

Galop and Stonewall Housing Oral History Project

Interviewee: Tor Docherty

Interviewer: Susan Hansen

Place of Interview: Cambridge

Date: 26th June 2009

Files: Galop TD1 Tor Docherty interviewed by Susan Hansen, 1 0 13

Key

SH: = Interviewer, Susan Hansen

TD: = Interviewee, Tor Docherty

[time e.g. 5:22] = inaudible word at this time

[5:22 1A] = inaudible section at this time

[Word 5:22] = best guess at word

SH: OK, so this is an interview with Tor Docherty, the ex-Chief Executive of Galop. It's Thursday the 26th of June 2009. It is about three o'clock in the afternoon and we are broadly in Cambridge. Present is Susan Hansen the interviewer, and Tor Docherty the interviewee. Can you tell me for the recording, where and when you were born?

TD: I was born in Sheffield on Christmas Day 1975.

SH: OK and recording this interview is for the Community Oral History Project for Galop and Stonewall Housing.

<End of Part 1>

SH: OK, first of all, could you tell me a little bit about your background, your childhood and where you grew up?

TD: Yep, I was born and raised in South Yorkshire, and my parents; my Dad was a teacher and my Mum's done all kinds of different jobs, but the longest period was a social worker. I lived in South Yorkshire until I was 18, went through school there. And when I was 18 I went to university in London, I did a law degree. And during my law degree I also started doing voluntary work at the Terrence Higgins Trust, the HIV charity. I did those in parallel and by the time I was coming to the end of my law degree I decided that I didn't really want to pursue law any further, although I loved studying it, I didn't want to take it into practice really. But I had loved my time at the Terrence Higgins Trust and thought that I'd quite like to work in the voluntary sector.

As I was finishing my degree, a job came up at Refuge; a women's domestic violence charity. And so for about two and a half years I ran their helpline, which was a great job, but pretty stressful. You can imagine the kind of things that you hear on a domestic violence helpline every day.

From Refuge I moved to Stonewall Housing and worked there for a year. From there I moved to Cruse Bereavement Care, a bereavement charity as the name suggests, and ran their helpline for a couple of years. And then from Cruse I moved to Galop. That's a fairly quick history of my work and studies.

SH: OK that's the whole interview then done pretty much!

<Laughter>

OK ...

<End of Part 2>

SH: So you moved to London to pursue the law degree, was that in the nineties?

TD: It would've been ... <laughs> '92, would it have been? No, '94, I'm sorry, '94 yep.

SH: And how did you find London after living up North?

TD: Do you know, it was really wierd because I lived in a place called Tickhill in South Yorkshire, which is, I think, technically a small town, but very village like in its feel. And when I was about, I dunno, 15, I went to London for the first time to see a friend that I'd met on holiday. And she lived in Barking which she said was next to Dagenham. So as we were driving through Dagenham I expected there to be some fields between Barking and Dagenham, but maybe not as many as there might be in the country, which looking back is so stupid and naive. But I thought it can't possibly all just merge, but of course it does. So I wasn't quite that naive when I moved down at 18, but it was very different. And I really liked the anonymity because living in a small place, everybody knows you and although that was never really a problem, there is an accountability to that. And the idea of being, not in the living away from home for the first time, but also living in a place as big as London was just great, it's nice to just not be observed so much really.

I lived in Halls of Residence in the first year, and then lived out in houses with friends in the second and third year, and just had a really, really great time and enjoyed being in London for all those reasons.

SH: OK I suppose we can ...

<End of Part 3>

SH: We can move along then to talking a little bit in more detail about ...

<Laughter>

Let's just start that one again.

TD: I think it might be worth it, yeah.

<Laughter>

<End of Part 4>

SH: OK the next question is about, I guess, in more detail how you came to be involved with Galop, a potted history about ... could you tell me in a little more detail about how that happened?

TD: Yeah, I'd worked in things that had touched the LGBT community, if you like, for a while. Volunteering at the Terrence Higgins Trust, while it's a HIV charity, clearly it's got lots of gay connections and at the time probably more so than now because I think now they're much more, or increasing their focus

on African work as well. Whereas at the time it really as a gay men's organisation. Then through working at Stonewall Housing for a year, which at the time was in the same building as Galop. So I knew what Galop was, and I'd heard on the grapevine that the chief executive post might be coming up at some point in the future, this was while I was at Cruse Bereavement Care. And I just really liked the organisation; it seemed to bring together the things that I'd done because I'd done a law degree, so I had that legal knowledge. I'd done a lot of helpline work and one of Galop's core services was the helpline. And so I thought actually this could be a really, really exciting opportunity for me. I'd also by then been doing a fair bit of senior management in the previous couple of jobs, and I felt ready to give it a go at being the chief executive. Should I go on to say about when I was working at Galop when I started there?

I got the job and was absolutely thrilled to have been offered it, and the trustees invited me around for a drink and stuff around at somebody's house, and gave me a piece of A4 paper with a list on it which seemed to constitute my entire induction; that was it! So they also gave me a key, and on the first day I arrived and there was nobody there. So it was really the case of just find your feet.

The staff previously had all left in a very short period of time, and depending on who you listen to, depends on whether there was anything behind that or not. Some people say, 'it was just coincidence,' other people say, 'there was some dissatisfaction,' and I think sometimes these things happen.

So I started there and it was pretty chaotic at the time. I think because there'd been nobody really in post for a little while; they'd had a temporary administrator in and when I arrived she said, 'here's your post' and put this pile as long as her arm on the my desk, and then opened a draw and said, 'here's the rest of it.' So I just thought, oh my god! And I started opening it and it was all sorts that, again, through nobody being there, backed up a bit. So my first several months were really a case of trying to recruit some other staff and trying to sort through this mountain of stuff that was just left behind. So did a lot of that.

