OPENING DOORS TO UNDERSTANDING AND ACCEPTANCE

A FACILITATOR'S GUIDE TO PRESENTING WORKSHOPS ON LESBIAN AND GAY ISSUES

Written and Developed by Kathy Obear, THE HUMAN ADVANTAGE

THIS MANUAL CONTAINS MATERIALS AND TOOLS TO DESIGN LEARNING ACTIVITIES THAT CHALLENGE HOMOPHOBIA

SPECIFIC STEP-BY-STEP LESSONPLANS OF AT LEAST 8 HOURS OF STRUCTURED EXPERIENCES

A WIDE VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES INCLUDING:
- ICE BREAKERS AND WARM UP ACTIVITIES
- MYTHS AND FACTS
- VALUES CLARIFICATION
- SKITS AND ROLE PLAYS
- PERSONAL STORIES

READY-TO-USE HANDOUTS FOR GROUP ACTIVITIES

Available from the Campaign to End Homophobia,
PO Box 819, Cambridge, MA 02139
Price per copy $15 for individuals, $25 for organizations, and
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OPENING DOORS TO UNDERSTANDING AND ACCEPTANCE: A WORKSHOP EXPLORING GAY ISSUES

Designed by Kathy Obear

I. INFORMATION FOR FACILITATORS

A. Overview of Workshop

This lesson plan is designed as a full day workshop to explore many of the fundamental issues related to the lives of gays and non-gays.

B. Target Groups for Workshop

This workshop would be effective with participants who have limited knowledge of or experience with the realities of gay lifestyles, and who may possess negative attitudes towards gays. It would be a useful inservice training module for graduate and undergraduate staff members and volunteer leaders. It may be too basic for some professional staff; however, many full-time employees could benefit from this experience.

The scale on homophobia developed by Dr. Dorothy Riddle was helpful in designing the activities in this workshop to meet the preferred learning styles of a more dualistic population. (Refer to the work of Dr. Lee Knefelkamp on applying the Perry scheme to classroom learning) Dr. Riddle's work outlines a continuum of the different attitudes of homophobia that participants will bring to the workshop. (Refer to section IV. "Homophobia" in lesson plan for more detailed information.) It is the opinion of this author that most members of "society" in general fall somewhere in the lower end of the scale at either "Repulsion", "Pity", or "Tolerance". While it may be the hope of most presenters to facilitate a change in these attitudes towards the far upper end of the continuum to feelings of "Admiration", "Appreciation" and "Nurturance", it is highly unlikely that such dramatic impact will occur in such a short span of time. However, it may be realistic to expect participants to develop a greater understanding of the realities of gay lifestyles and to discover an ability to empathize with lesbians and gay men. If participants move from feelings of revulsion and pity towards those of acceptance and support, then they will be more receptive to future experiences that may help them to develop a sincere admiration of and appreciation for gays in our society.

According to most student/human development theories, it is important to challenge the attitudes and values of most dualistic participants gradually and in a safe and secure environment. Therefore, the workshop is not designed to advocate strongly that being gay is a natural and normal variation of human sexuality. Instead, the activities will stimulate the sharing of many diverse viewpoints and provide more accurate information to challenge prevailing societal myths. It is important for facilitators to create a personable and comfortable environment where all values and viewpoints are accepted and validated. It will be more powerful for most participants if their peers, not the presenters, challenge and critique the more homophobic statements and subtle discriminatory actions.

The overall philosophy that supports this workshop design is based on the concepts of preferred learning styles.

It is the opinion of this author that most of the participants will learn more if they have the opportunity to participate actively in experiential activities and small group discussions. It is important to begin with less threatening activities that are both physically-oriented and highly participatory. Several of the later activities are designed to help participants to "see the world through the eyes of gays". Through these role reversal strategies, many participants will begin to understand and empathize with the gay lifestyle. Finally, it is important to encourage participants to have fun during these activities. Occasional laughter and playfulness will help everyone involved release some nervous energy and to relax enough to be open to new and challenging ideas.

C. Expectations of Presenter

It is critical that presenters are thoroughly familiar with the fundamental issues of gays and are well-versed with the current statistics and related research. It is the hope of this author that presenters possess and espouse values that support the gay lifestyle as a natural and normal variation of human sexuality. This is a difficult workshop to facilitate; therefore, it may be important for less experienced presenters to first observe a workshop by a more seasoned colleague before attempting to do it. Another strategy for inexperienced presenters is to co-facilitate this workshop several times to become more comfortable with it. Unfortunately, a poorly facilitated workshop may in fact work to reinforce and/or increase feelings of homophobia among participants.

