

LGBT **Workshop** **Bundle**



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LGBT Workshop Bundle

Want some new tools for your facilitation tool box? This bundle includes transcripts of four highly interactive workshops that are facilitated by Jessica Pettitt with all different kinds of audiences with a wide variety of knowledge levels. Give these tried-and-tested tools a whirl.

Fun Triangle

Sex, gender, sexual identity and sexism and heterosexism made super clear

Gender This

The social construction of gender and our assumptions

Sticks & Stones

Words do hurt! Get to language, privilege, and false hierarchies

LGBT Messages I Learned

What are you bringing to the table from your past?

This is the self-awareness necessary to be an Ally

All profits from this bundle will go into a fund for students, staff, and faculty, that don't have funding to travel, eat, stay, or attend professional development conferences. If you or someone you know is interested in receiving funding, contact Jess directly at jess@goodenoughnow.com.

To schedule Jessica for consulting, speaking, and training, contact:



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Fun Triangle



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Fun Triangle

After doing transgender education for a number of years, this program developed around the triangulation of sex, gender, and sexual identity and the connections between sexism and heterosexism. By clearly depicting the differences and dependence of these three words that are often used synonymously, we can then begin a deeper conversation regarding current policies and procedures on campus. Understanding these differences can be made very simple so that next steps can be planned for campuses and organizations that may not be easy to implement.

Learning Outcomes:

- To define sexual identity, gender identity and sex
- To recognize the difference between sex, sexual identity and gender identity
- To describe how sexism and heterosexism are perpetuated by the conflation of sexual identity, gender identity, and sex

Comments from attendee:

"Jessica was very animated and informative. She is a very good speaker and made me think about our culture and question it."

Time Frame: Minimum of 25 minutes

Supplies Needed:

- 1 piece of flip chart paper or a dry erase board
- Masking tape
- 2-3 different colored markers

Room Set Up: I prefer a seated circle of chairs for participants. Make sure everyone has a good view of the triangle figure. Whether the facilitator is right- or left-handed will affect where the "blind spot" will be. Make sure participants are close enough to be able to read the triangle and everything written on the page.

Facilitator Notes: For some participants, I find that this is the first time sex and gender are not used as synonyms. I also find that this is the first time the connection between sex, gender, and sexual identity is grasped. A key phrase I used once to keep in mind of the difference is as follows: Sex is what is in your pants; Sexual Identity is what you do with your pants off; and Gender is the color or fabric of the pants themselves. While running the workshop, facilitators can also observe who the participants are that may need to talk more during the processing, be most uncomfortable with content, as well as finding any self-identified LGBT folks in the room who may move into "teacher" mode instead of learning mode. Throughout the script are [facilitator notes in brackets like this.]

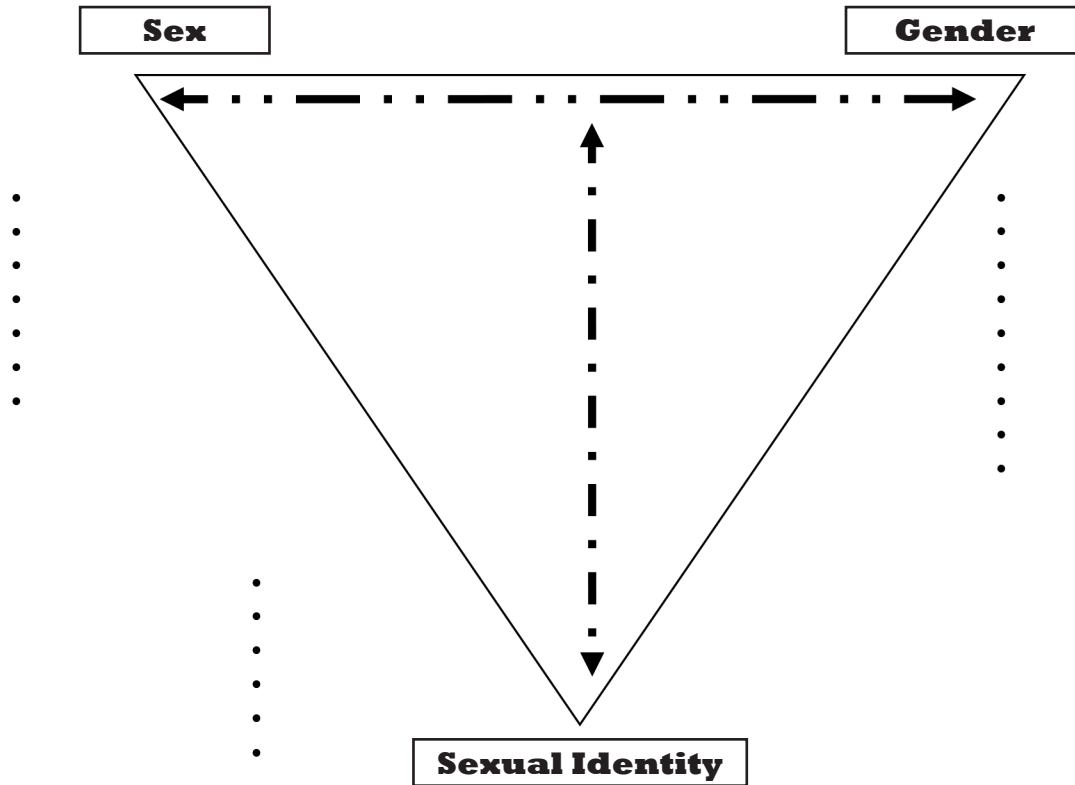
The Script: *Hi everyone, I'm [insert name]. This activity is going to really map out what I am talking about when I say Sex, Gender, and Sexual Identity.*

[Draw the upside down triangle on the board or paper. I usually make a joke about even my activities being "queer" as the upside down triangle is a symbol of the LGBT community. Don't worry about your handwriting or spelling; you are just guiding people through a conversation.]

