

**Speaking of  
Faith:**

Gay and  
Straight

Conversation



## Speaking of Faith: Gay Straight Conversation

### INTRODUCTION

Does the Bible have anything positive to say about gay people? How can Christians be more supportive and inclusive? Why are some people still opposed to equality? These are questions I have repeatedly been asked over the years when leading gender and sexuality discussions in religious settings.

The Purpose of this Bible Study is to offer Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender **affirming** readings of bible stories; to give a deeper insight into the ways the stories from the Bible help us to tell our own stories of faith. The Bible has too often been used as a weapon and tool of oppression. The result is that an increasing number of people view the Bible as hateful material, out of touch with modern human experience, and capable of causing great pain. The primary goal of this study is to begin building bridges over the deep chasms in our society around issues of sexuality. The guiding principle of this study is that the texts are not always prescriptive in the traditional sense. Using the Bible to prove a point about God is a weak response to the need for “evidence” in our science-saturated world. Our experiences influence how we read scripture and how we allow scripture to influence our lives. By utilizing the Bible to help tell LGBT stories, we can discover points of connection between all peoples.

I pray that God will bless your time together,

Caleb Crainer

SCHEDULE – (Meeting Time and Dates)

SESSION 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Introduction

SESSION 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Closet (hiding)

SESSION 3: \_\_\_\_\_ Coming Out (expectations, trust, truth)

SESSION 4: \_\_\_\_\_ Same Gender Loving (biblical examples)

SESSION 5: \_\_\_\_\_ Confronting Hate/Fear (THOSE texts)

SESSION 6: \_\_\_\_\_ Being Your Authentic Self (wise folks tell all)

SESSION 7: \_\_\_\_\_ Sexual Fulfillment (“Supposed” to be)

SESSION 8: \_\_\_\_\_ Community and Change (kingdom of God?)

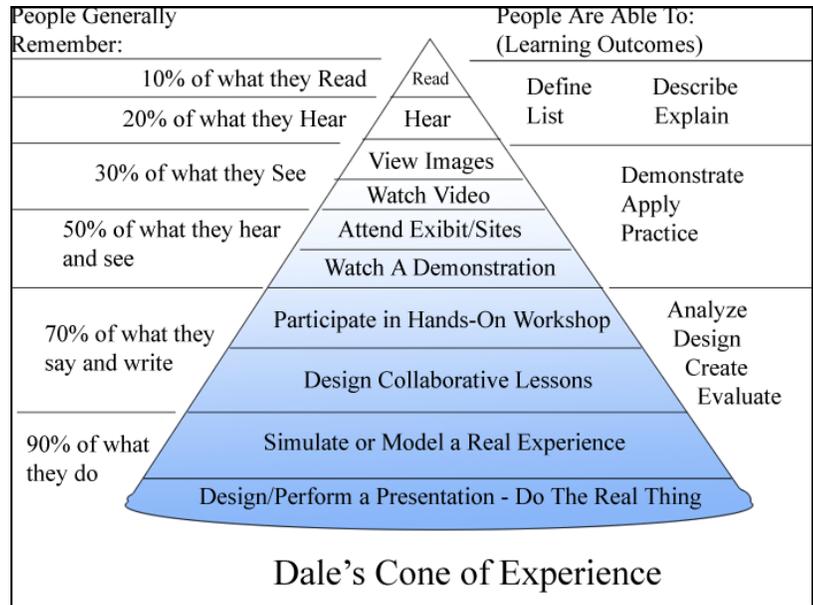
SESSION 9: \_\_\_\_\_ Sexualities (diverse perspectives)

SESSION 10: \_\_\_\_\_ Closing and Resources (love etc)



## NOTES ABOUT FORMAT AND LEADERSHIP

Even though it's a little dated, Edgar Dale's Cone of Experience (1969) provides a helpful visualization for my teaching strategy. I think active and collaborative learning helps people hang on to the material. Each lesson is designed to engage a wide range of participants from a wide range of backgrounds, with a wide range of preexisting knowledge. Whenever sexuality is discussed the opportunity for tension is high, as the leader you are responsible for moderating the discussion, sticking to the rules your group sets, and encouraging further dialogue.



**ACTIVITY:** Each section should include a learning activity to increase participation and internalization. Please read the activity ahead of time and come prepared with the necessary materials. I did not have a budget for this study, so most of the activity materials are inexpensive office supplies like notecards, tape, markers, etc.

**DISCUSSION:** I have provided some discussion questions for each session, but sometimes the participants wanted to talk about some specific topic more deeply. The tendency to share personal stories is prevalent. The leader must steer the conversation so that the discussion involves more than exchanging experiences. Try asking, "What did you learn from that day?" or "How did that event change how you thought about the topic?"

**RELATED TOPICS:** The sessions are designed to last for one hour. Sometimes the discussions did not take the whole time, sometimes we went over. I included a short list of related topics for each session that the leader might also use to help continue building the discussion. Think of these as the supplemental material.

**RESOURCES:** I realize that not everyone will have access to extra books on topics relating to LGBT affirming interpretations. Locating used copies or acquiring them through a library is a good way to build up your own comfort with presenting this material. There is nothing in the course itself that requires any of these books, but it can be helpful to know that other resources exist and how interested participants might keep reading on their own.

Remember to have fun too!



**SESSION 1: Introduction**

Format of the Study

- 10 Weeks/Sessions
- Each Week will focus on a different topic
- Each Week will engage a portion of Scripture
- Each Week a learning activity will open up dialogue

**Dialogue time does not require self-disclosure**

- Begin with generating some questions.
- Open and/or Close in Prayer

Learning Contract (created by the group)

- Expectation #1 - Respect for one another in position and opinion
- Raise Your Hand
- Confidentiality is to be kept
- Try to identify your sources and contexts.
- No Requirement to Self-disclose.
- Try not to Proof-text, instead look at larger stories
- Own your questions and disagreements

Basic Terminology

- L- Lesbian                      G- Gay                      B- Bisexual                      T- Transgender
- Q- Questioning or sometimes “Queer”

“Queer” is a popular academic catch-all term. This is the result of a movement to “reclaim” the term. Some people will have issues with this term as it still “stings” of name-calling. Likewise some people will have reservations about the word “homosexual.” Terminology is less critical at this stage, more important is the ability to forgive others’ different uses and listen to the content of what they are saying. Everyone should try to use a variety of terms.

