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STORYCORPS LAUNCHES OUTLOUD, A NEW INITIATIVE TO DOCUMENT EXPERIENCES OF LGBTQ PEOPLE, JUNE 28

Multi-Year Effort to Capture and Preserve LGBTQ Stories Across America Commemorates 45th Anniversary of Stonewall Riots and Honors StoryCorps Founder Dave Isay's Pioneering Father, Dr. Richard Isay

In its first ten years, **StoryCorps** has created the largest single collection of human voices ever recorded. The groundbreaking oral history project begins its second decade with a new, multi-year initiative, **OutLoud**, which will document the powerful, varied experiences of LGBTQ people across America, beginning **June 28**.

StoryCorps recognizes the profound historical importance of capturing the stories of the LGBTQ community and the urgent need for this work to happen now. OutLoud will preserve and honor the stories of those who lived before the 1969 Stonewall uprisings, connect generations and celebrate the voices of those most often excluded from the historical record.

Applying StoryCorps' simple methodology—one person recording another's story in locations across the country—OutLoud will preserve countless LGBTQ voices that might otherwise be lost to history. The end result will be a priceless collection of voices, one rich with wisdom and history passed from one generation to the next.

"All of us at StoryCorps feel privileged to embark on this historic journey with OutLoud," says StoryCorps founder and president **Dave Isay**. "Now is the time to record the stories of this great civil rights struggle of our time before they are lost to history. Launching this initiative has been a dream of mine for many years now. OutLoud is one of the highest uses of StoryCorps that I can imagine."

OutLoud represents Isay coming full circle personally and professionally. StoryCorps has undertaken the project in memory of Isay's father, the renowned psychiatrist **Dr. Richard Isay**, who came out to Dave when he was 22 and Richard was 52. Homosexuality was still considered a mental illness curable by therapy at that time. Richard was working predominantly with gay patients, counseling self-acceptance and campaigning for his peers in the field to do the same. An early and vocal advocate for marriage equality, he married his partner of 31 years, Gordon Harrell, in 2011, before passing away suddenly on June 28, 2012 from cancer.

Dave's first documentary for public radio, 15 years before he founded StoryCorps, was *Remembering Stonewall*, broadcast on the 20th anniversary of the riots. The project was the first-ever documentary about the Riots, and it was inspired, in part, by Dave's desire to understand and re-connect with his father.

In *Remembering Stonewall*—for which Isay recorded, and wove together first-person accounts of those who fought during the riots—lay the seed for the foundational ideas behind StoryCorps: the beauty, courage and

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poetry we can find in the voices of everyday people when we take the time to listen, and the importance of honoring the stories of those who may feel least heard.

Since its founding in 2003, StoryCorps has given more than 90,000 people the chance to record their stories. StoryCorps shares edited excerpts of these unique recordings through its popular weekly broadcasts on NPR, and through its animated shorts on PBS, digital platforms and bestselling books. It also leaves a legacy for future generations through its archive at the **American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress**, where a copy of each StoryCorps recording is kept with participant permission.

Through special projects like OutLoud, StoryCorps creates unique histories of particular communities and events. Other major StoryCorps initiatives in 2014 include the **Military Voices Initiative**, which records and preserves the stories of post-9/11 veterans, active-duty service members and their families; and **StoryCorps Legacy**, which works to collect, through hospitals and hospices, the stories of those living with serious illness and their families.

These projects follow several highly successful initiatives that StoryCorps has launched with noted partner organizations including the September 11th Initiative, which helped families memorialize the lives lost in the attacks on September 11, 2001, and February 26, 1993, in partnership with the National September 11 Memorial & Museum; the Griot Initiative, one of the largest collections of African American voices ever gathered, in partnership with the future Smithsonian National Museum of African-American History and Culture; and StoryCorps Historias, the largest collection of Latino and Hispanic voices ever gathered, in partnership with the Benson Latin American Collection at the University of Texas.

About StoryCorps

StoryCorps' mission is to provide people of all backgrounds and beliefs with the opportunity to record, preserve, and share their stories. Each week, millions listen to StoryCorps' award-winning broadcasts on NPR's *Morning Edition*. StoryCorps has published three books that are *New York Times* best sellers: *Listening Is an Act of Love*, *Mom: A Celebration of Mothers from StoryCorps*, and *All There Is: Love Stories from StoryCorps*. Our fourth book, *Ties That Bind: Stories of Love & Gratitude from the First Ten Years of StoryCorps*, was released in October 2013.

For more information, or to listen to stories online, visit www.storycorps.org.

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