How many of you have used Sex and Gender as synonyms? *Think about surveys or asking demographic data of folks. We usually do, but they are actually very different. For the sake of this activity, let's separate*

the two out. [Write Sex at the top left and Gender at the top right points of the triangle.] Then we have Sexual Identity. [Write Sexual Identity at the bottom point of the triangle.] I use the term Sexual Identity instead of Sexual Orientation as it seems to me to be a more inclusive way to describe who someone is romantically or sexually attracted to.

[Here is the worksheet I use as a handout for folks to write on. I will complete it for you on the next page.]



Frequently the words or concepts of Sex and Gender are seen as synonyms. For the sake of this training, think of Sex and Gender as two different concepts.

When you think of Sex, what comes to mind? (Biology, Science, Physical Elements, Characteristics)

When you think of Gender, what comes to mind?
(Roles, Identities, Perceptions, Expressions)

When you think of Sexual Identity (often referred to as Sexual Orientation), what comes to mind? Examples

What "isms" maintain this structure?

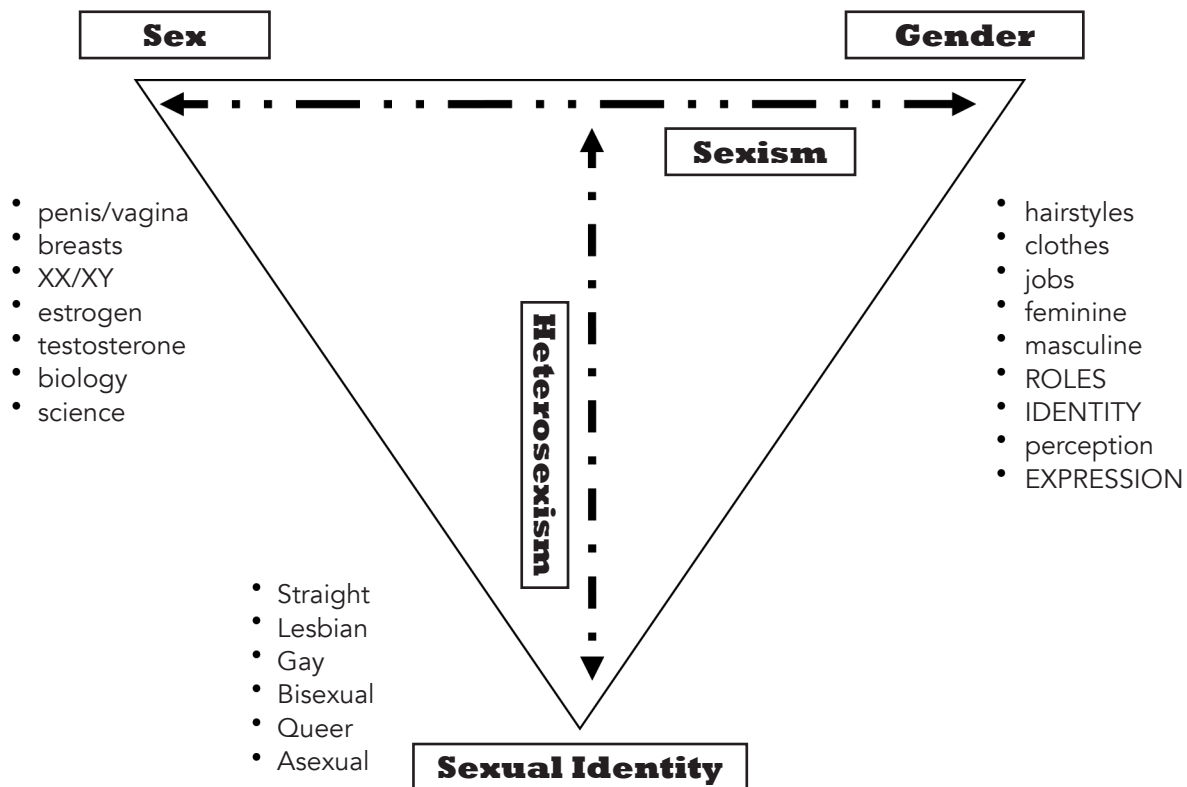
Developed by Owen Marciano, NYU's OUTspoken Peer Educators



[The Triangle should only have the three labels, Sex, Gender, and Sexual Identity, on it when you begin the discussion.]

Starting with Sex: What comes to mind? Remember Sex and Gender is separated for the sake of this exercise. [Write down similar things to above and help participants come up with these words. It is imperative you use Penis and Vagina as these words may make people uncomfortable and you need to paint a tone that this is okay. Also, someone will try and shock others by saying these words so get it over with before that happens. This may also be a good time, depending on the facilitator's comfort level and the participants' control level, to introduce the topic of intersex. I tell a story about my best friend in ninth grade, Linda, who had 12 toes. We all know of "weird" (better word – atypical) things that happen genetically, but we don't leave any room for this when it comes to sex characteristics. We typically understand biology of genitalia, chromosomes, and hormones to be binary and either "blue" or "pink." Someone with an Intersex Condition (preferred term to Hermaphrodite) may have an internal or external combination of these characteristics.]

[Secondary characteristics may come up — just bracket them together (breast, hair, voice, size, Adam's apple, etc.) and then explain before going on to Gender that these are biological or anatomical elements that are dependent on hormones and genetics and then interpreted by society.]



