



Defending Queerness:

An Intersectional Approach to Preventing and Responding to
Sexual Violence in the LGBTQIA+ Community

2021



Today's Discussion

Outline of Topics

Who We Are, Why We're Here, What We're About

Definitions & Policies

Talking with Title IX Practitioners

Statistics and Research

Suggestions and Next Steps

Resources

Introductions!

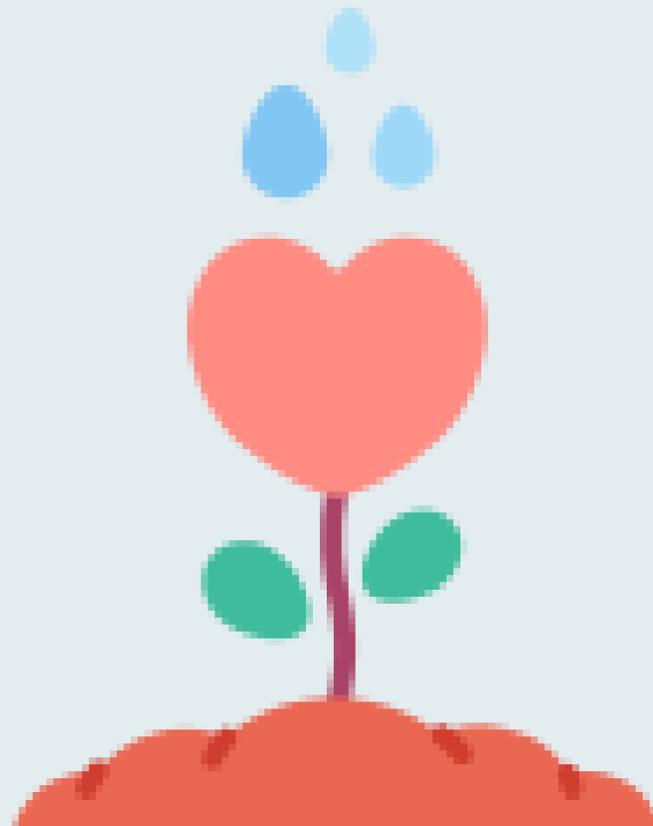
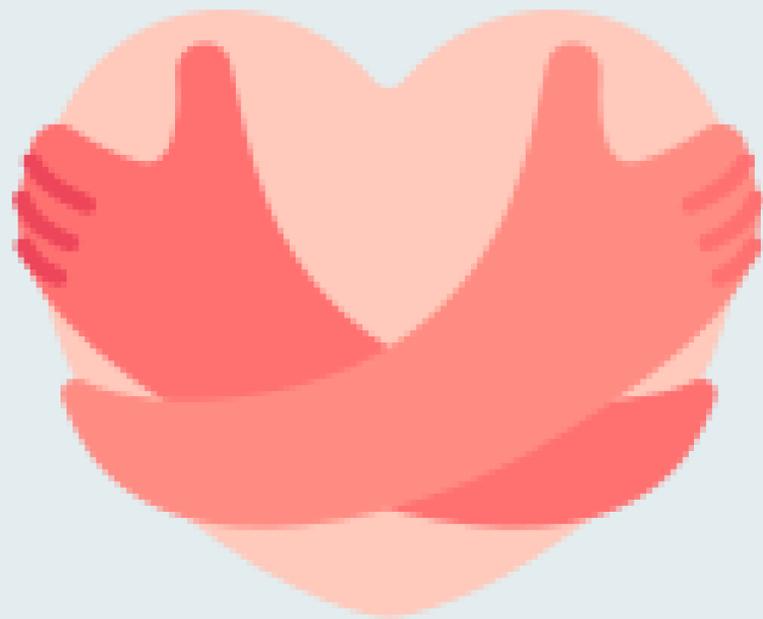
2021



Some of these topics can be triggering and we urge you to put your ~~self~~ first. If you need to turn off your screen or step away please do and feel free to private message either facilitator during or after the presentation.

Taking care of yourself allows you to care for your community.

We will have a list of resources at the end.



"If sexual assault prevention solely focuses on cisgender heterosexual violence, it may invalidate LGBT[Q] people's assault experience and be ineffective for LGBT[Q] populations" (Coulter et al., 2017, p. 733).

2021

"These systems of power are usually invisible and thus easily reified and perpetrated through learned and unquestioned participation in social structures." (Kortegast & van der Toorn, 2018, p. 271).

2021



Importance of Intersectionality



"Intersectionality" is a term coined by Kimberle Crenshaw in 1989. It was developed specifically to name the unique experiences of Black Women who move through the world in a way incomparable to Black men or White Women as each group has a level of privilege inaccessible to Black women. Race and Gender are inseparable for Black women.