I was trying to answer the helpline as much as I could in those early couple of months, but it really wasn't happening that much. So it was a bit patchy at first, but gradually managed to recruit some other staff. We had a project at the time that was aimed at black and minority ethnic LGBT people. So we were looking at that. I managed to recruit another member of staff to that, managed to recruit an administrator and so on. So suddenly we seemed to be back on our feet, and that was great.

It sounds a daft thing to mention, but the office at the time was the most oppressive little room you've ever seen; it was really wierd. It's quite a small space, the size of, I dunno, the floor space of probably four garages, not more than that I wouldn't say. But for some reason, somebody had built a partition up right by the window, up to almost the ceiling. So there was no natural light in the majority of the room. It was just wierd. You couldn't get anything useful on the far side of the partition either, like a desk or anything, it didn't fit through this little door they'd made. So it was just like working in a warren, because you couldn't see anything. So it was just a horrible, horrible place to work, and so run down. So eventually after I'd been there, gosh I don't know, 18 months maybe, a couple of years, we'd managed to pull the aside enough

money that we could just get this room sorted out, which made a huge difference.

A daft thing as well, we managed to get a little meeting room built, because prior to that, clients would be seen on one side of the partition and we'd sit on the other and hear every word that they were talking about. And we tried to be professional about it, but it's not nice for them to know that you can hear, or for us to hear everything that we're talking about. So it was quite nice to eventually get it sorted out.

SH: I forgot to check what date you started as you took ...

TD: It was a June, and what year would it have been? Can I check, is that alright?

SH: Yeah, we can come back.

TD: Yeah, sorry.

SH: OK, but you probably can remember, how long was you there for?

TD: Yeah, I was four years there.

SH: Four years, excellent. OK ...

<End of Part 5>

SH: So you've mentioned that when you started at Galop you had a fair bit of work to do, particularly piles of paper waiting for you.

TD: <Laughs> Yes.

SH: Can you tell me in maybe a little bit more detail what the predominant issues facing Galop were at the time when you got there?

TD: The internal issues were from the fact that there'd been nobody in post for a while, but also prior to me starting, they'd had a flat structure, no hierarchy within the organisation. Now I've never worked anywhere like that, and so I don't want to be over critical of a structure that I've never experienced, and I do understand that there are sometimes good reasons for attempting that. But coming into the aftermath of that, it was easy to see what hadn't been done, and I wonder if there was nobody ... The thing with being Chief Executive is that your job description could really be everything else. Because if it's not in that person's job, and not in that person's job, or that person's job, then you have to do it, or at least you have to take responsibility for getting it done. And so I think without that it was clear that things hadn't been cleared out, things hadn't been moved on, things hadn't been filed, things just hadn't been sorted out. So there was an awful lot of that. Also for the first, probably two years that I was there, people would say, 'You work at Galop? Oh, is that still going?' And so there was a real issue with people thinking it had shut down, and I don't know if that had come at the time when lots of staff were leaving, I don't know if a rumour had started. But it was really quite difficult to convince people that Galop had never gone away, and was strong and continuing into the future.

Also when I first started, I realised that our major source of funding was about to expire within three months. The funder at the time was called The Association of London Government, and is now called London Councils. It's a pot of money that all the London boroughs throw money into and then it's distributed to London-wide organisations. Our grant was literally about to run out and one of my first jobs was to reapply for that, which luckily we got, and we got four years funding from that. It's not entirely a coincidence that when the four years were coming up I thought, this is my time done, because I wasn't enormously keen on having to go through the process again, it's quite a lengthy thing to ... Also at the time I was expecting a baby, so I moved on for personal reasons as well.

So Galop's a funny one because it had also ... it punched above its weight before I joined I think, and I hope I continued that. But I think there was a lot of people to be proud of who'd gone before me. They'd managed to get very high level connections in the Metropolitan Police, some fairly high level connections in councils and so on, access to people that it isn't easy to get access to. And because it was so small, it's very impressive that people had managed to do that.

When I first started there, there was much more of a perception than there is now of, 'Well we don't really have any gay people in this area,' and we would actually hear people say that, people from councils and so on. Some of the better off boroughs would just simply think it wasn't an issue for them. And things often got done if you managed to get an LGBT person in the right place in the council. If there wasn't, it was an uphill struggle even to convince people why we existed. So yeah, it was a challenge and there really wasn't a very broad acceptance that LGBT people might need specific services, 'Well why can't they just use generic services?' Lots of things about, 'Well we treat everyone the same,' we would hear, and clearly, things have moved on now to recognise that people need to be treated equally but differently, to recognise their individual needs. But that just didn't really happen at the time.

So yeah, in some sense it was a bit overwhelming as well, taking over, because London was split into 32 boroughs, and it means that one tiny, tiny organisation with the equivalent of say 2 full time staff, is expected to deliver a service across these 32 boroughs. And so sometimes people would say, 'I was speaking to the equalities officer in Richmond and they'd never of you!' And I think, well that's because I have to do that phone call 32 times to even introduce ourselves and that meeting 32 times to let them know we exist. It's almost impossible, as well as trying to run an organisation with just all the day to day administration that that requires. So the way London's structured really doesn't help ...

<Interruption>

So it's tricky to be an organisation that small and I think that's a particularly challenge facing the LGBT sector, is it's tiny!

At the time that I was there, there was a lot of work being done on black and minority ethnic issues, I'm sure nowhere near enough. But we almost gazed on jealously, because there was as real drive, in the aftermath really of the Macpherson Report, to make sure that everybody was doing something on BME issues. And it ...

