Allyship 101: LGBT diversity, equity and inclusion

Dusti Mahoney, Landlord Liaison, YWCA North Central Washington, Wenatchee
Some ground rules

- This is a safe and educational space, please keep an open mind as you encounter new ideas.
  - Assume the good intentions of your fellow learners.
- There are no stupid questions.
- Please take care of yourself: take a break if you need to.
- Please be aware of your own privilege - the aspects of your identity that give you an advantage to those who might have to fight in that same regard.
- Use “I statements”: own your thoughts and feelings.
- This topic is a croissant, not a donut.
- Please let me know if I am talking too fast.
Pronouns: she and her
Whitman College, 2009
  - BA in Gender Studies with a concentration in LGBT and Queer Studies
Vista Youth Center
YWCA North Central Washington
  - dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.
Road map

- Terms
- Acronyms
- Allyship
- Coming out
- What comes next
Let’s Talk

Terms
Gay

- Men who desire to have romantic and sexual relationships with men
- Umbrella term
- Homosexual
- MSM
Lesbian

- Women who desire to have romantic and sexual relationships with women
Bisexual

- People who have an attraction to both men and women
- Bi invisibility
- Male bisexuality vs female bisexuality
There is an overlap between bisexual and pansexual

Pansexuality is very individual
Trans*

- Any individual who crosses over or challenges or blurs society’s traditional gender roles and/or expressions
- Someone who does not fit neatly into happy little gender/sex boxes
- More specifically: a person whose gender identity is not in alignment with their assigned gender, either all or part of the time
**Gender Queer**

- Someone who doesn’t identify with conventional gender distinctions
- May identify with neither, both or a combination of genders
- Non-binary or enby would fit best here

**Gender Fluid**

- Someone who doesn’t identify as having a solid and fixed gender identity
Queer

- Umbrella term to end all umbrella terms.
- Has vastly been reclaimed especially by a younger demographic.
  - Use with caution regarding older members of the community.
  - Use with caution regarding people you don’t know personally.
Questioning

- A person who is actively questioning their sexual or gender identity (or otherwise)
Asexual

- A person without a sexual attraction. Not often included in The Lexicon.
- Ace
- Becoming more accepted and known as people meet and connect via the internet
Polyamorous

- People who willingly and mindfully engage in consensual non-monogamous relationships either sexual, emotional or both.

- Estimates cite AT LEAST 500,000 poly relationships across the US
Intersex

- A person who’s sexual/reproductive organs or genes aren’t perfect.
- Disorders/Differences of Sexual Development (DSD)

Inclusion

Why include?

- If you are assigned the wrong sex it can screw with a lot of basic stuff
- If your genitals aren’t picture perfect often you obviously don’t fit into the boxes

Why not include?

- Intersex is often a medical condition and has nothing to do with a person’s sexual orientation.

Hermaphrodite

Numbers

- About 1 in 1500-2000 births
  - Might be as high as 1 in 100
Straight

- A person who desire to have romantic and sexual relationships with people of the opposite gender

- Heterosexual

- “Normal”
Cisgender

- A person whose gender presentation, gender identity and assigned sex match
Let’s Talk

Acronyms
QUILTBAG

- LGBT
- LGBT+
- LGBTQ
- LGBTQIA
- LGBTTIQQIAAP
- LGBTQ2
- LGBTTIQQ2SA
- SGL
- GSM
- GSRM
- GSD
- MOGII
Let’s Talk Allyship
Ally

- A heterosexual person who supports LGBT folks.
- Or a non-identitied person who supports people with that identity (Trans Ally).
- Most specifically a person with more social power who supports those who do not have the same social clout.
How to be a good ally - beginner

- Listen
- Be open-minded
- Be willing to talk
- Be inclusive
- Don’t assume
- Confront problematic behaviors
- Confront your own prejudices and privileges
- Defend your friends
- Treat everyone with dignity and respect