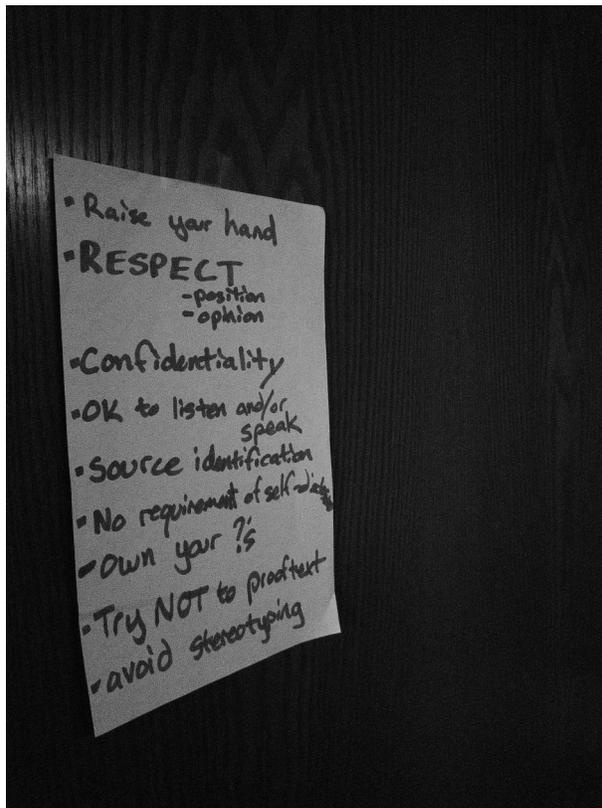
Discussion Questions:

- If we generated a list of new questions for a text, what might we include?
- How do we learn to read the Bible in new ways?

Activity: Plate or elpta

Each Person is given a paper plate and 30 seconds to 1 minute to transform something ordinary into something extraordinary. Scissors, crayons, tape etc. are provided. Then each person must say a little bit about what they have created. This is to demonstrate how using some tools can give us a new perspective on something we with which we feel very familiar.

**Text: Luke 1:26- 2:20 Jesus Birth Narrative in Luke. What sorts of questions do you have about this story? How might Mary in particular model “queer” or out-of-the-ordinary behavior?**



- Raise your hand
- **RESPECT**
  - position
  - opinion
- Confidentiality
- OK to listen and/or speak
- Source identification
- No requirement of self-identification
- Own your 'is
- Try NOT to prooftext
- avoid stereotyping

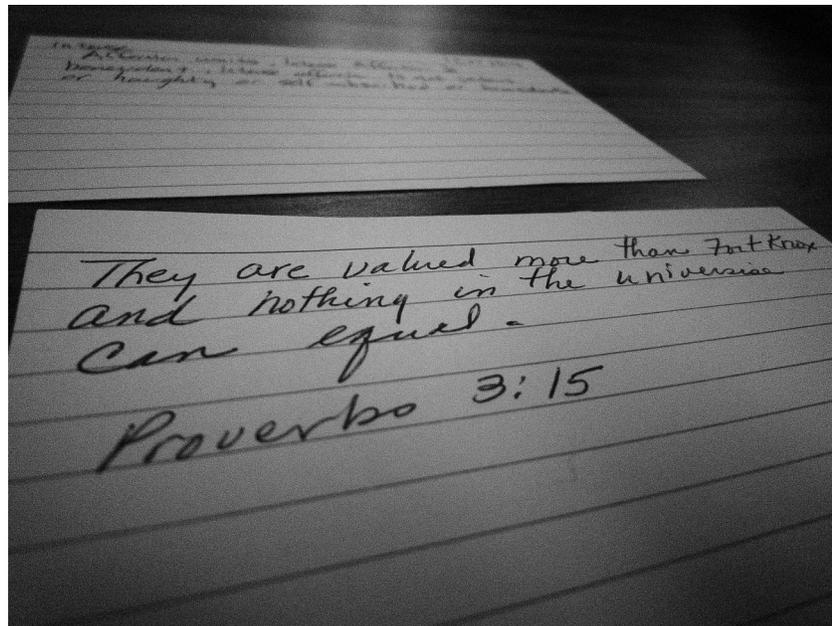
**SESSION 2: Closet (hiding)**

Activity: *Mind Your Language*

Each Participant selects a familiar Bible Verse and rewrites it using different words, but retaining the same basic meaning. Proverbs and Sayings work best. The more complicated the language, the better. Then we share the rewritten verses with one another and try to figure out what the original verse is. The objective is to get the group thinking about how we conceal meanings. LGBT people often must choose their words and actions carefully to avoid being detected in hostile environments.

**Text: Genesis 26:1-11. Isaac Pretends Rebekah is his sister! How does this scenario relate to how LGBT people experience the closet.**

In *Epistemology of the Closet*, Eve Kosovsky Sedgwick (1950-2009) writes, "virtually any aspect of modern Western culture, must be, not merely incomplete, but damaged in its central substance to the degree that it does not incorporate a critical analysis of modern homo/heterosexual definition." (1991, pg 1) According to Sedgwick, homo/heterosexual definition has become so tediously argued over because of a lasting incoherence "between seeing homo/heterosexual definition on the one hand as an issue of active importance primarily for a small, distinct, relatively fixed homosexual minority ... [and] seeing it on the other hand as an issue of continuing, determinative importance in the lives of people across the spectrum of sexualities." (source: wikipedia)



Discussion Questions:

- What exactly do you think “the closet” is?
- What are the internal and external pressures that keep people in the closet?
- Are some of these legitimate?
- How can remaining closeted lead to fear, self-denial, and self-hatred?
- Are there other comparable sorts of ways all people are in some sort of “closet” sometime?
- How are some places closeted about being gay-welcoming?

Related Topics:

*Growing up with hetero-normative society.*

*Military – Don’t Ask Don’t Tell...a Closet worth keeping?*

*Communities of Color – Why is the Down Low so “down” and “low”?*

*HIV/AIDS connection, and other dangers of secrecy.*

*Gaydar? And trying to figure out if people are closeted.*

Resources:

**Sedgwick, Eve Kosovsky.** *Epistemology of the Closet.* University of California Press, 1991.

**King, Jason.** “Remixing the Closet” <http://www.villagevoice.com/2003-06-24/news/remixing-the-closet/>

**“When Someone Comes Out To You.”** Northern Illinois University

**SESSION 3: Coming Out (expectations, trust, truth)**

Activity: *Create a Maze.*

Truth is not always easy. Using a roll of Masking Tape, create a maze on the table-top. Identifying some dead-ends with labels like “Parent’s expectations” or “Romance in Movies”...things that prevent truth from emerging. The facilitator navigates the maze and participants each explain a dead end or two.

**Text: Jeremiah 1:1-19** Jeremiah is reluctant to come out as a prophet.

**John 2:1-11** Jesus’ Hour has not yet come, or has it.



Discussion Topics:

- How does God show support for Jeremiah's coming out?
- Jesus' coming out is unexpected. In what ways was his coming out successful and in what ways could it have been different?
- What are some of the potential barriers to coming out?
- How can we make it safe for others to come out?
- How could you react when someone comes out to you? What NOT to say/do.

For Various Coming Out Info See <http://www.hrc.org/issues/10773.htm>

- How might Coming Out relate to Christian discussion around "Call" and "Vocation"?