Intersectionality has been expanded on to apply to the general importance of considering how multiple identities work together to create each individual's social position.

Here we touch on the intersections of race, gender, and sexuality as they related to sexual violence.

It is important to never divorce intersectionality from its origins.

Crenshaw, Kimberle "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Policies." University of Chicago Legal Forum 19 no. 1 (1989).

What Title IX Practitioners Had to Say...

What would you find helpful in a presentation like this?

"First, I would like to see where I can go for more information. Number two, how do I act..."

"Maybe the protections in place for community members because the laws are constantly changing..."

"I love to borrow and learn from others...I don't know how other Title IX offices work, or what they find helpful. I would want to walk away with something I could implement in my day-to-day."

"I'd want to hear from LGBTQIA+ students and hear about what they think Title IX is and how they see gender equity on campus."

Definitions



ILLUSTRATED BY HANNAH MINN

- **LGBTQIA+** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual
- **Queer**- A term people often use to express a spectrum of identities and orientations that are counter to the mainstream. Queer is often used as a catch-all.
*Be cautious of using it if not a part of the community.
- **Asexual**- A person who experiences reduced or no sexual attraction
- **Bisexual**- A person emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to more than one sex, gender or gender identity though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way, or to the same degree. Sometimes used interchangeably with pansexual.

Definitions

- **Transgender**- An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. No physical change must be made by a person to be transgender.
- **Nonbinary**- A person who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. Non-binary people may identify as being both a man and a woman, somewhere in between, or as falling completely outside these categories.
- **Cisgender**- A term used to describe a person whose gender identity aligns with the sex assigned to them at birth
- **Genderfluid**- Person who does not identify with a single fixed gender or has a fluid or unfixed gender identity
- **Intersex**- Intersex people are born with a variety of differences in their sex traits and reproductive anatomy.



ILLUSTRATED BY HANNAH MINN

Definitions

Sexuality and gender variance have existed in society and across all cultures as long as humans have had a society. Many cultures have specific and historical terms for various gender identities, sexualities, and ways of living.

These identities may not be able to correspond with the eurocentric definitions we defined previously as they exist within a cultural context.

- **Two-Spirit** - another gender role believed to be common amongst most first peoples of Turtle Island (North America)...it is rooted in the spiritual teaching that all life is sacred. (them. InQueery.)
- **Mashoga** - is a Swahili term that connotes a range of identities on the gender continuum. (PBS. Map of Gender-Diverse Cultures)
- **Hijras**- In (South Asian cultures including India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh) are physiological males who adopt feminine gender identity, women's clothing and other feminine gender roles. Most hijra do not consider themselves to be men or women or transgender, but a distinct third gender. (PBS. Map of Gender-Diverse Cultures)
- The Bugi people of southern Sulawesi recognize three sexes (male, female, intersex) and five genders: **Men, Women, Calabai, Calalai,** and **Bissu** (PBS. Map of Gender-Diverse Cultures)



Rainbow Collective of Thunder Bay

Protections

Bostock v. Clayton County, GA (June 15, 2020)

Department of Education's OCR's
Notice of Interpretation (June 16, 2021)

State definitions of sexual assault vary

What Title IX Practitioners Had to Say...

What are your general thoughts on working with the LGBTQIA population?

"For far too long, when we're talking about gender equity and Title IX, it's been a heteronormative, white, cis frame...Folks will say 'he said, she said,' and there's that heteronormative lens; another example is that we think survivors are white, cisgendered females. It's not about making LGBTQIA+ folks primary, but removing cultural biases."

"...I just handle the situation...Like, someone coming into our office could identify as part of the LGBTQIA+ community, but nothing related to that identity could be relevant to the support that they need."

"There are some privacy concerns and sensitivities regarding the LGBTQIA+ community, and those need to be taken into consideration...For example, parents might want to be involved but students might not be out...There are also concerns in violent or manipulative relationships when people out people as a form of violence, and that's also worth considering."

What Title IX Practitioners Had to Say...

In terms of sexual violence, do you think there is a difference within and/or towards the LGBTQIA community compared to cis/het couples?

"We know that trans women are one of the most vulnerable populations...The more systemically oppressed identities that are affiliated with an individual, the more at risk they might be. There are also very good reasons why they wouldn't report and can't seek support."

"Sometimes you hear stuff like -- I'm a white woman and I'm dating a Black person, therefore "I can't be racist," I'm woke by proxy. Sometimes the LGBTQIA+ community can be the same way; "well I'm gay, so I can't discriminate, because I'm already marginalized."

