ROUTLEDGE RESEARCH IN GENDER AND SOCIETY

Ageing, Gender and Sexuality

Equality in later life

Sue Westwood

ROUTLEDGE

This book offers invaluable insights into the range of experiences and concerns of old and aging lesbians and gay men, hitherto ignored in policy, research and practice.

Professor Rosemary Auchmuty, *School of Law, University of Reading, UK*

This timely and absorbing book provides a path-breaking analysis of the intersections of gender, sexuality and class in later life. Through novel analyses of the lives of older lesbians and gay men (LGB), it advances theoretical understandings of legal changes about sexuality, the construction of kinship, and inequalities in later life. By weaving empirical research with a breadth of theoretical ideas, this agenda-setting book is essential reading within ageing, gender, and sexuality studies.

Professor Sara Arber, *Co-Director, Centre for Research on Ageing and Gender (CRAG), University of Surrey, UK*

In *Ageing, Gender and Sexuality: Equality in Later Life*, Dr Westwood breaks new ground with her nuanced exploration of the intersection of aging, gender, and sexuality. Combining personal narratives with a "feminist socio-legal" approach, the book provides a compelling analysis of the equality issues facing lesbian, gay, and bisexual individual later in life. It makes a major contribution to the study of lesbian, gay, and bisexual aging and should be required reading for all those interested in questions related to aging, gender, and sexuality.

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An empirically rich and theoretically sophisticated study focussing on 'voices on the margins', and their spatial and temporal dis-placements, including from disciplinary locations and hetero-normative institutional provisions. This book re-invigorates important concepts such as 'families of choice', 'recognition', 'performativity', and 'intersectionality', stretching these to consider the specificities of ageing LGB lives. In challenging the rhetoric of 'the world we have won', it centres the question of 'equality for what and to whom?', allowing for attentiveness to resistant and blocked futures, in the realization and resourcing of ageing sexual subjectivities.

Yvette Taylor, *Professor of Education, University of Strathclyde, UK*

Sue Westwood's book leads the way in the intersectional analysis of ageing sexualities. It sets a new standard for research in the area. The book carefully examines how lesbian, gay and bisexual experiences of ageing are shaped by gender, class, relational status, law and social policy. It is essential reading for students, academics, and those with interest in ageing and/or sexuality.

Brian Heaphy, *Professor of Sociology, The University of Manchester, UK*

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Ageing, Gender and Sexuality

Ageing, Gender and Sexuality focuses on the experiences of older lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) individuals, in order to analyse how ageing, gender and sexuality intersect to produce particular inequalities relating to resources, recognition and representation in later life. The book adopts a feminist socio-legal perspective to propose that these inequalities are informed by and play out in relation to temporal, spatial and regulatory contexts. Discussing topics such as ageing sexual subjectivities, ageing kinship formations, classed trajectories and anticipated care futures, this book provides a new perspective on older individuals in same-gender sex relationships, including those who choose not to label their sexualities.

Drawing upon recent empirical data, the book offers new theoretical approaches for understanding the intersectionality of ageing, gender and sexuality, as well as analysing the social policy implications of these findings. With an emphasis on the accounts of individuals who have experienced the dramatically changing socio-legal landscape for LGB people first-hand, this book is essential reading for students, scholars and policymakers working in the areas of: gender and sexuality studies; ageing studies and gerontology; gender, sexuality and law; equality and human rights; sociology; socio-legal studies; and social policy.

Dr Sue Westwood is a researcher at the University of Oxford, Honorary Research Fellow at the Centre for Research on Ageing and Gender, University of Surrey and teaches Law at Coventry University Law School, UK.

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For my mother,
Lillian Florence Westwood née Calverley
14th July 1922–26th September 1993
A gentle woman.

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Earlier versions of some of the arguments presented in this book have appeared in the following published forms: ' "We See it as Being Heterosexualised, Being Put into a Care Home": Gender, sexuality and housing/care preferences among older LGB individuals in the UK' *Health and Social Care in the Community* (2015); 'Constructing Kinship in Succession Law (England and Wales): An analysis of older lesbians' and gay men's Will-writing' *Feminist Legal Studies* (2015); ' "My Friends are my Family": an argument about the limitations of contemporary law's recognition of relationships in later life' *Journal of Social Welfare & Family Law* (2013).

1 Introduction

Older lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people have, until recently, been ignored both in the study of ageing and in gender and sexuality studies. However, with growing legal rights and recognitions in many parts of the world, including the UK, LGB people of all ages are becoming more visible and more 'thinkable', both in academia and the 'real world'. Current cohorts of older LGB people, now in their sixties, seventies, eighties and nineties, have lived across this dramatically changing socio-legal landscape. In the UK their social status has shifted across just a few decades from criminal, mentally ill and/or sinner to socially respectable and lawful participants in society. Older LGB people have not only witnessed this, many have been actively engaged in fighting for it, and even more have navigated their lives, identities and relationships through and against it.

Despite Jeffrey Weeks' (2007) claims about 'the world we have won', however, LGB equality is not yet fully won. This is not only in those parts of the world where we can still be punished, tortured and even killed because of who and how we love, express our desires, and identify. Despite recent legal and structural gains in LGB equality in the UK, their impact at the level of lived experience has been 'socially and spatially uneven' (Podmore, 2013, p. 263). One of the areas of unevenness is in relation to older age. Older LGB people are located at the intersection of ageing, gender and sexuality, and associated privilege and disadvantage, informed by ageism, sexism, heteronormativity, heterosexism and homophobia. They are part of the 'queer unwanted' (Casey, 2007, p. 125), marginalised by younger LGB people because of their age(s) and marginalised by older heterosexual people and heterosexuality-privileging older-age care provision because of their sexualities. Older LGB women find themselves particularly affected by a combination of ageism *and* sexism *and* heterosexism.

Older LGB people, having witnessed, and lived through, dramatic socio-legal changes across their lives now find, at the end of their lives, that they are facing new frontiers of inequality. And they are encountering these new frontiers when they may be less able to tackle them independently, due to older-age-related physical and/or cognitive capacity and reliance upon others to help with living their everyday lives and meeting their personal care needs. While they may be less able to fight the good fight, they, nonetheless, have this new fight on their

hands. And they need others to help them with it, to support them in tackling the new inequalities they face, and in championing and defending their rights in the face of those inequalities. This book has been written with this emancipatory agenda in mind. Based on research conducted for a PhD in Law (also entitled *Ageing, Gender and Sexuality: Equality in Later Life*) it explores the (in)equality implications of ageing for current cohorts of older LGB people.

Taking a feminist socio-legal approach, I shall be arguing that temporality and spatiality shape uneven outcomes in later life, by informing the discursive and performative production of ageing, gender and sexuality, which in turn influence access to the equality issues of resources and recognition. I propose a new cohort model to explain how past and present interact to produce differing outcomes in later life, nuanced by age, gender, sexuality and class. Using the model, I show how the cohorts inform ageing subjectivities, kinship formations and access to informal intergenerational support in later life. I also locate older LGB individuals' concerns about future formal care needs in spatial terms, in relation to anticipated inequalities in older-age care spaces, and consider this in terms of practices of both power and resistance in those spaces. I argue that the place of gender in LGB ageing has been marginalised and suggest ways in which this could be addressed. This introductory chapter outlines key concepts, summarises the current research context, and provides an overview of each of the subsequent chapters. First, however, I need to briefly address issues of language and acronyms.

Language and acronyms

During the course of my research with 'older LGB' people, I encountered a number of people – women – in same-sex relationships who did not identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual and preferred not to label their sexualities/sexual identities at all. They also did not identify as 'queer'. This will be explored further in Chapter 3 ('Ageing Sexual Subjectivities') and I will not go into it in detail here. These women presented me with the question of how I was to describe, and include, them in my narrative.

It can be challenging to find ways of encompassing *both* people who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual *and* individuals who have same-sex desires and/or engage in same-sex sexual relationships, but who do not mobilise a lesbian, gay, bisexual or a queer identity (Stein, 2012). Some authors have used the term 'non-heterosexual' (e.g. Heaphy, Yip & Thompson, 2004), but this positions LGB sexualities in a deficit position (Harding, 2008), i.e. in terms of what they are not, rather than what they are. Another option is to talk about 'queer' as a global term (Gamson, 1995). But queer is a term many individuals do not identify with, particularly older individuals who associate it with historical pejorative overtones. It is also often rejected by those feminists who consider it to undermine gender politics (Fineman, Jackson & Romero, 2009).

Another possibility is to talk about 'minority sexualities' (e.g. de Vries, 2014). But this implies fixed positions of minority and majority sexualities

(Herman, 1994), when in reality each position is socially constructed and can shift across time. As Jeffrey Weeks has observed,

> We now know that heterosexual is not only a preference; it is an institution, so embedded in the ways we think and act that it is almost invisible, unless you try to escape it. Homosexuality may have come out into the open, it may have made institutionalized heterosexuality porous, but even in the advanced cultures of the West it is still subjected to the minoritizing forces that excluded it in the first place.
>
> (Weeks, 2007, p. 12)

Another possibility, responding to Weeks' analysis, and in recognition of these 'minoritizing forces', might be to use the term 'minoritised sexualities'. However, this would invisibilise lesbian, gay and bisexual cultural practices and social experiences, particularly the importance for some of 'coming out' as an ongoing, iterative, interactional process.[1] It also does not take into account the political dimensions of sexuality, particularly the elective sexualities of some radical feminist lesbians. After much deliberation (and experimenting with various alternatives) I have decided to use the acronym 'LGBNL' which stands for lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) individuals and those individuals in same-sex relationships who do not label (NL) their sexualities. It may seem clunky, and a little awkwardly unfamiliar, but that is not a bad thing, as I want to destabilise and deconstruct homogenising 'LGB' discourse, and bring into the foreground the experiences of those – women in particular – who do not identify with it.

This book does not address trans*[2] issues. This is not to deny the significance of trans* ageing, which is immense (Witten, 2014) and about which I have written elsewhere (see Westwood, 2016a and Westwood & Price, 2016, for example). However, one of the arguments I shall be making in this book is that the LGBT* (lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans*) umbrella is overly homogenising, conflating the issues and concerns of LGBT* people and obscuring the differences among and between them, including as they age. For this reason, I am focussing here on issues of LGBNL sexualities rather than those of (trans*) gender identities.

Age(ing), gender and sexuality

Older LGBNL individuals experience later life at the nexus of age(ing), gender and sexuality which, separately and together, 'serve as organizing principles of power' (Calasanti & Slevin, 2007, p. 10). Chronological age is one of the most powerful ways in which we are socially organised (Fredman & Spencer, 2003), with normative behaviours, rights and responsibilities based on age, varying widely according to historical and cultural contexts (Reed, Cook, Cook, Inglis & Clarke, 2006, p. 893). There are also different dimensions to older age itself, from the perspective of functionality:

> The National Service Framework for Older People suggests three groupings, namely: those 'entering old age' who live active and independent lives; those making the transition from independence to frailty, and those individuals who are frail and may have accompanying conditions that require care and support.
>
> (Ward, Pugh & Price, 2011, p. 6)

Older age is, in many cultures, particularly in the Western world, a time of cultural devaluation (Featherstone & Hepworth, 2005), ageism and age discrimination (Bytheway, 2005). Older people, especially in very old age, often shift from economic and social productivity to economic and social dependency, diminishing their cultural and social worth in capitalist societies (Estes, 1979, 1993, 2001; Townsend, 1981). This is nuanced by processes of cumulative advantage and disadvantage across a lifetime (Dannefer, 2003), which are, in turn, linked to issues of class.

The intersection of gender with ageing is of particular significance. Gender is a social and cultural construction of normative behaviour based on notions of femininity and masculinity. It is, as Judith Butler (1999) has argued, an issue of performance, rather than an expression of particular innate qualities, reproduced by disciplinary processes which serve to reinforce binary gender-based norms and compulsory heterosexuality (Rich, 1980). Women writers (Germaine Greer, 1991; Barbara MacDonald & Cynthia Rich, 1991; Betty Frieden, 1994; Gloria Steinem, 1995; Simone de Beauvoir, 1996) have highlighted the cultural devaluation of older women for several decades. Susan Sontag's article in the 1970s, 'The Double Standard of Ageing' (Sontag, 1972) argued that ageing women are stigmatised and marginalised both by ageing and by being ageing women. Merryn Gott wrote, 30 years later, 'Susan Sontag's "double standard" of ageing is alive and well in the 21st century in that physical ageing continues to disenfranchise and desexualize women in a way that it does not men' (Gott, 2005, p. 33). Prevailing discourse about gender and ageing is underpinned by heteronormative (assuming heterosexuality to be the norm) and heterosexist (privileging heterosexuality) assumptions (Cronin, 2006). Older people, if they are seen as having a sexuality at all, are generally assumed to be heterosexual (Roseneil & Budgeon, 2004). However, there has been a very recent growth of interest in 'how ageing mediates lesbian and gay experiences and relationships' (Heaphy, 2009, p. 135) and in how gender *and* sexuality mediate the ageing experience.

Despite modern day binary constructions of hetero-, homo- and bi-sexualities, sexuality is far more complex, fluid and socially, historically and contextually contingent (Richardson, 2000a; Weeks, 2010). Since Kinsey's early work (Kinsey, Pomeroy & Martin, 1948; Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin & Gebhard, 1953), there has been growing recognition of the overlap between the hetero- and the homo- and of sexual fluidity in individual lives (Sedgwick, 1990), particularly the lives of women (Kitzinger, 1987; Diamond, 2008). Sexuality itself is a contestable term (Weeks, 2010) in terms of whether it describes a behaviour, an orientation (innate or acquired), a strategic identity (Bernstein, 2009), an actual identity (Calzo, Antonucci, Mays & Cochran, 2011), with/out a politicised

component (Adam, 1995; Power, 1995), a broader ethos (Blasius, 1994), or possible combinations of all. In this book I shall work with the concept of sexuality as plural, gendered and socially, temporally and spatially contingent.

Socio-legal context

There has been considerable progress in the legal recognition (and regulation) of the lives of LGBNL individuals in recent decades, particularly in the UK (Weeks, 2010; Harding, 2011). This includes in relation to rights affecting women, which affect LGBNL women, of course. In terms of women's rights, there were major developments in legislation in the late 1960s and early 1970s (e.g. the Abortion Act 1967; the Equal Pay Act 1970; free contraception under the NHS Reorganisation Act 1974; and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975). In terms of sexuality/sexual identity rights, 'homosexual' acts between consenting men aged 21 or over were decriminalised in 1967,[3] with the age of consent being reduced to 16, the same age for heterosexuals, in 2000.[4] Homosexuality was declassified from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) II in 1973.[5]

A previous Conservative government had introduced 'Section 28'[6] which prohibited the 'promotion' of homosexuality (which impacted upon a lot of information and education services) but this was repealed by a Labour government in 2003.[7] The ban on serving in the military was lifted in 2000. Sexual orientation discrimination at work and in vocational training was prohibited in 2003[8] and in the provision of goods and services in 2007[9] and subsequently as a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. Same-sex couples were allowed to adopt in 2002,[10] and in 2004 the Civil Partnership Act was passed, providing the same legal recognition as heterosexual marriage. Under the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 and the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014, same-sex couples are also now able to marry.[11]

Family/kinship discourse

Older LGBNL people have both witnessed, and been a part of, changing family formations in recent decades. The denial of access to family life was central to the historical social exclusion of lesbians and gay men (Calhoun, 2000). Prior to the Civil Partnership Act (CPA) 2004 there was no legal mechanism in the UK for same-sex couples to secure legal recognition for their relationship (Harding, 2011). The post-Second World War welfare state[12] produced and reinforced a particular notion of family, that of the heterosexual male breadwinner providing for an economically dependent stay-at-home heterosexual wife and their children (O'Donnell, 1999; Carabine, 2001). This was further entrenched as the 20th century progressed, through various forms of legislation[13] which served to maintain 'the very idea that lesbian and gay families are essentially different and, indeed, deficient' (Hicks, 2005, p. 165).

Non-heterosexual parenthood was also difficult to access: first due to technological limitations in the early part of the 20th century, and then when advances

in conception and fertility treatment in the late 20th century potentially opened up pathways for lesbians and gay men to become parents (Zanghellini, 2010) legal constraints[14] then limited their access to associated professional services. Adoption was not an option in those years when homosexuality was still criminalised, vilified and regarded as a psychiatric disorder and/or perversion and when there was a conflation, for gay men in particular, of homosexuality and paedophilia (Hicks & McDermott, 1999). Prior to the Adoption and Children Act 2002 only married couples or single individuals were allowed to adopt, and there had continued to be a wariness in supporting lesbian or gay adoption (Skeates & Jabri, 1988) entrenching the heterosexual marriage as the primary couple form for child-rearing (Donovan, 2000).

Self-insemination networks enabled more lesbians to become mothers in the 1970s and 1980s, sometimes co-parenting with gay men (Clarke, 2008). However, Section 28, the conservative backlash to both this and increasing lesbian and gay visibility (Cooper & Herman, 1995), explicitly stated that 'local authorities should not promote the teaching in schools of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship'. This was emphasised in parliamentary debate when, for example, in 1988 the Earl of Caithness said:

> Local authorities should not be using their powers under section 17 of the Education (No. 2) Act 1986 to encourage the teaching that relationships between two people of the same-sex can and do play the same role in society as a traditional family.[15]

For many LGBNL individuals for most of the last century a lack of discursive and performative space meant parenting outside a heterosexual relationship was a rarity. LGBNL individuals who had children in heterosexual marriages and then tried to leave those marriages often came into difficulties in terms of child custody, many lesbians in particular losing custody of their children[16] through being considered 'unfit' mothers (Wyland, 1977; Rights of Women, 1984; Bradley, 1987; Radford, 1992; Beresford, 2008). By the turn of this century when partnerships were legally recognised, and adoption and reproductive assistance comparatively more accessible, this was only of partial benefit to LGBNL individuals in their late fifties and above. While they could make use of partnership recognition if they wished, such alternative routes to parenthood came too late for most, who were 'out of time' to reap the benefits of associated legal changes. This, then, is the historical background which informs older LGBNL individuals' current, lived, kinship.

The language regarding kinship is very often implicated in particular norms and normativities. The word 'family' itself is problematic not only because it is so closely tied to heteronormative family models (Roseneil & Budgeon, 2004; Smart, 2007), but also because of the increasingly fluid ways in which families are performed (Weeks, Heaphy & Donovan, 2001). It is this fluidity and variety of family forms that has led some queer theorists to argue that there is an ongoing breaking down of heterosexual family structures. The much used term 'family of choice' (Weston, 1991; Weeks *et al.*, 2001) can also be problematic in several ways: in the

inclusion of the word 'family' with its heterosexual overtones; in its implied homogeneity, which does not reflect diverse 'family' forms; and because some of the purported core qualities of 'families of choice' e.g. egalitarian structures and reciprocity, have been brought into question (Carrington, 1999).

Pahl and Spencer have proposed more nuanced analysis encompassing both 'friends' and 'families' in six different types of 'personal communities' (Pahl & Spencer, 2004, p. 199): (1) friend-like (more friends than biological family and a wide spread of types of friends); (2) friend-enveloped (a strong outer ring of friends but with biological family, partner and children – 'family' – prioritised at the centre); (3) family-oriented ('family' outnumbering friends and also prioritised over friendship); (4) family-dependent ('family' outnumber friends and are also relied upon for support); (5) partner-focussed (emphasis on partner as prioritised relationship with friends and extended family having secondary significance); and (6) professional dependent (small personal communities with professional relationships at the centre). The advantage of Pahl and Spencer's model is that it offers a useful way of conceptualising multiple kinds of 'family' and 'friendship' formations. However, it does still mobilise a 'friend' vs 'family' binary which can fail to take into account more complex relationships. I shall be using the term 'family' in this book in qualified ways, e.g. referring to extended biological family, when that is what I specifically mean, and to 'personal communities' or 'kinship networks' (according to context) when referring to broader relationship networks.

One of the key themes in this book is the enduring privileging of the conjugal couple and the nuclear family form and the continued marginalisation of other forms of personal relationships, such as: 'Non-normative intimacies – between friends, non-monogamous lovers, ex-lovers, partners who do not live together, partners who do not have sex together, those which do not easily fit the "friend"/"lover" binary classification system' (Roseneil & Budgeon, 2004, p. 138). We do not as yet have a vocabulary to describe these new relationship forms (Almack, Seymour & Bellamy, 2010). I have chosen to deploy the acronym 'SLIFs' (Supportive and Loving Intimate Friendships) to describe them, not out of a wish to categorise in a reductionist sense, but for conceptual convenience and to aid comparison. I also consider the significance of uneven access to intergenerational relationships in terms of both resources and recognition in later life, and use the term 'childfree' rather than 'childless', and 'child-with' rather than 'with children', in order to avoid colluding with notions of non-parenthood as a deficit identity (Reynolds, 2011).

Theoretical frameworks

Equality

Numerous lists and categories have been proposed to define the 'what' of equality (Baker, Lynch, Cantillon & Walsh, 2009). Nancy Fraser has clustered it into three main umbrella groupings: distribution (economic resources); recognition (cultural) and representation (political) (Fraser, 1996, 1997, 1998, 2000, 2007,

2008a, 2000b). Fraser repeatedly refers to their interrelatedness throughout her writing. However, Fraser controversially asserted in 1996 that lesbian, gay and bisexual equality was a problem of recognition, not redistribution (Fraser, 1996, pp. 13–14). This, not surprisingly, aroused considerable debate (Olson, 2008) particularly with Judith Butler (1997) and Iris Marion Young (1998). Butler, in her paper 'Merely Cultural', emphasised the interrelatedness of 'the reproduction of goods as well as the social reproduction of persons' (Butler, 1997, p. 40) and Iris Marion Young conceptualised cultural recognition not as an end in itself but as 'a means to economic and political justice' (Young, 1998, p. 148). Fraser did acknowledge in a footnote in a paper in 2007 'even sexuality, which looks at first sight like the paradigm of pure recognition, has an undeniable economic dimension' (Fraser, 2007, p. 27, footnote 3) indicating that she had somewhat shifted her position in response to these criticisms.

Davina Cooper has proposed an alternative 'equality of what' that is overarching and does not rely upon discrete categorisation, namely 'equality of power' (and by power, she means economic, social, cultural and relational power, rather than just political power). She proposes an understanding of equality as no one having 'an inherent right to impact more on their social and physical environment than anyone else' (Cooper, 2004, p. 77). However, this looser description makes it more difficult, I would suggest, to focus on particular aspects of inequality for analysis (Harding, 2011). If one does narrow in, then I think the categories Fraser has described (or ones similar to them) will still end up being deployed. For this reason, despite her uneasy relationship with sexuality, I consider Fraser's central framework helpful in structuring an analysis of equality and shall use it here.

In her analysis of resources, Fraser placed emphasis on the (re-)distribution of economic resources. Access to material resources is extremely relevant in informing later life outcomes, particularly as they are closely related to being able access social resources (Heaphy, 2009). However, other resources are also of importance, especially in later life. Health, physical and cognitive functioning (Glaser, Price, Willis, Stuchbury & Nicholls, 2009), access to 'love, care and solidarity' (Lynch, Baker & Lyons, 2009), safe housing (Barnes, 2012), social networks and informal social and instrumental support ('social capital', Cronin & King, 2014) all have direct impact upon well-being in late life (Bond & Cabrero, 2007; Fredriksen-Goldsen *et al.*, 2013). Differential access to these can produce profound affective inequalities (Lynch, Baker & Lyons, 2009) and engage with issues of inequalities of care from the perspectives of feminist care ethics (Tronto, 1993; Kittay, 1999; Sevenhuijsen, 2003; Held, 2006; Lynch, 2007, 2010).

Equality of recognition involves social status, cultural visibility and cultural worth (Young, 1990; Fraser, 1996; Nussbaum, 2010). Ageing LGBNL individuals are affected by issues of recognition relating to gender, sexuality and older age, as well as other intersecting social divisions. They are, in turn, affected by ageism (Nelson, 2005) at its intersection with sexism (Arber & Ginn, 1991) and heterosexism (Slevin, 2006). Heterosexism is a 'pervasive cultural phenomenon' (Peel, 2001, p. 544) operating individually, culturally and institutionally. Individually,

heterosexism is maintained through everyday interactions: the operation of norms (Butler, 1999); mundane heterosexism in 'everyday talk-in-interaction' (Kitzinger, 2005, p. 221) and in the 'discursive reproduction of homophobia' (Gough, 2002, p. 219). Institutional heterosexism is 'expressed through society's structure, institutions, and power relations' (Herek, 2004, p. 11) involving the systematic discursive and performative reproduction of heterosexism, heteronormativity and homophobia (prejudice and discrimination towards non-heterosexual people). Institutional heterosexism is of particular concern to older LGBNL individuals with formal care needs, in terms of institutionalised older-age care. This is addressed in Chapter 6.

In terms of representation (Fraser, 2008b), theorists have emphasised social and political participation and access to justice (Young, 1990; Lister, 1995; Donovan, Heaphy & Weeks, 1999; Cooper, 2006, 2007) as key equality issues. The history of lesbian and gay activism (Adam, 1995; Power, 1995; Jeffreys, 2003; Weeks, 2007; Cant & Hemmings, 2010; Stein, 2012) is fraught with tensions relating to identity categories and particular tensions within the 'LGBT' movement between queer theorists and feminists (Fineman *et al.*, 2009). The mobilisation of fixed identity categories, based on their 'political utility' (Gamson, 1995, p. 402) raises issues relating to the marginalisation of more transgressive presences in social justice movements (Sears, 2005). 'LGBT' activists use social science data 'to claim legitimacy and render queer worlds visible in the policy process' (Grundy & Smith, 2007, p. 294). However, the question is which and whose 'queer worlds' are rendered more or less visible in that process (Gamson, 1995). Fixed categories, while reflecting an important set of experiences among some LGBNL individuals can also exclude more fluid sexuality narratives, such as those of:

> People whose sexes, genders, and sexualities did not align in conventional ways: by gays and lesbians who had straight sex, straights who had gay and lesbian sex, gays and lesbians who had sex with each other, people whose gender and sexual preferences changed over time, individuals who rejected binary gender and sexual categories, and trans people and their partners.
>
> (Stein, 2012, p. 184)

This has particular relevance for LGBNL ageing. The emphasis on sexuality and age as the key distinguishers for older 'LGB' individuals iterates the tensions relating to gender within sexualities rights discourse (Power, 2010). A key criticism among lesbians of the gay liberation movement was that it was dominated by gay men and gay men's issues and paid little attention to issues of gender and class, which privileged gay men over lesbians. Many lesbians believed that gay men would be 'happy to leave the system of male domination intact' (Adam, 1995, p. 99). This is also a concern in relation to 'LGBT* ageing' discourse which, I shall argue in this book, marginalises the experiences of older lesbians,[17] bisexual and sexually fluid women and fails to take into account how gender itself shapes the experiences of LGBNL women *and* men.

Feminist socio-legal scholarship

Feminist socio-legal scholarship has revealed and rejected the gendered constructions of law (Smart, 1989), the impossibility of masculinist objectivity (Harding, 2004), and 'the view of the subject of law as an atomised, self-interested, competitive being' (Hunter, McGlynn & Rackley, 2010, p. 21), emphasising instead relationality and lifelong interdependency (Fineman, 2004). Feminist socio-legal theorists have shown how, in its application and interpretation, law is often contingent upon the subjective perspectives of (predominantly male) law makers (Hunter, 2010), and in the legal constructions of the public/private divide and its consequent variable protections for women and children (Graycar & Morgan, 2002).

Sexuality as a dimension of (feminist) socio-legal scholarship (Herman & Stychin, 1995; Stychin & Herman, 2000) has been considered in relation to such areas as: the lesbian and gay rights movement (Herman, 1994; Ball, 2009; Knauer, 2011); discrimination law (Badgett & Frank, 2007; Knauer, 2009); family law and parenting rights (e.g. Harding, 2011; Taylor, 2011a); partnership recognition (e.g. Boyd & Young, 2003; Stychin, 2006; Harding, 2006, 2008, 2010a, 2010b, 2011; Barker, 2006, 2012; Auchmuty 2009); tensions between religious and lesbian and gay sexuality rights (Herman, 1997; Cobb, 2009; Stychin, 2009; Clucas, 2012); governmentality and (local) politics (Cooper, 1995, 2006; Monro, 2010; Monro & Richardson, 2011; Nussbaum, 2010); equality and diversity discourse and practices (Cooper, 2004; Richardson & Monro, 2012); and the contested notion of citizenship (Richardson, 2000a, 2000b, 2004; Conaghan & Grabham, 2007; Cooper, 2007). Very little attention has so far been given to ageing.

There is a tension within feminist socio-legal studies, as within the broader frame of feminism (Fletcher, Fox & McCandless, 2008a), between those who interrogate the (re)production of gender (i.e. the gendering of women *and* of men) and the discursive and performative production of gendered practices at an embodied level (Fletcher, Fox & McCandless, 2008b), and those who focus more on the gender binary and issues of inequality between women and men (Samuels, 2009). Both perspectives are drawn upon in this book. For example, the reproduction of gender norms and normativities are considered in relation to older lesbian invisibility, particularly through the lens of 'compulsory grandmotherhood' (Chapter 4). Inequalities between LGBNL women and GB(NL) men are also considered in terms of gendered differential access to resources, recognition and representation in later life (addressed across Chapters 3 to 7).

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is central to this book's analysis of how ageing, gender and sexuality work with and through one another to produce uneven outcomes in later life. The concept of intersectionality emerged from Black feminist writers, (Kimberlé Crenshaw, 1989, 1991; bel hooks, 1982; Patricia Hill Collins, 2000) who argued that the experiences of Black women could not be understood in

terms of racism and sexism alone: Black women experience sexism differently from White women and racism differently from Black men. The work of these early authors has developed into a wide-reaching intersectionality paradigm (Davis, 2007) which encompasses a number of different approaches exploring inequalities which work with and through one another. Intersectional approaches 'look at forms of inequality which are routed through one another, and which cannot be untangled to reveal a single cause' (Grabham, Cooper, Krishnadas & Herman, 2009, p. 1). Intersectionality is 'useful as a handy catchall phrase that aims to make visible the multiple positioning that constitutes everyday life and the power relations that are central to it' (Phoenix & Pattynama, 2006, p. 187), and enables consideration of 'more than one aspect of identity at a time' (Weston, 2011, p. 16). It is the starting place for explanations:

> Intersectionality refers to the mutually constructed nature of social division and the ways these are experienced, reproduced and resisted in everyday life. A successful intersectional practice thus explores relational and reinforcing inclusions and exclusions, the first steps of which are to identify and name these.
>
> (Taylor, 2009, p. 190)

Intersectionality can be problematic because of its complexity (McCall, 2005) and can, if over-simplistically applied, imply a neat and ordered interaction between identity combinations, which can mask the 'intimate interconnections, mutual constitutions and messiness of everyday identifications and lived experiences' (Taylor, Hines & Casey, 2011, p. 2). There is a risk of an assumption of equality in different axes of oppression (Erel, Haritaworn, Rodríguez & Klesse, 2010) and distinction between axes that may imply that they operate separately and in a detached way, when in fact they operate together (Cooper, 2004) and 'mutually reinforce each other' (Grillo, 1995, p. 27).

Some theorists have rejected intersectionality as a workable tool. Conaghan (2009) has proposed that intersectionality has outlived its usefulness, arguing that it fails to take into account the multi-dimensional nature of intersecting inequalities and of oppressions. Nancy Ehrenreich (2003) has argued that it cannot simultaneously meet the needs/interests of conflicting groups; that it invites oppressions to compete; that it poses the 'infinite regress problem', i.e. we are all ultimately reduced to singular individualities. Her most powerful argument is that intersectionality suggests that we are all oppressed in some ways, and although this is initially 'appealing … it is also dangerously depoliticising, for the logical implications of a notion that everyone is oppressed, is that no one is' (Ehrenreich, 2003, p. 271). This latter point was also made by Judith Butler (1999) when she criticised the 'etc.' that often ends lists of identity categories, arguing that it demonstrates the limitlessness (and therefore futility) of such classification. Several theorists argue that intersectionality is fundamentally essentialising and excluding because it requires assignment to group identities (Monro & Richardson, 2011, p. 115).

Other authors have suggested that intersectionality may offer mediation between feminist and queer theories (Jackson, 2006) by enabling an understanding of how differently oppressed identities intersect and their intersection shapes their oppression. I share Yuval-Davis's view (Yuval-Davis, 2006) that some degree of categorisation is necessary in order to locate and distinguish between processes of inequality. However, we need to constantly interrogate which categorisation is mobilised, and how, in order to ensure its continued utility. Properly applied, intersectionality still has much to contribute in engaging simultaneously with the complexities of multiple dimensions of identity and how they work with and through one another to produce inequality.

Class

Class is a key site of intersection and of profound significance for LGBNL equality. Yet is has until quite recently been under-theorised in relation to ageing, gender and sexuality, with the notable exception of a small number of authors (e.g. Skeggs, 1997, 2004; Skeggs & Loveday, 2012; Taylor, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011a, 2011b). More recently, several scholars (Heaphy, 2011, 2013; Cronin & King, 2010, 2014) have drawn upon Bourdieu's work to understand inequalities in relation to older 'LGB' people. According to Bourdieu (1977, 1984; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) class, rather than being understood by occupation (one's own or one's parents') is better understood in terms of inter-related socio-economic and cultural resources which privilege and/or disadvantage individuals in making their way through the world. Bourdieu has distinguished between economic capital (material and financial resources); social capital (social networks, status and connections); and cultural capital (knowledge, both specialist knowledge relating to the world of work and also understanding certain ways of being and performing in particular contexts). While some feminists have struggled with Bourdieu for his under-attention to gender (Adkins & Skeggs, 2004), others have found his model, or adapted versions of it, particularly useful for returning an analysis of class to understandings of gender (and sexuality) in relation to the interaction between structures and subjectivities and of value-laden social movement (Skeggs, 2004). As Yvette Taylor has observed, Bourdieu's model,

> offers understanding of the ways that individuals move through social space, or, conversely, become restricted and fixed, through material inequalities as well as social judgements. This occurs across related terrains of education, employment and family, where (hetro)normativity also shapes material (im)possibilities and destinations. Such approaches begin to provide theoretical frames through which class and sexuality can be investigated as discursive, material, cultural and institutional; as simultaneously structural and subjective.
>
> (Taylor, 2011b, p. 5)

Brian Heaphy (2009) has argued for 'a situated understanding of the relational options available to older gay men and lesbians … acknowledging how relational choices and their limits are shaped by access to combined economic, social, and cultural resources' (p. 119). Heaphy emphasised how access to economic and financial resources is crucial in later life, affecting access to existing social and personal networks, and in turn, informal social (and material) support and the ability to establish new relationships. He has argued that 'limited economic resources combine with diminished social resources to limit intimate and relational possibilities' (Heaphy, 2009, p. 133) in later life. Cronin and King (2010, 2014) have also considered gender differences between older lesbians and gay men in terms of access to economic, social and cultural capital. They have highlighted the different social capitals of lesbians who have been 'out' for the majority of their lives and have established lesbian networks and those who 'came out' in later life (Cronin & King, 2010, p. 884). They argue that 'biography, gender and socio-economic status are significant mediators in the development and maintenance of social capital by older LGB adults' (Cronin & King, 2014, p. 258). Chapter 5 of this book considers the classed trajectories of older LGBNL individuals and their implications for access to resources and recognition in later life.

Temporality

Temporality is of growing interest to gender and sexualities scholars (McBean, 2013), in relation to historical contexts (Weeks, 2007), older age (Binnie & Klesse, 2013) and 'the interplay of the social context and historical times as well as the nature and consequences of linked and interdependent lives' (Fredriksen-Goldsen & Muraco, 2010, p. 402). History, temporality and time all 'tangle together' (C. Nealon in Dinshaw *et al.*, 2007, p. 179). Nancy Knauer has suggested that temporality is the 'fourth dimension of intersectionality' (Knauer, 2013, p. 300) demonstrating its significance to LGBNL ageing as follows:

> The indelible 'time stamp' that exists on every rendering of intersecting identities carries significant explanatory value. A seventy-five year old white woman in a long-term relationship with another woman stands at a complex intersection of race, gender, age, and sexual orientation. It goes without saying that our analysis (as well as her experience) would differ considerably if the snapshot of identity captured the intersection in 1963, 1983, or 2013.
>
> (Knauer, 2013, p. 300)

In order to understand ageing LGBNL subjective experiences, then, we need to know in what temporal context(s) those experiences are located.

Temporality is often understood as the linear progression of times past, present and future (Hoy, 2012), but it also involves the perception, experience and social organisation of time. These are often non-linear (Adams, 2004) and

involve different times, e.g. traditional, modern and postmodern time (Bryson, 2007), clock time and event time (Adkins, 2008). John Harrington (2012) has shown how time is social (actively produced by various social practices), plural (specific to different contexts, locations and activities), and rhetorical (a strategic process of persuasion, e.g. clock time). Harrington has proposed that time and law are mutually implicated in an 'intertemporal struggle' (Harrington, 2012, p. 496). For example, precedent binds the present with the past, while contract binds the present to the future. Law also engages with the life cycle, partly in the legal regulation of rights and responsibilities determined by chronological age, but also in matters of life and death, ranging from reproductive to end-of-life issues. Many feminist authors have argued that time is gendered (Felski, 2000), proposing, for example, that clock time is in conflict with (women's) caring time (Tronto, 2003).

The intersection of age(ing), gender and sexuality is implicated in time: Halberstam (2005) has proposed the ideas of 'reproductive time' ('ruled by a biological clock for women and by strict bourgeois rules of respectability and scheduling for married couples', Halberstam, 2005, p. 5) and 'inheritance time' ('generational time within which values, wealth, goods, and morals are passed through family ties from one generation to the next', Halberstam, 2005, p. 5). Subsequent queer discourse about 'straight time' and 'queer time' has had 'a tendency to reproduce rather rigid and stereotypical interpretations of queerness and heterosexuality' (Binnie & Klesse, 2013, p. 584) and overemphasise the queering of reproduction, e.g. Lee Edelman's exhortation to queers to embrace 'the death drive' (Edelman, 2004). Linn Sandberg has argued that, drawing upon Butlerian notions of performativity, queering the performance of older age can overcome the abjection associated with it (Sandberg, 2008).

Temporality is thematically present in this book in a range of ways: in my analysis of the various age standpoints of older LGBNL individuals at their intersection with historical regulatory and socio-cultural contexts; in the development of a new cohort model; in considering the inter-relationship of the past, present and future in LGBNL individuals' subjectivities, kinship construction and concerns about care needs; and in considering the significance of intergenerationality for gendered recognition and access to resources in later life.

Spatiality

Temporality and spatiality are inextricably linked (Casey, 2013). Judith Butler has explored how temporality is organised along spatial lines in that different 'times' can simultaneously co-exist in different places (Butler, 2008). Additionally spaces change across time; the same spaces are differently experienced and attributed with meaning across their own time (Valentine, 2007); the same spaces are differently occupied according to personal chronological time (Simpson, 2012); and different spaces are occupied at different personal chronological times (Simpson, 2013a).

Previous understandings of space among sexualities geographers have distinguished between lesbian and gay spaces (bathhouses; cruising spaces; public sexual spaces; urban commercial sexual spaces) and of other spaces normalised as heterosexual (Bell & Binnie, 2000). However, there has been, more recently, a growing appreciation that space is co-occupied and co-produced (Browne & Bakshi, 2011), a site of discursive and performative production of intersecting identities of varying spatial power and dominance (Podmore, 2013). Gill Valentine has showed how a disabled Black woman, married to a man, but then also exploring a sexual relationship with a woman, experienced different forms of inclusion and exclusion according to spatial context. For example, 'the Deaf club is produced as Deaf, heterosexual, and white; the office workplace as a hearing, masculinist space' (Valentine, 2007, p. 19). Valentine also highlighted how different *types* of spaces, e.g. Deaf club, work, can produce different dominant spatial orderings and 'hegemonic cultures through which power operates to systematically define ways of being, and to mark out those who are in place or out of place' (Valentine, 2007, p. 18).

Intersecting inequalities are nuanced by both temporal and spatial dimensions. They are temporal in that inequalities vary across socio-legal temporal and personal chronological contexts. Older lesbians and gay men, for example, have experienced differing rights and recognitions in recent eras and at different ages and stages in their own lives across those eras. They are spatial in that 'the ability to enact some identities or realities rather than others is highly contingent on the power-laden spaces in and through which our experiences are lived' (Valentine, 2007, p. 19). This is, in turn, informed by class which 'has a significant role in the types of spaces people can access and make claims to' (Casey, 2013, p. 145). Taylor (2008) has shown, for example how working-class lesbians can feel 'out of place' in both working-class communities because of their sexualities *and* in the (middle class) commercial scene because of their working classness. Taylor's work has highlighted the need to look beyond the scene to understand alternative spaces occupied by working-class lesbians and spatial contingencies of lesbian and gay performance: 'Processes of "coming-out" may be classed, not only in terms of access to scene spaces but also as a process that "classes" what can and cannot be said to whom' (Taylor, 2009, p. 199). Brown and Bakshi (reporting on their findings from the *Count Me in Too* project on LGBT lives in Brighton) observed that there were profound, classed spatial divisions between LGBT people in Brighton:

> Areas of social deprivation that were seen as 'dangerous' were often portrayed as inherently 'anti-gay'. These areas were feared and denounced by some participants as places where hate crime and a lack of acceptance were located … pointing to the intersection of class, place and sexual identities.
>
> (Browne & Bakshi, 2013, p. 77)

Browne and Bakshi, echoing Taylor's work, also observed that this created particular sites of exclusion for working-class LGBT people: 'LGBT people who

lived in working class estates felt marginalised not only in the areas where they lived … but also by the negative reactions from other LGBT people *in response to where they lived*' (Browne & Bakshi 2013, p. 78; their italics). Although some public places are now sites of a certain degree of tolerance for the performance of lesbian and gay lives many public places are still unsafe for their open performance (Hubbard, 2013) and what performance is tolerated is often a 'sanitised' one (Casey, 2013, p. 144). Visser (2008) and Browne and Bakshi (2011) have observed how access to material and cultural resources can also privilege the ability to access safe spaces to perform particular sexual subjectivities, allowing some lesbian and gay people to 'move across gay/straight divides and become an empowered gay consumer whose money can talk' (Browne & Bakshi, 2011, p. 187). These spaces often reinforce a 'powerful middle-class heteronormative ideal – with demands of successful careers, maintaining the home and good neighbourly relationships' (Casey, 2013, p. 144) and not 'flaunting' their gayness (p. 144). These 'respectably queer' (Ward, 2008) spaces operate as both sites of inclusion and exclusion, mediated by 'respectability' (Taylor, 2011a, p. 585).

Spaces occupied by older LGBNL individuals are significantly under-researched, particularly older-age health, housing and care spaces (Casey, 2013). In this book, I utilise spatial analyses to deepen understandings of queer presences and absences (Taylor & Addison, 2013) in spaces occupied by older people, and their equality implications, including in relation to home spaces and leisure spaces (Chapter 5) and formal older-age care spaces (Chapter 6).

Power and resistance in institutional contexts

In my analysis of older LGBNL individuals' concerns about anticipated future care needs (Chapter 6) I address issues of power and resistance. There is a substantial body of literature on power (Haugaard, 2002). Foucault emphasised the disciplinary processes and productive nature of power and 'governmentality', i.e. the practice of social control through normative power in institutions (Foucault, 1991, 1994), which has been developed further in relation to older-age care contexts in Julia Twigg's work on embodiment and care (Twigg, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2004). In contrast with power, however, resistance is comparatively under-theorised (Raby, 2005), including by Foucault himself (Sawicki, 1991). Rosie Harding has suggested that to separate resistance from power is to 'reify power' (Harding, 2011, p. 44) and emphasises the interconnected nature of power and resistance, with resistance modifying power, and power resisting that modification, so that power can also be resistance and resistance can also be power. This connects with Davina Cooper's understanding of power 'as a social relationship of inequality and dominance … [and] as a matrix of forces structuring social life' (Cooper, 1995, p. 2).

Harding has proposed three types of resistance: stabilising, moderating and fracturing. Stabilising resistance, according to Harding, involves non-normative practices (being lesbian and gay parents, being 'out' at work, gender

non-conforming behaviour) which do not disrupt the status quo. Moderating resistance on the other hand, is 'a form of resistance that attempts to tame power' (Harding, 2011, p. 47). This would include public marches and protests, both against something (e.g. anti-mandatory retirement age) or for something (e.g. gay pride), and also pressure group and social activist campaigning. Fracturing resistance, the third kind of resistance in Harding's model, involves power being broken, even if only temporarily, as in the overthrow of a dictatorship, for example.

In my analysis of resistance, I wish to contribute to the dialogue Harding has opened up in her innovative analysis by suggesting certain enhancements to her model. First, I propose an alternative to Harding's analysis of stabilising resistance. Increased visibility of non-normative identities does not maintain the status quo, in my view, but rather modifies it, by incorporating the non-normative into the normative. It is in effect a form of moderating resistance, in that, however gently, it serves to 'tame' power. So, for example increasing the visibility, inclusion and acceptance of older LGBNL individuals in care spaces where they are currently invisibilised and/or subject to discrimination *tames* heteronormative power by changing conceptualisations of ageing care-recipients to being potentially both LGBNL *and* heterosexual-identifying individuals.

My understanding of power is also angled slightly differently from Harding's. I understand power to be *both* relational *and* a force which operates through and is operated within relational dynamics. This echoes Iris Marion Young's understandings of power as relational, but also a site of domination (i.e. the oppressive use of power) in the context of social and institutional structures (Young, 1990). Because of this nuanced difference in our respective understandings of power, I understand concealment (Seidman, Meeks & Traschen, 1999) to be a form of resistance, one which maintains the status quo. For centuries LGBNL lives and relationships have been preserved and maintained through clandestine existence, as a protective strategy in the face of an overwhelmingly dominant heterosexist culture. Drawing on the idea of prefigurative communities (Boggs, 1977; Rowbotham, 1979), protective resistance also involves living out a desired future in parallel with an oppressive regime (Maeckelbergh, 2011), with the hope of one day overthrowing that regime, rather than seeking to become a part of a modified version of it (Anahita, 2009; Brenner, 2009). The dominant culture is resisted, not by challenging it, but by avoiding it. Resistance by concealment, which I shall call 'protective resistance', is not about a sword with which to attack heteronormative power: it is about creating a shield with which to defend against heteronormative power. It is this type of resistance, rather than Harding's co-existing 'stabilising resistance', which, in my opinion, serves to maintain the status quo. I therefore propose replacing Harding's category of 'stabilising resistance' with the category of 'protective resistance' instead.

At the other end of the spectrum of resistance, I also propose an additional category of a more radical type of resistance, by recuperating a radical vision of transformation (Segal, 2007, 2013) in terms of 'transformative resistance'. Transformative resistance is an extension of fracturing resistance. According to

Harding, fracturing resistance involves power being broken, if only temporarily. Transformative resistance does something more: it reconstitutes power, engaging with the deconstruction of systems of power and oppression (Solorzano & Bernal, 2001). Transformative resistance changes the dynamics of power, the relational web of power, the architecture and landscape of power. This is the domain of radical activism, including that of radical feminists:

> Radical feminists do not accept that we are constrained by discourses, able to do no more than accept or resist them, but instead emphasise the importance of identifying who has the power to authorise those discourses, of challenging oppressive structures, and of a transformative politics which seeks to build new structures based upon equality.
>
> (Derry, 2007, p. 321)

In other words, in a radical feminist framework, the goal is not to reposition oneself within existing power structures, but to change the power structures themselves. So, in the case of older-age care provision, for example, rather than simply aiming to make existing care systems more accepting of older LGBNL individuals, the systems themselves would be overhauled (this is explored in Chapter 6). So, in this book, I apply this enhanced model of resistance, using the following categories: resistance by concealment ('protective resistance'); resistance by taming power ('moderating resistance'); resistance by breaking power ('fracturing resistance'); and resistance by transforming power ('transformative resistance').

Issues of resistance also engage with normativity (Richardson, 2005) and homonormativity (Rosenfeld, 2009; Ghaziani, 2011). The associated debates involve, on the one hand, those who propose that equality is achieved by integration and normalisation (Sullivan, 1995) emphasising the similarities between LGBNL individuals and heterosexual-identifying individuals 'but for' a partner's gender (Taylor, 2011a, p. 587). Others have argued that the price of such an integrationist approach is assimilation, a loss of identity, a loss of difference, and further marginalisation of those who do not conform to the conventions of heterosexual relationship norms, gender conformity and 'banalized respectability' (Warner, 2000, p. 66). Warner's arguments were taken up by Lisa Duggan, also opposed to Sullivan's conservatism, who described 'the new homonormativity' as,

> A politics that does not contest dominant heteronormative assumptions and institutions, but upholds and sustains them, while promising the possibility of a demobilized gay constituency and a privatized, depoliticized gay culture anchored in domesticity and consumption.
>
> (Duggan, 2003, p. 50)

Homonormativity has subsequently been deployed more broadly by a range of authors (Herman, 2003; O'Brien, 2008; Browne & Bakshi, 2013) to describe

culturally acceptable forms of LGBNL behaviour which map most closely with heterosexual norms. The concept of homonormativity is not without its critics (Oswin, 2008), particularly for obscuring the specificities and spatial contingencies of the (re)production of (homo)normative discourses and practices and because it 'leaves little space for seeing practices that operate outside of, or counter to its logics' (Brown, 2012, p. 1066). This can create a Catch-22 argument, in that it is impossible for LGBNL individuals who adopt lifestyles similar to heterosexual-identifying individuals to avoid being accused of homonormativity. Rosie Harding, for example, rejects the notion that inclusion in basic social norms is 'inherently anti-progressive' (Harding, 2011, pp. 42–43).

I agree that integration does not necessarily mean the adoption of heteronorms, but instead a widening of those norms so that they become *both* 'hetero' and 'non-hetero' (apologies for the unavoidable mobilisation of binaries in making this point!). However, on the other hand, I do think there are issues relating to differences between 'respectable' lesbian and gay individuals (privatised sexual performance, gender conformity, nuclear coupledom, monogamy on a public level at least, domestication) (Ward, 2008) and 'unrespectable' LGBNL individuals (e.g. those who perform sex in public, including cottaging, and in saunas and in bathhouses; gender non-conforming and/or gender queer; polyamorous, non-monogamous and sexuality fluid; undomesticated, maybe with a touch of outrageousness thrown in) and processes of queer 'othering' (Casey, 2007). I am not persuaded that creating more space closer to the fire of social inclusion for the more 'respectable' LGBNL person will also create widening warmth for those with less 'respectable' lives. Instead, my concern is that they (and their lived radical critiques of gender and sexuality binary norms) are pushed further onto the margins, further away from the warmth of social inclusion.

Research context

Statistical profiles

In terms of the general profile of older LGBNL individuals, according to the YouGov survey of over 1,000 'LGB'-identifying people over 55, commissioned by Stonewall (Guasp, 2011), 'LGB' people aged over 55 are: more likely to be single (gay and bisexual men are almost three times more likely to be single than heterosexual men); more likely to live alone (41 per cent of 'LGB' people compared to 28 per cent of heterosexual people); less likely to have children (just over 25 per cent of gay and bisexual men and 50 per cent of lesbian and bisexual women have children compared to almost 90 per cent of heterosexual men and women); less likely to see biological family members on a regular basis (less than 25 per cent of 'LGB' people in the sample saw their biological family members at least once a week compared to more than 50 per cent of heterosexual people). The finding echoes those from an earlier UK study reported by Heaphy, Yip and Thompson (2004) and also studies from the USA (SAGE, 2010).

The problem with these statistics is that they are often mobilised to paint an overarching (homogenised) picture of older LGBNL individuals which obscures the lives and experiences, for example, of those individuals who *are* in couples, *do* share homes, *do* have children, and *do* see family members on a regular basis. Significantly, these obscured narratives are more likely to be those of older LGBNL women than LGBNL men (Averett, Yoon & Jenkins, 2012, p. 505). Apart from the Stonewall study, most research on older LGBNL individuals has tended to be small scale and short term (Grossman, 2008). It has also tended to privilege the experiences of older men over older women, with women being under-represented (Averett, *et al.*, 2012, p. 495), and bisexuality rarely addressed beyond the 'LGB' acronym (Jones, 2010). It is this gap/imbalance in knowledge which this book also addresses.

LGB ageing

There has been a dramatic growth of interest in LGB ageing in recent years. There is now a growing body of literature on 'LGB' 'LGBT' and 'LGBT*' ageing, much of which has come from overseas, primarily the USA (Berger, 1996; D'Augelli & Patterson, 1995; D'Augelli & Grossman, 2001; Rosenfeld, 2003; De Vries & Blando, 2004; Herdt & de Vries, 2004; Kimmel, Rose & David, 2006; Slevin, 2006; Fredriksen-Goldsen & Muraco, 2010; Gabrielson, 2011a, 2011b; Knauer, 2011; Averett *et al.*, 2012; Witten & Eyler, 2012; Fredriksen-Goldsen *et al.*, 2013; Fredriksen-Goldsen, Hoy-Ellis, Goldsen, Emlet & Hooyman, 2014; Fredriksen-Goldsen, Kim, Shiu, Goldsen & Emlet, 2015; Sears, 2013; Boggs *et al.*, 2014; Brennan-Ing, Seidel, Larson & Karpiak, 2014; De Vries & Croghan, 2014; Gratwick, Jihanian, Holloway, Sanchez & Sullivan, 2014; Kimmel, 2014; Witten & Eyler, 2012; Orel, 2014; Copper, 2015; Harley & Teaster, 2016) but also Canada (Brotman, Ryan & Cormier, 2003; Brotman *et al.*, 2007; Grigorovich, 2013, 2014, 2015a, 2015b; Harrison, 2006; Tolley & Ranzijn, 2006; Hughes, 2007, 2009; Robinson, 2008, 2013; Hughes & Cartwright, 2014), New Zealand (Neville & Henrickson, 2010), the Netherlands (Fokkema & Kuyper, 2009), Ireland (GLEN, 2011) and Spain (Villar, Serrat, Fabà & Celdrán, 2015).

Research in the UK, has primarily emanated from sociology and social work (Langley, 2001; Heaphy *et al.*, 2004; Cronin, 2006; Heaphy & Yip, 2006; Concannon, 2009; Fenge & Fanin, 2009; Brown, Browne & Lim, 2009; Almack, Seymour & Bellamy, 2010; Cronin & King, 2010, 2013; Cronin, Ward, Pugh, King & Price, 2011; Ward, Rivers & Sutherland, 2012; Jones, 2011, 2012, 2013; King, 2013; Simpson, 2012, 2103a, 2013b, 2014; King & Cronin, 2013; Fenge, 2014; Wilkens, 2015), with the exception of Jane Traies's recent work (Traies, 2012, 2015, 2016) on her UK study with over 400 lesbians, which she has conducted from a cultural studies approach.

In addition to this growing academic body of work, the voluntary sector has produced a range of documents on the needs of, and issues affecting, older 'LGB' individuals (Hubbard & Rossington, 1995; Smith & Calvert, 2001;

Knocker, 2006, 2013; Metlife, 2006, 2010; SAGE, 2010; Guasp, 2011; Ward *et al.*, 2011; Carr & Ross, 2013). The earliest waves of research sought 'to challenge the image of the lonely and bitter old queer' (Hughes, 2006, p. 57) and 'suggested that older gay men and lesbians are not alone, isolated, or depressed but benefit from navigating a stigmatized identity through crisis competence' (Fredriksen-Goldsen & Muraco, 2010, p. 402), which also informs resilience in dealing with inequalities associated with older age. Subsequent authors questioned the positive bias which may have been present in some of these initial studies (Berger, 1996). More recent research has focussed on social support and community-based needs and the perceived unpreparedness of older-age health and social care provision to meet the needs of older LGB(T) people (Ward *et al.*, 2011; Fredriksen-Goldsen *et al.*, 2013; McGovern, 2014; Westwood, King, Almack & Suen, 2015).