Related Topics:

- Celebrities who come out. Can affect their careers.*
- When coming out is not enough: politics and Ken Mehlman.*

Resources:

**Cheng, Patrick.** "Sin as the Closet, Grace as coming out: Rethinking sin and grace for LGBT People." [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rev-patrick-s-cheng-phd/sin-as-the-closet-grace-a\\_b\\_510437.html#](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rev-patrick-s-cheng-phd/sin-as-the-closet-grace-a_b_510437.html#)

**SESSION 4: Same Gender Loving**

Activity: Sexual Orientation Identification Activity

- Distribute copies of the [Sexual Orientation Identification](#) sheet and ask students to complete the 10 items silently.
- Once students have had a chance to answer all questions, ask them to call out the answer to item #1. Most students will have answered "lesbian."
- Next, ask students to call out their answer to item #2. Most will have answered "bisexual."
- Then ask students for their answer to item #3, at which point disagreements will probably begin to surface.
- Discuss the remaining items, most of which will provoke differences of opinion as to whether sexual orientation should be defined by behavior, desire, self-identification, or some combination of the three.

<http://www.understandingprejudice.org/teach/activity/orient.htm>

Questions: What are the criteria? Do virgins have sexual orientation?

What is the proper role of self-identification?

**Texts: 1 Sam 20; 2 Sam 1 - David and Jonathan**

**Ruth 1 – Ruth and Naomi (DABAQ- “cling” LIKE Gen 2:24)**

**Song of Solomon 1.7-17 Translating Genders**

**Deuteronomy 7: 9 and 13 God and Israel...both “dudes”**

יִשְׂרָאֵל אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה וְיְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (God is male) ) יְהוָה יְהוָה יְהוָה יְהוָה

**Matthew 8: 5-13 and Luke 7:1-10 Centurion’s “Servant”**

Discussion Topics:

- How are these Biblical examples of same-gender loving, how are they not?
- Marriage looks vastly different among different cultures. How do we situate our own views?
- What is behind the biblical images of successful relationships?
- What are some of the dangers of presenting a picture of Biblical marriage as one-single thing?
- Does the bible say anything about “Homosexuality” as we know it?
- What are the contextual assumptions of the biblical writer’s worldview regarding marriage?



Related Topics:

- What are some hurdles in finding Love for same-gender-loving folks?
- How are Ancient Texts authorities on Love for us? How are they not?
- Why is it important to find liberating readings in biblical material?

**Resources:**

**Theodore W. Jennings Jr., *Jacob’s Wound* (Continuum: New York, NY), 2005.**

**Theodore W. Jennings Jr., *The Man Jesus Loved* (The Pilgrim Press: Cleveland, OH), 2003.**

# SEXUAL ORIENTATION IDENTIFICATION

For each of the following ten people, check the box corresponding to whether the person is heterosexual (H), lesbian (L), gay (G), or bisexual (B).

- |                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> H <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> B | 1. A woman who has had a number of romantic relationships with women and is not interested in pursuing relationships with men.                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> H <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> B | 2. A man who has had several romantic relationships with women and men, though he strongly prefers relationships with men.                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> H <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> B | 3. A man who is more attracted to men than women although all of his sexual relationships have been with women.                                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> H <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> B | 4. A middle-aged man who has self-identified as gay since his teens but who has twice cheated on his male partner by having sexual encounters with women.    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> H <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> B | 5. A woman who has self-identified as heterosexual all her life but finds herself sexually attracted to a new female coworker.                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> H <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> B | 6. A man who married a bisexual woman one year after his male partner died of AIDS.                                                                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> H <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> B | 7. A woman who self-identifies as a lesbian, is active in the gay rights movement, but has a sexually monogamous relationship with her husband.              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> H <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> B | 8. A woman who had a sexual relationship with her college roommate a decade ago but has since then had sexual relationships only with men.                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> H <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> B | 9. A woman who psychologically, emotionally, and socially prefers the company of women over men but whose sexual experiences have been exclusively with men. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> H <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> B | 10. A man who has never felt sexually attracted to anyone or had a sexual relationship.                                                                      |

[From UnderstandingPrejudice.org]

**SESSION 5: Confronting Hate/Fear**

Activity: Bring in a box containing a bunch of random items (a roll of tape, a Frisbee, fuzzy dice etc...at least one item for each participant) Have everyone choose something, then go around and each person must say how their object can be used to help people and harm them. Once everyone has talked about the possible uses of their item, place a Bible in the center of the group and explain that in a similar way, these texts can be used to help or harm people depending on our intention, understanding, and creativity.

\*\*\*This session may work better in lecture format. Giving maximum time to move through each passage. For each passage the leader should name how this passage could be used to harm LGBT people, then identify alternative readings or understandings that could help LGBT people confront those prejudicial readings. This discussion raises important questions about biblical authority.

**Texts: THOSE texts usually used in damning LGBT people**

<u>TEXT</u>	<u>SUMMARY</u>	<u>HARMFUL USE</u>	<u>ALTERNATIVE</u>
<b>GENESIS 2:21-25</b>	The Creation Story	Man and woman	Humans in God's image
<b>EZEKIEL 16:49</b>	Sodom And Gomorrah	Decree against homo-sexuality	Actually a decree against poor
<b>LEVITICUS 18:22 AND 20:13</b>	Man with a Man	Same-Sex Behavior	Really, Heterosexuals men raping other men
<b>ISAIAH 3:9</b>	Sodom	Vices = gayness	Arrogance
<b>3 MACCABEES 2:5</b>	Sodom	Arrogance = gayness	Arrogance
<b>ROMANS 1:26-27</b>	Natural and Unnatural	SGL is "unNatural"	Doesn't say that
<b>1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-10</b>	"MALOKOIS" AND "ARSENOKOITAI"	"male prostitutes" and "sodomites"	"Soft" and "sexual predators"
<b>1 TIMOTHY 1:9-10</b>	"ARSENOKOITAI"	"homosexuals"	"sexual predators"
<b>JUDE 1:7</b>	Sodom and Unnatural		
<b>MATTHEW 11:20-24</b>	Sodom		

Important Points to Highlight:

Creation Stories vs. Evolutionary Biological Evidence

Cultural Norms of the Time and Place, Real Sin of Sodom, malokois, arsenokoitai

The common terms to refer to same-sex behavior (among Men and Younger Men) was

“paidophthoros” which is no where in the NT.

Plato argues in “Laws” against same-sex love...laying homophobic foundations. (360 BCE)

Where does Natural Argument come from? Plato.

