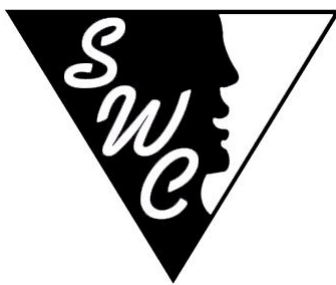


SPEAKERS

BUREAU

MANUAL



2006-2007

The Stonewall Center

**A Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, Queer, and Transgender
Educational Resource Center**

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About the Speakers Bureau

Introduction

Welcome to the Stonewall Center's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Ally (LGBTQA) Speakers Bureau! The Speakers Bureau is a volunteer organization that is coordinated by a part-time staff member of the Stonewall Center. The Speakers Bureau recruits and trains lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and ally speakers to conduct panel presentations about LGBTQA experiences for residence halls, academic classrooms, local high schools, and community organizations. We are grateful for the commitment you have made to the Speakers Bureau and the work that you will be doing to address LGBT oppression. We hope that your participation in the Speakers Bureau will be a meaningful and empowering experience, in addition to being an important form of political activism and education.

Because the time and resources available for conducting training sessions for Speakers Bureau members are limited, it is extremely important that you read through the manual thoroughly and use it as a reference guide until you are familiar with the material. The Speakers Bureau is only effective when its members actively participate, therefore we hope that you will take your commitment seriously. Any suggestions for improving the Bureau are greatly appreciated.

The History of the Stonewall Center

A series of homophobic incidents in 1984 led to protests and the development of a report on the campus climate for lesbian, gay, and bisexual students at UMass Amherst. One of the report's main recommendations was the creation of the Program for Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Concerns. The Program was established in fall 1985 as an administrative office in Student Affairs, becoming just the third LGBT center on a college campus. The office served as a model for many other colleges and universities, and today more than one hundred LGBT campus centers and offices exist across the United States. In 1995, the Program for Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Concerns was renamed "The Stonewall Center: A Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, and Transgender Educational Resource Center." This change reflected a desire to recognize the distinct yet overlapping experiences of transgender people within lesbian, gay, and bisexual communities. This year, "queer" was added to the subtitle to reflect the many ways that students identify beyond dominant gender and sexual categories.

In addition to administering the Speakers Bureau, the Stonewall Center provides cultural and educational programming, a video and book library, information and referrals, support for individuals who experience harassment and discrimination, advocacy for LGBT people at UMass Amherst, and community outreach through QueerE, a weekly listserv of LGBT campus and community events.

About the Manual

This manual is designed for Speakers Bureau members to familiarize themselves with the format for presentations, learn more about LGBT experiences, and become more adept at public speaking, particularly speaking about LGBT issues. If you already are well-skilled as a public speaker and/or are very knowledgeable about LGBT concerns, we ask that you stay open to reviewing the basics, but also invite you to share your experiences to benefit other members.

In this manual, you will find information about the mechanics of the Speakers Bureau, your role and responsibilities as a speaker, suggestions for preparing your story, tips for speaking effectively, facilitation techniques, and guidelines for answering questions. The manual also includes sample questions, suggestions for dealing with difficult or hostile situations, and educational material that can enhance your and your audience's understanding of LGBT issues.

Does the Speakers Bureau Make a Difference?

When you are presenting on a Speakers Bureau, you may sometimes feel that you are gazing into a sea of disinterested faces. However, it is important to remember that what you see on people's faces does not always reflect what they are feeling inside. The vast majority of evaluations over the years demonstrate that Speakers Bureaus have immediate, positive, and often transformative effects on audience members. The following are a few excerpts from evaluations we have received in the past.

Sample Evaluation Feedback

Responses to the question, "The most interesting/exciting thing I learned was":

"How open people are, how safe and secure people can be. How I hope that I can someday feel the same way."

"It was very interesting to hear their individual stories instead of just spitting statistics at us."

"How many privileges heterosexuals have that we take for granted."

"About transgender aspects of life. It was so interesting to hear about her life."

"How people can overcome so many hardships and still find happiness. I wish that everyone were required to see this presentation. It changed my outlook."

"So glad I came, learned and thought about things I don't usually think about."

Responses to the question, "My reaction/feedback to the individual speaker(s) is":

"They were all funny, sincere and well-spoken. I learned more in this one hour than I learned in our entire unit on lesbian and gay issues."

"I liked the way they presented themselves and were open for questions about their personal lives, no easy thing. I think it took a lot of guts on their part to lead this seminar."

"Are any of you seeing anybody??...serious!"

Speakers Bureau Goals

- ▽ **Increase LGBTQA visibility and counteract misinformation about the lives of LGBTQA people.** Many non-LGBT people still have little or no personal exposure to out LGBT people and to strong heterosexual and cisgender/non-transgender allies. As the questions and evaluation comments of audience members indicate, many attendees are surprised to learn that LGBTQA people lead lives that are not substantially different from their own.
- ▽ **Discuss the diversity of LGBT communities.** Being LGBT cuts across all cultures and identities. Therefore, Speakers Bureau members should make every effort to emphasize the varied experiences of LGBT people and to speak from their own points of view, rather than attempting to speak for all LGBT communities.
- ▽ **Make real the oppression of LGBT people.** One of the main reasons that anti-LGBT propaganda (such as the argument that LGBT people want “special rights” rather than civil rights) has often been effective is because many non-LGBT individuals do not realize or believe that queer people are oppressed. If you are LGBT, it is important to provide concrete examples of how you have been discriminated against or how homo/bi/transphobia has adversely affected your life. You should also try to mention well-known incidents of anti-LGBT violence, harassment, and discrimination.
- ▽ **Empower audience members who may not be out about their sexual and/or gender identities.** Members of the Speakers Bureau who are entirely open about being LGBT may forget that there was a time when they had to decide whether and how widely to come out. One of the most rewarding aspects of being involved in the Speakers Bureau is seeing how our willingness to talk about our experiences can help audience members decide to be more open about their own LGBT identities.
- ▽ **Empower ourselves as LGBTQA people.** While the Speakers Bureau is an important tool for educating audience members and raising awareness about LGBT lives, it is no less important as a forum for our own expression and personal development. Many panelists remark on the satisfaction that they receive from being the kind of role model for others that they wish they would have had themselves.
- ▽ **Demonstrate the importance of being a heterosexual or cisgender/non-transgender ally.** Ally speakers offer a crucial perspective on how queerphobia hurts everyone, not just LGBT people. The presence of allies on panels sends a clear message to non-LGBT people that they have a part to play in the struggle against LGBT oppression. Allies also serve as important role models for how to be aware of and accountable for heterosexual and gender normative privilege.
- ▽ **Serve as an impetus for questioning larger issues of social oppression.** We hope that dispelling anti-LGBT attitudes can lead to a discussion about the origins of heterosexism, genderism, and other forms of oppression and how these “isms” can be eliminated. While the Speakers Bureau only provides a first step in confronting intolerant attitudes, panelists should be prepared to offer suggestions and resources for further learning.

Speakers Bureau Mechanics

How Members Are Assigned to a Speaking Engagement

Speakers Bureau members can participate on a panel after they have attended a training. When a request comes into the office, the Speakers Bureau Coordinator will send an email to the member listserv to see who is available, keeping in mind the needs of the panel requester and seeking to have a diverse panel. Ideally, most panels will consist of three to five speakers with different sexual and gender identities. We strive to show the diversity of LGBTQA communities in terms of race, religion, age, class, ability, culture, and gender. There is no set number of panels that Speakers Bureau members are required to do, but we would prefer that members participate in at least one panel each semester.

One of the panelists will be asked to be the lead speaker. This person is responsible for facilitating the panel and bringing the handouts and evaluations from and then back to the Stonewall Center (the full responsibilities of the lead speaker are listed on the next page). If a lead speaker has not been designated in advance, the panelists should choose a lead speaker themselves.

Panel Format

While the format for more specialized presentations may be somewhat different, the general format of a panel is as follows.

1. The person who requested the Speakers Bureau introduces the panel as representatives from the Stonewall Center's Speakers Bureau.
2. The lead speaker introduces himself and thanks the panel requester for inviting the Speakers Bureau. Ze explains the format and goes over the ground rules.
3. The speakers tell their "stories." Each panelist should speak for no more than five minutes.
4. The lead speaker opens the floor to questions, reminds the audience of the ground rules as needed, and facilitates the discussion. If no one is willing to ask questions, the lead speaker should ask the audience about how they have seen LGBT people treated in society or popular culture—personal experience is often an easier area for students to address. The lead speaker could also break the ice by asking students to write a response to a question(s) and having them read back what they wrote.
5. The panelists answer questions based on their experiences and knowledge. Responses should be used to spark further questions and comments from the audience.
6. The lead speaker closes the presentation by thanking the panel requester again for bringing the Speakers Bureau and has the requester distribute the handouts and evaluation forms. This is a good time to mention upcoming LGBT campus events and to direct audience members to the Stonewall Center and the Pride Alliance if they want more information or would like to become involved in LGBTQA support or activism.
7. The audience, panel requester, and the panelists fill out their respective evaluation forms. Plan to stay 15 minutes after the panel and let the audience know that the Speakers Bureau

members will remain afterward if people have further questions or concerns. Be prepared to give referrals and suggest additional resources.

Responsibilities of Speakers Bureau Members

1. Participate in the Speakers Bureau training and read this manual carefully.
2. Respond to the Speakers Bureau Coordinator in a timely manner about your availability for panels.
3. Meet with the other panelists for about 15 minutes before the session to discuss the logistics of the presentation.
4. Follow the Speakers Bureau format.
5. Represent the goals of the Speakers Bureau in your presentation.
6. Stay 15 minutes after the presentation to answer further questions from audience members and to debrief with the other panelists.
7. Fill out the evaluation form with the other panelists.
8. Find a replacement if you cannot attend a Speakers Bureau session that you had agreed to do. Also inform the Speakers Bureau Coordinator of your replacement.
9. Encourage your friends and interested audience members to join the Speakers Bureau. We always need more people.
10. Make suggestions that may enhance the success of the Speakers Bureau.
11. Respect and support fellow panelists. Remember that you are working as a team.
12. Have fun!