By contrast with this growth of sociological research, other scholarship has lagged behind. In UK gerontology, for example, there continues to be a 'queer absence' (Cronin, 2006, p. 107) produced by a 'rhetorical silencing' of ageing LGBNL sexualities (Brown, 2009, p. 65). There are similar gaps in socio-legal scholarship: 'Elder Law' (Doron, 2009; Doron & Soden, 2014) does not address diversity in general, nor sexuality diversity in particular (Westwood, 2013); sexuality discrimination literature (Badgett & Frank, 2007) does not address (older) age; and age discrimination literature (Fredman & Spencer, 2003) does not address sexuality. Feminist critiques of family law (Diduck & O'Donovan, 2006) have focussed on same-sex parenting and partnership recognition, but have not yet taken into account the later life family and kinship formations of LGBNL individuals. So, while there is a growing interest in LGBNL ageing, very little attention has so far been from an equalities perspective (Binnie & Klesse, 2013). This book is intended to address this knowledge gap, cutting across both socio-legal and gerontological borders.

Health and social care provision

There is an expanding body of literature about older LGBNL individuals' fears and concerns in relation to older-age health, housing and social care provision which is perceived as ill-equipped to recognise and meet the needs of older LGBNL individuals (Hubbard & Rossington, 1995; Harrison, 2001, 2002; Langley, 2001; Heaphy *et al.*, 2004; Knocker, 2006; Harrison & Riggs, 2006; Tolley & Ranzijn, 2006; Brotman *et al.*, 2007; Hughes, 2007, 2009; Price, 2008; Concannon, 2009; Stein, Beckerman & Sherman, 2010; Fenge & Hicks, 2011; Guasp, 2011; Ward *et al.*, 2011; Cartwright, Hughes & Lienert, 2012; Fish, 2012; Knocker, Maxwell, Phillips & Halls, 2012; NRC, 2012; Pugh, 2012; Walker, Hughes, Ives & Jardine, 2013; Fredriksen-Goldsen *et al.*, 2014; McGovern, 2014; Sullivan, 2014; Valenti & Katz, 2014; Willis, Maegusuku-Hewett, Raithby & Miles, 2014; Neville, Adams, Bellamy, Boyd & George, 2015; Westwood, 2015a, 2015b; Westwood *et al.*, 2015; Westwood & Price, 2016). There is also a lack of choice in housing and/or care provision, with no specialist

options currently available in the UK (Carr & Ross, 2013). These inequality issues (Ward *et al.*, 2011; Cronin *et al.*, 2011) have been explored from a socio-legal perspective by Nancy Knauer (2009, 2010, 2011, 2015) in the USA, but they have not yet been approached from such a perspective in the UK. This book, again, addresses this gap.

Distinguishing between 'older LGB' lives: cohort models

Several authors have mobilised the idea of cohorts in relation to older LGBNL individuals to: distinguish between older and younger generations of lesbian/gay individuals (Parks, 1999[18]; Robinson, 2008[19]; Vaccaro, 2009[20]); differentiate among older gay/lesbian and gay individuals (De Vries, 2014; Dentato, Orwat, Spira, & Walker, 2014[21]); and/or describe different socio-historical eras which have been occupied by older gay/lesbian and gay individuals (Plummer, 2010[22]; Hammack & Cohler, 2011[23]). Plummer additionally refers to age standpoints:

> Our social sexual worlds always lie at the intersections of our generations (along with other locations such as class, gender, nation, and ethnicity). All sexualities dangle from an age perspective. They are situated in age standpoints. At any moment of thinking about the sexual, we will usually find at least five generations helping shape that moment. And these are just the living generations—to this there will also be the legions of dead generations, whose ghosts may still be heard speaking past sexual stories.
>
> (2010, p. 165)

Plummer's age standpoints involve a series of successive and/or overlapping age generations. However, age standpoints can also be understood more broadly, in terms of personal chronological age, generation, socio-historical context, life stage, and, some authors have suggested, cohorts.

Dana Rosenfeld distinguished between two distinct lesbian and gay cohorts – pre-Stonewall stigmatised, 'discredited' and closeted identities and post-Stonewall 'gay affirmative', accredited and more visible identities (Rosenfeld, 2003), emphasising the significance of stigma in lesbian and gay identity development. Ann Cronin proposed a third cohort, that of previously married women (and to a lesser extent men), often with children, who 'come out' in later life (Cronin, 2006). In doing so Cronin emphasised the significance of personal chronological age, gender and life stage in informing an individual's experience of 'coming out' and/or forming same-sex relationships.

Rosenfeld was interested in identity discourse. Cronin and colleagues have, however, argued for a destabilisation of discrete identity categories (Cronin *et al.*, 2011), focussing more on performative specificities, and the implications of differing cohorts for access to social capital (Cronin & King, 2013). While Rosenfeld flags the very powerful shift from a discredited identity to the possibility of an accredited one, she mobilises a very distinct pre- and post-Stonewall binary around a single historical event, which does not take into account wider

socio-legal contexts, the intersection of gender and sexuality, nor how sexuality discourse and performance is itself historically produced and continuously changing (Halperin, 2013). While Cronin and King offer an added layer to conceptualising LGBNL ageing, their 'binary plus one' analysis (i.e. pre-post-Stonewall identities plus women with children who 'came out' in later life) still only encompasses a very limited range of experiences and narratives.

Cohort models hold the disadvantage of the risk of over-generalisation and failing to take individual variation into account, potentially smoothing over those narratives which do not neatly fit into a particular cohort. But they also offer the advantage of providing a descriptive framework upon which to hang clusters of commonalities in complex group processes. All of these cohort models bring something to an understanding of the role of time in the production of LGBNL sexualities/sexual identities: the differences between older and younger generations in the discursive and performative possibilities available to them; the significance of personal chronological age, life-stage, and socio-historical context, for those discursive and performative possibilities; the significance of the navigation of stigma and the alternatives created by newer, more affirmative identity discourse (and more recent queer discourse). Ken Plummer in particular mobilises the very useful concept of age standpoint, highlighting how each individual is personally located in their own particular temporal contexts (Plummer, 2010).

However, none of the accounts provide an analysis which takes *all* of these factors *and* their intersections into account. Additionally, none of the above cohort models capture the full range of sexuality/sexual identity narratives and performances produced by older LGBNL individuals, including: the narratives radical feminist lesbians (Jeffreys, 2003) enacting the 'rage of oppression' (Kitzinger, 1987, p. 115) who *elected* to take on a lesbian identity (in contrast with the dominant romantic-liberationist stories of emancipation which prevail in lesbian and gay history discourse, see Plummer, 1995); the various forms and understandings of bisexuality (Dworkin, 2006; Halperin, 2009; Barker *et al.*, 2012); sexual fluidity, which is particularly associated with women's sexuality (Diamond, 2008); and those individuals who mobilise a non-labelling narrative about sexuality.[24] In Chapter 3, I draw upon temporality and temporal concepts to build a new identity/performance narrative cohort model which, I propose, does take all of the above into account.

Chapter outlines

Each of the chapters addresses a different dimension of in/equality in the lives of older LGBNL people. They are informed by my analysis of data produced for my PhD in Law, which involved semi-structured interviews with 60 LBNL people in the age group 60 and over[25] (36 women and 24 men). The methodology is described in Appendix 1. Participant profiles are detailed in Appendix 2 in relation to historical socio-legal ones. Cohort profiles and allocations are detailed in Appendices 3 and 4 respectively.

Chapter 2 (Regulatory contexts) locates older LGBNL people in regulatory contexts. Through an analysis of UK law and social policy relating to older age, through the lens of gender and sexuality, and of law and social policy in relation to gender and sexuality, through the lens of older age, I identify how older LGBNL people have uneven access to recognition and resources in UK regulatory contexts.

Chapter 3 (Ageing sexual subjectivities) explores the lived experience of ageing among older LGBNL people. I introduce my new cohort model ('Out Early'; 'Breaking Out'; 'Finding Out'; 'Late Performance'; 'Lesbian by Choice'; and 'Voices on the Margins') which I use as a framework to understand how participants' narratives are shaped by the retrospective past and their personal timings in relation to historical socio-legal ones. Appendix 4 provides a detailed description of how I assigned participants to cohorts.

Chapter 4 (Constructing kinship) explores older LGBNL kinship and equality in terms of recognition (the different meanings assigned to increasing legal recognition and regulation of same-sex relationships; and gendered stereotypes attached to reproductive normativity – 'compulsory grandmotherhood' – informing the social mis-recognition of older lesbians) and resources (uneven access to intergenerational social support among older LGBNL people). I argue that intergenerationality is central to understanding older LGBNL inequalities both in terms of (gendered) recognition and access to affective resources in later life.

Chapter 5 (Classed trajectories) explores older LGBNL people's uneven access to economic assets, and the implications of this for their quality of life in older age. The classed spaces of inclusion and exclusion associated with those different materialities, and (middle class) social norms of respectability, are also considered. There is also an analysis of the narratives of some of the participants with regard to the disposal of their assets in their Wills, in order to understand how, and along which lines, material privilege is reproduced.

Chapter 6 (Anticipated care futures) addresses older LGBNL individuals' concerns about older-age care needs and care provision. I propose that these concerns relate to anticipated spatial inequalities associated with both poor older-age care, with little control of the dying process, and anticipated (hetero-) normativities reproduced in older-age care spaces. These are considered in relation to power and resistance. I argue that older-age care needs, and associated vulnerabilities and dependencies, can complicate resistance to those spatial inequalities, while at the same time that resistance also holds the potential to transform care in later life.

In Chapter 7 (Conclusion), I reflect on the intersecting themes in the preceding chapters, developing them further. I also consider whose voices are heard in this, and other older LGBNL research, and, more importantly, whose are not. This involves some speculation on my part about how our accounts of LGBNL ageing might change if those 'Voices on the Margins' were to be included. Finally, I consider the social policy implications of my findings, and identify areas for future research.

Notes

1 Thanks to Rosie Harding for this insight.
2 Trans* is an umbrella term which covers the gender identity spectrum: including (but not limited to) transgender, transsexual, transvestite, genderqueer, genderfluid, non-binary, genderless, agender, non-gendered, third gender, two-spirit and bigender (Tompkins, 2014).
3 The Sexual Offences Act 1967.
4 The Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000.
5 Homosexuality was declassified from the seventh print of DSM II in 1973 (McCommon, 2009).
6 'Section 28' of the Local Government Act 1988.
7 Repealed earlier in Scotland, in 2000.
8 Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003.
9 The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007.
10 Adoption and Children Act 2002.
11 With exclusions for the Church of England and an opt-in clause for others religious organisations.
12 Heterosexuality was reinforced by welfare provision (Family Allowance Act 1945), tax benefits for married couples (i.e. Married Man's Tax Allowance), pension, property (e.g. the Rent Act 1977) and inheritance rights.
13 Under the Family Law Act 1991, divorce law reforms further entrenched the institution of heterosexual marriage (Collier, 2000) while the 1998 Green Paper 'Strengthening Families' 'virtually ignores' (Collier, 2000, p. 173) cohabiting couples, be they heterosexual or gay. The Children Act 1989 which established the enduring responsibilities of biological parenthood post-divorce, and the Child Support Act 1991, which established economic accountability of absent fathers, served to entrench the place of biological fathers in family life.
14 The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990 made it a requirement that doctors should take account of a child's need for a father before giving women access to any licensed fertility services. This stance clearly denied lesbians access to fertility treatment. Additionally, only one partner of a same-sex couple could be named as the child's parent on the birth certificate, with the other partner required to apply to the courts to adopt their child. The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008 subsequently removed the father requirement, requiring consideration be given to 'supportive parenting' instead. In addition, both partners in a same-sex couple undergoing clinic-based fertility treatment could be named as parents on the child's birth certificate.
15 Lords, *Hansard*, 16 February 1988, 627.
16 In Re P (A Minor) (Custody) [1983] 4 FLR 401 a court placed children with their lesbian mother only as a 'last resort' alternative to local authority care (O'Donnell, 1999). The issue of potential 'corruption' of the children by their mother's 'deviant' sexuality was mitigated only by her discretion with regard to her sexuality, i.e. if she had been less 'discrete' she would have been corruptive and so not granted custody (Beresford, 2008). In a later court case, (B v. B (Minors) (Custody, Care and Control) [1991] 1 FLR 402, while the issue of deviance had faded, the issue of corruption had not. While awarding custody to a lesbian mother, the court distinguished between lesbians who did not 'advertise' their lesbianism (such as the mother in the case) and 'militant lesbians who tried to convert others to their way of life' (B v. B (Minors) (Custody, Care and Control) 1991, quoted in O'Donnell (1999)). Implicit are both the notion that same-sex parents/sexualities are potentially contaminatory and that it is undesirable to grow up lesbian or gay (Norrie, 2000) and explicit is the idea that lesbian and gay parents must be extremely private about their sexualities in order to be allowed custody of their children (O'Donnell, 1999). In Re D (An Infant)

(Adoption: Parents' consent) [1977] AC 602, which concerned a gay father's refusing to give consent to his son's adoption by his ex-wife's new husband, the court held that 'normal' family life was paramount in the interests of the child, and that a gay father could not provide such 'normality' (Beresford, 2008). In C v. C (A Minor) (Custody: Appeal) [1991] 1 FLR 223 an initial judgment granting custody to a lesbian mother was overruled by the court of appeal for not giving sufficient weight to the mother being in a lesbian relationship. A heterosexual family context was assumed to be closer to 'loving and sensible' than a same-sex one per se (Boyd, 1999). A new hearing was ordered, with the father (and his new wife) awarded temporary custody, although at the subsequent hearing C v. C (Custody of Children) No. 2 [1992] FCR 206, custody was again awarded to the mother, on the basis that her sexuality was only one of a number of factors to be taken into account.

17 Including the experiences of those women who understand themselves to have *chosen* a lesbian identity as part of their resistance to patriarchy (Dixon, 2010).

18 Parks defined cohorts by the era of lesbian history in which respondents achieved adulthood (age 18) – before Stonewall (1969); during Gay Liberation (1970–1984); 1985 and later in terms of 'Rights' (Parks, 2013) in the context of 'coming out' and identity narratives (Parks, 1999).

19 'Young', 'Middle' and 'Old' aged.

20 Vaccaro compared three 'generations' (Vaccaro, 2009, p. 113): Baby Boomers (born between 1943 and 1960); Generation X (born between 1961 and 1981); and Millennials (born after 1981).

21 Pre- (born 1900–1920) and post-Second World War 'Baby Boom' generation (born 1946–1964).

22 These are: (1) 'Criminal, sick, closeted worlds' (1900–1960); (2) 'Coming out of closeted worlds' (emergent gay affirmative generations, 1950s–1970s); (3) 'Gay liberation worlds' ((politicised) gay liberation generation, late 1960s–1970s); (4) 'HIV/AIDS worlds' (the death of young gay men from AIDs in the 1980s); (5) 'Queer two worlds' ('queer generation two' started to arrive in the late 1980s and aimed to deconstruct any stable sense of gender or sexual category, Plummer, 2010, p. 175); (6) 'Cyber queer worlds and the postcloset world' (internet networking from the mid/late 1990s onward 'the new generation finds less and less difficulty in coming out or, indeed, even the need to come out' Plummer, 2010, p. 175); and (7) 'something new' that Plummer cannot yet identify.

23 Hammack and Cohler (2011) have proposed three cohorts to describe the 'narratives of desire and exclusion' (Hammack & Cohler, 2011, p. 162) of 'five generations' (Hammack & Cohler, 2011, p. 163) of gay men spanning a 60-year period, from a public policy perspective: (1) 'From Silence and Sickness to a Gay Identity: Coming of Age in the 1950s and 1960s'; (2) 'From "Gay Is Good" to the "Gay Plague": Coming of Age in the 1970s and 1980s'; and (3) ' "Virtually Normal": Coming of Age in the 1990s'.

24 Celia Kitzinger's Factor (2) group of LGBNL women who base their sexualities 'on the belief that "Women respond to 'the person, not the gender' and 'it all depends who you fall in love with' " ' (Kitzinger, 1987, p. 102).

25 Three were under 60, interviewed with partners who were over 60.

2 Regulatory contexts

Introduction

Regulatory contexts are the frameworks through and against which we all, including older LGBNL individuals, construct our lives. This chapter analyses law and social policy affecting older people, approached through the lens of gender and sexuality/sexual identity, and law and social policy relating to gender and sexuality/sexual identity, approached through the lens of older age. This analysis shows how older LGBNL people are disadvantaged in law and social policy in several ways, highlighting, in turn, how older age can both iterate previous gender and sexuality inequalities and also produce new ones.

Three new insights are offered here. First, there is now a four-tier system of relationship recognition in UK law, which disadvantages relationships most likely to be a part of older LGBNL individuals' personal communities in later life. Second, in health and social care law and policy, the ageing legal subject is constructed in ways which privilege ageing heterosexual-identifying individuals and marginalise ageing LGBNL individuals. Third, the Equality Act (EQA) 2010 disadvantages older LGBNL individuals in two main ways: in the construction of sexuality as a single strand 'orientation'; and in the exemptions from protection from harassment outside of the workplace, which disproportionately affect older (non-working) individuals, especially those living in closed care settings. These three areas of inequality produce differential access to resources and recognition for older LGBNL people, in comparison with older heterosexual people, younger LGBNL people, and within and among themselves, nuanced in particular by gender, class and relationship status.

Four-tier privileging of (ageing) relationship forms

The four-tier relationship recognition system in the UK is reflected in the regulation of finances, health and social care, and housing. A key aspect of this is the privileging of the sexual couple and the comparative lack of access to recognition and resources by Supportive and Loving Intimate Friendships ('SLIFs').[1] The four tiers of privilege are as follows:

1 *The fully legally recognised couple.* Positioned at the first, most privileged, tier is the legally recognised civil partnership[2] or married[3] couple, which now sits alongside the previous heterosexual spousal default mechanisms in tax, welfare benefits and pensions, inheritance law, housing policy and provision, and in health care decision-making.
2 *The partially legally recognised couple.* At the second, less privileged, tier is the partially legally recognised non-registered same-sex couple which has a degree of recognition, albeit less than the married/civil partnership couple, in various contexts which incur both privilege (e.g. some aspects of health care decision-making for cohabiting couples) and disadvantage (e.g. welfare benefits assessment for cohabiting couples).
3 *Potentially legally recognisable SLIFs.* At the third, even less privileged, tier, are non-conjugal, non-biological/filial, intimate relationships, i.e. SLIFs, for which there is no formal legal provision and which are not automatically recognised in legal defaults, but for which partial recognition can be created through mobilising law (e.g. via nominations in private pensions, in Wills, Lasting Powers of Attorney, etc.).
4 *SLIFS which cannot be recognised in law.* At the fourth, least privileged, tier, are non-conjugal, non-biological/filial, intimate relationships, i.e. SLIFs, for which there is neither formal legal provision nor any means for remedying this through mobilising law (e.g. non-recognition under mental health legislation 'Nearest Relative' rules, no recognition of non-conjugal, non-biological relationships of care and support under intestacy rules, no tenancy rights upon death, etc.).

Running in parallel to this are the biological/filial family defaults in many areas of law, just behind the married/civil partnership couple, sometimes ahead of the conjugal couple, sometimes behind, according to different areas of law, but always ahead of SLIFs. I shall now explore each relationship tier in greater detail.

The fully legally recognised couple

At the top tier of legal privilege is the legally recognised sexual couple, with spousal/civil partner default mechanisms in tax, welfare benefits, pensions and inheritance law. Married couples and civil partners are entitled to: a state pension on the basis of a partner's National Insurance Contributions; automatic access to a partner's occupational pension when they die;[4] and the Married Couple's Allowance and tax benefits (enabling the transfer of savings to a partner who pays no tax or tax at a lower rate).[5,6]

Civil partners and spouses enjoy exemption from Inheritance Tax liability, and are recognised under intestacy rules and housing tenancy succession rules. Under the Inheritance Tax Act 1984, which applies across the UK, a surviving spouse is exempt from Inheritance Tax.[7] Following the Civil Partnership Act (CPA) 2004 this benefit was also extended to civil partners.[8] In cases of

intestacy, the spouse/civil partner is allowed to apply to become an executor of the deceased partner's estate and to inherit under inheritance legislation[9] and intestacy rules[10] which were recently modified under the Inheritance and Trustees' Powers Act (ITPA) 2014. If there are surviving children, grandchildren or great-grandchildren of the person who died and the estate is valued at more than £250,000, the surviving spouse/civil partner will inherit: all of the personal property and belongings of the person who has died, the first £250,000 of the estate, and half of the remaining estate. The remainder is distributed to children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. If there are no surviving children, grandchildren or great-grandchildren, the surviving spouse/civil partner will inherit the entire estate. In terms of tenancy rules,[11] spouses and civil partners are entitled to take over a deceased spouse's/civil partner's council tenancy and housing association tenancy, but not private assured shorthold tenancies (unless their name is also in the tenancy agreement). They may be entitled to succeed under assured and regulated private tenancies.

The legally recognised couple (and default filial/biological family line) is also prioritised in medical decision-making, mental health and mental capacity legislation. In terms of medical information-sharing and decision-making, 'next of kin' remains a powerful 'right of entry' to visitation, information and decision-making participation regarding someone in hospital, care or a nursing home, which is of particular relevance to older LGBNL individuals. Although there is an absence of legal clarity about who is next of kin, anyone, including a friend, can be nominated as such. However, in practice, particularly in consultation over treatment issues, it is the spouse or civil partner or blood/filial relation who usually take priority (Royal College of Nursing, 2003).

Older people can be detained under mental health legislation, especially those with dementia (McPherson & Jones, 2003). Under mental health legislation, the 'Nearest Relative' has a range of rights and responsibilities in relation to someone with mental health difficulties. Under section 26 of the Mental Health Act (MHA) 1983 these are: to apply for admission to psychiatric hospital; to be informed of an admission to psychiatric hospital; to be consulted by the Approved Social Worker (ASW) before admission under section 3 or guardianship; to require social services to direct an ASW to apply for admission; to discuss decisions not to admit; to discharge; and to apply to the Mental Health Review Tribunal.

In this area there is again the four-tier relationship recognition construct, with the legally recognised conjugal couple, and then the biological/filial relationships, being privileged in England and Wales, where there is a strict hierarchy of 'Nearest Relative' recognition. Under s.26(6) MHA this hierarchy is: (1) husband, wife or civil partner; (2) son or daughter (adult); (3) father or mother; (4) brother or sister (over 18); (5) grandparent; (6) grandchild (over 18); (7) uncle or aunt (over 18); (8) niece or nephew (over 18). Partners are also included (including same-sex partners) where a couple have been living together as husband and wife or as if they were civil partners for six months or more, unless one of them is married and not permanently separated.

The partially legally recognised couple

Cohabiting partners do not enjoy the same privileges as married couples or civil partners. They are not entitled to a state pension on the basis of a partner's National Insurance Contributions; they do not have automatic access to a partner's occupational pension when they die (although they can be named as beneficiaries in private pension schemes under which anyone can be nominated as a beneficiary); and they do not benefit from Married Couple's Allowance and tax benefits. Unlike married couples and civil partners, cohabiting partners do not enjoy exemption from Inheritance Tax liability,[12] meaning that they are at greater risk of financial penalties and housing insecurity when a partner dies. Under the current rules, without a valid will, unmarried couples living together have no automatic inheritance right to a partner's estate. The Law Commission of England and Wales proposed a revision to this state of affairs (Law Commission, 2011) and the Inheritance (Cohabitants) Bill was proposed which would have given cohabiting couples certain automatic inheritance rights, particularly those with children.[13] The proposed Bill was rejected by the government in 2014 meaning that there are still no automatic legal inheritance rights for cohabiting partners (Stowe, 2014).

Cohabiting partners have limited protections under the Inheritance (Provision for Family and Dependants) Act (IPFDA) 1975.[14] According to the IPFDA, those who are entitled to make an application for financial provision from a deceased person's estate are: spouse or civil partner; former spouse or civil partner who has not remarried or formed a new civil partnership; a child of the deceased or someone treated as a child of the deceased; any person maintained by the deceased immediately prior to death; a person who had cohabited (as a couple) with the deceased for the two years immediately prior to their death.

Currently, any claims for dependency have to show that, on balance, the deceased made a greater contribution to the shared finances than the surviving person. However, under the changes made to the IPFDA by the Inheritance and Trustees' Powers Act (ITPA) 2014, which came into effect on 1 October 2014, a person may now be eligible to make a claim if the deceased made a substantial contribution to that person's needs[15] and no longer has to show that the deceased contributed more to the relationship than the claimant did. The requirement to show that the deceased had assumed formal responsibility for the applicant has also been removed.[16] However, cohabiting partners' claims will have to be balanced against the claims of others, including those who have inherited the estate. In this way there is a very clear financial incentivisation for cohabiting couples, particulary those for whom death is more salient (i.e. older couples), to get married or form civil partnerships.

In terms of tenancy rules[17] cohabiting partners can take over a deceased partner's council tenancy and housing association tenancy, but not private assured shorthold tenancies (again, unless their name is also in the contract). Cohabiting same-sex partners not married or in civil partnerships and on means-tested benefits are also less well-off following the Civil Partnership Act (CPA) 2004. Prior

to the CPA, cohabiting same-sex partners on welfare benefits, unlike cohabiting opposite gender partners, were assessed as single people. Since the CPA, cohabiting same-sex partners, whether in a civil partnership or not, are assessed as couples, resulting in reduced income (payments for a couple being less than payments for two single people).[18]

These issues implicate class, gender and race/ethnicity. Just as the CPA itself has economically privileged winners (i.e. those in employment) and economically disadvantaged losers (i.e. those dependent upon state benefits) (Stychin, 2006), this too applies to older age, for both heterosexual and same-sex couples. The more affluent couples who have private pensions – whose beneficiaries are not contingent on partnership status – are the winners, and the less affluent couples who are reliant on state pensions – whose beneficiaries *are* contingent on partnership status – are the losers (Boyd & Young, 2003). It also intersects with gender, privileging middle-class men on relatively higher pensions, for example, over working-class women more likely to be reliant on state benefits (Jackson, 2011). It further intersects with race and ethnicity: older people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, especially older women, being among the most socio-economically disadvantaged in the UK (Evandrou, 2000) and so more likely to be reliant upon state pensions.

In terms of mental health legislation, under the Mental Health Act 1983, as outlined in the preceding section, partners who have lived together for more than six months can be recognised as the 'Nearest Relative'[19] in England and Wales.[20] Partners who do not cohabit, or who have cohabited for less than six months, are not entitled to be recognised. In Scotland however, under the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003, a person over 16 can nominate a 'named person' to support her/him and to protect her/his interests in any proceedings under the Act, which means that a non-cohabiting partner or a partner with whom the person has cohabited for less than six months could be nominated.

Potentially legally recognisable SLIFs

Surviving SLIFs have even fewer automatic rights than married, civil-partnered and cohabiting couples. As well as having no pension rights (unless named as beneficiaries in private pension schemes), no tax benefits and no Inheritance Tax privileges, they also have no tenancy claims. Under tenancy rules, in England and Wales,[21] apart from spouse and civil partner, the only other people who have tenancy succession rights to council and housing association tenancies are other 'family members' (providing a spouse or civil partner is not living in the property, and the family member had been living there for over a year). 'Family members' comprise cohabiting partners, children, parents, siblings and most other 'close relatives', but not friends.

In terms of inheritance, friends also have few rights. They have no claim under the IPFDA and Family Law (Scotland) Act 2006, unless they can show that they had been financially reliant upon the deceased immediately prior to

their death. Notably in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, friends who may have provided financial and/or other support to the deceased person have no automatic rights to a claim at all (Anderson, 2011), although they might be awarded a discretionary grant from the Crown, if they chose to apply for one.[22]

While friendships are excluded through inheritance defaults, wills can override that exclusion. The option of opting out from heteronormative and/or couple-based defaults through will-writing is often used to argue against the significance of potentially discriminatory succession rules (Monk, 2011). However, disputed wills and discretionary awards under intestacy rules remain problematic. This is partly because the court is required to be able to have the mindset of the deceased and in the case of LGBNL individuals may not be able to do so (Anderson, 2011). While Humphrey, Morrell, Mills, Douglas and Woodward (2010) recently surveyed attitudes in the UK to inheritance by spouse/civil partner/children/extended family under intestacy rules, their study did not ask research participants their sexual identity/sexuality, and there is little data on LGBNL attitudes towards inheritance. With a lack of information a predominantly heterosexual and heterosexist judiciary (Hunter *et al.*, 2010) would find it difficult to make well-informed judgments. It is most likely courts would instead default to a heteronormative family paradigm (Foster, 2001) which would not necessarily reflect the perspectives of LGBNL individuals (Gallanis, 1999).

In terms of the Mental Health Act, it is very difficult, in England and Wales, for a friend be recognised as the 'Nearest Relative'. Under s.26(7) MHA, an individual, other than a relative, who has been living with the person for a period of no less than five years, will be treated as if they were a relative, after all the other list of biological family members has been considered. In Scotland, however, under the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003, as noted above, a person over 16 can nominate a 'Named Person' to support him/her and to protect his/her interests in any proceedings under the Act. This can be a friend if they wish. If no one is chosen, then the 'primary carer' will be the 'Named Person': 'This is the person who provides all or most of the care and support for the service user, without receiving any payment'.[23] This might be a friend. Only if there is no nominated person or primary carer would the person's nearest biological relation become the named 'Nearest Relative'.[24]

Friends can also be nominated to assume rights and responsibilities, in the case of mental incapacity.[25] Through Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPAs) (Property and Financial Affairs/Personal Welfare) in England and Wales, and a Continuing and/or Welfare Power of Attorney in Scotland, a person can nominate individuals including friends, to make decisions about their property and finances and/or about their care should they lose the capacity to do so for themselves. Prior to the Mental Capacity Act 2005 for England and Wales and the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 no one had the right to consent to treatment on behalf of someone else, but now, under a Personal Welfare LPA (Continuing and/or Welfare Powers of Attorney for Scotland), attorney(s) can do so. The Acts also make provision for advance decision-making.[26] In England and Wales, an advance decision is legally binding (unless overridden on Best Interests

grounds under the Mental Capacity Act 2005) and must be respected by medical teams (although it can also be overridden under the Mental Health Act 1983). In Scotland advance directives are not legally binding, however, they must be taken into account by medical teams and others making decisions on a person's behalf.

Lasting Powers of Attorney, Powers of Attorney, Advance Decisions and Advance Directives, and Wills all take on particular significance for individuals who do not want their conjugal/biological/filial default relationships to become privileged in decision-making should they lose mental capacity. This is of course of particular significance to older individuals. However, this is likely to be unevenly distributed by class: better-educated and more affluent individuals are more likely to be aware of and able to afford to deploy these options than those who are less well-educated and/or socio-economically disadvantaged.

Legally unrecognisable SLIFs

In certain areas of law, SLIFs are excluded and there is no way they can be opted in. This includes couples' tax benefits, Inheritance Tax privileges, and tenancy claims, as outlined in the previous section. In England and Wales, a friend cannot be appointed as 'Nearest Relative' unless that person has been living with the person concerned for at least five years.[27] The privileging of biological family and/or the conjugal couple and the lack of facility to remove the 'Nearest Relative' in England and Wales has been challenged in the courts. In R (M) v. Secretary of State for Health,[28] a psychiatric patient, sexually abused by her biological father in childhood, was unable to have him removed as her 'Nearest Relative', despite him being able to read her medical records in his capacity as 'Nearest Relative', and her psychiatrist attesting that this had a detrimental effect on her mental state. She successfully obtained a declaration by the court that the Mental Health Act 1983 s.26 and s.29 (relating to replacing the 'Nearest Relative') were incompatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.[29] This case was preceded by JT v. United Kingdom[30] and FC v. United Kingdom[31] both cases also relating to alleged abuse by 'Nearest Relatives'. In the JT case the government had written to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) stating it would amend existing legislation (reflecting an out of court settlement), but had not yet done so. The government had initially proposed introducing new mental health legislation which would give patients (with capacity) the right to nominate their 'Nearest Relative', but subsequently retreated from this promise (Hewitt, 2007). The government has left it open to the courts to interpret the meaning of 'suitable'. Lord Hunt offered some clarification in parliament during the consultation stage:

> We have in mind situations where a nearest relative's occupation of that role and its powers under the Act pose a real and present danger to the health or well-being of the patient. Where a nearest relative has abused the patient, for instance, he should not be allowed to exercise the rights of the nearest relative.[32]

The Joint Committee on Human Rights (JCHR) considered the definition of suitability overly restrictive: 'It is too narrow to enable a patient to displace a nearest relative with whom they emphatically do not get along, unless there is some undercurrent of abuse' (JCHR, 2007, p. 16). The definition certainly leaves a person no space to elect to have a supportive friend, rather than a biological family member, as his/her 'Nearest Relative'. The 'Nearest Relative' can delegate his/her rights to someone else (who need not be a relative) by providing notice in writing.[33] But it is not inevitable that a family member would be willing to do so, particularly if there are fractured relationships in the first place (Monk, 2011).

This holds particular significance for older LGBNL individuals. Many of the oldest LGBNL individuals will have spent a significant part of their adult lives living in a mental health regulatory context which historically treated homosexuality as a form of mental illness (Goldberg, 2001), possibly forcibly detained at the behest of family members, and for these individuals psychiatric assessment, treatment and containment (especially against their wishes) are sites of particular vulnerability. They may be uniquely sensitive to the inability to nominate as 'Nearest Relative' a friend who may be far more validating and respectful of their sexual identity and personal and social circumstances than a biological family member (Rapaport, 2004; Rapaport & Manthorpe, 2008).

A further gap in the recognition of friendships is with regard to care home fees. In England Wales, the Care Act 2014 (accompanied by supporting regulations and statutory guidance, including Care and Support (Charging and Assessment of Resources) Regulations 2014 and Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2014) has recently revised the situation relating to charging for care home fees. If a person is unable to pay for their care home fees, and has moved permanently into a care home (i.e. for more than 12 weeks), then their home may be taken into consideration in the local authority's assessment of their assets.[34] It may have to be sold, or a charge placed on it so that, when it is eventually sold, the local authority can claim back some/all of the care home fees that it has paid on the person's behalf. Even with a new cap on total care fees, under the Care Act 2014, many people will still need to sell their homes to pay for care (Long, 2014) although this can now be deferred until their death. Under current rules a person's home is exempt from being taken into account when occupied by a spouse, civil partner or cohabiting partner, a 'close relative' under the age of 16, or over the age of 60; a relative under the age of 60 who is disabled; or a former partner who is divorced or estranged but who is a lone parent.[35]

The close relative is defined as: parent; parent-in-law; son; son-in-law; daughter; daughter-in-law; step-parent; stepson; stepdaughter; brother; sister and the spouse, civil partner or unmarried partner of any of these; grandparent; grandchild; uncle; aunt; nephew or niece (and their spouse/civil partner).[36] The local authority also has the discretionary powers to ignore the value of the house if it is the permanent home of a carer or close friend:

> An example where it may be appropriate to apply the disregard is where it is the sole residence of someone who has given up their own home in order to care for the person who is now in a care home or is perhaps the elderly companion of the person.[37]

However, this is determined on a case by case basis and the local authority will need to balance this discretion with ensuring a person's assets are not maintained at public expense.[38]

The four-tier relationship privileging is in play again, with the conjugal partner and biological/filial relationships recognised and afforded financial protection and housing security, and no statutory protection for SLIFs, including those who have been primary carers. This means that SLIFs are in a relatively vulnerable housing situation in comparison with other relationship forms when providing care to someone in a home over which they have no legal claim.

SLIFs are also excluded in other areas of law not specifically relevant to older age, but which might affect an older person. For example, under the Fatal Accidents Act 1976, 'friends' have no rights to make a claim for bereavement or loss of dependency in the case of wrongful death. Under EU law, notions of family are understood to be based around conjugal, filial and, to a lesser extent, biological ties, to the exclusion of other relationship forms, including friendships (Guth, 2011).

These differing tiers of legal relationship recognition are significant for older LGBNL individuals in a number of ways. First, achieving legal recognition for a partnership is incentivised in law and social policy which has particular significance in older age (e.g. mental capacity, death-related financial matters, etc.). In this way the normativity of the sexual couple and the heterosexual family form are reinforced through both legal recognition and financial reward (Auchmuty, 2009), particularly for an older person (for whom issues of inheritance, for example, are more salient).

The differing tiers of legal relationship recognition are also significant for the relationship networks of older LGBNL individuals, because they are more likely to consist of, or disproportionately contain, SLIFs (Heaphy *et al.*, 2004). Given that SLIFs are under-recognised in law and social policy affecting older-age issues (finances, health and social care provision, housing, etc.) this means that older LGBNL individuals' personal communities (Pahl & Spencer, 2004) are disproportionately disadvantaged by the marginalisation of SLIFs in law. It particularly marginalises those older individuals who are polyamorous and/or with personal communities not predicated on nuclear family forms.

A further area in which the differing tiers of legal relationship recognition are significant for older LGBNL individuals is in relation to care. Care, both informal and formal, in the form of practical, personal and emotional support, becomes increasingly significant in later life. In the areas outlined above, relationships of love, care and support and the tangible provision of care in later life are given scant recognition and no priority, reinforcing the continuing undervaluing of care (Barnes, 2012) and the affective domain of equality (Lynch *et al.*, 2009).

The ageing legal subject in health and social care law

As outlined in Chapter 1, the legal subject of law has been the focus of much socio-legal analysis. An area which has been less well-examined is the *older* legal subject in law (Herring, 2013), which this section considers, firstly in relation to health care law and policy and then in relation to social care policy. My argument here is that the ageing legal subject in law is heterosexual, located in a nuclear family context, with extended biological family support and local community support networks. This particular construction of the ageing legal subject, I propose, directs recognition and resources towards such an individual *and* also directs them *away* from older LGBNL individuals, particularly those who are not located in a nuclear family context, who do not have robust extended family networks and/or who do not have local community support networks.

Health care policy

Although health care policy has begun to acknowledge the particular needs and issues affecting LGBNL individuals in general, and older LGBNL individuals in particular,[39] this has not yet translated into the realities of health care provision (Fenge & Hicks, 2011). The Audit Commission's 2002 review of mental health services for older people made no reference to sexuality at all (Audit Commission, 2002). The more recent government document *No Health without Mental Health*[40] specifically refers to improving outcomes for 'lesbian, gay and bisexual' people with mental health problems, acknowledging that they 'have a higher risk of mental health problems and of self-harm' and 'also suffer more attacks and violence'.[41] However, no reference is made to the particular mental health needs of *older* 'lesbian, gay and bisexual' people, and there are at present no specialised strategies to address their particular mental health needs.

There are also no health policies or campaigns targeting the specific health needs of older LGBNL individuals, e.g. older lesbians' avoidance of heteronormativity-based cervical and breast cancer screening, hence delayed diagnosis and poorer outcomes (Hunt & Fish, 2008); the growing number of older men living with HIV/AIDS (Rosenfeld, Bartlam & Smith, 2012; Emlet, Fredriksen-Goldsen & Kim, 2013) and the high-risk category of older LGBNL men acquiring HIV/AIDS in later life (Ward *et al.*, 2011). A number of authors have also observed the invisibility of LGBNL individuals in dementia care (Westwood & Price, 2016), in end of life care (Corden & Hirst, 2011) and in recognition of and support for later life bereavement (Fenge & Fannin, 2009).

Care of older people is frequently medicalised, with an emphasis on the body rather than the whole person (Vincent, Phillipson & Downs, 2006), with diversity, including sexual diversity, out on the margins of the focus of bodily care. Despite Standard 2 of The National Service Framework for Older People (NFSOP)[42] stating it 'requires managers and professionals to recognise individual differences and specific needs', the framework makes no reference to the nature of those specific needs, and makes no reference to LGBNL individuals,

other than that they should be included in research. Public health research continues, however, to fail to take older LGBNL individuals into account (Addis, Davies, Greene, MacBride-Stewart & Shepherd, 2009). The limited health care policy and provision available to LGBNL individuals is primarily 'gay' male based, focussed on youth culture, and youth-based sexual health practices, and not the needs of older LGBNL individuals (Ward *et al.*, 2011).

Social care policy

There are gaps in the regulation of social care relating to older LGBNL individuals in three main areas: carer recognition; community care policy; day and residential care provision. My argument here is that social care policy is predicated upon models of traditional heterosexual families comprising nuclear family, filial and extended biological relationships, rather than wider networks of love, care and support, which include SLIFs (Ward *et al.*, 2011). This, I propose, marginalises older LGBNL individuals and their carers both in relation to recognition by service providers, and access to, formal social care resources which they provide.

Carer recognition

There is an increasing emphasis by the state on the privatisation of care for older people, i.e. placing greater emphasis on partners and 'families' to provide care at home (Easterbrook, 2002). While the rights and needs of LGBNL carers have been advanced in recent years, in terms of lesbian and gay parenting rights, those of other LGBNL carers, including those of older people – who are often older LGBNL individuals themselves (Grossman, D'Augelli & Dragowski, 2007) – have been less well addressed (Willis, Ward & Fish, 2011). This is evident in four key ways: (1) in the use of the generic and genderless word 'carer' in key legislative and social policy discourse, which fails to take into account carer diversity in general, the gendering of care, and LGBNL carers in particular; (2) in explicit heteronormative assumptions in the social construction of carers in wider government and voluntary sector discourse, which emphasises the traditional heterosexual family and again fails to take wider care network forms, and particularly LGBNL carers and relationship forms, into account; (3) in implicit heteronormative assumptions in older-age carer discourse, e.g. dementia care; and (4) in assumptions of heterogeneity in carer discourse which exclude wider relationship forms: 'Rights for carers require an intelligible model of the family that has no space for non-standard intimacies: polyamory, non-standard parental relationships, independent financial arrangements between partners, and close ties between friends' (Conaghan & Grabham, 2007, p. 20). Three key pieces of legislation relating to carers[43] refer to carers under the generic legal term 'he' and make no reference to diversity or identity issues, including sexual identity/sexuality. The 2007 government guidelines on the provision of information to carers of people with dementia[44] refers to carers in generic gender-less terms,

apart from a passing reference to gender – 'Women, in particular, often find that they are expected to care for a sick relative, although many carers are, in fact, men'[45] – and makes no reference to sexual identity/sexuality at all. The Healthcare Commission's report *Equality in Later Life*,[46] which explores the outcomes for older mental health service users and carers, also makes no reference to diversity.

The Carers' Strategy for Wales[47] refers to the importance of recognising diversity and 'the provision of culturally appropriate or specialist support',[48] using a diversity list, which includes sexual orientation, which service providers must take into account. *The Carers Strategy for Scotland*[49] shows greater recognition of structural issues affecting carers, using an identity list which includes sexual orientation and emphasising that 'Carers may be excluded from support because there is no recognition of their particular caring situation. The result may be lack of opportunity, difficulty in accessing provision or unresponsive services'.[50] The Labour government's 2008 carers strategy for England, *Carers at the Heart of 21st Century Families and Communities*,[51] acknowledges that carers are a diverse group of people, and refers to sexual orientation, including the lack of knowledge about LGBNL carers. However, this document still has an overarching multicultural emphasis: there are seven references to issues specifically affecting people from 'Black and minority ethnic (BME)' backgrounds, e.g. mentioning that several BME languages do not have a word for carer. There is no reference to issues specifically affecting LGBNL carers, such as the challenge of 'coming out to care' (Brotman *et al.*, 2007), for example. The privileging of multicultural discourse (Daley & MacDonnell, 2011) is echoed in the more recent coalition government's document addressing the implementation of the Carers Strategy[52] which made little reference to diversity at all, except with reference to 'BME' issues, with no reference to gender or sexual identity/sexuality at all.

The Department of Health's *End of Life Care Strategy*[53] does make reference to same-sex partners as carers but in doing so positions same-sex partners in a particular way in relation to family:

> Provider organisations will also wish to be aware of the possibility that the individual and carer might be in a gay or lesbian relationship and that the main carer may be the patient's partner and not a family member.[54]

So, in the way family is constructed here, while someone's heterosexual husband or wife would be regarded as a 'family member', a same-sex partner would not. This brings to the fore the heterosexist notions of family which are being deployed. The Labour government's 2009 report on the consultation findings on the future of care (HM Government, 2009a), employed discourse about LGBT families with an unspoken assumption that 'family' means biological family: 'Those representing lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) groups emphasised that people from these groups often do not live with family or have strained relationships with them' (HM Government, 2009a, p. 72). This is

despite the fact that later on the same report observed, 'One respondent representing the LGBT community was keen to stress that assumptions must not be made that everyone is heterosexual and that there should always be wider definitions of various terms, such as "family" and "carers"' (HM Government, 2009a, p. 81). In the Labour government's 2009 report on improving the lives of older people, *Building a Society for All Ages*,[55] there is an explicitly heteronormative model of familial care, with an emphasis on intrafamilial intergenerational relationships in later life:

> We recognise that getting older is not just going to affect the individual. As we age, our family structures are going to change too. More active grandparents will have the chance to play a greater role in their families' lives, but more people will be caring for their older relatives too.[56]

This excludes the experiences of older LGBNL individuals in a number of ways. Older LGBNL individuals are less likely to be embedded in nuclear/extended family networks, less likely to be grandparents, and less likely to have access to, or provide, intergenerational support (Guasp, 2011). They are more likely to have SLIF relationships, but these are not addressed in 'family' models of care, which serves to exclude their models of personal communities in carer discourse.

The invisibility of older LGBNL care and carers is further nuanced by both gender and sexual identity/sexuality. Lesbians are excluded, not just in terms of the invisibility of LGBNL individuals in carer discourse in general, but also in carer discourse which assumes that single women who are carers are heterosexual (the spinster model of care, Manthorpe & Price, 2006). Gay men caring for other gay men with HIV/AIDS are either excluded altogether (Rosenfeld *et al.*, 2012) or only constructed in terms of the provision of care of partners with HIV/AIDS and not other types of caring (Munro & Edward, 2010). Bisexual women and men are most likely not to be recognised in any carer discourse at all, yet they may experience particular complexities in disclosing their own historical care narratives which may have involved both same-sex and opposite-gender relationships (Jones, 2010).

The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004 emphasised the importance of providing timely information to carers. It introduced new provisions into the 1995 and 2000 Acts[57] which required a local authority, in certain circumstances, to inform carers that they may be entitled to an assessment under those Acts.[58] The explanatory notes stated 'This will ensure that carers get information about their rights at the appropriate time'.[59] The Care Act 2014 has now created a statutory entitlement for carers to receive support in their own right. However, if LGBNL carers are not recognised, they will also not be provided with this information or much-needed carer support (Hash, 2006; Hash & Netting, 2009). This, in turn, denies LGBNL carers access to sources of relief from their carer burden, increasing the risk of carer breakdown (Ward, Vass, Aggarwal, Garfield & Cybyk, 2005). This is of particular relevance to older LGBNL adults, who are

both more likely to need support from informal carers than younger LGBNL adults and are also more likely to be providing later life care to others as well (Grossman *et al.*, 2007).

Community care policy

With an increasing emphasis on the privatisation of care, UK community care policy is predicated upon two key assumptions: (1) that older people will receive informal social support from partners, children, extended biological family, neighbours and faith groups first, and only when those informal resources have been exhausted will the state step in (Bernard & Phillips, 2000); and (2) that, when the state does step in, there will be sufficient, adequate, local formal care provision which can be purchased and which will meet the needs of the older person. This is based on heteronormative constructions (produced by heteronormative gerontology research, Cronin, 2006) of older-age informal social networks and communities, which lead to an under-estimation of older LGBNL individuals' need for formal provision and of the availability of culturally appropriate formal provision in their local communities (Aronson & Neysmith, 2001, p. 143).

In terms of assumptions about informal social support, as noted previously, in comparison with heterosexual-identifying older people, more older lesbian-, gay- and bisexual-identifying individuals live alone, are childfree, have less supportive extended family ties (Guasp, 2011) and many, particularly the oldest old, are not open about their sexualities in their neighbourhoods, and may not enjoy support from local community/faith groups (Cronin *et al.*, 2011). Older LGBNL individuals are more likely to look to their partner, and then the state, for support, with none of the other intervening relationships (Heaphy *et al.*, 2004), suggesting that they will be earlier and disproportionate users of formal care provision. Moreover many older LGBNL individuals live in neighbourhoods which are not reflective or supportive of their sexualities. Their diverse forms of families and communities are often geographically dispersed (Pugh, 2002), and access to them can become increasingly difficult with age (Heaphy, 2009).

In terms of the availability of adequate, local formal care provision, this is highly problematic for older LGBNL individuals, both in terms of the availability of support in their own homes (which will be addressed in this section) and in formal care provision in sheltered housing and residential care (which will be addressed in the next section). The personalisation agenda[60] has been heralded by many as having the potential to enable LGBNL individuals to have greater access to personal care and support[61] which is reflective of and validates their lives and lifestyles (CSCI, 2008; Concannon, 2009). Underpinning the agenda (as outlined in the white paper, *Our Health, Our Care, Our Say*[62]) is the assumption that older people will be able to purchase such support from their own communities. However, this can only be achieved if such services exist (Pearson, 2010). Many older LGBNL individuals do not have a sense of an LGBNL community (Pugh, 2002) and/or it is not physically local to them and/or they cannot

identify support from that community (from which they are often excluded due to ageism). In terms of formal care providers, e.g. care agencies, these are underprepared to meet the needs of older LGBNL individuals (Ward *et al.*, 2011). Being able to choose between agencies that are all equally heteronormative is no choice at all (Concannon, 2009). This can produce profound disadvantages, as in this example, identified in the Equality and Human Rights Commission's (EHRC, 2011) recent report on domiciliary care for older people:

> An older gay man with dementia decided to stop receiving services because of the homophobic reaction of care staff. This had led to him having to move into residential care earlier than necessary as his elderly partner had struggled to cope alone with caring responsibilities.
>
> (EHRC, 2011, p. 37)

This example shows how a lack of appropriate community-based resources can deny an older LGBNL individual access to support in later life, and thereby necessitate residential care provision sooner than might be necessary. Moreover, that residential care provision is also likely to be ill-equipped to meet the needs of older LGBNL individuals (Ward *et al.*, 2011).

So, community care policy does not take sexual identity/sexuality diversity into account, and is predicated upon concepts which construct carers, care networks and potentially purchasable community care as heterosexual, either by default or more explicitly. This has implications in terms of not only access to care resources but also how the terrain of those resources is constructed. Constructions of communities on to which government care strategies are mapped are of heterosexual communities: the points on the map, its undulations, are shaped by heteronormative markers, which construct older people in need of community care as living in particular community care networks. Strategies which determine the flows of formal care and support are positioned across a heteronormative terrain on which older LGBNL individuals' care networks and care needs are not mapped, and as a result they are far less likely to receive appropriate formal care and support when they need it.

Sheltered housing and residential care provision

The third gap in provision is in regard to sheltered housing and residential care. As observed in Chapter 1, there is a growing body of knowledge about older LGBNL individuals' fears and concerns regarding this provision (e.g. Ward *et al.*, 2011; Westwood, 2015a, 2015b). These are informed by the perception that formal care spaces are sites of 'ignorance at least, homophobia at worst' (Guasp, 2011, p. 22) and of disconnection from LGBNL individuals' support networks. There are a small number of policy documents which address these issues in general, such as *Older Lesbian Gay and Bisexual People: Briefings for Health and Social Care Staff*.[63] However, it is questionable to what extent these policies translate into practice, especially as there is a lack of rigorous auditing procedures (Fish, 2009).[64]

UK policy also has little to say about sheltered housing accommodation (Carr & Ross, 2013), while policy aimed at addressing 'LGB/LGBT' issues or residential care provision tend to take a 'cultural competence' approach. For example, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has produced a document advising people living in residential care about the standards they can expect. Sexuality is referred to only once: '[You can expect that] … staff respect your cultural background, sex (gender), age, sexuality (whether you are a lesbian, gay, bisexual or heterosexual person), religion or belief, and your disability, if you have one' (CQC, 2009). Although the term sexuality is used here, the document then defaults to an identity-based narrative, i.e. *being* an 'LGB' or heterosexual person, serving to marginalise those who do not mobilise an identity-based narrative.

There is a growing number of guidelines about providing services to older 'LGBT' people (Westwood *et al.*, 2015) primarily from the voluntary sector, some of which are specifically aimed at social care contexts, some of which are aimed at both health and social care contexts. The Stonewall guide for the NHS, *Sexual Orientation: A Guide for the NHS* (Stonewall, 2010) focusses on the 'significant differences between the health needs of lesbian, gay and bisexual people and those of heterosexual people' (Stonewall, 2010, p. 2), mobilising a binary 'LGB' or heterosexual construct rather than addressing diversity among and between LGBNL individuals. The Age Concern publication *The Whole of Me … Meeting the Needs of Older Lesbians, Gay Men and Bisexuals Living in Care Homes and Extra Care Housing* (Knocker, 2006) takes an identity-based approach, referring to identity-based sexual orientations, with quotes from gay-identifying and lesbian-identifying individuals only. This serves to marginalise the experiences of older non-labelling and/or bisexual individuals, who are, again, often women.

The Stonewall guide for social care providers *Working with Older Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People: A Guide* (Taylor, 2013), which is referred to on the CQC website as its source for good practice guidelines,[65] goes further, using the term 'older gay people' interchangeably with 'older lesbian, gay and bisexual people', e.g.

> Older lesbian, gay and bisexual people want many of the same things in later life as heterosexual older people.… Stonewall research has shown that half of older gay people feel their sexual orientation has, or will have, a negative effect on getting older. Gay people are…
>
> (Taylor, 2013, p. 2)

The above quotation starts off referring to 'lesbian, gay and bisexual people' but then conflates them into 'gay people', which privileges 'gay' over 'lesbian' and bisexual. The subsequent recommendations in the same section also make the conflation:

- Improve the experience of older gay people in care homes;
- Provide better information and services to older gay people;

- Improve healthcare to older gay people;
- Demonstrate a commitment to lesbian, gay and bisexual Equality.

(Taylor, 2013, p. 2)

The use of 'gay' as a generic term is problematic in several ways: first, it prioritises the 'gay' descriptor (most often used by gay men) over lesbian and bisexual ones (most often used by women); second, it serves to conflate lesbian, gay and bisexual issues and/or homogenise narratives about older LGBNL individuals; third, it marginalises political lesbian identities; and lastly, in privileging an 'orientation' approach to sexuality, it serves to marginalise those individuals who do not understand their sexualities in those terms.

The Opening Doors London checklist for social care providers, *Supporting Older Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender People* (Opening Doors London, 2010) focusses on enabling organisations to become 'LGBT Friendly' so that 'the older person feels able to "come out" to the organisation and be fully themselves' (Opening Doors London, 2010, p. 1). 'LGBT-friendly' is problematic in two main ways. First, it takes a homogenising cultural competence approach, masking issues of diversity, especially gender diversity (Johnson & Munch, 2009). Notions of 'coming out' also privilege those who mobilise a 'coming out' identity-based narrative. Second, it diverts attention away from the possibility of alternatives to mainstream provision.

The main thrust of voluntary sector guidance in the UK is in relation to making mainstream provision more 'LGBT Friendly' (Westwood & Knocker, 2016) rather than addressing specialist options instead. Yet an increasing number of reports on older LGBNL housing suggest the need for specialist housing and home care services (CIH, 2011). Some older LGBNL individuals are also interested in co-housing and co-care arrangements (Carr & Ross, 2013). Using a co-production approach, older LGBNL co-tenants/co-owners could collectively purchase or commission services, using their own pooled funds and/or individual budgets/benefits to jointly purchase accommodation, care and support which fits with their particular needs (Skidmore, 2010). This would enable them 'to choose and control services that are safe, accepting and culturally or socially appropriate' (Blood, 2010, p. 11). However, support for such projects is not yet available (Westwood, 2016c).

