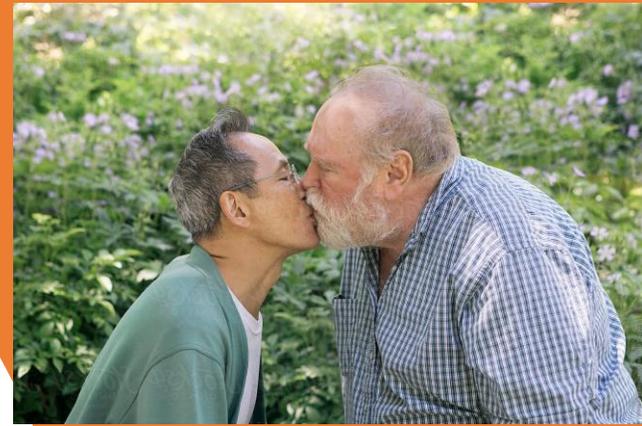


Sex, Seniors, and STIs

Ina Park MD, MS

Associate Professor, UCSF School of Medicine
Medical Director, CA Prevention Training Center
Medical Consultant,
Division of STD Prevention, CDC



Disclosures

- None

Meet Terrence

- Terrence is a 60-year-old man living with HIV since 1984
 - He is in HIV care and virally suppressed
 - Stopped meeting partners on dating apps during 5 months of shelter-in-place then resumed sexual activity
 - Presented with a rash on his trunk and scrotum (signs of syphilis)
 - He came to see me at the STI clinic b/c “I didn’t want my HIV doctor to know”

Breaking the myth of sexless aging

- % of older adults reporting sexual activity in US
 - 73% in 57-64 year olds
 - 53% in 65-74 year olds
 - 26% in 75-84 year olds
- Sex still happens for people living with chronic illness
 - About ½ of people with dementia (59% men, 51% women)
 - About ½ of men (55%) and 40% of women after heart attack
 - About ½ of men (55%) and 40% of women living with HIV (cisgender)

Lindau ST, *JAMA Cardiol* 2018, Lindau ST, *N Engl J Med* 2007
Lovejoy TI, *AIDS Behav* 2008. Golub SA, *STD* 2010.

What you should be asked about sexual health



Types of sex, gender/HIV status of partners



Substance use history (drugs + sex)



Travel history/sex tourism



Past STIs, Condom use



Intimate partner violence



Sexual function/pleasure

What you might be asked about sexual health

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Why the disconnect?

- Many of us (care providers) assume that older adults don't engage or rarely engage in sex, AND...
 - We did not receive adequate training on discussing sex/sexuality.
 - Some of us spent too much time studying and not enough time having sex or talking about it.
 - Now we are not comfortable discussing sex.
- Many you might assume that you are no longer at risk for sexually transmitted infections (STI)
 - You don't ask us about it or ask to be tested

STI/HIV Risk among Older Adults

What might drive increased risk of STIs/HIV for some older adults?

- Good health and longer life span= more partners
 - Low rates of condom use
 - Internet dating
 - Use of erectile dysfunction medication
 - Sex tourism
 - Sex with commercial sex workers
-
- Clinicians should discuss sexual risk and risk reduction strategies with older patients