<Interruption>

SH: OK, so we were just talking about the attention to BME issues.

TD: Yeah that's right. When I took over as Chief Executive of Galop, a lot of the time we gazed on enviously at what was being done by statutory services, for the BME communities, and I'm sure it wasn't enough and there was a lot of ground to be made up with the BME community. So I'm not trying to do that thing where we all pit against each other and say, 'Well we want what they've got, and they've got it better than us, we're the worst done,' to the community or any of that. But following the Macpherson report, there were a lot of duties placed on the statutory services to deliver things for BME communities, and we didn't have an equivalent. And the other massive problem that we faced as proving the need for our service, because there is no agreed number of how many LGBT people there are. And the second you haven't got that, you can't prove your need. Because we can say, '20% of LGBT people that we've interviewed have experienced so and so.' 'Well how many does that make it?' 'Oh well we don't know.' Well if it's only 300 that 20% isn't that many then. So it's really, really difficult.

Eventually we found a stat for that with some sort of authority behind it which the government had used in the build up to the civil partnership legislation. And we finally found a government quote that said that they thought about 7% of the population was lesbian, gay or bisexual, they didn't have a stat for transgender in there. But at least it us something with a bit of authority behind it, to say that, 'the government says that 7% are LGB, and therefore we now are saying in this borough there'll be this borough, and this community there'll be that many.' And it gives us a bit of drive.

But as we looked on to what was being done in the BME community, some of it we benefited from because it was replicated for LGBT. But an awful lot of it wasn't. So for example. The Metropolitan Police had an LGBT advisory group of independent people including myself, to advise them on dealing with the LGBT community. Now we only had that because they were forced to set up the BME one and we were lucky enough to be tagged on with that.

But in other cases, I was consulted at one point on a London Housing strategy. And I remember it saying specifically, because almost every page had a target for how many BME people would benefit from X initiative, or Y initiative. And at the very beginning, they'd said, we are going to deal with all the communities, and we're going to deal with all minority groups, and on page one, BME target, page two, BME target. And one of the pieces of feedback that I gave was you either need to do targets for all communities, or none, because otherwise you are creating a hierarchy and that's not on. If you just want to do BME, then that's fine, but just claim that you're doing that, don't claim you're doing something for everybody, and then not do something for the LGBT community.

And those sorts of things I don't think were particularly well received by statutory services, I think because probably an awful lot of the BME stuff that they were doing was fairly tokenistic. So they wanted patting on the back for it, they certainly didn't want hauling over the LGBT coals as well.

I think it's also worth pointing out that in my period at Galop, and I think probably still now, there was even a hierarchy with LGB and T. Even services

aimed at LGBT were largely aimed at gay men, probably with lesbians tagged on. I would say bisexual people came next, and I think transgender people came bottom and I think that probably still goes on today. If you then get to minorities within the LGBT community, so you start to talk about black women, or people with disabilities, or any of that, the LGBT community's probably no better than dealing with any of that than the wider community. It was one of the things I tried really hard to do at Galop, and at one point, a very large percentage of our clients had disabilities. I don't know how much of that was down to proactive things that we did and how much was just chance. But we were quite pleased that that was the case because we felt the people who might be additionally vulnerable were able to access our service, so we were quite pleased with that.

We also did a fair bit of work at my time there promoting the service to transgender people. When I started at Galop, transgender issues were something that I didn't know a lot about. But I hope that during my time there I picked up enough information and we did specific work targeting transgender community. We actually officially during that time because LGB and T, because prior to me joining it hadn't been transgender as well.

There was a lot of discussion, when we decided that we might like to officially become transgender, there was a lot of discussion about whether or not that was the way for us to go. And at board level, there was a lot of support and concern about what transgender people faced. But there was a lot of discussion about whether what transgender people face is homophobia, or whether it's something separate. Is it gender phobia if you like, transphobia or sexism or whatever else. But in the end, my feeling and the thought that prevailed was, it's all very well us sitting and academically debating whether or not it's this that or the other; there is no service, we are best placed at the moment to deliver it, and so let's deliver it. And to be honest, we were delivering it unofficially anyway. So we just made it official and launched that. So that's one of things I'm more pleased about really.

<End of Part 6>

SH: OK so we've been talking about the kinds of issues that you were facing at Galop when you were CEO, which includes the inclusion of transgender people and a T, in there. Could you maybe talk about this stuff, I guess, a little more within the wider political context at the time, the kinds of things that were happening during the time you were CEO?

TD: Yeah, one of the biggest developments I think while I was CEO at Galop was the introduction of what we were calling third party reporting. It's a way of reporting a crime to the police without having to speak directly to the police. So the idea was that as a community organisation, people might trust us where they didn't trust the police. And what we did was work with the police to develop this system. The police developed their own, but we did it in a bit more depth than that. The police launched a pack where you could write down what had happened to you and post it to them. You could either be anonymous or you could say that you wanted the police to contact you again. The problem with the police's pack was that it was tiny for a start, it was half the size of a postcard on each little page, so you had to summarise the incident on a tiny little piece of paper. And the police themselves realised very quickly that if you weren't literate, or if you didn't haven't have neat handwriting, or if you didn't speak very good English, it was absolutely

useless the information that they were receiving. So what we did at Galop was we would take the report. So we trained up our staff to be able to take details of what had happened, and to ask some of the right questions, to mean that even if the police received an anonymous report, it was still of some use. We would then send that to the police who would log it, and either they would log it as intelligence if it was anonymous or if the person was willing to be contacted, they'd be given a crime reference number and could be contacted by the police.