It is possible that both the Equality Act (EQA) 2010, the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998 and/or the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) might offer scope to mobilise law in order for people to ensure that specialist provision is made available and/or co-housing and co-care projects supported. In terms of the EQA it might be argued that services which fail to meet the 'identity' needs of older LGB/LGBNL individuals are at the very least indirectly discriminatory. The (albeit much diluted) public sector equality duty's requirement to have due regard to the need to 'advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it'[66] offers scope to argue that older LGB/LGBNL individuals should have equal opportunity to be accommodated and/or share services with people with whom they

can identify and share common experiences. Specialist provision, far from being construed as being discriminatory, would constitute measures commissioners and providers are taking to address the needs of people who share a particular protected characteristic:

> It may be possible for a service provider to target its services at people with a particular protected characteristic through positive action. The service provider must be able to show that the protected characteristic these people share means they have a different need or a past track record of disadvantage or low participation in the sort of activities the organisation runs it may be possible for a service provider to target its services at people with a particular protected characteristic through positive action. The service provider must be able to show that the protected characteristic these people share means they have a different need or a past track record of disadvantage or low participation in the sort of activities the organisation runs.
>
> (EHRC, 2014, p. 1)

Additionally, Article 8 ('Right to private and family life') of the ECHR might also offer scope for championing the rights of older LGBNL individuals (BIHR, 2010), in particular to be supported to live in housing and care spaces where their sexual identities/sexualities are recognised, validated and respected and where those who want to can live alongside other people with shared gender/sexual identities/sexualities.

Under-protection under the Equality Act 2010

The final area of law in which older LGBNL individuals are marginalised is in relation to the Equality Act (EQA) 2010. The EQA disadvantages older LGBNL individuals in two main ways: in the construction of sexuality as a single-strand 'sexual orientation'; and in the exemptions from protections from harassment outside of the workplace. Each will be addressed in turn.

Single-strand approach to equality

Sexuality equalities discourse in the UK is embedded in notions of sexual orientation underpinned by essentialist understandings of sexuality (Richardson, 2000a). A sexual orientation approach tends to imply homogenised notions of group identities and assumptions of sameness (Cooper, 2004), which do not take into account diversity within group membership nor how 'identities are themselves diversified through complex intersections' (Richardson & Monro, 2012, p. 174). It excludes a range of other accounts of sexuality, and, in the context of this book, does not take into account the narratives of those older LGBNL individuals who do not understand their sexuality as an orientation and/or do not locate it in an identity context and/or understand it as fluid and changeable. As this book will show, these narratives are more often those of older LGBNL women.

The EQA, with its single-strand focus on 'protected characteristics' and with its equality of opportunity emphasis (Kantola & Squires, 2010) also fails to take into account the complex inter-connections between processes of sexual inclusion and exclusion (Verloo, 2006; Hannett, 2003) and is 'structurally antithetical to developing a nuanced recognition of intersectionality … and to tackle more complex structural aspects of discrimination' (Squires, 2009, p. 506). Intersecting discrimination had been addressed in the introduction of protection from dual discrimination under section 14 of the Equality Act 2010 (introduced by the then Labour government). However, the subsequent coalition government did not bring this Section into effect, arguing that its implementation would be too costly.[67] The removal of dual discrimination from the EQA affects older LGBNL individuals in a number of ways, in that they cannot make a claim on the basis of discrimination on the grounds of: (1) age and sexual orientation (in cases where a person has been discriminated against because they are both older and LGBNL individuals); (2) age and gender[68] (in the cases of an LGBNL woman discriminated against because, for example, she is an older woman); and (3) gender[69] and sexual orientation (in cases where a person has been discriminated against because they are a LGBNL woman or man). Even if dual discrimination had been brought in, the EQA would still not have afforded the facility to make a claim for discrimination on the basis of multiple intersecting disadvantages, i.e. ageing, gender *and* sexuality. Yet, as this book will show, older lesbians perceive their experiences of ageing inequalities to be located at precisely the intersection of all three.

Harassment exclusions

Older LGBNL individuals are under-protected from harassment by two sets of regulatory gaps: (1) through a predominance of harassment legislation in relation to public spaces[70] and an absence of harassment legislation in relation to 'private' spaces of care and accommodation; and (2) in the harassment exclusions in the Equality Act 2010. In terms of 'public'/'private' spaces, harassment legislation becomes complicated in carescapes where 'public' and 'private' overlap, e.g. older-age care spaces (Casey, 2013). 'Contemporary anti-discrimination law is grounded in a constructed division between the public and private spheres: the latter a space into which the law cannot easily intrude' (Cobb, 2009, p. 346). In addition to a lack of protection from harassment in care spaces from other forms of harassment legislation, protection from harassment in care spaces is also denied by the harassment exclusions in the EQA. These specifically remove protections from harassment on the basis of sexual orientation in contexts beyond the workplace.

Harassment is addressed in section 26 of the Act, which, according to the parliamentary briefing notes:

> preserves existing legislative provisions on harassment. Harassment as it has come to be defined in legislation will probably always be directly discriminatory, but represents a different and more aggravated form of

> discrimination. In bringing in a unified provision for harassment within a single enactment, the [Act] will effectively extend free standing harassment provisions to other strands not currently protected by specific harassment provisions.[71]

Harassment is sub-classified in the Act as: unwanted conduct harassment;[72] sexual harassment;[73] and 'non-submission' harassment.[74]

The protected characteristics of sexual orientation and religion enjoy equal protection with the other protected characteristics from harassment in the workplace (EQA 2010, Part 5) but are excluded from protection outside of the workplace in the following areas: in the provision of services (including goods) and public functions (EQA 2010, Part 3);[75] in the disposal, management and occupation of premises (EQA 2010, Part 4);[76] in education (EQA 2010, Part 6), where gender reassignment is also excluded from protection;[77] and in associations (EQA 2010, Part 7).[78]

The EQA's exclusions from sexual orientation harassment protection beyond the workplace were specifically included to protect religious proselytising from accusations of harassment (Baird, 2009), serving to privilege religious over sexual orientation rights (Clucas, 2012). During the consultation phase prior to the introduction of the Equality Bill, a number of individuals and organisations expressed concerns about the exclusions. For example, the human rights organisation Liberty observed:

> Liberty cannot see why it would be acceptable for a person to harass another on the basis of their religion or sexual orientation when providing (or not providing) a service – and particularly when exercising a public function (examples including law enforcement and medical treatment on the NHS).... It is not enough to simply state that this replicates existing law – if there is a gap in the law then this new consolidating, and harmonising Bill should extend to all relevant areas, and not simply perpetuate current inadequate protection.
>
> (Liberty, 2009, p. 8)

The British Humanist Association came closest to making a connection between sexuality and older age, in addressing the issue of harassment from care providers:

> We are disappointed that the Government does not agree that a useful distinction can be made between 'closed' environments, such as schools (there are particular and well-known problems in faith schools), prisons, hospitals and hospices (where service users are 'captive' with limited choice and control over their environment) and other extra-employment contexts. Indeed, it is not just a question of open and closed spaces: harassment becomes an issue whenever people do not have a choice of service provider, including but not limited to when they have to receive a public service from a contracted religious organisation.[79]

The Joint Committee on Human Rights (JCHR) was also concerned about the exclusions and took the view that they represented 'a significant gap in the protection against discrimination offered by the [Act]'[80] raising issues about legal ambiguity and compliance with the ECHR (Doyle, Casserley, Cheetham, Gay & Hyams, 2010). The JCHR also took the view that equal harassment protection for sexual orientation could be interpreted in a way that did not impinge upon religious freedoms[81] and proposed special protections from harassment for those in 'closed' spaces (e.g. prisons, care homes, schools, etc.) (JCHR, 2009). This was again opposed by faith organisations, and the government acceded to their pressure, supported by Stonewall, who took the view, based on legal advice, that there was not a sexual orientation harassment scenario which would not be covered under direct discrimination (Stonewall, 2009).

Direct discrimination, however, is harder to prove than harassment, given that it requires a comparator, which harassment does not (Connolly, 2006). And if all harassment can be encompassed under direct discrimination, it begs the question as to why protection from harassment was included in the Act at all, and contradicts the explanation in the EQA notes that harassment 'represents a different and more aggravated form of discrimination'.[82] There are also concerns that these gaps in harassment protection may raise issues relating to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), with particular reference to prohibition of discrimination[83] in conjunction with the right to respect for private and family life,[84] freedom of thought, conscience and religion[85] or the prohibition on inhuman or degrading treatment[86] (JCHR, 2009), and the public duties under section 6 of the Human Rights Act, exposing public authorities to potential legal challenge.

What this means, in effect, is that older LGBNL individuals occupying older-age care spaces enjoy unequal (and lesser) protections from harassment than *both* older heterosexual-identifying individuals occupying formal older-age care spaces, especially closed care spaces *and* younger LGBNL individuals (not occupying those spaces) (SCIE, 2011b). Given that homophobic harassment is defined as a form of elder abuse,[87] it also means that older LGBNL individuals are less well protected from elder abuse in older-age care spaces than their older heterosexual-identifying peers.

Concluding remarks

Older LGBNL individuals are marginalised in regulatory contexts in a range of ways: in the four-tier privileging of relationships which prioritises the legally recognised couple and biological family, and marginalises friendship and non-normative kinship networks; in the construction of the ageing legal subject in health and social care policy, as heterosexual, located in heterosexual kinship networks and heteronormative models of community; and in equality legislation which does not take into account multiple intersecting sites of discrimination, and which, in its harassment exemptions, disadvantages older LGBNL individuals over both younger LGBNL individuals and older heterosexual-identifying individuals.

Heteronormativity shapes many aspects of law and social policy affecting older people, often indirectly produced through models of ageing lives, kinship networks and communities which are based on heterosexist norms and assumptions. The prioritising of the cohabiting conjugal couple and biological family and marginalisation of other relationships and kinship forms also disadvantages older LGBNL individuals whose personal communities are more likely to be comprised of the latter. Civil partnerships and same-sex marriage have further entrenched the privatisation of both financial support and care (Stychin, 2006) and the conjugal couple and biological family as central organising features of the state (Boyd & Young, 2003). LGBNL individuals' non-conjugal ties of love and support (SLIFs) have been accorded variable 'institutional inferiority'[88] in comparison to both registered and unregistered same-sex conjugal relationships.

One of the concerns about same-sex marriage and, to a slightly lesser extent, civil partnership (Harding, 2011), was that they would privilege one relationship form ('compulsory matrimony': Robson, 2009, p. 313) while further marginalising others and would jeopardise wider reform of relationship recognition beyond the conjugal (Auchmuty, 2004; Barker, 2012). Nicola Barker suggested that they would reduce incentives for further debate 'once the most privileged, and politically powerful, couples are satisfied' (Barker, 2006, pp. 255–256). At the same time, if 'family of choice' accounts of LGBNL kinship are correct, there may be little appetite for greater recognition (and regulation) of friendships whose hallmark is voluntarism and a lack of duty and commitment. However, whether desirable or not there appears to be little legal movement at present towards widening legal recognition to other relationship types and kinship forms.

This regulatory marginalisation is compounded by issues of intersectionality. Older LGBNL individuals are disadvantaged in older-age regulatory contexts not only by sexuality, but also by the intersection of gender *and* sexuality and/or ageing, gender *and* sexuality. The EQA affords no mechanism to provide protections from this in law. The EQA is *itself* a site of discrimination, with its harassment exclusions affording greater protections to working-age LGBNL individuals than non-working-age individuals and to heterosexual individuals than LGBNL individuals. The harassment exclusions were an attempt to balance competing rights based on the protected characteristics of 'religious belief' and 'sexual orientation'. As the JCHR identified, these competing rights tensions have particular relevance for closed care contexts. As will be shown in Chapter 6, interview participants expressed concerns about prejudice and discrimination in older-age closed care spaces, particularly on the grounds of religious belief. This spatial domain, and its implications for later life equality, has not been explored through the lens of religion and sexual orientation and merits further research (this is discussed further in Chapter 7).

Notes

1 SLIFs are outlined in Chapter 1.
2 The Civil Partnership Act 2004, applied throughout the UK, granted same-sex couples the same rights and responsibilities as married heterosexual couples.
3 According to the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013, in England and Wales, and the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014, same-sex couples may now marry. In Scotland civil partners who now wish to marry may do so. There is currently a government consultation process regarding the futures of civil partnerships in England and Wales, with three options on the table; (1) abolish civil partnerships and convert existing ones into marriages; (2) stop any further civil partnerships being formed, but retain existing ones; and (3) keep civil partnerships and open them to opposite-gender couples.
4 It is possible for anyone to be named as a beneficiary of a private pension upon death, but not for a state pension.
5 Sections 35, 36 and 37 of the Income Tax Act (ITA) 2007 provide a non-transferable personal allowance. Sections 45 and 46 ITA provide for married couple's allowance to married couples or civil partners where one or both spouses or civil partners were born before 6 April 1935. Sections 47 to 52 ITA provide for the transfer of married couple's allowance between spouses or civil partners including the transfer of unused relief.
6 There is one financial advantage to not being married or in a civil partnership for older LGBN women previously married and widowed: they retain their widow's pension, if they are in receipt of one, which they would lose upon marrying or entering a civil partnership.
7 Section 18(1) Inheritance Tax Act 1984; Tax and Civil Partnership Regulations 2005.
8 Tax and Civil Partnership Regulations 2005.
9 Inheritance (Provision for Family and Dependants Act) 1975 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) (as amended by the Law Reform (Succession) Act 1995) and Family Law (Scotland) Act 2006.
10 Administration of Estates Act 1925 (England and Wales); Succession (Scotland) Act 1964, as amended by the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Act 1968 and the Succession (Scotland) Act 1973; Administration of Estates Act (Northern Ireland) 1955.
11 Housing Act 1988 (England and Wales); Housing (Scotland) Act 2001; Housing (NI) Order 1983.
12 Section 18(1) Inheritance Tax Act 1984; Tax and Civil Partnership Regulations 2005.
13 Unmarried partners who have lived together for five years, or two years if they had children, would have had the right to inherit upon one partner's death.
14 Inheritance (Provision for Family and Dependants) Act 1975 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland).
15 Section 1(3), IPFDA as amended by paragraph 3, Schedule 2, ITPA .
16 Section 3 IPFDA as amended by paragraph 5 of Schedule 2 to the ITPA.
17 Housing Act 1988 (England and Wales); Housing (Scotland) Act 2001; Housing (NI) Order 1983.
18 Under section 136 of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, the income and capital of a member of the claimant's family is treated as that of the claimant for the purposes of a claim for benefit. Section 137 defines 'family' as a married or unmarried couple and their dependent children. The definition of 'couple' in s.137 was amended to include civil partners and those living together as if they were civil partners.
19 Section 26(6) Mental Health Act 1983.
20 The Mental Health Act 2007 gave greater rights to cohabiting partners (same-sex and different-sex) as well as the option of applying to the court to have a 'Nearest Relative' replaced if he/she is not a 'suitable person' (Mental Health Act 2007 s.23 and s.24 amending Mental Health Act 2003 s.29).

21 Housing Act 1988 (England and Wales); Housing (Scotland) Act 2001; Housing (NI) Order 1983.
22 The Treasury Solicitor (2008).
23 Scottish Government (2008) p. 3.
24 Scottish Government (2005).
25 Mental Capacity Act 2005 (England and Wales) and the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000.
26 Advance Decisions in England and Wales (Mental Capacity Act 2005, ss.24–26) and Advance Directives in Scotland (Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 s.47(2)) enable a person to make decisions with regard to medical treatment at end of life.
27 Section 26(7) MHA.
28 R (M) v. Secretary of State for Health [2003] EWHC 1094 (Admin).
29 Human Rights Act 1998 Sch. 1 Part I Art. 8 (respect for private and family life).
30 JT v. United Kingdom (application 26494/95), 30 March 2000.
31 FC v. United Kingdom (application 37344/97) 7 September 1999.
32 HL Deb 17 January 2007: Column 672.
33 Section 32(2) MHA and Regulation 24 of the Mental Health (Hospital, Guardianship and Consent to Treatment) Regulations 2008.
34 Department of Health, 2011.
35 Para 34(b), Annex B, *Care and Support Statutory Guidance Issued under the Care Act 2014*.
36 Para 35, Annex B, *Care and Support Statutory Guidance Issued under the Care Act 2014*.
37 Para 42, Annex B, *Care and Support Statutory Guidance Issued under the Care Act 2014*.
38 Para 42, Annex B, *Care and Support Statutory Guidance Issued under the Care Act 2014*.
39 The White Paper, *Better Care, Higher Standards: A Charter for Long Term Care*, (Department of Health, 1999a); the *National Service Frameworks for Mental Health* (Department of Health, 1999b) and its *Action Plan* (Department of Health, 1999c); The Department of Health's *End of Life Care Strategy: Promoting High Quality Care for all Adults at the End of Life* (Department of Health, 2008b); *Essence of Care: Benchmarks for the Fundamental Aspects of Care* (Department of Health, 2010b). The Health Act 2009 places a statutory duty on NHS services to take account of the new NHS constitution, which deploys a diversity list which includes sexual orientation in its principles and also refers to the need to respect an individual's human rights (Department of Health, 2010a).
40 HM Government (2011).
41 HM Government (2011) para. 6.29.
42 Department of Health, (2001).
43 Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995; Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000; Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004.
44 Department of Health (2007a).
45 Department of Health (2007a) p. 31.
46 Healthcare Commission (2009).
47 Welsh Assembly Government (2007).
48 Welsh Assembly Government (2007) p. 8.
49 The Scottish Government (2010a).
50 The Scottish Government (2010a) para 5.2.
51 Department of Health (2008a).
52 Department of Health (2010a).
53 Department of Health, (2008b).
54 Department of Health, (2008b) para 110.
55 HM Government (2009b).

56 HM Government (2009b) p. 7.
57 Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995; Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000.
58 Section 1 of the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004.
59 Explanatory Notes to Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004, para 12.
60 Department of Health (2007b).
61 The Community Care (Direct Payments) Act 1996 allowed local authorities to give cash payments ('Direct Payments') to service users instead of providing services to them, in order that the service users could purchase preferred services themselves. 'Personal Budgets' refer to the sum of money allocated to a service user, following assessment of needs, which can either be taken in the form of cash payments or can be used by the service user to direct a care package commissioned on their behalf by the local authority (Department of Health, 2010b). Personal Budgets are known as Individual Budgets under the Scottish Government's Self-Directed Support (SDS) strategy (The Scottish Government, 2010b).
62 Department of Health (2006).
63 Department of Health (2007c).
64 *No Secrets*, the Labour government's guidelines in 2000 on the protection of vulnerable adults (Department of Health, 2000), includes sexual orientation in several anti-discrimination lists, but then recommends monitoring by service providers of disability, gender and ethnicity, but not sexual orientation. CQC care home evaluation is less and less nuanced and reporting does not specifically refer to diversity issues.
65 www.cqc.org.uk/public/news/meeting-needs-lesbian-gay-bisexual-and-transgender-people.
66 Section 149(1)(b) of the Equality Act 2010.
67 In the Budget Statement on the 23 March 2011 George Osborne announced that the government was 'scrapping plans for regulations that would have cost businesses over £350 million a year, including stripping back proposed regulation on dual discrimination and third party harassment from the Equalities Act 2010' (HM Treasury, 2011, p. 7).
68 Gender is constructed as the protected characteristic of 'sex' under the EQA.
69 Again, the protected characteristic of 'sex' under the EQA.
70 Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008; Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994; Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004; Local Government Act 1988; Protection from Harassment Act 1997; Public Order Act 1986; Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000; Sexual Offences Act 1967.
71 Parliament, UK (2009) para 42.
72 Section 26(1) defines unwanted conduct harassment as:

> A person (A) harasses another (B) if (a) A engages in unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, and (b) the conduct has the purpose or effect of (i) violating B's dignity or (ii) creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for B.

Section 26(4) establishes that in deciding whether conduct has that effect, each of the following must be taken into account, namely, (a) the perception of B; (b) the circumstances of the case; (c) whether it is reasonable for the conduct to have that effect.
73 Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature (s.26(2)):

> A harasses B if (a) A engages in unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, and (b) the conduct has the purpose or effect of (i) violating B's dignity or (ii) creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for B.

74 Non-submission harassment is defined as s.26(3):

> (a) A or another person engages in unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or that is related to gender reassignment or sex, and (b) the conduct has the purpose or effect of (i) violating B's dignity or (ii) creating an intimidating, hostile,

> degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for B, and (c) because of B's rejection of or submission to the conduct, A treats B less favourably than A would treat B if B ad not rejected or submitted to the conduct.

75 Section 29 Provision of services – EQA 2010 S29(8):

> In the application of section 26 for the purposes of subsection (3), and subsection (6) as it relates to harassment, neither of the following is a relevant protected characteristic: (a) religion or belief; (b) sexual orientation.

76 Section 33 Disposal – EQA 2010 s.33(6): 'In the application of section 26 for the purposes of subsection (3) neither of the following is a relevant protected characteristic: (a) religion or belief; (b) sexual orientation'; s.34 Permission for disposal – EQA 2010 s.34(4): 'In the application of section 26 for the purposes of subsection (2) neither of the following is a relevant protected characteristic: (a) religion or belief; (b) sexual orientation'; s.35 Management – EQA 2010 s.35(4): 'In the application of section 26 for the purposes of subsection (2) neither of the following is a relevant protected characteristic: (a) religion or belief; (b) sexual orientation'.

77 Section 85 Pupils, admission, treatment, etc – EQA 2010 s.85(10): 'In the application of section 26 for the purposes of subsection (3) none of the following is a relevant protected characteristic: (a) gender reassignment; (b) religion or belief; (c) sexual orientation'.

78 Section 101 Members, s.102 Guests – EQA 2010 s.103(2): 'In the application of section 26 for the purposes of section 101(4) or 102 (3), neither of the following is a relevant protected characteristic: (a) religion or belief; (b) sexual orientation'.

79 See *Memorandum submitted by the British Humanist Association* Ev 100–106 in JCHR (2009).

80 JCHR (2009) para 114.

81 As outlined in Mr Justice Weatherup's judgment in Christian Institute v. Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister [2008] E.L.R. 146.

82 Parliament UK, 2009, para 42.

83 ECHR Article 14.

84 ECHR Article 8.

85 ECHR Article 9.

86 ECHR Article 3.

87 Department of Health (2000) para 2.7.

88 Hansard, Commons, 12 October 2004, 213; Christopher Chope, cited in Stychin (2006) p. 913.

3 Ageing sexual subjectivities

Introduction

The experience of ageing is temporally contingent. Older LGBNL individuals' ageing narratives are shaped by the retrospective past, the present and their personal chronological timings in relation to both. These narratives are also highly gendered. The women in this study have far more fluid accounts of sexuality/sexual identity and/or sexual relationships than the men and also emphasised the place of gender in their experience of social ageing which was not reflected in the men's discourse. So while the men linked their experiences to issues or recognition in relation to age and sexuality, the women linked theirs to issues of recognition involving age, *gender* and sexuality. This analysis thus offers insights not only on the gendering of LGBNL ageing but also more broadly on the temporal dimensions of (gendered) identity development.

This experience of gendered ageing among LGBNL individuals is informed by cohort. As explored in Chapter 1, none of the existing cohort models satisfactorily encompasses the temporal complexities of LGBNL identity development, through and against which ageing LGBNL identities are then navigated. I have therefore developed a new cohort model which does provide a more useful framework with which to think about and explore these complexities.

New cohort model

The diversity of ages among the participants (52–92) serves to highlight how there is not one homogeneous ageing block of older LGBNL individuals, but rather successive waves of generations who came of age (i.e. reached adulthood, Hammack & Cohler, 2011) during different eras, and those who 'came out' and/or formed a same-sex relationship, also did so at different ages during different eras (see Appendix 3 for a breakdown). For example, Agnes, the oldest participant, born in 1920, was aged: 25–35 in 1945–1955; 36–46 in 1956–1966, 47–59 in 1967–1979, 60–79 in 1980–1999, and 80–92 in 2000–2012. By contrast, Bob, one of the younger participants, born in 1952, was only alive in the last three years of 1945–1955 and was aged: 4–14 in 1956–1966; 15–27 in 1967–1979; 28–47 in 1980–1999; and 48–60 in 2000–2012. Agnes and Bob thus

experienced these very different eras at very different ages, and this in turn informed the discursive and performative opportunities available to them at those different times/ages and how this has shaped their lives not only at the time, but right through until the present day. As Audrey observed,

> I think it's a generational thing, but not in the exactly obvious way, because there might be two women of my age, one of whom has been a lesbian all her life, so let's say she was a young butch lesbian, so we can really get the oppression in there, in the 1950s. She's going to have a very different sense of self and very different picture of how it is to come out, to a woman of the same age, in her sixties perhaps, who was married and had children and didn't come out until she was 50, in 1990, when being a lesbian was a whole different thing.
>
> (Audrey, aged 67)

Audrey highlights the significance of temporality for ageing sexual subjectivities. She identifies multiple differences between two older 'lesbians' of a similar age and generation: the chronological age at which they 'came out', one woman in her teens, the other in her sixties; the socio-historical eras in which they did so, one woman during the oppressive 1950s, the other in far more liberal and inclusive recent times; and the life stage and life history through and against which they did so, one woman on the cusp of adulthood, the other in very late adulthood, possibly with children and grandchildren. Audrey also flags the issue of gender non-conformity and oppression, the accumulated effects of which will have influenced the 'lesbian' who has been 'out' for longer.

This diversity of narratives is often lost in generic ageing LGB/LGBT discourse, and it this diversity which I have sought to capture in my cohort model. It involves five different types of identity/performance narratives: 'Out Early'; 'Breaking Out'; 'Finding Out'; 'Late Performance'; 'Lesbian by Choice'. It also identifies a further conceptual cluster ('Voices on the Margins'), which refers to those voices of non-participants partially heard through the narratives of the participants. Each of the cohorts will now be explained. For a full breakdown of the cohorts, and how participants were allocated to them, see Appendix 4.

Cohorts

'Out Early'

The 'Out Early' cohort involves an early identity and concurrent performance narrative. This cohort comprises lesbians and gay men who use an 'I always knew I was lesbian/gay' identity-based narrative and describe always having had exclusively same-sex sexual relationships. For example, Moira, aged 75, has been with her civil partner for over 30 years. She has always identified as lesbian and said she had only ever had sexual relationships with women: 'I'm a cradle lesbian. I was a lesbian at the age of three … I fell in love at the age of nine for the first time' (Moira, aged 75). Similarly, Lawrence had sexual encounters with boys at his

boarding school, and afterwards, 'I just carried on, as it were' (Lawrence, aged 63). Both Moira and Lawrence describe a lifelong awareness of exclusive same-sex desires and adult lifetimes of engaging in only same-sex relationships and of recognising themselves to be lesbian or gay. Out of the 60 participants, 16 came into this category: eight women and eight men, aged between 52 and 75.

'Breaking Out'

The 'Breaking Out' cohort comprises lesbians and gay men who use an 'I always knew I was lesbian/gay' identity-based narrative involving an initial awareness of, and struggle with, same-sex desires before eventually reaching a resolution. For example, Jack, aged 66, 'came out' as gay when he was 30, after he left his home area and went to university as a mature student.

> I had gay feelings and I went to an all-boys school, and you saw boys mucking about that sort of thing, and to me, I felt, it's a phase, sort of thing. Well as the years went by, it wasn't a phase, and I started to feel guilty.… So I just, even though I felt I was definitely gay, I became Jack the Lad, went off with women all the time.… And I came up here to university … there was freshers' week and there was gay students union stall and I thought, ooh, I can't go to it, I was too frightened. And I went to a pub one night and got frightened and didn't go back for a few months … then went to bars again, had sexual experiences with men and I just knew what was going on in my mind was true.… And then the next freshers' week I was running the stall! And I've never looked back.
>
> (Jack, aged 66)

Diana, aged 69, came out in her twenties, in the 1960s, identifying as lesbian ever since.

> I was born in 1943. I knew there was something different about me. I had boyfriends. I was engaged, all that sort of thing. I didn't know there was anything other than heterosexuality, because that's all there was. But I knew I was different … I had boyfriends while I was in the Navy … I really believed that whatever my feelings were, they were just some sort of cross to bear … in my diaries … I see my struggles at the time were my attractions to other women. I got friendly with a woman … it was normal, if you had a friend to stay, you shared a bed. And it happened, the second or third time we shared a bed, and it was the most natural thing in the world. And we thought we were the only ones [laughs]. In retrospect, we knew that other people knew, and there was this secret society in the Navy as well … I was then taken to this club … there was that butch and femme thing, and when I went out with [another] woman, she was butch, and I had to dress as femme … you had to be one or the other. There were all the heterosexual rules of male and female.
>
> (Diana, aged 69)

Both Jack and Diana mobilise emancipatory narratives of an awareness of same-sex desires and a struggle with them, eventually resolved. Both refer to attempting to live heterosexual lives, of guilt and fear of recognition (Jack) and of a lack of language or constructs to enable self-/mutual recognition among women with same-sex desires (Diana). Both refer to finding places and spaces with others like them as a way out, breaking out and/or into communities of support which offered legitimised recognition for their sexualities/sexual identities. Out of the 60 participants, 22 came into the 'Breaking Out' category: nine women and 13 men, aged between 52 and 75.

'Finding Out'

The 'Finding Out' cohort involves narratives about a retrospective lesbian, gay or bisexual identity, *discovered* – post-heterosexual identification and performance – through same-sex sexual relationships. Among the men participants this discovery was articulated in terms of a back-dated gay identity. For example, Frank, aged 70, who had been married with two children said 'I always knew I was gay, but only in retrospect'. Only when addressing his alcoholism in his 40s did Frank also address his sexuality and he came out as gay – 'this eased the constant pain from acting straight … I have 26 years of sobriety and being gay is personally still a significant part of my recovery'. Donald also described a process of denial, including to himself, where he had never even considered being gay, having lived an asexual life right into his thirties, when the initial legalisation of homosexuality triggered an awareness in him and within weeks he had joined a lesbian and gay political movement: 'I've never been in the closet, I've been nowhere and from there to badge-wearing screaming queen in six weeks flat' (Donald, aged 75).

'Finding Out' was also described by those women participants who mobilised a sexual identity discovery narrative but in more fluid ways. This was sometimes described in terms of growing self-awareness ('I think I was bisexual, but the lesbian side of me I didn't really want to look at.… I understand myself better now … I see myself as lesbian now', Maureen, aged 62) which sometimes involved a period of shifting back and forth between sexual relationships with women and men ('and then I realised I preferred women…' Rachel, aged 64). It was sometimes prompted by a particular romantic relationship: 'But then I fell in love with a woman, and then I knew what love was…' (May, aged 64). Sexual identity was also sometimes mobilised as a convenient descriptor of behaviour rather than of a core identity: 'I suppose bisexual was a convenient label for me to use while I was still living with a man', said Bernice, aged 60, who now identifies as lesbian. She explains the shift which took place after her husband died: 'Once I was on my own, and free to get more involved with women, possibly my first serious relationship with a woman that I had, left me in no doubt, and there was no turning back then' (Bernice, aged 60). By contrast Bridget now describes herself as bisexual since forming her first and only relationship with a woman: 'I must be bisexual, because I enjoyed sex with men, and I just

happened to fall in love with my best friend, and she just happens to be a woman' (Bridget, aged 66). While these are very diverse narratives, and meanings, for sexuality, what these women, and men, have in common, is that there is a theme of a process of discovery and subsequent repositioning of sexual identity, in all of their accounts, rather than one of ongoing awareness, conscious struggle and then resolution of the 'Breaking Out' cohort. Out of the 60 participants, 14 came into this category: 11 women and three men, aged between 60 and 92.

'Late Performance'

The 'Late Performance' cohort encompasses the accounts of individuals (five women aged between 64 and 69) who identified and performed as heterosexual for the majority of their lives and then, in later life, have formed same-sex partnerships. They do not identify as lesbian/bisexual/gay, locating their sexualities in depoliticised performative discourse. Yvette, for example, chooses not to label her sexuality/sexual identity: 'I identify as being Theresa's lifelong partner … I'll never be with anyone else. Neither female nor male' said Yvette, aged 67, who discovered love with a woman – now her civil partner – for the first time when she was 65. Marcia, aged 66, had also been in heterosexual relationships before meeting her civil partner Angela, six years ago, and she also declines to label her sexuality, mobilising a gender-neutral approach:

> I just happen to have fallen in love with a woman, but I don't think I am [lesbian]. I suppose society sees me as that, because I am in a civil partnership. But I don't identify as that. I've dated plenty of men … I've never thought of myself as 'a lesbian' or having a coming out, never had any repressed sexual feelings that I couldn't talk about. And I think if I met a guy that has the same qualities that Angela had, I'd have been perfectly happy with him.
>
> (Marcia, aged 66)

Other women were more ambivalent, such as Ellen, now in a civil partnership, who was heterosexually married for 40 years previously:

> I mean since I realised that I love Tessa, and love a woman, no one could be more shocked than me, I can tell you … I've never fancied a woman in my life. Present company excluded [said to Tessa] … I don't know if I am a lesbian, I really don't know. Am I a lesbian? All I know is I love Tessa, I love her to death … there's a very broad spectrum, isn't there? Because I lived as a heterosexual all my life, I didn't know as a child I was different, I didn't know as a young adult, middle adult, listening to lesbians talking, there's always been an innate knowledge, a recognition, even if it was denied. I've never had that recognition.
>
> (Ellen, aged 64)

Among these five women there was a profound de-politicisation of their discourse: 'I don't feel any political, it just sort of evolved' (Angela, aged 64, Marcia's partner, also with a previous history of heterosexual relationships, who also does not label her sexuality). The only exception is Ellen – the most ambivalent – who said 'I am a feminist through and through' and who linked her growing attraction to Tessa with a parallel growth in her 'admiration' for women while engaging in women's studies research. The next cohort, by contrast, is deeply implicated in gender politics.

'Lesbian by Choice'

The 'Lesbian by Choice' cohort, is very much a politicised, chosen, identity involving an elective lesbian-identified performance narrative. This cohort applies to only three women participants, aged 62, 63 and 66 respectively. Each of the narratives were from women who chose to 'give up' men and assumed a lesbian identity in pursuit of their radical feminist goals of resistance to patriarchy (Jeffreys, 2003). Frances had lived an exclusively heterosexual identity and lifestyle and had been briefly married to a man in her early twenties. She had to 'learn' how to be a lesbian when she made her political choice in her late twenties, in the mid-1970s:

> [I was at] a women's centre … and that's where I became a feminist, and that's where I became a lesbian. For me the two are integral, I can't separate my feminist politics from my sexuality.… I realised that I would never have an equal relationship with a man. And I thought, well, that only leaves me with one other choice.… Up until that point I didn't even know that there was such a thing as lesbianism and no idea that women could love women.… If I wasn't going to be in sexual relationship to men [*sic*], what was my other choice? It was either to be celibate, which was not very appealing, or to at least explore the idea of being intimate with women and … [in the end].… It was very easy, my first woman lover was kind of in the same situation as me, so we kind of just held each other's hand through the whole thing.
>
> (Frances, aged 66)

The other two women came from a place of having previously had sexual relationships with both women and men, and then deciding to be women-exclusive. Jennifer decided to 'give up men' based on her radical feminist ideology, and assumed a lesbian identity and lifestyle in the late 1970s:

> I was a political lesbian … I just made the choice to give up men. For all sorts of reasons, you know, it was the argument that I wanted someone who knew how to clean the toilet, and someone who didn't want me to cook for them, that sort of thing.… You see there are so many stories about 'I fell in love with a woman and there just was no choice', which is fine, it just

> wasn't what happened. I fell in love with lots of women and nothing happened, and I got off with lots of men, and I daresay I was in love them, some of them, at various points. I mean this was the era when one did have lots of partners. And then I decided, no, I'm not going to have anything more to do with men.… So I gave up men. I didn't have any problems fancying women…
>
> (Jennifer, aged 62)

Cat was previously married to a man, but then embraced radical separatist feminism in her mid-thirties, through a combination of falling in love with a woman when she was married (having had sexual relationships with women when she was younger) and engaging with the women's peace movement in the 1980s:

> When left my marriage, I lived for a year without any interaction with a man. I had no male interaction at all. So, if there was a male bus driver I wouldn't get on a bus. If I went to a shop and there was a man there, I wouldn't buy the product, I'd come out. So, for a whole year of my life, that's how I lived it.… Because I wanted to know whether I actually could live without men in my life. Because whenever they'd been in my life it was either to exploit or abuse or to deceive, except my dad, who was a bit of a plonker. And that's why I changed my name and everything, because I didn't want to have anything to do with patriarchy.
>
> (Cat, aged 63)

Cat highlights the very explicit location of her lesbian identity in terms of resistance to patriarchy. These women are distinguishable from participants in the other cohorts in that their understandings of sexuality are in relation to both fluidity and choice, and as located in gender power politics, rather than fulfilling desire or romantic feelings and attachments (Kitzinger, 1987). Notably, for Frances, such an elective narrative is often marginalised:

> I mean, when I told my coming out story to a woman who is probably late thirties? She really didn't believe me. She didn't believe that becoming a lesbian could be a political choice. She'd always been attracted to girls when she was younger, so, for her, it wasn't an issue and she came out at a time where it wasn't an issue. So, she, I mean literally, her jaw dropped and she looked at me as if I were telling her a fable. It took quite a while for me to convince her that, no, it was absolutely true, and that I wasn't the only one.
>
> (Frances, aged 66)

This silencing – absence of recognition – of an elective politicised sexual identity can be located both in the marginalisation of women's (sexual) histories and in the marginalisation of gender politics and radical feminism within the now-ageing 'LGBT' rights movement.

'Voices on the Margins'

This category is not a cohort as such, describing, as it does, absent or only partially glimpsed experiences of non-participants whose hidden lives are alluded to in participants' narratives. This includes: older heterosexually married men who engaged in sexual relationships with gay men (e.g. Des, Les and Jack who have sexual relationships with heterosexually married men; Ronald who is heterosexually married, and still lives with his wife, but also has two male lovers); older LGBNL friends of participants who are concealing their sexual identities/sexualities in sheltered housing and/or care accommodation (e.g. Rupert's and Diana's friends who would not be interviewed for fear of being 'outed'); and those women living lives of compulsory heterosexuality, who might, at some point in the future, engage in same-sex relationships:

> I am amazed at how many people we have met, and in [local lesbian group] … who said they had been married and they were now – I thought I was the only one who was married, you know. [It's] fabulous, absolutely fabulous. And then it makes me think, well how many more are out there? Come on out girls! Let's get them out! Away from the kitchen, get out!
>
> (Ellen, aged 64, 'Late Performance')

The purpose of this category is to keep in mind the narratives which this study – and many other LGBNL studies – does not capture, and to create a space, which I shall return to at the end of this book, to consider the implications of those unheard voices for the overall (partial) stories we tell about LGBNL ageing.

Considering the new model

This new cohort model suffers the inevitable limitations of all cohort discourse: the risk of homogenisation, over-generalisation and over-simplification; and the temptation to smooth over the edges of those narratives which do not easily slip into a particular category. The model nonetheless offers a convenient shorthand to think of the different timings and ways in which individual participants construct an LGBNL identity/sexuality. It also affords useful conceptual space to be able to think about the different ways in which those sexual identities/sexualities are experienced in relation to ageing. Its particular strength is its ability to take into account the different temporal contexts of ageing sexualities and the narratives of both those individuals who engage with identity-based sexuality narrative, which may or may not be politicised, and those who engage with more fluid and/or performative narratives. The next section draws upon this new cohort model to analyse participants' constructions of their ageing sexual identities/sexualities.

Discursive production of (gendered) sexualities/sexual identities

Participants' constructions of their ageing sexualities/sexual identities were strongly shaped by gender. The women participants' narratives were more diverse, variable,

fluid and relational, whereas those of the men were more atomistic, essentialistic and located in binary constructions (i.e. either gay or straight) of a core orientation. In order to adequately address the wider diversity among the women participants, the section on their discursive production of sexuality is longer than the men's.

Women: plural relational narratives of sexual identities/ sexualities

The historical silencing and invisibilising of women's same-sex desires, as outlined in Chapter 1, was reflected in the interviews. Agnes, for example, met her husband when she was 17, and they married a couple of years later, in the early 1940s:

> [I'm] lesbian, definitely. But I didn't find out until I got married. Well, almost from the start of marriage, I realised there was something missing. And it took me quite a while to realise … a year or so, maybe more … that I didn't want to be married … [I didn't like] … being with a man … the sex wasn't really wonderful actually … and I started to see some women that I realised that I liked more than I should … I didn't know the word [lesbian], I didn't know there was a word.… I doubt I'd have got married [if I had].
>
> (Agnes, aged 92, 'Finding Out')

Agnes' awareness of an absence of desire for her husband, and a presence of desire for women, only emerged after she had married. When it did emerge, she had no words to describe what it meant to her. It was not for several decades that she used the word lesbian to describe herself to herself (after she'd had an affair with a woman) and it was six decades before she used it to describe herself to someone else (the warden in her sheltered housing, after her husband had died). Agnes believes that access to the awareness, and the vocabulary, might have meant she would not have married. But, the available vocabulary itself was extremely limited at that time. Even women actively engaged in same-sex relationships were often extremely isolated and, during this period, often lacked access to a sense of other women like them with whom they might identify.

> So I got together with this older lesbian. Because I thought we were the only lesbians in the world … I was 17 and she was 30 … we took off and lived together for 10 years. In a very isolated way. We didn't know of any other lesbians, and we lived deep in the country. And then, after 10 years, we made contact with some other lesbians …
>
> (Moira, aged 75, 'Out Early')

The sense of isolation Moira describes (exacerbated for those living in rural areas, Jones, Fenge, Read & Cash, 2013) created very limited discursive possibilities for women with same-sex desires in the 1940s and 1950s to have a way to describe themselves and their relationships, even to themselves. Across

subsequent decades this silence shifted. Joan was in her early twenties in the mid-1960s and describes a shift from not knowing what lesbian meant, to associating it with stigma:

> I always knew I was a lesbian. And had an affair with my best friend.… It was quite nice, enjoyed it … I didn't know what the word lesbian meant. I knew how I felt. But my mother saw things on the television, and would then say 'Well, they were a whole load of lesbians anyway'. And I thought I don't know what a lesbian is but it's not good [laughs]. And then, when I found out, I thought, well, obviously it's going to be frowned on, so I went down the route, I got married.
>
> (Joan, aged 67, 'Breaking Out')

Joan is describing compulsory heterosexuality (Rich, 1980) in the unthinkability and then disrespectability of same-sex desires among women. This in turn led to her channelling herself into a respectable but unfulfilling heterosexual relationship, her incentive to do so compounded by wanting children. Subsequent emergent politicised resistance to gender inequalities, and to the invisibilisation of women's same-sex desires, produced new opportunities for other women to explore their sexualities in safe, affirmative, spaces which had not been available to Joan:

> I just knew I wasn't going to make it with men, no matter how hard I tried to hold down my desires [laughs] … [and so I went to] a women's centre.… And I never looked back.… It was like 'oh my god', ding, ding, ding. So that was it. And there were lots of baby dykes at that time. It was late 70s, and we were all struggling, you know, fancying these stars of the women's movement, and we were grappling with what was socialist feminism, what is Marxism, and just this awareness raising, and you fell in love all the time.
>
> (Alice, aged 60, 'Out Early')

Alice, in contrast with Agnes and Joan, reaching early adulthood in a later, more permissive decade then they had, found a discursive (and performative) pathway available to her – in ways which had not previously been available – to mobilise a public, affirmative, lesbian identity. For some women, mobilising a lesbian narrative began to shift away from essentialist, identity-based discourse, to one located in desire (Herman, 2005). Barbara, for example, is very clear that 'lesbian' is a descriptor of her, rather than something which defines her:

> I don't say 'a lesbian', I identify as lesbian, because saying 'a lesbian' labels me, whereas saying Barbara who used to be a vet, owns a dog, loves her garden, happens to be lesbian, is different.
>
> (Barbara, aged 83, 'Finding Out')

So, for Barbara, identifying as lesbian is just one aspect of her life. By contrast, for other women who also engaged with a lesbian identity during this period, it is fundamental to their identity:

> And so, then we had an affair, but we were both married … I was getting a divorce from my husband and she was from hers … then I was on my own for about three years, but thinking well, I am a lesbian.
>
> (Violet, aged 73, 'Finding Out')

For Violet, there was a process of discovery, and a conclusion that 'I am a lesbian', whereas Barbara mobilises her sexuality as but one of many descriptors. By contrast, again, Vera mobilises her sexuality discourse in contingent ways, describing herself as lesbian or bisexual according to relationship context. When she is in a relationship with a man, she identifies as bisexual, and when she is in a relationship with a women she identifies as lesbian, because bisexual is 'too powerful a position to occupy' (Vera, aged 60, 'Finding Out'). She explains this contingent identity narrative:

> If I had to identify, primarily I would identify as a lesbian, that's what I would do, that's my orientation. I [put bisexual on the form] because I thought it was more honest in a funny kind of way, because I've had such a lot of relationships with men and, in fact, most of my relationships have been with men and they haven't been deeply unhappy relationships and I have no objections to having sex with men. It's much more political in many ways … I tend to say lesbian, because I work for a women-only organisation, all my life is dedicated to women, women's issues and the empowerment of women, so it kind of feels right. But, if we're simply talking about who I could end up in bed with, then the reality is it could be either.
>
> (Vera, aged 60, 'Finding Out')

As Vera explains, she uses 'bisexual' to describe her *behaviour* (because she might choose to have sex with a man or a woman) but lesbian to describe her *political affiliation* (which she refers to as her orientation), both being informed by *relational contexts*. By the time Vera was deploying this discursive and performative fluidity, it was the 1990s, when emergent queer narratives and deconstructions of gender/sexuality binaries had begun to emerge, affording greater discursive space for Vera to be able to do so.

Maureen also mobilises a combined bisexual and a lesbian narrative, but this time to describe a changing, core, sexuality:

> I think I was bisexual, but the lesbian side of me I didn't really want to look at. I wanted children, I wanted the normal sort of things, I knew I was attracted to women, but it never really raised its head. I never found a woman I was particularly attracted to, I just knew I was attracted to women. So I was married for 25 years. And then you meet somebody … and you're just not going to keep it down any longer, and it just exploded.
>
> (Maureen, aged 62, 'Finding Out')

So Maureen retrospectively understands her sexuality as bisexual, with different 'sides' to her sexuality. Maureen now identifies as lesbian, describing this in terms of a changing sexuality based on greater self-knowledge: 'I understand myself better now. I can still look at a man as attractive, as aesthetically pleasing. But I wouldn't want to have sex with him. So I see myself as lesbian' (Maureen, aged 62, 'Finding Out'). For Maureen, then, her understanding is that her sexual desires have shifted through greater self-knowledge. That shift is (at the present time) understood by Maureen as now fixed and unchanging, rather than (as for Vera) optional and elective. Vera's more fluid narrative, like Marcia's ('If I met a guy that has the same qualities that Angela had, I'd have been perfectly happy with him', Marcia, aged 66, 'Late Performance') is reflective of recent increasingly diverse discursive and performative possibilities beyond rigid binary narratives of gender and sexuality.

These diverse constructions of LGBNL sexualities among the women participants partly support previous authorship on women's sexual fluidity, but also complicate and broaden those analyses. Lisa Diamond, researching younger women, describes sexual fluidity as 'situation-dependent flexibility in women's sexual responsiveness' (Diamond, 2008, p. 3), although she still holds to the concept of 'an overall sexual orientation' for women (Diamond, 2008, p. 3). However, many of the women interviewees' narratives were more suggestive of flexibility beyond a core orientation, of 'erotic plasticity' (Peplau & Garnets, 2000, p. 330) among some women. Moreover, Frances' 'Lesbian by Choice' narrative suggests a degree of selective sexuality, beyond sexual fluidity. While Jennifer and Cat, also 'Lesbian by Choice', had previously had sexual relationships with women and men before 'opting out' of sex with men, Frances had not. She had to 'learn' how to be a lesbian. It could be argued that a willingness (and success) at such 'learning' might suggest a predisposition to being able to do so, even with a lack of prior awareness. Nonetheless, it points to a greater degree of agency and choice around sexuality than is generally recognised.

Some participants echoed Kitzinger's (1987) five-factor (plus two uncertain ones) analysis. So, for example: Maureen's ('Finding Out') story of finding her true (lesbian) self after a heterosexual-bisexual identification, reflects Kitzinger's Factor (1) involving 'before and after' stories of rejection of a conformist heterosexual lifestyle and finding self-fulfilment through lesbianism; Marcia's gender-free ('Late Performance') narrative maps on to Kitzinger's romantic Factor (2), 'Women respond to "the person, not the gender" and "it all depends who you fall in love with"' (Kitzinger, 1987: 102); Barbara's ('Finding Out') 'I am lesbian' rather than 'I am a lesbian' narrative echoes Kitzinger's apolitical Factor (3) 'Lesbianism as a personal sexual orientation, that is only one aspect of a woman's identity' (Kitzinger, 1987, p. 110); and Cat, Jennifer and Frances' 'Lesbian by Choice' narratives reflect Kitzinger's Factor (4), women who 'present their lesbianism within the political context of radical feminism' (Kitzinger, 1987, p. 110). Significantly, there were no self-loathing Factor (5) narratives, suggestive, perhaps, of the increased affirmative discursive and performative space since Kitzinger conducted her study nearly 20 years ago.

The women's narratives in this study complicate Kitzinger's and Diamond's analyses in three main ways. First, while some women mobilised either a feminist politicised or a romantic sexuality narrative (as described by Kitzinger), others mobilised both, for example Ellen, who links her deep love for Tessa with her growing feminist awareness. This suggests that there is not, among some women, a clear-cut disconnect between romance and feminism. Similarly, while Marcia's gender-fluid narrative suggests a depoliticised sexuality where partner choice is based on characteristics rather than gender, Jennifer's gender-fluid narrative involves being able to choose a woman instead of a man:

> I also think there's far more fluidity around sexuality than people are willing to admit. There are lots of straight men who have gay sex, so many lesbians who were married before, you know, I do think it's a question of being open to women, rather than a question of being only focussed on women, you just have to think about the possibility and once the possibility is there, many more of us will embrace it.
>
> (Jennifer, aged 62, 'Lesbian by Choice')

Here we see how sexual fluidity and radical politics overlap in Jennifer's narrative, unlike in Kitzinger's either/or constructs, and unlike Diamond's depoliticised accounts of sexuality.

Second, neither Kitzinger nor Diamond can account for the strategic discursive production of sexuality articulated by Vera whose mobilisation of plural sexualities (lesbian/bisexual according to context) suggests a complexity and agency among women engaged with a same-sex/both-sex sexuality that is not reflected in either Kitzinger's or Diamond's analyses. Third, Kitzinger's analysis does not account for sexual fluidity (which she herself only tentatively touches upon with her uncertain 'Factor 6') or for changing desires, identifications, and context-contingent sexualities across a lifetime. Whereas Diamond does account for these, she nonetheless still adheres to a notion of a core orientation, which, for many of the women participants in this study would not appear to be the case. And of course neither Kitzinger nor Diamond contextualise the regulatory and socio-cultural contexts in which different discursive possibilities have been in/accessible.

These subtleties, nuances, particularities, and relational contingencies of sexuality narratives among the women participants are significant in and of themselves, and for the insights they can offer to the complexities of gender/sexuality discourse. They also have implications for later life, informing how a woman will experience her sexual identity/sexuality in the context of the ageing experience, which will be explored shortly.

Men: atomistic, essentialistic, accounts of binary sexual identities

By contrast with the women's complex, plural and varied narratives of sexuality performance and construction, the men's sexuality narratives were far more

atomistic, essentialistic and based on binary constructions of sexual identity, i.e. 'gay' or 'straight'. The men's discourse engaged overwhelmingly with 'before and after themes': personal (before and after 'coming out' as a gay man, 'before and after' a heterosexual relationship, 'before and after' being a monk), socio-legal (before and after criminalisation and pathologisation) and a combination of both (one informing the other). There was a predominant permanent identity narrative among the men participants, i.e. *always* having had a sense of difference in terms of sexuality, or *always* knowing they were gay (whether then openly performing as such) or retrospectively realising they had *always* been gay. This sense of a constant unchanging sexuality, that was about both orientation (desire) and identity (core sense of self), was very different from the more contingent, relational narratives of the women participants.

Unsurprisingly, the narratives of the men were informed by the historical criminalisation, pathologisation and stigmatisation of same-sex relationships between men.

> From first realisations of oncoming sexuality, and of course there were no discussions about it, you thought you were the only one in the world.… I was brought up in a society where religion's very important … the whole thrust of religion was that it was wicked and wrong. And of course it was unlawful, it was illegal, so no teachers talked about it, not anybody had anything positive to say about it.… The isolation of it … was total.
>
> (Billy, aged 61, 'Breaking Out')

Billy is highlighting the key role school and church played in the silencing of non-heterosexual sexualities, and how the shadows of illegality and sin led to a sense of complete isolation. This extract from Lewis's interview offers further insights in this regard:

> I always remember sitting on a train, there was a newspaper there, and there was this scandal, I think it was a spy scandal, and this newspaper … said 'This is what a homosexual looks like' and it had the picture of the person spread out on the front page [laughs]. And that was my sort of upbringing of being gay.… I grew up to think that being heterosexual is the only thing.
>
> (Lewis, aged 65, 'Out Early')

For Lewis, then, the only discursive practices in popular culture about men who were sexually attracted to men was in relation to crime, scandal and 'Othering', which he understood as a form of compulsory heterosexuality which was at dissonance with his own desires.

Growing political resistance and increasing opportunities for affirmative 'gay' identities in the context of an increasingly politicised rights-orientated discourse (Cant & Hemmings, 2010) is reflected in those men who engaged in emancipatory narratives involving a 'coming out' process. Bob, for example, had a girlfriend in his late teens and early twenties, but was struggling to come to terms

with what he knew to be his 'true' sexual identity. He movingly describes the experience of 'coming home' when joining the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) in his early twenties:

> I remember the first thing that happened was that I just burst into tears. I had come home. And I remember being held, being cuddled and caressed, by people who'd been through what I'd been through … I just burst into tears, and by the end of that meeting, I was a fully fledged member of the Gay Liberation Front.
>
> (Bob, aged 60, 'Breaking Out')

The GLF gave Bob discursive and performative space to engage with an affirmative gay identity, one which he had not previously been able to acknowledge to himself. By contrast, Alastair, 15 years older than Bob, and already engaged in same-sex relationships before the rights movement, found the movement a place to be able to express an identity he already recognised, but in a newly legitimising way: 'When Gay Lib happened, [when I was in my thirties] I just thought I have been waiting all my life for this … I just want to be out, to be who I am really' (Alastair, aged 76, 'Out Early'). For Alastair, then, the movement created a discursive (and performative) space to express in more public, collective, ways his true self – 'who I am really' – of which he was already aware. This sense of the importance of the freedom to express – discursively/and performatively – an authentic self is most explicit in this extract from Phil's interview:

> I have two birthdays … my biological one is 62 now [and the other one] is 31. That's the day I came out.… I always say that my life started at 31, and everything else before was just a mechanical warm-up.… In terms of physical sex, sublimating, I think is the psychology word.
>
> (Phil, aged 62, 'Breaking Out')

So, for Phil, when he 'came out' he was literally 'born again' (not in a Christian evangelical sense), feeling able to express a (legitimised) truth he already knew about himself but had concealed. While, for Alastair, a politicised identification gave him additional ways of discursively producing a sexuality he had previously selectively disclosed to others, for Phil, openly identifying as gay was a transformational moment symbolising a completely new public mobilisation of his sexual identity.