Meet Bill

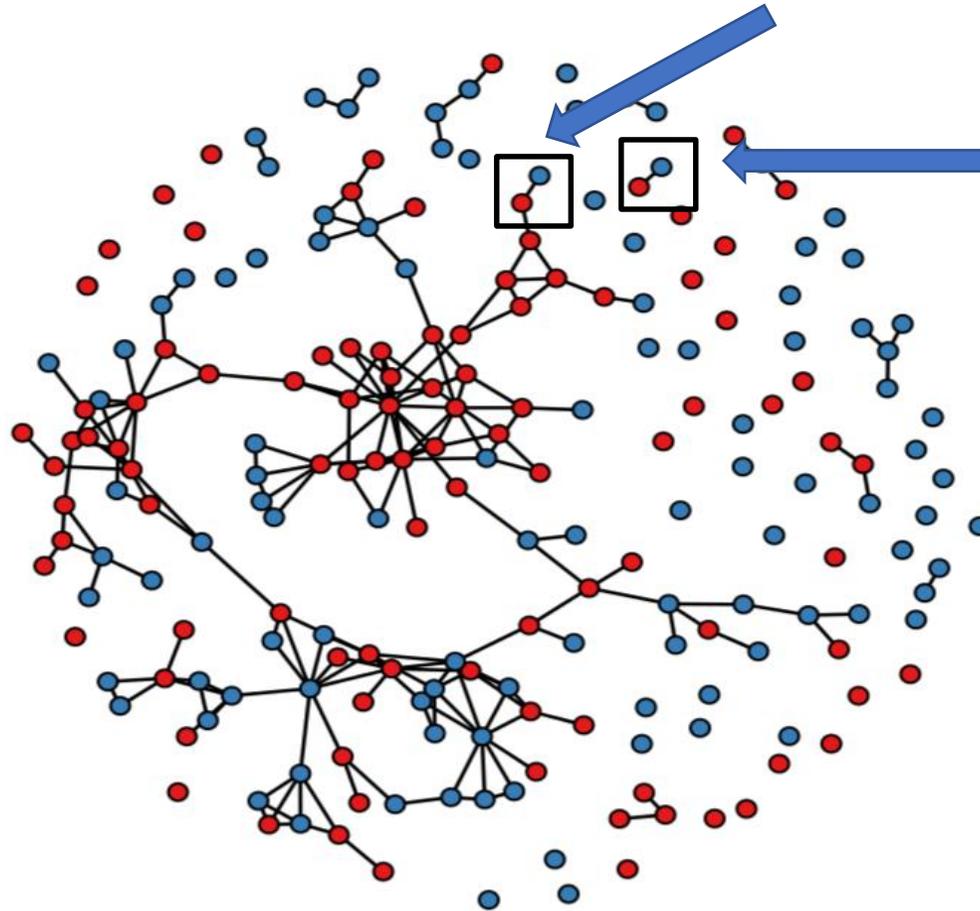
- Bill is a 65-year-old cisgender man who came in for an STI check.
 - He had been stably partnered for more than 30 years
 - He is insured and saw his MD regularly for hypertension and arthritis
 - His MD asked him over the years “how is your partner doing,” to which Bill responded, “fine”. They had not had sex in decades
 - He had multiple other partners, and didn’t use condoms or PrEP
 - His rapid HIV test was positive, he began ART that afternoon



“Age is not a
condom”

Stephen Karpiak PhD
GMHC

It's not just you, it's your network



- You may have just one partner, but that partner may have very different levels of risk for STIs/HIV

Martina Morris and Solomon Tsellegelliasie,
University of Washington

Sexuality among older men with HIV

- Sexual activity goes down with each decade (from age 50+), but is similar to HIV-negative men
- Condomless sex associated with recent substance use and loneliness
- Symptoms (weight changes, loss of libido) that affect appearance or sexual functioning associated with lower Quality of Life scores
- Men with an AIDS diagnosis are at higher risk for erectile dysfunction than those without AIDS



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)

Karpiak SE Curr Sex Hlth Rep 2017, Golub, *STD* 2010

Olson B, Qual Life Res 2019, Shindel AW *AIDS Patient Care STDs* 2011.