Responsibilities of the Lead Speaker

1. Obtain the handouts and evaluation forms from the Stonewall Center and give them to the panel requester to distribute after the presentation.
2. Lead the check-in meeting with the other panelists before the start of the panel to determine speaking order and to discuss any special needs for that presentation.
3. Introduce the Speakers Bureau, go over the ground rules (provided below), facilitate the question and answer period, inform the audience about campus events and resources, and conclude the presentation.
4. Lead the panelists' debriefing after the presentation and work with the other speakers to fill out the panel evaluation form.

5. Collect the audience, requester, and panel evaluation forms and return them to the Stonewall Center as soon after the presentation as possible.
6. Set a tone of openness and willingness to engage in the topic.

Ground Rules

The lead speaker should go over the following ground rules at the beginning of the presentation.

- **Confidentiality is important.** Let the audience know that personal information shared during the Speakers Bureau is confidential and should not leave the room. Explain that some of the LGBT speakers may not be “out” to everyone, so that it is important that audience members not identify the panelists in public, such as by calling out, “Hey, didn’t I see you at that gay speakers panel?,” if they should see one of the speakers elsewhere on campus. Indicate that the confidentiality policy also applies to what audience members disclose during the presentation.
- **We are not there to engage in a debate, but to share our experiences.** Let the audience know that the main goals of the Speakers Bureau are to share the panelists’ personal experiences and to present factual information.
- **We speak only for ourselves, which is why we always use ‘I’ statements.** The panelists represent only themselves, not all LGBT people and allies. Emphasize the diversity of LGBT identities and note that the panelists’ experiences constitute only a small segment of LGBT experiences. If you have the opportunity, explain that the assumption that all queer people are alike is a form of stereotyping commonly practiced against oppressed groups. Also point out that audience members should speak only for themselves too.
- **There are no stupid questions.** Approach your audience with an awareness that for some students, the panel will be their first exposure to a group of “out” LGBT people. They may ask questions that you find naïve or even offensive. But it is better to have these questions expressed, so that we can address the stereotypes and misinformation behind them. Explain to the audience that if we did not feel comfortable answering questions, we would not be there. You also might suggest to the audience that the panel is an opportunity for them to ask questions they might not feel comfortable asking someone they know who is LGBT.
- **We reserve the right not to answer particular questions.** We reserve the right not to answer particular questions. Explain that some panelists may not want to discuss certain aspects of their personal lives, such as their sexual behavior or relationships. We also might not have an answer to any given question, for many different reasons. Note that the panelists can take care of themselves by deciding when to answer and what to share, and that the audience does not need to worry about censoring their questions. So as not to discourage questions, also state that such instances rarely occur and that we encourage all questions, as someone is typically willing to respond.
- **Seek approval of the ground rules from the audience.** Ask if these ground rules are OK and if they would like to add any new ones.

Giving an Effective Presentation

Before the Presentation

- ▽ **Prepare your story.** Before your first presentation, think about the important experiences you have had as a LGTB person and what you want to share with an audience. Also consider how being queer relates to other aspects of your identity, including your racial, cultural, and class background, your religious beliefs, and your political perspectives. A helpful way to plan your presentation is to practice with a friend who can give you feedback on your comments. Be sure to time your comments so that you get a sense of how it feels to speak for five minutes.
- ▽ **Gear your story to the audience.** The Speakers Bureau Coordinator will let you know the nature of the audience to which you will be speaking, such as whether it is a course for first-year college students, who will have had limited exposure to LGBT issues in the classroom, or whether it is an upper-level course in sociology, English, or Education, in which the students may have learned more about LGBT topics. Shape your story in a way that will connect with your audience. For example, if you are speaking to high school students, talk about your high school experiences. The more your audience can identify with you, the more they will listen to what you have to say.
- ▽ **Educate yourself.** Audience members frequently ask questions about current LGBT political and legal issues, so it is important for you to keep informed of news, including local news, related to LGBT people.

While Speaking

- ▽ **Make eye contact and use friendly body language.** Even if people do not remember the specifics of what you said, they will remember the tone you set.
- ▽ **Speak slowly and clearly.** One way to monitor your pace is by remembering to breathe.
- ▽ **Give autobiographical information about yourself.** Sharing personal details, such as where you grew up, your cultural background, and what you do for fun, will help your audience relate to you.
- ▽ **Explain what motivates you to speak.** Tell the audience why you chose to participate in the Speakers Bureau, what the work means to you, and what you hope to accomplish by speaking.
- ▽ **Keep your story focused.** Do not try to share everything that has ever happened to you. Concentrate on one or two experiences that you think are significant.
- ▽ **Be aware of the questions your story might generate.** Be prepared to answer the questions that you think your story might raise. Put another way, try to shape your story in a way that will raise the questions you want to answer.
- ▽ **Give concrete examples of oppression.** Audience members often do not realize the many ways that LGBT people experience discrimination.

- ▽ **Share what you like about being queer.** While it is important to emphasize the realities of LGBT oppression, it is also important not to focus exclusively on prejudice and discrimination.

Additional Tips for Speaking Effectively

- **Define the terms you use.** Remember that some audience members have had little or no exposure to LGBT issues. Terms like “out,” “ally,” “transgender,” “homophobia,” and “heterosexism” should be defined when first used.
- **Explain your use of “dyke,” “queer,” and other reclaimed words.** Many LGBTQA people have given positive connotations to words that anti-LGBT people use as insults. This situation can be confusing for some audience members. If you use a reclaimed term to describe yourself or your community, be sure to describe what it means to you. If you do not like the use of these words, you are also welcomed to explain why. Disagreements of this kind demonstrate the diverse experiences, values, and political views of LGBT communities.
- **Be honest about your experiences and beliefs.** Sometimes it is tempting to craft a story that represents ideal, rather than real, experiences—to transform oneself into the “Super Queer” who never internalized hatred and was always out and proud. Remember that the Speakers Bureau is intended to show the humanness and complexity of LGBTQA lives. We have hardships and embarrassments, as well as triumphs and joys, just like everyone else.
- **Respect all LGBT people.** In an attempt to win acceptance from the dominant, straight society, some LGBT people disown members of the community whom they see as “abnormal” or “deviant” because they are different from themselves and often less mainstream. This practice is an all-too-common occurrence within oppressed groups. It mirrors the dominant culture’s “divide and rule” practice of creating “other” groups and labeling them abnormal, perverted, and inferior. We all know how it feels to be made an “other” and dehumanized. Using this insidious practice against one another only undermines LGBT communities and limits the potential for building coalitions to create fundamental and lasting political change.

After Speaking

- ▽ **Listen to others.** After you have finished telling your story, listen attentively to the stories of the other panelists. It is important not to tune out when other people are talking, even if you have heard their stories many times. If the audience senses that you are bored, they will tune out as well. You should also listen for questions that you can ask other panelists if there is a lull in the question and answer period.
- ▽ **Prompting questions.** Once all the speakers have told their stories, the lead speaker will open the floor to questions. There is often an awkward silence before anyone asks a question. It is natural for people to be hesitant, so do not panic if this situation arises. If you let the silence continue for several seconds longer than you are used to, someone will usually take the initiative to ask the first question. However, if the silence continues or if there is a lag at some other point during the discussion, you can use the following methods to prompt discussion.

- Encourage the audience, telling them that you are there because you want to answer their questions. Say something like, “as we stated in the ground rules, we believe that there are no stupid questions, so please feel free to ask whatever is on your mind.”
 - Raise a question that you think might be on the minds of audience members: “One question I’m often asked that brings up an important issue is…”
 - Ask a co-panelist a question related to his story or for which you know he has a good answer.
 - Ask the audience a question, such as “How many people in the room know someone who is LGBT?” or “Where have you learned about LGBT people?”
 - Have audience members write down questions anonymously. Collect the questions and read them aloud to begin discussion.
- ▽ **Prevent a few people from dominating the discussion.** If a few people ask all of the questions, say something like “We’ve heard a lot from a couple people, and we appreciate their questions, but is there anyone else who would like to ask a question who hasn’t had a chance yet?”
- ▽ **Solicit a broad range of questions.** Try to avoid getting sidetracked onto one or two issues, such as religion or AIDS. If you feel that one subject is monopolizing the discussion, say something like “I think that we’ve talked enough about _____ for a while, so let’s move on to some other areas.” If someone continues to bring up the same subject, let the person know that you would be happy to discuss the issue after the presentation.
- ▽ **Validate questions.** Supportive phrases such as, “That’s a great question” or “I’m glad you asked that,” can encourage the audience to talk about issues relevant to them and enable people to feel more relaxed when asking questions, which can make it easier for them to ask more difficult questions.

Suggestions on Answering Questions

The question and answer period of a Speakers Bureau is in many ways the heart of the session. It is the time when you get to interact with the audience, find out what they are interested in, and begin to have a dialogue about LGBT issues. Again, it is important to set a tone that is open, friendly, and relaxed. When someone asks a question out of ignorance or with hostile overtones, try not to “react.” While being angry at homo/bi/transphobia is perfectly understandable, the Speakers Bureau is generally not a forum for expressing anger; rather, it is an *educational panel*.

The following are some helpful guidelines to remember when answering questions.

- **Listen carefully to the questions being asked**
Do not assume that you always know what an audience member is asking or that someone is intentionally being hostile when they use inappropriate language. Many people are unfamiliar with proper terminology. If an audience member’s comments are unclear, have the person clarify, or repeat what you think the person is trying to say, asking “What I hear you saying is _____. Is that correct?”
- **Be aware of air time**
Do not relate long anecdotes or dominate the discussion. Signal speakers who have gone on too long to let them know that they should wrap up and give other panelists a chance to speak.