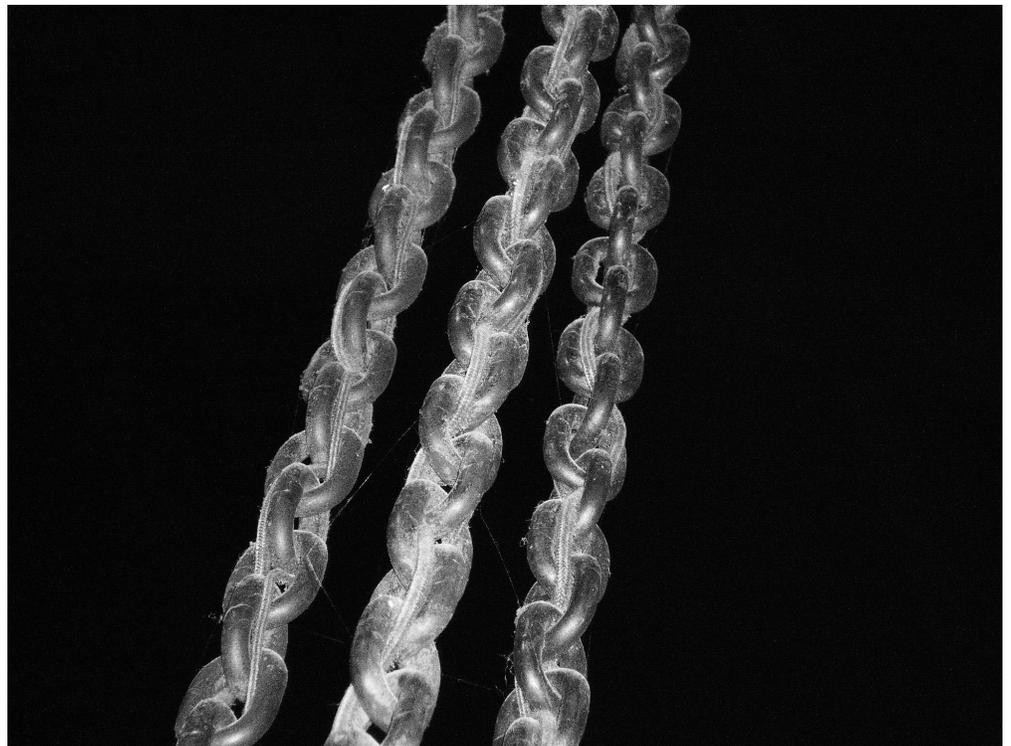
The Bible might not be the best advocate for LGBT inclusion, but there is NOTHING in the Bible that speaks directly against the idea of Same-Gender Loving as we know it. And even if it did...disregarding context sets a dangerous precedent.

Resources:

**Theodore W. Jennings Jr., *Plato of Paul?: The Origins of Western Homophobia* (The Pilgrim Press: Cleveland, OH), 2009.**

<p>These laws were often too strict for even Biblical Characters Deut 25: 5-10</p>		<p>What are the assumptions?          What are these rules good for?          Look at the context.</p> <p>The goal is to keep the bloodline pure. There are issues of property.</p> <p>“Abomination” is toevah (not “sin” exactly)</p> <p>Other Abominations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Is “as with a woman” possible?</li> <li>-Jesus challenges Purity Systems</li> </ul>
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Other Abominations:



**SESSION 6: Being Your Authentic Self- Learning about Transgender Folks**

Activity: On 3x5 note-cards, each person writes the name of a famous celebrity. Anyone, dead or alive, but keep it to yourself. Then the facilitator comes and picks them all up. Once all are gathered, the facilitator tapes the card to each person's back. Each participant must then get up, move around, and ask questions of other people to learn more about their identity. The learning objective is to see how we construct our identity, what bits and pieces are most helpful? Now that someone told you that you were "so an so"...are you really that celebrity? How do you know?

Basic Terminology:

Gender - the socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for one's female or maleness.

Sex - **biological** and physiological characteristics that superficially determine male or femaleness.

Transgender – a person who crosses traditional gender norms, broad term.

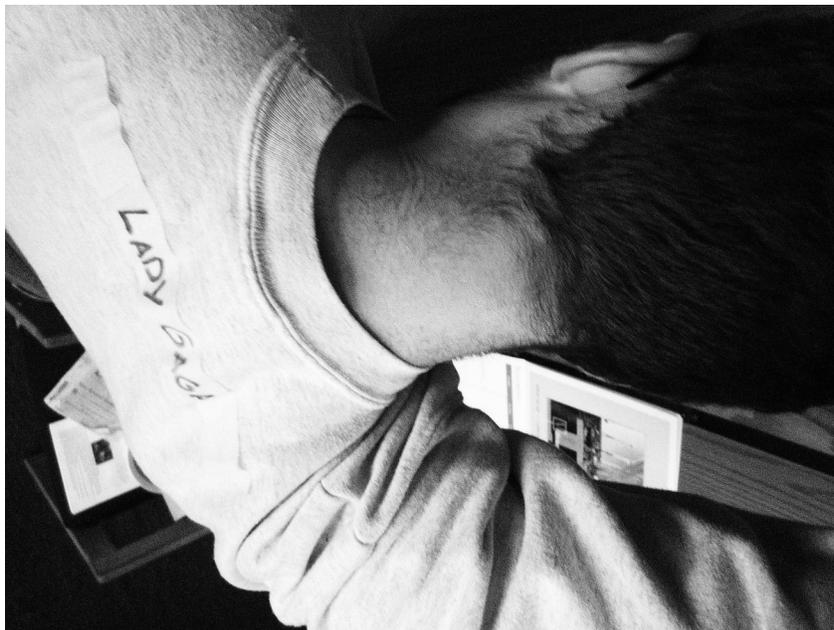
Intersex- a person who possesses ambiguous anatomical features. Formerly "Hermaphrodite."

Pre/Post Op – a person who feels that Gender Reassignment Surgery is/was necessary to live full-time in the gender within which they identify.

FtoM/MtoF – Female to Male / Male to Female abbreviations.

Cross Dresser – a part-time activity exploring gender boundaries and binaries.

**Texts: Deuteronomy 22:5 vs. Matthew 6:25-34 vs. Galatians 3:28**



Discussion Questions:

- What is self?
- Where does “self” come from? Shift to inward “consciousness” in Protestant Reformation.
- How do we be *more* true to ourselves? Personal Authenticity vs. Social Authenticity.
- What are some gender stereotypes? Where are some Gender-Neutral Bathrooms?

Related Topics:

- Aristophanes' account of gender splitting in Plato's Symposium
- Various Ancient accounts of a “third gender” in Sumerian, Egyptian, and Indian texts.
- Gender and Genetics <http://www.who.int/genomics/gender/en/index1.html> and The Intersex Spectrum <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/gender/spectrum.html>

Resources:

- Wilchins, Riki. *Queer Theory, Gender Theory: An Instant Primer*. Los Angeles, Alyson Books, 2004.**
- Guignon, Charles B. *On Being Authentic*. New York, Routledge, 2004.**

**SESSION 7: Sexual Fulfillment**

Activity: Mystery Puzzles. First everyone in the group must work together to correctly configure a printed photo that has been cut up into 4 puzzle pieces. The leader can show them the original photo to help. Was that difficult? Probably not. Next the leader gives the group a puzzle of blank colored construction paper approx. 6 pieces. Then another of two similar colors in the same shapes. The pieces could be interchanged but will they be? Then another made from two sheets of the same color, forming two irregular shapes. This will be significantly more difficult. Then, time permitting, give each participant a sheet of a third color, and a pair of scissors. They are invited to fracture the paper any way they choose. Then all the pieces are mixed up in a central bowl...and dumped out. Allow them to struggle with the new giant mass of puzzle pieces for a bit, and then stop them. The point of this activity is to get us thinking about wholeness, how do we know what wholeness looks like? How can it be related to wholeness in one another? As we discuss sexual fulfillment in the Bible, we need to keep all these variables in play.