Sexuality among older women with HIV

- Sexual activity goes down with each decade, but is similar to HIV-negative women
- More than 1 in 4 women living with HIV report condomless sex (detectable and undetectable VL)
- Common themes from focus groups of Black/Latina women
 - Pleasure and sense of sexual freedom increases for some
 - Less physical ability (for certain positions) and partner dysfunction
 - Must confront ageist stereotypes from younger family members: “too old” to have sex



Meet Marta

- Marta is a 59 yr old female who presented for vaginal discharge
 - She was having vaginal and oral sex in exchange for crystal methamphetamine
 - She also had an extensive rash on her feet and hands and trunk (a sign of syphilis)
 - She ended up also having gonorrhea/chlamydia
 - After extensive counseling she agreed to start HIV PrEP

Changing the game: U=U plus PrEP

- HIV Treatment as Prevention (TaSP), Undetectable=Untransmittable plus PrEP for HIV-negative people
 - Allows greater bridging between partners from HIV- and HIV+ communities
 - Reduces/eliminates the need for serosorting or having oral sex only as a method to reduce transmission
 - Reduces pressure to have disclosure conversations
 - TaSP + PrEP is great for HIV, but not for STIs...

October 2019: STIs reach an all-time high



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[2020 Releases](#)

[2019 Releases](#)

[2018 STD Surveillance Report](#)

[2018 Releases](#)

[2017 Releases](#)

2018 STD Surveillance Report

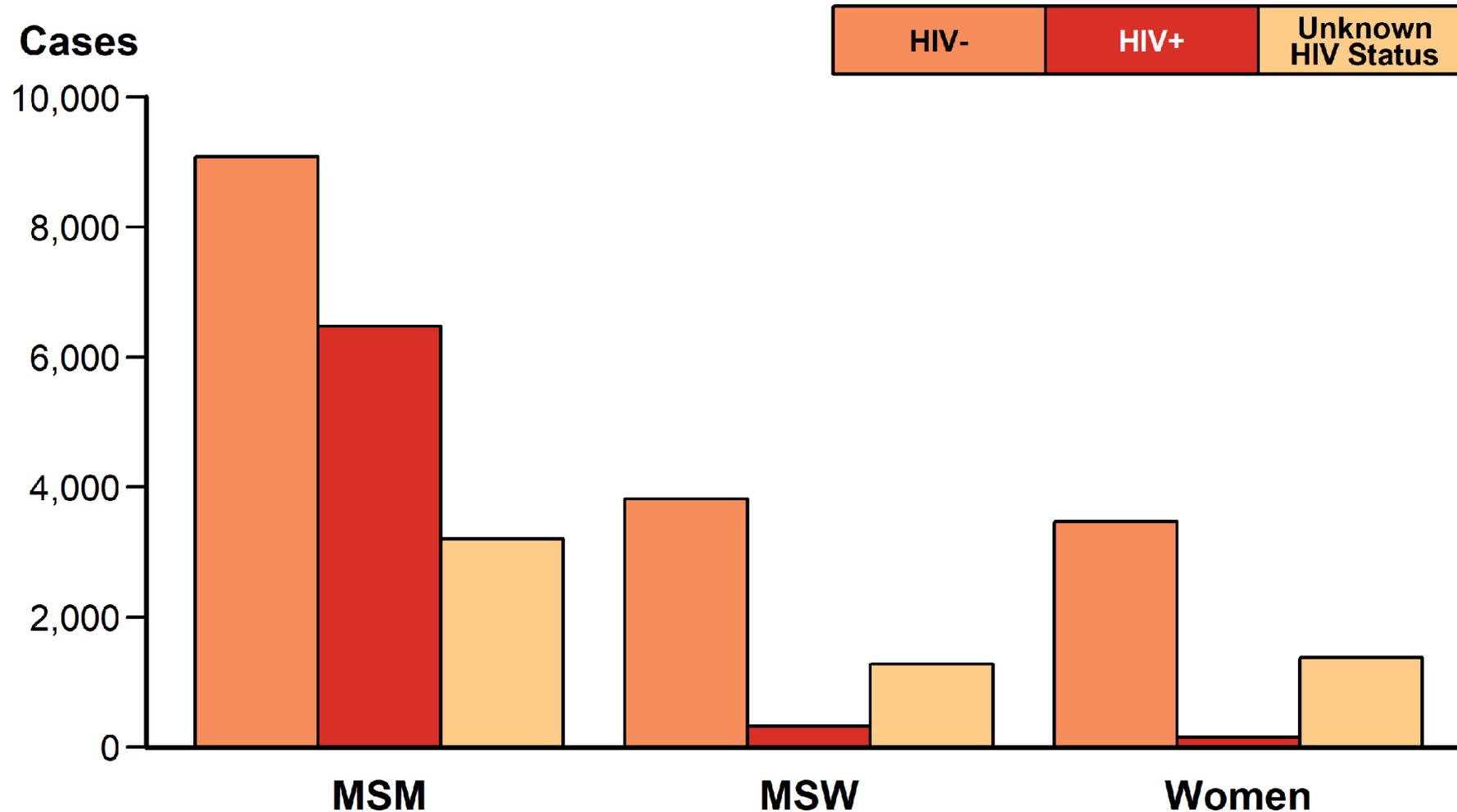
October 8, 2019 – STDs increased for the fifth consecutive year, reaching all-time high