- **Know your facts**
Be accurate in quoting research. If you do not know the answer to a question, say “I don’t know” and direct the person to resources, such as other panel members, books and other publications, and the Stonewall Center.
- **Listen for underlying assumptions**
When people ask questions, they are often trying to make a statement. For example, if someone asks, “Do you think people like you should be raising children?,” they may be saying “I don’t think LGBT people should be raising children.” The underlying assumption may be that we will force our children to be queer or that we are child molesters. In such instances, it is helpful to get the speaker to express their assumption directly, so that you can better address it. You can say “It sounds like you have some feelings about this issue. What do you think?”
- **Do not argue in front of the audience**
It is okay for panelists to disagree, but a Speakers Bureau is an inappropriate place for an argument. If you object to something said by another panelist, state that you have a different point of view and briefly explain your opinion.
- **Know your limits**
If you do not feel comfortable answering a particular question, just say so. Other panelists may be willing to respond instead.
- **Try to give the big picture**
When answering questions, present the views of other LGBT people, as well as your own. For example, if you are not religious and someone asks your religious affiliation, you might say “I personally do not believe in organized religion, but I know that many other LGBT people actively attend places of worship that are LGBT-supportive.”

Commonly Asked Questions

The following is a list of questions that are often asked during Speakers Bureaus. Please take some time to think of how you would answer them and be sure that you are comfortable and ready to share your responses. Remember that your answers do not have to be perfect, just honest and based on your own experiences.

General Questions

1. How long have you identified as LGBT?
2. Do you feel that you were born LGBT?
3. Do you ever regret being LGBT?
4. Where did you grow up? How was it like being LGBT there?
5. What was the hardest aspect for you of coming out?
6. Do your parents or other family members know that you are LGBT? What has been their reaction?
7. Do you see a conflict between your religious beliefs and your sexual or gender identity?
8. How do you meet other LGBT people and find dates here?
9. Are you involved in a relationship now? If so, for how long?
10. Are you afraid of HIV/AIDS?
11. If you are in a relationship, do you assume traditional “male” and “female” roles?
12. Can you tell who is lesbian/gay and who is straight?
13. What percent of the U.S. population is LGBT? How many LGBT students are at UMass?
14. Do you want to settle in Massachusetts to get married?
15. Do you want to have children?
16. How accepting do you find the environment at UMass and in the local community?
17. Do you feel comfortable being “out” on campus?
18. How do you deal with negative attitudes toward you?
19. Have you personally experienced discrimination?
20. How do you feel about the use of the word “queer?”
21. I have a friend who I think is LGBT, and I want to let that person know that he or she has my support. How should I approach the person?
22. What resources are available at UMass for LGBT students and allies?
23. How can people show support to the LGBT community?
24. What’s going on with same-sex marriage in Massachusetts and how do you feel about it?

Questions Directed Specifically to Transgender People

1. When did you first realize you were transgender?
2. Did you act and dress like the “opposite sex” when you were growing up?
3. What is the difference between a transvestite and a crossdresser?
4. Do you receive a lot of harassment when people read you as different than you are presenting?
5. How do you handle public restrooms?
6. Are you planning to have sex reassignment surgery?
7. If you are transitioning, why do you feel the need to alter your body? Why not just redefine what it means to be male/female?
8. Can people who have transitioned still have orgasms after surgery?
9. How do you go to the bathroom?

Questions Directed Specifically to Allies

1. Are you ever thought to be LGBT? If so, how do you handle that?
2. Have you ever questioned your own sexual or gender identity?

3. How can I be an ally to LGBT communities?
4. How did you come to be an ally?
5. Were you ever homophobic?

Questions Directed Specifically to Bisexuals

1. When did you first realize that you were bisexual?
2. Did you identify as lesbian/gay or heterosexual before identifying as bisexual?
3. Do you think it is easier to be bisexual than lesbian/gay?
4. Do you tell potential partners that you are bisexual?
5. Are you equally attracted to men and women, or are you more attracted to one gender?
6. Do you feel accepted by the lesbian and gay community?
7. Is bisexual a real identity?

Questions Directed Specifically to Lesbians

1. If lesbians do not like men, why do they often look so male?
2. Are you a lesbian because of bad experiences you have had with men?
3. Have you ever had a heterosexual relationship?

Questions Directed Specifically to Gay Men

1. Why do many gay men act so effeminate?
2. Have you ever had a heterosexual relationship?

Handling Resistance and Hostility

Occasionally, you might be invited to speak before an audience you know will be unreceptive to the information you want to present, or you might encounter hostility from a few individuals within the group.

Hostility can be seen as a symptom of a host of emotions, such as anger, fear, or hurt. Hostility might be a direct expression of insecurity around the basic emotional issues of human sexuality, or can be placed in “religious” or political terms. For those expressing it, hostility is serving some sort of function. It is not so much about attacking you as it is about filling a need in them.

Hostility might be manifested in a variety of ways, such as defensiveness, obstructiveness, yelling, arguing/debating, disrespectful laughter, or pointed silence and withdrawal, often shown vividly through body language.

Verbal hostility can range from a simple question with veiled hostility, to an outright statement like “You people disgust me!,” to a persistent attempt to disrupt the entire engagement to make a point.

Remember, in all likelihood you will not change this person. Do not try to convince them or get involved in power struggles with hostile members of the audience. If there is any name-calling involved, do not throw it back. Within the short amount of time you have, you will not convince those who are firmly entrenched in their prejudices.

Try to avoid taking personally any expressions of hostility. You might feel a tremendous amount of anger directed toward you, but in the majority of cases these feelings have absolutely nothing to do with you personally. You may represent the issues that many people are struggling with themselves. You can distance yourself from the hostility by reminding yourself and your audience of this.

Be comforted to know, however, that most of your audience, even if they disagree with you, do not want to see you harassed. If you can handle a potentially hostile situation effectively, you win points. Ultimately, you are in charge, and you can set the tone. The presence of hostility, in a limited number of people, does not mean that you are alone or that you have lost control of the situation. When you enter a potentially hostile situation, it is good to remember two basic objectives:

1. Manage the hostility.
2. Maintain your personal integrity and comfort level.

Though there are no set rules on how to attain these objectives in a speaking engagement, we offer some strategies for trying to defuse or redirect resistance or hostility. These strategies have been compiled by members of the Bureau, with the assistance of Cooper Thompson of the Campaign to End Homophobia.

❑ Ignore the Hostility

Sometimes the best tactic is simply to ignore a hostile comment coming from the audience. This often works when the comment is an off-hand remark rather than a direct question or statement.

❑ Deflect the Hostility

Appreciate people for asking questions and recognize their feelings. “Thank you for your honesty in making that comment. Many people have similar concerns.” You can then decide to

address the comment (“In my experience, however, I’ve found that…” or “I do not agree. Here is what I think…”), or move on.

A good strategy can be to toss the question back to the questioner: “That is an interesting question, what do you think?” or to give yourself a bit more time to formulate your response: “Can you say more about what you mean?” You can also toss the question to the entire group, where you may find allies. “I have my opinions on this question, but before I give my response, I would like to hear from some of you. Does everyone here agree with that view?”

❑ **Co-opt the Hostility**

You can agree with or support a portion of the person’s statement while making a point supporting your own position: “It is true that some gay males are raised in families that might be defined as having a distant father and overbearing mother, but so are some people who are heterosexual. By no means is this the only kind of family situation that gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals (or transgender people) grow up in.”

Treat a question or comment intended to bait you as if it were legitimate and use your answer as an opportunity to provide other information. Be aware of the underlying assumption, stereotype, or question beneath the question that is actually being asked.

Audience Member (to a lesbian): “You’re just here to pick up women.”

Speaker: “You raise an interesting point. There is a stereotype that lesbians only have sex on their minds and want to ‘convert’ heterosexual people. For me, I have been in a loving relationship with another woman for over five years, and I’m really not interested in having sex with anyone else.”

Sometimes you can silence a person’s disruptive behavior, or potentially even win that person over, by providing accurate information to contradict the myths and negative stereotypes that result in hostility. Explain to the audience in general, as well as to the person who asked the question, what assumptions you think are being made. Try to give a calm alternative to the comment.

Audience Member: “If everyone were homosexual, humanity would be destined to extinction.”

Speaker: “Even if one day there were only gay men and lesbians in the world (which, by the way, I think there is very little chance of), humanity would not be destined to extinction because lesbians and gay men can and do produce and raise children.”

Though you should not take hostility personally, you can frequently personalize the issues by relating your own experiences and giving a number of personal anecdotes to support your position. Let your audience see your humanity, your humor, your joy.

❑ **Address Repeated Hostility**

If an audience member continually interrupts with hostile comments, you might wish to address the disruption by allowing the person a few minutes to say anything he or she wants to say, after which time the disruptive individual agrees to let other people speak: “You obviously have a point you want to make. Why don’t you take two minutes to say whatever it is you want to say

without interruption. Then we will go back to the general discussion (or presentation) without further comments from you. Go ahead, you have two minutes.”

Alternatively, you could give a disruptive person the opportunity to share concerns following the engagement: “We don’t have time now to continue with this particular point, but I will be available at the end of the discussion to talk with you about this matter.”

□ **Move Beyond Hostility**

Focus your comments on audience members who want to learn. You can do this by addressing the disruptive individual (“I’m aware that you have asked a lot of questions, and I really need you to hear that I want you to allow others in the room to ask theirs.”) or by addressing the group as a whole: “We seem to have a difference of opinion that I don’t think we can resolve today. Since we’re all here to learn, let’s move on to other people’s questions.” Or “It seems that we will not be able to reach an agreement on this point right now, so I suggest we agree to disagree.” Or “I think I’ve already answered that, so let’s give some other people a chance to ask their questions.” Or “I’m aware that other people have some concerns. Would you like to share them with the rest of us?”