Ground Rule: *No need for specifics. Tonight is not the forum to talk about what turns you on. It will be tempting as we discuss sexual fulfillment, but more important for our dialogue will be discussions of broader notions of sex and our society.*

**Text: Song of Songs Chapter 1 (Bloch and Alter Translation)**

Life-Giving Sex as a good gift from God. Sometimes results in a new child, sometimes in recreation, mutual pleasure, stress relief...etc.

vs

Life-Degrading Sex when good gift of God in Sex is used to cause harm or pain.

Importance of Thinking Long-Term



#### Discussion Questions

- How do you understand the word *sex*? What does it refer to? How did you learn it?
- What do you think sex is good for?
- What are the demonizing or divinizing messages about sex/marriage in our culture?
- How can these be constraining to straight and gay folks?

#### Related Topics

- Purity vs. Impurity...where do we get this from?
- Ethics surrounding sexuality. Bigger and better than rules?

#### Resources:

**Chilstrom, Herbert W. and Lowell O. Erdahl. *Sexual Fulfillment for Single and Marries, Straight and Gay, Young and Old*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 2001.**

**Bloch, Ariel and Chana Bloch. *Song of Songs: A New Translation*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.**

**SESSION 8: Community and Change**

Activity: Timeline. First ask everyone to write down a tradition that they enjoy. Then stretch out a timeline using masking-tape on the table...one end will be the present, the other will be the past. Ask them to arrange the traditions in the order that they started. The learning objective for this activity is to get participants to think about the origins of traditions, how we assign meaning to our activities, and how things can change.

**Text: Exodus 19 – Holy Kingdom**

**Luke 13:18-21 and Luke 17:11-21**

Steps to Changing homophobic mentality in communities

- 1-Realizing and Naming the existence of homophobia in a community
- 2-Understanding that while we may never be “cured” of homophobia, we can be working on it.
- 3- Knowledge. Especially first-hand interaction with LGBT folks.

“That’s what the gospel does: it makes us pregnant with the unexpected and opens up the tight boundaries of our existing communities. If the church wants to go on being the church...then its going to have to pay attention to that. We lesbian and gay folk are, in a sense, God’s gift to the church at the present moment, to help make that possible. If part of the church does some kicking and screaming about it, that’s nothing new. Its just like what we read in the New Testament.” (*Gifted By Otherness*, pg. 32)



Discussion Questions:

- How have sexual norms changed in your lifetime? Did they change in your parents life time?
- Where did our sense of “family” come from?
- How can one generation’s solution become another generation’s problem?
- Should space be made for “haters” now that LGBT inclusion is morally acceptable by the majority?

Related Topics:

- Imagine some ways our community can create healing and move towards affirmation.
- Identify warning signs of when rhetoric starts to become complacent.

Resources:

**Countryman, L. William and M.R. Ritley. *Gifted By Otherness: Gay and Lesbian Christians in the Church*. Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 2001.**

**Hilton, Bruce. *Can Homophobia Be Cured?* Nashville: Abingdon, 1992.**

**McNeill, John J. *Taking a Chance on God*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1988.**

SESSION 9: Sexualities and Identities

Activity: On two giant sheets of paper taped to the wall (or two sheets of plain paper) draw rectangles that leave at least a few inches of border. On one sheet SIDE the top of the shape write “good girl” and on the other write “real man.” Announce that the OUTSIDE is NOT “good girl” or “real man.” Ask everyone to write with at least four stereotypes...and to come up and write them on the paper. All at once so no one gets singles out. Some folks will need some clarification. I will initiate with an example “good girls don’t kiss on the first date”(write “kiss on the first date” on the OUTSIDE of the “good girl” rectangle) and “real men go to bars” goes on the INSIDE of the “real man” rectangle). The learning objective is to show the narrow socially accepted definitions of gender and sexuality that culture perpetuates. Talk about what is true and what is not true. Which ones does the bible or religion seem to perpetuate? What are the punishments for not c

Texts:

Joshua 2: 1-24 Rahab the prostitute ( *ῥαῖη* *zonah*) helps out Joshua’s spies

John 7:53-8:11 The Woman Caught in Adultery ( *μοιχεῖα* *moicheia*) Jesus saves from stoning

Matthew 19: 1-12 Jesus on Divorce ( *ἀπολύω* *apoluo*) and Eunuchs ( *εὐνοῦχος* *eunikos*)

1 Corinthians 7 Paul asks people to pretend to be single ( *ἄγαμος* *agamos*).

Psalm 113 The Lord makes the Barren ( *ῥηῖ* *akar*) woman a mother.

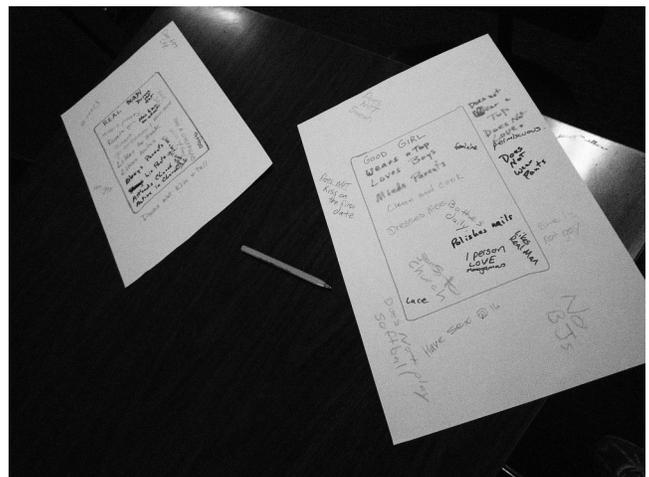
Other Sexual Orientation Categories: (LGB)

- A- Asexual
- O- Omnisexual
- P- Pansexual
- 2S- Two Spirited (or T-S)
- Q- Queer
- Q- Questioning
- S- Straight Ally

Other Gender Identifications: (T)

- I- Intersex
- 3- Third Gender/Sex
- GQ- Gender Queer
- H- Hijra
- An- Androgynous

How would you “measure” Sexual Orientation?



Discussion Questions:

- How does the way we use language constrain possibilities regarding sexual orientation?
- Do you think people are “born gay” or do they “adopt a gay identity”? Why? Are those the only options?
- Some authors in the Bible use sexual imagery to promote a narrow view of sexuality. How do these texts question rigid stereotypes and allow for new possibilities?
- When have gender-roles and stereotypes FAILED to give an accurate picture of reality?

