

stonewall workplace conference

FRIDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2017 - MERCURE PICCADILLY HOTEL, MANCHESTER

Session A: Being BAME and LGBT in the workplace

Facilitator(s): Emma Palmer, Client Account Manager and Rachel Ishmael, Campaigns Assistant, Stonewall

Speakers: Gamal 'G' Turawa, Metropolitan Police Service
Sgt Guy Lowe-Barrow



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Session Outline

- Terminology
- Intersectionality
- Cultural pressures
- Racism on the scene
- Challenges at work
- Invisibility and role models
- Being an ally



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Terminology

- LGBTQ- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer
- BAME- Black, Asian and minority ethnic
- POC- People of colour
- QTIPOC- Queer, trans, intersex people of colour

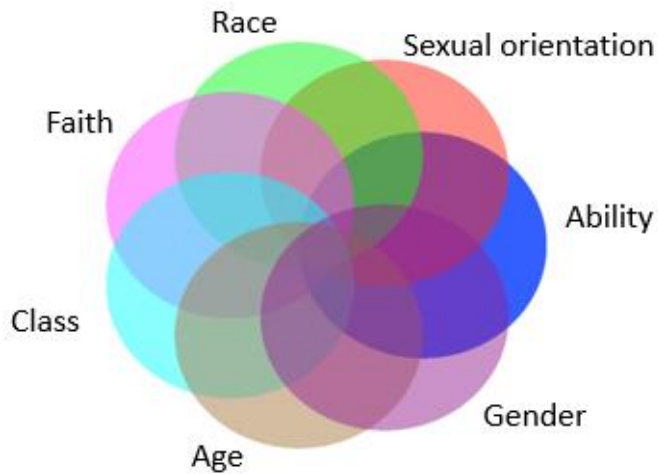


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Intersectionality



Definition:

- The study of overlapping or intersecting social identities and related systems of oppression, domination, or discrimination

Audre Lorde- "There is no such thing as a single issue struggle, as we do not lead single issue lives."



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Cultural Pressures

- Isolation from family, church, community
- Hyper-masculinity
- Interpretation of faith
- Family shame within a collectivist community
- Colonial overhang- discriminatory laws still held up in countries of origin
- Idea that LGBT identities are a western concept/corruption

Side note: BAME people does not = Homophobia, biphobia, transphobia. Assumptions can be made that BAME people are going to be - This is unhelpful, important to bust myths and challenge those stereotypes!



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Racism within the LGBT community

NO SPICE
NO CURRY
NO CHOCOLATE
NO RICE
NO FALAFEL

- Racism on apps
- Exclusionary door policies
- Racist drag



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Racism within the LGBT community

- 75% of Black men
- 81% of east and south-east Asian men

Have experienced racism on the Britain's gay scene.

(FS Racism on the scene survey 2017)



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Challenges BAME staff face at work

- Discrimination during the recruitment process
- Racial harassment from colleagues
- Breaking the glass ceiling



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Invisibility

I wish there was somebody black that would have guided me in understanding my sexuality.

Curtis, 25

Show me the black gay people! We're invisible and that's part of the problem we have.

Michael, 32



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Staff LGBT Network Group

WHY?

- Promotes diversity
- Builds internal communication channels
- Provides peer support
- Promotes career progression
- Raises awareness of LGBT issues
- Offer social networking for LGBT staff and allies, internally and externally
- Provide support for LGBT staff