The revival of a stigmatised sexual identity during the AIDs era (as outlined in Chapter 1) was reflected in Billy's narrative:

> The HIV crisis, when it first started, those hideous front pages, and you feel contaminated yourself. It didn't matter whether you were HIV or AIDS, but you feel contaminated by it. 'You're one.' People were asking if you can catch AIDS from the chalice at church. You couldn't go to gay bars, go

> there, you'll catch it. It was treated like a modern day leprosy, that was how it was, it was horrible.
>
> (Billy, aged 60, 'Breaking Out')

Billy is describing the stigma-based connotations of gay sexuality through the linkages with HIV/AIDS. In a sense, gay men, having just overcome or going through the process of overcoming the stigma of criminalisation, entered a new era of stigma, associated with contamination and sickness. Interestingly, Billy is one of only a handful of the men participants to mention the AIDS crisis (political activists Martin and Bob being among the others), suggesting, perhaps, that there is still a degree of stigma attached to discursively engaging with it, both retrospectively, and among those who are now living and ageing, with HIV (Rosenfeld *et al.*, 2012).

Notions of sexual fluidity, even with increasing discursive and performative opportunities, were rare among the men participants. Andrew, for example, said, retrospectively, 'I knew I was gay from being three or four. Yeah, yeah, of course I did.' He got married to a woman, engaging in sexual relationships with men during the marriage. He describes bisexual performance, but in the context of a gay identity:

> It so happened I fell in love with a woman [his wife]. She was everything I wanted … we got on really well. And we had lots and lots of friends. The house was never silent.… And then, it all went pear-shaped when I met David ['I just loved the man. And still do'] … I realised I loved her, but I'd never been 'in love' with her. I mean I was 26 when I married, so I could have sex with man, woman or beast, at that age, not that I did, but you know what I mean.
>
> (Andrew, aged 66, 'Breaking Out')

Despite a retrospective history of sexual fluidity, Andrew never engaged/engages with a bisexual identity narrative. Andrew, like Maureen, has described a shifting sexual performance, but in a different way. While Maureen understands herself to have been bisexual, but to now be lesbian, Andrew has retrospectively constructed the period when he was having sex with both a woman (his wife) and men (on the scene, while still married) as being a truly gay sexuality with the heterosexual acts being due to indiscriminate sexualised behaviour associated with his own youthful sexuality. He discounts his long-term loving sexual relationship with his wife in order to align himself with an enduring gay identity narrative.

Only Sam raised any uncertainty about locating himself in the binary categories of 'gay' and 'straight':

> I knew I had some attractions to same-sex, but also feeling there's some fluidity there. I went to college when I was 19 and I had a girlfriend, and I had no sexual experience with women at that stage. [Friend took him to a gay

> pub] and it opened up another world. And I went back. I also joined CHE a little bit later, and that's how I entered the way of meeting people … I met my partner at 22.
>
> (Sam, aged 61, 'Out Early')

Sam has been with his civil partner for 37 years, and mobilises a gay identity. Early on in their relationship, they separated briefly and Sam had an affair with a woman. He ended it because she was married (to a man): 'But it still ticks through my mind. I just wondered whether, if things had been different, I don't know … I've always thought there are degrees of feeling and degrees of passion and of intimacy' (Sam, aged 61, 'Out Early'). So, here we can see the suggestion of sexual fluidity and of something beyond the limited possibilities of binary discourse (Esterberg, 2002) available to Sam over 30 years ago.

Derek is the only participant to express ambivalence about both his sexuality and his gender identity. Aged 61, he has been married to women twice and has three children. He had no prior sexual encounters with men until he left his second wife in 1999, when he was 48, and began 'experimenting' with sexual relationships with men, soon identifying as gay:

> So I thought, well, I'll experiment. I rang up one of these numbers you get in the local papers, and the rest, as they say, is history. You know, you talk to a straight fella, would you consider doing this with another fella, 'Oh no! Don't be so disgusting!' I did it, and it was wonderful. But I don't know if I identify as gay. If George Clooney was to walk across there, I wouldn't think 'Cor, look at that, or, or, get your trousers off George' … [gay is] it's the easiest way of identifying myself. I'm certainly not hetero.
>
> (Derek, aged 61, 'Finding Out')

Derek describes himself as a cross-dresser:

> A dress! It just drops off you. If I've got through to the gas board, and I've got to argue with them on the phone about the bill, if I put a dress on, I'm so much calmer. There's one lad that I see who likes me to dress. Or I'll just get up one day if I'm not working and I'll think, oh yes, I'll put a dress on today. And I've got a postman … and he's seen me dressed in some, well, a dozen different costumes, I mean I don't have a lot.… Doesn't even bat an eyelid. I'll stand there in a dress, and we'll chat.
>
> (Derek, aged 61, 'Finding Out')

Derek has an ambivalent gender identity: 'I don't know what my gender identity is now. I think if it was 30 years ago, I might … have sought gender reassignment' (Derek, aged 61, 'Finding Out'). In relation to his understanding of his gender identity and sexuality, then, underneath Derek's identification as a gay man he has an underlying uncertainty in relation to both, and being caught in the need to categorise himself: 'I don't like being labelled for anything'.

The narratives of the gay men participants, on the whole, however, engage far more with binary narratives of 'before and after', the criminalised 'homosexual' of old compared with the more recently liberated gay man, and the navigation of stigma through and by both. The emphasis on stigma in their narratives in particular echoes the work of a number of different authors, including: Dana Rosenfeld's account of dis/accredited identities (Rosenfeld, 2003); Peter Robinson's observations of the increasing opportunities to mobilise a legitimised identity among younger gay men compared with their older counterparts (Robinson, 2008); Hammack and Cohler's account of the repositioning of gay men's stories from 'the shadows of subordination to a place of positively affirmed identity' (Hammack & Cohler, 2011, p. 172); De Vries's observations of the enduring significance of the navigation of stigma in older gay men's (and lesbians') lives (De Vries, 2014); and Plummer's account of the shift from 'Criminal, sick, closeted worlds' to 'Gay liberation worlds' and to 'Cyber queer worlds and the post-closet world' (Plummer, 2010, p. 175).

The men's narratives also offer new insights. First, unlike the women in the study, some of whom have mobilised a gender/sexuality queer narrative in later life, with the exception of Derek, none of the men do. Second, while 'coming out' is a significant element of all of the men's narratives, it is far more differentiated by cohort among the women. The 'Later Performance' women who do not mobilise an identity narrative also do not mobilise a 'coming out' discourse at all. Previous authors have suggested that the decline in the mobilisation of a 'coming out' narrative is generational. Plummer's has suggested, in terms of gay men, that 'the new generation finds less and less difficulty in coming out or, indeed, even the need to come out' (Plummer, 2010, p. 175). Heaphy, Smart and Einarsdottir (2013) have suggested that 'coming out' is less significant in the narratives of 'younger' same-sex couples for whom it has not so often involved disruptions to biological family relationships. My findings complicate these narratives by showing that some older generations of women also do not feel the need to 'come out' and also (see Chapter 5) have not experienced disruptions to biological family ties, suggesting that some older as well as younger women are experiencing increased options in the discursive and performative production of sexuality in current socio-legal times.

Third, the contrast between the narratives among the men and women participants would suggest that those authors who seek to mobilise a universal ageing sexuality narrative for both LGBNL women and GB(NL) men may be at risk of conflating two different sets of processes. And, in that conflation, it is the atomistic, essentialist, emancipatory narratives more common to gay-identifying men which would appear to have been privileged and the more relational, contingent, fluid, elective narratives of LGBNL women which have been obscured.

Ageing, gendered, sexual identities/sexualities

Having now located how the participants understand their (gendered) sexualities/sexual identities, we can turn to what ageing means to them.

Embodied ageing: functionality and fear

Participants understood older age itself in relative terms:

> It depends what you mean by old age. You know, people in my age, in their sixties, are still fairly active and not really thinking too much about the long term. But some of the men who come to [support group] are in their eighties, and their concerns are about care. Will there be any prejudice in sheltered housing [and so on]?
>
> (Bernice, aged 60, 'Finding Out')

> I think there's kind of ageing and there's kind of, being old. I think, I think, I don't have any problem ageing as I am now, it's when you start thinking about things like, you know, going into an old people's home, or even into sheltered housing or something like that, that one is afraid.
>
> (Jennifer, aged 62, 'Lesbian by Choice')

Bernice and Jennifer are highlighting how different older-age standpoints have different implications in terms of ageing concerns. The embodied experience of ageing can sensitise an individual to ageing issues:

> Lots of my friends are starting to fall ill. I've got arthritic knees. I have a friend [detail] who is 12 years younger than me and has bladder cancer. So lots of little things like that are happening which rather makes me focus me on 'fuck paying the mortgage back, have some holidays'.
>
> (Phil, aged 62, 'Breaking Out')

Phil is commenting on how ill-health and age-related physical problems can sensitise an individual to issues of ageing. Levels of physical and/or cognitive functioning – not necessarily correlated with chronological age itself – are also linked to the extent to which ageing is perceived as problematic. So, Ellen, aged 64 ('Late Performance'), active and mobile, declared 'I think I'd always, I don't know, maybe I'm naive, I think I'd always demand my rights, my independence, my dignity'. By contrast, Diana, only five years older than Ellen, and until recently very active herself (in fact supporting slightly older friends with care needs), now suffers from a painful leg condition which limits her mobility, which means she needs help both at home and if she wants to go out. Diana reflected:

> I'm very sad sometimes. And anxious and fearful. Having to contemplate if I have to live with a disability, what's it going to be like. Because I'm finding hospitals and things like that overwhelming. I'm vulnerable sometimes, not being able to fight my corner.… And I wonder who is going to advocate for me when I am in that position? I am going to have to depend on other people. And I want those people I depend on to recognise my difference and acknowledge what that might mean to me.
>
> (Diana, aged 69, 'Breaking Out')

Diana's concerns about dependency needs have been made salient by her recent injury and incapacitation. She also experiences a heightened sense of vulnerability due to limited informal social support. Single, 'out' since early adulthood, she has no intergenerational family relationships. Ellen, by contrast, only in a same-sex relationship in the last few years, has not only her (younger) partner, but also her children as potential sources of support. Diana has close friends, but she and her friends (of similar ages) are all beginning to need extra support at around the same time. Moreover, unlike Ellen, in the 'Later Performance' cohort, Diana's fears about dealing with institutions is exacerbated by an experience as a young adult (she is in the 'Breaking Out' cohort) when she was expelled from the Navy because of her sexuality:

> And next thing I knew, I get called up in front of the officer in charge and charged with being a lesbian. So, in terms of being out, I was outed in two ways, I was out of my job, out of my career, out of my place to live, out of my culture, everything. And within weeks, I was out of the services, at only 28.
>
> (Diana, aged 69, 'Breaking Out')

Diana's fear of needing formal care provision is informed by her earlier experience of exclusion from the Navy and a whole way of life because of her sexuality. Thus experiences of ageing are informed by multiple factors: embodied, relational and past history and cohort, with both past and present, intersect to shape experiences of ageing among older LGBNL individuals.

Social ageing

Changing social status: losses and gains

Participants' understandings of changing social status were informed partly by cohort. Those who had been 'out' and/or in same-sex relationships over an extended period of time had lived through dramatic changes to their own social status across their lifetimes. Those who had 'come out' and/or formed a same-sex relationship in most recent years were looking at those changes in relation to other people's histories rather than their own:

> I think there's probably still a lot of lesbians and gays out there who are frightened to admit to what they are, because of, perhaps, the stigma of what went on years ago. But I think that, to my age group, people are more open about it and more accepting, so the worries are diminishing.
>
> (Bridget, aged 66, 'Late Performance')

> If you've had to live all of your life, or the formative part of your life when you've had to be very circumspect and secretive, that's a very difficult mindset to get out of.… I think people of my generation (up to 70) have had

> more experience of when it hasn't been illegal. Whereas somebody in their eighties or nineties [has not].
>
> (Clifford, aged 66, 'Out Early')

Both of these extracts highlight the significance of cohorts for present day perceptions in relation to openness and safety. However, even among those individuals who had been 'out' and/or in a same-sex relationship for a long while, the changes in social status were understood differently, for some as 'times gained' and for others as 'times lost'. Billy takes the 'times gained' perspective:

> Because if you're my age, you're looking from here, which is an incredibly different place, back into something which is almost impossible, I would have to sit down and reconstruct it now. I've had so long, it seems now, of thinking, 'Well, it's all right, really', that an awful lot of all that other stuff, which was awful, awful to the point of suicidal thinking, for both of us, at different times, it is almost impossible to believe that we're here … Gareth the rugby player, this big hunk of a man coming out and saying 'Oh, I'm a fairy'. Isn't that wonderful? And people didn't laugh and say 'Ugh, go to hell'. So I just can't believe it.
>
> (Billy, aged 60, 'Breaking Out')

So, for Billy, with his very optimistic take on things ('Isn't that wonderful?'), the past is so dissonant with the present that he struggles to reconstruct it. There is such a sharp contrast between his past and his present that it is, for Billy, almost impossible to conceptualise. For Audrey too, the difference between past and present is striking, but her perspective, rather than Billy's 'times gained', is more one of 'times lost':

> I stood at Pride last week. I was very moved, as I always am. I watched the armed forces go by and thought about all the women … who had been terribly oppressed in the armed forces, because they were suspected of being lesbians, or were sacked, or whatever. And I saw the teachers go by under their union banners, and I just wondered, and thought how impossible I would have been when I was a young teacher. And then I actually got very angry because, instead of thinking, oh how wonderful it is that it is different now, I thought why did we have to put up with that crap? If it can be like this now, why did it ever have to be not like this? Because it damaged us. It limited our lives.
>
> (Audrey, aged 67, 'Out Early')

In contrast with Billy, Audrey is concerned with the consequences of a hidden life, and what she understands to be the damage this caused to those individuals who lived in secret (and, of course, those who still do). Long-term self-surveillance and concealment can have implications for mental health in later life, as, for example, Jack observed:

> With my mental health problems, I don't know if it stems from originally, you know, seeing myself as a criminal and an outsider and that, and that had an impact in the problems I've had, even though from the age of 30 I've been open and that. You know, from the age of 30, it's been very hard, thinking you could go to prison, you know, it's an awful feeling, you know, thinking you have to put on a different front, you know.
>
> (Jack, aged 66, 'Breaking Out')

For Jack, then, the cumulative effects of minority stress (DiPlacido, 1998) associated with living under the shadow of criminalisation may have had a detrimental effect on his mental health, echoing the observation that 'to be in the closet is, then, to suffer systematic harm' (Seidman, 2002, p. 30). Those in the 'Out Early' and 'Breaking Out' cohorts are more likely to have been exposed to stigma and its consequences than those in the 'Late Performance' cohorts. This is demonstrated most clearly in the narratives of Tessa and Ellen.

Tessa (aged 58, 'Out Early') and Ellen (aged 64, 'Late Performance') have been together for six years. Their relationship, and civil partnership, has led to a change in perceived social status for each of them in ways which are highly illuminating:

> I think, for me, I have never felt so good about being a lesbian as I do now, and it is Ellen who enabled me to do that … I've not been a particularly bad person, I don't think. You know, I abide by the law, I belong to Amnesty International, I believe in equality for – you know all that – I think I do the right kind of things in my life, and yet I've always known that people think, would think, that I'm not really as good as anybody else. So, I've always had that sort of feeling. And then I met Ellen.… And she says to people, this is Tessa, my partner, and we're open about it. And since that, since we're open with people, we tell people, the response has been fantastic.… People are very open, very welcoming, and it's been wonderful for me.
>
> (Tessa, aged 58, 'Out Early')

Tessa's sense of self-worth has been transformed by her relationship with Ellen and its timing (when they have access to regulatory legitimisation of their relationship) resulting in a shift from a stigmatised identity to one that is more normalised and respectable (Richardson, 2004). Interestingly, however, Ellen, coming from a previous life of heterosexual privilege, now feels she is perceived to have a lowered social status. Ellen's Catholic faith is particularly important to her, and she was surprised, and pleased, when she found tolerance from her Catholic priest when she left her husband after 40 years of an abusive marriage: 'He said you come to the sacraments, you come to Mass … we don't need saints here' (Ellen, aged 64, 'Late Performance'). However, after she went public with her relationship with Tessa, now her civil partner, she received a different response: 'Well, it's quite obvious, I'm not welcome and I shouldn't receive the sacraments.… So, soul in limbo, if you like. An outcast … it's been torture'

(Ellen, aged 64, 'Late Performance'). Ellen feels she has become a 'second-class' citizen:

> But I do think, by and large, lesbians, gays, are second-class citizens. I, socially, am now a second-class citizen, whereas previously, as a married woman, with a profession, Catholic married woman, I was accepted, I was there, there was no echelon of society that wouldn't accept me. Now, because I have stepped away from that false identity, that sham, and keeping up appearances, I'm in a life that really has meaning, but I think, to society, I think it's looked down upon.
>
> (Ellen, aged 64, 'Late Performance')

These two extracts demonstrate the significance of cohorts for issues of recognition in an ageing context. While Tessa, as a lifelong lesbian, has moved from a place of stigma and perceived low social status to a comparatively improved position, for Ellen, her shift from (Catholic) heterosexual privilege to lesbian performance has involved a perceived loss of status. Although she now feels herself to be in a more authentic position ('a life that really has meaning'), Ellen feels that she is 'looked down upon' in the eyes of (heterosexual) others. Tessa is aware of the upward direction in her sense of cultural worth; Ellen of the downward direction of hers. These two perspectives are telling: while a person with a lifelong LGBNL identity/sexuality observes equalities gained, someone with a more recent one may still observe privileges lost.

Loss of social status as sexual beings associated with ageing was a particular theme among some single participants. Two men alluded to lack of visibility as gay men.

> On a daily basis, I have the luxury of not looking like a poof in a lot of people's eyes … I have the luxury of looking like an old man to the kids, so they don't put me in that category…
>
> (Phil, aged 62, 'Breaking Out')

In this extract, Phil describes not being recognised as a gay man by 'kids' as they see him as old and, so, asexual. This, for Phil, reduces the risk of exposure to homophobic abuse: his invisibility makes him feel safer. Donald also spoke of loss of visibility as a sexual being, this time in relation to younger gay men:

> If people look at an older man, it doesn't occur to them that he might be gay, but it doesn't occur to them that he might be straight either. [It bothers me because] I don't see why I shouldn't chat up a pretty young man. Go window shopping.
>
> (Donald, aged 75, 'Breaking Out')

So, for Donald, his diminished visibility involves loss not gain, and that loss is in relation to sexual attractiveness and possibilities for sexual encounters. The

notion of not being seen as sexual was also echoed by several single women participants:

> [I feel I have a] lower market value on the scene … I belong to [lesbian group] and they think I'm a batty old bird, but they indulge me, but there's no question that I'm seen as sexual, you know.
>
> (Ren, aged 63, 'Breaking Out')

> Sex is very nice, and I hope I continue to get it. But it evades you as you get older and it gets more difficult to access, you know … I suppose there's a form of internalised ageism and homophobia as well. And it's what society dictates is sexual, most people don't like to think of old people being sexual, do they?
>
> (Diana, aged 69, 'Out Early')

So, with ageing, LGBNL individuals may feel they are less likely to be seen as sexual beings (as many older heterosexual people also feel). This was more of a concern for single participants who were looking for intimacy, compared with single participants who were not looking for intimacy, and those in couples, who were less likely to be looking for new intimacies. However, while both single women and men participants were aware of a diminishing sexual value, the women also articulate heightened sensitivity to loss of visibility/value as women and as lesbians.

Changing visibility: the lesbian 'Bermuda Triangle'

Women participants spoke about a heightened awareness of the impact of ageing not only in relation to sexual identity/sexuality but also in terms of gender. Here, first, Stella explains:

> I've been out all my life as a lesbian, and never had any qualms or anything about all that. But I still find it hard to say I'm retired. First of all there's the equality thing of not being able to do jobs because I was a girl, and then there's the lesbian and gay switchboard, the campaigning and equal rights and all that sort of thing, and now I'm confronting ageism, and people seeing me as somebody past their retirement date.
>
> (Stella, aged 66, 'Out Early')

So, for Stella, ageing involves entering a new frontier of inequality, related to older age. Audrey also describes a sense of loss of status and visibility associated with age and gender:

> When I was retired, I'd been in a very powerful job, and I'd been very active and quite well known … and when I retired I not only left all that but I also went to live in the country in a place where I was less well known. And I

> remember thinking 'I am not anybody now except an old woman'. I am a small person with white hair. And I tended to be treated in that way and it was very noticeable to me that people treated me very differently then. Until, of course, I opened my mouth … and then there is that dissonance … you can see their eyes and you can see them thinking 'Who is this?' Because you're a little old lady in a raincoat with white hair and then suddenly you say something very bossy, or intelligent or directive … ah, and then they have to put you in a different box…
>
> (Audrey, aged 67, 'Out Early')

Audrey is describing here the sense that loss of status through retirement, and stereotyping based on her appearance, has resulted in her feeling discounted as an 'old woman' by those who do not know her. Stella is surprised to find herself trying to conceal her older age:

> When I was growing up in my activism, and I would see jokey scenes about a woman who won't say how old she is, I said I would never do that. But I do! And I do dye my hair. I don't want people to initially see a grey-haired person and write them off.
>
> (Stella, aged 66, 'Out Early')

Stella's attempts to conceal her ageing by dyeing her hair echoes earlier authorship which has suggested that LGBNL women are not immune to the gendered normativities of embodied ageing (Slevin, 2010) and social pressures to mask ageing (Hurd, Clarke & Griffin, 2008). Among women who had identified as lesbian for a long while, there was also a sense that ageing affected their recognition not only as women but also as lesbians. Cat, aged 63, ('Lesbian by Choice') said, 'I've spoken to women my age and older [and] as we get older as lesbians, we disappear. We're not sure where we go to.'

Audrey has a suggestion about where older lesbians go:

> The common definition of a lesbian is a sexualised definition … particularly, I think, for those of whom are only aware of lesbians as an item in straight men's porn … a lesbian is a person who has sex with other women [and] our cultural definitions of older people is that old people are not sexual.… And we have a lot of trouble dealing with geriatric sex. So, if a lesbian is a sexual idea and an old woman is an asexual idea, then it becomes kind of impossible to think about an older lesbian.… I would say that ageism and sexism and heterosexism … form a kind of Bermuda Triangle into which older lesbians disappear.
>
> (Audrey, aged 67, 'Out Early')

So, according to Audrey's understanding, it is the combined effects of the intersection of ageism and sexism ('an old woman is an asexual idea') and lesbian stereotyping ('lesbian is a sexual idea') that produces old lesbians as unthinkable

and invisible. This is within the broader context of: the historical 'enforced invisibility' (Moonwoman-Baird, 1997, p. 202) of sexuality between women involving a process of 'deliberate non-engagement' in law (Derry, 2007, p. 26); the marginalisation of women's histories in general (Rowbotham, 1973, 1979) and lesbian and bisexual women's histories in particular (Everard, 1986; Duberman, Vicinus & Chauncey, 1990; Faderman, 1979); and by the positioning of 'lesbians' as 'not woman' (Calhoun, 1995) in historical discourse. As far back as 1999, Elise Fullmer and her colleagues observed that 'a combination of prevailing social constructs of sexuality, lesbianism, gender and age serve to make older lesbians invisible both within and outside of the lesbian community' (Fullmer, Shenk & Eastland, 1999, p. 133). More recently, Jane Traies (2009, p. 79) has highlighted the continuing cultural invisibility of older lesbians who are both 'unrepresentable and unseeable' and a recent meta-analysis of studies of older lesbians (Averett, Yoon & Jenkins, 2012) suggested that there are 'triple marginalisation' processes associated with age, gender and sexuality.

This diversification of discourse relating to (older) women's same/both gender sexualities is perceived by some as destabilising notions of a lesbian identity:

> I find as I get older I can't tell who the lesbians are, whereas I never had that problem when I was younger. Now many of them turn out to be mothers and grandmothers, whereas I am not, and I feel that is quite a distinction.… So I find it very hard to relate to older lesbians that have assumed the persona that society expects of them, which is that people first see 'older woman', possibly pensioner, possibly retired, and then they see mum and grandmother, and then possibly they see, right down at the bottom of the list, they might see lesbian, or think lesbian.… It seems that any old person might be a lesbian now. We had to work quite hard at it in my day.
>
> (Stella, aged 66, 'Out Early')

In her assertion that 'any old person might be a lesbian now', Stella is not only referring to previously heterosexually married women with children and grandchildren who now identify as lesbian/are in same-sex relationships. She is also referring to an erosion of politically mobilised lesbian identities (Jeffreys, 1989) that are now, for Stella, becoming blurred in later life.

Ageing and opportunities lost and gained

Ageing involves both gains and losses. The 'Late Performance' women unexpectedly found love with a woman when they were already older women. For Ellen this has involved a new authenticity and a discovery of sexual pleasures she never knew before:

> I mean, even the most basic thing, kissing, I hated, it's crazy isn't it, in my early married days, I hated my husband's kisses, well, the first time Tessa

> kissed, me, stars, the lips fitted, I mean kissing is such a pleasure, how simple is that, and [says to Tessa] I hope you don't mind me talking about this, equally, the lovemaking, the love, is tailor-made, for me.
>
> (Ellen, aged 64, 'Late Performance')

Ellen's delight in the physical pleasures of her relationship with Tessa comes after 40 years of marriage when she was physically and sexually mistreated by her husband, giving her new, and unexpected, joys in later life.

For Vera, ageing gave her a stronger sense of personal security with which to explore new sexual possibilities:

> In a way I didn't struggle with this, I didn't deal with this until I was older, if you see what I mean, so I was kind of settled into my own skin, I didn't really have to talk to anyone about it, except myself and my close friends, until when I was 40 and I started a very public relationship, and a live-in relationship.
>
> (Vera, aged 60, 'Finding Out')

Vera links her smooth transition from a heterosexual to a lesbian/bisexual identity to her maturity and the confidence which came, for her, with age. For Joan, her ageing was also linked to her 'Breaking Out' to embrace the lesbian identity she had hidden for so long. Rather than maturity, however, it was the imminent prospect of retirement: 'We'd been married for 35 years. And I thought I can't go into retirement with this man, I can't' (Joan, aged 67, 'Breaking Out'). Agnes waited even longer, until her husband of 60 years died of old age, before finally declaring herself to be a lesbian when she was 85. She feels she left it too late: 'I'm too old, really now … I wish I was half my age … I'd have a chance of finding a partner. But not now. It's ridiculous to think about it at my age' (Agnes, aged 92, 'Finding Out'). She copes by reading lots of lesbian romances, while remaining (re-)concealed in her sheltered accommodation. Even though Agnes regrets not finding a partner, she has at least declared her authentic sense of self before she dies. There may be other women and men in Joan's and Alice's situations who do not take that last minute leap, their stories staying with them until death, the unheard LGBNL 'Voices on the Margins'.

For some participants ageing, particularly among 'older older' individuals, age meant reduced opportunities. Sally said that she felt as if all her options had run out:

> I think about it constantly. Because when you get to my age, everything narrows, you don't have the options that you had when you were 50. You don't have the energy, you don't have the enthusiasm, you don't have the options.
>
> (Sally, aged 75, 'Breaking Out')

Sally describes feeling that she has fewer choices with age, and that choices diminish in later older age. Donald also felt that his physical and cognitive

ageing was now limiting his activities, including campaigning on older 'LGBT' issues:

> Insofar as I am an activist at all, yes I will take those issues up. But my problem now is that physically, it's difficult. I have difficulty walking, I'm in constant pain, I have bad neuropathy. And you need a certain degree of energy to do that. And so what I tend to do now is provide a bum on seat or turn up and wave a stick, or something like that. But as far as organising goes … take a major leadership role, no … I want time to myself … I know my brain is slowing … [it] doesn't worry me. But does tend to stop me taking on anything new.
>
> (Donald, aged 75, 'Finding Out')

Donald is describing how physical and cognitive deterioration has an impact on engagement in activities, including activism. Sally and Donald, describing age-related restrictions, are in their mid-seventies, and Agnes, who feels she has left things too late, is in her nineties, whereas Vera and Ellen are describing renewed opportunities in their forties and fifties. This shows again how different ages under the 'older age' umbrella, together with their embodied contingencies, give varying, highly individualised meanings to LGBNL ageing.

Concluding remarks

Using the new cohort model has helped to show how the discursive and performative production of sexuality is temporally located, both in terms of personal chronological times, socio-historical times, and intersections and interactions between the two. This speaks profoundly to issues of recognition, of non-/mis-recognition, of changing recognition, in terms of shifting cultural worth, and of the need (or not) to mobilise a sexual identity for strategic political purposes. The cohort model takes into account both identity-based and non-identity-based sexuality narratives, and sexual identities/sexualities which have been produced through and against differing age standpoints and temporal contexts. In doing so it has also helped to highlight the gendered differences in now-ageing LGBNL sexual identities and sexualities. While ageing is experienced in the context of sexuality by the men participants, it is understood by women participants to be a matter of *both* gender *and* sexuality, each contributing to a sense of cultural devaluation, especially among single women. In this way, through the lens of intersectionality, older LGBNL women experience ageing differently from older LGBNL men *and* between and among each other, contingent upon the meaning(s) and significance they give to their sexualities/sexual identities. Differences between and among older LGBNL women and men, have been addressed here in terms of individual recognition. In the next chapter they are considered in relation to kinship, in terms of both recognition *and* resources.

4 Constructing kinship

Introduction

This chapter explores older LGBNL kinship and equality in terms of both recognition and resources. Recognition is understood here as an equality issue in two main ways. First, these particular cohorts of older LGBNL people have seen the legal recognition of same-sex relationships change dramatically across their lifetimes, and the different meanings they assign to this are informed both by ageing and by cohorts. Second, older lesbians described gendered stereotypes attached to reproductive normativity – 'compulsory grandmotherhood' – as playing a powerful role in their social mis-recognition in older age. This is both lesbians who are childfree but are assumed to be heterosexual and childwith, and lesbians who are childwith but are assumed to be heterosexual because of this. In terms of resources, the findings show that uneven access to intergenerational social support is a key distinguisher in the lives of older LGBNL people. This is not only compared with older heterosexual people, who are more likely to have intergenerational support, but also between those older LGBNL people who are childfree and those who are childwith. I argue that intergenerationality is central to understanding inequalities at the intersection of ageing, gender and sexuality, both in terms of (gendered) recognition and access to affective resources in later life.

Cohorts, relationship recognition and the salience of ageing

In Chapter 2 I highlighted the under-recognition of friendship in law. Significantly, there was a profound silence from participants on seeking further relationship recognition in law, above and beyond that of partnership recognition. There appeared to be no appetite for the legal recognition (and regulation) of friendship. This would appear to support previous research which suggested that lesbian and gay 'families of choice' are based on reciprocity, mutual affection and trust, and a distinct lack of a sense of obligation or duty, and are particularly resistant to notions of formal legal ties and responsibilities, and to financial commitments (Weeks *et al.*, 2001).

For some participants, partnership recognition itself was already a step too far. This was most clearly articulated by Cat, aged 63, and Jennifer, aged 62

(both from the 'Lesbian by Choice' cohort), Alice, aged 60 ('Out Early') and Iris, aged 61 ('Breaking Out'). All embedded their arguments in feminist discourse linking marriage with gender and sexuality, for example:

> I think part of the delight, if we have any payoff for being gay, I think it's our struggle to be as we are. I don't really want to have to hang on to some sort of heterosexist notion of being tied together.
>
> (Alice, aged 60, 'Out Early')

'I'm an old hippy feminist … I'm anti all that stuff' (Iris, aged 61, 'Breaking Out'). Jennifer was the most vehement in her opposition to relationship recognition in any form:

> I don't like relationship recognition. Let's just get rid of this … I don't like the law coming in.… The law doesn't work for women, it doesn't work for minorities generally … so I'm absolutely uninterested in relationship recognition.
>
> (Jennifer, aged 62, 'Lesbian by Choice')

Jennifer's viewpoint raises an important counter-narrative involving not only opposition to civil partnership[1] but also to wider forms of relationship recognition (Barker, 2012). Jennifer sees law as gendered, and, in its gendering, disadvantageous to women. Jennifer also expressed concerns about couple privilege:

> I'm absolutely uninterested in relationship recognition. I think the way it's been in our society, it's about flaunting the fact that not only are you sort of within the legal regulation, but someone loves me, I've got someone, I've got someone, you haven't. I have that. It's like you're doubly privileged. So that's what I don't hold with.
>
> (Jennifer, aged 62, 'Lesbian by Choice')

Here Jennifer (who is in a couple herself, but not a civil partnership) is raising the issue of the privilege of both couple status and legitimised couple status. This was a concern for Billy too:

> When you get to the stage of civil partnership, every gay person doesn't have to do it, it's not for everybody, that's not the thing, it's not some kind of 'Oh, I'm better than the guy who shags around'. No, it's not that. It's not that at all. I don't give a stuff whether they shag around. If that's what makes them happy, then, though it probably won't. But I'm not coming down with a first- and second-class agenda among gay people. I wouldn't have that. Absolutely not.
>
> (Billy, aged 61, 'Breaking Out')

This extract can be read in two ways. Billy is saying that people do not have to engage with the heteronormative hierarchy of relational practice just because

legal recognition has come along. But he also recognises the possibilities that increased inclusions for respectable (Richardson, 2000b) coupled gay men may lead to increased exclusions (Smart, 1989) for more 'unrespectable' gay men. Billy is clearly anxious that his own engagement with a legalised relationship form might somehow collude with that privilege/disadvantage.

The majority of participants saw the formal legal recognition of same-sex relationships in a very progressive light, nuanced by their particular cohorts and age standpoints. For those of a comparatively short period of engagement with same-sex issues, who have formed their first same-sex relationships following the Civil Partnership Act 2004 (e.g. Marcia, Angela, Yvette, Ellen), access to civil partnerships appeared to be somewhat unremarkable in their discourse: they were accessing something already available before they formed their same-sex partnerships and that had never been unavailable to them. For those who had 'come out' and/or been in same-sex relationships prior to civil partnerships, i.e. when there had been no legal mechanism for their formal legal recognition, civil partnerships were much more remarkable:

> Because if you're my age … it is almost impossible to believe that we're here.… I just can't believe it. Civil partnerships? Can you imagine? Never, never.
>
> (Billy, aged 61, 'Breaking Out')

For Billy, access to relationship recognition within his lifetime is almost impossible to comprehend, indicating just how quickly socio-legal change in relationship to LGBNL rights has occurred. For Jennifer, despite her opposition to relationship regulation, she has observed how civil partnerships have contributed to social change:

> I do think in the last couple of decades the whole terrain has changed. I do think the Civil Partnership Act played a big part in that, not that I was in favour of it, I just thought it was a waste of time – but I do think it made lesbians and gays very, very visible and it did make it possible for lots of people to be visible in their families and in the workplace and [trained] a whole range of people and services across the country to recognise, which they never did before, so many people just didn't see, you would know that someone was lesbian or gay.
>
> (Jennifer, aged 63, 'Lesbian by Choice')

So for Jennifer, approaching civil partnership from a comparatively longer period identifying as a lesbian (than, say, those LGBNL individuals in the 'Late Performance' cohort), her understanding is that it has played a key part in increasing LGBNL individuals' inclusion in family and social spaces. Jennifer frames this in terms of equality of recognition, in terms of both visibility and social status.

Participants who had been involved in lesbian and gay rights activism saw access to partnership recognition as a hugely political as well as a deeply

personal act (Peel & Harding, 2004). Martin, for example, who has been with his partner Bob for 32 years, said about their civil partnership ceremony:

> It was an important political thing, it was important to recognise our love and our relationship, but it was a milestone in civil rights … a political message of being out.
>
> (Martin, aged 62, 'Out Early')

Here Martin emphasises the significance of the mix of love and politics (Smart 2008) in the context of citizenship discourse (Harding, 2011). He and his partner met through politics, have been lifelong gay rights activists, their resistance has suffused their relationship, and their relationship has suffused their politics (Clarke, Burgoyne & Burns, 2007). For them both, access to partnership recognition is a culmination of both their personal and political lives. Sam also articulated a political reasoning for entering into a civil partnership after being with his partner for 37 years:

> I thought it was important. I thought it was an important statement to make. A public statement and an important statement to make for the progression of LGBT rights. I think we're still not there yet in this country. There's still the heterosexism, the assumption that everyone is heterosexual, and I think that if more and more engage with partnerships and legal aspects of partnership, I think it becomes part of the ether of what's around in society. My partner would say he primarily did it for his pension rights, for financial reasons. Fine, that's OK. That was his concern, about financial security [for me, because his health is 'not so good'].
>
> (Sam, aged 61, 'Out Early')

Sam highlights the salience of ageing in relation to civil partnerships, on several levels. For Sam himself, it was important to enter into a civil partnership as a political act, and an act of resistance, in support of 'LGBT' rights, in the context of the many, many years when he and his partner had not had access to relationship recognition in law. But for his partner, his decision was more informed by the embodied experience of an ageing, ailing body, and wanting to ensure financial security for Sam when he dies, echoing Shipman and Smart's 'everyday reason' (Shipman & Smart, 2007, p. 16) for forming civil partnerships out of a sense of mutual (financial) responsibility for partners. Judith and her partner, now deceased, also formed a civil partnership for utilitarian reasons, as she explained, 'Completely practical reasons. She wanted me to have her pension when she died. And I wanted to be the next of kin if anything happened to her' (Judith, aged 71, 'Finding Out').

The wish to protect the surviving partner, both materially and in terms of power and authority to be present while a loved one is dying, and to have formal legal authority after that loved one's death, informed many participants' narratives:

> There was the whole business about if you haven't got a civil partnership, what rights do you have in law, and if one of us took ill or one of us died, you know the threat that, we'd seen the film then about the two women … where the nephew comes in, and takes everything, so I think that was part of the motivation, to see that everything was legally there.
>
> (Tessa, aged 58, 'Out Early')

For Tessa and Ellen, then, as for many other participants, making sure they had rights in terms of end-of-life and inheritance was of key significance (Shipman and Smart's utilitarian 'legal recognition'). Among the more privileged couples, those with greater disposable wealth, the wish to secure inheritance privileges for partners (see Chapter 2) was a particular concern. Tessa also mentions the film about two women, which was subsequently clarified later in the interview as *If These Walls Could Talk 2*.[2] A number of lesbian-identifying participants made reference to this film and the spectre of being excluded from a loved one's final days, and from access to property and funerals upon death. This fear was particularly strong among those individuals who had engaged longest with LGBNL identification and performance. In this way there was a combination of practical 'go to' (seeking legal protection) and 'go from' (avoiding legal vulnerability in the face of possible exclusion) reasons for forming civil partnerships, both constituting acts of resistance.

While for many of the men participants civil partnerships meant increasing social status and legitimisation, among the women participants, civil partnerships were also understood as a means of increasing visibility:

> They might have the view of you as two elderly ladies living together, they never actually do anything you know, it's companionship, that sort of thing. But if you actually say 'we're civil partners' then it implies that there is more to your relationship than they actually think.
>
> (Moira, aged 75, 'Out Early')

Civil partnerships enabled Moira and Violet to become visible as partners, resisting invisibility reproduced by gendered heteronormative assumptions that, as two older women living together, they are just 'companions'. In this sense, ageing gives civil partnerships an added equality dimension, which goes beyond Shipman and Smart's 'public statement of commitment' to a relationship to one which renders that relationship visible in the first place. Importantly, Moira and Violet had moved from a need to conceal to a need to be seen, reflecting changing social times. For Billy, by contrast, the issue, while also a matter of recognition, was less one of visibility and more of cultural value:

> Well, we'd been together over 30 years at that stage. When it came in for the first time in my life I felt somehow rather validated. Someone was saying, look, you're not a wee shit. It was a very, very big thing. You'd been told, to start off, that you were a criminal. You were going to hell.

> There was nothing about you that was worth bloody while, didn't matter what you did, you were never going to come to anything. And then there was somebody saying, yeah, you two, you can do this, you can sign this piece of paper, and it's public, you've got to put this notice on the board. Everybody can see it. That's bloody important.
>
> (Billy, aged 61, 'Breaking Out')

Billy is describing the significance for him of the shift from stigma to social inclusion and validation. This theme of increased social status post-civil partnership (Shipman & Smart, 2007) was particularly evident among the narratives of the gay men. It may be that the loss of power for gay men, through stereotypical hetero-masculine privilege (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009), and its partial recovery through the legitimisation of civil partnership (Green, 2012), may result in greater emphasis on the significance of status, and resistance to stigma, among gay men than LGBNL women (who remain marginalised by gendered power differentials). This may be more profound for those gay men who had been out and/or in a same-sex relationship for the longest periods of time who had also experienced this comparative lack of status for longest.

The women participants, by contrast, had a much more diverse, and for some, ambivalent, engagement with civil partnerships. For example,

> Well, I really wanted to. It felt like a lot of work had been done by a lot of people [detail] to get us to that point, and I felt I wanted to honour all of that. It wasn't to tie Daphne down at all, because there wasn't any need for that, it was just to honour the work that had been done to get us to that point.
>
> (Sandra, aged 61, 'Breaking Out')

Sandra articulates here both a celebration of the political achievement, but also a strong wish to distance herself from, and thereby resist, patriarchal 'ownership' connotations of heterosexual marriage (Barker, 2012). Her civil partner Daphne, also expressed this distinction:

> I used to say to people, I don't know if you know the line from the Joni Mitchell song, 'We don't need no piece of paper from the city hall, keeping us tied and true' and I didn't ever feel that we needed that, because I feel we're stuck with each other for life really.… But I agree with what Sandra was saying, why wouldn't you do it when so many people have done so much to get us there.
>
> (Daphne, aged 60, 'Out Early')

In this extract Daphne, quoting a line from a Joni Mitchell[3] song reflects the anxieties expressed by those women participants with particularly strong feminist allegiances that they might be perceived as 'selling out' and colluding with the heterosexist relationship model of marriage by entering into civil partnerships (Goodwin & Butler, 2009) and their ambivalence (Harding, 2008) in choosing to

do so. This was also echoed by Judith, whose civil partner died last year, explaining their preference for civil partnerships over marriage:

> We both really didn't want anything that was like marriage. We'd both been married, and we didn't want that. If people want to, fine, but we didn't. I think 'civil partnership' is nice and clean and different enough to be OK.
>
> (Judith, aged 71, 'Finding Out')

This is an example of the very clear wish for relationship recognition that is different from heterosexual marriage. By contrast, the 'Late Performance' participants who located their sexualities in relational contexts, rather than political ones, particularly those who had previously been married to men, desired the very opposite, namely the 'sameness' of heterosexual marriage recognition. Maureen, who was previously married to a man, explained:

> I wanted to legitimise our relationship. There have been occasions when, you know, you call each other girlfriends, but it's not, it's much more than that and even the word partner.… I just felt it legitimised our relationship … and it was a way of saying, this is us, this is what we are, this is what we do, I want to make a noise about it, and really celebrate it and have a date. When you get married, you have a proper date for a proper anniversary. Let's face it we've all been used to that, haven't we? It's just normal.
>
> (Maureen, aged 62, 'Finding Out')

Maureen is expressing resistance to same-sex relationships being treated as different and 'less than' heterosexual relationships. When she says 'we've all been used to that' she is speaking from the standpoint of having lived a large part of her adult life within the framework of a heterosexual identity. Many older LGBNL individuals have not 'been used to that' at all.

Bridget also wants the sameness of heterosexual marriage discourse:

> I introduce Liz as my wife, you know, but really she's not, she's my civil partner, so, to be able to actually say legally that she's my wife would be really, really nice … I think it's about possession, isn't it? Because she is mine, and I want people to know she's mine and she spoken for.
>
> (Bridget, aged 66, 'Late Performance')

While Bridget wants to establish ownership of Liz, for some women the notion of ownership was particularly problematic:

> I do have a little bit of an issue with people calling themselves husbands and wives, in a homosexual or a heterosexual relationship, because there's an element of ownership … Sandra's not my wife, she's my partner. There's something more equal about being a partner than being a wife.
>
> (Daphne, aged 60, 'Out Early')

So Daphne, whose sexuality is located in feminist discourse, resists likening her civil partnership to marriage, because she wants to avoid associations of ownership. Bridget, by contrast, who ambivalently identifies as bisexual and locates her sexuality far less in feminism, feels civil partnerships are not enough because she wants to be able to claim ownership of her partner.

There was a very clear split among the interviewees between those who were in favour of same-sex marriage, and those who were not. The feminists who objected to civil partnerships, not surprisingly, also objected to same-sex marriage. Some participants thought civil partnerships, and the recognition and rights they afforded, were sufficient, e.g. 'We've done it. In all senses it is a marriage, isn't it? (Maureen, aged 62, 'Finding Out', referring to her civil partnership with Joan). Those who were in favour of same-sex marriage located their arguments in 'equality of opportunity' contexts:

> We should be able to get married, so that homosexuals are on the same footing as heterosexuals.
>
> (Jack, aged 66, 'Breaking Out')

> That's my armed forces argument, not that I want people to go into the armed forces, because I'd rather we did things a different way, but, if it's there, we should all have equal access to it, and the same goes for marriage. If it's there, it should be given to us as much as anyone else.
>
> (Martin, aged 62, 'Out Early')

> It is a matter of equality, it isn't a matter of discrimination. Either people are equal or they're not. Why can't heterosexual people have civil relationships if they want to?
>
> (Alastair, aged 76, 'Out Early')

Jack, Martin and Alastair are emphasising equality in terms of being entitled to access the same institution as heterosexual couples. Other gay men participants – but not LGBNL women – located marriage in terms of procreation, which they in turn positioned in terms of heterosexual relationships:

> I'm quite content that a marriage is between people who are going to procreate and produce children. I don't see why my partnership would have to be called a marriage in the conventional sense. Why can't we just say it's a celebration of being together and leave it at that?
>
> (Ken, aged 64, 'Out Early')

> Because I don't think marriage is necessary. I don't think marriage is right between two people of the same sex.… Because of the children thing…
>
> (Arthur, aged 60, 'Out Early')

What is interesting here is that it was the men participants (far fewer of whom had children) who showed a sense of disconnect between child-rearing and

same-sex relationships, compared with the women participants who did not (and who were much more likely to have children).

Participants' narratives about partnership recognition highlight the place of ageing in equality discourse in general, and narratives of resistance in particular, in relation to kinship. First, civil partnerships have particular meanings for older LGBNL individuals who had been 'out' and/or in long-term partnerships for the longest period of time. Living long enough to see, and be a part of, this dramatic change, and in particular the success of their personal and political resistance to formal relationship inequality, held particular significance for them.

Second, the utilitarian benefits of civil partnerships have particular salience to older LGBNL individuals in general for several reasons: because of the greater imminence of death and dying; because, for those in couples in particular, of the heightened need to ensure legal protections for surviving partners made more pertinent by that imminence, particularly at times of age-related ill-health. It is not that these issues are not also relevant to younger LGBNL individuals, but that they become foregrounded for older individuals who are coming closer to their own and/or their partners' deaths.

Third, understandings of civil partnerships are nuanced by gendered age standpoints in several ways: older lesbians being informed by their experiences of invisibility both as individuals and in their partnerships (recognition in terms of visibility); older gay men being more informed by issues of status (recognition in terms of cultural value); feminists (particularly those of the 'Lesbian by Choice' cohort) ambivalent about and/or rejecting of the formal legal regulation of relationships (resistance to patriarchy); previously married 'Finding Out' and 'Late Performance' women keen to (re-)experience the sameness of status and value (but not oppression) for their same-sex partnerships as that of their previous heterosexual marriages. In this way, ageing gives shape to these 'before and after' perspectives on civil partnerships.

The narratives of participants in couples also confirmed the entrenchment of the conjugal couple as a primary and prioritised relationship form in modern LGBNL kinship discourse. This again echoes the work of Heaphy, Smart and Einarsdottir (2013), studying same-sex couples under the age of 35, who observed 'While socialising with friends was valued, the couple was almost universally seen as the most important relationship' (Heaphy *et al.*, 2013, pp. 1363–1365). However, their research was only with couples, so they were unlikely to get non-couple orientated perspectives. The participants in my research were a mix of singles and couples, and while for some of them a partnership was at the heart of their kinship, for others it was not. This is addressed next.

Diverse kinship formations: beyond 'family of choice'

In this section I consider kinship in terms of composition and the prioritisation of relationships within that composition. In doing so I complicate, and to a certain extent contradict, 'families of choice' discourse. 'Families of choice'

discourse originated in Kath Weston's (1991) work, where she suggested that 'LGB' individuals used the term family not to describe biological family but rather partners, friends and children. Weston also suggested that families of friends were more fluid than biological family networks, and had a stronger element of choice to them. This was developed further by Weeks *et al.* (2001) who suggested that lesbian and gay 'families of choice' are based on reciprocity, mutual affection and trust, and a distinct lack of a sense of obligation or duty. However, more recent work conducted by Heaphy, Smart and Einarsdottir (2013) with young same-sex couples under the age of 35 had suggested a decoupling of friendship from notions of family and increased prioritisation over the nuclear family form and biological families.

Pahl and Spencer's work on 'personal communities' (Pahl & Spencer, 2004; Spencer & Pahl, 2006) has identified six different types of kinship formations: (1) friend-like (more friends than biological family and a wide spread of types of friends); (2) friend-enveloped (a strong outer ring of friends but with biological family, partner and children – 'family' – prioritised at the centre of the personal community; (3) family-oriented ('family' outnumbering friends and also prioritised over friendship); (4) family dependent ('family' outnumber friends and are also relied upon for support); (5) partner focussed (emphasis on partner as prioritised relationship with friends and extended family having secondary significance); and (6) professional dependent (small personal communities with professional relationships at the centre) (Pahl & Spencer, 2004).

Rather than reflecting either the earlier 'families of choice' work or the more recent 'return to the family' narratives suggested Heaphy, Smart and Einarsdottir's research, my analysis reflects something more nuanced and more closely relating to Pahl and Spencer's analysis. I suggest that older LGBNL kinship composition is shaped by cohort, gender and intergenerationality, and that it is far more diverse, and involving blended families, than previous researchers have proposed. However, despite this, I also argue that there is a surprising disconnect between friendship and property in the disposal of assets in older LGBNL individuals Wills, with many single individuals, even those with personal communities which prioritise friendship, nonetheless showing a strong sense of duty and responsibility towards biological family, complicating both families of choice and personal community narratives.

Kinship composition

Diverse sizes and forms

Participants described a wide range of social networks, very reminiscent of Pahl and Spencer's 'personal communities'. In terms of number, some participants had a network comprising just a single individual, while others had a network involving large numbers of individuals. Les, who describes himself as very 'introverted' and suffers from a phobia of public transport, has very little contact with his biological family, and described the smallest network of all the participants:

> I've only got one really good friend now, and he's a married guy, his wife doesn't know. But it's got to be limited all the time.… It's not having a network of friends that depresses me.
>
> (Les, aged 62, 'Finding Out)

So Les's 'personal community' comprises just one person, and he links his lack of a more robust network with his mental health problems, which echoes research linking social support and social network size with physical and psychological well-being (Fredriksen-Goldsen *et al.*, 2013). By contrast Ken – also single and childfree, also with a sister with whom he has little contact ('My sister and I don't get on well. Oddly enough, I think she's slightly uneasy about me being gay', Ken, aged 64, 'Out Early') – has many more friends and acquaintances. According to Ken he has a 'couple of dozen' long-term friends whom he sees regularly and 'I probably see half a dozen of them every week'. These are examples of personal communities which are centred upon friendships. By contrast, Jack, also single and childfree, has a personal community which comprises friends and biological family, to whom, in terms of closest friends and closest biological family members, he understands both to be 'family':

> I'm not typical of older gay men I think because I've got loads of friends and I've got loads of women friends. I'm very close to my sister and my niece who lives [abroad], she's got three children and I adore her. She came and stayed a week with me, we had a wonderful time, totally open with her about everything.… But my friends are my family, lovely close friends I've got … there's just such a closeness, a feeling of mutual support. Emotional support. Always there for one another. Very mutual, not at all one sided. Happy times. [Practical support too] … like my friend if he ever has to go to the hospital or anything like that, I'll go with him.
>
> (Jack, aged 66, 'Breaking Out')

Jack's network involves friends and family, with 'friends' conflated with, rather than distinguished from, biological 'family'. Many of the childfree women participants also spoke about kinship networks involving both friends and biological family. Childfree women from the earlier cohorts tended to prioritise friends over family, as this extract from Sandra and Daphne's joint interview highlights:

> Well, in terms of biological family, my younger brother, his wife and his kids. I adore the kids, Daphne's not so keen on children. So [they] are my family, and my mum, of course. But we also have some very good friends in [local area], you know, four or five, and they feel more [like family].… They're all lesbians. They're of an age with us. We have quite similar backgrounds and experiences.… Oh and sense of humour.…
>
> (Sandra, aged 61, 'Breaking Out')

Sandra is describing a mixed network of family and friends. However, unlike Jack, she and her partner Daphne differentiate between the two in terms of closeness:

> That's what's so comfortable about our community here, [it's] that we get it, we don't have to do any explaining. And that's why that community is comfortable. And that's why our wider blood family isn't. It's not that we keep having to justify it, but it's just like my sister, it doesn't matter how many nice meals she puts on the table, and smiles, and all the rest of it, she doesn't truly believe that we're normal [laughs]. So, why should you be comfortable around somebody who thinks you're a pervert? Whereas with our [lesbian] family, we know we're normal.
>
> (Daphne, aged 60, 'Out Early')

For Sandra and Daphne, then, their family relationships are nuanced by the extent to which their sexualities are accepted (or not) and their friendships enhanced by the commonality of sexuality. Alice also refers to a distance in her relationship with her biological family, but based more on history this time:

> And there will also be those of us, a sizeable population, who didn't bring our families along with us. We became distanced. I mean they're maintained, our links with our biological families, but they're not our first port of call. We look to our friends I think.
>
> (Alice, aged 60, 'Out Early')

For Alice, friendships and the women's communities of the 1970s and 1980s were her new family form and she mourns their passing:

> [It was] the late 70s, early 80s. And we all lived together. We were all what would now be called polyamorous, we called it non-monogamy, we tried lots of things, we tried living as companions rather than lovers, we tried having several lovers at one time, all sorts of combinations of things to get away from patriarchal models of living based on a gender division of labour and under the control of organised religion.… The thought of that never happening again, well … [it feels] a bit like death.
>
> (Alice, aged 60, 'Out Early')

Alice, no longer with her partner, feels acutely the loss of her radical friendships to what she perceives as a domesticated lifestyle:

> They have their houses which mean an awful lot to them, they've really slogged for them, they've got them really nice, just the way they want. They've usually got a house-load of animals.… They just do their allotments, they don't really look at society, they're not interested in the big questions.… They're happy, they do what they want day in day out. If they get nice neighbours, they feel really lucky. They have holidays three times a

> year and they work at universities, things like that, they get paid well. I couldn't live like that. It wouldn't suit me, and I've given up on them being part of any intentional community.
>
> (Alice, aged 60, 'Out Early')

By contrast with Alice's sense of loss and isolation, Cat, living in another part of the country to Alice, in a strong feminist community, continues to still feel well-connected to that community and her radical feminist principles (including her ongoing gatekeeping of her contact with men). Cat also has a daughter, grandson, and son-in-law, whom she visits frequently, although she explains 'My interactions with men, even with my grandson, are carefully thought out' (Cat, aged 62, 'Lesbian by Choice').