**Resources:**

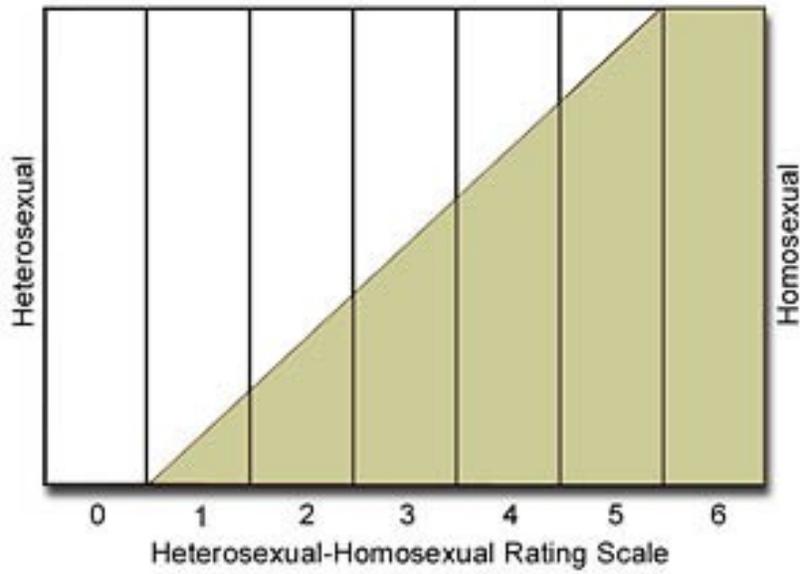
Queen, Carol and Lawrence Schimel. *Pomosexuals: Challenging Assumptions About Gender and Sexuality*. San Francisco: Cleis Press, 1997.

Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York, Routledge, 1990.

Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands/ La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987.

Baur, Karla and Robert Crooks eds. *Our Sexuality*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2005.

Kinsey Scale:



<http://www.iub.edu/~kinsey/research/ak-hhscale.html>

Klein Grid:

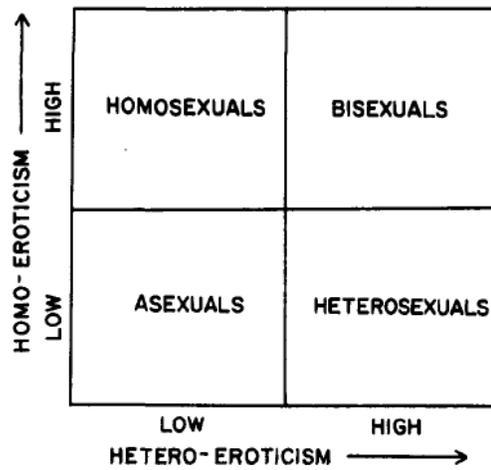


Figure 1. Four orientation categories generated by a two-dimensional model.

When you are alone, and thinking/fantasizing about other Humans. Are there differences in the types of fantasies for different gender identifications?

Fantasy

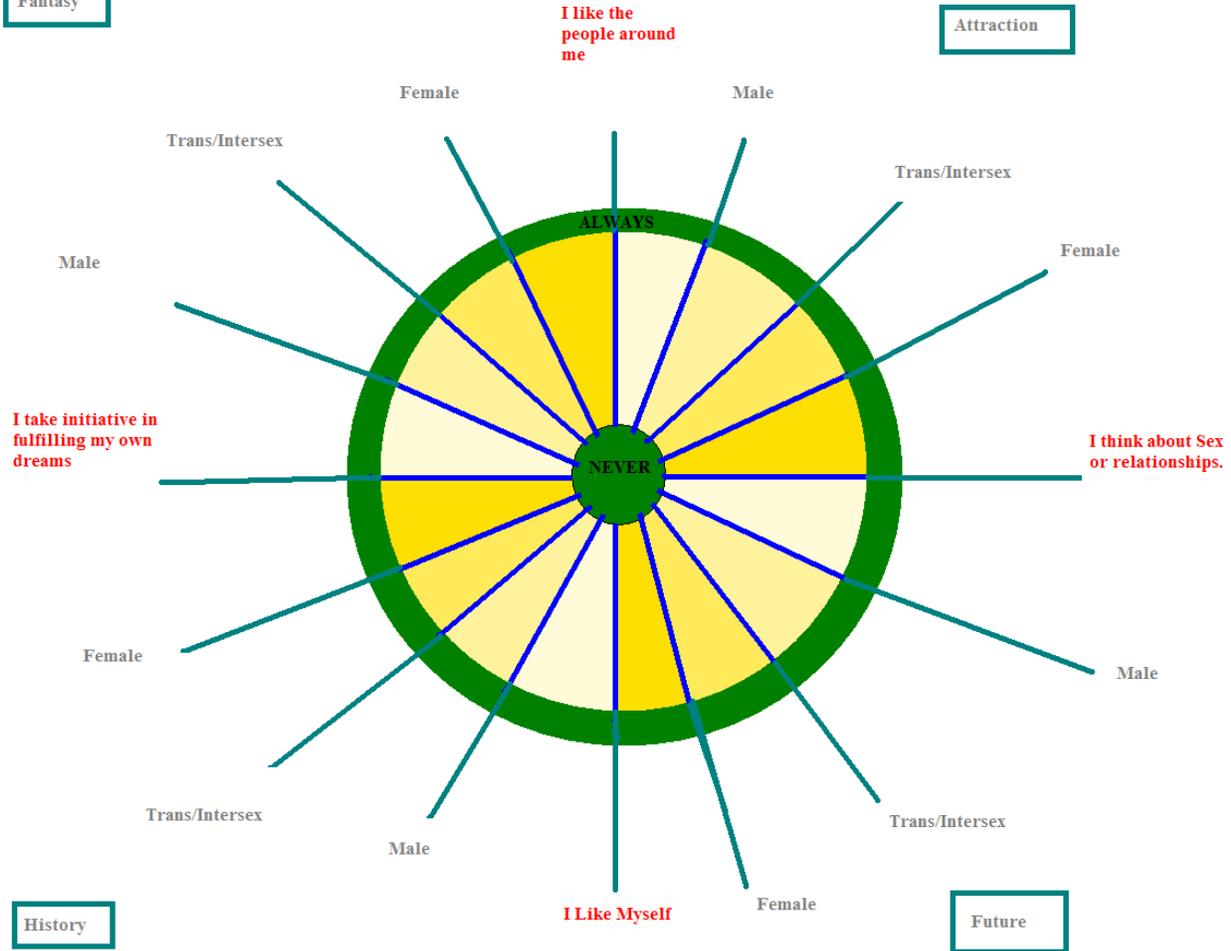
**HOW DO YOU IDENTIFY?**

Sexuality \_\_\_\_\_

Gender \_\_\_\_\_

What other gender identifications do find yourself attracted to? Are there differences in the ways you notice physical features of other Humans?

Attraction



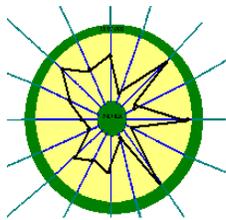
History

Past involvement (within 5 years) with other Humans in a sexual relationship...however you define it.