Source: https://www.glaad.org/resources/ally/2
How to be a good ally - advanced

- Shut up and listen
- Ally is an action
- Ally is not self proclaimed
- You don’t take breaks either
- Constant education
- You don’t get the spotlight
- Community accountability
- Focus on your own
- Listen, apologize, do better
- Carry your own emotional load

Source: http://everydayfeminism.com/2013/11/things-allies-need-to-know/
How to be a bad ally

- Assume one act of solidarity makes you an ally forever
- Make everything about your feelings
- Date ‘em all
- Don’t see race/gender/disability/etc
- Don’t try harder
- Challenge oppression in personal situations but not in systematic ways
- Take. Don’t give
- Quote famous people or your one ___ friend

Source: http://www.blackgirldangerous.org/new-blog/2013/6/17/8-ways-not-to-be-an-ally
Trans etiquette and allyship

- Treat trans people just like you treat anyone else!
- Use the correct name and pronoun
  - Not sure? Just ask! “What pronouns do you use?”
- If you make a mistake with name or pronoun
  - Alone: apologize and drop it
  - In a group: just move on
Things not to say

- I’ll never get that name/pronoun right!
- You will always be a man/woman to me.
- Have you had… “the operation”?
- Are you done?
- Which bathroom do you use?
- If you combed your hair a certain way/ walked a certain way/ did some asinine thing you’d be more masculine/feminine!

- When did you become a transgendered?
- You pass really well!
- How do you have sex?
- I can still see the man/woman in you.
- How is your family taking it?
- Are you sure?
- Are you afraid that people will hurt you?
- Tranny
Some questions…

1. What do you think caused your heterosexuality?
2. When and where did you decide you were a heterosexual?
3. Is it possible this is just a phase and you will outgrow it?
4. Do your parents know you are straight? Do your friends know? How did they react?
5. If you have never slept with a person of the same sex, is it just possible that all you need is a good gay lover?
6. Why do you insist on flaunting your heterosexuality… can’t you just be who you are and keep it quiet?
8. Why do heterosexuals place so much emphasis on sex?

9. Why do heterosexuals try to recruit others into this lifestyle?

10. A disproportionate majority of child molesters are heterosexual… Do you consider it safe to expose children to heterosexual teachers?

11. Just what do men and women do in bed together? How can they truly know how to please each other, being so anatomically different?

12. With all the societal support marriage receives, the divorce rate is spiraling. Why are there so few stable relationships among heterosexuals?

13. How can you become a whole person if you limit yourself to compulsive, exclusive heterosexuality?

Source: Martin Rochlin, Ph.D., 1972
Let’s Talk

Coming out
Stages of coming out

- Closeted = “I don’t want you to know”
- Passing = “I assume you don’t know”
- Covering = “I don’t know what you know”
- Implicitly Out = “I’m gay. See it if you can.”
- Explicitly Out = “I’m telling you I am gay.”
- Publicly Out = “See me as gay.”
Coming out in the workplace

- Eliminates the need to hide or mislead.
- Makes deeper friendships possible.
- Breaks down barriers to understanding.
- Builds trusting working relationships.
- Lets us bring our “whole selves” to work.
- Being open can make you more productive.

Source: https://www.hrc.org/resources/coming-out-at-work
Myths about coming out at work

- Coming out at work isn’t a big deal- it’s 2019!
- Coming out is more or less the same for everyone.
- There is complete control over being out or not.
- Coming out has nothing to do with work.
- Coming out at work happens just once.
- There is only one way to come out (or not).
- People are scared to come out just because they fear for their career.

Source: https://hbr.org/2018/10/7-myths-about-coming-out-at-work
Let’s Talk

What comes next
What can your organization do tomorrow?

- Create a **public** statement of nondiscrimination
- Actively recruit members of marginalized or disadvantaged communities to be a part of your organization- especially on the board!
- Create formal partnerships that encourage cooperation
  - YWCA NCW
  - Wenatchee Pride
- Train staff, volunteers and others
- Include pronouns in email signatures