According to the annual Sexually Transmitted Disease Surveillance Report, STDs increased for the fifth consecutive year – with nearly 2.5 million combined cases of chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis. Cases of congenital syphilis – syphilis passed from a mother to her baby during pregnancy– increased 40 percent from 2017-2018. Congenital syphilis can result in miscarriage, stillbirth, newborn death, and severe lifelong physical and neurological problems.

Resources:

- **Press Release:** [New CDC Report: STDs Continue to Rise in the U.S.](#)

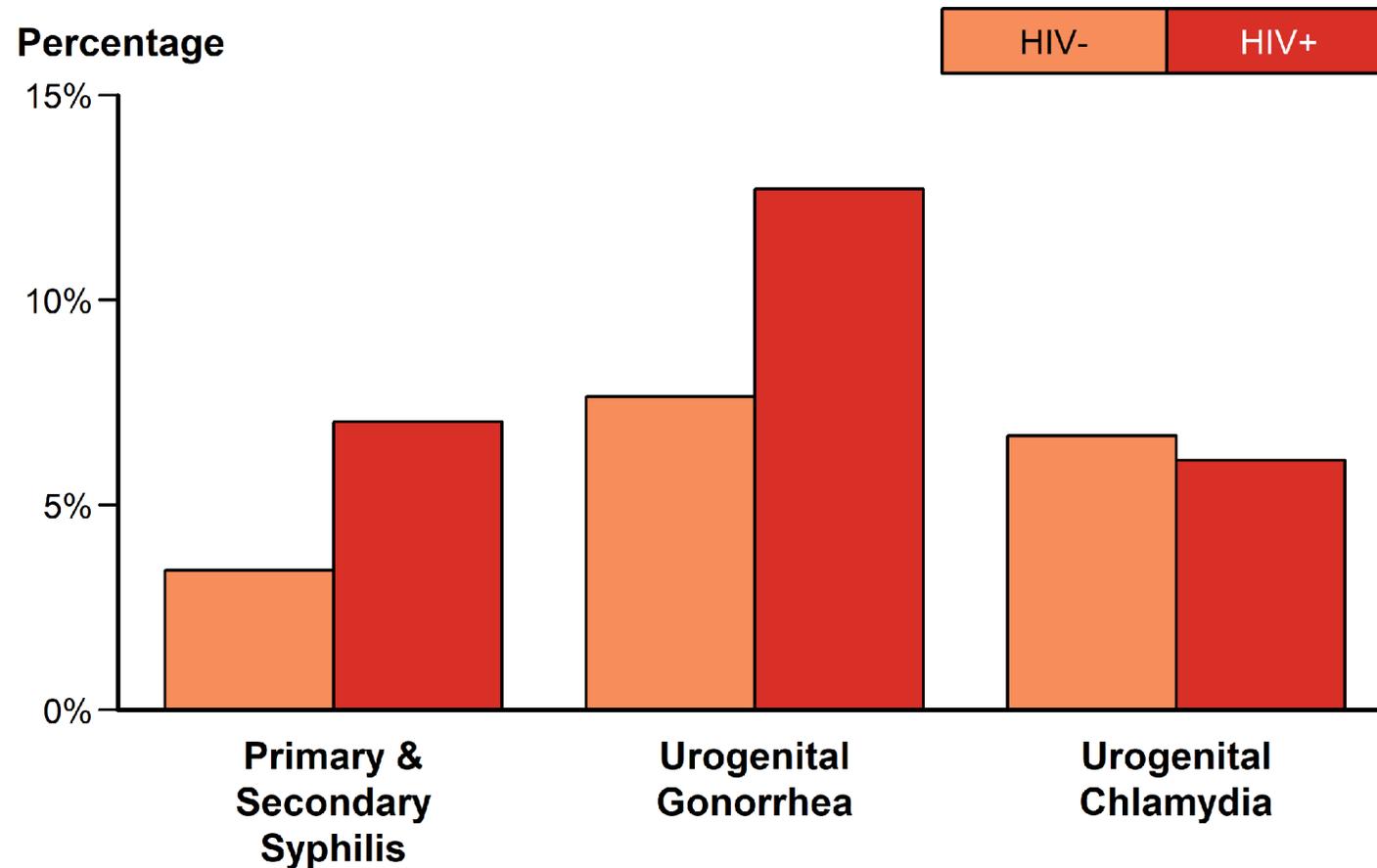
Primary and Secondary Syphilis — Reported Cases by Sex and Sex of Sex Partners and HIV Status, United States, 2018