There are, of course, many other strategies to deal with resistance and some of those listed might not be suitable to your individual style of presentation. Talk with other facilitators about their strategies and experiences, and spend some time thinking about how you might react to and deal with these kinds of situations. Above all else, you should consider your own well-being to be your top priority. On those rare occasions when the atmosphere gets too strained, do what you need to do to take care of yourself and don’t worry about how well or poorly the engagement might turn out.

This section was written by Warren J. Blumenfeld for the Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Speakers Bureau of Boston’s “Speaking Out” manual

Information About LGBTQA Experiences

The Legal and Political Rights of LGBT People

Local Laws and Policies

University of Massachusetts

- The school's nondiscrimination policy includes "sexual orientation," but not "gender identity or expression."
- Because same-sex couples can marry in Massachusetts, the state has extended health benefits to married same-sex couples. Under union contracts, the University of Massachusetts provides other benefits, including tuition waivers, bereavement leave, and the use of athletic facilities, to the same-sex domestic partners of employees.

Pioneer Valley

- Northampton's nondiscrimination ordinance includes "sexual orientation" and "gender identity or expression." Amherst's policy only includes "sexual orientation."

State of Massachusetts

- Massachusetts explicitly prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation in public accommodations, housing, public and private employment, education, credit, and union practices. Gender identity is not explicitly included in the state's anti-discrimination law, but several courts and the state Commission Against Discrimination have ruled that transgender individuals can pursue an anti-discrimination claim under the category of sex or disability discrimination.
- Beginning in 2004, Massachusetts began issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples residing in the state as a result of a 2003 Massachusetts Supreme Court ruling. More than 6,000 same-sex couples have married since then. Out-of-state couples are prevented from entering same-sex marriages if these marriages would not be legal in their home states, a restriction upheld by the state Supreme Court in 2006.

Laws in Other States and Cities

Anti-Discrimination

- Seventeen states and the District of Columbia currently ban discrimination based on sexual orientation in housing, public accommodation, and/or employment: California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada (only employment), New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin.
- Eight states and the District of Columbia explicitly ban discrimination based on gender expression and identity in housing, employment, and public accommodations: Minnesota, Rhode Island, California, New Mexico, Illinois, Maine, Washington, and Hawaii (only housing and public accommodation)
- More than 75 municipalities protect the rights of gender-diverse people, from large metropolises (including New York City, Chicago, Houston, Dallas, San Diego, Seattle, San Francisco, Atlanta, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh) to small cities (including New Hope, PA [population 2,252] and Huntington Woods, MI [population 6,151]).

Marriage/Domestic Partnership Rights

- Along with the right to marry in Massachusetts, same-sex couples in Vermont and Connecticut can enter civil unions that give them the same benefits and protections under state law as male-female couples who are legally married.
- Twenty-five states have passed laws that would deny recognition to same-sex couples and to same-sex marriages performed in other states. An additional twenty states have codified this language into their constitutions (Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Georgia, Hawaii, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, and Utah). Only New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts do not legally ban same-sex marriages. President Bush has endorsed a constitutional amendment on the federal level.
- Internationally, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, and Canada allow same-sex couples to be legally married, and Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland have laws that grant same-sex couples virtually all of the benefits of civil marriage. France, Germany, and Brazil provide many legal benefits to same-sex couples. Same-sex couples have equal adoption rights in Belgium, Spain, the Netherlands, and Sweden.

Hate Crimes Laws

- Twenty-nine states and the District of Columbia have enacted hate crimes legislation that includes crimes based on real or perceived sexual orientation.
- Eight of these states (Minnesota, California, Hawaii, Vermont, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and New Mexico) and the District of Columbia also explicitly include gender identity and expression in their hate crimes laws.

Sodomy Laws

- In 2003, the Supreme Court in *Lawrence v. Texas* ruled that sodomy laws violate the constitutional right to privacy, thereby voiding the 13 remaining state sodomy laws.

Federal Laws and Policies

Anti-Discrimination

- Congress has never passed any legislation supportive of LGBT civil rights.
- In the last few years, congressional supporters have tried to pass a law that bans sexual orientation discrimination in employment (known as ENDA, or the Employment Non-Discrimination Act), but this effort too has been unsuccessful.
- Congress has passed a Defense of Marriage Act, which by defining marriage as between a man and a woman, prevents the federal government from recognizing same-sex relationships.

Resources for LGBTQA Youth

Websites

Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere: www.colage.org
The Cool Page for Queer Teens: www.bidstrup.com/cool.htm
Fierce!: www.fierceny.org
Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network: www.glsen.org
Gender Crash: www.gendercrash.com
National Youth Advocacy Coalition: www.nyacyouth.org
Out Proud: www.outproud.org
Techno-Dyke: www.technodyke.com
Youth Resources: www.youthresource.com

Publications

“Bending the Mold: An Action Kit for Transgender Youth,” available from the National Youth Advocacy Coalition: www.nyacyouth.org/nyac/Bending%20the%20Mold-final.pdf
“Beyond the Binary: A Tool Kit for Gender Identity Activism in Schools,” available from Lambda Legal: www.lambdalegal.org/binary-data/LAMBDA_PDF/pdf/305.pdf
Morty Diamond, ed., *From the Inside Out: Radical Gender Transformation, FTM and Beyond*, 2004
Mary L. Gray, *In Your Face: Stories from the Lives of Queer Youth*, 1999
Kelly Huegel, *GLBTQ: The Survival Guide for Queer and Questioning Teens*, 2003
David Levithan and Billy Merrell, eds., *The Full Spectrum: A New Generation of Writing About Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, and Other Identities*, 2006
Tracie O’Keefe and Katrina Fox, eds., *Finding the Real Me: True Tales of Sex and Gender Diversity*, 2003
“Out, Safe, and Respected: Your Rights at School,” available from Lambda Legal: www.lambdalegal.org/binary-data/LAMBDA_PDF/pdf/315.pdf
Ritch C. Savin-Williams, *Mom, Dad, I’m Gay: How Families Negotiate Coming Out*, 2001

Resource Centers

Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Society (GLASS)
Community Action Youth Programs
393 Main Street, Greenfield
413-774-2318; glass@fcac.net
A social and support group for LGBT and questioning youth and allies, aged 12-22. Meetings are held Wednesdays from 6-8 p.m. Transportation is available.

Pride Zone Too

413-582-7861

Northampton’s LGBT youth center, open Tuesdays and Fridays, 3:30-8; Thursdays, 5-9.

The Stonewall Center: A Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, Queer, & Transgender Educational Resource Center
University of Massachusetts

Crampton House/SW, 256 Sunset Avenue, Amherst

413-545-4824; stonewall@stuaf.umass.edu; www.umass.edu/stonewall;

A resource and referral center that offers educational and cultural programming, a Speakers Bureau, a weekly events listserv, and a free lending library.

LGBT and Same-Gender Loving People of Color Resources

Websites

Asian and Pacific Islander Family Pride -- www.apifamilypride.org
Asian Equality -- www.asianequality.org
Asian Pacific Islander PFLAG -- www.pflag.gapsn.org
Asian Pacific Islander Queer Women and Transgender Coalition -- www.apiqwtc.org
Gay Asian Pacific Alliance -- www.gapa.org
Gay Asian Pacific Islander Men of New York -- www.gapimny.org
Keith Boykin -- www.keithboykin.com
Latino/Latina Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Youth (in Spanish) --
www.ambientejuven.org
National Black Justice Coalition -- www.nbjcoalition.org
National Native American AIDS Prevention Center -- www.nnaapc.org
Native Out -- www.nativeout.com
O-Moi (Vietnamese Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Women) -- www.o-moi.org
Out People of Color -- <http://members.aol.com/outpeopleofcolor>
Queer Asian Pacific Alliance -- www.qapa.org
Resources for GLBT Youth of Color -- www.safeschoolscoalition.org/RG-glbtyouthofcolor.html
Trikone (LGBT South Asians) -- www.trikone.org
Two-Spirits.com -- www.2spirits.com
Walk For Me Wednesdays (drag ball culture) -- www.walk4mewednesdays.com
Zuna Institute: National Advocacy Organization for Black Lesbians -- www.zunainstitute.org

Books

Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/ La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, 1999
Lester B. Brown, ed., *Two Spirit People: American Indian Lesbian Women and Gay Men*, 1997
Devon W. Carbado, Dwight A. McBride, and Donald Weise, eds., *Black Like Us: A Century of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual African American Fiction*, 2002
Delroy Constantine-Simms, ed., *The Greatest Taboo: Homosexuality in Black Communities*, 2001
David L. Eng and Alice Y. Hom, eds., *Q & A: Queer in Asian America*, 1998
Catriona Rueda Esquibel, *With Her Machete in Her Hand: Reading Chicana Lesbians*, 2006
E. Lynn Harris, ed., *Freedom in This Village: Twenty-Five Years of Black Gay Men's Writing: 1979 to the Present*, 2004
Sue-Ellen Jacobs, Wesley Thomas, and Sabine Lang, eds., *Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality*, 1997
E. Patrick Johnson and Mae G. Henderson, eds., *Black Queer Studies: A Critical Anthology*, 2005
Kevin K. Kumashiro, ed., *Restoried Selves: Autobiographies of Queer Asian-Pacific-American Activists*, 2003
Sabine Lang, *Men as Women, Women as Men: Changing Gender in Native American Cultures*, 1998
Russell Leong, ed., *Asian American Sexualities: Dimensions of the Gay and Lesbian Experience*, 1995
Martin F. Manalansan, *Global Divas: Filipino Gay Men in the Diaspora*, 2003
Dwight A. McBride, *Why I Hate Abercrombie And Fitch: Essays on Race and Sexuality in America*, 2005
Leon E. Pettitway, *Honey, Honey, Miss Thang: Being Black, Gay, and on the Streets*, 1996
Makeda Silvera, ed., *Piece of My Heart: A Lesbian of Colour Anthology*, 1991

Intersex Resources

Intersex Person: An individual whose combination of chromosomes, hormones, internal sex organs, gonads, and/or genitals differs from one of the two expected patterns. Some intersex conditions include Klinefelter's Syndrome, Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome, ovotestes, hypospadias, and 5 Alpha-Reductase Deficiency. Allies should never refer to intersex people as "hermaphrodites." Most intersex activists reject the word because it stigmatizes their experiences and is a mythological fallacy (no one is born fully male and fully female; earthworms and snails are hermaphroditic, not humans). Many intersex people also ask that allies avoid using "intersexual" as a noun.