D. Suggestions For How To Market This Workshop

Unfortunately, most people who might benefit most from these activities will probably not take the risk to attend this workshop. There are advertising strategies that may increase the likelihood that more and different kinds of people will attend. It is important to emphasize that all people (not just gays) are invited to attend. The following questions may be useful descriptors on advertising to convey messages about the workshop:

- Do you have a roommate, a friend, a relative who is gay? Do you want to be able to better understand what their life is like?

- Do you want to learn how to help them to find more peace-of-mind and happiness?

- Do you want to learn more about the issues of gays so you can learn to work more effectively with your peers and supervisors in the workplace and the classroom?

Clearly, the activities are designed to challenge the participants' values and beliefs; however, it may not be advantageous to include these concepts in the advertising material.

A week-long or month-long programming series on human sexuality is an effective approach on most college campuses and in many courses. People who may not typically attend a workshop on gay issues might become more interested after they experience a module on interpersonal relationships or a panel on lifestyle choices. If themes related to gays are "woven" into the fabric of all other workshops in a non-threatening and unobtrusive way, then more participants might decide to attend a full session on gay issues.

E. Important Thoughts To Consider When Preparing to Present This Workshop

A serious issue for facilitators to consider before the workshop is whether or not to discuss their own sexuality with participants. In many ways it would be a no-win situation if facilitators announced their sexual orientation during the introduction: if you said you were gay, then some participants might discredit everything you say because you're "trying to persuade them you're normal"; however, if you tell them you are not gay, some may question your legitimacy as a presenter and wonder, "How does s/he know what's true or not?" In one study conducted by Carla Lee Anderson, Ph.D. on the effects of a workshop for female nursing students, the data suggest that the decision of presentors to disclose their sexual orientation has no significant relationship with the attitudinal changes of participants. (refer to Anderson, Carla Lee, Ph.D., "The Effect of a Workshop on Attitudes of Female Nursing Students Toward Male Homosexuals", Journal of Homosexuality, Fall 1981, pp. 57-69.) Some gay presentors decide to be open about their sexual orientation in order to provide the participants with a chance to get to know "a real gay". This opportunity to interact with positive role models, either through a panel or with the presenter(s), seems to produce more positive results in replacing more judgmental and condemnatory participant attitudes with more objective and understanding ones. In the Anderson Study the significant factor is that the role models need to be of equal or greater status than the participants. (Anderson, p. 58)

There may be numerous and very real political and occupational consequences for some gay presenters who choose to reveal their sexual orientation. Within the past two months the U. S. Supreme Court refused to hear the appeal of a high school guidance counselor who had been fired after she revealed to her colleagues that she was bisexual. Gays do not enjoy Constitutional protection with regards to employment (much less other basic human rights). It may be politically astute for most gay presenters to carefully weigh the serious consequences before deciding to be open to anyone about their sexual orientation.

The following section was developed for a workshop on gay issues in 1981. All facilitators, gay and non-gay alike, are strongly encouraged to review these questions during your preparation of any programming on gay issues.

CHECKLIST FOR PROGRAMMING ON GAY ISSUES

_____ Why am I doing this?

_____ What is my goal? What does being open minded mean?

_____ What are the politics of this issue or situation on my campus?

_____ Do I have the support of my staff? Of my supervisor? Of the Housing Division? Of other administrators up to the president? Does it matter?

_____ Where will I find resources for information and assistance? Is there a Gay Advocates Office or a Gay Student Union? Office of Ethics and Religion? Counseling Services? Any academic units which might be of assistance?

_____ Who are my allies on campus or community for help with tackling such programming?

_____ Am I secure in my own sexuality? What are my concerns?

_____ How will I react if a staff member "comes out"?

_____ Am I prepared to deal with the reactions to this programming?

_____ Have I prepared my staff? Have I prepared the service staff in the building? The administration? The Campus? The community?

_____ What happens if I get a bad facilitator? What is their motivation for facilitating such a program? Are they clear about their own sexual identity?

_____ How is the current political climate in the country going to affect the presentation of this program?

Prepared for the Workshop on "Gay Awareness in Residence Halls", presented by University of Michigan Housing Staff, ACUHO Conference, University of Colorado at Boulder, July 1981.

LESSON PLAN

Opening Doors to Understanding and Acceptance

A. Purpose/Goals of Workshop

1. To provide accurate information and facts about homosexuality.
2. To provide the opportunity to examine personal and societal attitudes and beliefs about homosexuality.
3. To facilitate increased awareness of and empathy for the harsh realities of lives of gay men and lesbians in a homophobic society.
4. To explore ways to improve the quality of life for gays on a local scale.