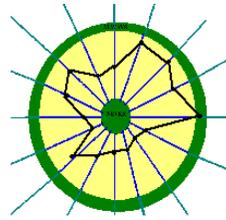
Future

What you would like to see as part of your sexual life experience within the next five years.

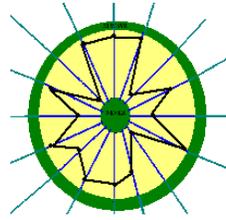
**HOW TO READ THE MODEL:** Place a dot along the continuum of NEVER to ALWAYS for each of the lines of the chart. Then connect your markings to produce a polygon. Everyone's will be different, that is the point. Here are some examples below. Feel Free to place dots in between lines or outside of the wheel if that seems to fit best.



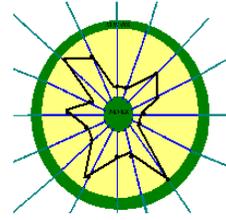
Self-Identified Hetero Male



Self-Identified Bisexual Female



Self-Identified Heterosexual Transgendered (M-F)



Self-Identified Lesbian Female

These are not actual results, merely possible ones. What does your's look like?

Craimer anti-model:

This is an anti-model for human sexuality which I developed. My aim was to help people reform the way that language has dominated reality for LGBT people. The Wheel does not give you a quantifiable sort of answer, only directs reflection to incorporate a wider variety of criteria. It could be interesting to compile and compare the maps of people who share common gender or sexual identifications to see how their wheel shapes differ.



Discussion Questions:

- How would you define “love”?
- What are the many words we use for love in our culture?
- How is love a gift? How can love be misused?
- Does love follow general rules? Why do you think the way you do about Love?

Closing.

In the past 10 weeks we have journeyed together through difficult issues and new territory. We have learned a great deal from one another and our traditions. This Bible Study’s goal was to begin to build bridges over the deep chasms in our society around issues of sexuality. I pray that the Holy Spirit will keep stirring us toward more expansive and inclusive visions of relationship. Please complete the feed-back survey and return it to the facilitator.

**Resources:**

- George, Kenneth. Mr Right Is Out There: The Gay Man’s Guide To Finding and Maintaining Love. Los Angeles: Alyson Books, 2000.**
- Phillips, Christopher. Socrates In Love: Philosophy for a Die-Hard Romantic. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2007.**

**Evaluation**

Leader: Caleb Crainer

Dates: October 13 2010 to December 22, 2010

Goal: To begin building bridges over the deep chasms in our society around issues of sexuality.

How well did the course meet the stated goal?

Describe your sense of the Leaders' organization and preparation?

INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS: *Please comment about what was helpful and what was not.*

SESSION 1: **October 13** Introduction

Activity: Paper Plate Reshaping

Text: Mary gives birth to Jesus in Luke

SESSION 2: **October 20** Closet (hiding)

Activity: Rewriting a Bible Verse

Text: Isaac Pretends Rebekah is his sister

SESSION 3: **October 27** Coming Out (expectations, trust, truth)

Activity: Create a Maze

Text: Jeremiah and Jesus coming out as prophets

SESSION 4: **November 3** Same Gender Loving (biblical examples)

Activity: Sexual Orientation Identification Quiz

Text: David and Jonathan, Ruth and Naomi, etc.

SESSION 5: **November 10** Confronting Hate/Fear (THOSE texts)

Activity: Random Objects can be helpful or harmful

Text: THOSE Texts usually used to harm LGBTQ people

SESSION 6: **November 17** Being Your Authentic Self (wise folks tell all)

Activity: “Who am I?” Name on your back

Text: No Cross-dressing vs. No male or female

SESSION 7: **December 1** Sexual Fulfillment (“Supposed” to be)

Activity: Mystery Puzzles

Text: Song of Songs 1

SESSION 8: **December 8** Community and Change (kingdom of God?)

Activity: Traditions Timeline

Text: How “God’s Kingdom” changed from Exodus to the New Testament Parables

SESSION 9: **December 15** Sexualities (diverse perspectives)

Activities: “Good Girl” and “Real Man” Boxes

Texts: Rahab the Prostitute, Woman caught in Adultery, Eunuchs from Birth

SESSION 10: **December 22** Closing and Resources (love etc)

Activity: Love Songs and Actual Characteristics of Love

Text: Paul says Love Never Ends! And Jesus gives a commandment of Love

OVERALL

If you needed to remove one session which one would you remove?

Which was your favorite session? Why?

How might this course be improved in the future?

What are some other topics you think would be useful to discuss in this course?

Any other comments:

Thank you for your participation in this course!

GLOSSARY

Abstinence	Not engaging in any sexual behavior with another person.
Ally	A heterosexual identified person who affirms LGBT equality and works for LGBT inclusion.
Ambisexual	An uncommon synonym for bisexual.
Androgynous	1. Exhibiting approximately equal proportions of masculine and feminine characteristics simultaneously. 2. Independence from the gender roles
Aphrodisiac	A food, drink, medication, or sometimes a thought that intensifies sexual desire.
Asexuality	Incapable of experiencing sexual attraction.
Bisexuality	Sexual attraction to persons of both sexes.
Castration	The surgical removal of a man's testes.
Celibate	Living under a vow not to marry or to engage in sexual relations.
Chastity	A synonym for abstinence or responsible sexual behavior
Circumcision	In males, removal of the foreskin.
Cohabitation	A live-in sexual relationship between two persons who are not married to each other.
Coitus	Penile-vaginal intercourse.
Coming-Out	A person acknowledging to themselves, their family, friends, and co-workers that they have a homosexual or bisexual orientation. This can extend over a considerable time interval.
Conception	Beginning of pregnancy, when the male sperm fertilizes the female egg.
Concubine	A woman who cohabits with a man but is not his wife, usually in polygamous cultures.
Contraception	The prevention of fertilization and pregnancy.
Copulation	Penile-vaginal sexual activity' making love.
Cross-Dress	To wear the clothing of the other sex for any of a variety of reasons.
Down-Low	Or DL. A term to refer to closeted gay men, usually in the African American community, who regularly engage in sexual relations with other men.
Drag	The wearing of exaggeratedly feminine clothing by a man, often for entertainment purposes.
Drag Queen	An entertainer -- generally a gay man or transgendered woman -- who dress in clothing normally associated with women.
Emergency Contraception	Use of high-dose contraceptives after unprotected sex to prevent pregnancy.
Erotica	Sexually themed works, such as books or sculpture, deemed to have literary or artistic merit.
Escort	Euphemism for a prostitute who advertises by print, word of mouth, or the Internet.