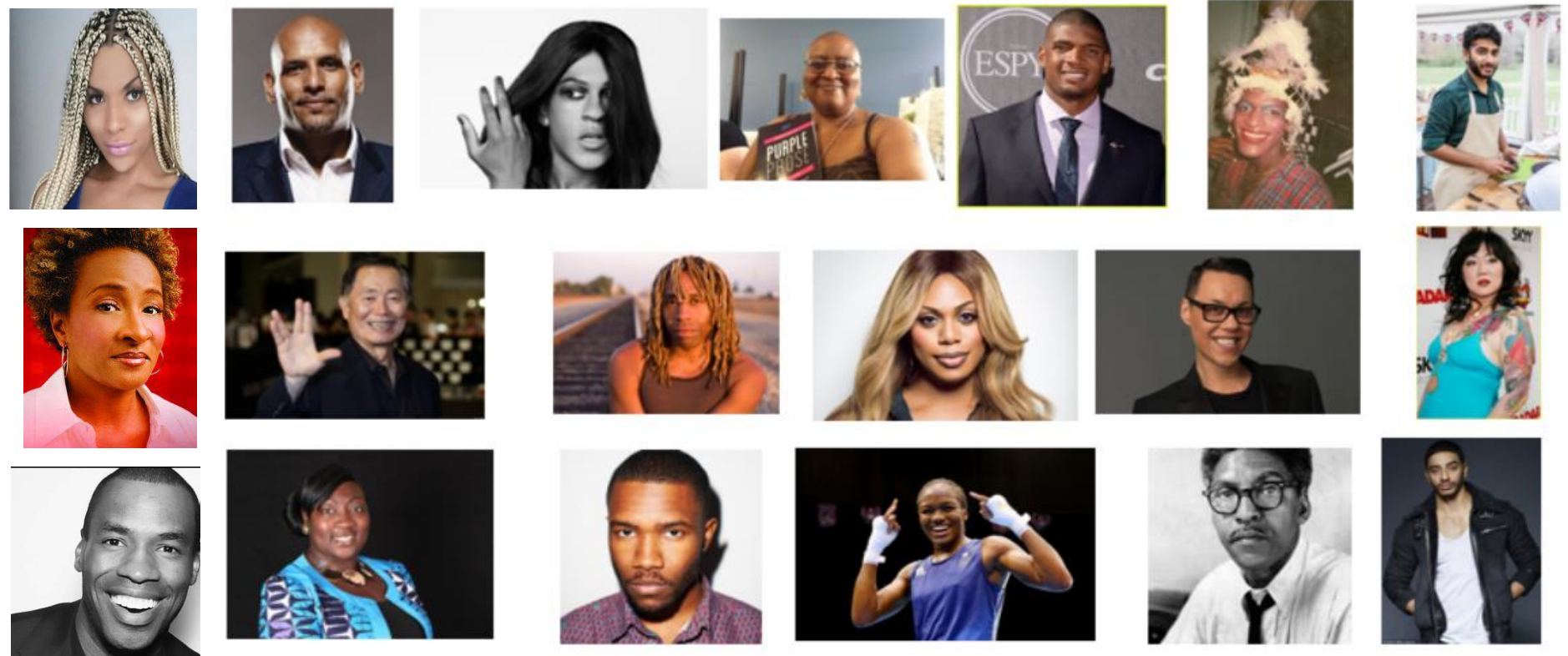


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Role Models



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Being an ally

- **Allies are individuals who don't necessarily identify as LGBT and believe that lesbian, gay, bi, and trans people should experience full equality at work, at home, at school or in the community.**
- **Challenge homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and racism when you see it amongst your communities**
- **Don't deny people's experiences**
- **Come out for LGBT and sign our pledge #COFLGBT**
- **Sign our #NoBystanders pledge**
- **Get engaged in Stonewall's BAME work**