"I think that it can have an impact, the identity of a person can impact the trauma that comes with it, if that makes sense. Like, the identity of a person and the experience of a person can affect how they respond to a specific incident, like not coming forward because of a lack of trust in authority or not wanting to come out to someone they don't know."

some stats

47% of transgender people experience sexual assault

40% of gay men report experiencing sexual violence

1 in 5 bisexual women report being raped by an intimate partner

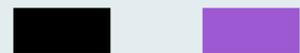
47% of bisexual men experience sexual violence

From Gentlewarrior, Sabrina. Culturally Competent Service Provision to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Survivors of Sexual Violence. Contribution by Kim Fountain, Sept. 2009



by the numbers

- LGBTQIA+ students report "higher 6 -month incidence rates of DV (30.3% compared to their heterosexual counterparts (18.5%)" (Edwards et al., 2015)
- 10% of transgender -identifying people were sexually assaulted in the past year and 54% experienced partner violence (Griner et al., 2017)
- Transgender people at higher risk than cisgender people; 20.9% of transgender people reported sexual assault, compared to 8.6% for cisgender women and 3.6% for cisgender men (Coulter et al., 2017)
- Higher likelihood for those identifying as gay/lesbian or bisexual and those who are Black or Latinx (Coulter et al., 2017)



some findings

- The majority of sex - and gender-based violence happens before age 25.
- MtF are more frequently victimized than FtM (Griner et al., 2017).
- Intersections matter; Black, LatinX, gay/lesbian, and bisexual transgender people more likely to be sexually assaulted (Coulter et al., 2017).
 - 57.7% of Black transgender people reported being sexually assaulted in the past year, possibly due to compounded discrimination.
- LGBTQIA+ people of color are more likely to conceal their identities in order to avoid harassment (Rankin, 2005).



"why aren't they getting help?"

- Lack of trust stemming from "systemic, familial, and environmental discrimination and microaggressions; societal discomfort with transgender identities; denial of bodily privacy; and a clinical view of transgender people as having a mental disorder" (Griner et al., 2017, p. 5716).
- Assumptions that rates of sexual violence are lower in the LGBTQIA+ community, a fear of not being believed, not wanting to 'out oneself,' depression and substance abuse , being part of a small community (Ollen, 2018)
- Compounded minority stress for the "most vulnerable student populations" (Nicolazzo, 2017)



What Title IX Practitioners Had to Say...

How do you incorporate this into your work?

"Being aware that when it comes to certain populations, including the LGBTQIA+ population, gender-based violence impacts them more severely. Being aware of statistics, that people with certain identities may not feel comfortable reporting, talking to me, or sharing their experience at all."

"...No kind of sexual practice —and I've done a lot of investigations —surprises me, and that's a good thing. For folks who practice Title IX, when people gasp when they hear about a certain type of activity that can be a display of bias. As long as it's consensual it's all good."

What Title IX Practitioners Had to Say...

What would you suggest are best practices, if there are any?*

"I really do think taking everything case by case. Different folks have different preferences. Just because they are LGBTQIA+ doesn't mean they want the same thing that someone else does."

"Being empathetic —it's hard because we can't take sides in this job, but empathy can be there regardless and makes people feel comfortable and heard."

"...no one can ever be an expert, but it's important to stay connected and keep dialogues going. The community is so different. You can run the risk of thinking one approach works for everyone, which is absolutely not true."

What Title IX Practitioners Had to Say...

How can the field of Title IX and/or gender equity improve?

"To be accountable we need to make ourselves vulnerable...We need to examine our own biases and how our practice might not be inclusive."

"There are like zero resources for male victims."

"... training for employees and folks who do the work to make sure they're inclusive. Even the smallest comment, misinformed language can have a huge impact."

"...making sure policy is inclusive. Revising —usually it's super legalistic and he or she, but hopefully we don't use that in our everyday practice. If someone would go to the policy and read that, there's the potential they would think that doesn't include them."

"Compliance and policy frequently aren't kind to lived experiences, so we need to incorporate that understanding into the work we do. "

Prevention

- Consider cultural factors and collaborate with members of the group, "Nothing about us without us." Focus groups can help! (Ollen, 2018).
- Programming should be proactive, tailored to the audience, and use relevant examples.
- Specifically talk about LGBTQIA+ students' "particular vulnerability" (Ollen, 2018).
- Improving education around bystander intervention, especially proactively.
- Offer other reporting or communication channels (e.g. a chatroom) (Nicolazzo, 2017).

how can we help?