How to Be an Ally to Intersex People

- Do not assume that you can tell if someone is intersexed and do not assume that you know no one who is intersexed.
- Never ask someone who is intersexed about how they have sex or what their genitals look like. This is inappropriate in every situation.
- Do not tolerate anti-intersex remarks or humor.
- Respect the confidentiality of anyone who comes out to you as intersexed.
- Refer to an intersex person by the pronoun they prefer, regardless of the person's appearance. If you are not sure of which pronoun to use, ask respectfully. Never use the word "it" when referring to someone who is intersexed. To do so is incredibly insulting and disrespectful.
- An intersex person may have undergone painful surgeries without their consent that have lasting effects on their psychological, emotional, and physical health. Consequently, an intersex person may not want to hear that infant genital surgeries are "for the best" or "necessary," as these judgments minimize or ignore their own experiences.
- Do not assume that a common genital conformation is better than an uncommon one. Many intersex people who have escaped non-consensual genital surgery express satisfaction and even delight with their uncommon bodies. The message behind genital surgeries is that uncommon genitals are unacceptable and that the person who has or had these genitals must be a "freak." This kind of message is extremely disrespectful and can severely damage a person's self-esteem.
- The Intersex Society of North America recommends assigning a gender to intersex children, but to avoid surgeries or hormone therapy until the children reach an age when they can decide their gender for themselves. If your family bears or adopts an intersex child, get all the facts, including talking with intersex adults, before making decisions about medical intervention. Your doctors may strongly pressure you to submit your child to surgery, but remember that the vast majority of intersex conditions pose no health threat to the child.
- Intersex people have often been the targets of societal violence, based on the assumption that gender is a rigid, bi-polar category that cannot be violated. You can help change this belief by examining your own ideas about gender and challenging the people around you to do the same.
- Do not automatically include intersex people in "trans" and "queer" categories. Many intersex people do not feel included in or represented by the trans and queer movements.

Adapted from Lizz Green, University of California, Riverside

On the Web

Bodies Like Ours: www.bodieslikeours.org

Intersex Initiative Portland: www.ipdx.org

Intersex Society of North America (ISNA): www.isna.org

“Introduction to Intersex Activism: A Guide for Allies” (available at www.intersexinitiative.org/publications/index.html)

Survivor Project (intersex and trans survivors of domestic and sexual violence): www.survivorproject.org

“Teaching Intersex Issues: A Guide for Teachers in Women’s, Gender and Queer Studies” (available at www.intersexinitiative.org/publications/index.html)

Books

Colapinto, John. *As Nature Made Him: The Boy Who Was Raised as a Girl*. Harper Collins, 2000.

Dreger, Alice Domurat. *Hermaphrodites and the Medical Invention of Sex*. Harvard University Press, 1998.

Dreger, Alice Domurat, ed. *Intersex in the Age of Ethics*. University Publishing Group, 1999.

Eugenides, Jeffery. *Middlesex*. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2002. (Fiction)

Fausto-Sterling, Anne. *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Human Sexuality*. Basic Books, 2000.

Kessler, Suzanne J. *Lessons from the Intersexed*. Rutgers University Press, 1998.

Lees, Lisa. *Fool for Love*. Lulu Press, 2005. (Young adult fiction)

Preves, Sharon. *Intersex and Identity: The Contested Self*. Rutgers University Press, 2003.

Videos (all available from the Intersex Society of North America)

Hermaphrodites Speak!

Is It a Boy or Girl?

Total Patient Care: The Child with an Intersex Condition (geared toward medical and mental health professionals)

Yellow for Hermaphrodites: Mani’s Story

LGBT and Religion/Spirituality Resources

Websites

Affirmation: Gay and Lesbian Mormons -- www.affirmation.org
Affirmation: United Methodists for LGBT Concerns -- www.umaffirm.org
Al-Fatiha (LGBT Muslims) -- www.al-fatiha.org
Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Ministry -- www.clgs.org
Christian Lesbians -- www.christianlesbians.com
Dignity USA (LGBT Catholics) -- www.dignityusa.org
Evangelicals Concerned -- www.ecwr.org
Friends (Quakers) for LGBTQ Concerns -- www.quaker.org/flgbtqc/index.html
Integrity (LGBT Episcopalians) -- www.integrityusa.org
Interweave: Unitarian Universalists for LGBT Concerns --
<http://qrd.tcp.com/qrd/www/orgs/uua/uu-interweave.html>
JQYouth (Jewish LGBT Youth) -- www.jqyouth.org
LGBT Pagan sites -- www.witchvox.net/links/net_gay.html
LGBT Religious Archives Network -- www.lgbtran.org
More Light Presbyterians -- www.mlp.org
Orthodox Jewish Gays -- www.orthogays.com
Rainbow Baptists -- www.rainbowbaptists.org
Safra Project (LBT Muslim Women) -- www.safraproject.org
United Church of Christ Coalition for LGBT Concerns -- www.uccoalition.org
Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches -- www.ufmcc.com
Whosoever: An Online Magazine for LGBT Christians -- www.whosoever.org
World Congress of Gay and Lesbian Jewish Organizations -- <http://glbtjews.org>

Books

Rebecca Alpert, *Like Bread on the Seder Plate*, 1998
Gary David Comstock, *A Whosoever Church: Welcoming Lesbians and Gay Men into African American Congregations*, 2001
Peter J. Gomes, *The Good Book: Reading the Bible with Mind and Heart*, 2002
Steven Greenberg, *Wrestling with God and Man: Homosexuality in the Jewish Tradition*, 2005
Daniel A. Helminiak, *What the Bible Really Says about Homosexuality*, 2000
Debra Kolody, ed., *Blessed Bi Spirit: Bisexual People of Faith*, 2000
Winston Leyland, ed., *Queer Dharma: Voices of Gay Buddhists*, 2000
John J. McNeill, *Taking a Chance on God: Liberating Theology for Gays, Lesbians, and Their Lovers, Families, and Friends*, 1996
Stephen O. Murray and Will Roscoe, eds., *Islamic Homosexualities: Culture, History, and Literature*, 1997
David Shneer and Caryn Aviv, eds., *Queer Jews*, 2002
Justin Edward Tanis, *Trans-Gendered: Theology, Ministry, and Communities of Faith*, 2003

Ally Packet

Becoming an Ally

What Is an Ally?

An ally is a member of the dominant social group who takes a stand against social injustice directed at a target group(s)—for example, white people who speak out against racism, or heterosexual individuals who speak out against heterosexism and homophobia. An ally works to be an agent of social change rather than an agent of oppression. When a form of oppression has multiple target groups, as do racism, ableism, and heterosexism, target group members can be allies to other targeted social groups (African Americans can be allies to Asian Americans, blind people can be allies to people who use wheelchairs, and lesbians can be allies to bisexuals).

Characteristics of an Ally

- Feeling good about your own social group membership and being comfortable and proud of your own identity
- Taking responsibility for learning about your own heritage, culture, and experiences in society and the cultures and experiences of oppressed groups
- Learning how oppression works in everyday life
- Listening to and respecting the perspectives and experiences of members of oppressed groups
- Acknowledging unearned privileges that were received as a result of your status in society and working to earn these privileges for oppressed groups
- Recognizing that unlearning oppressive beliefs is a lifelong process
- Being willing to take risks and try new behaviors
- Acting in spite of your own fear and the resistance of others
- Being willing to be confronted about your own behavior and consider change
- Committing yourself to take action against social injustice in any way you have influence
- Understanding the connections among all forms of social injustice
- Believing you can make a difference by acting and speaking out against social injustice
- Knowing how to cultivate support from other allies

Definitions: Terms You Need to Know to Be an Effective Ally

Appropriate Group Terminology

Bisexual: An individual who is romantically and physically attracted to people of different genders. Bisexuals need not have equal attraction to or sexual experience with men and women.

Cisgender: A person who is gender-typical or non-transgender.

Gay Man: A man who is romantically and physically attracted to other men.

Heterosexual: An individual who is romantically and physically attracted to people of the same gender.

Intersex Person: An individual whose combination of chromosomes, hormones, internal sex organs, gonads, and/or genitals is not considered “standard” for either male or female. About one in 2,000 children, or five children per day in the United States, are born visibly intersex.

LGBT: An abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.

Lesbian: A woman who is romantically and physically attracted to other women.

Queer: Traditionally a pejorative term for LGBT people, the word has been reclaimed by some LGBT people to describe themselves. It is not universally accepted within the LGBT community, and if used by heterosexuals who are not allies, it is still often considered derogatory.

Trans or Transgender: Most commonly used as an umbrella term for someone whose self-identification or expression challenges traditional notions of “male” and “female.” Transgender people include transsexuals, crossdressers, drag queens and kings, genderqueers, and others who cross traditional gender categories.

Crossdresser: a person who, regardless of motivation, wears clothes, makeup, etc. that are considered by the culture to be appropriate for another gender but not one’s own.

Drag King and Drag Queen: A female-to-male crossdresser (typically a lesbian) and a male-to-female crossdresser (typically a gay man), respectively, who present in public, often for entertainment purposes.