ACRONYMS: MSM = Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men; MSW = Men who have sex with women only.



MSM Attending STD Clinics with Primary and Secondary Syphilis*, Urogenital Gonorrhea, or Urogenital Chlamydia by HIV Status, 2018



* Includes SSuN jurisdictions that reported data on at least 20 patients with a diagnosis of primary and secondary syphilis in 2018.

NOTE: See section A2.2 in the Appendix for SSuN methods.

ACRONYMS: MSM = Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men.



Anal HPV is almost universal

>80% of HIV+ Men who have Sex with Men have anal HPV

>30% have HPV16, the type that causes anal cancer.

Anal HPV is this common regardless of age

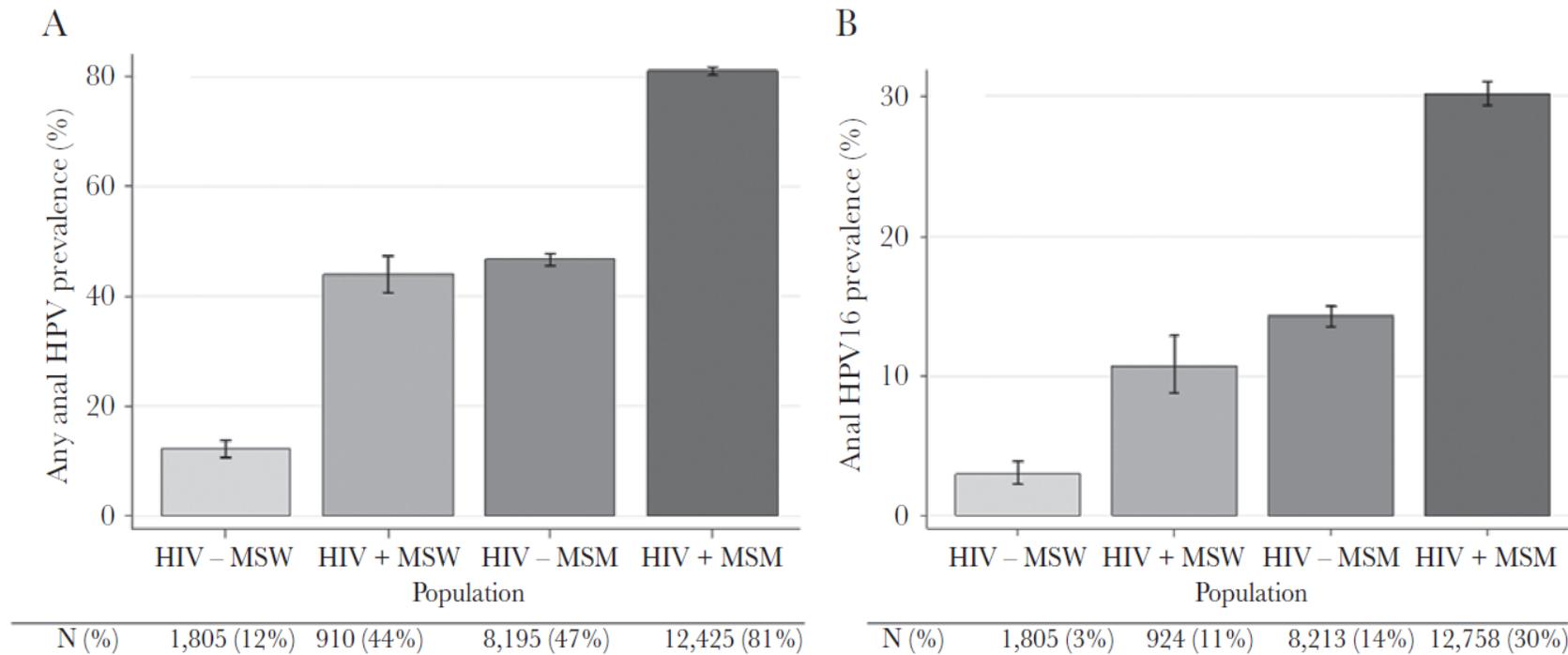


Figure 2. Prevalence of any anal human papillomavirus (HPV) infection (A) and anal HPV16 infection (B) by human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) status and sexual preference irrespective of anal diagnosis, including studies for which anal cytopathology diagnosis was unknown. Error bar: 95% CI. Abbreviations: MSM, men who have sex with men; MSW, men who have sex with women.

Should I be screened for anal cancer?

- In the general population, HPV-related anal cancer is more common among women than men (~2 cases vs 1.3 cases per 100,000)