Many childwith women tended to prioritise children and grandchildren over friendship. Rene who has three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, said for example, 'Family is really, really important to me, and it's not just [my daughter] it's the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren' (Rene, aged 63, 'Breaking Out'). Vera who has six children and six grandchildren, also said, 'I can no longer visualise who I would be if I didn't have children, because I've had them for a very long time … my family means pretty much more than anything else to me' (Vera, aged 60, 'Finding Out'). So here we can see how for both Rene and Vera their relationships with their children and grandchildren are of central importance to them. Indeed, Vera's identity and sense of self is embedded in having children and grandchildren.

The men participants with children and grandchildren, by contrast, showed greater variation in their involvement with them, some maintaining close ties, others more distanced. Andrew is very close to his children and grandchildren. Here he describes his civil partnership with David:

> We've been together since 1987: 26 years. We had our civil ceremony in 2008 and my granddaughters were ring bearers. My two boys came. And David's son Michael, he was his best man. My girlfriend ['she's like my sister, we've known each other since I was three'] was my best man and his son was his best man, as it were.
>
> (Andrew, aged 66, 'Breaking Out')

This is a strong example of the discursive and performative 'queering' of 'family' (King & Cronin, 2013). Andrew's sons attended, his partner's son (who they co-parented after his partner's divorce from his wife) was his 'best man'; Andrew's grandchildren were 'ring bearers' (using heterosexual marriage discourse); he uses the term 'girlfriend' for a woman who is actually his platonic best friend, whom he then describes in familial terms ('like my sister') to explain their closeness; and his 'girlfriend' is then also described as a 'best man', mobilising both gender binaries to describe her relationship with Andrew and her role in his civil partnership ceremony. So not only were children and grandchildren

central to the event, but also his friend/sister was interwoven into family discourse to make it a completely 'family' event.

This section has offered but a small sample of participants' narratives about their kinship networks. It has served to highlight how participants vary widely in terms of the size and composition of their networks, and the extent to which they prioritise friendships, partnerships and/or biological family relationships within their networks. The next section explores how those networks can also comprise relationships which go beyond the binary of friendship or biological family and raise again the importance of SLIFs in the lives of older LGBNL individuals.

Blended families and SLIFs

Participants described a range of significant relationships in their kinship networks which go beyond the friends/family binary. Older LGBNL individuals' continuing ties with their ex-partners is a well-recognised feature of 'families of choice' (Weston, 1991; Weeks *et al.*, 2001). This was evident in the narratives of many of the participants. May's ex-partner has cancer and has recently moved back in with her: 'She's not back as my partner, she's back as a friend in need' (May, aged 64, 'Finding Out'). Violet and Moira cared for Moira's ex-partner in the final years of her life ('There she is on our window sill' said Violet, aged 73, 'Breaking Out', pointing to a photograph). Jennifer (aged 62, 'Late Performance') has been with her present partner for over 20 years and describes her previous partner as 'kind of like a third person in our relationship'. Ian (aged 69, 'Breaking Out') and Arthur (aged 60, 'Breaking Out') are 'best friends' with their ex-partners, who are now partnered to one another. Des's ex-partner comes to stay with him in his sheltered accommodation: 'my ex-partner … comes to visit me, and when he comes, he stays in the guest suite on the ground floor' (Des, aged 69, 'Finding Out'). Moira explains the significance of ex-partners:

> It's kind of family, they're family. Because in our sub-culture, which may not in the future go on quite as it has done, but because we were in a secret world, it's family, and it's a fairly small world, and you're living in the same community. So if you don't get on, it can be very difficult for your friends.
>
> (Moira, aged 75, 'Out Early)

While 'families of friends' research has recognised the significance of ex-same-sex partners in the kinship networks of 'LGB' individuals, what is less well-recognised is the significance of ex-opposite-gender partners in the lives of older LGBNL individuals. Yet several participants spoke of maintaining close ties with ex-partners from heterosexual relationships. Des, for example, said,

> My daughters come up here about three or four times a year, with my ex-wife. Or should I say they really come for the shopping. I put them up in [a local hotel]. They come up here just for one night, call in on the way, say

> hello, and then they go shopping, I have a meal with them in the hotel in the evening, and then they call in for breakfast on the way down the next morning … and then I go down in November to visit them for three days.
>
> (Des, aged 69, 'Finding Out')

Des also often speaks to his ex-wife (who has remarried) on the phone. He talks to her about his problems. For example, Des is worried about his memory and has discussed this with her: 'I do get a bit worried at times … [but] my ex-wife says that she forgets things as well' (Des, aged 69, 'Finding Out'). Joan and Maureen also have close, and ongoing, ties with their ex-husbands:

JOAN (AGED 67, 'BREAKING OUT'): Maureen's ex-husband is painting the outside of our house.

MAUREEN (AGED 62, 'FINDING OUT'): [It's become amicable]…. It took a long time. We were OK with each other after a while, although it was a bit strained. But then he got ill. And I used to just pop in, have a quick coffee with him. He's fine now, he's OK.

JOAN (AGED 67, 'BREAKING OUT'): But he brings his problems to you…

MAUREEN (AGED 62, 'FINDING OUT'): Yes, he does, and the dog…. He tried to get me to iron his shirt yesterday. He said 'You haven't ironed a shirt of mine for 20 years'. And I said 'I'm not starting now'. [Laughter]

Des, Joan and Maureen offer interesting examples of postmodern 'blended' family constructions and of enduring ties between individuals beyond the formal legal recognition of relationships. Another example of this is not in relation to ex-partners, but in relation to children and ex-children. Ian and Arthur are supporting Ian's ex-daughter-in-law and her two children (who live near them) materially, practically and emotionally. Ian's son has a new partner and children and Ian says, 'I've in a way disowned him because he's not looked after those kids, never mind the new ones he's got' (Ian, aged 69, 'Breaking Out'). So here, Ian has skipped a generation in providing support, and is supporting his grandchildren's mother, to whom he is not biologically related, over his son, to whom he is. In this way we can see how older LGBNL kinship networks are becoming increasingly complex, varied, and context contingent.

Narratives of change

Participants also spoke of relationships changing with time. Sam and his partner (childfree) had a friendship network drawn from their careers (a combination of Pahl and Spencer's 'partner dependent' and 'professional dependent' personal communities). Now they have retired that network has dwindled:

> Our friendship groups have actually diminished over the years [detail]. Since leaving work that's narrowed it down even more. So I can see the day, looking at the pattern of my life, is that will get smaller and smaller, and people will

> either have died off or drifted away. And that's always in the back of my mind, it's like a little bell ringing, in the back of my head, saying beware, you need to be out there, because otherwise the world will get very small.
>
> (Sam, aged 61, 'Out Early')

Sam is reflecting on how ageing can change kinship networks, and that, without replenishing those networks, there can be a risk of increased isolation. The passing of time also saw shifting family attitudes and opportunities for reconciliation. In this extract from Lawrence's interview, he describes the shift in attitudes among 'my Evangelical Christian family':

> Well, they've turned out to be all right. My sister gave a reading at our civil partnership. And they all came.… My niece and nephew … I am a great-uncle to their five children. My sister had a 60th birthday party a few weeks ago, the entire family were there and we were very welcome.
>
> (Lawrence, aged 63, 'Out Early')

So here we can see how, for some, family attitudes have become more accepting and inclusive across time and how, perhaps, the legalisation and legitimisation of same-sex partnerships may have contributed to that process.

Many participants from the earlier cohorts spoke of family rejections when they 'came out', e.g. 'My mother said to me "I'm so glad your father didn't live to see you living like this"' (Rupert, aged 68, 'Out Early'), 'Mother said "You're worse than a death in the family"' (Rene, aged 63, 'Breaking Out'). Daphne describes her experience:

> When I did tell my parents … when I was with Sandra, it was the worst thing I could have told them. My mother told me later, when she had been diagnosed with diabetes, that she thought it was the shock of me telling her that had caused the diabetes. She also said that, later, she had been crying, and my father had found her and she had told him, and it was the first time she had seen my father cry. So, on the whole, I wouldn't recommend it. I wouldn't do it again. She knew Sandra and liked Sandra, but as soon as she knew, she didn't refer to her by name (again), this woman who had dragged me into a twilight world … 'whatshername' was how she was usually referred to.
>
> (Daphne, aged 60, 'Finding Out')

Across time, Daphne's mother, gradually accepted Sandra more, albeit somewhat grudgingly, even asking her to buy presents for Daphne on her behalf in recent years. And there was also a moment of reconciliation at the end of Daphne's father's life:

> The night before he died, I was there, Sandra was coming, and he could barely lift his head off the pillow, but he said 'I thought Sandra was coming' and I said she is, and she came, and when she came, he gave her a big hug,

> and that was quite affecting. And we travelled back home, and then got the call to say he died … [he knew] I was being looked after by someone who cared for me…
>
> (Daphne, aged 60, 'Finding Out')

This very moving narrative highlights how relations can change within families across time (Smart, 2007), how love can overcome prejudice, as well as how death and dying can themselves have transformative powers. This is also apparent in the following extract from Billy's interview:

> I was great friends with John's mother. But of course his whole family being Catholic, all the wedding invitations would come addressed to John, Christmas cards would come addressed to John, John would never go to any of the weddings, would not go to any of them. But then with his mother's death, just over a year ago, I thought, I wasn't going to wait for the invite. So we both went [to the funeral].… And it's been incredibly healing. We were both accepted by the lot of them.… Sometimes healing and reconciliation comes in lots of ways.… They asked me if I'd like to help carry the coffin … the fact that her eldest son asked if I'd like to carry the coffin, it was a huge, huge thing.
>
> (Billy, aged 61, 'Breaking Out')

This extract highlights how faith-based heterosexist family norms initially resulted in Billy's exclusion from his partner's wider family (despite being 'great friends' with his mother) for many decades (they have been together for over 30 years). It also highlights, as does the extract from Daphne's interview, how family attitudes can change. The big question is, of course, what has brought about these changes, and whether the shift in social attitudes has been brought about by a change in law (Harding, 2011), or whether shifting social attitudes brought about the change in law (e.g. Stychin, 2006). Most likely it is a combination of the two, as well as, in the context of faith, increasing divergence between religious doctrine at an institutional level and its interpretation (Valentine & Waite, 2012) and manifestation at an individual level (Yip, 2008).

Those individuals who have 'come out' and/or formed a same-sex relationship in later life, especially the 'Late Performance' women, spoke of far greater family acceptance:

> Much to my astonishment, I didn't give them the credit they were due … my family is 100 per cent accepting and there is no one else in the family in a same-sex relationship. They've welcomed Marcia with open arms, she's as much a part of the family as I am. I have not lost one friend, they're all very welcoming and last time I went back to [place] by myself, just to touch base with everybody, Marcia stayed here, they were all like 'Where's Marcia? Where's Marcia? Why didn't she come? We're devastated Marcia's not here'.
>
> (Angela, aged 64, 'Late Performance')

This extract demonstrates 'family' and 'friends' welcoming a same-sex partner in the context of increasing family acceptance of same-sex relationships, not only among young people, as suggested by Heaphy, Smart and Einarsdottir (2013) but also among older people 'coming out' to their families in later life as well.

Beyond the egalitarian ideal

'Social trust, solidarity and norms of reciprocity' (Cronin & King, 2013, p. 18) and an ethic of care (Roseneil, 2004) are often considered the hallmarks of LGBNL relationships, but some participants offered counter-narratives which suggested that this was not always the case:

> I was 60 in a refuge … let's just say it ended badly and I had justification for going to a refuge.
>
> (Rene, aged 63, 'Breaking Out')

> Bernard had issues. He was difficult for me to deal with. He'd have sulky episodes, which I always find difficult [detail] … he would become a bit violent, there were a couple of times when he would attack me, I didn't retaliate, 'Oh, mind my glasses', I think I used to say [laughs].
>
> (Rupert, aged 68, 'Out Early')

These narratives serve to highlight the presence of physical violence and abuse within (older) LGBNL individual's intimate relationships (Donovan, Hester, Holmes & McCarry, 2006), which can also involve emotional abuse (Donovan & Hester, 2010). Several participants described controlling and critical same-sex ex-partners (e.g. Des, aged 69, 'Finding Out', Dylis, aged 75, 'Breaking Out' and Maureen, aged 62, 'Finding Out'). For example, Maureen said of her late partner (prior to her relationship with Joan, now her civil partner):

> We had a difficult relationship and it wouldn't have lasted. But she got ill, and I didn't feel I could walk away then. And I felt rather trapped, and I was trapped, and it went on for about five years … it was very hard, it was a black, black time … I did love her, but she was very difficult to live with, and because of her illness, it was affecting her oxygen levels, she became very, very obsessive-compulsive. She couldn't move around and so she wanted everything just so … and so she was very difficult to live with.
>
> (Maureen, aged 62, 'Finding Out')

This extract demonstrates the tensions that can affect same-sex partnerships, when one partner becomes ill. There can be tensions arising from break-ups, as well. For example, Tessa's ex-partner threatened to expose her at work, after Tessa had left her for Ellen:

> She was talking to me on the phone and she said 'it would be very interesting for your headmistress if I came in and told her that her [job role] and one of the [job role] who is a married woman, are having an affair, she'd really like that, wouldn't she?' And I just said, 'Isn't it a shame, Lavinia, that even within our sexuality, as lesbians, we can even think about blackmailing each other like that'. And that was it, she stopped, she never did it.
>
> (Tessa, aged 58, 'Out Early')

So here we can see the shadow side to the somewhat idealised notions of (older) LGBNL individuals relationships, serving to both complicate transformation of intimacy narratives (Giddens, 1992; Weeks *et al.*, 2001, Roseneil & Budgeon, 2004) and support Carol Smart's observation that 'it is important to emphasise both given and chosen families as fluid rather than seeing one as the replacement for the other, or seeing one as a haven in the flight from the other' (Smart, 2007, p. 675).

The significance of intergenerationality

Recognition: compulsory grandmotherhood

Chapter 3 considered older LGBNL women's experiences of invisibilisation in terms of the retrospective past in relation to current subjectivities. This section considers this invisibilisation through the lens of kinship. I analyse participants' narratives about mis-/non-recognition-based reproductive normativity and consider in particular older lesbians – both those who are childfree and those who are childwith – experiences of being invisibilised as lesbians by a process which I describe as 'compulsory grandmotherhood'.

There has been growing interest in lesbian motherhood (Dunne, 2000) and how lesbian mothers are 'reinventing and redefining the family, redefining family values, and transforming the meaning of parenting' (Clarke, 2005, p. 15). Recent research has explored how lesbian and gay parents – both biological and social parents – construct their kinship formations and negotiate a parental identity within them (Padavic & Butterfield, 2011; Nordqvist, 2014; Tornello & Patterson, 2015). What is less well recognised is that lesbian and gay parenting is not a new thing: a quarter of older gay men and half of older lesbians in the UK are likely to have children (Heaphy *et al.*, 2004; Guasp, 2011). However, there has been very little research conducted so far on LGBNL individuals and grandparenthood (Orel & Fruhauf, 2006, 2013; Orel, 2014) and yet it too is a growing phenomenon (Stelle, Fruhauf, Orel & Landry-Meyer, 2010). In this research, many of the women participants (but not the men) made links with being (grand) childfree or (grand)childwith and their visibility and social status as ageing lesbians. Childfree older LGBNL women observed that they were assumed by others to be heterosexual and (grand)childwith: 'And there's the assumption because I am an older woman that I must be heterosexual, that I must have children and grandchildren' (Diana, aged 69, 'Out Early'). This extract highlights a

perceived linkage between being seen as an older woman and being presumed to be a mother and grandmother. As Audrey observed:

> As a single older woman, you immediately fall into that stereotype of 'a granny'. And 'a granny' is heterosexual by default. And people are always asking me about my bloody grandchildren. I don't have any grandchildren, lesbians didn't have children in my day.
>
> (Audrey, aged 67, 'Out Early')

This extract demonstrates how Audrey feels invisibilised by the heterosexist assumptions that as an older women she must be both heterosexual and a mother and grandmother. Chapter 3 explored how many of the women participants felt they were rendered invisible at the nexus of ageism, sexism and heteronormativity. This was understood in the context of feminist authorship on the 'triple marginalisation' of older women. However, as alluded to in that chapter, this also needs to be located in the wider analytical frame of the transgression of heteronormative social reproductive normativities (Jagose, 2002). As can be seen from the above extract, Audrey feels she is mis-read, based on an ageist, sexist and heterosexist assumptions (Land and Kitzinger, 2005). These life course stereotypes for older women are deeply embedded in heterosexual family ideologies, underpinned by the gendered norms of heterosexual procreation and social reproduction, (Halberstam, 2005), shaping (mis-)recognition in later life.

By contrast, those women participants who were childwith and grandchildwith often reported feeling that this also obscured their identities as lesbians. Some found this obscurity strategically useful:

> [There are] times even now when I'm not out. You know, I've got used to deciding when and how I do that and because I think it's an easy cop out for me, because I've got kids and I was married I can play sides against the middle any which way I choose, and I do that.
>
> (Iris, aged 61, 'Breaking Out')

Having been married, and having children, then, gives Iris greater scope in terms of concealing her sexuality/sexuality identity if she wants to. Alex, like Iris, considers being seen as a mother and a grandmother as obscuring her lesbian identity [*sic*], but unlike Iris who finds it useful at times, Alex, like Audrey, sees is as getting in the way of her being seen properly:

> Because I have a child and grandchildren and I talk about them and I'm proud of them, because that's what I do, everybody assumes I'm a straight woman. But I'm not! I'd had relationships with men, and I was married years ago, but my last three relationships over the past 25 years have been with women. But people make assumptions based on what they see.
>
> (Alex, aged 60, 'Finding Out')

Alex observes that people make assumptions based on what they see, and, those assumptions, according to her experience, are based on heteronormative, heterosexist, reproductive norms. So lesbians are not only rendered less visible in older age through not having children and grandchildren, they are rendered less visible through having them as well (Fullmer *et al.*, 1999). Stella perceives access to parenthood as now being a major distinguisher between older LGBNL women:

> I feel slightly disparaged by lesbians who have children. Now, I feel people think that I'm not a proper lesbian, because I don't have children as well. And I find that really strange. It's sort of back to the old 'some are more equal than others' idea.
>
> (Stella, aged 66, 'Out Early')

So, for Stella, her experience of later life marginalisation is not only because she is an ageing lesbian (see Chapter 3) but also because she is an ageing childfree (and grandchildfree) lesbian. This recognition also differentiates older LGBNL women not only from each other but also from other women, irrespective of sexuality. In May's interview, for example, she attributes this to her sense of difference when she tried to join the Women's Institute (WI):

> I think you do stand out of the crowd more because you're not like everyone else. So I tried to join the WI. And I was different. I don't have a man to talk about. And everyone was going on about their grandchildren and their bloody husbands, and I get a bit bored by that. What is there to talk about? Very empty. People made me welcome, chatting away, but I didn't feel part of it. I didn't go back. I've got nothing in common with them.
>
> (May, aged 64, 'Finding Out')

So here we can see how May understands grandchildren discourse, and its embeddedness in heterosexual relationship discourse, as producing heteronormative older-age spaces from which she feels excluded. Ellen Lewin anticipated this, predicting, in 1993, that in the future: 'the otherness of childless lesbians may be intensified not because they are lesbians but because they are not mothers' (Lewin, 1993, p. 192, cited in Richardson, 2004, p. 403).

As Jane Traies has written, drawing upon Jill Reynolds' (2011) notion of 'childlessness' being a deficit identity, 'the identity of a childless older woman is a deficit identity, to the extent of being defined by what one is not' (Traies, 2012, p. 72). Old women who are childfree violate heterosexual life-course norms, indeed 'women without children' can be understood as 'a contradiction in terms' (Hird & Abshoff, 2000, p. 347). May's account of the impact of not only being childfree, but also grandchildfree, suggests that this adds further nuance to the deficit argument. Grandmotherhood is the only positive stereotype for older women, attached to concepts of being helpful, kind, serene and trustworthy (Cuddy & Fiske, 2004). A greater number of other negative stereotypes for older women abound (including evil goddesses; monsters; witches; hags; and crones,

Arber & Ginn, 1991) with far fewer counterparts for older men (Ray, 2004). MacDonald and Rich have written about older women who do not fulfil the 'Grandma requirements':

> In White Western society, the old woman is distasteful to men because she is such a long way from their ideal of flattering virginal inexperience. But also she outlives them, persists in living when she no longer serves them as wife and mother, and if they cannot make her into Grandma, she is – like the lesbian – that monstrous woman who has her own private reasons for living apart from pleasing men.
>
> (MacDonald & Rich, 1991, p. 141)

So not being a grandmother both defies heteronormative reproductive norms and invokes a woman who is not defined/definable in the context of her relationality with men. In this way, ageing, gender and sexuality intersect to shape social perceptions of older women, through the lens of reproductive normativity.

Resources: uneven access to (intergenerational) informal social support

Informal social support is of particular importance in later life because it acts as a buffer from the need for more formal care and support (see Chapter 2). This extract from Rene's interview offers insights:

> Well I'm still not able to drive since my hip operation, and I'm not doing my own shopping. My sister moved in for about two or three weeks when I first came out of hospital and my daughter comes in a couple of times a week and my friend Ruth drives me to appointments and things.
>
> (Rene, aged 63, 'Breaking Out')

Rene is highlighting here the importance of an informal social support network when an (older) individual develops additional care and support needs. Rene's personal community of significant women in her life has helped her with practical tasks (shopping, driving), personal support (staying with her when she had high personal care needs), and emotional support (regular visits) during a time of heightened need. This is an example of not only an informal social support network, but also a flexible one which can provide extra targeted assistance as and when needed (Croghan, Moone & Olson, 2014). Rene's support network also has a significant component: it is intergenerational.

An intergenerational network is important because the risk of an intragenerational network is that in older age all the network members may develop care needs at around the same time and be unable to provide each other with reciprocal support. To return to an example given in Chapter 3, Diana had previously been supporting older friends who were struggling with age-acquired illness and disability, and navigating the health and social care system. Since

Diana has acquired her own age-related illness and disability, she is not only in need of informal social support herself, which her friends cannot provide, she is also no longer able to provide it to her friends, highlighting the knock-on effects when an older caregiver develops care needs themselves (Manthorpe & Price, 2006). This is why intergenerational support is so important, but not just any kind of intergenerational support, rather one which can provide instrumental care if required.

While some support networks appear robust, in terms of size, and/or strength of affiliation, and may even have an intergenerational component, if that intergenerational component does not offer instrumental care, then it does not help to act as a buffer from the need for formal care provision. These two extracts highlight this issue:

> The psychology in the breeder world … you have lots of kids, so they're your pension, so that sort of psychology stacks for a lot of heterosexuals, I think. Whether they actually get what they expect is a different issue. [Talks about friend who is affluent enough to pay for care and also gets informal support from his four children] I have younger people in my world, but I don't think they would do that for me.
>
> (Phil, aged 62, 'Breaking Out')

> Well, I haven't got children, and I've only got one niece, and I can't imagine that she's likely to come and look after me … I remember us joking, one time, and me saying, 'Oh well when I am an old woman you can come and look after me' and she said 'Not likely', so I really don't think so. So, no I don't think there would be any support for me, I would be one of those little old ladies living in their houses on their own, surviving somehow.
>
> (Tessa, aged 58, 'Out Early')

These two extracts demonstrate the significance of not only an intergenerational component to an older individual's social network but also one which will supply the right kind of support. Both Phil and Tessa have young people in their lives, but not young people they can call on for instrumental support. By contrast, Cat, who lives in a tightly knit intergenerational feminist community, was able to name nine or 10 younger women who would provide her with support if she needed.

Ageing itself can change kinship size and composition; morbidity and mortality can impact the availability of informal social support (Croghan *et al.*, 2014). For individuals with very small social networks, such as Les, with his one friend, the loss of that friend would leave him completely alone. For individuals with small, partner-centric kinship networks (Pahl & Spencer, 2004), the death of a partner can also be problematic (Muraco & Fredriksen-Goldsen, 2011). Sam (who is childfree) had begun to think about it, primarily because of his partner's ill-health. Thinking about what would happen should his partner die and if Sam then needed support himself, he observed:

> This is where it gets tricky. Because I guess I would be no different from the 70 per cent of gay people, living alone, of a certain age, and where they don't have children, and do not have immediate family around them.
>
> (Sam, aged 61, 'Out Early')

So we can see here the heightened exposure to risks of both isolation and a lack of informal social support for ageing childless individuals in partner-centred kinship formations in the event of a partner's death.

Those participants who are childwith were more likely to cite their children as potential sources of support, although many emphasised that they did not expect their children to support them, as in Bob and Martin's interview:

> BOB (AGED 60, 'BREAKING OUT'): I remember my father once saying to me, I hope you will always want to know me, but if you don't, would you do me a big favour, fuck off. Don't come. If ever I see duty in your eyes, I will shut the door on you.
>
> MARTIN (AGED 62, 'OUT EARLY'): And that's what we have always told [our son].

Bob and Martin exemplify the rejection of notions of duty and family obligation (Weeks *et al.*, 2001) from their children, as many of the participants did. Many childwith heterosexual couples also express the same sentiments, but children do often end up providing informal social support, whether expected to or not. Vera, who has six children, recognised this, when talking about who would provide her with instrumental support should she need it in later life.

> My children. Yes, my children primarily. They would certainly assist and several would call in regularly. One is living with me and several live nearby and are fairly settled. I certainly wouldn't want them to have to provide any formal stuff. But they would be there, and they would assist.
>
> (Vera, aged 60, 'Finding Out')

When Vera refers to her children, she includes her stepchildren in that list. Ian, aged 69 ('Breaking Out') had asked his daughter-in-law if she would look after him in his older age ('she said of course'). Ian also thought she would also support his partner Arthur (the social father-in-law) but Arthur, aged 60 ('Out Early') was less certain, saying 'I don't know.' Similarly, when asked who would care for them if one of them died, Violet, aged 73 ('Breaking Out') responded 'My children would', but Moira, aged 75 ('Out Early', the social parent) was also less certain: 'Violet's children might. I don't know'. This further supports Heather Draper's research (2013) which highlighted different understandings of biological and social parents' entitlement (in the context of grandparent rights when parents separate) and Rosie Harding's work (2011) suggesting that same-sex partners of those who have biological children can fall into a category of 'illegitimate' parents, highlighting a further possible area of inequality between older LGBNL individuals.

Concluding remarks

This chapter has offered a range of new insights. In terms of the under-recognition of friendship in law, there was apparently little appetite for increased recognition and regulation of friendship or SLIFs in law. Those individuals with predominantly friendship-focussed kinship networks who wished their friends to receive their assets upon death, used their Wills to do so. Among many individuals with more mixed networks, there was a disconnect between friends, SLIFs and biological family and the disposal of assets, even when SLIFs comprised the more significant aspect of a participant's network. This does suggest, then, that there is far less of a sense of financial and material duty towards friends than biological family members, supporting 'families of choice' narratives, but that there is a sense of financial and material duty to biological/extended family members, which contradicts 'families of choice' narratives.

In terms of the privileging of the conjugal couple in law, there was a predominance of narratives suggesting that participants' lives reflected this prioritisation, and that participants approved of it. A small number of women questioned relationship recognition in law, and the participants were split on the issue of civil partnership/same-sex marriage, with some women participants voicing particular concerns about hetero-patriarchal norms. Feminist discourse informed one strand of narratives and it is striking that this is present in older LGBNL discourse about couple recognition, but was not found by Heaphy, Smart and Einarsdottir (2013) in the narratives of younger LGBNL couples. This raises questions about the different ways in which feminism is understood to have a place in the lives of older and younger LGBNL women.

The women participants expressed a strong sense that their social recognition in later life was nuanced by ageing, gender, sexuality and reproductive normativity. The men participants did not make similar observations. For these cohorts of older LGBNL women, then, gender distinguishes, and disadvantages them in terms of recognition, compared with older GBNL men. It remains to be seen whether this is also the experience of subsequent ageing cohorts. Participants were also distinguished by access to the resource of intergenerational support in later life. Given that more women than men participants had children (as reflected in previous research, e.g. Guasp, 2011), then men are at a clear disadvantage from this perspective.

Here we can see the significance of intersectionality. Older LGBNL individuals are differentiated from younger LGBNL individuals by their greater likelihood of needing instrumental care through older age. Older LGBNL individuals are differentiated from older heterosexual-identifying individuals in their comparatively depleted access to intergenerational support, due to sexuality. Older LGBNL women and men are also differentiated between one another in issues of gendered mis-recognition in later life and in terms of uneven access to intergenerational support, shaped by gender and cohort. Older LGBNL woman are differentiated from older heterosexual-identifying women in that they understand their sexual identities/sexualities to be invisibilised through reproductive

normativity, whereas older heterosexual-identifying women's sexualities (even if retrospective) are assumed by default. In this way, ageing, gender and sexuality, work with and through each other to shape uneven access to recognition and resources in regard to later-life kinship.

Access to social networks by LGBNL people in later life is mediated by access to material resources (Heaphy, 2009) and social and cultural capital (Cronin & King, 2013). How this plays out in the lives of older LGBNL people is addressed in the next chapter, which considers the participants' classed trajectories and the implications for their later lives.

Notes

1 Interviews were conducted prior to the introduction and implementation of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 and Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014.

2 *If These Walls Could Talk 2*: A collection of three short films, the first of which depicts a bereaved lesbian, in the 1950s, who had been in a closeted relationship, being denied access to her dying partner, and then after her partner's death, having her partner's estranged nephew take possession of their property and shared personal effects, with no recognition of the true nature of their relationship or of her bereavement: www.nytimes.com/movies/movie/186837/If-These-Walls-Could-Talk-2/overview.

3 *My Old Man* by Joni Mitchell: http://jonimitchell.com/music/song.cfm?id=159.

5 Classed trajectories

Introduction

As noted in Chapter 1, class is an under-interrogated area in relation to gender and sexuality (Taylor, 2009), and even more so in relation to ageing, gender and sexuality. Brian Heaphy (2009) has argued that 'later life relational choices can be limited by access to economic, social, and cultural resources' (p. 119) and Cronin and King (2010, 2013) have suggested that this is also differentiated by gender, with different degrees of access to lesbian and gay support networks among older lesbians according to when they 'came out'. Paul Simpson (2013a), in his UK research with gay men aged 39 to 61, has suggested that their navigation of the ageist gay scene is informed by class. He has proposed that 'middle class, long-term partnered and less frequent users of the [gay] village who had spent their early adulthood developing friendships independently of the (commercial) gay scene' (p. 292) are less likely to be affected by ageist exclusion than working class, single and/or non-monogamous gay men (who are more likely to continue to occupy the scene). Beyond this, however, little is yet known about the different materialities of older LGBNL people.

This chapter addresses this knowledge gap and offers new insights. I explore the participants' narratives about the materialities of their lives in three main ways. This is, first, in terms of their accounts of uneven access to economic assets, and the implications of this for their quality of life in older age. Second, in relation to classed spaces of inclusion and exclusion associated with different materialities, and (middle class) social norms of respectability which serve to include some types of LGBNL performance and exclude others. And third, what can be understood from the narratives of some of the participants with regard to the disposal of their assets in their Wills, in particular how, and along which, lines, material privilege is reproduced.

Uneven access to material resources

The participants described uneven access to material resources in later life, nuanced by gender and class. Positioned at one end of the spectrum is Dylis,

who has an involuntary insolvency arrangement which will not end before she dies, lives in a mobile home, on benefits, and has an extremely frugal life.

> I feel guilty that I can't put any money in the collection plate at times.… If I can't afford a newspaper during the week, I won't have a newspaper.… You get to think sometimes 'how am I going to manage?' But it makes me a bit resentful that there are things the girls do in the group that I can't afford to do … I haven't had a holiday for 10 years … I take [anti-depressants].… Yes, I am depressed, but by circumstance, if I had a bit more money, I'd be brighter.
>
> (Dylis, aged 75, 'Breaking Out')

Dylis is describing a very financially restricted life, where she struggles to make ends meet. By contrast, at the other end of the financial spectrum, Ken describes a far more affluent lifestyle,

> I had investments, savings, I had luck with the property market, and then I worked out if I buy this quite big house and let some of the rooms – I used to have five people in here, now I've only got two – that would keep body and soul together, and I had another property to let as well, and so I didn't really need to work. I think work's much over-rated you know [laughs]. I travel, I've always travelled hugely.
>
> (Ken, aged 64, 'Out Early')

Through his acquisition of property and investments, Ken no longer needs to work and is able to spend his material wealth on travel and other leisure activities. He is quite dismissive of his disposable income:

> I don't spend enough money.… If I go out with friends to London, we'll go to Weatherspoons. Twice! For lunch and dinner. I'm not proud.… I don't mind expensive holidays if I know I got the best deal possible. I'm a great one for picking up bargain theatre tickets.… I mean this weekend, we've got a special deal on gliding … I took some of my friends micro lighting, huge fun … I think I paid £49.… And this (gliding) cost £55.
>
> (Ken, aged 64, 'Out Early')

While Ken's understanding of being careful with his finances is eating out in Weatherspoons ('twice'), Dylis's understanding is focussed around whether or not she can afford a newspaper. It impacts upon her social life ('there are things the girls do in the group that I can't afford to do') and, in her mind, on being able to find a partner. While Dylis feels depressed 'by circumstance' Ken describes himself in another part of his interview as 'a lucky bugger':

> I've lived a very fortunate life. I grew up in a very loving and supportive family, I went to a school where there was no bullying or prejudice about

> being gay, although I didn't tell anyone I was gay then, I wasn't sure I was anyway. I went to a university which, though very conservative, was very supportive of me and my partners [detail], and the local church too, we were totally included. Now maybe it was because I was middle class, and confident, and socially accepted, if I lived in [local council estate] and went to a school where there was bullying … it's just my experience has been very favourable, and from my point of view, I have no gripes about equality. I'm very fortunate, happy, although I recognise that for other people it can be different. I'm a lucky bugger.
>
> (Ken, aged 64, 'Out Early')

The differences between Dylis's and Ken's respective experiences of later life flag the processes of cumulative advantage and disadvantage across a lifetime (Dannefer, 2003) involving economic, social and cultural capital. Dylis and Ken are differentiated by gender, parenting status, occupation and career pathway. Dylis was a part-time (low-paid) policewoman, then a care worker and then a university hall porter; Ken was a ('middle class') university lecturer. Dylis has a daughter and a grandson and has had various part-time jobs to fit around childcare. Ken has no children and worked full-time before retiring to live off his investments. Dylis has helped her daughter out financially, especially when her daughter's marriage broke up. She let her daughter live in the house Dylis used to own rent-free for many years (rather than letting it out) while she lived with her previous partner. Ken made some very astute property investments during a previous property boom and is now a private landlord, letting properties out for an income. These different, intersecting, aspects of their lives have resulted in very different material outcomes in older age.

In terms of social capital, on the face of it, Dilys's situation would appear to support the argument that lack of material resources restricts the ability to make new relationships. She is single, would very much love to have a partner, and links her financial difficulties to not being able to do so, both because of the constraints upon meeting people through paid-for leisure activities and because 'I wouldn't want a partner who thought I was just going out with them for their money'. Yet, in terms of finding a partner, economic assets are not the only issue, because Ken after a succession of long-term relationships, and who would also very much like to have a partner, has been single for the past five years:

> All my friends say 'I can't understand it. You're good looking, healthy, comfortably off, sociable' … you know, I've got everything, you can see that for yourself. Even all my straight friends will say they can't believe I've not met anyone … my friends who go on these websites to meet other people, there's nothing about relationships, it's all about cruising for one-night stands sort of thing, casual sex, casual relationships which I'm definitely not into.… I've met guys recently who say they are into long-term loyal loving relationships, monogamy, because that's very important to me, and then as I've got to know them better, I've come to realise that, no,

> they're not being true to themselves, let alone with me, they're not honest to themselves. Probably age is a significant factor.
>
> (Ken, aged 64, 'Out Early')

Ken is highlighting here that access to material resources in and of itself does not guarantee access to certain types of relationships. For Ken, age, not economic capital, is a significant, limiting factor.

While gender is a key factor in shaping material outcomes in later life, and can distinguish between the lives of some older LGBNL women and GB(NL) men, it is not the only factor. Indeed, the LGBNL women participants' narratives highlighted profound material differences between and among them. Some women, particularly those from professional backgrounds, in couples and without children, had retired relatively early (e.g. at 60) on generous occupational and/or private pensions. Other women, particularly those not from professional backgrounds, had retired comparatively later and/or with only state pensions. Their different trajectories are highlighted in the accounts of Cat, aged 62 and Jennifer, aged 63, who were both previously involved in the women's movement:

> And the social workers and the teachers who are now retired, they've got their holidays and their pensions … I sometimes think it would be nice to go off somewhere nice and hot. There's always that 'Am I going to be able to pay my way?' I'm very frugal with my money. Because I like enjoying myself. But you know, seeing Patti Smith last week cost me £25. Well, that's a lot of money to come out of a pension.
>
> (Cat, aged 63, 'Lesbian by Choice')

Cat is single, with a daughter and grandson. After a series of low-paid jobs, followed by a role in the voluntary sector, she is now retired, living on a state pension in rented accommodation and in financially constrained circumstances. By contrast, Jennifer, who is of a similar age, and was also part of the women's movement, is in a couple, has no children, and is still working in her professional job. She lives in the property she owns with her partner, also a professional, and will have an occupational pension when she eventually retires. Jennifer talked about the different trajectories of ageing radical feminist activists:

> We became mainstreamed and we have comfortable lives and we hope to have comfortable retirements. Many of the people we campaigned with and worked with in those days, didn't do that, couldn't, or didn't, they worked in, you know, manual trades or caring, didn't make a profession of their lives, are very, very poor now and, really, often in poor health and in really quite difficult circumstances. And we could have been there, but we took this very bourgeois choice to opt in, and these are the people who had the same politics, and you do notice it now.
>
> (Jennifer, aged 62, 'Lesbian by Choice')

Jennifer is highlighting the class differences which distinguish older lesbians, which she links to employment patterns, and associated incomes. She also flags the impact on health in later life too. Both extracts demonstrate how classed material inequalities informed by economic (income) and cultural (education and professional qualifications) capital differentiate the later life outcomes among and between older lesbians/LGBNL women.

Classed spatialities

As observed in Chapter 1, spaces are classed in terms of who can make claims on them (Casey, 2013), how (Valentine, 2007), and which forms of behaviour signal belonging (or not) to certain classed spaces (Taylor, 2008; Browne & Bakshi, 2013). This theme was present in the participant's narratives about both home spaces and leisure spaces.

Home spaces

Participants spoke about classed spatialities, in terms of freedom of performance and vulnerability to prejudice and discrimination. Tim and Lawrence own their own property in a quiet leafy residential area among other owner-occupied properties. Lawrence spoke about what made them choose the area:

> I said to Tim 'Yeah, I think we'll be OK, here, it seems like an educated neighbourhood'.… Because without education you get ignorance and ignorance breeds fear, which translates into negativity.
>
> (Lawrence, aged 63, 'Out Early')

Lawrence is linking (classed) education and materiality (i.e. as expressed in the neighbourhood) to the presence or absence of prejudice ('negativity'). Arthur and Ian also own their property and have private pensions (Arthur will when he retires). They live in a quiet residential area alongside other owner occupiers and Ian made links between class and locality:

> Fortunately, I think we've been lucky that we've never come across any homophobia where we've lived. Now we've got people that we know that have had to move. [Our friends] they went to live on a council estate and the neighbour and his kids were making threats and were being abusive. But, and I don't want to sound snobbish, but where they went to live, they bought their own house, but the other people who were living nearby (renting on state benefits].… And I think that's it. Because we're moving in a middle-class environment, people are more worldly wise, open minded, have got brothers and sisters that are gay. But you go to [local area] where they're all working class, and I'm not saying I wasn't working class, because we were, weren't we? But I don't think it would be quite as easy, because it certainly wasn't for [our friends].
>
> (Ian, aged 69, 'Breaking Out')

So, here, for Ian, class (private housing/council housing; working-class area/middle-class area) is perceived to influence exposure to prejudice, discrimination and hate crime. For some individuals their classed locations can inform the need to conceal. For example, Rene conceals her sexuality in her sheltered housing complex, explaining:

> I'm not out to the neighbours, because I think they'd be – apart from one I made a pass at who's also a lesbian but more closety – but I don't think they'd handle it all that well, it's a bit petty bourgeois respectable working class.… But the family all know and I was out at work although that seems to be a long time ago.
>
> (Rene, aged 63, 'Breaking Out')

This extract highlights how Rene (who has been open about her sexuality to family and friends for decades and was out at work) chooses to conceal her sexuality where she is living because of concerns about how her neighbours – heightened through the lens of class – might react. This is also reflected in the experiences of Les, a professional (now aged 64) who went bankrupt in his 40s, and has never recovered financially. Les is now in receipt of welfare benefits and living in rented sheltered accommodation, on a local authority housing estate. He has experienced, and at the time of interview was continuing to experience, homophobic harassment from his neighbours, having moved there after harassment in a previous sheltered housing complex.

> It came out accidentally by some stupid man who came to visit me and made an awful racket, I think he was just showing off. And the people in the flat above me heard, and she told the people behind me, and the same day there were shouts of 'Poof, poof' … over three years of abuse.… It never became physical, thank goodness, although there was one threat of that. Just shouted abuse day or night.… This woman had her little child out at 2 in the morning and she taught him to shout 'Poof' …
>
> (Les, aged 64, 'Finding Out')

Les attributes his unwanted 'outing' to his friend's disinhibited behaviour, but he also locates his neighbours' homophobic responses in relation to issues of class:

> If you can buy a property, you can move into a middle-class area. And middle-class people, I'm sorry to say it, are more educated, more intelligent, know more of the world, been to university, blah, blah, blah. They don't think being gay is anything to worry about. I can tell you that in the last 10 years, I've had an employer who was gay, who lived with his civil partner, they lived next door to another couple who was gay, they lived there for about 15 years, the other couple lived there about 12, they lived in a cul-de-sac in [affluent area], everybody knows they're gay, apparently it's called the pink end of the street, they've never had any problem, no

> problem from kids, no problem from anybody, and that's totally different [from my experience]. So utterly different.
>
> (Les, aged 64, 'Finding Out')

This extract highlights the power of material, classed, spaces and the 're-inscribing of constructions of '"respectable", "ordinary" middle-classness, where sexual status did not necessarily erode classed claims and capitals' (Taylor, 2011a, p. 596). In this way, economic resources can, for some, 'facilitate a fuller sense of ordinariness' (Heaphy *et al.*, 2013, p. 2581). Differential access to dis/advantaged normative spaces produces 'winners and losers' of spatial inequalities (Casey, 2013, p. 142), within which binary Les would most definitely locate himself as a loser in later life.

One of the main problems for Les is his lack of economic power in terms of choice in where he lives. This issue was recognised by several participants who had greater financial assets: 'I'm lucky in one way. I can afford to pay for what I need. So I have better control' (Donald, aged 75, 'Finding Out'). While Donald, who owns his own home and has a private income highlights how his purchasing power gives him greater control, Frances, who rents, but also has comparatively greater financial assets, made links with both choice and with freedom from discrimination:

> I have a regular income. So I'm not on benefits. I will have this income probably for the rest of my life [so] I will probably have access to more housing options than people who have less money than I do. And will probably be able to take a stand because I'm independent. Whereas someone who is dependent on say the council or some other government body and would live in fear of losing their housing if they came out, that may not be such an issue for me … I have greater options because of that.
>
> (Frances, aged 66, 'Lesbian by Choice')

Frances recognises that increased access to finances creates greater options to choose where one lives, and in terms of being able to choose to be open about one's sexuality because of that selectivity. This is demonstrated in Violet and Moira's interview. They both own their substantial property, and have been researching retirement villages, with a view to moving there. They have been interviewing prospective places for their suitability for same-sex couples:

> We've just looked at a couple of these retirement villages.… And we said [at the first village] 'Do you have any same-sex couples here?' and they said 'Yes, we do, there are two gentleman here, and we had two ladies who are buying a flat and they asked the same question as you' … [About the second village].… It was superb. It cost just shy of £400,000, service charges £6,000 and if one of you dies, it's a lot to pay. And when you sell your property, they take 20 per cent for their sinking fund. Now if you got there, and decide you don't like it, you lose 20 per cent of a

> large amount of money.... So anyway, we thought probably not, but it was interesting.
>
> (Moira, aged 75, 'Out Early')

The contrast between Les's experience and that of Moira and Violet is striking. Their housing experiences are located in difference areas (low cost rented housing/affluent privately owned), funded in different ways (state benefits/private income) and involve different options (it took Les several years, and petitioning to his MP to be moved by his local authority, to what turned out to be a very similar environment; Moira and Violet are shopping around and interviewing prospective candidates, and can take their time, because they are safe where they are). This again highlights how classed materialities can have a profound influence on quality of life in older age.

Leisure spaces

Participants also described navigating sexuality visibilities in spatial contexts. Graham is open about his sexuality in his sheltered accommodation:

> I think it's because I'm happy with myself and I know where I want to be and who I want to be with and how I want to be seen. And because I am content with that, I'm not expecting any abusive behaviour, and I'm prepared to confront it if I do.
>
> (Graham, aged 70, 'Breaking Out')

Graham's narrative is one of open self-acceptance. He also finds being explicit about his gay identity a useful tool to rebuff unwanted sexual advances from heterosexual women co-residents ('I said to her "Hold on, I should tell you now, I'm a gay man"'). However, Graham is nonetheless selective about his identity management in less familiar settings, and this is further nuanced by class. Graham went on a recent day trip which was put on for people who organise groups, and he and a friend were given a place because they jointly organise an older LGBT support group. He describes his decision about not to reveal his sexuality on the trip:

> I think we were the only gay people on the coach, and certainly from a gay organisation. It was a super day out … and we sat, with four women from a very working-class area of [city] and these four women were really lovely. And Tim said, 'Do you think we should tell them?' And I said 'No I don't think so' … I think we would have been perfectly happy [to tell them] if they had asked. At one point they asked 'What group are you?' and we said 'We're a group that meets up in [area]' and they said 'Oh, all men?' and we said 'No, there are some women as well' … I suppose I didn't want them to label us.
>
> (Graham, 70, 'Breaking Out')

Graham mobilises openness about his sexuality in his narrative about his sheltered accommodation, and uses his sexuality as a shield in response to heterosexual women there. However, he mobilises a reluctance to be recognised as a gay man with 'working class' heterosexual women on the coach trip. He implies that there can be both positive labelling in his sheltered accommodation (where he does not mention class as an issue) but less positive labelling in a situation where he perceives class as being an issue, and the working class-ness he attributes to the women on the trip as being problematic. Coach trips appear to be spaces where class(es) can intersect, an were also a site of concern for Martin, a retired professional:

> I mean I'm now a member of [retired trade union group] and they're mostly in their seventies and eighties and they're going for a coach trip to [place] soon. And I felt this very familiar little knot in my stomach, as I was booking two places for me and Bob. And I thought, gosh, what's that about? And it's because they just appeared to be very traditional, conservative [rural area] people. And I thought, gosh, I'm still expecting kind of a, I think from the men, a sort of 'ooh'.
>
> (Martin, aged 62, 'Breaking Out')

Martin's concern about the trip is linked to his perception of an increased risk of prejudice from older men from a particular type of (traditional, conservative, rural) background. This, and Graham's concerns, contrasts interestingly with Violet and Moira's account of a group trip to China over 10 years ago:

VIOLET (AGED 73, 'FINDING OUT'): We get on in hotels, and holidays, we went to China, came out in the airport…

MOIRA (AGED 75, 'OUT EARLY'): To our travelling companions. The guy was giving tickets out first to couples and he wasn't including us, and I said 'We're a couple, we're here for our 20th anniversary', and they all started clapping.

VIOLET (AGED 73, 'FINDING OUT'): They said 'Good for you, doing better than we are' [laughs].

There are several intersecting factors which differentiate Graham's and Martin's narratives with that of Violet and Moira. In terms of gender (two men on a trip; two women on a trip) and the gendering of homophobia (lesbian sexuality more likely to be discounted/dismissed, gay men's less so) the risks are different. In terms of partner status and domestication, Graham and his friend's status is unclear, and their explanation of themselves and their relationship to their group intentionally vague. By contrast, Violet and Moira are performing 'just like their idealised heterosexual counterparts but for sexual status' (Taylor, 2011a, p. 587) and are more safely recognisable in their conventional coupledom. In terms of class, people from 'a very working class' or 'traditional', 'conservative' rural area going on a one-day coach trip are likely to be from different backgrounds

than those who are going on an expensive escorted tour of China. Lastly, there is the issue of spatiality, and in particular powers of exit: there are limited exit pathways in the (free) 'closed' space of a coach trip, compared with the (paid for) spaces of an escorted tour which will only involve some overlaps with other travellers.

There are other non-scene leisure spaces where class can be an issue. Marcia, for example, sings in a choir. She formed her first relationship with a woman in her sixties, and distinguishes here between the reaction of her (working class) neighbours and her middle-class choir members:

> All my neighbours, who were very poorly educated, mostly unemployed, were absolutely fine. But … my choral society, which was made up of teachers and professionals … they were absolutely horrified … [I announced] 'my partner Angela and I will be having a civil partnership tomorrow' … after choir some people came up to me and shook my hand and other people didn't speak to me at all, people who would always speak to me, people in the row in front of me, turned their backs on me, did not speak to me. That was where I had my biggest rejection, was in the choir.
>
> (Marcia, aged 66, 'Late Performance')

Marcia emphasises class in the different responses she experienced to her first same-sex relationship. Rather than a narrative of working-class inclusion and middle-class acceptance, however, her account is the other way round. She describes acceptance from her working-class neighbours and rejection from her middle-class choir members. A significant mediating factor is religion. Marcia understood her choir members' reactions as being informed by tensions relating to their religious beliefs:

> It was about another year I was there in the choir before we moved. And some people did come around in time. And I could see some people struggling with the fact that they knew me and liked me as a person and now what are they going to do. And it was all about religion, it was against what the bible teaches, it was the church. It was a big conflict for them and I could see them trying to work it out. And I couldn't help them with that. I had a really, really, nice card from a woman who I'd never even spoken to in the choir, saying how proud she was of me … it was a lovely, lovely card and that meant a lot to me. And I suppose things like that made up for the bad reception I had from other people.
>
> (Marcia, aged 66, 'Late Performance')

Marcia is highlighting here both how religion can trump class in terms of responding to LGBNL people and also how different people interpret religious doctrine differently with some taking a more inclusive stance than others. This supports work by Andrew Yip who has argued that there is a considerable difference between orthodox Christian teachings and what actually occurs among

Christians, with increasing acceptance of LGBNL people within *some* parts of the Christian faith community (Yip, 2008). This issue is returned to in the next section.

Contextual contingencies are also highlighted in a story told by Martin. He and Bob, lifelong partners, both middle class by profession, used to frequent a working-class pub near where they live.

> We used to go to the local pub here, years back, when we first moved [here] and we always sat in the saloon and it was a very working-class pub, playing their darts and the rest of it, and they kind of looked at us every now and then, but it was all right, we rubbed along. And then one day, there was a darts group from somewhere else that came in, and they were openly unpleasant towards us, saying nasty things. And what was funny was, the locals who didn't really know us, kind of jumped on them, like, look, those are our queers, sort of, leave them alone. [laughs] So I think you can be accepted in communities, but I think what can happen is you have to conform to a certain stereotype way to be accepted, so, so long as you're both butch women or camp men, then we know what you are and we know where you are and you also make us laugh, so it's OK.
>
> (Martin, aged 62, 'Out Early')

Martin's story shows how group affiliations can overcome as well as exacerbate prejudice and discrimination. While he and Bob had been tolerated in the pub on the margins of group membership, the arrival of the more hostile 'out group' visiting darts club, pushed them further into in-group affiliation (and protection) by the home club. Martin also raised the issue of certain types of 'queer' behaviour being more acceptable than others, which is addressed next.

Classed respectabilities

Interwoven with participants' narratives about class, were notions of respectability and of behaving in ways which do and do not conform to middle-class expectations. Several participants spoke of the importance of 'fitting in' and of both being, and being seen to be, 'normal' and this was especially prevalent among participants with strong religious identities and/or affiliations. Bridget and her partner Liz were very proud that 'We've got the vicar coming to tea on Friday' (Bridget, aged 66, 'Late Performance'). Moira and her partner Violet, a nurse, were, for many years, 'not entirely open' about being a couple in their village, where they attended church each week ('customs of our tribe' said Moira, aged 75, alluding to the importance of church and church life for many older lesbians). They immersed themselves in village life,

> I think an awful lot of how you fit in is who you are. And I think how we are as a couple, although we don't talk about what makes us those people, we're involved in the community, Moira ran the Good Neighbours scheme

> [and] if someone needed nursing care of a particular immediacy, I was perhaps the person who would go.
>
> (Violet, aged 73, 'Finding Out')

When they recently circulated cards announcing their forthcoming civil partnership, a form of officially coming out to all who knew them, they were thrilled with the responses they received, including from local faith leaders:

> Well the first call we got was from the vicar's wife, saying 'Richard wants to know what time it's going to be happening, so he can be thinking of you'.... One of the Methodist lay preachers ... sent us flowers and a card.... We didn't expect a lot of graffiti on the walls or anything dreadful, although we thought it might happen, but I think, yes, the really outward display, was quite unexpected.
>
> (Moira, aged 75, 'Out Early')

Moira and Violet's delight, and surprise, at the open acceptance of their civil partnership from their local community, including religious leaders, shows how conditional they had felt their previous inclusion had been. This conditionality was based on behaving respectable and having a utilitarian role in their village. Despite this they were still not sure what response they would receive when 'coming out'. They even thought that hate crime ('graffiti on the walls') might be a possibility. This highlights how lesbian and gay people can often feel they have to conform to a particular set of norms to earn inclusion in mainstream spaces.

Andrew spoke more about those norms and the need to comply with them. He is an ex-head teacher, from a Christian background, who concealed his sexuality until his retirement (precipitated when he left his wife for a man). He has been out since then, has been a warden at his village church for the past 20 years, takes religious assembly at local schools and is an independent celebrant at funerals. Andrew says he has only once experienced homophobia in his village, from a 'village gossip' who told someone else he was 'queer'. He challenged her diplomatically and she ceased. Andrew thinks that the price for inclusion is to 'be normal':

> We're dealing with normal people. And we've got to be normal ourselves and conform ... like it or not, you've got to conform to the society in which you have to live ... [describes a highly qualified lesbian relative who went to a job interview and didn't get the job].... She dresses in men's clothes, jeans, and she's size 22, no bra, she's like a bloody trucker! I said 'No one would think you've got a fine arts degree!' I said 'If you experience homophobia dressing and acting like that, little wonder' ... if you want to be the outsider all the time or be a gay man with a feather stuck up your arse, you get what happens to you, don't you?
>
> (Andrew, aged 66, 'Breaking Out')

As this extract from Andrew's interview shows, gender non-conformity constituted, for him justification of social exclusion and even homophobia. While this could be argued to be some form of internalised homophobia, Andrew has made explicit the power of compliance with heterosexual norms and the gender binary as the price which must be paid for social inclusion (Richardson, 2004). This in turn means that non-conformist non-domesticated LGBNL individuals can pose a threat to that social inclusion, as this extract from Ian's interview demonstrates:

> There were two gay men on a cruise, and they were very camp, they were quite outrageous, and we didn't have much to do with them, they were quite embarrassing actually.… They were American and very loud.… Now we've got two friends, and everywhere they go they have trouble with the neighbours. But, do you know, they rub them up the wrong way. They're sex mad, make loads of noise. So you're going to upset your neighbours, aren't they, if you're bonking with the windows open and shouting, they don't want to know that sort of thing, do they?
>
> (Ian, aged 69, 'Breaking Out')

Ian's stance reveals the distinction between (classed) acceptable and unacceptable forms of the expression of same-sex sexualities. These narratives highlight both the power of material, classed, spaces which reinscribe respectability (Taylor, 2011a, p. 596) *and* how non-compliant others – 'dangerous queers' (Clarke *et al.*, 2007, p. 191) – can jeopardise that respectability and 'give good gays (white, middle class, monogamous, cohabiting, lesbian and gay couples) a "bad name"' (p. 191). The importance of being seen as 'normal' or 'ordinary' was also evident in the interview with Ian and his partner Arthur (both with strong Christian beliefs):

ARTHUR (AGED 60, 'BREAKING OUT'): People often say 'Are you brothers?'