When we started doing that piece of work I expected us to receive lots of things about people being shouted out in the street, or perhaps hit, those sorts of things. But actually we received reports of even more serious crimes. We took reports of rapes, we took reports of kidnappings and it was just unbelievable the stuff that was coming in, the severity of the crimes, that people were still too afraid to speak directly to the police about. And again, I'm not talking about people who were necessarily even very marginalised, or seemingly very marginalised in their day to day lives. So I took a report from a man who seemed fairly well off, arrived dressed in a suit from work, he clearly had, if you like, a fairly high powered job, and he was reporting being drugged and raped to us, and he didn't want to report it to the police, in spite of seemingly being a fairly powerful person in the rest of his life.

The beauty though of that system was, using that man as an example, he said that he didn't want to report it for himself; he just didn't want to go through that. But he would reconsider if the police had other incidents that sounded similar to his, that he then would've spoken out, for the greater good if you like. So you can see where as a community organisation we were able to access people that the police just weren't able to access.

In the same way, there was a man murdered on Clapham Common in my time at Galop, and in the weeks prior to that we'd taken one report of a very, very serious assault on Clapham Common, and the police were able to look back in to that and see whether there was any link to that. So this wasn't completely isolated information, it was, I think, quite useful to the police, and useful to our community to have another way in.

SH: So was that, pardon my ignorance, the third party reporting system, is this something that's been picked up since in other cities, or is it, as far as you know, still unique to Galop in London?

TD: Other areas do it but they don't do it in the way that Galop does because Galop was doing the reports in much more detail. Other cities have the packs, and they've gone out there, but I really don't think it's being pushed. I think what would really have helped, and imagine would still help, I think the police should have paid us for each report that we delivered, because the amount of time it took to sit and write one of these was at least an hour and more like two. And I mean I can emphasis enough really just how tiny Galop is to be doing the work it's doing. People kept saying, 'Well why don't you role this out nationally?' Well because nobody would pay us to do it, nobody would! The trust funders weren't interested in it, the police either didn't have the budgets or weren't prioritising their budgets in that direction. And I mean there was one lovely police officer called Carl Wonfor and he was doing a lot of the link work from the Metropolitan Police to us. He managed just once to get us a payment for just some of the reports, I think it was about £2,000 that he managed to swing in our direction for the work that we'd done. And I mean we

were immensely grateful. But we kept saying to them, 'If you would fund a full time post, doing this work, we could deliver you all sorts of things.' I think for the police it's a mixed blessing, because what we're saying is, 'We can make crime figures go up, we can bring you lots of crimes with no solution,' and I do understand why to the police that might not be such an attractive proposition.

SH: So it must have been really challenging to some extent, raising awareness of Galop's work, given, as you said, the tininess of the organisation next to the size of London. Did that take up a lot of your time in terms of your role while you were there?

TD: Sadly, I think what takes up a lot of time in that sort of role in an organisation that size is just keeping the organisation running, and it's such a shame, because again it comes down to resources, and when there is only ... I mean there was me as the Chief Executive, there was an administrator two days a week ... there was an administrator say a couple of days a week, we were so small. And it's just really difficult to just keep the organisation running. Daft things like you have to check the bank statements, you have to write the cheques, you have to do the company house annual returns, you have to do the board meetings, you have to do the staff supervision, and all of this stuff that doesn't progress the cause even one iota, takes up at least half of your time, if not more, and it's frustrating, immensely frustrating. But when you're that tiny, there's no one else to give it to. So what we tended to do was have me do my best on the promotion and on keeping things running, and we'd have project workers doing more specific areas.

The other great frustration is two or three year funding, because we'd just get something running and then it would finish, and we'd start all over again. Galop was funded then, and maybe still is, by the same few funders who were willing to touch LGBT work, because an awful lot of them weren't. And I don't know, we did a great big mailing to lots of different ... there are lots of things called the Worshipful Company of something or other, and lots of trades have these, so it might Goldsmiths or it might be, I dunno, there's even an IT one or it might be dressmakers, all sorts of things. But a mass mailing to loads of them saying would they consider funding us. And I think we got £1,000 back from one of them, we must have written to 50 of them. So I mean it just ... it was quite hard. I wished then, and didn't actually ever get round to doing anything about it, but I still wish that there would be more of a push within the LGBT community, for us as a community, to fund our own services. Because you see lots of these adverts on the TV for fund this at £2 a month, fund that at £2 a month. You don't need an awful lot of them to add up to a phenomenal amount of money. But it never even got passed the thinking stage to be honest. But I really wish that say four or five or the bigger LGBT charities would link together and get people donating each month, regular donors would make such a difference to what we could deliver.

I think the other problem on that sort of front is the perception that Stonewall Lobby Group is the only group that exists. I understand from a friend that they're now calling themselves the LGB Charity, or the Lesbian and Gay Charity or something, *the* charity. And it concerns me because in my experience they work largely in isolation. They are very well connected at very high levels and I wished at the time that they would have involved some of the front line organisations much more in being allowed to access their contacts. I don't even necessarily mean that I wanted to bend the ear of the minister myself, but I wish that they would have ever come to us to say,

'What's your experience of this, that and the other?' There just didn't seem to be any interest in working across the community at all, it's a shame.

SH: So Stonewall didn't take on any kind of big sister, big brother?

TD: No, not at all, very much in isolation, yeah.

SH: But, slightly about that topic, did ...

<End of Part 7>

SH: OK, so now I'd like to ask you something about ...

<End of Part 8>

SH: Now I'd like to ask you about what your life in London was like, during the time you were involved with Galop, outside of work?

TD: OK.