Genderqueer: A term used by individuals, especially transgender youth, who identify as neither male nor female, or as both, and who often seek to blur gender lines.

Transsexual: A person whose gender identity is different from their assigned gender at birth. Transsexuals often undergo hormone treatments and gender reassignment surgeries to align their anatomy with their core identity, but not all desire or are able to do so.

Appropriate Social Justice Terminology

Genderism: The societal, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices that privilege cisgender or gender-typical people and subordinate and disparage transgender and gender-diverse people. The critical element that differentiates genderism from anti-transgender prejudice and discrimination is the use of institutional power and authority to support prejudice and enforce discriminatory behavior in systematic ways with far-reaching outcomes and effects.

Heterosexism: The societal, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices that privilege heterosexuals and subordinate and disparage lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals.

Gender-Normative Privilege: The benefits and advantages that gender-normative people receive in a genderist culture. It also includes the benefits that transgender people receive as a result of claiming a gender-normative identity and denying their transgender selves. There is also **heterosexual privilege**.

Homophobia: The fear, hatred, or intolerance of people who identify or are perceived as lesbian or gay. Homophobia includes the fear of being seen as lesbian or gay and the fear or hatred of one's own attraction to members of the same sex (which is referred to as internalized homophobia). There are also **biphobia** and **transphobia**.

Inappropriate Terminology

Hermaphrodite: An inaccurate clinical term for intersex people. Most intersex activists reject the word because it stigmatizes their experiences and is a mythological fallacy (no one is born fully male and fully female; earthworms and snails are hermaphroditic, not humans).

Homosexual: A clinical term for gay men and sometimes lesbians. Although the word is still frequently used in the media and by some older gay men, it is largely rejected by most members of the gay community because of its anachronistic nature and because of how "homosexuals" were pathologized by the medical profession.

Transvestite: An outdated clinical term for crossdressers. Most crossdressers object to the word because it is commonly understood to describe men who are sexually gratified by wearing traditionally women's clothes, which does not apply to the vast majority of male crossdressers, who are not fetishists. They are simply more comfortable and more themselves in "women's" clothing. The term also does not recognize that women can crossdress too.

What Are Biphobia, Homophobia, and Transphobia?

Examples of Biphobia:

- Assuming that everyone you meet is either heterosexual or lesbian/gay
- Assuming that two women together are lesbian, that two men together are gay, or that a man and a woman together are heterosexual
- Believing that bisexuals are confused or indecisive about their sexuality
- Thinking that bisexuals are promiscuous or cannot live monogamously
- Assuming that bisexuals need at least one male and one female partner
- Thinking that bisexuals are attracted to everyone
- Assuming that people who identify as bisexual are “really” lesbian or gay, but are in denial
- Believing that people who are bisexual spread HIV/AIDS
- Thinking that people identify as bisexual because it is “trendy”
- Not wanting to date someone who is bisexual because you assume that the person will eventually leave you for someone of another gender

Examples of Homophobia:

- Harassing or engaging in violence against individuals who are or are perceived as lesbian or gay
- Denying equal treatment to individuals who are or are perceived as lesbian or gay
- Indicating discomfort or disgust toward individuals who are or are perceived as lesbian or gay
- Feeling repulsed by displays of affection between same-sex couples, but accepting affectionate displays between different-sex couples
- Assuming everyone you meet is heterosexual
- Thinking you can “spot one”
- Using a disparaging phrase such as “that’s so gay”
- Being afraid of social or physical interactions with people who are lesbian or gay
- Avoiding social situations or activities where you might be perceived as lesbian or gay
- Not confronting a homophobic remark for fear of being identified with lesbians or gay men
- Assuming that lesbians and gay men will be attracted to everyone of the same sex

Examples of Transphobia:

- Harassing or engaging in violence against individuals who are or are perceived as transgender
- Denying equal treatment to individuals who are or are perceived as transgender
- Indicating discomfort or disgust toward individuals who are or are perceived as transgender
- Thinking that transsexuals are mentally ill
- Believing that transsexual men and transsexual women aren’t “real” men and women
- Intentionally using inappropriate gender pronouns to refer to transgender people or calling them “it”
- Believing that crossdressing is a sexual perversion or that people who crossdress do so for sexual gratification
- Thinking that identifying as genderqueer is a phase or fad

How to Be an Ally to LGBT People

- Use the words “gay” and “lesbian” instead of “homosexual.” The overwhelming majority of gay men and lesbians do not identify with or use the word “homosexual” to describe themselves.
- Use non-gender specific language. Ask “Are you seeing someone?” or “Are you in a committed relationship?,” instead of “Do you have a boyfriend/girlfriend?” or “Are you married?” Use the word “partner” or “significant other” instead of “boyfriend/girlfriend” or “husband/wife.”
- Do not assume the sexual orientation of another person even when that person is in a committed relationship with someone of a different gender. Many bisexuals, and even some gay men and lesbians, are in different-sex relationships. Also, do not assume that a transgender person is gay or will seek to transition to become heterosexual.
- Do not assume that a gay, lesbian, or bisexual person is attracted to you just because they have disclosed their sexual identity. If any interest is shown, be flattered, not flustered. Treat any interest that someone might show just as you would if it came from someone who is heterosexual.
- Challenge your own conceptions about gender-appropriate roles and behaviors. Do not expect people to conform to society’s beliefs about “women” and “men.”
- Validate people’s gender expression. For example, if a person assigned male at birth identifies as female, refer to that person as “she” and use her chosen name. If you are unsure how to refer to a person’s gender, simply ask that person.
- Speak out against statements and jokes that attack LGBT people. Letting others know that you find anti-LGBT statements and jokes offensive and unacceptable can go a long way toward reducing homo/bi/transphobia.
- Educate yourself about LGBT histories, cultures, and concerns. Read LGBT-themed books and publications and attend LGBT events (you can learn about the LGBT events being held in the Pioneer Valley by subscribing to the Stonewall Center's QueerE listserv or by going to our website: www.umass.edu/stonewall).
- Support and involve yourself in LGBT organizations and causes. Donate money or volunteer time to LGBT organizations, such as the Stonewall Center. Write letters to your political representatives asking them to support legislation that positively affects LGBT people. Support local LGBT businesses and LGBT-friendly national chain stores (see the Human Rights Campaign’s website for information on LGBT-supportive corporations: www.hrc.org).

What Is Heterosexual Privilege?

If you are heterosexual (or, in some cases, simply perceived as heterosexual):

- ∇ you can go wherever you want and know that you will not be harassed, beaten, or killed because of your sexuality
- ∇ you do not have to worry about being mistreated by the police or victimized by the criminal justice system because of your sexuality
- ∇ you can express affection (kissing, hugging, and holding hands) in most social situations and not expect hostile or violent reactions from others
- ∇ you are more likely to see sexually-explicit images of people of your sexuality without these images provoking public consternation or censorship
- ∇ you can discuss your relationships and publicly acknowledge your partner (such as by having a picture of your lover on your desk) without fearing that people will automatically disapprove or think that you are being “blatant”
- ∇ you can legally marry the person whom you love in any state in the U.S.
- ∇ you can automatically receive tax breaks, health and insurance coverage, and spousal legal rights through being in a long-term relationship
- ∇ you can be assured that your basic civil rights will not be denied or outlawed because some people disapprove of your sexuality
- ∇ you can expect that your children will be given texts in school that implicitly support your kind of family unit and that they will not be taught that your sexuality is a “perversion”
- ∇ you can raise, adopt, and teach children without people believing that you will molest them or force them into your sexuality. Moreover, people generally will not try to take away your children because of your sexuality
- ∇ you can belong to the religious denomination of your choice and know that your sexuality will not be denounced by its religious leaders
- ∇ you know that you will not be fired from a job or denied a promotion because of your sexuality
- ∇ you can work in traditionally male- or female-dominated occupations without it being considered “natural” for someone of your sexuality
- ∇ you can expect to see people of your sexuality positively presented on nearly every television show and in nearly every movie

Myths and Realities of LGBT Life

▼ **Myth: Children raised by lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals are more likely to become gay.**

Reality: Numerous studies have found that children raised by gay and lesbian parents are not more likely to identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual as adults than children raised in heterosexual families. Research also demonstrates that there are no differences between the children in intelligence, psychological and social adjustment, and popularity with friends. Some studies show that children with gay/lesbian parents are more accepting of diversity.

▼ **Myth: The majority of child molesters are gay men.**

Reality: Very few gay men molest children. Research indicates that about 95% of child molestation is committed by heterosexual men. The overwhelming majority of lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals are interested in other adults, not children.

▼ **Myth: Most transgender people identify as lesbians or gay men.**

Reality: Gender identity (how someone perceives their own gender) is a different concept than sexual identity. Transgender people identify across the sexual-orientation spectrum, and in fact, studies show that the majority of crossdressers are heterosexual men.

▼ **Myth: “Homosexuality” is unique to humans and is not found elsewhere in nature.**

Reality: Same-sex sexual behavior has been scientifically documented as a normal, regular occurrence among nearly 300 species of mammals and birds, including chimpanzees, dolphins, elephants, squirrels, geese, and bears.

▼ **Myth: There are few actual bisexuals; most people will eventually identify as either completely lesbian/gay or heterosexual.**

Reality: Many people identify as bisexual all of their lives. There are probably as many, if not more, bisexuals as there are gay men and lesbians. However, bisexuals frequently go unrecognized because they are seen as heterosexual when they are in relationships with people of another sex, and as lesbian or gay when in relationships with people of the same sex.