So if that is Sex, what is Gender? [Participants will call out different things, write down a few and then write Roles, Identity, Perception, and Expression or (RIPE to remember it).] *Of the words we came up with, what is a role?* [jobs, hobbies, etc.] *What has more to do with Expression?* [feminine, masculine, clothes, mannerisms, etc.] *What would I mean by Identity?* [femme, butch, dyke, fairy, fag, man, women, etc.] *Roles, Identity, and Expression are elements of Gender that you control. Perception is how others see you. You can try to express yourself in a way that may align with how you identify and that may correlate with your roles, but it is really up to other people how they perceive you. A person can also purposefully express themselves, take on roles, and identify, in ways that don't perfectly align as "pink" or "blue" as this system is constructed and changes over time by culture and by the individual. It is also important to note where we can't control how others perceive us, only we can control how we perceive others. We make the assumption that everything related to gender is clearly "pink" or "blue," but some folks don't feel this is true for them. People could identify as a man and have long hair or be a nurse or a woman could be a professional wrestler and drive a truck. Some people may have been labeled one way at birth and identify as an entirely different gender (transgender) and some may seek medical treatment, hormone supplements, and surgeries to better express their gender (transsexual). Others may not like the "pink" and "blue" gender binaries and just want to be themselves without labels (gender variant). [Transgender and Transsexual are preferred terms to Transvestite and can be represented by the term Trans.]*

Lastly, what are different Sexual Identities? (Gay, Lesbian, Straight/Heterosexual, Bisexual, Queer, etc.) [Make sure you add Asexual or that one participant who is the thorn in your side will say it to be sarcastic. Homosexual is a pejorative term so don't list it; if it is called out break it down to lesbian, gay, bisexual. Transgender or Transsexual sometimes gets called out here, but that isn't a sexual identity. A Trans person has a sexual identity before and after transition, but being trans itself isn't a sexual identity.]

How are we doing here? We are talking about some pretty big topics, so it is okay to have questions, need clarifications, be confused, or just need to sit with this information a little while. [Take questions, clarifications, etc. Observe participant's body language for comfort level before moving on. For some groups the discussion may really pretty much need to stop here. Moving on to institutionalized forms of oppression is up next. If you don't think you can do it or if the participants just aren't up for it — then stop. If you have time left over, start conversations about how the three points are interconnected. Directions for this conversation are following the Sexism and Heterosexism discussion.]

There are two oppressive forces at play here keeping this "pink" and "blue" system in check and ordered according to our socially constructed cultural norms.

What oppressive force do you think exists connecting Sex to Gender? I will give you a hint, it ends in ... ism. Right — Sexism! [Even if participants don't call anything out I say "Good Job!" or something affirming to get energy back up or to keep it up as we head into a deeper level conversation. Write Sexism along a horizontal dotted line between Sexism and Gender.]

Sexism — in a Sexist Society who has the power? In our culture the answer would be men. I think of power like poker chips. Someone steps out of a poker game freeing a seat for you and you inherit their poker chips. Men inherit male privilege and therefore have more power over those who are not men. Of those who are not men, who has the most power? Women! This is important to clarify because folks who don't identify or express themselves or are not perceived by others as a man or a woman have less privilege or power than folks perceived as women and way less than those folks perceived as men. Sexism is what ultimately determines what constitutes "pink" and "blue."

Now, if Sexism is at play here [pointing to the line between Sex and Gender], what would be here? [Draw a vertical dotted line between Sexual Identity and the middle of the line between Sex and Gender.] Another hint... it ends in *ism*.

Heterosexism [write in along the dotted line] is the oppressive force that connects what we think are synonyms, but clearly aren't to sexual identity. We assume everyone is "pink" or "blue" and then we assume that everyone's internal and external characteristics are also "pink" or "blue" but our culture takes it one step further and we assume that all "pinks" are attracted to "blues" and vice versa. In fact, we use the term "Coming Out" when someone has to announce that they in fact are not heterosexual. [Use this space to talk about how straight people don't have to disappoint others' expectations by coming out as straight — this assumption of normative behavior or identity is privilege — more inherited poker chips — for a person who identifies as non-heterosexual gives back by coming out or is taken away if a person is perceived to be non-heterosexual regardless of the individual's actual identity.]

So to review, we have a person — [point to Sex and the listed words there] we probably don't know what is inside of their pants, but [point to Gender and the list of words there] based on how we perceive this person, we will make assumptions and draw conclusions about a person's Sex and Gender and ante up the culturally allotted amount of poker chips, or privilege. So this would be like guessing what is in the pants based on the color or fabric of the pants, maybe how the person walks in the pants, where they were purchased, style, etc. Once we have made the assumption here [tracing the sexism line] we will assume heterosexuality unless otherwise informed by this person. Now if our gender perception of this person doesn't line up perfectly "pink" or "blue" we will automatically assume non-heterosexuality. If we read this person as male, but feminine, we assume he is gay unless told otherwise; female, but masculine, we assume she is a lesbian unless told otherwise. The burden is on the person we perceive. So we assume what is in the pants based on how we perceive the person in the pants and then assume what that person does with their pants off... [pause to let this settle in]

This may sound confusing but we do it everyday all day to every person. Imagine how hard it must be if these assumptions about you are incorrect and you have the burden of correcting others and risking violence, rejection, etc. Understanding how this would feel is the first step to being an Ally for the LGBT Community.

Lastly, it is important to understand how these points, Sex, Gender, and Sexual Identity are connected. Let's all picture a person ahead of us. Everyone got a picture? Now, this person is walking toward you on an empty sidewalk. There are some people who may make us move to a side of the sidewalk, off onto the grass, change sides of the street, or hold our place firmly on the sidewalk — consciously or unconsciously.

If we take power and privilege as inherited poker chips into consideration — let's take it one step further in that when we perceive others we give them a certain amount of poker chips based on our assumptions and then take them away based on what we find out or as our assumptions and judgments change.