<Laughter>

Let me think. Just about the time I started at Galop, literally within a couple of weeks, I moved from Catford in South East London to Stoke Newington in Hackney. I moved there because gradually my friends had sort of all congregated around that area and I was sick to death of travelling up and down from Catford to see everyone. So I ended up moving up there. It was also about the time that Jacqui and I'd got to together. So I ended up living, as I say, in Stoke Newington, which was a really nice place to live, I really enjoyed it there. And seeing Jacqui a fair bit, and seeing my friends locally quite a bit, and it was also about two minutes away from Galop, which was lovely, 'cause I'd previously been commuting a long way for my previous job. So the idea of community in about five minutes was just wonderful.

Yeah, so Jacqui and I were getting together. We'd, I dunno, go out a little bit, no so much on the scene to be honest. It's really wierd, the scene's really one of those things that I'm really glad it's there, but I never use it <chuckles>, so. I'd be sad if it all shut down, but it's not open because I'm supporting it to be honest. There were a few places around at the time that we went to occasionally. There was quite a nice quiz night at a lesbian bar in Stoke Newington and stuff, but other than that, there wasn't an awful lot that we did on the scene. Just pottered about the place really and saw friends, that was mainly what we did.

SH: Was that like a contrast to student life in London?

TD: <Laughs> Yes, student life involved getting drunk before you went out, because you couldn't afford to get drunk when you went out. So there was always a lot of vodka before we started! But yeah, I mean personally I've never been one for clubbing particularly anyway, so that just wasn't really for me. But yeah, as I say, just hanging out with friends and enjoying bits and bobs like that, occasionally heading up to Hampstead Heath if we wanted a long stroll or any of that. But really just enjoying London, pottering about the place really.

SH: And were you involved with any other groups or activities or anything else outside of the paid work context?

TD: Yeah, I was on the management committee at Stonewall Housing, after I left as a member of staff, I stayed on the management committee for about another five years I think. I've always had a great respect for Stonewall Housing and it was nice to continue to be involved. So yeah, I was doing that. In terms of other voluntary stuff, like me think ... I was a little bit involved with an organisation called Regard, and I mean a little bit, I can't claim any credit for any of their successes. But very occasionally just helped out with the odd bit and bob there, but they were in the same building, again, as Stonewall Housing and Galop. Regard's an organisation for ... I don't know if it's just Lesbian and Gay, or LGBT, people with disabilities. I don't even know if they're still going 'cause they hit financial problems and that was the end of them being in the building. But I think they continued more loosely.

The other organisation around at the time LAGER, Lesbian and Gay Employment Rights, and I didn't have anything to do with them personally, but they were also in the same building. So it was quite a little gay centre for a while, accidentally I think, but it was quite nice for it to all be there. I think I sound really boring; I don't sound like I did anything <laughs> outside work, but I did, I just can't remember what it was!

<Laughter>

SH: So obviously pre-children then?

TD: Yeah, oh god yeah, now I don't do anything at all. <Laughs>

<End of Part 9>

SH: Alright, so this next section of the interview is about the impact of Galop. Now there are three parts to this and we'll take it in turn. I guess the first part is about the impact of working at Galop on you personally and on your life, and stuff about that.

TD: OK, the impact of Galop on my life was actually huge, professionally and personally. Professionally it was my first Chief Executive job and I now think that you spend the first year as a Chief Executive absolutely terrified to your very sole! It's the most frightening job, because you can't hand responsibility on, you realise that the Board of Trustees, while generally very well meaning, are not of enormous help on a day to day basis. And I don't even mean that they come and do your job, I just mean that they're often unavailable or ... This is no criticism of anybody who was on Galop's Board, they all absolutely did their best and did the job as I've done it myself on other boards, I just don't think the structure's great. And certainly the Chief Executive, it doesn't really help an awful lot. So I grew an awful lot in that role, because I just had to start taking responsibility for things that I would've passed on previously. You do a fair bit of waking up at three o'clock in the morning thinking, oh my god, have I done thingy, or I must remember to do so and so, and to be honest more often, are we going to survive the financial year, was my constant thing at Galop. I used to give Jacqui a ring and say, 'Meet me in the corridor,' and I'd be saying, 'Oh my god, there's no money!' And she'd be going, 'I know, there's no money at Stonewall Housing either!' So there was a fire escape, we used to go and sit on it and tell each other our woes and then

go back to work, 'cause you do need somebody that you can do that with, and doing the same role with a different organisation meant we could do it to each other. So the impact in that sense was great.

In a personal sense, I think I'd have to take Galop and Stonewall Housing together when I worked there, but in a personal sense, it was really wierd, but eventually really positive for me, to be professionally out, if you like, because every single meeting you had to out yourself at, and boy does it stop you being scared about outing yourself, because you just can't go to a meeting and pretend that you're not from where you're from. So you have to out yourself to great big conference rooms full of people. You have to out yourself to, I don't know, religious groups. You have to out yourself in, if you like, multi diversity forums, so perhaps where people with very strong beliefs that homosexuality is wrong, you're out in that forum. You end up going on TV and being interviewed and you out yourself there. It's just incredible; you really can't do it in a closeted way. But it's been great for me personally because Jacqui and now have children, and one of the things that we were adamant about before we started was that we would be out to anybody and everybody, because we thought it was our job to do and not our children's job to do. So I now, at least once a week, have a conversation who says, 'Oh what beautiful children, is their dad very dark?' 'Cause my children are mixed race. And I say, 'Oh my partner's a woman, but she's Asian, so we chose an Asian donor.' And I mean, talk about out in the playground and stuff, but it's great, and to be honest, I've not had any problems really. So it takes away a lot of the fear.