▼ **Myth: Being lesbian or gay is a type of mental illness and can be cured with appropriate psychotherapy.**

Reality: In 1973, the American Psychiatric Association removed “homosexuality” from its list of mental disorders, and in 1975 it stated that “homosexuality, per se, implies no impairment in judgment, stability, reliability, or general social or vocational capacities.” Although several “ex-gays” have become prominent in the mainstream media in recent years, very few gay people desire or are able to change who they are. Even many “ex-gays” admit that they continue to have attractions to people of the same sex; they just don’t act on their feelings. Helping LGBT people to develop a greater level of self-acceptance is a more effective therapy.

▼ **Myth: Most transgender people seek gender reassignment surgery.**

Reality: While some transsexuals take hormones, have electrolysis (for trans women) or mastectomies (for trans men), and undergo genital reconstruction surgeries, others choose none or only some of these procedures, because of the tremendous cost of the surgeries, the mixed results (especially for trans men), and a lack of access to medical care in general. Other transgender people decide not to alter their bodies permanently, but seek to express their gender identities in other ways, such as through crossdressing.

▼ **Myth: Bisexual men are largely responsible for the spread of HIV/AIDS to heterosexual women.** Reality: This stereotyping of bisexual men ignores the realities of AIDS. It is unsafe sexual practices and needle-sharing behavior, not membership in a particular group, that spreads HIV.

▼ **Myth: Being gay, lesbian, or bisexual is a personal choice that people make.** Reality: The cause of sexual identity is unknown. Many studies suggest a genetic or biological basis, while others cast doubt on a biological explanation. Similarly, some people feel that they were “born that way,” while others regard their sexual identity as developing over time.

▼ **Myth: Most transsexuals are trans women (individuals assigned male at birth who identify as female).** Reality: While trans women have often been more visible in society, it is estimated that there are approximately equal numbers of trans women and trans men.

▼ **Myth: Bisexuals are equally attracted to men and women.** Reality: Some are. But many people who identify as bisexual are more attracted to men or more attracted to women. Some say they are interested in men and women in different ways, and others say gender is not relevant to whom they find attractive.

▼ **Myth: Bisexual people are more promiscuous than heterosexuals or gay men and lesbians.** Reality: Bisexuality is a sexual orientation. It is independent of the decision to be monogamous or non-monogamous. Some heterosexuals, gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals are monogamous; others are not. It is a mistake to assume that because someone has the potential to be attracted to different genders, they must have more sex partners.

▼ **Myth: Providing a young person with information about LGBT people may harm them, or coax them to change their sexuality.** Reality: It is not providing teens with information that harms them. Because of feeling isolated and lacking resources that would enable them to accept themselves, LGBT teens are more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers. Suicide is the leading cause of death among gay, lesbian, and bisexual teens, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

▼ **Myth: Places of worship do not allow openly LGBT people to become members of their congregations.** Reality: While some places of worship and religious denominations are intolerant of people with different sexual and gender identities, others are very accepting, including Reform Judaism, Unitarian Universalists, the United Church of Christ, the Society of Friends (Quakers), and the predominantly LGBT Metropolitan Community Church. Many churches and synagogues in the Pioneer Valley readily welcome LGBT people as worshippers; some have LGBT clergy and/or perform same-sex marriages.

▼ **Myth: LGBT people are protected under civil rights laws like other groups and are asking for “special rights.”** Reality: In most of the U.S., LGBT people can be fired or not hired and denied housing and access to public facilities simply because of their sexual or gender identity. Only seventeen states and the District of Columbia currently ban discrimination based on sexual orientation, and only seven states and the District of Columbia ban discrimination based on gender identity/expression.

Transgender Packet

Transgender Terminology

Crossdresser: a person who, regardless of motivation, wears clothes, makeup, etc. that are considered by the culture to be appropriate for another gender but not one's own (preferred term to "transvestite").

Drag or In Drag: Wearing clothes considered appropriate for someone of another gender.

Drag King and Drag Queen: A FTM crossdresser (typically a lesbian) and a MTF crossdresser (typically a gay man), respectively, who present in public, often for entertainment purposes.

En Femme: A term in the male crossdressing community for expressing a more "feminine" personality and displaying more "feminine" gender behavior while crossdressing.

FTM: A female-to-male transsexual, a transsexual man, a transman, or a transguy—individuals assigned female at birth who identify as male. Some transmen reject being seen as "FTM," arguing that they have always been male and are only making this identity visible to other people (instead, they may call themselves "MTM"). Other transmen feel that "FTM" and similar language reinforces an either/or gender system.

Gender: The social construction of masculinity and femininity in a specific culture. It involves gender assignment (the gender designation of someone at birth), gender roles (the expectations imposed on someone based on their gender), gender attribution (how others perceive someone's gender), and gender identity (how someone defines their own gender).

Gender Expression: How one chooses to express one's gender identity to others through behavior, clothing, hairstyle, voice, body characteristics, etc.

Gender Identity: An individual's internal sense of being male, female, or something else. Since gender identity is internal, one's gender identity is not necessarily visible to others.

Gender Identity Disorder (GID): The classification for transsexuality in the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (4th Edition, Text Revision, 2001). Most transsexuals strongly object to being considered mentally ill, arguing that it is a completely inaccurate diagnosis and serves to dehumanize and pathologize them. However, some transsexuals in countries such as Canada and Holland support GID being recognized as a mental disorder, because it enables them to have their gender reassignment surgeries covered by government health insurance (gender reassignment surgeries are rarely covered in the U.S.).

Gender Reassignment Surgery (GRS): Surgical procedures that change one's body to conform to one's gender identity. These procedures may include "top surgery" (breast augmentation or removal) and "bottom surgery" (altering genitals). For female-to-male transsexuals, GRS involves a bilateral mastectomy (chest reconstruction), panhysterectomy (removal of the ovaries and uterus), and sometimes a phalloplasty (construction of a penis) and scrotoplasty (formation of a scrotum) or a metoidioplasty (restructuring the clitoris). For male-to-female transsexuals, GRS consists of optional surgical breast implants and vaginoplasty (construction of a vagina). Additional surgeries might include a trachea shave (reducing the size of the Adam's apple), bone restructuring to feminize facial

features, and hair transplants. Sometimes GRS is referred to as “gender confirming surgery,” to recognize that one’s gender does not change—it is only being made visible to others.

Gender Variant, Gender Diverse, or Gender Non-Conforming: Alternative terms for transgender, meaning one who varies from traditional “masculine” and “feminine” gender roles.

Genderqueer: A term used by individuals, especially transgender youth, who do not identify as either male or female and who often seek to blur gender lines. Among the dozens of more specific “genderqueer” terms are transboi, boydyke, third gendered, bi-gendered, multi-gendered, andro, androgyne, and gender bender.

Hir: A non-gender specific pronoun used instead of “her” and “him.”

Intersex: A person who is born with “sex chromosomes,” external genitalia, or an internal reproductive system that is not considered “standard” for either male or female (preferred term to “hermaphrodite”).

MTF: A male-to-female transsexual, a transsexual woman, a transwoman, or a transgirl—individuals assigned male at birth who identify as female. Some transwomen reject being seen as “MTF,” arguing that they have always been female and are only making this identity visible to other people (instead, they may call themselves “FTF”). Other transwomen feel that “MTF” and similar language reinforces an either/or gender system.

Second Self: A term in the male crossdressing community for an individual’s alternative gender preference. Male crossdressers express their second self through wearing “feminine” clothing and expressing “feminine” characteristics.

Sie or Ze: A non-gender specific pronoun used instead of “she” and “he.”

Trans or Transgender: Most commonly used as an umbrella term for someone whose self-identification or expression challenges traditional notions of “male” and “female.” Transgender people include transsexuals, crossdressers, drag queens and kings, genderqueers, and others who cross or challenge traditional gender categories.

Transitioning: The period during which a person begins to live as their new gender. It may include changing one’s name, taking hormones, having surgery, and altering legal documents.

Transphobia: The fear, hatred, or intolerance of people who identify or are perceived as transgender.

Transsexual: A person whose gender identity is different from their assigned gender at birth. Transsexuals often undergo hormone treatments and gender reassignment surgeries to align their anatomy with their core identity, but not all desire or are able to do so.

Two Spirit: A Native American/First Nation term for people who blend the masculine and the feminine. It is commonly used to describe biological women who took on the roles and/or dress of men and biological men who took on the roles and/or dress of women in the past (preferred term to “berdache”). The term is also often used by contemporary LGBT Native American and First Nation people to describe themselves.

How Might the Needs of Transgender People Differ from the Needs of Non-Transgender Lesbians, Gays, and Bisexuals (LGB)?

- They may identify as heterosexual, so may not be dealing with sexual identity issues. However, they will likely be seen by society as lesbian or gay because of the stereotype that trans people are lesbian or gay or because of appearances. (Take, for example, someone who identifies as female but who looks male and who is dating a biological man. She will see this as a heterosexual relationship or maybe a transsexual relationship, but most people will see two men together and perceive it as a gay relationship).
- They may experience more verbal and physical attacks than most LGB people if they are crossdressed or otherwise visibly gender diverse. After all, most LGB harassment stems from the perceived violation of gender norms.
- They are generally less accepted in society than LGB people, in large part because of ignorance. There is little understanding of transgender lives; they are rarely visible in popular culture (beyond the stereotypical images of drag queens) and almost no research has been conducted on their experiences.
- They also often experience a lack of acceptance from the LGB community, which uses transgender people as entertainers, but frequently does not want to see them otherwise.
- As a result of the lack of acceptance in the dominant culture and LGB society, they often lack a community and do not have role models or many positive images. Consequently, transgender people, especially trans youth, may feel more isolated and more marginalized than non-trans LGB people.
- Transgender students may want to remain closeted because of the legitimate fear of how they will be treated by their professors, employers, and in their field.
- If transitioning, they will need access to medical care and mental health care. But the medical profession often fails to support them because of ignorance and a traditional, psychoanalytical understanding of transsexuality.
- If transitioning, they will need to change all of their records and documents.
- While butch lesbians and other masculine-appearing women are harassed in women's restrooms, transsexual women are especially vulnerable to attack and embarrassment when they try to use the public bathroom appropriate for their gender.