Enunch	A cultural and social community of people who are either biologically male and adopt feminine traits and expressions; or, castrated men; or, hermaphroditic men (born with diminished male and female genitalia and other sexual characteristics) Due to their sexual difference they are social outcasts and have to either beg or become commercial sex workers to support themselves.
Fetishism	Sexual arousal by inanimate objects, materials, or parts of
Fornication	Obsolete term for sex between unmarried persons when
Gay	Generally men attracted to other men. He may or may not act on his attraction. Also used as a generic term for homosexual people.
Gay Bashing	Assault perpetrated against homosexuals because of their
Gaydar	The ability to recognize gay people on the basis of behav-
Gender	The collection of psychological and behavioral traits that
Gender Dysphoria	Medical term for the unhappiness or discomfort which may be experienced by one whose primary sex characteristics do not match one's gender identity
Gender Identity	A person's subjective sense of being male or female.
Gender Queer	A person who defies categorization related to gender.
Gender Role	The expression of gender identity in social behavior.
Hermaphrodite	Obsolete term for a person who possesses elements of
Heterosexism	Rejecting homosexuality and bisexuality as a normal, valid
Heterosexuality	Sexual attraction only (or predominantly) to persons of the
Hijra	A member of a class of male-to-female transgender people
Homophobia	Fear or hatred, overt or implicit, of persons with a homo-
Homosexuality	Sexual attraction only (or predominantly) to persons of
Hooking Up	Uncommitted sexual intimacy with an acquaintance.
Hypersexuality	Excessive sexual desire or behavior.
Incest	Sexual behavior between two persons who are closely related genetically -- typically parent-child or brother-sister. Various political jurisdictions and faith groups define the degree of closeness differently.
Infertility	Inability (of a man, woman, or couple) to achieve pregnan-
Intercourse	Sexual contact, usually understood to involve coitus.

Internalized Oppression	The turning inward and acceptance as true of negative messages and feelings about oneself and one's group, and misinformation about how members of the group (including oneself) deserve to be treated. Internalized oppression often includes messages which contradict one another, as well as messages which reinforce one another.
Intersex	Having a biological sex that is ambiguous or intermediate between
Intimacy	The sense of connectedness in an established relationship.
Jealousy	Fear that a partner may be sexually or emotionally unfaithful.
Lesbian	A female who is sexually attracted only to other women. She may
LesBiGay	Term sometimes used instead of LGBT
Libido	Psychic drive or energy associated with sexual energy; energy of
Masturbation	Sexual self-stimulation. Sometimes also used to refer to manual
Menstruation	The breakdown of the endometrium at approximately monthly inter-
Metrosexual	An urban male with a heterosexual orientation who rejects many macho attributes often linked to masculinity. He adopts many traits often associated with heterosexual females and gay males -- e.g. expensive hair care, stylish clothes
Monogamy	An exclusive sexual relationship between two persons.
Monosexual	A person who is sexually attracted to persons of only one sex. They
Omnisexual	An individual who is open to -- or who actually engages in -- a broad range of sexual activities, which might involve males and females, a wide range of adult ages, and perhaps a variety of paraphilias
Open Marriage	A committed relationship of two persons in which both are free to
Orgasm	Sexual climax, including physiological events such as muscle spasms and the subjective feelings of pleasure and release that accompany them.
Outercourse	Sexual activities other than coitus, promoted as a means to prevent
Pansexual	A synonym for Omnisexual. An individual who is open to -- or who actually engages in -- a broad range of sexual activities, which might involve males and females, a wide range of adult ages, and
Paraphilia	An umbrella term which includes many conditions in which an adult's sexual arousing fantasies involve non-human objects, the infliction of pain, non-adults, or other non-consenting persons.

Pedophilia	An adult or older youth who has " <i>recurrent, intense sexually arousing fantasies, sexual urges, or behaviors involving sexual activity with a prepubescent child or children (age 13 years or younger).</i> " Some pedophiles prefer males, others prefer females, and some are aroused by both males and females." <sup>1</sup> Pedophiles do not necessarily act on their desires.
Polyamory	The formation of nontransient sexual relationships in groups of three or more.
Polyfidelity	A committed relationships involving more than two persons in which all sexual activity is confined to the group.
Polygamy/ Polygyny	Marriage to more than one spouse at a time.
Pornography	Material (such as art, writing, photographic images, and film) that is intended to be sexually arousing. Also called porn or porno.
Procreation	Production of offspring.
Prostitution	The practice of engaging in sex for pay.
Queer	This most often refers to something that is strange or odd. It is also often used in reference to gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, intersex, and asexual communities. It is also used as a synonym for GLBT and LGBT.
Questioning	A person who is exploring the sexual orientation or expressing curiosity in alternative sexual expressions.
Rape	Coitus (and sometimes other penetrative sex acts) accomplished by force or the threat of force.
Sadomasochism (S/M)	The infliction and acceptance of pain or humiliation as a means of sexual arousal.
Same Gender Loving	A term referring to homosexual people that seeks to retain the love component of ones sexuality.
Sex	1. The category of male or female. 2. Sexual feelings and behavior.
Sex Worker	A person who engages in prostitution, pornography, or another sex-related occupation.
Sex-reassignment therapy	The use of hormones and perhaps sex reassignment surgery to help a transsexual change their appearance from the sex that they were identified with at birth to the opposite sex that they feel they truly are.
Sex addiction	The idea that a person may be addicted to certain forms of sexual behavior, by a mechanism similar to that of substance addiction.
Sexual Orientation	The direction of a person's sexual feelings toward persons of the same sex, the other sex, or both sexes.
Sexuality	The feelings, behaviors, and identities associated with sex.
Socialization	The effect of social influences such as family, education, peer groups, and the media on the development of psychological or behavioral traits.
Sodomy	Obsolete term for anal sex, or for any homosexual contact. As a legal term it may refer to a variety of prohibited sex acts.

Straight	Colloquial for heterosexual. Straight has connotations of "unadulterated," "pure," and "honest," and some members of the sexual identity community find distasteful the implication that one who is not straight is "bent," "adulterated," "impure," or "dishonest." Straight also has connotations of "narrow," "straight-laced" or "conservative," and some heterosexual people find that distasteful.
Swingers	Couples who agree to engage in casual sexual contacts with others.
Third Sex	A synonym for transgendered.
Transsexual	A transgendered person who seeks to transition to the other sex.
Transgendered	Having a gender identity that is discordant with one's anatomical sex.
Transitioning	The process by which transsexuals change sex.
Transvestism	Wearing clothes of the other sex for purposes of sexual arousal. Sometimes applied to cross-dressing for any reason.
Two Spirit Person	In Native American cultures, a person with the spirit of both a man and a woman; a transgendered person. Also called berdache.
Unrequited Love	Love that is not reciprocated.
Voyeurism	A paraphilia involving spying on persons while they are undressing, naked, or engaged in sex

More definitions available from:

<http://www.sinauer.com/discoveringhumansexuality/glossary.html>

<http://www.lehigh.edu/lgbtqia/documents/glossary%20bi%20site.pdf>

[http://www.religioustolerance.org/sex\\_defn.htm](http://www.religioustolerance.org/sex_defn.htm)

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

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Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands/ La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987.

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MOVIES:

MAGAZINES:

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