I think a job like working at Galop does two things. It makes you not be naive because I think I've been very lucky that I haven't experienced what the clients at Galop experience. But the same time, being so out everywhere makes you realise that actually the vast majority of the time you don't have a problem, and for the vast majority of people. I met quite a few people while I worked at Galop who to me, felt like they were professional victims if you like. They were so identified with their victimhood. I'm not talking about clients now, absolutely not, I want to make that clear. I'm talking about people working in the field who, if you like, were so identified with being the victim of things that I almost felt like no matter what any of the statutory services did, it would never, ever have been right. And again, it's hard to explain without sounding really down on people who are doing the activism, because I thoroughly admire the activists. There's a woman who I worked with back then who is about as strong as it's possible to be, and I'm sure herself as pushed the lesbian cause forward years and years, through being incredibly mouthy and incredibly feisty. So I'm not being down on people like that. But I'm being down on people who start every sentence with, 'As a whatever, I ...' this, that and the other.

And I even ran an exercise once for a group of people. It was part of the LGBT advisory group and they wanted some work on diversity. So I set up this training exercise, and what I asked people to do, I put some cards on the floor and it said things like gay man, lesbian, black, person with disability. And I asked people to go and stand by a card of something they were not. So if you were not a gay man, you could go and stand by the gay man card, if you were not a transgender person you could go and stand by the transgender card. And then in those groups I asked people to talk about how they felt having to represent the interests of that group, of which they were not part, because we were all supposed to speak on behalf of LGB and T, in all its

diversity. And my idea was really that for example, the people who were standing by the black card, who themselves were not black, would say, 'Well I worry about representing black people because I don't think that I know enough, I feel like I might get the terminology wrong, I feel that this that and the other, and I wish that I had more knowledge in these areas.' And I thought out of that could come some useful ideas for what further training we'd need, and particularly at the time internally there was an issue for about transgender and whether the people on the group who were not transgender were adequately representing what transgender people might need. So again, I thought the people in the 'were not transgender group,' would be able to say, 'I don't fully understand the difference between transsexual and transvestite,' for example, and then we could say, 'Right, out of that we will get some training and we'll know, and then we'll all do better.'

But coming back to the point about professional victimhood if you like. One of the cards I put on the floor was women, and some of the people who were not women went to that group. And one person I remember particularly was talking about, as a man, the sexism that he had experienced from women. And I was so irritated because this was a genuine exercise about groups within a group, who perhaps were not fully understood, and I think sometimes the gay male community does have difficulty understanding and accepting that the issues for lesbians might be different, and taking those onboard. And so I was quite incensed really that all that this person could do in that situation was become a victim, become more of a victim than the women. And so it was, I don't know, it was quite difficult and I did come across people in that role. So I think that going the long way around and coming back to the point, being forced to be so out through those roles and now as a life choice, has made me realise that there is an awful lot out there to be feared and I thank my lucky stars that I haven't been through what some of Galop's clients have been through. But equally, there's a lot that's not to be feared and you can be very, very out without having a problem, I think.

<Break in recording>

SH: OK, so we were talking about the impact of working at Galop on you both personally and professionally. Is there anything else you want to cover on that?

TD: No, I think that's fine. Oh sorry, do you want ... <laughs> start again, press it again.

<Break in recording>

SH: OK, we were talking about the impact of working at Galop on your life, I guess.

TD: Yeah, I guess that on a personal level as well, it's worth saying that Jacqui, who I'm with, and I, we got together just before I worked at Galop, but we were only newly together, and I was there four years. So during our time there we went from living in London together, and then living in Cambridge together and commuting. So that was quite a big impact. It meant that we worked very closely professionally and had a relationship together, which in a lot of ways was lovely because, like I say, we could go and sit on the fire escape and tell each other our professional woes. But it could sometimes be a bit close for comfort. If we fell out two minutes into our two hour commute, we'd sit in the

car not speaking for the next two hours, and that was just hard <laughs> work!

And sometimes it was difficult because we would face such similar issues in our organisations, that eventually we decided that we would make a rule that we'd talk about work for X amount of time, but then at home there was no work talk. Because otherwise, it's not that you mind listening to the other person's story, but when all it's doing is making you think, oh god I've got to do that at work, and I've got to deal with that, and I need to write that letter as well. It just gets a bit much really. It's almost like listening the whole time. So I'm glad now that we do different jobs, 'cause in the end it does drive you a bit bonkers really, so yeah.

SH: So the next ...

<End of Part 10>

SH: The next part of this question about the impact of working at Galop is, I guess, a bit more broadly about the impact of Galop on the LGBT community through the time you were working there.

TD: I think the very fact that Galop's there is a really good starting point for people, because otherwise where do you go for advice when you know you're not going to be judged? And Jacqui now works at Broken Rainbow, the domestic violence charity, and one of the things that we were talking about, as a result of some of the things that she's found there, is that on some level, LGBT people have an expectation of violence, or an expectation of harassment, that you think that you're fair game for a bit of hassle because if you will be gay you really have to expect to have it coming to you, that sort of feeling. And certainly with Galop, some of the things that people experience, they did think, well if I will insist on walking down the street looking a bit camp, then I've really got to expect that at some point somebody's going to punch me in the face. And it's such a sad thing that we have that within our community, but it's such a common thing, and I think it's really important to sometimes be able to go to somebody where you know there's no issue, where you know that that's not going to be at the back of their mind, that you brought it on yourself somehow.

I've since worked with somebody who recommended to a gay man that if he wanted to get a job he really ought to try and not be quite so camp, because really people might not want a camp person working for them. Now, that might be absolutely true that people might not want a camp person working for them, but that's not his problem, and it was being made to be his problem that he had to solve by not quite being the way that he was. And so to be able to go to somebody LGB or T and say, 'Look, I'm having this problem,' and to know that they're going to be fundamentally on your side is just incredibly important really. So I think it's important that we were there.