- Among HIV+ MSM, anal cancer rates are ~70-130 times higher than the general population
- Anal cancer rates unclear for HIV+ women
 - Some centers are using anal Pap tests to screen for cancer, national guidelines still don't recommend strongly
 - Large clinical trial (ANCHOR) trying to determine whether screening/treatment will prevent cancer (all genders)
 - Until then, an annual digital anorectal exam may help detect early cancer

<https://anchorstudy.org/>

Poynten M, 2018, IPVC
Machalek D, 2016, Papillomavirus Res
CDC/NIH/HIVMA/IDSA Opportunistic Infections
Guidelines 2020

Parting Thoughts

- If you or your sex partner(s) have other partners
 - Get tested at least once a year (folks of all genders)
 - Up to once every three months for men who have sex with men & people
- You may need to ask your provider for STI testing because they may assume you are not sexually active
- For MSM, make sure testing includes rectal/throat swabs, and an annual digital anorectal exam
- Encourage HIV- partners to ask their providers about PrEP, regardless of age



You're never too old express your true self.
Kenneth Felts, came out in Summer 2020, at age 90.

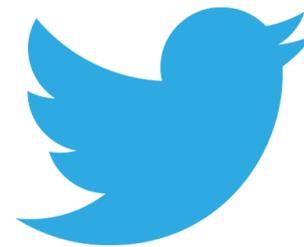
THANK YOU



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