Back to the person walking toward you on the sidewalk, based on their physical size [point to Sex] you assume that the person is a man [point to Gender]. If you identify as a man, this may not concern you at all, if you are a woman, this may be taken into consideration when determining what you will do to pass this person. Does this "man" look scary? Do you feel endangered?

As the “man” gets closer you determine that “he” is wearing a skirt so you decide that this “man” is actually a tall woman or a gay [point to Sexual Orientation] man [point to Gender]. This change is significant to understand because in our culture, someone tall is supposed to be a man and someone in a skirt is supposed to be a woman. If this person is a woman — we assume they are straight. If this person is a man in a skirt we assume they are gay — automatically. Take some time picturing people or even yourself in one of these points and see how the other two automatically get applied through assumptions and judgments. Now see how Roles, Expression, and Identity work to connect Sex, Gender, and Sexual Identity.

[This may be difficult for participants or even facilitators. I recommend facilitators getting comfortable with at least three examples of people who could be on this sidewalk who vary on expression, roles, identity, and sexual identity. Regardless of the example, the Sex is almost always assumed to align with the Gender perception.]

Does breaking down Sex and Gender as being separate make sense now? Does it also make sense how they are conflated together into synonyms? Once you have a better understanding of how they are different it is much easier to assess the tools used to gather information. For example, when looking at retention rates at your institution, are you really asking what the connection between testosterone or testicles is to graduation rates? My guess is, you are asking about students living as men on campus and the connections to the roles these men play and graduation rates.

This is really only the starting point of this discussion. Without this foundation, the discussion falls flat and is based on erroneous information.

Hopefully this helps continue conversations based on the real complex lives of people. It really is this simple.

Thank you!

Gender This!



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Gender This!

This workshop is a very basic workshop introducing the concept of gender as a social construct and how gender expression changes through class, culture, and time. This workshop is very interactive and provides a safe place for all sorts of questions regarding identity, language, sex, sexuality, and gender perception.

Learning Outcomes:

- To recognize three of their own stereotypes/assumptions about gender
- To understand and evaluate three stereotypes about gender that are supported by US culture
- To reorganize traditional gender perceptions based on the realities of judgments and assumptions



Time Frame: Minimum of 45 minutes

Supplies Needed:

- Flip chart paper or board
- Multiple colors of markers
- Masking Tape

Room Set Up: Draw two stick figures large on a board or one each on a large sheet of flip chart paper. Facilitator should have multiple colors of markers. Participants need a clear view of the flip chart paper.

Facilitator Notes: This is a VERY basic level program that gets people talking and the energy level can get high. Remember that you are trying to draw the binary gender system. Keep things very binary with your comments, drawings, and questions or suggestions. Throughout the script are [facilitator notes in brackets like this.]

The Script: *Hello! My name is [insert name] and today we are talking about gender. The best way I know how to do this is to first get everyone involved. So here you see that I have two stick figures. What I would like for you to do is to help me “gender” these figures in a typical if not stereotypical way. We are keeping to the binary for those advanced folks out there so you don’t need to get too creative — stick to the basics. So how this will work is you can call out items, characteristics, etc., and I will draw it where you tell me to. I am not an artist, but I will try my best. Are we ready to start?*

What would you like for me to draw or write? [Take suggestions from the participants. Draw the best you can what they call out on the figure they tell you, keeping to a binary. Have fun with this, to prompt for items. They may be getting cold, they get clothing. What is going on inside gets hormones, genitalia, etc., What is the relationship between these two? Usually they are high school sweethearts. What are their names? What pronouns do they use? What jobs do they have? Hobbies? Habits?] *Okay, so do we feel good with this?*

I like to start with these because when I start to “teach” about gender, folks have a hard time understanding how automatic gendering someone is. We started with two blank stick figures. Now, these figures both had two legs, arms, etc. We made an assumption of able bodied-ness. If you wanted them to be high school sweethearts or something like that, we assumed they were heterosexual. That was just an assumption we all started with. Also, take a minute to see what assumptions we made based on race, age, religion, political affiliation, native language, country of citizenship, etc. In the hundreds of times that I have done this, they are never gay, from the Masi Tribe in Kenya, older or younger than 20s or 30s, etc. The two stick figures are always upper class, white, employed or supported by the other, not criminals, no disabilities, Christian, Americans living the American dream.

Even though we didn’t say it nor did I include these details in my direction, it is what I get. It is what gender means to us. Gender means more than just genitalia, hormones, pronouns, sex characteristics, roles, identities, expressions, perceptions, etc. Gender is a giant amalgamation of our understood culture. We use this huge lens to see others and identify how we will interact with them. This [pointing to figures] becomes normal. This “normal” is socially constructed and changes over time and culture.

This is done so we can make sense of “normal” intellectually, but how does it inform our assumptions and judgments? Moreover, how does this sense of “normal” impact our behaviors?

[If this activity is paired with other activities, feel free to use figure A and figure B by the names they were assigned when talking about “normal” in other pieces of training. This prevents having to call out a participant specifically for being sexist, heterosexist, privileged, etc., just let the figure represent “normal.” It is important if you do this to eventually draw a line around the participants and facilitators that we are all part of these “normal” messages.]

It may not be our fault that we have this cultural norm informing our behaviors, thoughts, assumptions, judgments, etc., but it is our responsibility to accept this truth and do something with it. I don’t think it is practical to say, “I just won’t do this anymore.” I would prefer a degree of consistent self-reflection to better inform our reality.

When would gender not matter anymore? I like to use the example, now dated, of Britney Spears and Madonna kissing. These two women are so wealthy they can kiss and not experience homophobia or be labeled lesbian. They could also wear men’s clothing and not be considered men. Is this race, class, or some other part of our culture that affords them this fluidity? [Take a moment to discuss this concept.]