One of the other big changes that came about while I was there was LGBT liaison officers being introduced within the police, and this was a LGBT police officer that you could ask to speak to. Now it was done very well in some boroughs and very half heartedly in others. So in some boroughs it was a full time post, in other boroughs it was somebody who had it tagged on to their additional duties, with no time devoted to it. But the very fact it existed was some sort of recognition that you might want to speak to somebody who you

knew wouldn't judge you. Having said that, while I was at Galop, one of the big projects that we did was working with the Metropolitan Police, on behalf of the Home Office, to look at the training that police were receiving. It was initially called the Training Needs Analysis, and later they called it the Performance Needs Analysis. But the idea was that we looked at what the police needed to know about LGBT issues, and made sure that it was covered in their training somewhere. And we did that by travelling round the country and setting up these focus groups to talk to LGBT people and say, 'What is it that you feel that the police need to know?' And we split the country into a number of areas, and ran one generic one in each area for LGBT people, but we also ran specific ones for young LGBT people, BME LGBT people, people with disabilities, we ran a specific trans one, we ran a specific bisexual one, we ran a specific women's one to try and acknowledge that communities marginalise within the LGBT community, and make sure that we were speaking on behalf of the whole community about it.

And it was a fascinating piece of work. Each of the focus groups was run with one of us, if you like, a community member, and also a police officer. And one of the things that came across very loudly from all of the groups was they actually didn't care whether the police officer they dealt with was LGB or T, they cared that they were dealt with appropriately, and that came very strongly from all of those groups. The only time that people said differently was about sexual crimes and in those cases, some people expressed a preference, that they would rather speak to a LGB or T police officer. But generally people didn't mind.

The other things that were coming out of those groups at the time were things about the assumptions that the police made. I remember that we ran one for lesbians, and one of the lesbians there said that she'd been in a very violent relationship, and the police had been called on one occasion because she'd been beaten up really badly. And when the police arrived, they saw that she, the victim, was in quotes, 'the butcher of the two,' and the police assumed that because she was butch she was the perpetrator and she was the one taken away. And so that imposing of a heterosexual model on a homosexual relationship was fairly common, and clearly completely damaging.

So it was a really interesting thing that we were able to try and pull this together for the police. They then took it away and did their first write up of this training package. And it was really interesting again how they made LGBT people into tragic victims really. So there was some case studies and it was all of a tragic shy and retiring LGBT person being so sad at work. Now all of these things happen, but none of them were fighting, none of them had anything to say for themselves, it was all very tragic. And one of the things that we said is, 'Try and make these people a bit less tragic victims, try and make them into real rounded people, but still have a case study about how you can make them feel very uncomfortable and very angry by treating them this, that and the other way.' And I think that still goes on.

A friend of mine works at a council in the South of England, and she said that they were putting together a list of films for ... they were doing something for LGBT history month, and somebody said, 'Let's put together a list of recommended films for LGBT people to watch.' And they'd come up with all these tragic tales of sorrow and woe. Now again, that's all fine and that's all got a place. But that was all that there was, was some tragic tale of some

LGBT person dying a horrible death, which is pretty much what happens in films.

So it's quite interesting that even with that weight of evidence behind us of what these focus groups had said, it was still initially made into something tragic and sad and these lonely isolated people. And it was only on the second write up that we tried to make these case studies more rounded and more reflective of what had been said. So I think there's still quite a long way to go, but I think within the police there is now some acceptance that things do need to be sorted out and there is still some acceptance that they've got work to do.

SH: And the police were happy with your comments that their first pass was perhaps little dramas?

TD: <Chuckles> It was one of those projects that every deadline was running late except the final one and we were absolutely shouting and shouting about, 'We've got to get on with this if it's going to be done!' It was one of the very few projects that I've been involved with that had a lot of money attached to it, because there were some serious resources poured into finding this information out, and I think for that it was really impressive. I think that a lot of the police officers that I came across wanted to do things right, some of them just really didn't have a clue about how to do it. But then some of the police officers our clients were coming across were behaving very differently, and I think there probably is a difference between the police officers that I as a professional was coming across and the ones that we were allowed access to really. Inevitably, if somebody's willing to meet you, they're half way there. Some of the police officers that our clients were coming across were just horrendously bad at dealing with things. And I think one of the most regular things that we came across was just a complete lack of urgency on homophobic hate crime.

So I dealt with one client and he was beaten up really badly on a bus. And it was a bus with CCTV fitted, so it really should have been very straightforward to get these pictures. He reported it to the police immediately, but two weeks later they still hadn't requested the pictures, and by the time they requested this footage it had gone, it had been deleted or taped over, or whatever. And so even when people were willing to come forward, the examples of bad practice were just ... just lack of urgency really, just, 'Oh well, whatever.' And it's no good! And I don't know whether that was worse or better than other crimes, but it was very, very common for us to hear this, that somebody had something done and that the police just weren't prioritised in coming out to deal with it at all.

<End of Part 11>

SH: We've been talking about the impact of working at Galop, of the work you did at Galop on the LGBT community. The last part of this question is about the impact of your work with Galop on others, is there any other people, other communities perhaps?