IAN (AGED 69, 'BREAKING OUT'): And I'll say no, we're partners. I think that's a big part of the problem of why people don't like gays. Because they don't know what they're talking about, basically. They think we've got horns and purple tails. But when they see you, then they probably think we're not so bad after all.

ARTHUR (AGED 60, 'BREAKING OUT'): They're quite surprised that we're just ordinary men.

For Ian and Arthur, making themselves visible in their 'ordinariness' – 'just like their idealised heterosexual counterparts but for sexual status' (Taylor 2011a, p. 587) – goes some way to undoing negative stereotypes of gay men and increasing their chances of social inclusion. The wish to be seen as 'normal' is also echoed in Ellen's interview: 'I want people to see we're normal … I want people to see how ordinary I am. That I don't have two horns and a tail. I'm not breathing smoke' (Ellen, aged 64, 'Late Performance'). Ellen, who feels she has lost social status in her demotion from a heterosexually married Catholic woman,

again uses the words 'normal' (like Andrew) and 'ordinary' (like Arthur). She also refers to not having 'two horns and a tail' and 'not breathing smoke' echoing Ian's observations 'they think we've got horns and purple tails'. This powerful imagery both suggests how closely connected, conflated indeed, some older LGBNL people feel in the eyes of other people with evil, in the form of the devil, and their powerful sense of the need to disconnect themselves from that stereotypical and prejudicial misperception.

'The idea of "respectability"' (McNay, 2004, p. 186) has a long, classed, history (Skeggs & Loveday, 2012) operating powerfully to distinguish between 'more' or 'less' respectable classes. In relation to gender, bourgeois ideals of women involving 'elegance, refinement and controlled eroticism' (McNay, 2004, p. 186) against which working class women 'have been defined as common, bawdy and sexually promiscuous' (McNay, 2004, p. 186) mean that women's sexuality has been navigated through and against such classed ideals (Skeggs, 1997). Lesbian and gay citizenship debates (Bell & Binnie, 2000) have centred on issues of respectability (Rubin, 1993), on privatised sexualities 'in long-term, monogamous, relationships modelled on (hetero)normative marriage and family values' (Richardson, 2004, p. 407) and normative constructions of 'responsible and respectable sexual citizenship' (Richardson, 2005, p. 523) which involved 'sanitised' (Casey, 2013, p. 144) performances of lesbian and gay lives. Billy sees the exclusionary potential of legalised same-sex couple recognition (and regulation):

> When you get to the stage of civil partnership, every gay person doesn't have to do it, it's not for everybody, that's not the thing, it's not some kind of 'Oh, I'm better than the guy who shags around'. No, it's not that. It's not that at all. I don't give a stuff whether they shag around. If that's what makes them happy, then, though it probably won't. But I'm not coming down with a first- and second-class agenda among gay people. I wouldn't have that. Absolutely not.
>
> (Billy, aged 61, 'Breaking Out')

Billy recognises that legally privileging the conjugal couple could create a class divide between (older) LGBNL people, i.e. those in legally recognised and socially acceptable couples and those in other relationships forms which lack legal recognition and similar social status (see also Chapter 2). The following extracts from Alice's interview show how 'compulsory coupledom' (Wilkinson, 2013) and domestication has produced sites of both inclusion and exclusion for older lesbians. In this first extract Alice describes how she experimented with alternative models of living in the 1970s and 1980s:

> [It was] the late '70s, early '80s. And we all lived together. We were all what would now be called polyamorous, we called it non-monogamy, we tried lots of things, we tried living as companions rather than lovers, we tried having several lovers at one time, all sorts of combinations of things to

> get away from patriarchal models of living based on a gender division of labour and under the control of organised religion.… Some of that was probably a bit naive and daft but in terms of what my expectations are and what I think is possible, I think it has pretty much set up my ways of seeing the world and understanding the world.… We were quite proud to have ghetto, I guess, and it was probably the best time of my life.
>
> (Alice, aged 60, 'Out Early')

So for Alice, then, those early experiences created an expectation of how relationships could be performed beyond the heteronormative conjugal couple. Yet many of her allies from that time have now become coupled and domesticated, as she describes:

> They have their houses which mean an awful lot to them, they've really slogged for them, they've got them really nice, just the way they want. They've usually got a house load of animals.… They just do their allotments, they don't really look at society, they're not interested in the big questions.… They're happy, they do what they want day in day out. If they get nice neighbours, they feel really lucky. They have holidays three times a year and they work at universities, things like that, they get paid well. I couldn't live like that. It wouldn't suit me, and I've given up on them being part of any intentional community.
>
> (Alice, aged 60, 'Out Early')

For Alice, the loss of her old communities is devastating: 'The thought of that never happening again, well … [it feels] a bit like death' (Alice, aged 60, 'Out Early'). Her account echoes the observations of Nancy Whittier, in her study of ageing radical feminists, that,

> The loss of community that accompanied the decline of organised feminism in the early 1980s left all participants feeling a sense of loss, alienation and nostalgia, and deprived them of the networks and culture that supported their collective identity and translated it into mobilisation.
>
> (Whittier, 2009, p. 116)

This links in with the earlier observations of the different career trajectories and material outcomes in later life among and between older lesbians. Here, however, Alice is talking not about material capital but social and cultural capital, and the exclusionary lines of domestication differentiating between those older lesbians (and, of course, potentially all LGBNL people) who have engaged in compulsory coupledom and all its material and lifestyle trappings and those who have not. For 'Out Early' and 'Lesbian by Choice' women in particular, who are less likely to have children and/or to have engaged in compulsory coupledom, the loss of those communities is felt more keenly.

Passing on material resources

This section considers how material assets are disposed of in the participants' Wills. I have explored the issue of older LGBNL people's Will-writing in depth elsewhere (Westwood, 2015d). Here, I am focussing on how material privilege is passed on, and to whom, by older LGBNL people. I suggest that, according to this study, the nuclear and biological family are prioritised in the disposal of assets, with friends and/or care providers marginalised. This is with one notable exception: there may be a particular trend among some materially privileged single childfree gay men to pass their assets on to other men. I consider this in terms of the gendered reproduction of material privilege among older LGBNL women and men.

In England and Wales where there is testamentary freedom[1] Finch and Mason have argued that will-writing is 'the business of constituting kinship, not just reflecting it' (Finch & Mason, 2000, p. 162). Yet the majority of UK research on inheritance (Finch & Mason, 1993, 2000; Humphrey *et al.*, 2010; Douglas, Woodward, Humphrey, Mills & Morrell, 2011; Hasson, 2013) has not addressed sexuality. Even in Morrell, Bernard and Legard's (2009) study exploring attitudes towards intestacy rules among 'non-traditional families', although same-sex couples were included in one of four focus groups, there was no specific analysis of the findings by sexuality. Daniel Monk has, however, recently broken new ground by exploring lesbian and gay Will-writing in his analysis of E.M. Forster's will (Monk, 2013), his analysis of contested Wills (Monk, 2011) and his research with lawyers who have written Wills for lesbian and gay clients (Monk, 2014a, 2014b).

Finch and Mason (1993, 2000), in their major works on inheritance in England, have argued that kinship, as reflected in Will-writing, is flexible, negotiated and contingent, in contrast with more rigid intestacy rules. Douglas *et al.* have reported that their research indicates the 'enduring' (Douglas *et al.*, 2011, p. 245) privileging of the biological/nuclear family in Will-writing. They have argued that their findings do not support Pahl and Spencer's (2004) more diverse approach to kinship, and that instead they indicate 'a more predictable picture when it comes to inheritance' (Douglas *et al.*, 2011, p. 254). In terms of the 'inheritance families', Douglas *et al.* have also argued for a distinction between children, regarded as 'always family', linked by the 'blood line' (Douglas *et al.*, 2011, p. 246) and spouses who are potentially less permanent fixtures on the kinship map. Monk has critiqued Douglas *et al.*'s research for not taking into account alternative lesbian and gay kinship formations (Monk, 2014a). His own research echoed Finch and Mason's observations of negotiated family relationships. In particular, while the lawyers in Monk's research described notions of 'family money' underpinning some of the Wills, they all

> stressed that for gay men and lesbians the way in which they were treated by their family and in particular the degree of acceptance of their sexuality was a critical factor that frequently trumped any notion of biological family obligation.
>
> (Monk, 2014a, p. 317)

My own research (Westwood, 2015d) complicates these accounts, suggesting that there are multiple factors informing decision-making in LGBNL Will-writing and that these decisions do not always reflect the most significant relationships, care practices or kinship formations of the testators. Sometimes biological family is privileged, including through the passing on of 'family money'. Sometimes friendship is privileged (among gay men). And while sometimes the degree of acceptance of sexuality informs bequests, at other times there can also be a resounding disconnect between the two.

Nuclear and biological family

Those participants with cohabiting partners and children prioritised them (particularly the passing on of pensions and/or shared property to partners) in their Wills. Those participants with non-cohabiting partners, however, did not. Iris, aged 61, has been in her current committed living-apart-together relationship with her woman partner for four years. She has two children and two grandchildren, a sister (with whom she is 'close') four nieces and nephews, a brother-in-law and a wide circle of women friends. Iris has a 'conflictual' relationship with her son and daughter (her daughter lives with her, along with one of Iris's grandsons).

> They would stand up for any gay person, but … if I was to say anything about being a lesbian, my daughter would say 'You dyke' or something rude.… But both of them are staunchly in favour of friends who are gay or people in the public eye who are gay. I mean, my daughter's best friend is a gay man. But they don't want their mother to be gay.
>
> (Iris, aged 61, 'Breaking Out')

Iris keeps her life with her partner, and her life with her children and grandchildren, completely separate: 'because it's quite conflictual, so when I go to her I like a rest from it all'. Iris and her partner are financially independent of one another, both owning their homes, and they have no sense of financial responsibility towards one another. Iris is worried about getting dementia, which her mother had at quite an early age. Thinking about a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA), Iris said she would nominate her partner, 'because she would be conscientious and do whatever was needed' (Iris, aged 61, 'Breaking Out').

However, when it comes to Iris's Will, her daughter and son are sole beneficiaries. Iris's decision-making reflects both the presence of obligation (to her children) and freedom from obligation (to her partner) both iterating and complicating 'family of choice' narratives. Significantly, while Iris shows a strong sense of obligation to her children and grandchildren, it is her partner, not her children, she would trust to make decisions on her behalf, showing a disconnection between Will-writing and care and support received. This is also echoed in Rene's Will. Rene's personal community of significant women who have helped her with practical tasks since her hip operation includes her daughter, sister, and

(heterosexual) best friend. However, only one of these relationships is reflected in her Will, her beneficiaries being her daughter and her son (from whom she is estranged). Rene's Will shows a disconnection between the care and support she receives (excluding her sister and her friend) and a prioritisation of her children (her daughter, who does provide care and support and her son, who does not).

Rachel is single, childfree, and lives in her own home. She has a strong network of women friends, particularly as she organises a local lesbian group, and also has strong ties with her sister and her sister's children. When considering her funeral, Rachel wants her friends, rather than her family, to organise it:

> My family don't know my likes and dislikes, they don't know me like my friends, my lesbian friends, do … I'd want [friends' names] to sort it because they're my friends, and I'd want them to include my sister, because I love her, but she doesn't know me well enough to know. And she's very much Roman Catholic, I'm not practising any more, and I know what she'd do and I don't want any of that. So, yeah, it would be friends.
>
> (Rachel, aged 64, 'Finding Out')

Despite Rachel feeling that her lesbian friends know her better than her sister does, and wanting them to arrange her funeral, those friends, in fact none of her friends, are included in her Will. Instead, the beneficiaries are her sister, nephew and godchildren.

> My family came right back in to my mind as soon as I didn't have a partner that I shared a property with … I don't see the point in leaving money to my friends.… But I think of my sister as my little sister, as I've always felt a bit responsible for her, so that's why she's in it. Her son is my favourite nephew [laughs].
>
> (Rachel, aged 64, 'Finding Out')

So, in terms of the disposal of her estate, Rachel's decision-making is informed by duty and responsibility towards her biological family. She explicitly discounts her friends in her Will-making, noting her own biological family default when she and her partner split up.

Lewis is 61, has identified as gay for all of his adult life, is single, childfree and lives in sheltered housing. Lewis's primary source of contact and social support is via various political, community and older LGBT support groups with which he is actively involved. Lewis's only family member, his sister, lives overseas and they have very little contact ('We're not very close now and haven't been for a little while'). Even so, Lewis's sister is the sole beneficiary in his handwritten Will:

> I've got a kind of Will. But when I spoke to my sister last year, she thinks I should get an Executor, she thinks I should get a solicitor to do it. I need to sort that out. It's been worrying me … I'd love to have a gay solicitor, but

> there isn't one here. Then I could say I want someone to come to my flat before my sister arrives and chuck out all my porn.
>
> (Lewis, aged 65, 'Out Early')

Lewis has prioritised a biological family member, to whom he is not close, in his Will, and not those people who are his primary sources of social support. He also highlights the added complexities for lesbian and gay individuals when planning the disposal of their estates, both in relation to wanting to find a local gay solicitor (not easy in rural areas) and a wish for 'posthumous secrecy' (Jaconelli, 2012, p. 162), or to maintain a retrospective respectability in wanting his porn to be removed.

Relatively affluent, Rupert, aged 68, has identified to himself as gay from an early age, becoming more open about it to others across the years. Rupert and his civil partner, who is from a minority ethnic background, live very near Rupert's biological family – his brother, sister-in-law, niece and her husband. Rupert and his partner both have mental health problems, very few friends and receive no support from his family:

> They don't like gay people. They don't like different ethnic groups. And they don't like mental illness. So … [laughs]
>
> (Rupert, aged 68, 'Out Early')

Despite the lack of support from his family, Rupert has already ceded the bulk of his estate (inherited from his parents) to them, including the home in which he used to live with a previous partner, which is now occupied by his niece and her husband, while Rupert and his partner now live in a small, inferior, property. Rupert's strategy highlights how the disposal of assets may take place while an individual is still alive, rather than through their Will.

Ex-partners and friends who are 'family'

Des has included his ex-partners in his Will. His estate is equally divided between his ex-wife, his ex-(civil) partner and his three daughters. One of Des's main reasons for not dissolving his civil partnership, although he and his civil partner are permanently separated, is to protect his ex-partner from Inheritance Tax. For Des, it is extremely important to 'do right' financially both in regard to his ex-partner and his children and ex-wife: 'I know I have their [children] respect.… I've treated them fairly. And I've treated my wife, ex-wife, fairly as well…' (Des, aged 63, 'Breaking Out'). A sense of obligation informs Des's decision-making. This sense of obligation is extended to his ex-partners, and is indicative of the complexity of modern day relationships, including for older gay men and lesbians. Jack's social network blends family and friends in their significance. This is, in turn, reflected in his Will:

> Well, I had my younger nephew in my Will. I don't have anything to do with him [now], my sister doesn't, my niece doesn't, you know, and he's

> very irresponsible, you know he drinks and drives. And at the end of the day I thought I can't be having this, you know, so I've given some money to friends and my family, and I've given more than half to [charity] because I'm very much into human rights I'm in [charity] and all that.… So it goes to two relatives, my niece, sister and two friends … [the greatest amount to] my sister.… She has the need.
>
> (Jack, aged 66, 'Breaking Out')

Jack's Will is informed by traditional 'duty' and 'responsibility' values, aimed at both family *and* friends. Jack also has very strong socialist/collectivist principles ('I became a Labour councillor at 23') and so the wider community is, to him, also his family, and he has a duty to that 'family' too, hence the major charitable component to his Will. Jack's decision-making is also mediated by perceived need (hence the greatest sum left in his Will is to his sister) and by deservedness (hence the exclusion of the wayward nephew). Jack observed 'I'm not typical of older gay men I think because I've got loads of friends and I've got loads of women friends'. Among the interviewees there was indeed a small group of single childfree gay men who had social networks which predominantly involved other (gay) men, who disposed of their assets exclusively to those men, as is explored in the following section.

Gay men with men's friendship networks

Donald, aged 75, ('Finding Out') is openly gay, single, childfree and lives independently in his own home. Donald has more friends than biological family. He has a sister with whom he is not close ('We exchange telephone calls about twice a year'). Both extremely affluent, they have an agreement that they will not be beneficiaries in each other's Wills after witnessing family conflict over their grandmother's Will. Donald's beneficiaries are all long-standing men friends (gay and heterosexual). Alastair (aged 76, 'Out Early'), Ken (aged 64, 'Out Early') and Phil (aged 62, 'Breaking Out') are also single and childfree. They each live independently in their own homes, are very open about their sexualities, and have large friendship networks comprising friends they see on a regular basis. Their friends are predominantly gay men. All three men have siblings with whom they have poor relationships. Alastair does not get on with his sister's husband whom he considers to be homophobic; Ken is estranged from his sister who he believes to be uncomfortable with him being gay. Phil is emotionally detached from his twin brother ('We don't have much in common … he's totally irrelevant [to me]') and stepmother, ('it wouldn't worry me if I never met her again'). He sees them both once a year, on his stepmother's birthday, to honour his late father's memory.

Alastair, Ken and Phil, like Donald, each describe friend-like personal communities, according to Pahl and Spencer's (2004) model. These are further nuanced by gender and sexuality, and informed by alienation from biological family members, based at least in part (for Alastair and Ken) on perceptions of

homophobic rejection by siblings/siblings' partners. Donald, Alastair and Ken's Wills reflect their personal communities: their bequests are all to men, particularly gay men. Alastair's Will has four beneficiaries, his closest male friends. Ken's Will has a larger number of male friendship beneficiaries, which he adjusts regularly, according to the shifting quality of his relationships. Donald, Alastair and Ken have not bequeathed anything to biological family members.

Phil's Will also reflects his personal community. He has four primary beneficiaries – two gay and two heterosexual men – as well as numerous other male beneficiaries nominated to receive smaller amounts. There is only one woman in Phil's Will: his stepmother. He explained that this was to repay her for the money she had saved him by caring for his father before he died. If she had not done so, Phil reasoned, he would have had to pay for his father's care. By leaving her a bequest in his Will, according to Phil, he is honouring a material debt owed, an obligation, rather than reflecting any kind of emotional tie to his stepmother.

Reflections

In contrast to much of the previous empirical work around Wills, the narratives analysed here point to many different explanations underlying Will-making (Westwood, 2015d). While distinctions between 'family' and 'friends' were made by some participants, others described relationships which lay in the space between these two traditional binary distinctions: Jack in his conflation of 'biological family' and 'friends family'; Des in the significance accorded to his ex-partners; Judith and Iris's respective 'living apart together' partnerships; Rachel's bequests to her godchildren. In contrast with Finch and Mason's work on negotiated relationships and inheritance there is a striking *lack* of negotiation among several of the participants in terms of the disposal of assets even when biological family relationships are poor, and they experience rejections due to their sexuality. This may suggest a privileging of the 'blood line' (Douglas *et al.*, 2011, p. 246) by some and/or the continued passing on of 'family money' (Monk, 2014, p. 317). On the other hand, the presence of godchildren in this study, and Monk's work as well, also poses a challenge to Douglas *et al.*'s (2011) assertion that disposal of assets to children is specifically in order to perpetuate 'the blood-line'.

Significantly the provision of love, care and support does not inform who is made a beneficiary. This might be because care, if between friends, is understood as being founded on voluntarism. It might also reflect the wider cultural devaluation of care (Barnes, 2012). In this study, the women were more likely to have children (their own or avuncular), to whom they then left their estates. By contrast the four people whose beneficiaries were exclusively (male) friends (apart from Phil's exceptional inclusion of his stepmother) were childfree gay men. This raises the possibility of a particular pattern of disposal of assets associated with connections between relatively affluent, childfree, gay men, in contrast to other LGBNL individuals who dispose of their assets along biological family and/or intergenerational lines. This area merits further research.

Concluding remarks

This chapter has highlighted the significance of material resources for quality of life among older LGBNL individuals, and of the great variation in access to such resources among them. This is not only gendered, in terms of different trajectories among women and men, it is also mediated by class and social/cultural capital. In particular many LGBNL women with professional backgrounds have carved out materially comfortable and domesticated lives in contrast with the less well-resourced women who did not go down the professional (coupledom) route.

These classed differences have a strong spatial component, with certain classed home and leisure spaces perceived as more or less safe for the open performance of LGBNL lives and sexualities. This open performance is, however, read as being highly contingent on compliance with middle-class norms and respectabilities. These were identified as being of particular significance to those participants with strongly held religious beliefs and/or those who engaged in religious spaces for leisure activities. A key issue appeared to be the performance of privatised (non-hetero) sexualities. This is particularly significant for older LGBNL people in relation to older-age care spaces run by religious organisations and/or where care workers with strong religious beliefs which are opposed to non-heterosexuality may be employed. A number of older LGBNL people are concerned about this issue, as will be addressed in the next chapter.

Note

1 Individuals are under no formal duty to pass property down through biological family (Kerridge, 2011).

6 Anticipated care futures

Introduction

One of the main concerns of older LGBNL individuals about ageing is in relation to older-age care needs and care provision. I propose that these concerns relate to anticipated spatial inequalities. In considering their possible care futures, participants were most concerned about the spaces in which those futures would be lived out, and about who might co-occupy and co-produce those spaces with them. Formal older-age care[1] spaces were perceived as poor, with little control of the dying process, and as sites of particular (hetero-)normativities experienced at times of increased vulnerability. This analysis deepens understandings of 'queer presences and absences' (Taylor & Addison, 2013) and of new gendered and sexual landscapes (Browne & Nash, 2013), by expanding conceptualisations of sexualised spaces (Brown, Browne & Lim, 2009) beyond home/work/leisure (Browne & Bakshi, 2011) to include those of formal care. In considering participants' concerns about future care spaces, I move away from conceptualising spaces as inherently heterosexual (Bell & Binnie, 2000), i.e. inevitably shaped by immutable heterosexist norms. Instead I understand social spaces to be suffused with power (Foucault, 1980), but with contextual, contingent, dominant spatial orderings (Valentine, 2007), temporally variant (Oswin, 2008), and discursively and performatively (re)produced (Podmore, 2013). In the context of sexuality, there are no absolutely 'heterosexual' spaces, only ones where heteronormativity is, at a particular moment in time, the reproduced dominant spatial ordering.

My argument in this chapter is fourfold: first, older-age care needs are anticipated by participants as potentially relocating them into spaces of older-age-based inequalities; second, these spatial inequalities are understood to be magnified by gender and sexuality, nuanced by age standpoints, particularly cohorts; third, older-age care needs, and associated vulnerabilities and dependencies, are perceived as complicating resistance in response to these spatial inequalities, while at the same time that resistance also holds the potential to transform care in later life; and fourth, that these spatial issues are 'imbued with the problem of time' (Butler, 2008, p. 1), e.g. 'life-time' and the ending of embodied existence (Fletcher *et al.*, 2008b).

Anticipating spaces of unequal older-age care

This section addresses participants' fears and concerns about standards of older-age care and concerns about the control of death and dying. Although concerns about care deficits are shared by many older people, regardless of sexuality (Guasp, 2011), they are more likely to affect older lesbian and gay individuals sooner and in greater numbers than older heterosexual-identifying individuals. This is due to the different structuring of their informal social support networks (see Chapter 4) which play an important role in buffering older people from the need for formal care provision (Glaser *et al.*, 2009). Older lesbians in particular are more likely than older heterosexual women and older gay men to spend their final years in residential care (Archibald, 2010).[2] Older gay and bisexual-identifying men, by contrast, may not live as long, but are likely to have earlier higher support needs (Rosenfeld *et al.*, 2012), having poorer health than older heterosexual men and being disproportionately represented in the ageing population living with HIV/AIDS (Fredriksen-Goldsen & Muraco, 2010).

Quality of older-age care

Concerns about care were located by participants firstly in terms of standards of care for all older people. As Jennifer reflected:

> It's when you start thinking about things like, you know, going into an old people's home, or even into sheltered housing or something like that, that one is afraid. Because my only experiences of those have just been so dreadful that I don't think it would matter if I was a lesbian or I was straight, I just don't want to go there [sigh].
>
> (Jennifer, aged 62, 'Lesbian by Choice')

This extract highlights how some concerns about older-age care relate to standards of that care itself even before taking issues of gender and sexuality into consideration. Many older LGBNL individuals (particularly those who have supported ageing friends and family: King & Cronin, 2013) are aware of problems regarding care standards for older people (CQC, 2010; EHRC, 2011; Commission on Dignity in Care, 2012; Francis, 2013; Clwyd & Hart, 2013) especially in closed care contexts[3] through having supported others in those contexts. This informs how care is anticipated.

The dissonance between personalisation (see Chapter 2) rhetoric and the realities in practice (Blood, 2010; Eyers, Arber, Luff, Young & Ellmers, 2012) was observed by Maureen, who used to work in social care with older people: 'Care homes is just warehousing, isn't it? I haven't been to a care home where I've thought "wow this is nice"' (Maureen, aged 62, 'Finding Out'). Specific concerns about care are highlighted in the following extract where Moira and her partner Violet are describing Moira's late mother's care:

> It was horrendous. They lost my mother's glasses and said she came in without any. My mother had worn glasses since the age of five.… And [they] lost her teeth. Apparently we should have marked them.… And while they were getting her new glasses, we went in, and there she was, looking unkempt, with food down her front, her hair not done, no glasses on, and they'd given her a magazine. She couldn't read it.
>
> (Moira, aged 75, 'Out Early')

> …and that's another thing in the nursing home, that we would find Mother in somebody else's dress, a horrible Crimplene dress.
>
> (Violet, aged 73, 'Finding Out')

Here, the key concerns are both a lack of personalised care (SCIE, 2011a) (no glasses, lost teeth, being given a magazine she couldn't read, wearing clothes that were not her own) and a lack of basic dignity in care (Dixon, Biggs, Tinker, Stevens & Lee, 2009) (looking unkempt, with food on her clothing). In terms of equality, the issue for older LGBNL individuals is not the anticipation of receiving care inferior to that of heterosexuals, but rather the anticipation of care that is *equally as poor* as that experienced by older heterosexuals. As Alice said, when talking about constructing alternative forms of older LGBNL individuals' care:

> Do we have the means to make that a good alternative rather than a pale imitation with very low paid care that heterosexuals are willing to put up with?
>
> (Alice, aged 60, 'Out Early')

So here we can see the desire for a better standard of care than that perceived as currently being provided to older ('heterosexual') people: the desire not just to emulate current care provision, but rather to improve upon it. The perceived reality of older-age care in residential care spaces, at the level of lived experience rather than policy prescriptions, is that actual care practices are the opposite of personalised, they are generic, 'one-size fits all'. That non-personalised care is also perceived to be of a very poor standard, below that which would be considered acceptable for other age groups (Herring, 2003).

At the same time as there is a concern about poor standards of care, there is also a perception that care spaces place constraints on the assertion of rights:

> A lot of older people … will do anything not to upset their carers because they're scared of the repercussions … Daphne's mum wouldn't let Daphne speak up on her behalf, because she was scared about how she would be treated … is it, as you get older, that you're scared of upsetting the people that you are relying on for something?
>
> (Sandra, aged 61, 'Breaking Out')

This extract highlights how some older people can be reluctant to assert their rights, or have them asserted on their behalf (Woolhead, Calnan, Dieppe & Tadd, 2004),[4] and how this reluctance can be informed by heightened vulnerability associated with older-age-related care needs (Twigg, 1999, 2000, 2004). Closed institutions such as prisons are considered to be sites of wide-ranging performances of resistance (Ewick & Silbey, 1998; Bosworth & Carrabine, 2001). However, this may be constrained in the 'fourth age' (Gilleard & Higgs, 2010) where embodied dependency – 'you're scared of upsetting the people that you are relying on' – may undermine potential resistance, particularly among those who are 'different' in some way, including LGBNL individuals (Aronson & Neysmith, 2001). This, together with limited protections for older people in care spaces (Herring, 2003), as well as a paucity of non-statutory advocacy (Katz, Holland & Peace, 2013) means that many of formal law's protections relating to care standards[5] and equalities and human rights[6] have only limited applicability to those older people who are unwilling and/or unable (Sen, 2005; Nussbaum, 2010) to mobilise them (Lloyd-Sherlock, 2002).

Non-recognition of sexuality in older age

The discursive silencing of sexuality among older people (Taylor & Gosney, 2011) and the behavioural erasure of sexual activity by older people (Bamford, 2011; Bauer *et al.*, 2013b) is a site of inequality for all older people. As Donald observed,

> If I'm in a care home and somebody wants to visit me and get their bottoms beaten, well you've got problems with sound-proofing at once. But then again, how many heterosexuals who are into S&M would also have a problem with that? My inclinations are that we need to form allies with other older people. We need to look at the issues that go across older people. And sex is one.
>
> (Donald, aged 75, 'Finding Out')

While, as Donald observed, the issue of sexual activity in older-age care can be one which unites older people irrespective of sexuality, such activity is of particular relevance to older LGBNL individuals because it is more likely to be stigmatised (Hughes, 2009). In addition, the under-recognition of older people as sexual beings, as individuals with sexualities, also undermines the recognition of differences in sexuality between and among older people. So although care deficits impact all older people, they hold particular significance to LGBNL older people both because of their likely disproportionate use of older-age care provision and of sexuality-blindness (any sexuality) in older-age care contexts.

The disciplining of the end of life

A small number of participants interrogated how the end of life is currently regulated:

> [Suicide is not a tragedy] I see people who, doddery old condition, in hospital, being kept alive ruthlessly, and I regard that as a tragedy.
>
> (Phil, aged 62, 'Breaking Out')

> The medical advances that have been made in keeping us alive, the ethical thing hasn't kept pace with it. You keep people alive for longer, 'Oh we're all living for longer'. It's not necessarily a quality life.… Our cat wasn't well and so we had her put down eventually. I don't want to be that skeleton that was lying on my mother's bed. I want to keep more in control if I can.
>
> (Daphne, aged 60, 'Out Early')

Here we see the distinction between longevity and quality of life, and the paradox of a different model of euthanasia for animals and humans. Nine participants,[7] six women and three men, articulated a preference for 'ending my life at the time and way of my own choosing' (Stella, aged 66, 'Out Early'), another woman participant wished to have her life ended for her should she become incapacitated[8] and another implied she would choose not to continue living after her partner died but went into no further detail.[9] In terms of planning to die, Sally said:

> I've no family, they're all dead, no children, I never wanted any, no partner. And so there wouldn't be anybody there for me. And I can't imagine anything worse to be in hell hole in the armpit of a care home, where I'm abused or neglected. I'd rather die, thank you! So if ever I feel that physically or mentally, I'm on the downward slide, I definitely want to do something about it, because I can't see the point. I can't see the point at all and I feel strongly about it.
>
> (Sally, aged 73, 'Breaking Out')

Here we can see how a combination of the absence of informal social support and concerns about standards of care for older people, particularly those with LGBNL sexual identities/sexualities, has led Sally to conclude death would be preferable. Assisted dying and euthanasia are unlawful in the UK[10] as was mentioned by several of these participants:

> Oh no, I mean it's the last taboo, isn't it? [refers to legal 'right to die' cases] I mean that would be ideal, I suppose, to have your loved ones help you at the time that suits you without them getting done over.
>
> (Stella, aged 66, 'Out Early')

> My worry is, of course, the law. Because, if this is to work with the current legislation, you can't involve your friends. What I would like is to have a party, where there's everybody I love around, say 'OK guys, bye' [waves], stick the bag over my head, turn the valve on, please. But I have to do it earlier if it's me only. And that really annoys me. That's other people's

> wanky prejudices, really silly, dictating stupid outcomes. And that means I will die earlier [because I will have to do it by myself].
>
> (Phil, aged 62, 'Breaking Out')

These extracts demonstrate a critical interrogation of 'the calculated management of life' (Foucault, 1979, p. 140) by the state. Several authors have argued that the medicalisation of dying and death (Ost, 2010), 'the institutional governance of timely deaths' (Broom, 2012, p. 226) and 'a compulsory ontology of pathology in professional accounts of suicide' (Marsh, 2010, p. 28) all serve to produce disciplined dying subjects. Phil articulates resistance to this, constructing it as discriminatory ('other people's wanky prejudices') and, in terms of 'why law privileges some bodily choices and harms over others' (Fletcher *et al.*, 2008a, p. 331), as irrational ('really silly, dictating stupid outcomes'). A full exploration of these issues goes beyond the remit of this book and I have addressed them more fully elsewhere (Westwood, 2016c), however, the point I want to make here, is that the current regulation of death and dying is perceived by some older LGBNL individuals as a site of inequality in and of itself.

Gender and sexuality inequalities

This section considers participants' fears about future care needs and spaces, through the intersecting lens of gender and sexuality, in relation to three main areas: resources (lack of choice in provision); recognition (discursive and performative production of sexuality); and association (inclusions, exclusions, norms and normativities). My overall argument in this section is that the now well-recognised fears and concerns about formal older-age care provision are underpinned and informed by these inequality issues. In other words, anticipating future older-age care needs prompts fears about spatialised inequalities.

Resources: lack of choice in provision

This section considers the issue of older-age care and accommodation for very old people with high dependency needs which is gender and sexuality 'blind' (Cronin *et al.*, 2011) residential care provision. My argument is that the lack of choice in provision (Eaglesham, 2010; Carr & Ross, 2013) is an inequality issue relating to age, gender *and* sexuality. I propose that previous research on older LGBNL individuals' care preferences has privileged the voices of those who want either 'LGBT friendly' mainstream *or* 'LGBT' specialist provision (the majority of whom are men), and marginalised the voices of those who want gender and/or sexuality specific provision (the majority of whom are women).

When asked about their preferences, all participants expressed the wish to age in place, i.e. in their own homes, reflecting the views of the vast majority of older people (Musingarimi, 2008). If faced with the prospect of residential or nursing home care, participants consistently expressed the view that there should be a range of choices of types of care and accommodation available to older

'LGB'/'LGBT' individuals: 'I would like to see a choice of care homes' (Rene, aged 63, 'Breaking Out'); 'I think people should have choice … and there should be homes for gays and lesbians definitely' (Jack, aged 66, 'Breaking Out'); 'One size doesn't fit all' (Martin, aged 62, 'Out Early'). In terms of personal preferences, there was considerable divergence (see Table 6.1).

As can be seen from Table 6.1, the majority of women participants (62 per cent) expressed a preference for non-mainstream provision, most wanting either women-only or lesbian-only accommodation (evenly split), with many of the women who chose lesbian-only as their first option, selecting women-only as their second option. The *least* popular option among the women participants was lesbian and gay (LG)/lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB)/or lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) provision. The majority of gay men in the sample, by contrast, expressed a first preference for mixed mainstream provision (56 per cent), and a second preference for gay-men-only accommodation (25 per cent). Again, the *least* popular option among the men participants was LG/LGB/LGBT provision.

In terms of cohorts, the 'Out Early' and 'Breaking Out' cohorts of women were among those who preferred LG/LGB/LGBT accommodation whereas as higher proportion of the 'Finding Out' cohort of women expressed a preference for women-only or lesbian-only accommodation (see Table 6.2. below). It could be that the women participants who 'discovered' a lesbian sexuality ('Finding Out'), often did so within a feminist politicised context, which would orientate them more towards women/lesbian-only provision; whereas lesbians who came together with gay men via rights activism might be more likely to be comfortable with LG/LGB/LGBT provision.

Table 6.1 Residential care preferences as expressed by the 45 out of 60 participants who expressed a preference[1]

	Mainstream ('LGBT friendly')[2]	*Women-only*	*Lesbian-only*	*Men-only*	*Gay men-only*	*LG/LGB/LGBT*	*Total*
Women	11 (38%)	7 (24%)	7 (24%)	n/a	n/a	4 (14%)	29
Men	9 (56%)	n/a	n/a	0	4 (25%)	3 (19%)	16
Totals	20 (44%)	7 (16%)	7 (16%)	0	4 (9%)	7 (16%)	45

Notes

1 Ten of the 60 participants expressed no preference; another eight expressed a preference to die instead of going into a care home, three of whom did nonetheless express a residential care preference, although maintaining they would prefer to die. The following ten participants did not express a preference: Ronald (aged 60) was seriously ill and unable to see beyond that; Clifford (aged 67) was vague; Derek (aged 61) ambivalent; Audrey (aged 60) and Martin (aged 62) hopeful about ageing in place; and Barbara (aged 83) avoided thinking about it – 'I kind of shut that away as if I'm going to drop dead'; (Dylis, aged 75) 'It wouldn't really matter to me'; Billy (aged 61) – 'I don't see any point in worrying about the future. There is only a now'; Julia (aged 69) – had been about to move in with her lover, but plans fell through and she couldn't see beyond that at present; and Liz (aged 52) did not express a preference – the interviewer missed following this up during a joint interview with her partner.

2 Those who preferred mixed mainstream provision consistently specified that it should be 'gay friendly' or 'LGBT friendly'.

Table 6.2 Mainstream vs non-mainstream residential care preferences as expressed by the 45 out of 60 participants who expressed a preference, by cohort, and by gender

	Mainstream ('LGBT friendly')[1]			*Gender/sexuality exclusive (i.e. Women-only; Lesbian-only; Gay men-only)*			*LG/LGB/LGBT*			*Totals*		
	W	*M*	*Total*	*W*	*M*	*Total*	*W*	*M*	*Total*	*W*	*M*	*Total*
'Out Early'	3 (43%)	4 (57%)	7 (50%)	2 (29%)	3	5 (36%)	2 (29%)	0	2 (14%)	7	7	14
'Breaking Out'	1 (33%)	4 (66%)	5 (55%)	0	1 (17%)	1 (11%)	2 (66%)	1 (18%)	3 (33%)	3	6	9
'Finding Out'	3 (27%)	1 (33%)	4 (27%)	8 (57%)	0	8[2] (53%)	0	2 (66%)	2[3] (13%)	11	3	14
'Late Performance'[4]	3 (60%)	0	3 (60%)	2 (40%)	0	2 (40%)	0	0	0	5	0	5
'Lesbian by Choice'	1 (33%)	0	1 (33%)	2 (66%)	0	2 (66%)	0	0	0	3	0	3
Totals	11	9	20 (44%)	14	4	18 (40%)	2	3	7 (16%)	29	16	45

Notes
1 Those who preferred mixed mainstream provision consistently specified that it should be 'gay friendly' or 'LGBT friendly'.
2 All women.
3 Both men.
4 All women.

The data compare interestingly with previous research. The majority of previous studies[11] have reported individuals expressing a preference for LG/LGB/LGBT accommodation.[12] However, these studies have asked binary either/or questions, i.e. *either* mainstream *or* LGB/T, and so have produced binary answers. The voices of gay men have also tended to be disproportionately represented (see Chapter 3). A few studies have distinguished preference by gender e.g. Gay and Grey in Dorset (2006),[13] which reported that the majority of older 'LGB' individuals in its sample wanted non-mainstream provision, and the majority of those wanted lesbian and gay specific accommodation. However, most of its participants were under 64, and over two-thirds belonged to lesbian and gay support groups (Gay and Grey in Dorset, 2006, p. 22), which may have led to that sample being more likely to be in favour of mixed non-mainstream provision. Moreover, there was no breakdown by gender of preferences for lesbian and gay accommodation and the option of women-only accommodation was not presented to participants.

In a study that is now quite old, Quam and Whitford did include a gender analysis, reporting that 79.5 per cent of lesbians wished to live in a lesbian-only community compared with only 24.4 per cent of gay men who wanted men-only provision (Quam & Whitford, 1992). This echoes Monica Kehoe's study of older lesbians (now 25 years old) in which she reported that 66 per cent of her participants preferred an exclusively lesbian environment (Kehoe, 1988), iterated in Goldberg, Sickler and Dibble's (2005) subsequent meta-analysis of research.

The data echo those studies which indicate a preference among lesbians for lesbian-only and/or women-only provision. The data, while a relatively small sample size, nonetheless highlight how mobilising a statistic of a majority preference for non-mainstream provision as a desire for LGBT provision can be misleading, in two main ways. First, while it is true that the majority of the sample expressed a preference for non-mainstream provision, when broken down by gender, it is actually the case that this was the preference of the majority of the women in the sample, but not the majority of men. Second, when that non-mainstream provision was broken down from its umbrella category of 'LGB/T', the least popular option was actually 'LGB/T' provision and the most popular options were gender specific ones. This suggests, if nothing else, the need to closely interrogate statistics representing the preferences of older LGBNL individuals, particularly in terms of gender distortion and under-attention to diversity in strategic collective identity discourse.

Also worthy of note is that, of the ten participants living in mixed mainstream provision, nine expressed a preference to be living in non-mainstream provision if available.[14] In other words, only one out of the ten people currently living in sheltered accommodation are living in the type of sheltered accommodation they would prefer, highlighting not anticipated inequalities, but inequalities at the level of immediate, embodied, existence.

The lack of choice of care and accommodation provision is an issue of inequality of resources. While it impacts all older people who need care and accommodation in older age it disproportionately affects older LGBNL

individuals in two main ways. First, as outlined earlier, older LGBNL individuals are more likely to comprise those older persons who require care and accommodation in later life. Second, it is provision which is specifically targeted at older LGBNL individuals – and gender/sexuality specific provision at that – which is not available at present. So while older heterosexual-identifying individuals may suffer from *limited* choices in terms of provision, older LGBNL individuals who want gender/gender and sexuality specific provision suffer from an *absence* of choice.

Recognition: discursive and performative production of sexuality

There are two further clusters of themes in relation to equality in the provision of older-age care and accommodation: equality of recognition (addressed in this section), and equality of association (addressed in the next section). Fears relating to equality of recognition are clustered around three sub-themes: lack of visibility; risky visibility; and uneven opportunities for openness.

Lack of visibility

It is now well recognised that older-age formal care spaces are regarded by older LGBNL individuals as intrinsically heteronormative (Heaphy *et al.*, 2004; Guasp, 2011) to the extent that receiving care is understood as crossing 'a heterosexual border' (Beckett, 2004, p. 44). This section of my analysis offers insights into how that heterosexual border can be understood to be constituted and how heteronormativity in care spaces (Fish, 2006) can be perceived as being reproduced and reinforced as the dominant norm (Valentine, 2007). The perception of care spaces as heteronormative pervaded participants' narratives. Cat said, for example:

> You've got quite stroppy 60-year-old dykes around … the like of which you've never seen before. And we see it as being heterosexualised, being put into a care home.… And there's no way anyone's doing that to me.
>
> (Cat, aged 60, 'Lesbian by Choice')

Here Cat not only raises the idea of heterosexism but also the concern that she will be disciplined by heterosexist norms, i.e. 'heterosexualised'. This underpins many participants' fears about engaging with care spaces:

> I live in an incredible amount of fear about my future. Not just as an older person. But as a gay older person. Institutions, they're very straight. My god I hope I don't have to go into a care home, I really do … When I think about it, I find it quite scary. It frightens me that I am just going to be invisible, a nobody, that I am just going to be lost. And what I would want to do is just die.
>
> (May, aged 64, 'Finding Out')

Here we can see both the fears about older-age care institutions being heteronormative ('institutions, they're very straight') and the associated fear that non-heterosexuals will be rendered invisible as a consequence. That lack of visibility was often associated with concerns about loneliness and isolation: 'It will make you feel more isolated if you're treated as straight or if you're treated as peculiar if you're not straight' (Iris, aged 61, 'Breaking Out'). This extract raises both the issue of invisibility ('being treated as straight') and the issue of devalued visibility ('treated as peculiar if you're not straight'), both understood as informing a sense of isolation.[15] How care institutions are understood to be discursively and performatively rendered 'straight' is demonstrated in Lewis's interview. Lewis is on a committee supporting his local day centre for older people. But he would not go there himself, and in this extract he explains why:

> So although I'm actually supporting this heterosexual day centre, because of the need for it, I'm also trying to find alternatives for gay people.... Because I can't see me fitting into somewhere like that.... Because of entrenched attitudes and because it's all geared to heterosexual people.... Everything that happens, what they talk about, and their past, things that don't relate to me as a gay man. Whereas, I've got nothing against them having that day centre, but I think there should be something similar for gay people.... Because everything's heterosexist, really. They can't relate to your needs.... You don't have *Gay Times* on the table, but you'll have something for heterosexuals on the table.
>
> (Lewis, aged 65, 'Out Early')

Interestingly, Lewis talks about 'this heterosexual day centre': even though it is not explicitly for heterosexual people, this is nonetheless how he perceives it. Lewis highlights in particular the power of 'mundane heterosexism' (Peel, 2001) and the discursive reproduction of everyday heterosexualities (Coates, 2013): 'Everything that happens, what they talk about, and their past, things that don't relate to me as a gay man'. Alastair also raised the issue of how heteronormative discourse is embedded in heterosexist relationship discourse:

> They talk about their families the whole time. Their sons, their daughters, their cousins, their nephews, their nieces, and if you say anything about your boyfriend, they say 'oh you have to go on about being gay don't you?' You feel like punching them.
>
> (Alastair, aged 76, 'Out Early')

So here Alastair is describing how everyday talks about relationships located in heterosexist reproductive norms reinforces and reproduces those norms, marginalising recognition of those whose relationships are not located in them. In this way we can see how sexuality is shaped in space and also shapes space, and how discursive heterosexual performance produces heterosexual/heterosexualised spaces. The heterosexist assumption in care spaces is also reproduced via

cultural representations, e.g. Lewis's reference to the absence of *Gay Times*, which this extract from Alice's interview further demonstrates:

> I don't want to be sitting in a urine-smelling older person's home with a lot of straight people singing Second World War songs. I'd rather be sitting with people that I can relate to, watching gay cabaret, or getting some of the LGBT film festival films coming in, you know, that sort of thing.
>
> (Alice, aged 60, 'Out Early')

This extract highlights concerns about both care standards ('a urine-smelling older person's home') *and* dominant heteronormativity, performed by 'a lot of straight people singing Second World War songs', further reinforced by a lack of cultural representation of lesbian and gay media (Phillips & Marks, 2006). Heteronormativity is thus understood as both linguistic and cultural performance, embedded in norms which both privilege heterosexuality by its assumed presence and marginalise non-heterosexuality by its unquestioned absence.

Risky visibility

The counterpoint to fears about lack of visibility was fears about risky visibility which is considered next. Formal older-age care spaces were constructed by participants as 'risky spaces' (Simpson, 2012, para 4.3). Frances for example expressed fears about abuse:

> Because of our sexuality there's more to be abusive about potentially and because we're still considered less than the idea of stealing from us, or you know being abusive in some other way, is even more attractive. Well who cares about the fag, who cares about the dyke, they don't need the money, so in that sense we're more vulnerable.
>
> (Frances, aged 66, 'Lesbian by Choice')

In this extract we can see the concern that being recognised as lesbian or gay increases the risk of abuse (in this case financial abuse), mirroring other research suggesting that mainstream care spaces are perceived as unsafe by older LGBNL individuals (Ploeg, Lohfeld & Walsh, 2013; De Vries, 2014). Of greater concern among participants was everyday homophobia, i.e. 'the subtle, and problematic, aspects of prejudiced talk' (Peel, 2012, p. 38). Diana gave this example, talking about a friend living in sheltered accommodation, who is not open about her sexuality:

> … she lives her life privately. But she has to get involved in this sheltered unit, because there are coffee mornings and things like that and, you know, she doesn't want to be unfriendly. She wants to feel part of that community. She also happens to be Black. And she's had to listen to things, when people have been reading the newspaper, listen, when there's some gay issue or

> something, to things like 'Oh, if my daughter was like that I'd kill her'. Now what does she do with that? If she challenges that she outs herself and then puts herself in a very vulnerable place.
>
> (Diana, aged 69, 'Out Early')

We can see here the tension between wanting to be part of a shared community, and yet feeling marginalised because of homophobia (most likely to be present among older people; Valentine & MacDonald, 2004). Diana's friend has chosen to remain hidden in order to feel safe and (partially) accepted. Being Black (which she is unable to conceal), and therefore (implied) in a minority among white service users and staff, Diana's friend's isolation is further compounded by issues of racism, highlighting how multiple dimensions of identity can intersect to produce inequality (Valentine, 2007).

The bulk of concerns about homophobia were in relation to care staff attitudes, about which the interview with Derek, who still works in social care, offered insights:

> I was told by somebody don't tell anyone unless you have to. They [colleagues] tell gay jokes which are funny and I laugh at them but I think well if I come out to them they might think 'oh my god we told a gay joke [he] will be upset … I'd love to tell them at work. I wish I could. I mean this other gay driver, he'll say for himself, 'I'm just going out for a Barry' and that means a cigarette, 'going out for a "poof"' and he's happy with that, but when he goes out there are comments, they find it amusing.
>
> (Derek, aged 61, 'Finding Out')

This narrative echoes reports by health and social care staff of heterosexist harassment and homophobic discrimination (Hunt, Cowan & Chamberlain, 2007) many of whom, like Derek, conceal their sexualities as a result (Manthorpe & Price, 2006). While prejudice-talk is often moderated in public, and reserved for private places (Young, 1990), this is complicated in older-age care spaces, where the public and private overlap (Hubbard & Rossington, 1995) and where care workers often deploy home-talk in public spaces of home-work. Stella's interview highlights how this can be further nuanced by class and culture:

> There is a sort of dichotomy, in that a lot of the care support workers are minimum wage people, often now from cultures that do not have a normal view of homosexual people. So I would want them to be respectful. But I'm not sure that will happen.
>
> (Stella, aged 66, 'Out Early')

So here we see concerns about both class ('minimum wage people') and culture, in terms of staff attitudes (Walsh & Shutes, 2012). This is particularly relevant given the increase in migrant workers 'who could belong to faith communities or

cultures that have negative views of homosexuality' (Carr, 2008, p. 117), may have strong moral objections to working with older LGBNL individuals (Willis *et al.*, 2014) and may even feel it is their moral duty to try and 'save' them (Knocker, 2013, p. 10). The fear of cultural *and* religious-based prejudice is reflected in the following extract from Rene's interview:

> [I am frightened] that I would encounter homophobia, because all kinds of people work in care, from like fervent Filipino Catholics to young people who are not particularly educated, you know? So yes, that would make me apprehensive.
>
> (Rene, aged 63, 'Breaking Out')

This extract highlights a number of important issues. First, the fear which can be present among older LGBNL individuals that migrant care workers may come from cultures which are less accepting of non-heterosexuality than in the UK. Second, the perception that they may also be informed by religious beliefs which make them view LGBNL individuals less favourably. And third, it also highlights the racial/ethnic stereotypes which can be mobilised, making care spaces fertile ground for the playing out of multiple preconceptions, prejudices and rights-based tensions (Walsh & Shutes, 2012).

Religion was a concern at not only at an interpersonal level but also at an institutional level: 'I think a lot of the care homes are run by faith institutions of some sort who could be very homophobic indeed' (Tim, aged 52, 'Breaking Out'). Institutional religious-based homophobia (Sacks, 2011) is again relevant, given the increasing outsourcing of care by local authorities to religious care organisations. This highlights the particular significance of the conflict of rights between religion and sexual orientation (Stychin, 2009) in the context of welfare spaces (Green, Barton & Johns, 2012), especially closed care spaces. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, these spaces are also ones where older LGBNL individuals are under-protected from anti-harassment legislation, with the Equality Act harassment exclusions specifically intended to avoid anti-LGBNL religious proselytising falling within the confines of the Act.

Older LGBNL individuals, particularly the 'Out Early' and 'Breaking Out' cohorts have lived the majority of their lives under the shadow of religious-based discrimination, both institutional and, for some, individual ('Oh blimey, I had hands laid on me and all sorts', Ian, aged 69, 'Breaking Out') and many will be particularly sensitive to being subjected to it once more (Morrow, 2001). While strategies of avoidance, compartmentalisation (of public and private expression of faith/sexuality) and selective religious networking are used by people of faith, including LGBNL individuals of faith, to navigate competing rights in open spaces (Valentine & Waite, 2012) such strategies are not possible for either care workers or care users in closed care spaces (Phillips & Marks, 2006) which are sites of *both* private and public performance (Cobb, 2009), and sites of under-protection from harassment (as addressed in Chapter 2).

Anticipated risky visibility was not confined to mainstream care spaces. Many participants articulated a fear of ghettoization (Croucher, 2008), and heightened vulnerability to prejudice and discrimination, in specialist provision:

> I've heard all the arguments for and against a lesbian scheme, or a gay only scheme, and I think I'd come down against it, because while you're within that nice little cocoon, everyone's friendly and it's all going to be lovely. But the minute you step out of the door, then everyone in the neighbourhood knows that that particular block of flats is the gay and lesbian complex, so I think that is when you're going to get the homophobia.
>
> (Bernice, aged 60, 'Finding Out')

This extract highlights the fear that separating off from mainstream provision could increase visibility in risky ways. In this way both mainstream and separatist provision can be perceived as sites of potential risky exposure to prejudice and discrimination. Under such circumstances, concealment is often perceived as the safest option (Carr & Ross, 2013). This is explored in the following section.

(In)equality of openness[16]

A key area of concern among participants was in relation to the open performance of same-sex sexuality lives and intimacies. Although some public places are now spaces of a certain degree of tolerance (Browne & Bakshi, 2011), this is often a 'sanitised' performance (Casey, 2013, p. 144). Many public places continue to be 'coded' as unsafe for overt performance of same-sex sexuality identities and intimacies (Hubbard, 2013). Because of this many LGBNL individuals, especially older LGBNL individuals (Guasp, 2011), rely upon home as a relatively (Johnston & Valentine, 1995) safe space for open identity performance and a means of 'resisting both the erasure and/or discipline of the heteronormative gaze' (Gorman-Murray, 2013, p. 103).