Sticks and Stones: LGBT 101



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Sticks and Stones: LGBT 101

What better way to learn about sexual identities than to list out social norms, stereotypes, media images, rumors, jokes, and slang! This is a safe space for any and all kinds of interactive discussions regarding Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Heterosexual identities. By comparing themes of these messages learned for these different groups, we can then have a much deeper conversation about class, race, educational access, citizenship, ability assumptions, etc. By understanding our language we can hold ourselves accountable to building an inclusive environment for all (regardless of sexual identity).

[View a clip from this program.](#)

Learning Outcomes:

- To articulate their own stereotypes, derogatory terms, and other assumptions for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and heterosexual people
- To identify others' stereotypes, derogatory terms, and other assumptions for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and heterosexual people
- To recognize the U.S. cultural need for binaries when examining sexual identities and gender identities



Comments from attendees:

"You answered all of my questions knowledgeably and without making me feel dumb for asking."

Time Frame: Minimum of 25 minutes

Supplies Needed:

- 5 sheets of flip chart paper
- Extra flip chart paper
- Masking tape
- 5 different colored markers

Room Set Up: Flip chart paper is taped to the walls in separate areas of the room to allow for small groups to rotate around the room without overhearing other groups' conversations. Each sheet should be labeled with one of the following labels: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Heterosexual/Straight. If posting sheets up before the workshop, fold the bottom half up and tape to wall loosely to cover up the label on the sheet. One marker is left by each area of the room with a sheet of paper. Extra flip chart paper is on hand in case a group needs more room, another sheet can be taped up during the activity.

Facilitator Notes: This is a good time to assess energy and knowledge levels in the room. If it seems low, have participants stand, stretch, and repeat after you some short phrase that is relevant to your upcoming section, or something that will increase the energy level in the room like "TGIF! TGIF!" This is also a GREAT way to break the ice for a group that doesn't previously know each other and/or if participants are nervous or anxious about the content of the workshop. While running the workshop, facilitators can also observe who the participants are that may need to talk more during the processing, be most uncomfortable with content, as well as finding any self-identified LGBT folks in the room who may move into "teacher" mode instead of learning mode. Throughout the script are [facilitator notes in brackets like this.]

The Script: *Hi everyone, I'm [insert name]. Our next activity is going to expand on messages you got about your own and others' sexual orientations and sexual identities — and we're going to discuss messages you've received about transgender individuals as well.*

First, we're going to get into small groups, so please count off by 5's.

[Have everyone count off 1,2,3,4,5,1,2,3,4,5,1,2,etc.]

[Have each group (1's, 2's, 3's, etc.) gather in separate areas of the room.]

Now that we're in groups, pick up your marker. This marker is going to travel with your group as you move around the room. You may not get to all of sheets, depending on time. Go ahead and uncover your labeled sheet. You will see an identity written at the top of your sheet of paper. Write any messages you have learned about this identity. These can be stereotypes, careers, slang, famous people, media images — anything at all — and we're looking for the good, the bad, and the ugly — so don't try to be polite! It may work best for one person in each group to write down what everyone else calls out. Remember, these don't have to be things you believe, just things you know are out there. It is important to remember that you will not be held personally accountable for anything that you write. It is not our fault that these messages are in our heads, but it is our responsibility to learn from these messages. You'll have two minutes to write down as much as you can! Go ahead and start!

[Give the groups two minutes ONLY to write things down and then switch the groups or the lists around the room (depending on space and energy of the participants — moving the lists will calm the participants down but you need more facilitators, and moving the groups will add energy to the room and create more "get to know new people" space) twice so each group gets three lists throughout the activity, taking their marker with them. Each time, they get two minutes. If you have enough trainers present, one facilitator should join each group as well but should have someone else write the terms down and should not dominate the conversation. To better manage time, you may also want to give two minutes for the first sheet and then taper time each rotation.]

Okay, now we're going to switch lists. Read what was written before you and add to what the group before you has already written down.

[Switch lists. Give two minutes.]

And now we're going to switch lists one last time.

[Switch lists. Give two minutes.]

[It is not necessary to have each group go to all five sheets — if the group is small, then it is fine. Once there is enough information on the sheets to fill in stereotypes, you can stop the rotation. I usually wait for "breeder" to show up on the Straight list or if it is time to stop, I will make the suggestion to that group.]

Okay, if one person from Gay, Lesbian, and Heterosexual/Straight groups could bring their list up and post it to this side of the room, please. Can one person from Bisexual and Transgender groups bring their list up and post it to this side of the room, please. And then have a seat back in the large group. I will take the markers back on your way back to your seats.

[Post the lists on opposite sides of the rooms with Gay, Lesbian, and Heterosexual (in this order) on one side and Bisexual and Transgender on the other.]

So, what was this activity like? How did it make you feel? Was there a list that was easier for you? Harder for you? Why?

I separate the lists in this manner so that we can first focus on what I have reclaimed as “monosexual” identities, meaning, in this context, groups that have one option of attraction. By definition, “gay” means someone who identifies as a man and is sexually or romantically attracted to other men. “Lesbian” means someone who identifies as a woman and is sexually or romantically attracted to other women. “Heterosexual” could mean a self-identified man or woman who is attracted to the “opposite” sex (e.g. men to women and women to men). Some Gay and Lesbian people are not comfortable having something in common with Heterosexuals and some Heterosexuals are not comfortable having this “one option” commonality with Gay men or Lesbian women. For the sake of this exercise, I want to show how different the messages are about these groups even with the “one option” commonality.

Let’s start with the Heterosexual/Straight list.