- Collaborate and adopt a 'trickle -up approach' (Nicolazzo, 2017)
- "One thing that I've noticed is that there are some people who are heterosexual, who...think, 'this isn't my territory. I don't have the authority to say anything,' and they keep quiet" (Ollen, 2018)
- Remove barriers to reporting: fear of being stereotyped/blamed, experiences of discrimination, and reluctance to report another member of the community (adapted from Benuto et al., 2019)
- Poor interviewing techniques can cause people to shut down --see if you can build rapport and best practices (Benuto et al., 2019)
- Perceived inclusivity actually lowers odds of sexual assault (Coulter & Rankin, 2020)



Gender Support Plan

Set a specific plan for LGBTQIA+ reports that ensures an identity affirming experience

- Always use affirming language. Do not ask anyone to defend or explain their identity.
 - If necessary ask if there are any specific concerns they have because of their LGBTQIA+ status
- Identify safe people for referrals.
 - Does your school have a counseling service? Are any of the counselors explicitly LGBTQIA+ friendly?
- Create an optional form that documents student's correct names, pronouns, and safety levels.
- Display acknowledgment that your location is an LGBTQIA+ friendly safe place.
- Connect each student with a safe contact
 - Office member, Professor, Coach, ETC.
- Know your campus support systems.
 - LGBTQIA+ clubs or centers can provide a sense of community that makes individuals feel safe.

What We Can Do About It



— Campus-based violence prevention efforts

And make sure to include trans and nonbinary folks!

— Know your stuff

Learn about resources, options, and opportunities.

— Advocate for others

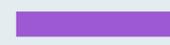
See something, say something.

What We Can Do About It



Do more research

Find (or develop) more recent, local data.



Train employees

Practice trauma -informed care.
Have a Gender Support Plan.



Act inclusively

Bring people in and hear them out.



Listen

Accept criticism and try to understand.



Key Takeaways

- Examine your background and biases.
- Community and kinship groups are crucial, but they can also have unhealthy components.
- Work towards ensuring safe spaces and backup plans. An LGBTQIA+ Center isn't enough.
- Break down silos. RAs and LGBTQIA+ Centers are a good place to start (Rankin, 2005).
- Ensure that the LGBTQIA+ population knows you're there for them—talk to them, include relevant examples, be aware of resources. Build trust and rapport. Advertise your services to individual groups.
- Revisit practices and policies regularly (especially around investigation and adjudication).

Future Research

- Centering LGBTQIA+ voices, especially from people of color, trans, and nonbinary folks.
- Breaking down walls and reducing silos internally and externally.
- Conducting more research, period.

National Resources

National Sexual Assault Hotline – can also refer you to a local rape crisis center

1-800-656-HOPE (4673) 24/7 or

Online Counseling at <https://ohl.rainn.org/online/>

Love is Respect Hotline

1-866-331-99474 (24/7) or Text “loveis” 22522

The Anti-Violence Project– serves people who are LGBTQ

Hotline 212-714-1124 Bilingual 24/7

LGBT National Help Center

National Hotline (1-888-843-4564) or National Youth Talkline (1-800-246-7743)

Online Peer Support Chat (<https://www.glbthotline.org/peer-chat.html>) or Weekly Youth Chatrooms (<https://www.glbthotline.org/youthchatrooms.html>)

National Domestic Violence Hotline

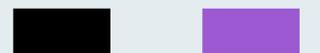
1-800-799-7233

Text LOVEIS to 22522

FORGE– serves transgender and gender nonconforming survivors of domestic and sexual violence; provides referrals to local counselors

The Network La Red– serves LGBTQ, poly, and kink/BDSM survivors of abuse; bilingual

Hotline - 617-742-4911



National Resources for BIPOC

API Chaya - empowers survivors of gender-based violence and human trafficking to gain safety, connection, and wellness. We build power by educating and mobilizing South Asian, Asian, Pacific Islander, and all immigrant communities to end exploitation, creating a world where all people can heal and thrive.

Helpline: 1-877-922-4292/206-325-0325

Helpline Hours: Monday-Friday 10am-4pm

Office Email: info@apichaya.org

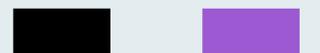
Website: <https://www.apichaya.org/>

Inclusive Therapists - Inclusive Therapists offers a safer, simpler way to find a culturally responsive, social justice-oriented therapist. We center the needs of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and the LGBTQIA2S+ community. We honor the full neurodiversity spectrum and advocate for mental health care accessibility for people with disabilities. We are a mental health justice movement pursuing equity and liberation through education, collective care, and activism.

Website: www.inclusivetherapists.com

National Queer and Trans Therapists of Color Network - The National Queer and Trans Therapists of Color Network (NQTTCN) is a healing justice organization that actively works to transform mental health for queer and trans people of color in North America

Website: www.nqttcn.com/





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