[OH2149.Stuart_file4_access_clip1.mp3] [01:17:02]

Stuart:

They always tell you, "You're going to be nothing but a statistic." I'm going out and saying, "I want you to be a statistic. I want you to be counted!" You have to think of it that way, because every interview, every opportunity, every person who says "I am an LGBT veteran. This is what I went through, this is what I experienced as a woman, I experienced military sexual trauma." You know, whatever happened to you when you were in. Whatever it was. "I was treated unfairly because of my race, or because of my religious beliefs." It can be anything. But, if you don't tell anybody, nobody can mark that and count it. You aren't gonna be counted. And some smart PhD student [laughs] is gonna be on a team researching this stuff, because it's already growing. The VA is one of the largest opportunities for research, which I learned in my psychology of women class that I had in this very building [laughs] two summers ago. Sabin Hall. There's all this research out there starting to count that, starting to count how you want to identify. They're starting to allow you to change your discharge, your proof of military service, your DD214s, your NG1s, and whatever the reserve calls it, to change your gender to the identity you choose, and to merge that with your federal records. So that when you die as "Jane," they'll know you were "John" when you served. Rather than, "Jane wasn't a veteran, Jane didn't serve," they can merge those. A lot of people don't know that. A lot of people don't get VA service or veteran stuff until later in life, they're learning all this. But maybe they were out or came out later. We have so many groups that, they're gonna age out and they're gonna disappear. And you know as a historian, that disappears, it's gone. The valuable knowledge, those great stories, they're gone. You were afraid to check that box, I know what that feels like. I wouldn't check it either. We didn't get counted then, so get counted before you go.