[Read the words on the list out loud.]

Are there any terms that you need clarification on? [If yes, ask someone from that color of marker group to explain the term.]

Do you see any themes on this list? [Usually, this list mentions children, family, religion, politics, and normal. Breeder often gets on the list which is an opportunity to discuss in group vs. out group language. Other negatives may be geared towards the religious right hateful ideals, but this isn’t about the person.]

Okay, the Gay list.

[Read each list item out loud. The facilitator should stand in front of the Lesbian list to block the lists from the participants.]

Are there any terms that you need clarification on? [If yes, ask someone from that color of marker group to explain the term.]

Do you notice any themes from this listing of words? [The Gay list is usually very sexual and feminine. Jack from Will & Grace usually gets on the list — note not Will, but Jack. The Gay list may also have words that use Gay as an umbrella term for all things not heterosexual. Try and focus on the individual Gay terms instead of the group terms, but discuss how “gay” may not represent people of color, women, or those with less financial means, therefore not being a good umbrella term. Don’t push for themes for the list as it will become easier as you continue processing the other lists.]

Okay, Lesbian list?

[Read the list out loud. The facilitator should stand in front of a gap between Lesbian and Bisexual]

Are there any terms that you need clarification on? [If yes, ask someone from that color of marker group to explain the term.]

Do you notice any themes from this listing of words? [This list is usually more masculine, committed relationships, less sexual, unless talking about straight male fantasies, less fashionable.]

Do you notice any themes or contrasts between the Gay and Lesbian lists? [Both lists are very individual and binary. One is feminine and sexual and the other is masculine and asexual. You can have a discussion about sexism and patriarchy here and that masculine gay men happen and feminine lesbians happen. Discuss the pressures to be gay enough or lesbian enough.]

If we compare the Heterosexual list to the Gay and Lesbian lists, what comparisons and contrasts can we make?

[Allow for a few minutes of comments and discussion. This is a good time to talk about internalized homophobia, coming out, and other key words. Also, that Gay men and Lesbian women may have religious identities, political views, children, etc. Heterosexuals may also be hyper-sexualized, fashionable (metrosexuals), be in committed relationships, etc. Also, within these groups is where the privilege of making up language exists. Language is created to determine which communities one belongs to and which communities a person doesn't have or want membership to.]

Now, as we move to the other lists, let us keep these discussions in mind. I have Bisexual and Transgender here together to help explain what I like to call Fluidity. Where Gay, Lesbian, and Heterosexual lists are coming from that "one option" similarity, Bisexual and Transgender listings come from many options. In fact, some would say that the system based on "one option" itself is limiting their own identities. Let me explain by starting with Bisexual. [Facilitator should be blocking Transgender from participants' view.] In this context, I am using the term Bisexual to describe self-identified men and women that are romantically or sexually attracted to either men or women.

Okay, the Bisexual list?

[Read the list out loud.]

Are there any terms that you need clarification on? [If yes, ask someone from that color of marker group to explain the term.]

Do you see any themes on this list? [This list has significantly less words on it than Gay or Lesbian, and is usually more confused, and as I like to name it, homeless, meaning that the Bisexual is rejected from the heterosexual norm for being greedy and from the Gay and Lesbian communities for being confused or just a stepping stone to being gay or lesbian (bi now gay later). Have a discussion about how this is a real legitimate identity, but because of social pressures to pick one or the other, is seen by others as unstable or hyper-sexualized. If a bisexual woman is dating a man, she will be perceived as straight and if she claims a bisexual identity her commitment to her partner is questioned. She isn't given "room" to be fluid with whom she is romantically or sexually attracted to.]

Okay, last but not least is the Transgender list. I use the term Transgender as both an umbrella term and an individual identity representing those individuals who are fluid in the sense of their own self-identified gender. A trans person may not identify with the gender they were given at birth. When we talk about Gay, Lesbian, Heterosexual, and Bisexual, these communities are labeled based on their gender identity and the gender identity of the folks they are romantically or sexually attracted to. Trans folks may identify as any of these sexual identities, and are the "T" in LGBT because of the role gender plays in labeling these communities. A trans person has "fluidity" in their own gender expression.

Lastly, the Transgender list?

[Read the list out loud.]

Are there any terms that you need clarification on? [If yes, ask someone from that color of marker group to explain the term.]

Do you see any themes on this list? [This list is even shorter yet as so few people know a lot about the trans population. Confused, depressed, evil, dangerous, perverts, complicated surgeries, and bureaucratic processes like getting a passport, going to a doctor, etc., usually come up on the list.]

[This is a good time to talk about passing and “going stealth.” Passing is when someone has transitioned from birth gender assignment (medically or not) and is perceived by others as they currently identify. Their gender identity is validated by others — they pass. “Going stealth” refers to the passing person’s visibility as a trans person. If they pass as the gender they want to be perceived, they don’t have to identify as transgender, but as a man or woman. By not visibly or vocally identifying as a trans community member, but as a man or a woman within the binary cisgender community — their transition isn’t common knowledge.]

What do you notice when you compare the Bisexual and Transgender lists? [Terms like pansexual and omnisexual are being used to describe folks who have romantic or sexual attractions to others regardless of gender identity to be more inclusive than the binary implied in Bisexual. Both of these lists are negatively judged by Gay, Lesbian, and Heterosexuals.]

And how do the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender lists compare and contrast with one another?

[Allow time for discussion. Gay and Lesbian lists are much more about the individuals while Bisexual and Transgender are larger, macro institutionalized terminology — not personal or even seen as “real” individuals.]