Formal older-age care spaces (both domiciliary and residential care) are particular sites of exposure to the heteronormative gaze (Casey, 2004; Phillips & Marks, 2006) both replicating the constraints upon public performance (Brotman, Ryan & Cormier, 2003) and at the same time problematising the 'doing' of home, because home itself is being performed in a public place (Barnes, 2012). Several studies have observed that older 'LGB' individuals 'continue to live in fear and hide their identities' in care spaces (Harrison & Riggs, 2006, p. 49). This is echoed in my research, both in terms of participants' own narratives and in references to 'Voices on the Margins', i.e. those individuals in care spaces who the participants knew of and who refused to be interviewed for fear of being 'outed'. Only two of the 10 participants living in sheltered accommodation were open about their sexualities (one of whom was unwillingly 'outed'). Those individuals who were not open, made those decisions on the basis of protective resistance, i.e. self-protective strategies in risky spaces, as is evident in the following interview extracts:

> 'What if they [care staff] took a dislike to me? I don't think many people here would understand it or accept it somehow'.
>
> (Agnes, aged 92, 'Finding Out')

> 'I do not need what might be a headache or provoke an adverse reaction'.
>
> (Frank, aged 70 'Breaking Out')

These extracts highlight how a fear of hostility and/or rejection informs both Agnes' and Frank's decision to conceal. Audrey also makes links with ageing and fear:

> I realise that as you get older you begin to lose confidence and when you're very old you can become very unconfident. And I think it's to do with losing physical strength and ability … and I think, therefore, people put up with things and don't feel that they can fight back. And I think when you hear these things about old gay men and lesbians going into residential care homes and going back in the closet, because they just don't feel they can cope with the prejudice, that's *terrible*. But you can understand it, because I do think as you get older, many people do get more afraid.
>
> (Audrey, aged 67, 'Out Early')

Audrey is observing how older age itself can be understood as both increasing fear and reducing confidence, including in the ability to 'fight back', i.e. resist, in ways other than by concealment. Resistance by concealment in care spaces, however, lacks the compensatory privacy of home (Angus, Kontos, Dyck, McKeever & Poland, 2005) when home is performed in public places, disciplined by external norms and routines (Milligan, 2012) under conditions of heightened surveillance (Exley & Allen, 2007) and self-surveillance (Rosenfeld, 2003). The need to conceal in public homespaces negates the possibilities and benefits of identity-based 'nesting' (Falk, Wijk, Persson & Falk, 2012, p. 1002). To give a very simple example, Rene 'de-dykes' (Kitzinger, 1994, p. 11) her sheltered accommodation when anticipating the presence of strangers:

> It's a general feeling that they would treat me differently if I was out to them … I suppose it makes me a little nervous, you know, like I've got some explicitly lesbian fridge magnets stuck on the side of my fridge and if I have tradesmen in I tend to hide them in a drawer cos I don't want to be treated less favourably.
>
> (Rene, aged 63, 'Breaking Out')

So we can see here how visible signs of a lesbian identity/life in a person's own homespace can be removed to avoid anticipated homophobic discrimination. If Rene were to live in a high surveillance closed care space, she would find strategic identity management (i.e. being selectively 'in' or out' according to context: Orne, 2012) very difficult indeed, and she would probably have to

choose either being all 'in' or all 'out'. Yet the visual displays of identity and significant relationships are important:

> Be nice if you could have your partner's photo up, or have a place where you can be private together, or even, in a public place, hold hands without it being nudge-nudge wink-wink.
>
> (Doris, aged 69, 'Out Early')

> I would like to be able to put my photos in my room, the same as anybody else. I want to have the confidence to do that and not be abused because they're same gender. And I want the staff to be able to talk to me about them, and be positive about people being gay, a smile, a positive response, to talk to me about my photos like they would with anyone else.
>
> (Theresa, aged 63, 'Finding Out')

These extracts show how both public and private displays of affection and affective intimacies are perceived as being compromised by homes being performed in public spaces.[17] In this way older-age care needs present LGBNL individuals with new spatial challenges in later life. This echoes research which suggests that sexuality performance is continually (re)negotiated and managed according to spatial contingencies across a lifetime (Gibson & Macleod, 2012; Visser, 2013), magnified here through the added dimension of ageing and age-related care spaces.

Age standpoint is relevant here: those participants who raised the strongest concerns about mainstream provision were those who had been 'out' and/or in same-sex relationships for the longest periods of time, and so also had the greatest experience of institutional heterosexism and homophobia. The 'Late Performance' cohort, by contrast, was comparatively silent about such concerns. In this way, again, past experiences cast a shadow over not only the present subjectivities of participants but their feared future subjectivities as well.

Association: inclusions, exclusions, norms and normativities

This section addresses participants' concerns about not being able to access support networks in closed care spaces. It also addresses the equality implications of formal care spaces as sites of 'enforced engagement', i.e. 'having to engage with other older people that under different circumstances [one] would have chosen not to' (Milligan, 2012, p. 2116).

Challenges to kinship maintenance

Maintaining attachments beyond care institutions is vital to the well-being of those residing in them (Falk *et al.*, 2012).[18] However, some kinds of being and belonging fit better than others in institutionalised contexts (Cooper & Herman, 2013) and for those who are more marginalised those attachments take on added

significance. This extract from Diana's interview is an example of participants' concerns in this regard:

> If I'm in a sheltered unit or an old people's home, I want to be able to read and get information and I want to be able to connect with my community. I want to go to [older lesbian group] still. Now how am I going to get to [older lesbian group] if my mobility is compromised? Is somebody going to get me a special bus? If I'm lucky I'll have friends who'll take me there once a month. But what if I have Alzheimer's? Will it be assumed I'm heterosexual and I don't need my friends to come and talk to me about my past?
>
> (Diana, aged 69, 'Breaking Out')

This extract highlights the importance of retaining connections with one's community (in this case an older lesbian community) as well as fears that such connections will not be maintained once in formal care provision. A recent US study of specialist older LGBT housing provision would appear to support this observation, reporting that for those who had sought out such provision, seeking acceptance and a sense of community were major factors in their doing so (Sullivan, 2014). Reciprocal validation was highlighted by many participants as being a vital part of later life:

> It's about people, you know gay and lesbian people being able to talk about their lives, and feel people are interested and that. Cos it's really important to reminisce, you know.
>
> (Jack, aged 66, 'Breaking Out')

> [Explaining her preference for 'gay women' only accommodation] You become friends, they're like minded, you can share your life, you can be as open as you can be, you can talk about your life, and that's what you want to do at that stage of your life.
>
> (May, aged 64, 'Finding Out')

So here we can see the importance of being able to reminisce, and of being able to do so with like-minded people. While a small number of participants did not think their sexuality would be relevant in older-age care spaces ('If I am very frail and old … I can't imagine it will be a major concern of mine', Jennifer, aged 62, 'Lesbian by Choice'), the majority thought it would:

> Physically I [don't] think my needs would be any different … if I can't walk up the stairs then I need a lift, just like anybody else does, and if I need a wheelchair, my wheelchair, it may have a rainbow flag on it, but you know, it's not really any different. But it's something cultural and it's about shared experience and maybe even shared values, but I'm not sure about that. And I think it has a lot to do with friendship and support and knowing that there's a

> good possibility that, you know, I won't be mobile and that I want the people around me to have some sense of who I am, from their core to my core.
>
> (Frances, aged 66, 'Lesbian by Choice')

In this extract we can see the key distinction between physical care needs shared with all older people and socio-cultural care needs which differentiate older people. While both Jennifer and Frances belong to the 'Lesbian by Choice' cohort, they have different understandings of the significance of their choice of sexuality in later life. Jennifer understands it to have diminishing relevance while Frances understands it to have continuing, and even enhanced significance. For Frances, her sexuality is part of her 'core' (as would be the case for identity-based cohorts too); for Jennifer, her sexuality is not part of hers (as for many of the 'Late Performance' cohort too, especially the non-labelling women). In this way we can see how, while freedom to associate with those who are emotionally significant is important in general to older LGBNL individuals, it has heightened significance to those for whom it is essential for identity maintenance.

Not being able to maintain affiliations and community attachments is a major affective inequality, transecting and transcending resources, recognition and representation (Lynch, 2010), with profound implications for physical and mental well-being for older LGBNL individuals in later life (Fredriksen-Goldsen *et al.*, 2013). Yet on the other hand, enforced engagement with unwanted others can also have a detrimental effect, as is considered next.

Risky hetero-masculinity: women's fears of embodied sexual threat

A number of women participants[19] – not only radical feminists – expressed concerns about sharing care alongside men, heterosexual men in particular:

> I really, really hope I don't have to share accommodation with men.
>
> (Judith, aged 71, 'Finding Out')

> I think I'd have to have a woman-only [care home], I couldn't bear to be in close proximity with men.
>
> (Ellen, aged 64, 'Late Performance')

> I find men's habits not very pleasant.
>
> (Claire, aged 65, 'Finding Out')

This reluctance to live alongside men informed these participants' preferences for women-only/lesbian-only accommodation. Even some women who preferred mainstream provision had concerns about sharing care spaces with men:

> I would prefer a weighting of women and not very many men, and the men would have to be very couth, don't want any horrible older things wandering around with their flies open, you know.
>
> (Tessa, aged 58, 'Out Early')

Here we can see the engagement with stereotypes of ageing masculinity. Notions of the older man as generally uncouth, e.g. ugly, dirty and lacking in good manners, are evident in Tessa's expressed tolerance for only those older men who can maintain their 'couth-ness'. Several women were concerned about men making overt sexual advances:

> I don't like men. And old men, well.… Well, there's the whole sort of, the whole thing of, certainly where my mum is, the sexual inhibitions go, well perhaps they never had any inhibitions, and they just get worse as they get older … she's in sheltered accommodation. But old men being flirty, I just find it completely revolting, I really do.
>
> (Sandra, aged 61, 'Breaking Out')

So this extract shows Sandra's baseline of not liking men, her concerns about her perception of heterosexual men's sexual (dis)inhibitions, and her understanding that they worsen with age. Here we have a further engagement with the stereotyping of older (heterosexual) men as lecherous. Sandra also emphasises the fear of being subjected to sexual advances from heterosexual men ('I just find it completely revolting, I really do'). This fear can be heightened by older age as this extract shows:

> Some of that I saw in my mum's nursing home, old blokes, just, letch, you know. 'Oh, dykes, phew, give me half a chance, mate.' And when you're old and weary you don't want to be fighting that kind of crap off, really.
>
> (Daphne, aged 60, 'Out Early')

This extract highlights concerns not only about being exposed to unwanted heterosexual advances, but also the impact of ageing and frailty on the capacity and willingness to resist and or defend oneself – 'when you're old and weary you don't want to be fighting that kind of crap off'. Under such circumstances, women residents would look to staff to maintain boundaries, including sexual boundaries, on their behalf. However, there was a lack of confidence in care staff doing so:

> I'm quite capable of saying piss off, but I don't want to see it. I think it's disrespectful. And I think it's disrespectful of care staff to allow it, 'Oh come on Jim, stop messing, put it away'. No, I would like more to be done to Jim than that … I would like them to be much firmer. Just because they're older, doesn't mean they've lost their marbles. There are an awful lot of men who are struggling with dementia, but there are also a lot who say 'it's just acceptable here'. You don't often see women doing it, do you?
>
> (May, aged 64, 'Finding Out')

May is reflecting here concerns about the extent to which staff minimise inappropriate sexual behaviour among older men in care contexts, as well as her

perception there is a strong gender-based dimension to that inappropriate behaviour ('You don't often see women doing it, do you?'). This highlights how both age and space can exacerbate a woman's sense of vulnerability to heterosexist harassment.

Reflected here are notions which conceptualise ageing male sexuality as the behaviour of a 'dirty old man' (Walz, 2002; Bauer, *et al.*, 2013a; Sandberg, 2013). This also engages with how sexuality among those with physical and/or mental incapacities is seen as something risky that needs to be controlled (Herring, 2012). But at the same time it also speaks to the symbolic representation of enduring fears of (heterosexual) male dominance, expressed through heterosexual sexual oppression (MacKinnon, 1989). While stereotypical notions about sexual threat are being deployed here, there is also a factual basis to them: 90 per cent of all care home residents who complain of unwanted sexual behaviour are women (Rosen, Lachs & Pillemer, 2010) and over 90 per cent of all perpetrators of that alleged behaviour are heterosexual men (Ramsey-Klawsnik, Teaster, Mendiondo, Abner, Cecil & Tooms, 2007). Although these concerns may be shared with heterosexual women (Phillips & Marks, 2006) they are particularly relevant for LGBNL women who have deliberately constructed their lives in ways which centre on relationships with women and/or women who have strategically rejected heterosexual masculinity (e.g. politically mobilised 'Finding Out' and 'Lesbian by Choice' cohorts).

Those LGBNL women who want gender-separate provision are not alone in this aspiration: it can also be true for some gay men as well, as addressed in the next section.

Risky hetero-femininity: gay men's fears of hetero-feminisation

A small number of gay men expressed a reluctance to live in mainstream provision because of the predominance of women there ('90 per cent of it's females in nursing homes', Ian, aged 69, 'Breaking Out'). 'Feminisation' discourse about older-age care spaces (Davidson, DiGiacomo & McGrath, 2011) fails to take into account that these spaces are not only gendered but sexualised as well. They are spaces not just of feminisation, but of *hetero*-feminisation, as is highlighted here:

> I would not want to go through that level of distress … in a care home, where I would be in a minority, a) because I'm male and b) because I identify as being gay. And the care staff making assumptions and say 'Sit next to Gladys, because she hasn't got anybody'. And I'm thinking 'I don't want to sit next to Gladys, I'd rather sit next to Bob'.
>
> (Sam, aged 61, 'Out Early')

So we can see here the embodied fears of a gay man, about being in both a gender *and* sexuality minority, and being actually physically placed, or rather mis-placed, as a heterosexual man in mainstream provision.

Some of the gay men expressed a preference for gay-men only provision above and beyond concerns about hetero-feminisation. Older lesbians have very little contact with gay men, and vice versa, even those accessing specialist services (Knocker *et al.*, 2012), including participants in my study. As Ken observed:

> One of the things about a gay man is that he probably prefers the company of other men! Yes, we have common interests, lesbians and gay men, because we're fighting the same battles, the same prejudice and so on. But to meet socially, I can't see why you should expect that.
>
> (Ken, aged 64, 'Out Early')

This preferred lack of involvement extended, for some, to all women:

> I am terrified of a nursing home where all the staff are female, and they treat me as if I fancy the women. Just awful.… Not a woman in sight would be fine by me. I know that sounds awful. But … I just relate to men so much better … the vast majority of women that I know, pass me by, they're just part of the scenery that I can't avoid.
>
> (Phil, aged 62, 'Breaking Out')

This extract highlights an issue which is not often referred to, the strong wish not to share care alongside women, demonstrated by Phil's fear ('terror') of being surrounded by women and presumed to be heterosexual. In Phil's ideal world there would be 'not a woman in sight'. While there is a degree of legitimacy attached by some to lesbians' wishes not to be around men (Browne, 2009), a similar degree of legitimacy is often not accorded to gay men who wish to not be around women. The dominant discourse tends to be one of misogyny (Richardson, 2004), i.e. women-hating, rather than men-preferring. It is, of course, possible to be both. What is important here is to show that, just as some older LGBNL women do not wish to share care alongside men, there are also some older gay men who have constructed lives away from women and do not wish to receive care from, or live alongside, them.

Equality of association in care spaces

While in their pre-formal care provision lives, older LGBNL individuals are able to selectively socially network, in mainstream residential care provision they are not. Such provision impedes their choices, exposing them to increased risks associated with heteronormativity and homophobia. At the same time it also places constraints upon access to those relationships/networks which are sources of support and act as buffers/self-protective mechanisms in response to heteronormativity and homophobia.[20]

Anticipating resistance

The preceding sections identified anticipated inequalities of resources, recognition and association, and hence power. This section considers anticipated resistance to that power. As explained in Chapter 1, I am using a four-type model of resistance: resistance by concealment from power ('protective resistance'); resistance by taming power ('moderating resistance'); resistance by breaking power ('fracturing resistance'); and resistance by transforming power ('transformative resistance'). This chapter has demonstrated how older LGBNL individuals can use concealment as a self-protective resistance strategy. It has also highlighted how older-age care needs and spaces can complicate older LGBNL individuals seeking to tame power, through: the constraints of older-age related cognitive and physical disabilities, and a lack of advocacy for those who cannot advocate for themselves; a reluctance to complain on the part of older people, particularly older people with minority identities; disciplinary processes of institutions geared up to producing docile bodies; lack of visibility and risky visibility; and constraints upon minority solidarity ('association'). This section considers more proactive, and more confident, narratives of 'pushing against' resistance, as represented in: 'right to die' discourse; narratives about choice of provision; narratives about co-operative projects; and narratives about plans for open performance in care spaces.

Proactive resistance discourse was, first, present among those who wished to see the legalisation of assisted dying and euthanasia, articulating a desire for (fracturing) resistance (i.e. breaking power, Harding, 2011) to 'becoming institutional bodies' (Wiersma & Dupuis, 2010, p. 278) and the governmentality of death and dying (Beauchamp, 2006; Tierney, 2010). Second, discourse about alternative forms of provision to that which is currently available, including various kinds of gender/sexuality specific accommodation[21] articulated another form of (fracturing) resistance, i.e. breaking power systems of monolithic forms of older-age care. Third, narratives about cooperative communities of care, especially among women, articulated a more transformative resistance:

> My ideal, what I'd really like to do, is to sell my house, and put it together with other women selling whatever they've got, and having a big place, and living with other women, just for the camaraderie, the possibility that between us we might be able to make sure that we have the support that we need because we're older.
>
> (Rachel, aged 64, 'Finding Out')

This is an example of the theme of the ideal of a women's community as a site of pooling of resources, reciprocal support, and co-commissioning of care. This notion goes beyond moderating resistance, i.e. seeking to tame the power of formal care systems (i.e. modifying existing power structures). It also goes beyond fracturing resistance (i.e. seeking to break power) and is instead transformative (Halkon, 2013) in its re-visioning of care (Kittay, Jennings & Wasunna, 2005). It is

transformative in that it seeks to develop new and different power structures, both in terms of deconstructing the notion of all older people as passive consumers of care, and reconstructing a notion of the co-production of care (Sharif, Simpson, Ross & Turner, 2012; SCIE, 2013) among older people. The women's collectives of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s may yet see a revival in older-age care (e.g. Older Women's Cooperative Housing (OWCH), 2013), echoing the principles of feminist care ethics (Tronto, 1993; Sevenhuijsen, 2003; Held, 2006; Barnes, 2012).

The fourth strand of proactive resistance narratives was integrationist, i.e. discourse underpinned by the desire for 'equal but different' care from within mainstream provision:

> We should all be able to live together in harmony, but in order to do that, the staff must not assume everyone to be heterosexual and must treat everyone equally. Not necessarily the same, but equally.
>
> (Bernice, aged 60, 'Finding Out')

What is being articulated here is an 'equality of opportunity' or 'equality of recognition' approach, i.e. the opportunity to be equally well recognised. This desire is for a form of moderating resistance, i.e. seeking to tame power, embedded in normalising integrationist norms (Sullivan, 1995). This was echoed among a number of participants:

> I think we need something that is integrative. I think there will be, if there aren't already, LGBT nursing homes or care homes. It wouldn't be something I want. I wouldn't want to live in that bubble. I don't live in a bubble.
>
> (Bob, aged 60, 'Out Early')

> I think care homes ought to be integrated otherwise you're going to get segregation.
>
> (Yvette, aged 69, 'Late Performance')

> I'm not in favour of gay homes, because I think it pushes a wedge between people again.
>
> (Doris, aged 69, 'Out Early')

What can be seen here is a desire to be equally part of mainstream society and care provision through integration and normalisation (as opposed to deconstructing 'normal', Warner, 2000). Integrationist narratives included the idea of resistance-by-training:

> I think you have to go in … and change attitudes among carers. You've got to work with the carers on specific issues. You've got to address the attitudes among them. Make people aware.
>
> (Donald, aged 75, 'Finding Out)

This is another example of the desire to moderate disciplinary power (Harding, 2011), this time by deploying staff training (Ross & Carr, 2010)[22] to modify attitudes. Interwoven with narratives of moderating resistance was a faith in the ability to challenge inequality at an interpersonal level: 'I don't want to be in an enclave. I'd rather challenge inequalities when they happen' (Marcia, aged 66, 'Late Performance'). Marcia is envisioning domiciliary care provided by care agencies which she will personally select in order to avoid prejudice and discrimination ('I would vet them. I would interview them'). The key issue here is the extent to which an older LGBNL individual will have the capability to do such vetting, particularly in residential care spaces.[23] A number of participants thought they were in a resistance 'lull' after successfully achieving civil partnerships, but that their resistance would be revived when residential care was imminent:

> I think when you're confronted with something as outrageous as being driven up to Shady Pines, we'll open the door and jump out or do whatever we can do … [laughs]. … And the principle has always been, unless you act and do it yourself, it don't happen.
>
> (Martin, aged 62, 'Out Early')

The problem with this strategy which Martin himself (ruefully) recognised, is that by the time he is being driven up to Shady Pines, he may no longer be able to 'open the door and jump out' either physically or psychologically. As Alex, who still works in social care, observed:

> In 10 years' time the people entering care homes are going to be so enfeebled, so dependent, many of them with dementia, that the element of choice, and the ability to exercise that choice is almost going to be non-existent.
>
> (Alex, aged 60, 'Finding Out')

So here we see again how cognitive and/or physical incapacity may impinge upon resistance (Grenier & Hanley, 2007), both protective (impinging upon concealment) and proactive (impinging upon proactive strategies). Cat has one contingency plan:

> Me and my friend Anna said we'd go in the same care home and we'd sleep with each other on a Thursday night and then piss on the floor the next morning. That's the only plan we've got so far.
>
> (Cat, aged 60, 'Lesbian by Choice')

This is a playful plan for embodied resistance, albeit one that still is contingent upon a certain degree of physical and cognitive capacity.

This section has highlighted how various resistance narratives play out in participants' discourse about resisting the institutionalisation of death and dying and of potential marginalisation by (hetero)normativities within that institutional power.

Given that vulnerabilities in very old age can place constraints upon resistance, it may be that younger (older) individuals performing acts of anticipatory resistance on behalf of others and their ageing future selves, may play a significant role in the extent to which that resistance takes hold and achieves change.

Concluding remarks

This chapter has demonstrated the significance of space and spatiality in participants' concerns about future age-related care needs. Anticipated formal spaces of older-age care were perceived as being of a poor standard for all older people, with little control of the dying process. They were perceived as particularly problematic in terms of gender and/or sexuality, with anticipated inequalities in relation to resources, recognition, and association. Equality of association – the ability to live alongside and/or network with personal communities – stands out as an equality issue which does not fit easily into either the categories of resource, recognition, or representation. It both transects the three (social networking being a social, material and affective resource and a site of reciprocal recognition and validation and opportunities for representation) and yet also transcends them, emphasising the social-relational dimensions of equality.

More broadly, this chapter has also offered new insights into how space can be understood as being discursively and performatively (hetero-)sexualised and how care spaces are sexualised spaces. They can also be spaces of (re-)concealment, as the implied absent presences of those who conceal their sexualities in sheltered accommodation are hinted at through participants' references to 'Voices on the Margins'. There is a need for more research in this area, in order to better access these marginalised voices, learn about the actual outcomes for those individuals anticipating their care futures, and explore the extent to which anticipated care inequalities are reflected (or not) in actual lived experience.

Notes

1 'Formal care' encompasses paid social and/or personal care that is provided in the home, in day care, or in residential care/nursing homes.
2 Women live longer than men, but with greater levels of disability (Bettio & Verashchagina, 2010); and single, child-free older women (most likely to be lesbian: Heaphy *et al.*, 2004; Guasp, 2011) are particularly likely to spend their final years in residential care (Arber, 2006). They are also more likely to have dementia, because it is age-related: two-thirds of people living with dementia are women (Knapp *et al.*, 2007; Erol, Brooker & Peel, 2015).
3 By closed care contexts I mean: domiciliary care provided to a housebound person with no external social support; and residential/nursing care for those with physical and/or cognitive incapacity and limited 'powers of exit' (Joint Committee on Human Rights (JCHR), 2009).
4 Reasons include: not knowing their rights and how to complain (Woolhead *et al.*, 2004); reluctance to complain for fear of alienating staff and concerns about reprisals (Aronson & Neysmith, 2001); learned passivity (Preston-Shoot, 2001) via a process of socialisation producing compliant institutional(ised) bodies (Wiersma & Dupuis,

2010); lowered expectations resulting from previous, institutionalised, poor care (Dixon *et al.*, 2009); a lack of advocacy; an absence of an independent complaints procedure (Office of Fair Trading, 2005; Gulland, 2007); a reluctance to deploy formal frameworks for social relations (Ewick & Silbey, 1998); limited/no 'powers of exit' (Persson & Berg, 2009).

5 National Minimum Standards (Care Standards) Act 2000: When newly admitted to residential care an assessment 'should consider the person's social interests, hobbies, religious and cultural needs' (Department of Health, 2003, pp. 3–4).

6 ECHR Article 3 (Right not to be treated in an inhuman or degrading way) and Article 8 (Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence); section 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) makes it unlawful for a public authority to act in a way that is incompatible with a person's rights under the European Convention on Human Rights; Equality Act 2010 – Direct and Indirect Discrimination based on protected characteristic of age in provision of goods, services and housing.

7 Daphne, aged 60 ('Out Early'), Rupert, aged 68 ('Out Early'), Sam, aged 61 ('Out Early'), Alice, aged 60 ('Out Early'), Stella, aged 66 ('Out Early'), Iris, aged 61 ('Breaking Out'), Phil, aged 62 ('Breaking Out'), Sally, aged 73 ('Breaking Out'), Jennifer, aged 62 ('Lesbian by Choice').

8 May, aged 64 ('Finding Out').

9 Tessa, aged 58 ('Out Early').

10 Suicide was unlawful in the UK until 1961, when the Suicide Act 1961 abrogated the rule of law whereby it was a crime for a person to 'commit' the crime of suicide. Under the same Act, 'aiding, abetting, counselling or procuring the suicide of another' was, however, deemed a crime, and currently remains one.

11 The Stonewall report, disappointingly, given it is the largest UK study to date, does not give any figures about care preferences (Guasp, 2011).

12 Heaphy, Yip and Thompson (2003 and 2004) found that (77 per cent) of their sample of 266 survey participants wanted provision that was 'lesbian, gay and bisexual friendly'; the Brighton 'Count Me in Too' project found that 62 per cent of their sample wanted 'LGBT specialist' provision (Brown *et al.*, 2009); Hubbard and Rossington, in their sample of 117 older lesbians and gay men found that 91 per cent of lesbians and 75 per cent of gay men wanted 'accommodation specifically for lesbians and gay men' (Hubbard & Rossington, 1995); In the USA, the much-cited study by Lucco reported that almost 90 per cent of a sample of lesbians and gay men were interested in LGB specific residential support services (Lucco, 1987). However, Lucco's study, now over 25 years old, comprised only 57 lesbians compared with 399 gay men; a US study of 28 lesbians and gay men found that they all preferred the idea of having 'gay or gay friendly' care providers (Stein *et al.*, 2010, p. 431); Adelman Gurevitch, de Vries and Blando (2006) sought to ascertain the preferences of 1,301 LGBT adults aged 18–92 living in San Francisco. Participants were only given three options and of these approximately 25 per cent of women and 25 per cent of men wanted exclusively LGBT (with no breakdown by type); 60 per cent of women and 56 per cent of men preferred 'mixed'; less than 5 per cent wanted 'mixed but mostly heterosexual'; a New Zealand study of over 1,000 lesbians and 1,000 gay men reported that 58.9 per cent of lesbians and 51.6 per cent of gay men would prefer an 'LGB retirement facility' (Neville & Henrickson, 2010), but this was not broken down by type.

13 Gay and Grey in Dorset (2006) in their survey of 91 older lesbians and gay men found that 39 per cent wanted ('lesbian and gay friendly') integrated provision, 14 per cent wanted 'lesbian-only', 9 per cent wanted 'gay-male only', and 18 per cent wanted lesbian and gay specific accommodation (Gay and Grey in Dorset, 2006, p. 29).

14 Out of the 10 participants already living in mixed mainstream sheltered accommodation, only one of them expressed a preference for this. Six of the participants already living in sheltered accommodation, expressed the wish not to be doing so, and a

preference for the following: three wanted to be living in 'lesbian and gay' or 'gay and lesbian' accommodation, one wanted to be living in LGBT accommodation, and two wanted lesbian-only. Three did not specify what form of non-mainstream provision they would prefer.

15 Although not referred to by participants, there is the additional issue for bisexual/non-labelling individuals that even if recognised as non-heterosexual, they may then only be seen in binary terms, i.e. as lesbian/gay rather than bisexual/non-labelling, obscuring not only their self-identification but also relationship histories.

16 Thanks to Ruth Fletcher for suggesting this concept.

17 Although not referred to by participants this is even more complicated for bisexual/non-labelling individuals who wish to display relationship histories involving intimacies with individuals of both genders.

18 As is recognised in the National Minimum Standards (Care Standards) Act 2000: assessments of people newly admitted to residential care 'should consider the person's social interests, hobbies, religious and cultural needs' and 'carer and family involvement and other social contacts/relationships' (Department of Health, 2003, pp. 3–4).

19 Claire (aged 65, 'Finding Out'); Ellen (aged 64, 'Late Performance'); Daphne (aged 60, 'Out Early'); Tessa (aged 58, 'Out Early'); May (aged 64, 'Finding Out'); Sandra (aged 61, 'Breaking Out'); Judith (aged 71, 'Finding Out'); Cat (aged 63, 'Lesbian by Choice').

20 This could be argued to engage Articles 8–11 and 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

21 A number of such projects are opening up in the USA and Europe (Westwood, 2016b).

22 While training is important (Harding & Peel, 2007), training without contextual support is often ineffective (Westwood & Knocker, 2016), and is often not prioritised either at structural (Richardson & Monro, 2012) or institutional levels (CSCI, 2008), particularly during times of austerity (King, 2013).

23 Those with more purchasing power may be able to do so to a certain extent.

7 Conclusion

This book has explored how ageing, gender and sexuality shape equality in later life. My argument is that temporality and spatiality shape uneven outcomes in later life. They do so by informing the discursive and performative production of ageing, gender and sexuality, which in turn influence unequal access to resources, recognition and representation. Chapter 2 explored the regulatory contexts through and against which older LGBNL individuals experience and construct their lives. It showed that there is now a four-tier system of relationship recognition in UK law, which prioritises the conjugal couple and biological family and marginalises friendships and SLIFs. In addition, the ageing legal subject in health and social care law is predicated upon heteronormative assumptions, which disadvantages older LGBNL individuals and their informal carers. At the same time, the Equality Act (EQA) 2010 under-protects older LGBNL individuals in its single strand approach, construction of sexuality as an orientation, and in its harassment exclusions.

Chapter 3 addressed ageing LGBNL subjectivities and introduced the new cohort model which takes into account both identity-based and non-identity-based accounts of sexuality and the gendering of sexuality. The model was then used to analyse how the past shapes the discursive and performative present and, in turn, access to recognition and resources in later life. Chapter 4 addressed kinship construction approached through the cohort framework. Older LGBNL people's kinship networks complicate, and at times contradict, 'family of choice' discourse, and their lives are differentiated by unequal access to the crucial resource of intergenerational informal care and support in later life. Reproductive norms and normativities can act as a differentiator for older lesbians compared with older gay men in terms of issues of (non-)recognition. Chapter 5 explored the role played by class both in the uneven distribution of later life material resources and also in terms of recognition and the privileging of ageing, middle class, social respectabilities. Chapter 6 considered how older LGBNL people's major concerns about older-age care needs, are spatialised ones, relating to issues of anticipated inequalities in older-age care spaces.

This chapter draws together these various threads to reflect and expand upon them. It also returns to the 'Voices on the Margins' – glimpsed partially in the participants narratives – to consider whose voices are missing from this research study, and others like it, and what can be implied from their absent presences.

The intersection of ageing, gender and sexuality

In order to understand the meanings of ageing for LGBNL individuals any analysis has to be located in terms of their engagement with the past, present and future. That engagement is informed by their age standpoints, notably by the cohorts to which they belong. Gender is central to the experience of ageing, and to ageing sexualities. Gender informs age standpoints, access to resources and recognition – past, present, and in anticipated futures – and representations of LGBNL individuals and their concerns. Gender also informs, and differentiates, constructions of sexuality among and between older LGBNL individuals, and their understandings of what those sexualities mean in ageing contexts. In particular the essentialist, atomistic, identity-based narratives of the men participants in relation to their sexualities, mean that they locate their ageing in terms of *being* older gay men. While some of the women participants also understood their ageing in terms of *being* older lesbians, others located their ageing sexualities in more fluid, relational and context-contingent terms. All of the women participants understood themselves in terms of *being* ageing women, in other words they, unlike the men, experienced ageing as a gendered event.

Age standpoints informed, among other things, perspectives on equality. For the individuals who had 'come out', and/or been in same-sex relationships for the longest periods of time, the changes in legal and social status were quite remarkable. This was less so for those who had 'come out', and/or formed same-sex relationships, more recently. Even so, all the participants saw their ageing as being located in a particularly significant socio-historical time: those who had lived long enough to see changes they thought they would never see in their lifetimes (e.g. civil partnership, and now marriage); those who had lived long enough to find discursive spaces to articulate a hidden sexual identity (e.g. Agnes at 85); those who found that later life offered a springboard to a new life, whether it was one long dreamed of (Joan, aged 67, 'Breaking Out'), or one completely unimagined (Angela, aged 64, 'Late Performance'). Ageing, then, for some, especially the women participants, offered expanding relational opportunities. But this was not so for everyone. For Les, and for Dylis, in very constrained financial circumstances (Chapter 5) and for Sally, who thinks all her options have run out (Chapter 4), ageing involves shrinking opportunities. And, of course, as the participants identified, ageing can mean different things at different (older) ages and stages in life.

How, ageing, gender and sexuality intersect to influence the later lives of LGBNL individuals is complex, highly context-contingent and often nuanced by other factors (class, religion, physical and/or mental well-being, functionality, etc.). These also intersect with spatial contingencies, as highlighted by participants' narratives about anticipated care futures. As Gill Valentine has observed, 'the ability to enact some identities or realities rather than others is highly contingent on the power-laden spaces in and through which our experiences are lived' (Valentine, 2007, p. 19). Intersectionality is thus spatially constituted. Different spaces produce and reinforce different intersecting aspects of identity (Valentine, 2007).

This of course is relevant for older LGBNL individuals in terms of dominant spatial orderings, both in relation to the reproduced privileging of youth in particular LGBNL spaces (e.g. the gay commercial scene, Simpson, 2013a) and the reproduction of heterosexuality in age-specific leisure spaces (Simpson, 2012, 2014) and in housing, health and social care spaces (Ward *et al.*, 2011). But it also has wider implications. This study has added to Valentine's insights in two main ways: first, in offering an understanding of how care spaces are also sexualised, normative spaces; and, second, in showing how the discursive and performative privileging of heteronormativity and heterosexism can be perceived to operate in those care spaces. This then offers wider insights into the systematic reproduction of heterosexuality in institutionalised settings.

Based on the findings from this study, the discursive and performative privileging of heterosexuality in sheltered housing and care institutions is read by the participants as operating in four main ways: in everyday talk among staff and service users which assumes heterosexuality to be the norm; in heteronormative relationship discourse which again assumes heterosexuality to be the norm; in implied or explicit cultural devaluation of LGBNL sexualities; in the presence of heterosexual-privileging media and the absence of media which reflect LGBNL lives. All serve, separately and together to reproduce and reinforce heterosexuality, heteronormativity and heterosexism.

At the same time as they have major concerns about inequalities in older-age care spaces, older LGBNL individuals are less well protected in those spaces than older heterosexual individuals are in them, and also than younger LGBNL adults are in other spaces (i.e. the workplace). Moreover, the absence of intersectionality in UK rights discourse, i.e. focussing on rights accorded to single, separate identity groups, not their intersections (Verloo, 2006; Hannett, 2003) is also problematic. The Equality Act, with its focus on 'protected characteristics' and the removal of dual discrimination affords no opportunity for protection from multiple intersecting discriminations, i.e. to be old *and* lesbian, or old *and* gay *and* Black, or old *and* bisexual *and* disabled. The public sector duty in the original version of the Act would have created an onus on public bodies to actively counter disadvantage between groups (Squires, 2009). However, this too has been significantly diluted in the subsequent government's revisions of that duty (EHRC, 2012), leaving an enduring emphasis on singularity and individualism, and under-protection for those older people who are marginalised at the nexus of multiple social divisions.

The end result, for older LGBNL individuals, is that social policy and legislation, when it does recognise older age or gender or 'sexual orientation' as equality issues, recognises them separately, but not together. Older-age recognition and resources will not reach some older LGBNL individuals because of their *sexualities*; and recognition and resources for LGBNL individuals will not reach some older LGBNL individuals because of their *age*. And for older LGBNL women, with their tripartite intersecting experiences of discrimination associated with age, gender *and* sexuality (and others too, e.g. class,

ethnicity, disability, etc.), there is no scope to address this multi-faceted, interconnected, operation of disadvantage. So while intersectionality is an effective theoretical tool, it can be less effective in operational terms.

Which/whose equalities?

The integrationist/assimilationist debate has come up repeatedly in this book, alongside the argument that those older LGBNL individuals leading more 'respectable' (Richardson, 2000b) lives are more likely to be privileged in access to recognition and resources. The desire to be seen as normal, as 'just like' heterosexual-identifying individuals apart from the gender of one's partner, was an overriding narrative among the majority of participants. What *kind* of normal can be most clearly seen in the discussions about civil partnership and same-sex marriage. Those who want same-sex marriage, and all its trappings, believe equality means having access to the same relationship institutions as heterosexual-identifying individuals. Those who want civil partnership, but not marriage, want their relationships to have equal rights and responsibilities, and equal status, to marriage, but they do not want it to be the same institution as that of heterosexuals. Then there are those on the margins, who want neither, who resist the associated norms, and who feel marginalised by the domesticated, couple-driven lives which are prioritised and privileged in society.

Couple privilege even with the additional financial responsibilities, protects some LGBNL individuals from some of the social marginalisation associated with ageing. Access to children and grandchildren also acts as a buffer, in terms of the potential for intergenerational informal social support. In terms of care provision, the more gender non-conforming, less mono-relationship performing, the more difficult it will be for an older LGBNL person to fit in within care contexts. Conversely, the more closely mapped on traditional heterosexual norms an individual's performance and lifestyle is, the less difficult it will be to fit in. The privileging of the respectable 'older LGBT' person, serves to marginalise, obscure, and ultimately, culturally devalue, less respectable older LGBNL people, who are also under-represented in research, raising 'epistemological questions about whose experiences are being used to generalize understandings of sexual and intimate life' (McDermott, 2011, pp. 75–76), including in older age.

The extent to which participants feel they are now enjoying comparative equality in later life is contingent upon how they understand equality and where they locate themselves in relation to the norms of inclusion and exclusion relating to gender, sexuality and ageing, in a later life context. The most radical participants, Cat and Phil, are leading semi-separatist lives and clearly locate themselves as gender and sexuality outsiders looking in on either a patriarchal and heterosexist world (Cat) or a woman-saturated 'straight' world (Phil). Their options to resist this in very old age could be constrained and reduced to peeing on care home floors (Cat) or ending one's own life (Phil). However, the

possibility nonetheless exists, for (younger) LGBNL others to champion their more radical corner(s) with the aim of achieving transformational change for current cohorts of older LGBNL people and their future selves.

'Voices on the margins'

'Voices on the Margins' refers to indirectly accessed lives and experiences glimpsed in participants' narratives, referred to in passing, alluded to in conversations, implied in their discourse. These offer small insights into the lives of those individuals very rarely included in ageing LGBNL research: men married to women who engage in some form of sexual activity with other men (including the participants); older bisexual men and more older bisexual women; individuals in same-sex relationships (or bereaved and previously in same-sex relationships) who have led hidden lives, and who are still concealing themselves today (some of whom are friends of the participants, but declined to participate in the research); individuals who had not previously led hidden lives but have now concealed themselves in older-age care and accommodation spaces (some of whom are supported by participants); people in polyamorous relationships; those women (and perhaps men too) for whom the possibility of a sexual life with a person of the same-sex is still in the realms of the 'unthinkable' (Rich, 1980). This notion of the potential for more women to choose to engage in intimate relationships with other women was also made explicit by Jennifer: 'once the possibility is there, many more of us will embrace it.' This echoes a more radical re-visioning of sexual relationships and intimacies.

These absent presences (both actual and potential) are a powerful reminder of the partial picture of any research involving 'hidden populations', including this project. Thinking about them here, it is important to consider what this research project would have been like were more of those absent voices to have been heard. The lifelong and/or now concealed would doubtless have provided greater insights into navigating stigma, marginalisation and fear. Those who are concealed and currently living in care spaces would have offered invaluable information about the actual lived experience of doing so rather than simply anticipated fears and concerns. The need to 'capture' such voices is pressing. It may be that some will never be heard, but a longitudinal study of now-ageing LGBNL individuals about their actual care outcomes, compared with their anticipated ones, would be particularly useful. Narratives from more bisexual people would have helped to complicate, and further deconstruct, linear accounts of sexualities and sexual identities and contributed more to the de-marginalisation of bisexual narratives from (ageing) 'LGBT' discourse. There might also have been, based on Rebecca Jones's (2012) work, more hopeful and non-normative imaginings of ageing bisexual futures. Hearing from LGBNL people who are living polyamorous lives would also have provided important insights into non-normative ageing relationship forms (Klesse, 2014) and added to the debate about how sexuality is discursively and performatively reproduced.

Perhaps the most significant absence, is the voices of working-class older LGBNL individuals. So much of our understanding of LGBL lives, including older LGBNL lives, is based on middle-class accounts of those lives. Those middle-class accounts involve the participation in comparatively safe circles of tolerance and/or acceptance, and of compliance with middle-class respectability as the price of inclusion. We need to know much more about how ageing sexualities are discursively and performatively reproduced in working-class spaces, otherwise we will only ever understand the lives of the socially privileged. Likewise, the under-representation of people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds also contributes to the only partial picture we have so far developed about ageing LGBNL lives.

Social policy implications

The findings reported here have multiple social policy implications. Regulatory gaps relating to older LGBNL individuals were identified in Chapter 2, which privileged, to varying degrees, the conjugal, biological, filial and heterosexual relationship, marginalising supportive and loving intimate friendships (SLIFs) in various ways. The participants in this study showed little appetite for the legal recognition of SLIFs, which may be a reflection of their own (couple-privileging) demographic, or a broader reluctance to formalise relationships based on voluntarism and reciprocal trust. Nonetheless, the gaps affecting SLIFs merit further legal enquiry, in particular the under-recognition in succession law of love, care and support provided by SLIFs to a person at end of life. While relationships of dependency are recognised in law (e.g. financial claims that are possible for a person who has been financially dependent on a deceased person) relationships of care and support being provided (rather than received), and/or of reciprocal care, are less well recognised. The marginalisation of informal care in regulatory contexts merits further enquiry.

The under-recognition of care, of (older) LGBNL carers and of LGBNL SLIFs, engages with broader issues of the enduring cultural devaluation of care (Barnes, 2012). It is echoed in the concerns of older LGBNL individuals regarding care standards for older people in general and for LGBNL individuals in particular (Chapter 6). So too is the heteronormative modelling of community care services, which need to be revised to include sexuality diversity, rather than the current sexuality-blind approach (Cronin *et al.*, 2011). The provision of care to (older) LGBNL individuals by faith-based organisations and/or individual carers engages with one of the major rights conflicts of this new century. It is the elephant in the room (or two elephants more precisely – religion *and* sexuality/sexual identity) in relation to care, which urgently needs to be addressed. There is virtually no literature on religion in the context of older-age care provision (Knocker, 2013), although there is growing anecdotal evidence of tensions between medical, nursing and social care staff with strict religious beliefs and care users with minority sexualities (CSCI, 2008). The tension between competing religious and sexual minority rights (Stychin, 2009), as played out in care

contexts, is 'an "uncomfortable" subject which is often avoided' (Carr, 2008, p. 113). However, it is one which is going to become increasingly relevant, with an ageing population and greater demand for care workers, including those from migrant cultures, often embedded in strong religious beliefs. As such this is an area which requires closer attention in terms of policy and practice implications, and also research.

There is a need for better information to support social policy makers and service providers in their decision-making (Averett *et al.*, 2012; De Vries and Croghan, 2014) (again see the section on research, below). In particular, the fears and concerns among older LGBNL individuals about care needs and care spaces merit closer attention. Based on participants' narratives, there is a need for: a far more robust approach to making mainstream provision more attuned and responsive to the needs of older LGBNL individuals (Knocker, 2013); greater choice in housing and care provision (CIH, 2011); a range of alternative housing for older LGBNL individuals (Carr & Ross, 2013) and for systems to enable older people, including older LGBNL individuals, to be supported in setting up, and maintaining, co-operatives and self-directed projects (Gabrielson, 2011b; SCIE, 2013).

The growing support for the right to die is not specific or unique to older LGBNL individuals. Not all of the participants in this study engaged with this subject but those who did felt that being unable to choose when and how they died, and being denied help to do so, was a profound social injustice which should be remedied. This is a social policy issue which is going to take on increasing significance with a population which is living for longer, but not always with a good quality of life, especially in very old age. The risk for older LGBNL individuals is that death might be perceived not as the preferred alternative out of a range of possibilities, but the *only* alternative to health and social care provision which does not meet their needs. This would, of course, be the ultimate injustice, and is the kind of vulnerability issue many feminists have been cautioning about in their wariness over right-to-die debates.

Implications for future research

This project has identified a number of important, and intriguing, areas for future research. In terms of the wider regulatory context (Chapter 2), there is a need to consider the legal recognition of wider relationship forms beyond that of the conjugal couple (Barker, 2012) and binary relationship constructions. There is obviously huge research potential in terms of how civil partnerships, and now same-sex marriage, will influence constructions of 'family life' including in later life. There is also potential to explore not only the beginnings of 'family life' (civil partnership/marriage; birth/adoption) but also fractures to LGBNL 'family life' (civil partnership dissolutions, divorce) and also the endings (death, dying, funerals) and how they are shaped by age(ing), gender and sexuality. There is rich potential to explore how assets are actually distributed on the death of LGBNL individuals (both testate and intestate). A major unexplored area of

research is the equality implications of the harassment exclusions in the Equality Act 2010, particularly in an ageing context.

In terms of research methodology, there is much more to be learned about accessing so-called hidden populations, and about including LGBNL individuals in research (Westwood, 2012). There is the enduring challenge of how privileged researchers can access the lives of those who do not share their privilege in meaningful, and truly empowering, ways. In terms of the retrospective past, there is a need to document, describe and understand the experiences of ageing LGBNL individuals beyond the emancipatory, liberationist, stories and to capture these wider, more complex, more nuanced, historical accounts before those carrying them die out.

In terms of current subjectivities, there is an urgent need for a large-scale, longitudinal study of the lives of older LGBNL individuals (Fredriksen-Goldsen & Muraco, 2010). This is for a number of different reasons. First, there is a need to understand how the arc of ageing impacts older LGBNL individuals across different age standpoints, and according to different personal, temporal and spatial contexts, and access to material and social resources. Second, policy makers and service providers need large-scale data which represents the full spectrum of concerns among older LGBNL individuals before those concerns will be addressed.[1] Third, there is a need to understand how actual futures compare with anticipated ones, in order to locate older LGBNL individuals' fears and concerns in some basis of lived outcomes. This is particularly in relation to anticipated informal social support (both the expected presence of informal support and the feared absence of it) and anticipated formal social support (and concerns about invisibility, risky visibility, unequal opportunities for openness and constraints upon social networking).

In terms of those anticipated, and feared, care futures, there is a pressing need for reliable, robust, up-to-date research on health, housing and care provision for older LGBNL individuals. This research is needed on multiple levels. First, we need to urgently get a sense of attitudes among staff and services users in mainstream sheltered housing, residential and nursing home contexts, towards older LGBNL individuals (Willis *et al.*, 2014). There has been no research replicating that of the much-cited study conducted by Hubbard and Rossington in 1995. There is a need for something much more recent, and methodologically robust, which will offer policy makers and service providers a reliable research picture on which they can base future strategy. Second, we need to understand the lived experiences of LGBNL individuals in those spaces, made more complicated by those lives often being hidden lives, but something which needs to be pursued nonetheless. Third, as outlined above, we need a fuller picture of the kinship networks of older LGBNL individuals, what kind of social support is accessed by them, when and how they access formal social care, and then what their experiences are of doing so. This speaks to the need for a large-scale longitudinal study to give an in-depth picture of the later life, and end of life, care trajectories among older LGBNL people, in all their diverse forms (Orel, 2014).

There is also a need for a far greater understanding of the range of provision older LGBNL individuals want and need (Addis *et al.*, 2009; Ward *et al.*, 2011; Manthorpe & Moriarty, 2013). In particular there is a need for better representation of the care preferences of older LGBNL women, bisexual women and men, non-labelling women and men (Jones, 2011, 2012; Grigorovich, 2013; Walker, 2013) and those with more non-normative, e.g. polyamorous (Barker, Heckert & Wilkinson, 2013), lives.

Personal reflections

This project started, for me, when I was caring for my father who had dementia, and I wondered who would be there for me if I was to be in the same position as he was. The question prompted a career change into an entirely new field. When thinking about my own future, I have toyed with the idea of spending my final years in a women's collective, with romantic notions of 'paying-it-forward' by caring for older women, in anticipation of women a generation down from me, caring for me when it is my turn. But, really, I can't see me doing it. I am very comfortable with living alone. As Diana observed 'We would all like to live in this big house where we share a communal space, but we won't give up our space either' (Diana, aged 69, 'Out Early').

But the dementia does worry me. My mother died suddenly, in her early seventies, while she was still independent and living a full life. It was sad for her in one way, but in another way, not. But I am more like my father, physically and mentally, and I think a later death, with increased risk of dementia, is more likely to be my lot. I have an aunt in her nineties, who is severely disabled, who has carers coming in five times a day, who cannot get in or out of her own bed, or take herself to the toilet, or cook for herself, or go out alone, who is doubly incontinent and preoccupied with the minutiae of her life. I do not want that for myself, and I do not want my father's memory loss and confusion either.

So, then, perhaps I might end my own life, at some future point. The problem with ending one's life is it takes a lot of courage. The will to live is strong, and life can become even more precious when there is less of it left. If I am to take my life before dementia takes such a grip on me that I am unable to do so, I shall have to do it while I am still relatively well-functioning and, ironically, still able to live a meaningful life. Tricky. But I do believe in the right to die, belong to a right-to-die organisation, and know my preferred method. I am also hopeful that by the time dementia may become relevant to me there will be treatments, if not cures, to keep it at bay. Ultimately, for now, though, there is little I can do, apart from accept, as Billy says, that there is 'no point in worrying about the future. There is only a now' (Billy, aged 61, 'Breaking Out').

Interestingly, this project has contributed to a new phase in my life, one of the most rewarding. I have made so many new connections, both in the UK and overseas. I have a new and rich professional life as a researcher and educator. I have written much and had quite a lot published. Alongside this book, I have also been co-editing, with Dr Elizabeth Price, a book entitled *Lesbian, Gay,*

Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Individuals Living with Dementia: Concepts, Practice and Rights, which is also being published by Routledge this year. In addition to making many new professional contacts, and building strong professional networks, I have made several very good new friends.

Ironically, addressing later life has reenergised my own life. It has given me the chance to make up for the times I have been less than true to myself, for those early years when I desperately tried to shoe-horn myself into a heterosexual life. I resonated with Audrey when she said 'I was in the closet for most of my life and I'm trying very hard now, that when it does matter, I don't shy at that fence, because I'm trying to make up for all the years I wouldn't do it'. I just missed out, age-wise, on the radical 70s, which I have always regretted. Like Joan who made a last minute leap into self-fulfilment thinking 'I can't go into retirement with this man' (Joan, aged 67, 'Breaking Out') so I have made a last minute leap into activism, tweeting, blogging, campaigning, running events and finding that I belong, at last, to a social movement. Hopefully I am doing some good, that will be of benefit to others. At the outset of this book, I was full of the 'rage of oppression' (Kitzinger, 1987, p. 115) about the plight of older LGBNL individuals. Now that rage has been transformed, channelled into the thrill of resistance, the possibilities for making change happen. As Martin said, about change, 'unless you act and do it yourself, it don't happen'. But in terms of ageing issues, as this book has shown, you have to act on behalf of your future self, and others' future selves. I am proud to be part of that process.

Final words

This book has been about equality issues affecting particular ageing LGBNL individuals, who lived, and aged, through distinct and significant changing regulatory and socio-cultural times. Subsequent waves of ageing LGBNL individuals, with their own various age standpoints, will have their own unique perspectives on equality and the ageing experience. It will be interesting to compare their experiences with those of the participants in this study. I hope some future researcher will do so. I also hope that successive generations of LGBNL individuals – who perhaps will one day not even be minoritised – will appreciate their heritages, those individuals who fought for the rights they now enjoy, and the importance of continually striving to protect and improve upon those rights, across the lifespan, not least of all in older age.

Note

1 Sadly, the data from the YouGov survey commissioned by Stonewall had not been shared with other researchers for secondary analysis, despite requests, and has not been disseminated beyond a single report directed towards the layperson.

Appendix 1

Research methodology

The data analysed in this book was collected for the empirical component of my PhD, which interrogated how the intersection of ageing, gender and sexuality impact later life equality (Westwood, 2015c). The project was given ethical approval by Keele University Ethics Committee. Ethical issues (researching hidden populations; insider/outsider dynamics; and anonymity in sensitive research) were addressed in the Methodological section of the thesis (pp. 107–116) and were also explored in a paper published in a peer-reviewed journal (Westwood, 2013). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 60 older LGB individuals. Participants were recruited via online advertising, networking, opportunistic sampling and snowball sampling. Data were analysed using a staged process of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Interviews were audio recorded and then transcripts prepared for analysis. These were sent to participants for verification and/or corrections. The final version, approved by each participant, was then used for analysis. Thematic analysis (Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012) is one of a number of subtly different ways qualitative researchers identify, analyse, and report patterns within data (Creswell, 2014). This approach was chosen in order to make an interpretive analysis (Boyatzis, 1998) without then generalising it into an overarching new theory, as in grounded theory, for example. The staged approach to thematic analysis, as described by Braun and Clarke (2006), was deployed. Themes were identified in a number of ways: for the frequency of their presence; for the significance placed upon them by (some) participants; for the ways in which they complicated one another; and for their saliency and significance (Buetow, 2010).

Obtaining a representative sample with LGB individuals is extremely difficult, because it involves accessing hidden, marginalised populations of uncertain constituencies. All but one of the participants this study identified as white British, and the majority were well-educated and relatively affluent, reflecting the standard profile of LGB samples (Grossman, 2008). For profiles of all 60 participants, please see Appendix 2.

Appendix 2

Participant profiles

Table A2.1 Participants' age range, ethnicity and relationship status

	Women	*Men*	*Total*
Total no. of participants	36	24	60
Age range	58–92	52[1]–76	n/a
Ethnicity	35 White British 1 'Anglo Indian'	24 White British	59 White British 1 'Anglo Indian'
Single	14	11	25
Couple	22	12	34
Polyamorous	–	1	1
Children	17	7	18
No children	19	17	36
Grandchildren	13	3	14
No grandchildren	23	21	44

Note
1 The 52-year-old participant was in a joint couple interview with his partner, who was 63.

