

Queer (In)visible and Disenfranchised

The Situation of LGBTQ+ Seniors in the Czech Republic

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Introduction

- Work in progress presentation (part of a PhD research)
- Aim: to map the situation in the secular, post-socialist Czech Republic
- Grief as a culturally mediated experience

Disenfranchised Grief

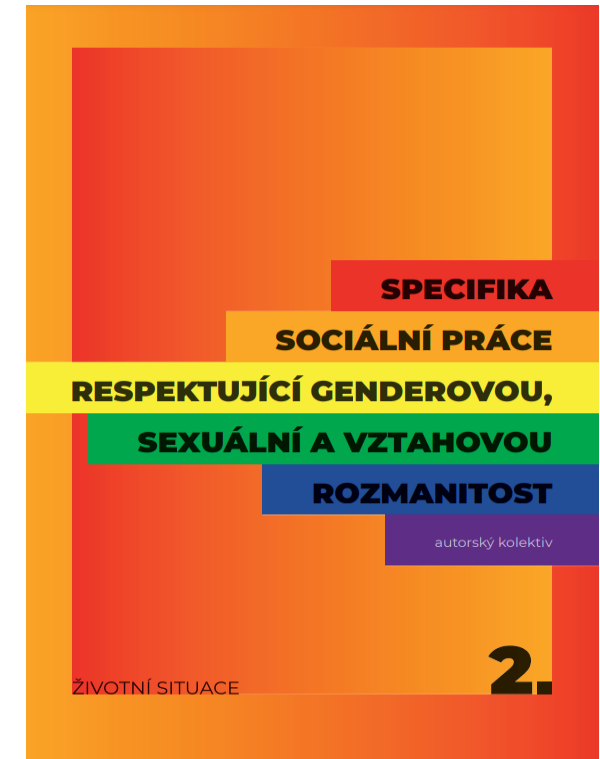
- „Cannot be openly acknowledged, is not socially sanctioned, and is not publicly mourned“ (Doka, 1989)
- Grievers conceal their grief to avoid stigmatisation
- Trouble finding social support

Intersectionality

- Age, ethnicity, sexuality, gender, status etc.
- Associated with assumptions (ageism, heteronormativity)
- A paradox: LGBTQ+ seniors do not (cannot?) exist (Hasmanová Marhánková, 2018)

Methodology and Data Collection

- An in-depth interview with a bereavement counsellor (thematic analysis)
- A content analysis of a brochure aimed at social workers
- RQ: How does both brochure and organization work with the issue of disenfranchised grief and LGBTQ+ topic?
- RQ: What is the situation like in the Czechia?



Findings - brochure

- 1 chapter dedicated to grief and bereavement
- Active use of the concept of disenfranchised grief
- Focus on LGBTQ+ as a homogenous group

Findings - interview

- Only a handful of experience with LGBTQ+ grievers
- *„We had a gay couple, one of them suffered from stroke and wasn't able to care for his bussines. And his partner was now in a difficult situation, because he had no rights to represent him as they weren't registred. Plus, his partner's family wasn't comfortable with their relationship.“*
- *„I accompanied a lady who was previously married. And after she had already left the counseling center, she found out somewhere on the Internet what I do, among other things, and called again, saying that they were gay and a lesbian in marriage.“*

Findings – Ambivalent picture

- *„So there's actually a lot of activity going on now that already has elements of a more organized campaign, but it's still kind of elusive. We do it now as part of our free time, as a volunteer activity, there is no project for it, which I think would be nice to deal with somehow. (...) We all have a job, and we do these things on the side.“*
- Institutional approach is not sufficient

What next?

- Interviews with LGBTQ+ seniors who experienced loss (of a spouse)
- Interviews with gatekeepers
- Analysis of more documents

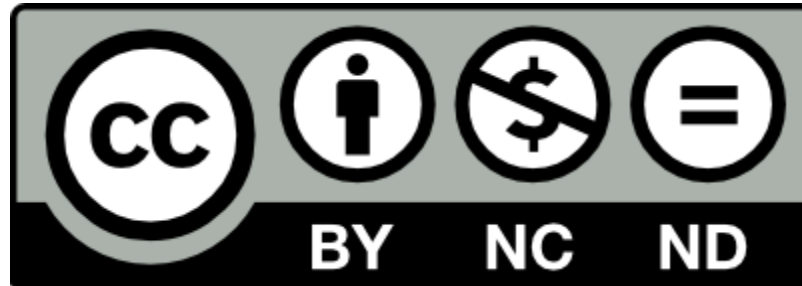
Thank you! Let's stay in touch

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