When looking at all of the lists, what messages do you see? [Themes of what is normal, less normal, and abnormal are defined on the lists. Also, when someone is coming out, they are countering expectations that were placed on them by others instead of others being more careful when placing expectations or judgments on others. It is important to note that usually the lists are very western, American, white, upper-class, privileged lists and would vary from culture to culture. This is important to understand when the word “normal” is used or implied as this is our/your normal — not a unilateral normal.]

Are there any questions or thoughts before we wrap up this activity? [Often, points made at the very beginning of the workshop will come back up for clarification.]

[If doing other workshops after this activity, I would recommend taking a break here. If this is the end of the workshop, I would offer the organizer the opportunity to keep the lists for future reference. If followed by an open forum discussion, put the lists back up in the front of the room, in Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Heterosexual/Straight order, and reinforce the “It isn’t my fault this stuff is in my head, but it is my responsibility to learn from it” theme. The lists taken out of context are usually seen as alarmingly honest and brave collections of truths that you can then say were written by folks in this community.]

LGBT

Messages

I Learned



GOOD
ENOUGH
NOW

LGBT Messages I Learned

Doing Social Justice work is a simple concept, but it isn't easy. While moving forward, we must also trace from where we have come and what we have learned. This activity is primarily a silent self-reflection journey through one's past to better inform our futures.

Learning Outcomes:

- Identify messages you learned about one key identity that makes you who you are
- Identify messages you learned about at least two groups to which you are not a member
- Identify an event where you actively or passively supported oppression
- Connect the functions of internalized and externalized oppression with one's own identities and experiences
- Participate in an authentic conversation regarding emotions, anxieties, and realities of doing social justice work

Time Frame: Minimum of 40 minutes

Supplies Needed:

- Sheet of paper divided into four quadrants
- Pen/marker for each participant

Room Set Up: This activity is done privately with dyad conversations at the end. Each person could be seated at tables and turn to a neighbor, or sit on the floor and cluster in sets of twos (or very small groups) afterwards.

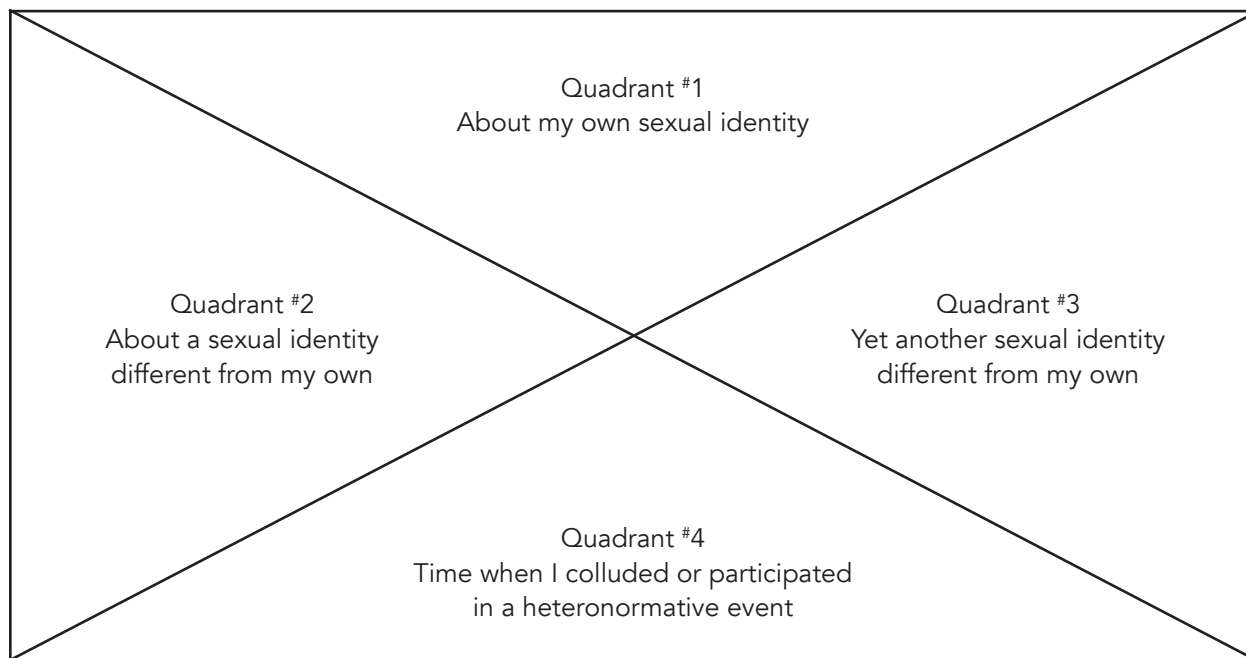
Facilitator Notes: I think it is important to provide a private space for participants who really need to trace back roots of where bias grows. It is imperative to facilitate this activity as serious, quietly encouraging participants to be honest with themselves. I keep track of time per quadrant, give a minute warning before moving to the next section, and remind participants that they do not have to share anything with anyone in the room that they don't want to share. The purpose of this activity is for each participant to bookmark roots of their belief systems. Some of the roots are important and unchangeable while others may be sources of shame, embarrassment, frustration, anger, and/or deeply held pain and stories of harm. I also only read the instructions for one quadrant at a time. This allows for interesting conversation around our dependency on binary systems (when the third quadrant is named). Throughout the script are [facilitator notes in brackets like this.]

The Script:

Hi everyone, I'm [insert name]. This activity is a little different than most diversity trainings in that I want you to have a think back... way back. I'm going to lead us all through an activity where you are going to be asked to record or bookmark messages you have learned about specific topics that I will give you. You can draw, write words, or whatever you need to mark different experiences in your own life. When you think of one, record it, and then think further back. Keep recording everything that comes to mind. You are not going to share anything you record on your sheets with anyone in the room unless you choose to; I will not ask you to share anything with me or anything else. When doing social justice work, it is important to document the roots of our beliefs, where we learned these beliefs, and what messages are attached to them in order to choose what needs to be updated so to speak and what remains critical to your current belief system.