Table A2.2 Breakdown of participants' home ownership/rental and present/most recent employment status

	Women	*Men*	*Total*
Home owner	28	20	48
Home renting	8	4	12
Profession (academic; architecture; engineer; nurse; social work/ probation; teacher; scientist; therapist; vet)	19	14	33
Senior civil servant (Civil Service/NHS/Local Government); CEO; IT consultant; own business	9	6	15
Middle administrator; middle manager; secretary; skilled trade	4	3	7
Postal worker, unqualified driver, unqualified care worker	4	1	5

Table A2.3 Breakdown of participants' religious affiliations

	Women	*Men*	*Total*
Practising Christian	11	**9**	20
Buddhist	1	0	1
Holistic	1	0	1
Pagan	1	0	1
Total with active faith	**14**	**9**	**23**
'Nominal CofE'	1	1	2
'Jewish non-practising'	1	0	1
Agnostic	1	0	1
'None'	19	14	33
Total no active faith	**22**	**15**	**37**
Grand total	**36**	**24**	**60**

Table A2.4 Breakdown of participants' sexuality/sexual identity

	Women	*Men*	*Total*
Lesbian	29	n/a	29
Gay	1	24	25
Bisexual	1	0	1
Strategically lesbian/bisexual	1	0	1
Non-labelling	4	0	4
Total	**36**	**24**	**60**

Appendix 3

Participant cohort, age and era

Table A3.1 Participants' ages and eras

Participants	*Born*	*1945–1955*	*1956–1966*	*1967–1979*	*1980–1999*	*2000–2012*
1 Moira aged 75	1937	8–18	19–29	30–42	43–62	63–75
2 Lawrence aged 63	1949	0–6	7–17	18–30	31–50	51–63
3 Audrey aged 67	1945	0–10	11–21	22–34	35–54	55–67
4 Clifford aged 67	1945	0–10	11–21	22–34	35–54	55–67
5 Stella aged 66	1946	0–9	10–20	21–33	34–53	54–66
6 Tessa aged 58	1954	0–1	2–12	13–25	26–45	46–58
7 Martin aged 62	1950	0–5	6–16	17–29	30–49	50–62
8 Alastair aged 76	1936	9–19	20–30	31–43	44–63	64–76
9 Ken aged 64	1948	0–7	8–18	19–31	32–51	52–64
10 Rupert aged 68	1944	1–11	12–22	23–35	36–55	56–68
11 Liz aged 52	1960	–	0–6	7–19	20–39	40–52
12 Alice aged 60	1952	0–3	4–14	15–27	28–47	48–60
13 Doris aged 69	1943	2–12	13–23	24–36	37–56	57–69
14 Daphne aged 60	1952	0–3	4–14	15–27	28–47	48–60
15 Sam aged 61	1951	0–4	5–15	16–28	29–48	49–61
16 Lewis aged 65	1947	0–8	9–19	20–32	33–52	53–65
17 Joan aged 67	1945	0–10	11–21	22–34	35–54	55–67
18 Tim aged 52	1960	–	0–6	7–19	20–39	40–52
19 Walter aged 58	1954	0–1	2–12	13–25	26–45	46–58
20 Violet aged 73	1939	6–16	17–27	28–40	41–60	61–73
21 Dylis aged 75	1937	8–18	19–29	30–42	43–62	63–75
22 Jack aged 66	1946	0–9	10–20	21–33	34–53	54–66
23 Ian aged 69	1943	2–12	13–23	24–36	37–56	57–69
24 Andrew aged 66	1946	0–9	10–20	21–33	34–53	54–66
25 Arthur aged 60	1952	0–3	4–14	15–27	28–47	48–60
26 Bob aged 60	1952	0–3	4–14	15–27	28–47	48–60

27	Rene aged 63	1949	0–6	7–17	18–30	31–50	51–63
28	Sally aged 73	1939	6–16	17–27	28–40	41–60	61–73
29	Phil aged 62	1950	0–5	6–16	17–29	30–49	50–62
30	Diana aged 69	1943	2–12	13–23	24–36	37–56	57–69
31	Billy aged 61	1951	0–4	5–15	16–28	29–48	49–61
32	Graham aged 70	1942	3–13	14–24	25–37	38–57	58–70
33	Des aged 69	1943	2–12	13–23	24–36	37–56	57–69
34	Frank aged 70	1942	3–13	14–24	25–37	38–57	58–70
35	Sandra aged 61	1951	0–4	5–15	16–28	29–48	49–61
36	Theresa aged 63	1949	0–6	7–17	18–30	31–50	51–63
37	Donald aged 75	1937	8–18	19–29	30–42	43–62	63–75
38	Rachel aged 64	1948	0–7	8–18	19–31	32–51	52–64
39	Alex aged 60	1952	0–3	4–14	15–27	28–47	48–60
40	Les aged 62	1950	0–5	6–16	17–29	30–49	50–62
41	Claire aged 65	1947	0–8	9–19	20–32	33–52	53–65
42	May aged 64	1948	0–7	8–18	19–31	32–51	52–64
43	Maureen aged 62	1950	0–5	6–16	17–29	30–49	50–62
44	Agnes aged 92	1920	25–35	36–46	47–59	60–79	80–92
45	Judith aged 71	1941	4–14	15–25	36–38	39–58	59–71
46	Bernice aged 60	1952	0–3	4–14	15–27	28–47	48–60
47	Vera aged 60	1952	0–3	4–14	15–27	28–47	48–60
48	Julia aged 69	1943	2–12	13–23	24–36	37–56	57–69
49	Barbara aged 83	1929	16–26	27–37	38–50	51–70	71–83
50	Derek aged 61	1951	0–4	5–15	16–28	29–48	49–61
51	Iris aged 61	1951	0–4	5–15	16–28	29–48	49–61
52	Ronald aged 60	1952	0–3	4–14	15–27	28–47	48–60
53	Bridget aged 66	1946	0–9	10–20	21–33	34–53	54–66
54	Angela aged 64	1948	0–7	8–18	19–31	32–51	52–64
55	Marcia aged 66	1946	0–9	10–20	21–33	34–53	54–66
56	Ellen aged 64	1948	0–7	8–18	19–31	32–51	52–64
57	Yvette aged 69	1943	2–12	13–23	24–36	37–56	57–69
58	Jennifer aged 62	1950	0–5	6–16	17–29	30–49	50–62
59	Frances aged 66	1946	0–9	10–20	21–33	34–53	54–66
60	Cat aged 63	1949	0–6	7–17	18–30	31–50	51–63

Appendix 4
Cohort allocations

Cohort one: 'Out Early'

'Early Identity' and 'Concurrent Performance' narrative

1 Moira

Moira, aged 75, has been with her civil partner for over 30 years. She has no children, but her partner has children and grandchildren. She has always identified as lesbian and has only ever had sexual relationships with women:

> I'm a cradle lesbian. I was a lesbian at the age of three … I fell in love at the age of nine for the first time. And of course, went to an all-girls school and had huge crushes that went on happening (laughed). And then I met my first relationship when I was just about leaving school … she was an older woman … we took off and lived together for 10 years.
>
> (Moira, aged 75)

2 Lawrence

Lawrence, aged 63, has been with his civil partner for nearly 20 years. They have no children. Lawrence has always identified as gay and has only ever had sexual relationships with men:

> I was privately educated and although there was sexual activity as you would expect in all-boys schools, as soon as you're out of the hot house, 99 per cent returned to normality, or what was seen as normality. I just carried on with the same interests as it were.
>
> (Lawrence, aged 63)

3 Audrey

Audrey, aged 67, is single and has no children. She had boyfriends in her early teens, but then was with her long-term partner, a woman, for over 40 years, since

she was 18. After they split up, she was in another relationship for three years. She has identified as lesbian all her life, but has only been partially out, especially not at work:

> It was a long old journey and I was in the closet for most of my life and I'm trying very hard now, that when it does matter, I don't shy at that fence, because I'm trying to make up for all the years I wouldn't do it.
>
> (Audrey, aged 67)

4 Clifford

Clifford, aged 68, has identified as gay all his adult life. His partner of 36 years died a few years ago. He has now been in another committed relationship for four years. He has no children, but a wide support network, including intergenerational support from his deceased partner's extended and extensive biological family.

5 Stella

Stella, aged 66, has identified as lesbian all her adult life. She is single and has no children.

> I knew that I was gay or lesbian, I didn't use either word, when I was about 8 … I knew I was attracted to girls not boys … I had two relationships in my teens.… Everybody was aware at school that I was gay. I never thought it was wrong.… And I've had girls come and stay, and there'd be a lilo on the floor, but we'd be in bed in the morning and my dad would come in and said 'All right girls, bacon and egg for breakfast?' and we'd have no clothes on so it would be fairly obvious.… But for a long time with my sexuality I wasn't sure if I was different because I wanted to do boys' jobs. I spent a lot of time wondering if I really wanted to be a boy. And the answer to myself was and is no.
>
> (Stella, aged 66)

6 Tessa

Tessa, aged 58 is in a civil partnership with her partner of six years. She has no children. Tessa has been in lesbian relationships all her life, moving in a small social network of other lesbians, not out at work, but out to her family.

> Knew all my life that I was gay, knew to keep quiet about it, knew not to tell people about it, knew it was wrong … I always lived discretely, I didn't come out at school, because, you know, in those days it wasn't regarded as being a particularly good career move, so I was quite discrete.
>
> (Tessa, aged 58)

7 Martin

Martin, aged 62, is Bob's civil partner. They have a grown-up son (by means of artificial insemination). Martin has identified as gay since his teens:

> I guess I probably came out to myself when I was about 13, 14, because as you know, coming out is a life process, really, isn't it? I mean you think you've done it, and then you have to do it again and again and again.… So, 13, 14 and I used to go up to [city] and hang around … and I was looking for a man, but I didn't know how you got one, so fortunately I think, with hindsight, I never found a man, I used to go and get a milkshake and then go home again [laughs]. So that was my, kind of, beginnings – how do you do it?
>
> (Martin, aged 62, 'Out Early')

Martin eventually made connections with gay men through political activities and met Bob, his lifelong partner in his early twenties, in the 1970s, on a political march.

8 Alastair

Alastair, aged 76, is single and has no children. He has self-identified as gay all his life. He was selectively out since his early twenties, in the 1960s and then fully out in his thirties in the 1970s.

> I was out to friends. That's how I defined friends. Friends were the people who knew I was gay and who didn't mind. And when I first decided to do that I was about 22 or 23, when I first decided I was going to be open with friends. There were two or three who never spoke to me again, which is curious. And when Gay Lib happened, [when I was in my thirties] I just thought 'I have been waiting all my life for this… I just want to be out, to be who I am really.
>
> (Alastair, aged 76)

9 Ken

Ken, aged 64, is single and has no children.

> I suppose I was 21 (1969), when I'd told my family, because I'd met this guy who I lived with for seven years.… And my parents would come up every year to see me. So I thought, well they're going to quiz me about the sleeping arrangements, so I said, sit down, Mum, I've got something to tell you. And, wonderful reaction. 'Really? Oh, well I must introduce you to [names]'. And it just never occurred, but of course, why shouldn't my mum have gay friends? It just never occurred to me.
>
> (Ken, aged 64)

10 Rupert

Rupert, aged 68, is in a civil partnership and has no children. He has self-identified as gay all his life, engaging in clandestine same-sex relationships from an early age until he began openly living with his first long-term partner in his late thirties, after which time he came out to his family, and then increasingly out to others:

> Oh, it was difficult, in the 60s, 70s. I was out gradually and I suppose by the time I was 40, 45, I was tacitly out. I get more out every year.… Just a feeling that it was highly abnormal, unusual, not normal, would be distressing to family, parents, brother, probably to workmates as well during that period … in the 70s [it was] highly difficult to make contact with gay people, unless you were highly promiscuous.
>
> (Rupert, aged 68)

11 Liz

Liz, aged 52, has identified as lesbian all her adult life:

> I was in the WRAF and I got kicked out. Well, I could've stayed in if I agreed to psychiatric treatment. But I said, there's nothing wrong with me, I'm not sick, I said, you can't change me, that's the way I am … I was 21. And I said, no, there's nothing wrong with me. I'm normal [laughs]. So they said well you'll have to go then, so I said OK, I'll go.
>
> (Liz, aged 52)

12 Alice

Alice, aged 60, is single and has identified as lesbian since her late teens.

> I just knew I wasn't going to make it with men, no matter how hard I tried to hold down my desires [laughs] … [and so I went to] a women's centre.… And I never looked back … It was like 'oh my god', ding, ding, ding. So that was it.
>
> (Alice, aged 60)

13 Doris

Doris, aged 69, is single and has no children. She was in a long-term relationship but has been single for many years and prefers to remain so. Doris had always known she was gay and came out in the army in her early twenties:

> I got thrown out … part of it was because I told them I was gay.… They went barmy. They told me there was something mentally wrong with me. So that's it and I got out.… They locked me up.… They sent me [another

> posting].… They said we're going to give you another chance, I didn't want another chance, so I ran away again, and then they brought me back, and then my papers came through and I got out.
>
> (Doris, aged 69)

14 Daphne

Daphne, aged 60, has always been in relationships with women. She has been with her civil partner for over 30 years. She was in another long-term lesbian relationship prior to that. She has no children.

> I had a relationship with a woman … I didn't think about [my sexuality] other than I was with this woman and it was nice.… The woman I was having a relationship with wasn't happy that we weren't out, and I wasn't happy about the idea of being out … and then I met Brenda, who knocked my socks off.
>
> (Daphne, aged 60)

15 Sam

Sam, aged 61, is in a civil partnership and has no children.

> I knew I had some attractions to same sex, but also feeling there's some fluidity there. I went to college when I was 19 and I had a girlfriend, and I had no sexual experience with women at that stage. [Friend took him to a gay pub] And it opened up another world. And I went back. I also joined CHE a little bit later, and that's how I entered the way of meeting people … I met my partner at 22.
>
> (Sam, aged 61)

Sam has been with his civil partner for 37 years. Early on in their relationship, they separated briefly and Sam had an affair with a woman. He ended it because she was married (to a man):

> But it still ticks through my mind. I just wondered whether, if things had been different, I don't know … I've always thought there are degrees of feeling and degrees of passion and of intimacy.
>
> (Sam, aged 61)

Sam's slightly ambivalent understanding of his sexuality does not totally 'fit' with the long-term identification as lesbian/gay of others in this cohort. However, he is most closely aligned to this cohort because of his long-term public identification as a gay man paralleled by a long-standing partnership with a man. The fact that he had a girlfriend before joining CHE, could put him in the 'Breaking Out' cohort, but his narrative is not one of struggle, but of a gradual unfolding. He could have been described as bisexual, but this was not a descriptor he mobilised for himself.

16 Lewis

Lewis, aged 65, is single and has no children. He came out when he was 23, forming his first gay sexual relationship and affiliating himself with gay political groups:

> I think I realised early on but it was supressed, and that was by me, because, there was no such thing as being gay then [laughs]. … I grew up to think that being heterosexual is the only thing, so why was it when I was at a social organisation, that I liked the guy who was sitting next to me [laughs]. … [Then at 23] I left home and had my first real gay experience.
>
> (Lewis, aged 65)

Lewis eventually came out to his family, and made links with gay social networks, although he was not overtly out at work: 'but I think they probably knew. I didn't hide it or anything'.

Lewis's delayed performance, and 'suppression' of his awareness of his 'homosexuality' could place him in the 'Breaking Out' cohort. But his early self-identification as 'homosexual' to himself, absence of relationships with women, and same-sex sexual performance in his early twenties, informed my decision to place him in this cohort.

Cohort two: 'Breaking Out'

'Early Identity' and 'Performative Struggle and Resolution' narrative

17 Joan

Joan, aged 67, Maureen's civil partner, was also previously married to a man, and has children and grandchildren. She distinguished between her experience and Maureen's:

> I mean you were denying it, and I was wishing I didn't have to deny it all those years.
>
> (Joan, aged 67)

Joan had identified as lesbian early on in life, but had elected to get married:

> I always knew I was a lesbian. And had an affair with my best friend. … It was quite nice, enjoyed it … I didn't know what the word lesbian meant. I knew how I felt. But my mother saw things on the television, and would then say 'Well, they were a whole load of lesbians anyway'. And I thought I don't know what a lesbian is but it's not good [laughs]. And then when I

> found out, I thought, well, obviously it's going to be frowned on so I went down the route, I got married, I had children, I wanted children anyway. It was a bit of a disaster.
>
> (Joan, aged 67)

After 35 years of being married to a man, and after years of secretly reading lesbian magazines, a friendship with Maureen had grown into something more, and, in her mid-fifties (in the late 1990s) Joan left her husband and moved in with Maureen.

18 Tim

Tim, aged 52, is in a civil partnership and has no children. Tim was very isolated in his teens and twenties, partly associated with feeling 'different' because of his sexuality. He eventually came out in the 1980s, when he was in his twenties:

> I'd felt attracted to boys from a very early age, even though I didn't know the words 'gay' or 'homosexual'. I was very shy anyway and the feeling that I was different made me deeply closeted and isolated.… Didn't come out during my undergraduate years … did a PhD … still didn't come out … got a job … and round about then I started taking *Gay Times*. I remember, first couple of issues I read absolutely everything. All the adverts, every single article, all the personal ads … [and] at some point in the late 80s I found [gay walking group] and I found it a great way to meet people … [joined other gay walking groups] … I met some people there who have remained friends ever since.
>
> (Tim, aged 52)

19 Walter

Walter, aged 58, had his first sexual relationship in his late twenties with the man who is now his civil partner:

> I suppose … I went to a boy's grammar school … I was conscious of being different, conscious of being gay … I went to university and I wasn't out there either … I had girlfriends … and then I went [abroad] and discovered gay sex … I met [partner] at a party and within a couple of years he'd moved in, and I was more out then, you know neighbours, one neighbour said 'Are you gay?' and I said yes, and actually it's much easier if people ask you, and you can just say yes, than having to say 'Well, I'm gay' or something like that. But for years, with my family, Adrian was 'the lodger' and Mum and Dad liked him ever so much, but he was always 'the lodger' … and then my brother's girlfriend, she's quite open, and she said, we were all sat round having a curry, she said something like 'do you know other gay people?' or something like that and then it was out, and then it was just accepted … It was easy, it was good.
>
> (Walter, aged 58)

20 Violet

Violet, aged 73, has been with her civil partner for nearly 30 years, and has identified as lesbian since her late thirties. Previously married to a man, she has children and grandchildren.

> I'd always preferred little girls. Well, not little girls, women. Little girls when I was little, primary school. I did have a great crush on one little boy, when I was five. But he was a very gentle, dear little thing. And he moved away and I don't think I ever looked back … I went through school and into my teens … with crushes, enormous crushes on all these women. I remember saying to my grandmother when I was about 15, I think I'm, queer was probably the word I used.… And she just said, 'oh don't worry, it's a phase girls go through'. And so I moved into the stage where what you do is you get married … I wanted children. I think I wanted to play mummies and daddies as well, because I was the product of a broken marriage, and so I wanted to do it right … then I met my first lady partner … but thinking well, I am a lesbian … And then [civil partner] came into my life.
>
> (Violet, aged 73)

21 Dylis

Dylis, aged 75, is single, she has a grown-up child and grandchildren. She was in a lesbian relationship in her early twenties, was then married to a man for 20 years and, after her divorce in her late forties, has been in lesbian relationships and identified as exclusively lesbian.

> I joined the police force when I was 21, and fell in love with somebody at police training school, and we were together for four years … I was absolutely, deeply in love with her and I still have a photograph of her beside my bed.… One day, she rang me up, and she said 'Burn everything we've ever exchanged' and I said 'Why?' and she said 'Somebody's been through my flat'. Well in those days in the police force, '59 I joined and I left in '68, they could sack you for it. So I did. It took me two hours to burn a four-year loving relationship. And we started going out with guys for the sheer hell of it, to throw people off the scent…
>
> (Dylis, aged 75)

22 Jack

Jack, aged 66, is single and has no children. He came out when he was 30, after he left his home area and went to university as a mature student.

> Well, when I started off, well being a gay teenager, I had gay feelings … as the years went by, it wasn't a phase, and I started to feel guilty.… So I just

> even though I felt I was definitely gay, I became Jack the Lad, went off with women all the time.… I was seen as very much a heterosexual, you know, because when you're in your twenties, you could perform, you know, whatever.… And I came up here to university … there was freshers week and there was gay students union stall and I thought, ooh, I can't go to it, I was too frightened. And I went to a pub one night and got frightened and didn't go back for a few months … then went to bars again, had sexual experiences with men and I just knew what was going on in my mind was true.… And then the next freshers week I was running the stall! [laughter] And I've never looked back.
>
> (Jack, aged 66)

23 Ian

Ian, aged 69, was married to a woman, before he became involved with a gay man, and eventually he and his wife split up. He has children and grandchildren:

> Oh, I've been gay all my life.… But in the '60s you couldn't do much about it could you? I mean I was brought up in the church. I've led a very blinkered life … I mean it drives you crazy, doesn't it? I was going to get married, and I had a breakdown for three months, because I didn't want to get married, but what else was there?… We were married in '66 and divorced in '80, and I'd sort of come out, found out about things in the '70s.
>
> (Ian, aged 69)

Ian has since forged an openly gay life and has been with his current partner for nearly 30 years.

24 Andrew

Andrew, aged 66, is in a civil partnership. He was previously married to a woman (having sexual relationships with men throughout his marriage) and has children and grandchildren. He has openly identified as gay since the mid-1980s, when he was in his forties:

> I knew I was gay from being three or four. Yeah, yeah, of course I did.… It so happened I fell in love with a woman. She was everything I wanted. She was outgoing, she was fun we had the same interests, and so on, and we got on really well. And we had lots and lots of friends. The house was never silent. And then, of course we had children, which is what I'd always wanted … And then, it all went pear-shaped when I met (current partner). I just fell in love completely, utterly, absolutely. I realised I loved (ex-wife), but I'd never been 'in love' with her. I mean I was 26 when I married, so I could have sex with man, woman or beast, at that

age, not that I did, but you know what I mean.… I just loved the man. And still till do … I met him in 1984 and we've been together since 1987. 26 years.

(Andrew, aged 66)

25 Arthur

Arthur, aged 60, has been with his partner for nearly 20 years. He has no children or grandchildren but his partner does. He came out in his early twenties:

Well, to start with … I felt I had to do the girl thing, and date girls, and I found a girl, I suppose I went out with Miriam, I should think, for two or three years. And then I'd found a gay friend.… There was a gay club we used to go to.… And in the end I had to just tell her what was happening, when I was about 19, 20. I [was brought up] in Church of England … quite a conflict, really, because you're always told it's not the thing to do. But you think, well, that's what I want to do, and you've got that conflict all the time. But in the end it just overpowers you to do what you feel you have to do. In the end, I used to keep a diary, and my mum found it, and read it. And that's how they got to know I was gay.

(Arthur, aged 60)

26 Bob

Bob, aged 60, has been with his civil partner Martin for over 40 years. They have a grown-up child whom they co-parent with a lesbian mother. He had girlfriends in his teenage years, despite 'knowing' he was gay. Eventually, after he went to university, he came out in 1971, aged 21, through joining the Gay Liberation Front. He subsequently ended his relationship with his long-term girlfriend and has lived the rest of his life openly out as a gay man. Here, Bob describes his 'moment' of coming out at his first GLF meeting:

I remember the first thing that happened was that I just burst into tears. I had come home. And I remember being held, being cuddled and caressed, by people who'd been through what I'd been through … I just burst into tears, and by the end of that meeting, I was a fully fledged member of the Gay Liberation Front. I was political anyway, and I took like a duck to water to the politics of GLF, because that's very counter-culture anyway.

(Bob, aged 60)

27 Rene

Rene, aged 63, is single, with children and grandchildren. She has been married to a man, and has openly identified as lesbian, and has been in a series of long-term

lesbian relationships since her thirties. Rene got pregnant after a drunken sexual encounter with a man, then got married, knowing she was lesbian:

> That was about already having a child and wanting another one and wanting to get away from my parents and thinking that at that point that the scene wasn't a fit place to bring up kids, 'cos it was rare for people to have kids then, on the scene … had another child, and I didn't come out till I was 30.
>
> (Rene, aged 63)

28 Sally

Sally, aged 73, is single and has no children. She had her first lesbian relationship, and has subsequently openly identified as lesbian, in her late twenties, in the late 1960s.

> I sort of tried to commit suicide when I was about 15 … I wanted to be invisible. [Mother had health problems] There was no way I could leave home. There was no way I could tell her what I thought was wrong. Because there was no help in those days. No support. [I couldn't tell her] that I was gay. Because she'd always had this vision of her daughter in a white dress coming down the aisle to this bloke. She was very romantic. And I tried. I tried. But I just couldn't. [Revisits mother's attitude to lesbians – she found a lesbian magazine in her post, called it 'filth']. In those days you have to remember gay women weren't as they are now. They were the full monty [describes 'butch dykes']. I never wanted that. I never wanted to be a man. I was quite happy being a woman, despite the restrictions.
>
> (Sally, aged 73)

29 Phil

Phil, aged 62, is single and has no children. He said 'I knew at the age of eight, I was a poof … I have never voluntarily seen a woman naked and I don't want to' (Phil, aged 68). But Phil did nothing to act on his feelings until his late twenties, having sexual relationships with neither men nor women until he was 27, when he had his first sexual encounter with a man. When he was 30 he changed careers and came out, publicly identifying as a gay man since then:

> I have two birthdays … my biological one is 62 now [and the other one] is 31. That's the day I came out.… I always say that my life started at 31, and everything else before was just a mechanical warm-up.… In terms of physical sex, sublimating, I think is the psychology word.
>
> (Phil, aged 62)

30 Diana

Diana, aged 69, came out in her twenties, in the 1960s, identifying as lesbian ever since.

> I was born in 1943. I knew there was something different about me. I had boyfriends. I was engaged, all that sort of thing. I didn't know there was anything other than heterosexuality, because that's all there was. But I knew I was different … I had boyfriends while I was in the navy … I really believed that whatever my feelings were, they were just some sort of cross to bear … in my diaries … I see my struggles at the time were my attractions to other women. I got friendly with a woman … it was normal, if you had a friend to stay, you shared a bed. And it happened, the second or third time we shared a bed, and it was the most natural thing in the world. And we thought we were the only ones [laughs]. In retrospect, we knew that other people knew, and there was this secret society in the navy as well … I was then taken to this club … there was that butch and femme thing, and when I went out with [another] woman, she was butch, and I had to dress as femme … you had to be one or the other. There were all the heterosexual rules of male and female.
>
> (Diana, aged 69)

31 Billy

Billy, aged 61, has been with his civil partner since he was in his late twenties, in the 1970s. He has no children.

> That's when John and I met, managed to get my own brain around that I was gay, around 27, 28. We met in [place] and moved to [place], I was almost 30, for lots of reasons. The real push for lots of gay people is they're living in a very provincial place as [where he was living] certainly was. When we got together it was still unlawful to be homosexual and living together and there was a lot of pressure. He was Roman Catholic, I was Protestant [side comment]. Got to [city], thought we'd be here for a year or so. It took John a while to get a job. [detail] We found a little house in [area] and have lived in this area ever since.
>
> (Billy, aged 61)

32 Graham

Graham, aged 70, is single and has no children. He has self-identified as gay throughout his adult life. He became a monk in his twenties (in the 1960s), to try and quell his gay sexuality, before openly identifying as gay in his thirties (in the 1970s):

> I was a monk. I was a Franciscan friar in the Anglican church. I think I knew, well I did know I was a gay man, and I wasn't particularly happy

> about that at the time, in the early '60s, for all sorts of reasons. And it was an escape route, I think. I thought maybe that I would be cured if I went into this friary and put on this brown dressing gown and a rope around me.… And I thought everything would be fine, and of course it wasn't. It was absolute nonsense … looking back I wasn't fixed afterwards, because I then tried a heterosexual relationship and that didn't work … after that I then had a relationship over a number of years on and off with a guy who had been a friar with me.
>
> (Graham, aged 70)

33 Des

Des, aged 69, now separated from his civil partner, was previously married to a woman, and has grown-up children and grandchildren. He got divorced in his early forties, after joining a group for married gay men when he was 39 (in the 1980s). Des eventually met a man with whom he became partnered, resulting in his divorce. After that partnership broke up, he was with another man for 13 years, they entered a civil partnership, but have now separated.

> Subconsciously I knew, but at the time it was illegal for gay men to have sex. And I was conformist, I worked for central government, I wanted to comply. I wanted to keep my job, so cottaging was out of the thought. Well, I found the idea pretty disgusting at the time, still do to a certain extent now.
>
> (Des, aged 69)

34 Frank

Frank, aged 70, was married to a woman, and they had two children, when he came out when he was 45 (in 1987) – 'I always knew I was gay, but only in retrospect'. He got married at 26, 'trying to meet society and family expectations … I didn't act on any gay feelings but the thoughts were there'. Only when addressing his alcoholism in his forties did Frank also address his sexuality and he came out as gay – 'this eased the constant pain from acting straight … I have 26 years of sobriety and being gay is personally still a significant part of my recovery'. Frank found his AIDS activism gave him a pathway to being out:

> The AIDS movement helped me to come out and find my role in the gay society. Even before I came out I did some volunteering with an AIDS/HIV support organisation. At some level this may have been a test of how I might find out about my possible future life. Once I came out I became active in gay organisations and this made me even more comfortable with being and living as a gay man.
>
> (Frank, aged 70)

Frank's narrative might have fitted in with the 'Finding Out' cohort, in that he deploys a retrospective gay identity narrative, but he attributes his alcoholism to suppressing feelings and thoughts which were known on some level, and then a process of eventually accepting, rather than discovering, his sexuality in his sobriety.

35 Sandra

Sandra, aged 61, has been with her civil partner for over 30 years. She has no children. She has identified as lesbian since her mid-twenties (in the 1970s)

> I started a relationship with a girl who was two years older than me. She was 15 and I was 13. And we spent many happy hours privately doing what we privately did, completely ignored by both sets of parents who hadn't any idea that we were doing anything other than listening to music. [She] suddenly dumped me and started going out with a man who she subsequently married and is still with. I didn't really know about lesbianism or whether I was or wasn't or whether I needed to have an opinion on it … eventually find a helpful male to help me get rid of my virginity, which wasn't a very pleasant experience … I was thinking that I was going to try and have relationships with men, I wasn't thinking that I was going to be a lesbian … I thought I was heterosexual but didn't like sex very much … [then I met a woman] and she helped me [decide I was a lesbian]…
>
> (Sandra, aged 61)

Sandra was eventually in a long-term lesbian relationship, before meeting, and falling in love with Daphne, who is now her long-term civil partner.

Sandra is borderline between this and the 'Finding Out' cohort. Her narrative of an early awareness of same-sex desire informed my decision to place her in this cohort.

36 Theresa

Theresa, aged 63, is in a civil partnership and has no children. Theresa was married to a man for eight years before divorcing and coming out as gay in her late twenties, since which time she has been in a series of long-term relationships with women.

> Before I got married, something was in the back of my head, but I'm 63 now, and in those days things were very hidden, and I didn't have anyone to talk to about it. So this starting of awareness within me went back into my subconscious and got hidden. We split up after 7 years because by then I did understand. And it was very sad that we split up, and I realised I was gay.
>
> (Theresa, aged 63)

Theresa is borderline between this and the 'Finding Out' cohort. However, her narrative of suppressing an awareness which was later expressed informed my decision to place her in this cohort.

Cohort three: 'Finding Out'

'Retrospective Identity' and 'Performative Discovery' narrative

37 Donald

Donald, aged 75, is single and has no children. He had avoided all intimacy in early adulthood and had been celibate until his early thirties:

> I am unusual, in that I've never been in the closet, I've been nowhere and from there to badge-wearing screaming queen in six weeks flat … I'd been running, I knew perfectly well I was gay, but I'd been blocking it off.… Then Gay Lib got going about 1970/71 … then *Gay News* as a newspaper got going, none of which I saw, but then there must have been, late 1973, there was an article in *The Telegraph* about CHE [Campaign for Homosexual Equality]. And I cut it out and it must have sat somewhere in my house for, oooh, two months, before I finally did anything about it, [and then I wrote asking for information]. I got an absolutely first-rate letter back from them, sent me the information, didn't push me at all, but said that if I was interested there was a local group … [I was at a dinner party] and I found myself sitting next to a woman who got on to the subject of homosexuals and how sensitive they were and how wonderful they were at advising her on decorating, and finally I had had enough and I said 'gays are no more sensitive than anybody else', 'how do you know?' 'I am one!' and that was that. Out.
>
> (Donald, aged 75)

Donald then went on to attend CHE meetings, was out everywhere, to friends, family and at work and became actively involved in CHE campaigning and other related activities.

38 Rachel

Rachel, aged 64, is single and has no children. She had relationships with both men and women, before identifying as lesbian when she was 30.

> At that time the women's liberation movement was coming into its own [I] was my twenties when I started thinking about things, about equality, got involved with Women's Aid … I was heterosexual. I'd been engaged twice and just couldn't go through with it and then when I was about 27 I realised I was quite interested in some of the women I was working with.… So I started a relationship with my then-best friend. You know

> we were still friends, but sometimes we had sex, it was very exciting, and neither of us had done that before, you know. And then when I was 30 I was, you know, I knew this wasn't a passing phase. But by that time I was also with a guy I'd been with for about six years, um so there was a kind of bisexual element to that … and then I met a woman who I was with for six years. [I identified as lesbian by then] … I realised I preferred women's company, never got on with men that well.
>
> (Rachel, aged 64)

39 Alex

Alex, aged 60, was married to a man and has a grown-up child, and a grandchild. She has a complex relationship narrative, but has identified as lesbian since her 30's, in the 1980s:

> …got pregnant by a boy I met at a fresher's dance in my second year, shotgun wedding … left him, and left my daughter.… It was a very unusual thing, to leave a child as a mother it was 1979, and it has been one of the defining characteristics of my life [daughter eventually came to live with her] … [in relationships with women, then a man, then formed a long-term relationship with a previous woman partner, they eventually split up, and, after a four-year gap, she is now in another relationship, has openly identified as lesbian for many years] … I've not been attracted to men in the last 30 years.
>
> (Alex, aged 60)

40 Les

Les, aged 62, is single and has no children. He had had 'no sexual activity whatsoever' until he left his country of origin and relocated to the UK in the mid-1990s, in his early forties. He had 'worked out' he was gay in his thirties:

> I'd kind of thought it through in my thirties a bit. Because I thought it would have made my life easier if I wasn't, and it would certainly have made my parents happier, although we never discussed it.
>
> (Les, aged 62)

Les is still not openly out, although he has had gay relationships and maintains links with other gay men, although 'I would never talk about myself having a gay lifestyle even now to be honest. Because I'm a very introverted person anyway.'

41 Claire

Claire, aged 65, is single, with children and grandchildren. She was previously married to a man, but has identified as lesbian since she left her husband in her thirties in the 1970s. She has since had one long-term relationship and other short-terms ones.

> I was friendly with a particular girl at school. And we sometimes used to go out together, like other friends I'd go out with. And one day, I was just sitting, and she came up to me and said 'Do you know what a lesbian is?' And I said, yes, I'd read lots of books, so I knew, and she never spoke to me after that. And I thought what was that about? And I felt I had to prove I wasn't a lesbian, that I had to have this life that made it quite clear that I wasn't. Because I had read 'The Well of Loneliness' and that was the most god-awful book. And I thought I can't fit in with, well nobody I knew could fit in with, that kind of life … upper class, calling each other men's names, it was like a heterosexual relationship rather than two women on an equal footing, it was rather the one plays the man's part and the other plays the woman's part and they both dressed according to those roles. And I didn't want that … So I went to university and got married … [My marriage] was very stultifying, very irritating, somebody telling me what to do all the time. It just wasn't right.… I didn't seem to be able to stop the bandwagon, the heterosexual bandwagon. I just didn't have the nerve … I mean eventually I did have the nerve. I often think, I don't know, if it was being married to the wrong person pushed me along a road to think about these things and if I hadn't, I'd just have been unhappily married to someone who was nice and pleasant, and just been unhappy, and not knowing why I was unhappy.
>
> (Claire, aged 65)

42 May

May, aged 64, is single and has no children. She split up with her long-term woman partner a few years ago. She identifies as gay:

> Are you straight or gay? I'm gay.… Lesbian leaves the person you're talking to without any confusion about what you are. I create confusion. Somebody asks me a question, I never give them a straight answer. I'm gay. I'm happy … I thought I was straight because I had boyfriends. But I came onto my girlfriends … and eventually I got married to this man. I thought it was safe, normal, I wanted children, and I lived a straight life. And he was a good husband, a very good husband, we were together for eight years.… But then I fell in love with a woman, and then I knew what love was … [I was] 28. I had not been in love before then. And the experience was just amazing, incredible … I left my husband for her.
>
> (May, aged 64)

43 Maureen

Maureen, aged 62, is now in a civil partnership. She was married to a man for 25 years, and has grown-up children. She had her first sexual relationship with a woman in her fifties (in the late 1990s):

> I think I was bisexual, but the lesbian side of me I didn't really want to look at. I wanted children, I wanted the normal sort of things, I knew I was attracted to women, but it never really raised its head. I never found a woman I was particularly attracted to, I just knew I was attracted to women. So I was married for 25 years. And then you meet somebody … and you're just not going to keep it down any longer, and it just exploded.
>
> (Maureen, aged 62)

However, Maureen now identifies as lesbian, describing this in terms of greater self-knowledge:

> I understand myself better now. I can still look at a man as attractive, as aesthetically pleasing. But I wouldn't want to have sex with him. So I see myself as lesbian.
>
> (Maureen, aged 62)

Maureen's account of knowing she was attracted to women early on, and her retrospective account of being bisexual but suppressing her lesbian side, could have led me to place her in the 'Breaking Out' category. I have chosen to place her in the 'Finding Out' category, because her lesbian identity is one which she has discovered late in life and only after leaving her marriage with a man and subsequently forming relationships with women.

44 Agnes

The oldest participant in the study, Agnes is now 92, and she has the latest 'Later Life Identity narrative', describing herself as 'coming out' when she was 85. Agnes had been married to a man for over 60 years, with a gradual realisation from early on in her marriage that she did not desire men, and, later on, that she did desire women. She had one short-lived affair with a woman when she was in her fifties. 'I didn't know the word [lesbian] … I didn't know there was a word' (Agnes, aged 92).

By the time she did know there was such a word, and thought it applied to her, it was too late. She firstly did not leave her husband because she was afraid of losing her children ('He would have made a terrible fuss'), and then for fear of upsetting her mother. But after her husband died, when she was 85 (in mid-2000), Agnes did eventually tell a trusted care professional in her sheltered accommodation: I just said 'I'm a lesbian'. And she just looked at me and said 'I'd never have guessed' (Agnes, aged 92).

45 Judith

Judith, aged 71, is in a same-sex relationship. She was previously married to a man and has children and grandchildren before identifying as lesbian in her forties (1980s). She has also been in a civil partnership, but her civil partner died.

> Got married, had two children … feeling I was a square peg in a round hole, really … I wasn't keen on the sex.… And the penny dropped because of getting into feminism and examining my life and realising what wrong paths I'd taken really. Fell for somebody, rather intense relationship … [Then another] relationship for about two and a half years … [couple of other relationships] … then I met my partner Jessica.… And we were together for 23 years. And she died last year. [Now in a relationship with the woman she had been with for two and a half years previously]. Strange but it is very wonderful.
>
> (Judith, aged 71)

46 Bernice

Bernice, aged 60, is single and has a grown-up daughter. She has been married to men twice, and had previously mobilised a bisexual identity before identifying as lesbian in her forties (in the 1990s):

> I would say came out in my forties. I was married, had a child, and, as so many women of my generation did, just went along with the flow. Then I got divorced, I remarried, and the man that I married, he knew I was, well at that time I identified as bisexual, but he also identified as bisexual, but we knew we would be faithful to each other, so we knew it wouldn't be an issue. And then he became ill, and I nursed him for several years, and I only really came out [as a lesbian] after he died, in 1998 … I suppose bisexual was a convenient label for me to use while I was still living with a man. I hadn't had any serious relationships with a woman at that time. Once I was on my own, and free to get more involved with women, possibly my first serious relationship with a woman that I had, left me in no doubt, and there was no turning back then.
>
> (Bernice, aged 60)

47 Vera

Vera, aged 60, has been married to men twice and has children and grandchildren. She had her first sexual relationship with a woman in her forties (in the 1990s), and since then has been in monogamous relationships with both men and women. When she is in a relationship with men, she identifies as bisexual and when she is in a relationship with a women she identifies as lesbian, because bisexual is 'too powerful a position to occupy' (Vera, aged 60):

> If I had to identify, primarily I would identify as a lesbian, that's what I would do, that's my orientation. I [put bisexual on the form] because I thought it was more honest in a funny kind of way, because I've had such a lot of relationships with men and in fact most of my relationships have been with men and they haven't been deeply unhappy relationships and I have no objections to having sex with men. It's much more political in many ways

> … I tend to say lesbian, because I work for a women-only organisation, all my life is dedicated to women, women's issues and the empowerment of women, so it kind of feels right. But if we're simply talking about who I could end up in bed with, then the reality is it could be either.
>
> (Vera, aged 60)

48 Julia

Julia, aged 69, is in a same-sex relationship. She identified as heterosexual for the early part of her adult life, has been in several long-term relationships with men, and has four children. Several of her relationships have been traumatic and/or abusive. She described a progressively emerging lesbian sexuality, having had her first relationship with a woman while in a therapeutic community in her thirties.

> That was when I first fell in love with my first woman. I don't know how it happened, I don't know why it happened, it just did really.… It was a nightmare. All my relationships have been a nightmare.… The next one wasn't much better [laughs].
>
> (Julia, aged 69)

Her more recent relationships, since her late forties, have been with women. Julia has been in her current relationship for two years:

> [It's a] nightmare [more laughter] Oh god, oh god. I think I'm only meant to be with these women to explore my dark side.… She has another partner … I'm her mistress.
>
> (Julia, aged 69)

Julia and the woman she is in a relationship with had planned to live together, and had recently found a house they were going to live in but the other woman changed her mind at the last moment – 'she bottled it'. Julia feels very let down, an experience she has had several times previously.

49 Barbara

Barbara, aged 83, was previously married to a man, had two children and has grandchildren. She identified as lesbian in her fifties, in the 1980s.

> My mother was quite dominant.… She made me into the boy, because she'd got three daughters … she dressed me like a boy. Dressed us all in blue shirts and shorts. But I remember she would say 'Oh Barbara will do that. Barbara's my boy'.… It impacted on me in all sorts of ways. I think subconsciously I felt I shouldn't have married, boys don't marry boys, that's homosexual. I still do [feel like a boy] in a sense … I don't feel comfortable in feminine clothes. I react to the elastic in bras. I don't say 'a lesbian', I identify as lesbian, because

> saying 'a lesbian' labels me, whereas saying Barbara who used to be a vet, owns a dog, loves her garden, happens to be lesbian, is different.
>
> (Barbara, aged 83)

50 Derek

Derek, aged 61, has been married to women twice and has three children. He had no prior sexual encounters with men until he left his second wife in 1999, when he was 48, and began 'experimenting' with sexual relationships with men, soon partially identifying as gay:

> So I thought, well, I'll experiment. I rang up one of these numbers you get in the local papers, and the rest, as they say, is history. You know, you talk to a straight fella, would you consider doing this with another fella, 'Oh no! Don't be so disgusting!' I did it, and it was wonderful. But I don't know if I identify as gay. If George Clooney was to walk across there, I wouldn't think 'Cor, look at that, or, or, get your trousers off George' … [gay is] it's the easiest way of identifying myself. I'm certainly not hetero.
>
> (Derek, aged 61)

Derek is also a cross-dresser with ambivalent gender identity: 'I don't know what my gender identity is now. I think if it was 30 years ago, I might … have sought gender reassignment' (Derek, aged 61).

Derek's ambivalent understanding of both his sexuality and gender identity poses a challenge in terms of placing him in a cohort. However, he does mobilise an identity as a gay man, however ambivalently, belongs to a gay men's support group, and there was a process of discovery (possibly ongoing) which led to me deciding to locate him in the 'Finding Out' cohort.

51 Iris

Iris, aged 61, was previously married to a man and has children and grandchildren. Now single, she became involved with a woman in her thirties:

> When I was 13 I thought that the way I felt about one of my school friends was more than just a crush. But she was not interested in a relationship. I loved her and she is still 'the love of my life'. And that not having gone anywhere, I suppose when I met a boy at 17, did the conventional thing, which was to be with him. We lived together for eight years, we were married for seven years, had two children, my choice. And when I was 32 I fell in love with a woman.… And it was what I'd always wanted.
>
> (Iris, aged 61)

Iris's narrative could potentially place her in the 'Breaking Out' cohort, in that there was an early realisation of same-sex love and desire. But it is not clear with

Iris there was much of a struggle, or processes of repression or suppression. It seems that her making sense of finding fulfilment in a same-sex relationship – 'It was what I'd always wanted' – was retrospective, acquired only after being in one. For this reason, I placed Iris in the 'Finding Out' rather than 'Breaking Out' cohort.

52 Ronald

Ronald, aged 60, is still married and living with his wife, and came out to her and his two teenage children, when he was 56:

> When I was in my early twenties I wondered if I was gay. I met my wife when I was 37, had one girlfriend in between. Should have recognised the signs but didn't, but with the brainwashing that goes on I just didn't.… But throughout my married life I was troubled with thoughts. Pushing them away because I thought they were wrong and all the rest of it. Until four years ago I went through a major crisis. The church I attended, there wasn't anyone who was there for me, and it was horrid, my wife and me, we were living separate lives and almost drifting apart.… And I thought I've got to sort some of this out. So I rang up gay switchboard, got an interview with [counselling project] … she asked me to fill out a form and when it came to the section on sexual orientation, I thought well I've got to say I'm gay. I'd been fighting it for years, thinking it was wrong, pushing it away. I'd had very unsatisfactory relations with [my wife]. But because I was committed to marriage … I soldiered on.
>
> (Ronald, aged 60)

Ronald is now very actively involved in a gay faith group and has two long-standing intimate relationships with gay men. He continues to live with his wife and daughters:

> My wife and [children] they love me to bits.… It's a bit of a two-edged sword really [laughs], it's lovely from one point of view, but it also keeps me in the way of life I've been in pretence over for most of my life, and I'd like to finally break free of it all. I feel if I ever did settle down with another man, I feel I would be coming home at last. It's a very schizophrenic experience.
>
> (Ronald, aged 60)

Cohort four: 'Late Performance'

'Absent or Ambivalent Identity' and 'Late Performance' narrative

53 Bridget

Bridget, aged 66, had been married to a man for 34 years and has children and grandchildren. She left her husband when she was in her mid-fifties

(in the 1990s) to be with Liz, now her civil partner. They have been together for 12 years:

> It never ever crossed my mind. I never gave it a thought. I always say to people, I must be bisexual, because I enjoyed sex with men, and I just happened to fall in love with my best friend, and she just happens to be a woman. I don't look at any of my friends and think, cor, I fancy her … I'm just in love with Liz.
>
> (Bridget, aged 66)

54 Angela

Angela, aged 64, previously married, got together with Marcia, now her civil partner, when she was in her late fifties, having had no previous inkling of any same-sex desire. She describes her reaction after meeting Marcia:

> It was a whole new reality, and whole new part of myself that I didn't know about, that I'd never experienced. And so I walked around a lot going 'Fancy that!' and just getting used to the idea.… But I don't feel any political, it just sort of evolved.
>
> (Angela, aged 64)

55 Marcia

Marcia, aged 66, had always been in relationships with men before meeting her civil partner Angela, when she was 60, in the early 2000s:

> I just happen to have fallen in love with a woman, but I don't think I am [lesbian]. I suppose society sees me as that, because I am in a civil partnership. But I don't identify as that. I've dated plenty of men … I've never thought of myself as 'a lesbian' or having a coming out, never had any repressed sexual feelings that I couldn't talk about. And I think if I met a guy that has the same qualities that Angela had, I'd have been perfectly happy with him.
>
> (Marcia, aged 66)

56 Ellen

Ellen, aged 64, is in a civil partnership and has grown-up children. She had been in an abusive marriage with a man for 40 years, before falling in love with Tessa in her late fifties (early 2000s), her first and only relationship with a woman. Within two years of meeting her she had left her husband. They have now been together for six years, and are civil partners.

> Since I realised that I love Tessa, and love a woman, no one could be more shocked than me, I can tell you. But I look back, for the past five, 10 years

> of my working life, and it's all to do with my degree [thesis was on an aspect of women's lives] that was like a light coming on, the importance of women. I began to admire women, I didn't fancy them, I've never fancied a woman in my life, present company excluded [said to Tessa] … I am not out there waving a banner, saying 'Say it out say it proud, I am a lesbian' because I don't know if I am a lesbian, I really don't know. Am I a lesbian? All I know is I love Tessa, I love her to death. I'm a feminist through and through. I've brought my daughters up not to obey and kowtow, and they don't, they do not.
>
> (Ellen, aged 64)

57 Yvette

Yvette, aged 69, is in a civil partnership and has no children. She has been married to men twice; her second marriage lasted for 36 years. In recent years, after her second marriage deteriorated, she became friendly with, and then close to, Theresa, who is now her civil partner. They have been in a relationship since Yvette was 67. Yvette is involved in older LGBT advocacy, but does not identify as lesbian or gay. Instead, she says 'I identify as being Theresa's lifelong partner… I'll never be with anyone else. Neither female nor male.'

Cohort five: 'Lesbian by Choice'

'Elective Lesbian-Identified' performance narrative

58 Jennifer

Jennifer, aged 62, has been with her current woman partner for over 25 years. They have no children. She had had relationships with men and women, before deciding to 'give up men' based on her radical feminist ideology, and assume a lesbian identity and lifestyle in the late 1970s:

> I was a political lesbian … I just made the choice to give up men. For all sorts of reasons, you know, it was the argument that I wanted someone who knew how to clean the toilet, and someone who didn't want me to cook for them, that sort of thing.… You see there are so many stories about 'I fell in love with a woman and there just was no choice', which is fine, it just wasn't what happened. I fell in love with lots of women and nothing happened, and I got off with lots of men, and I daresay I was in love them, some of them, at various points. I mean this was the era when one did have lots of partners. And then I decided, no, I'm not going to have anything more to do with men.… So I gave up men. I didn't have any problems fancying women … I think there's far more fluidity around sexuality than people are willing to admit.
>
> (Jennifer, aged 62)

59 Frances

Frances, aged 66, is single and has no children. She had lived an exclusively heterosexual orientation and lifestyle, and had been briefly married to a man, in her early twenties. She and had to 'learn' how to be a lesbian when she made her political choice in her late twenties, in the mid-1970s:

> [I was at] a women's centre … and that's where I became a feminist, and that's where I became a lesbian. For me the two are integral, I can't separate my feminist politics from my sexuality.… I realised that I would never have an equal relationship with a man. And I thought, well, that only leaves me with one other choice.… Up until that point I didn't even know that there was such a thing as lesbianism and no idea that women could love women.… If I wasn't going to be in sexual relationship to men, what was my other choice? It was either to be celibate, which was not very appealing, or to at least explore the idea of being intimate with women and … [in the end].… It was very easy, my first woman lover was kind of in the same situation as me, so we kind of just held each other's hand through the whole thing.
>
> (Frances, aged 66)

Frances explained how she feels that political lesbians are not well understood by the majority of other lesbians, especially younger ones.

> I mean when I told my coming out story to a woman who is probably late thirties? She really didn't believe me. She didn't believe that becoming a lesbian could be a political choice. She'd always been attracted to girls when she was younger, so for her it wasn't an issue and she came out at a time where it wasn't an issue. So, she, I mean literally, her jaw dropped and she looked at me as if I were telling her a fable. It took quite a while for me to convince her that no, it was absolutely true, and that I wasn't the only one.
>
> (Frances, aged 66)

60 Cat

Cat, aged 63, was previously married to a man and has a grown-up child and grandchild. She embraced radical separatist feminism in her mid-thirties, through a combination of falling in love with a woman when she was married (having had sexual relationships with women when she was younger) and engaging with the women's peace movement in the 1980s:

> When I left my marriage, I lived for a year without any interaction with a man. I had no male interaction at all. So if there was a male bus driver I wouldn't get on a bus. If I went to a shop and there was a man there,

> I wouldn't buy the product, I'd come out. So for a whole year of my life, that's how I lived it.… Because I wanted to know whether I actually could live without men in my life. Because whenever they'd be in my life it was either to exploit or abuse or to deceive, except my dad, who was a bit of a plonker. And that's why I changed my name and everything, because I didn't want to have anything to do with patriarchy.
>
> (Cat aged 63)

Additional: 'Voices on the Margins'

Indirectly heard hidden lives alluded to in participants' narratives

Older married men having sex with gay men participants

- I've only got one really good friend [intimate relationship] now, and he's a married guy, his wife doesn't know. But it's got to be limited all the time (Les, aged 62).
- I've worked on [gay telephone helpline] and I've met hundreds and hundreds of men in my life who call themselves bisexual and I don't think they're bisexual, I think their gay, and they use that term, you know, they might be in relationships, like [the] guy I see, and I said 'are you bisexual?' and he said 'well I'm divorced now' and I said 'you do fanny about, don't you', so I said to him you know are you bisexual, you like going with me, although I think he only goes with me to be honest, you know it's nice to think that, but he's got this degree of innocence about him, and he said 'oh you've got to keep your hand in', now that's not convincing to me, that he's truly bisexual, whereas I've met men before, and they really are you know, and they clearly enjoy sex with women, and I can discuss it 'you're bloody naughty, aren't you' I say, you know 'you're getting it both ways' [both laugh] … From my experience, there's a huge hidden, really hidden, the number of people who are gay… (Jack, aged 66).

Older people self-concealing in care spaces

- We're currently supporting an elderly gay man, he's 84, lived in secret all his life … He's now in quite a nice care home, £2,500 a month [laughs]. But he doesn't adapt well.… So, it's a struggle for him (Rupert, aged 68, 'Breaking Out').
- … she lives her life privately. But she has to get involved in this sheltered unit, because there are coffee mornings and things like that and, you know, she doesn't want to be unfriendly. She wants to feel part of that community. She also happens to be Black. And she's had to listen to things, when people have been reading the newspaper, listen, when there's some gay issue or something, to things like 'Oh, if my daughter was like that I'd kill her'.

Now what does she do with that? If she challenges that she outs herself and then puts herself in a very vulnerable place (Diana, aged 69).

- I don't think many people here would understand it or accept it somehow, but then Jenny said she didn't think I was that way, so you don't know how many other people are (Agnes, aged 92).

Women living heterosexual lives who might potentially form same-sex relationships

- I am amazed at how many people we have met, and in [local lesbian group] … who said they had been married and they were now – I thought I was the only one who was married, you know. [It's] fabulous, absolutely fabulous. And then it makes me think, well how many more are out there? Come on out girls! Let's get them out! Away from the kitchen, get out! (Ellen, aged 64).

Table A4.1 Cohort Summary

Participants	*Cohort*
1 Moira aged 75	Out Early
2 Lawrence aged 63	Out Early
3 Audrey aged 67	Out Early
4 Clifford aged 67	Out Early
5 Stella aged 66	Out Early
6 Tessa aged 58	Out Early
7 Martin aged 62	Out Early
8 Alastair aged 76	Out Early
9 Ken aged 64	Out Early
10 Rupert aged 68	Out Early
11 Liz aged 52	Out Early
12 Alice aged 60	Out Early
13 Doris aged 69	Out Early
14 Daphne aged 60	Out Early
15 Sam aged 61	Out Early
16 Lewis aged 65	Out Early
17 Joan aged 67	Breaking Out
18 Tim aged 52	Breaking Out
19 Walter aged 58	Breaking Out
20 Violet aged 73	Breaking Out
21 Dylis aged 75	Breaking Out
22 Jack aged 66	Breaking Out
23 Ian aged 69	Breaking Out
24 Andrew aged 66	Breaking Out
25 Arthur aged 60	Breaking Out
26 Bob aged 60	Breaking Out
27 Rene aged 63	Breaking Out
28 Sally aged 73	Breaking Out
29 Phil aged 62	Breaking Out
30 Diana aged 69	Breaking Out
31 Billy aged 61	Breaking Out

Participants	*Cohort*
32 Graham aged 70	Breaking Out
33 Des aged 69	Breaking Out
34 Frank aged 70	Breaking Out
35 Sandra aged 61	Breaking Out
36 Theresa aged 63	Breaking Out
37 Donald aged 75	Finding Out
38 Rachel aged 64	Finding Out
39 Alex aged 60	Finding Out
40 Les aged 62	Finding Out
41 Claire aged 65	Finding Out
42 May aged 64	Finding Out
43 Maureen aged 62	Finding Out
44 Agnes aged 92	Finding Out
45 Judith aged 71	Finding Out
46 Bernice aged 60	Finding Out
47 Vera aged 60	Finding Out
48 Julia aged 69	Finding Out
49 Barbara aged 83	Finding Out
50 Derek aged 61	Finding Out
51 Iris aged 61	Finding Out
52 Ronald aged 60	Finding Out
53 Bridget aged 66	Late Performance
54 Angela aged 64	Late Performance
55 Marcia aged 66	Late Performance
56 Ellen aged 64	Late Performance
57 Yvette aged 69	Late Performance
58 Jennifer aged 62	Lesbian by Choice
59 Frances aged 66	Lesbian by Choice
60 Cat aged 63	Lesbian by Choice

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