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Being an ally

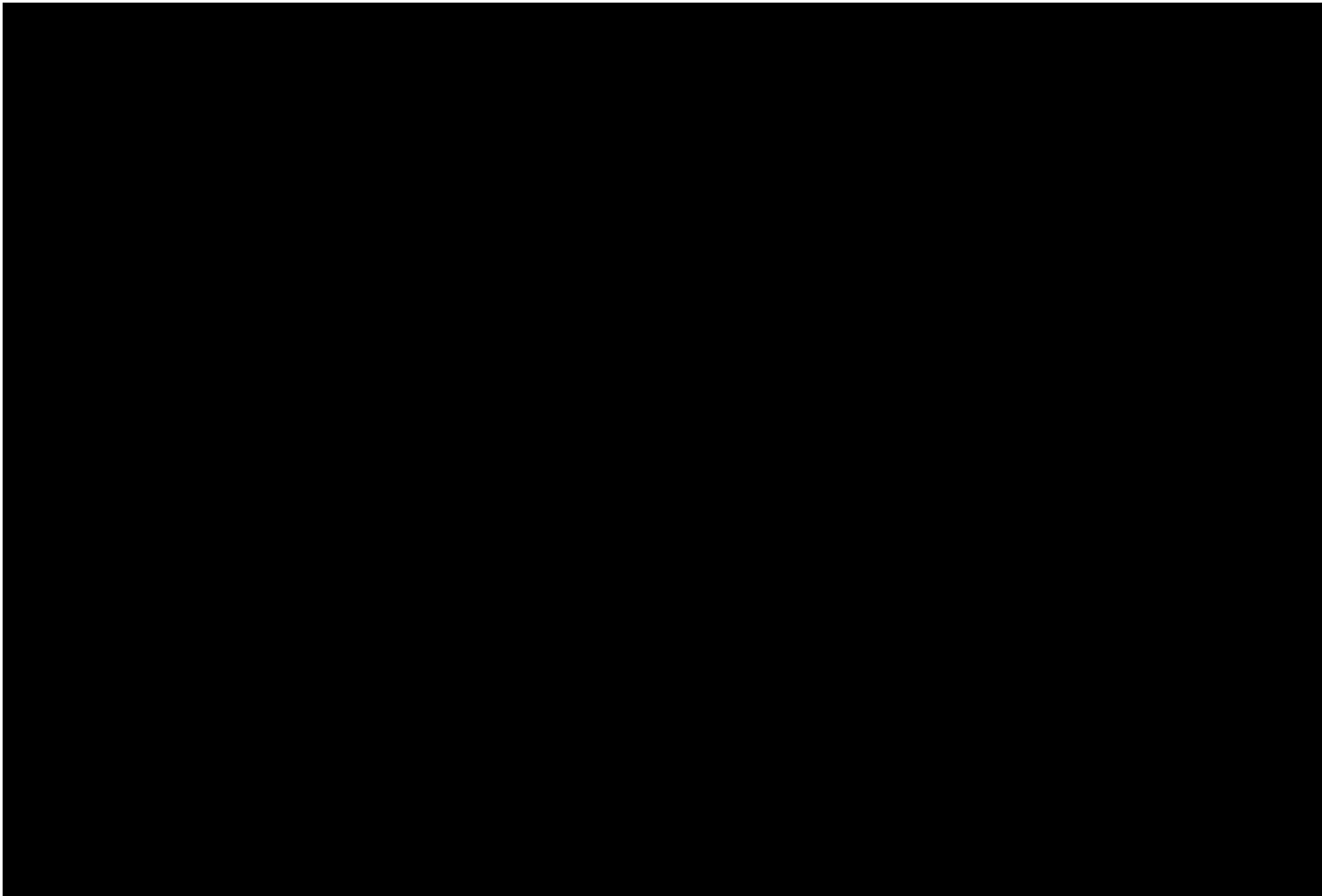
- Remember people belong to more than one identity
- Talk to black and minority ethnic lesbian, gay and bisexual and trans people
- Don't make assumptions
- Understanding the power and privileges you may have



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Acceptance without exception



Being LGBT and a Person of Colour (PoC) in the Army

Stonewall Manchester Workplace
Conference 2017

Speaker: Sgt Guy Lowe-Barrow
The Army



My story...

- I left my country of birth because I wanted to work in an environment where my sexuality was no barrier.
- Thus far I have 16 years experience in the military
- 15 years as an out gay man

Still here...

- Has it been a struggle?
- Would I do it again if I could?

So what is it like being gay and a PoC in the Army?

- I have turned up to a new work place of 500-600 people, knowing that I am maybe one person of colour out of 15-20 and the only 'gay one'
- In my 16 years I've never served alongside an (out) lesbian or an out gay or bi male of colour
- I have worked with ex service personnel who identify as Trans.



So what is it like being gay and a PoC in the Army?

- I have had a few fights.
- Two visits/stays in the Priory (Mental ill health).
- I have had some amazing days.
- Met some amazing people.
- Part of two incredible networks.
- Ultimately it is being part of a team where I bring all of me to work.



My experience, negatives:

- Racism.
- Xenophobia.
- Homophobia.



My experience, challenges:

- That feeling that you have got to achieve twice, if not three times, as much as your other colleagues to get the same recognition.
- Few if any people who looked like me shared my background or experiences.
- Having to assimilate but keeping my individuality.
- Changing my perception of what it is to be a PoC, immigrant and gay.



My experience, positives:

- Friendships and camaraderie.
- Contributing to the changing culture within my organization.
- Promotion.
- Being part of Pride.
- Changing perceptions.



Thank you.

Sgt Guy Lowe-Barrow
The Army.