[Make sure everyone has a sheet of paper and something to write with. Ask participants to draw a large X on their paper dividing the sheet into four quadrants. Some folks may want to record the prompt in each section so that they can remember what they record in each section. I will be referring to the quadrants by number, 1, 2, 3, and 4.]

[Do not give participants the prompts for all quadrants up front. Give the instructions one quadrant at a time.]



[After participants have divided their sheets into quadrants, remind them that this is an activity for personal reflection.]

As we begin this reflection activity, I will give you prompts for each quadrant. I will give you a warning when you have about a minute left to finish up the documentation in each quadrant. You are welcome to go back throughout the activity if you think of other messages you learned or if you need to finish something you were working on in an earlier time period. I will then ask you to set your pen down when you are done with the quadrant and to sit quietly while your peers may still be working. Remember, doing social justice work is very much based on the messages you have learned. Anything you record is to remind you of your memories, life experiences, etc.

For the first quadrant, remember that you might want to take note of the prompts in each quadrant to help you later when you look back over this sheet in the future. I will be referring to the quadrants by number. So, number one, please record, draw, list reminders of messages you learned about your own sexual orientation or identity group. [You can also use gender identity, race, class, etc., instead for this activity – here we will focus of sexual identity aspects (straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual) of the participant. The process is the same no matter the identity that is being used. Also, remind participants that they do not have to share their recordings with others – it is a self-reflective activity only.]

[Give at least 5 minutes of silence. Watch for the length of time people need. Give a one minute warning by asking people to get to a stopping place or to finish up the memory they are currently recording.]

We are going to move to the second quadrant now. In quadrant two, please record messages you have learned about another sexual identity group other than your own.

[Give at least 5 minutes of silence. Watch for the length of time people need. Give a one minute warning by asking people to get to a stopping place or to finish up the memory they are currently recording.]

Wrap up quadrant two so that we can move on to the third quadrant. In quadrant three, please record messages you have learned about yet another sexual identity group other than your own.

[Notice that heterosexual participants tend to lump all non-heterosexual groups together in this quadrant. Just let them – don't say anything. Non-heterosexual participants may use this quadrant to depict LG messages or another sexual identity group, and bisexual people may not see a problem with these directions and not understand others' confusion. This is a great way to remind participants of our binary default. Us/Them is only two options instead of more than two options being available. If working with gender — cisgender participants may lump women together then men — leaving trans, gender queer people for quadrant #3. Those with cisgender privilege may be confused by a third gender option — those that don't identify within the binary gender system may have an easier time with the directions.]

[Give at least 5 minutes of silence. Watch for the length of time people need. Give a one minute warning by asking people to get to a stopping place or to finish up the memory they are currently recording.]

For the last quadrant, I am going to ask that you reflect on your own inactions or actions. Remember that what you choose to record on this sheet will not be shared with the larger group unless you choose to share. This quadrant may be more difficult for some; I challenge you to dig up at least one example. Please record a time, place, or event where you colluded or supported a heteronormative event through your direct action or inaction.

[Give at least 5 minutes of silence. Watch for the length of time people need. Give a one minute warning by asking people to get to a stopping place or to finish up the memory they are currently recording.]

[Notice that this is usually extremely difficult for participants, especially for non-heterosexual [non-cisgender] participants. When giving the direction for this quadrant be mindful that most don't understand the word *collude* so be prepared with a definition, but not an example. If you give an example, they will find a time they did exactly the same thing and put that down on their sheet. You want them to come up with something on their own and/or struggle to do so.]

Thank you for your patience during this activity. As I told you, this isn't easy nor a typical diversity activity. Truth be told, our lives are like most diversity activities and this one is really about one's or your own life.

Now, I have stated a number of times that you don't have to share with anyone what you have recorded on your sheets. This is really for you and your ongoing reflection. What I would like to do now is give you the opportunity to talk with one other person about this experience. Before you pair up, please turn your sheets over and record four conversation prompts so that I don't have to interrupt the flow of conversation with the next prompt.

Prompt #1

What did you think about this activity? How did you react to the directions?

Prompt #2

Which quadrants were easier or harder to fill out?

Prompt #3

What did you feel while working in each quadrant?

Prompt #4

How are you feeling during this conversation?

I am going to give you and your partner about 10 minutes [maybe 15 minutes depending on confusion/frustration levels] to work through these four conversation prompts without interruption. Please pair up with a partner and make sure that both of you have a chance to share. I will be back in a little while.

[After 10 or 15 minutes bring the group's attention back to the front of the room.]

By show of hands, how many of you wish you could keep talking?

[Look around the room and then state the rough percentage of hands in the air — usually WAY more than half.]

I want to take this opportunity to mention that you don't need me or any other diversity speaker to have conversations like this. You just need to make the time and space to really deeply listen and share with one another. That IS doing social justice work.

Now, about this activity and the brief conversations you had with your partner... What, if anything, would you like to share with the large group? Do you have any questions for me or your fellow participants?

[Take comments from the participants.]

[Your role during this conversation is to notice patterns, and stir up the discussion about how this experience might be different for different people. You can then pull from the conversation a mutual understanding of the social construction of sexual identity as well as the importance of holding one to lessons learned and finding lessons you may need to unlearn to be congruent with one's core values. How does class (upbringing and/or current economic status) impact this activity? What about internalized and externalized sexism and heterosexism [cisgenderism]? Do you see any connections between the ease in which you completed the activity and your place (or the placement of others) within a "hierarchy of oppression?"]

Thank you!