



# BISEXUAL ALLYSHIP ROUNDTABLE

Presented by: Dr. Stephanie Britton and Leigh Steinberg

Out & Equal Workplace Summit – Oct. 3, 2018

# AGENDA

- **Raising awareness**
  - Terms and definitions such as bi, pan, and queer
  - What is Bi/Pan/Queer erasure? How does it happen?
- **Debunking myths and stereotypes about the Bi/Pan/Queer community**
- **What can allies do to support the Bi/Pan/Queer community?**

# TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

- **Bisexual:** People who are not mono-sexual who are *not* attracted exclusively to members of the opposite sex, and are *not* attracted exclusively to members of their same sex.
- **Pansexual:** Persons who have the capability of being attracted to others regardless of their gender identity or biological sex. A pansexual could be open to someone who is male, female, transgender, intersex, or agendered/genderqueer.
- **Queer:** A term people often use to express fluid identities and orientations.
- **Related terms:** pansexual, queer, fluid, omnisexual, nonmonosexual, in the middle sexualities, heteroflexible, homoflexible, polysexual and many others

# BI/PAN/QUEER ERASURE

- **BI ERASURE** A pervasive problem in which the existence or legitimacy of bisexuality (either in regard to an individual or as an identity) is questioned or denied outright.

*Example: If a bisexual is in a permanent monogamous relationship, others may insist they can't really be bisexual or that their orientation doesn't matter/has changed now that they are partnered.*

- **BIPHOBIA** Fear of bisexuals, often based on stereotypes, including inaccurate associations with infidelity, promiscuity, and transmission of sexually transmitted infections. *Bias* or *prejudice* is usually a more accurate description of antipathy toward bisexual people.

*Example: being turned down for a date with the reason, "I don't date bi people".*



# MYTHS/STEREOTYPES



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- Bisexuality is just a phase
- Bisexuals are indecisive or confused/ they're really gay but won't admit it
- Bisexuals just want attention
- Everyone is bisexual/bisexuality doesn't exist
- You aren't bi if you haven't had sex with both men and women
- To be bisexual you have to love both genders equally
- Bisexuals are greedy/promiscuous/can't be monogamous/are more likely to cheat/love threesomes
- Bisexuals are much more likely to carry STDs
- Bisexual people are less likely to face stigma than LGBT+ people



# WHAT ALLIES CAN DO TO SUPPORT THE BI/PAN/QUEER COMMUNITY

## Conversation 1:

**Person A:** I tried dating boys during high school. In college, I of course went through a bisexual phase before coming out as lesbian.

**Person B:** <Laughs> Yeah, we all go through that phase!

## Change the dialogue:

**Person A:** I tried dating boys during high school. In college, I briefly identified as bisexual before eventually coming out as lesbian.

**Person B:** Yeah, coming out is a journey for everyone.

# WHAT ALLIES CAN DO TO SUPPORT THE BI/PAN/QUEER COMMUNITY

## Conversation 2:

[Two women couples are talking at an LGBT community center event]

Couple 1: It's so nice to see more lesbian couples coming to these events. Really shows how large our community is and it's great to meet new lesbians!

Couple 2: Actually, we're not both lesbian. I'm bisexual.

Couple 1: Oh, you don't need to pretend. It's ok to admit that you're a lesbian. You're safe here.



# WHAT ALLIES CAN DO TO SUPPORT THE BI/PAN/QUEER COMMUNITY

## Change the dialogue:

[Two women couples are talking at an LGBT community center event]

Couple 1: It's so nice to see more lesbian couples coming to these events. Really shows how large our community is and it's great to meet new lesbians!

Couple 2: Actually, we're not both lesbian. I'm bisexual.

Couple 1: Oh, I'm sorry for making an assumption. Welcome! How did you two meet?

# REFERENCES

- *Biresource.org*
- *Binetusa.org*
- *HRC Explore: Bisexual page*
- *GLAAD Bi Media Resource Guide*
- *Bi Any Other Name: Bisexual People Speak Out, by Lani Ka'ahumanu and Loraine Hutchins*
- *Getting Bi, by Robyn Ochs*
- *Sexual Fluidity, by Lisa Diamond*
- *Mostly Straight, by Ritch Savin-Williams*



COMPLETE THE SURVEY!