TD: I think that ... I hope there was some positive impact for particularly transgender people of things that went on in my time at Galop. When we launched the service for transgender people we received quite an angry letter from someone who's fairly high profile within transgender campaigning. And

he was really angry with us, saying that we should've always been providing this service, and that it wasn't enough to just say that we were going to provide the service, we had to actually do something about it. In one sense, I absolutely understood where he was coming from because you do often hear, 'Of course we provide an equal service,' and people actually don't. So I did understand why he was so wary of what we were saying. But I wrote back to him detailing all the things that we'd done, and he never responded again, which again I thought was quite a shame. But it was met with a lot of suspicion by him. Now although he was purporting to speak on behalf of people, I don't think there'd been any sort of consultation; it was a personal letter from this man saying that he was concerned. But I do feel like we did a lot of work and I really worked hard while I was there to make sure that we were doing LGB and T, because it's so easy to say that you are and not do it. And I think I learnt that personally as a lesbian within the community, seeing that sometimes what's done is actually very right for gay men, and very not right for gay lesbians. Also the more that I was there, the more I found ... One of the Board of Trustees did some research and she found that for every ... so for every eight gay men that were reporting hate crime, only one lesbian's reporting. So when we say things are underreported and we go out to a gay club and do a great big push on reporting, we're probably hitting the gay men who within the community are probably reporting most already. We're not hitting communities within communities and I think that's still the challenge, but I hope it was one that I started to bring to the fore.

When I left Galop I was replaced by a lesbian and I think that she's continued to keep that up. So I hope that the profile remains higher within the smaller communities with LGBT. I think whenever you do any work on equalities, there's an impact across equality strands because if you can get an acceptance that things aren't always the same for everybody, then hopefully people do start to think of lots of strands of equality, rather than just whichever one you happen to be talking about. So yes, I hope there was a broader impact for other communities in that sense.

<End of Part 12>

- SH:** OK this is the final question. OK, this question is just about more generally, changes that you've witnessed for the LGBT community, with both in terms of policing and in terms of Galop's work, is there anything here?
- TD:** Yeah, I think that when I started, and if I jump back a little bit to when I worked at Stonewall Housing as well, because I worked there, then had a two year gap, then worked at Galop. So I was within that field for a seven year period if you like. Right at the beginning I think that LGBT were just dirty words. People really, really didn't want you to talk about it. And when I was at Stonewall Housing I was once trying to find a place for a client to go, and on the phone I was told, 'We don't take lesbian and gay people at this hostel.' So it was a blatant as that. And of course at the time there was no legal recourse with that either, they were perfectly within their rights to do that.

So I happened to be across both organisations at a time when the laws started to change as well, and suddenly goods and services, you couldn't discriminate in terms of delivering goods and services. There was equality brought about in employment or at legalisation to allow for that, to give you some sort of recourse.

It was interesting on a personal level to be in my first job in a mainstream organisation after the equality legislation came through, to be able to think I can out myself and you can't sack me, or, you can sack me but I'll be straight back at you. Not that I've ever felt particularly threatened by that, but it was a feeling of strength. The thing about civil partnerships came in as well while I was working across the LGBT field. Various things around equality for transgender people came in at the time, and so it was quite an exciting period of finally achieving, on paper, some things that had been campaigned for, for such a long time.

So there were lots of changes in that sense. Suddenly we had legal recourse, and I think the goods and services thing is the real opportunity for LGBT people now, because it touches, in so many areas ... I went up last week to meet my son's new head teacher at school, and I felt so confident in going into that meeting and saying, 'This is what my son needs, he has same sex parents, this is what he's going to need from you.' And because of the legislation behind me, I felt so much more confident going into that. I didn't feel like I had to convince her, I felt that I was telling her what she legally had to do. I didn't approach it like that, I approached it much more constructively than that. But it's really nice to know that you've got that strength behind you if you need it. And I think that came in, in a lot of areas. There was a lot more recognition of what hate crime was doing and there were changes to sentencing so that you could take into account that fact that an offence was homophobically motivated. So there was a lot that went on in that sense.

I think as a community our position got so much stronger during that period, just because we had the law behind us finally. I think there's still an awful long way to go and I think that the Equality Act's coming up, and it's going to push local authorities and so on to evidence what they're doing for different communities. But I'm slightly cynical about what they will actually do on LGBT, because one of the things that we pushed for constantly was for statutory services to monitor how many LGBT people they were dealing with. And we were constantly told, 'People don't like to answer that question.' Now there's no way that they knew that because they'd never trialled it. If they'd trialled it and found it, fine, but they never trialled it. And what they meant is, 'We don't like to ask that question.' They're embarrassed to ask because who would possibly want to be asked such a dirty little question when they've come for a normal service for normal people

So all of these things are becoming slightly more common. But I still work in the voluntary sector, and the number of organisations that I see monitoring sexual orientation on anything are so few and far between. And the voluntary sector's supposed to be a bit more able to do this. The organisation that I work in now, I work in a disability charity and we do it with reasonable success, but nobody really batted an eyelid. Clients didn't batter an eyelid, staff didn't really batter an eyelid, and to be honest, I don't think people are as against things as you think they're going to be. And I really think it's time that statutory services starting pulling their finger out and trying to do some sort of monitoring. They need to perhaps be a bit creative about how they do it to protect people's privacy. But I don't really think it's acceptable anymore that they just don't know how many people are using their service and whether it's equally accessed or not. We also pushed for the question to be included in the census because there was some consultation about whether or not it should be. But we lost big time on that. There was no way it was ever going to

happen, and I really hope the next time it does, but I'm not even sure they're going to be ready for it next time, I think maybe the time after that it'll come.

SH: So there have been many, many changes!

TD: Yeah, just a few, yeah!

<Laughter>

SH: Gosh OK. Well that brings us to the end of the official schedule, unless there is anything that you'd like to return to or talk in anymore depth about?

Thank you very much for your time!

TD: Thank you very much, thank you.

SH: OK.

<End of Part 13>

<End of recording>