How to Be an Ally to Transgender People

- ∇ Validate people's gender expression. It is important to refer to a transgender person by the pronoun appropriate to their gender identity. In other words, if someone identifies as female, then refer to the person as "she"; if someone identifies as male, refer to the person as "he." If you are not sure, ask them. Never use the word "it" when referring to someone who is transgender. To do so is incredibly insulting and disrespectful. Some transgender people prefer to use gender-neutral pronouns: "hir" instead of "her" and "his," and "sie" or "ze" instead of "she" and "he."
- ∇ Use non-gender specific language. Ask "Are you seeing someone?" or "Are you in a committed relationship?," instead of "Do you have a boyfriend/girlfriend?" or "Are you married?" Use the word "partner" or "significant other" instead of "boyfriend/girlfriend" or "husband/wife."
- ∇ Challenge your own conceptions about gender-appropriate roles and behaviors. Do not expect people to conform to society's beliefs about "women" and "men."
- ∇ Do not assume that someone who is transgender is lesbian, gay, or bisexual, or that the person will seek to transition to become heterosexual.
- ∇ Use the word "crossdresser" instead of "transvestite," which is often considered pejorative.
- ∇ Never ask transgender people about how they have sex or what their genitals look like. This is inappropriate in every situation.
- ∇ Do not share the gender identity of individuals without their permission. Do not assume that everyone knows. The decision to tell someone about their gender should be left to the person.
- ∇ When you learn about someone's transgender identity, do not assume that it is a fad or trend. While public discussions about transgenderism and transsexuality are a relatively recent phenomenon, most transgender people have dealt with their gender identity for many years, often at great personal and professional costs. It is important to trust that someone's decision to present themselves as gender diverse is not made lightly or without due consideration.
- ∇ Educate yourself and others about transgender experiences and concerns. Introduce trainings, readings, and other resources to your peers and colleagues to continue educational efforts to deconstruct social norms around gender, sex, and sexual orientation.
- ∇ Work to change campus policies in areas such as housing, bathroom access, student records and forms, and health care that discriminate against transgender people and seek to include gender identity/expression in your school's non-discrimination policy.

Gender Normative Privilege

If I am gender normative (or, in some cases, simply perceived as gender normative):

- ∇ My validity as a man/woman/human is not based on how much surgery I have had or how well I “pass” as a non-transperson.
- ∇ When initiating sex with someone, I do not have to worry that they will not be able to deal with my parts, or that having sex with me will cause my partner to question his or her own sexual orientation.
- ∇ I am not excluded from events which are either explicitly or de facto (because of nudity) for men-born-men or women-born-women only.
- ∇ My politics are not questioned based on the choices I make with regard to my body.
- ∇ I do not have to hear “so have you had *the* surgery?” or “oh, so you’re *really* a [incorrect gender]?” each time I come out to someone.
- ∇ Strangers do not ask me what my “real name” [birth name] is and then assume that they have a right to call me by that name.
- ∇ People do not disrespect me by using incorrect pronouns even after they have been corrected.
- ∇ I do not have to worry about whether I will experience harassment or violence for using a bathroom or whether I will be safe changing in a locker room.
- ∇ I do not have to defend my right to be a part of “queer,” and gays and lesbians will not try to exclude me from *our* movement in order to gain political legitimacy for themselves.
- ∇ I do not have to choose between being invisible (“passing”) or being “othered” and/or tokenized based on my gender.
- ∇ When I go to the gym or a public pool, I can use the showers.
- ∇ If I go to the emergency room, I do not have to worry that my gender will keep me from receiving appropriate treatment, or that all of my medical issues will be seen as a result of my gender.
- ∇ My health insurance provider (or public health system) does not specifically exclude me from receiving benefits or treatments available to others because of my gender.
- ∇ My identity is not considered “mentally ill” by the medical establishment.
- ∇ I am not required to undergo an extensive psychological evaluation in order to receive basic medical care.
- ∇ The medical establishment does not serve as a “gatekeeper,” determining what happens to my body.

Adapted from: <http://ftmichael.tashari.org/privilege.html>

The Legal and Political Rights of Transgender People

Hate Crimes and Hate Crime Laws

- Since 1989, about one person a month on average has been reported to have been killed in the U.S. because of their perceived gender identity. Many more murders are not reported or are not classified as anti-transgender hate crimes.
- In 2005, there were 14 known anti-transgender murders in the U.S., and another 14 reported elsewhere in the world.
- While 46 states have hate crime laws, only 10 states (California, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, and Vermont) and the District of Columbia include the category of gender identity or expression.
- Only Minnesota, California, New Jersey, and Washington currently have laws that ban harassment against students in public schools based on their gender identity or expression.

Anti-Discrimination Laws

- Only 7 states—California, Illinois, Minnesota, New Mexico, Maine, Rhode Island, and Washington—ban discrimination based on gender identity and expression in housing, public accommodation, and employment (in addition, Hawaii covers housing discrimination).
- More than 75 municipalities protect the rights of gender-diverse people, from large metropolises (including New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Dallas, San Diego, Denver, Seattle, San Francisco, Atlanta, New Orleans, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh) to small cities (including New Hope, PA [population 2,252] and Huntington Woods, MI [population 6,151]).
- Ohio, Idaho, and Tennessee deny transsexuals the right to change the sex designation on their birth certificates, while courts in Texas and Kansas have refused to recognize the new birth certificates of transsexuals.

Anti-Discrimination Policies

- Since 1996, more than 65 colleges and college systems have added gender identity/expression to their nondiscrimination policies, including the University of Maine schools, the University of New Hampshire, the University of Vermont, and five colleges in Massachusetts, but not the University of Massachusetts.
- More than 75 Fortune 500 corporations have added gender identity/expression to their nondiscrimination policies, including Aetna, American Airlines, Apple Computers, AT&T, Bank One, Citigroup, Ford, IBM, Eastman Kodak, Lucent Technologies, JP Morgan Chase, NCR, Nationwide, Nike, PepsiCo, S.C. Johnson and Sons, and Xerox.

Medical Care

Most private medical plans, the Medicaid statutes of 26 states, and federal Medicare explicitly exclude coverage for transsexual surgeries and related treatments, including the cost of hormones, based on the misguided belief that such procedures are cosmetic and therefore unnecessary. Increasingly, though, transgender advocates are successfully challenging the denial of basic health care services to transsexuals by using claim appeal processes and by filing suits against insurers and state Medicaid agencies.

Transgender Campus Resources

Books and Articles

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- Israel, Gianna E., and Donald E. Tarver II. *Transgender Care: Recommended Guidelines, Practical Information, and Personal Accounts*. Temple University Press, 1997.
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- Nestle, Joan, Riki Wilchins, and Clare Howell, eds. *Genderqueer: Voices from Beyond the Sexual Binary*. Alyson, 2002.
- Rankin, Susan R. *Campus Climate for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender People: A National Perspective*. National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute, 2003.
- Rudd, Peggy J. *Crossdressing with Dignity: The Case for Transcending Gender Lines*. PM Publishers, 1999.
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- Sausa, Lydia A. "Updating College and University Campus Policies: Meeting the Needs of Trans Students, Staff, and Faculty." In *Addressing Homophobia and Heterosexism on College Campuses*. Edited by Elizabeth P. Cramer. Harrington Park Press, 2002. 43-55.
- Transgender Law Center. *Peeing in Peace: A Resource Guide for Transgender Activists and Allies*. Available at <http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org>.

On the Web

FTM International: www.ftmi.org
International Foundation for Gender Education: www.ifge.org
National Center for Transgender Equality: www.nctequality.org
PFLAG's TNET (Transgender Network): <http://pflag.org/TNET.tnet.0.html>
People in Search of Safe Restrooms (PSSR): www.pissr.org
Sylvia Rivera Law Project: www.srlp.org
Trans-Academics.org: www.trans-academics.org
Trans Family: www.transfamily.org
Trans Health: www.trans-health.com
Trans Proud: www.transproud.com
Transgender Care: www.transgendercare.com
Transgender Day of Remembrance: www.gender.org/remember/day
Transgender Law and Policy Institute: www.transgenderlaw.org
Transgender Law Center: www.transgenderlawcenter.org
Transgender Youth Resources: www.youthresource.com/living/trans.htm
UMass Amherst Transgender Guide: www.umass.edu/stonewall
University of California info. on gender-free restrooms: www.uclgbtia.org/restrooms.html

Area Support Groups

East Coast FTM Group: betpower@yahoo.com
The Sunshine Club: www.thesunshineclub.org
UNITY of the Pioneer Valley: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/unity-of-the-pioneer-valley>

Films

A Boy Named Sue (documentary about an FTM)
Boys Don't Cry (fictionalized story of Brandon Teena's life)
Drag Kings on Tour (documentary)
Georgie Girl (documentary about a trans New Zealand legislator)
Just Call Me Kade (documentary about a trans male teen)
Ma Vie en Rose (feature film about a trans child)
No Dumb Questions (documentary about children learning about their trans aunt)
Normal (feature film about a male crossdresser)
The Opposite Sex: Jamie's Story (documentary about a transitioning MTF)
The Opposite Sex: Rene's Story (documentary about a transitioning FTM)
Paris Is Burning (documentary about voguing in New York in the late 1980s)
The Rubi Girls (documentary about a Dayton drag queen troupe)
Soldier's Girl (fictionalized story of the partner of murdered soldier Barry Winchell)
Southern Comfort (documentary about a trans man who dies of ovarian cancer)
Toilet Training (documentary about the need for gender-neutral bathrooms)
Transamerica (feature film about a trans woman)
TransGeneration (documentary/television series about transitioning college students)
Venus Boyz (documentary about drag kings)