B. Agenda/Time-line

(10 min.)	1.	Introduction
(10 min.)	2.	Icebreaker: "Let Me In!"
(10 min.)	3.	Small Group Discussion: What is Homosexuality?
(10 min.)	4.	What is "Homophobia"? - a large group discussion
(30 min.)	5.	Myths: A Sociogram Activity
(10 min.)	6.	Concentric Circles
(20 min.)	7.	Stereotypes: A Brainstorming Activity
	8.	Values Clarification
(20 min.)		a. Small Group Discussions
(45 min.)		b. Role Plays
(10 min.)	9.	Coming Out: Lecturette/discussion
(20 min.)	10.	Read-arounds
(15 min.)	11.	Personal Stories
(15 min.)	12.	Fantasy
(15 min.)	13.	Kinsey Scale and other Relevant Statistics
(15 min.)	14.	Life for Gays on this Campus
(10 min.)	15.	What we all can do to help - Resources available

(10 min.) 16. Closing/Summary Comments

(60 min.) 17. Panel Discussion

(10 min.) 18. Evaluation

5 hours 45 minutes Total

Note:
The facilitator will need to add in time for breaks. It is suggested to include a "stretch" break (5 minutes) every hour and a longer refreshment break of fifteen minutes every hour and a half or two hours. In addition the lunch break should be from 45-60 minutes long. Total additional time for breaks and lunch is approximately two hours.

C. Pre-Workshop Preparation Information

1. Materials
   a. Handouts
   b. pens/pencils
   c. newsprint pad
   d. easel or blackboard
   e. magic markers/chalk
   f. tape
   g. name tags
   h. refreshements (coffee, tea, juice, soda pop, ice, sugar, sugar substitute, honey, cream, cups, spoons, hot water, fresh fruit, pastries, napkins, etc.)
   i. overhead/screen (if appropriate)
   j. prepared transparencies or newsprint

2. Room Considerations and Set-up

   - Comfortable chairs/couches (movable)
   - carpeted floor
   - large enough to accommodate several small groups and icebreaker activities
   - wall space for hanging newsprint
   - able to be darkened
   - low external noise factors
   - trash can
   - near restroom, water fountain and snack bar facilities
   - do not allow smoking
   - arrange chairs in semi-circle

3. Things to do as Participants Arrive

   - Greet them warmly as individuals
   - Introduce yourself
   - Give out name tags
   - Hand out packets with handouts (in order of use)
   - Make sure everyone has a pen/pencil
   - Introduce participants to each other
   - Facilitate "small talk" to ease the tension

WORKSHOP OUTLINE

I. Introduction

Note:
The purpose of this section is to set a tone for the rest of the workshop. It will be important to make the participants feel welcome and comfortable by appearing personable, humorous and approachable. The following are suggested strategies for creating an effective environment.

a. Welcome the participants

b. Briefly give title of workshop

c. Introduce yourself
- establish your credibility
- Why are you doing this workshop?
- Why is this such an important topic?
- Why is this such a threatening topic?

d. Purpose/Goals of Workshop

1. What is it designed to do?
- explore some of the societal beliefs about homosexuality
- learn some new information about the gay lifestyle
- share different perspectives and attitudes about gays
- try to understand what it might feel like to be gay in today's society

2. What will not happen?
- not here to try to change how you think or feel
- not here to judge or criticize you

3. Acknowledge both gay and non-gay participants

e. Agenda/Format

- mention several topics: stereotypes, values, facts/myths
- mention several teaching strategies: small group discussions, brainstorming, skits/role plays, large group discussion
- mention timeline issues: frequent breaks, lunch, ending time
- orient them to key facilities: bathrooms, refreshments, water fountain, etc.

f. Expectations of Participants

- emphasize that the quality of workshop will depend on their willingness to participate and share ideas
- need them to take risks and to participate actively
- need them to listen actively to others
- encourage openness to new ideas
- emphasize need to respect all points of view

- encourage honesty with themselves and group members
- ask them to be willing to challenge their own ideas and values
- tell them to feel free to interrupt at any time to ask questions or to offer comments
- tell them to let you know if they need a stretch break
- encourage them to have fun

g. Assess Knowledge Level/Experience Level

- ask how many have friends/relatives who are gay
- ask how many have attended a workshop or class session on gay issues

II. Icebreakers: "Let Me In!"

It may be important to start off this workshop with a seemingly unrelated, physical, and wild and crazy activity, in order to break down territorial barriers and to have participants productively use their nervous energy. This activity "Let Me In", is a fun way to get participants to begin to feel what it is like to be continually denied access to opportunities.

Instructions:

1. Divide the group into two subgroups. All of the participants will be in Group A except for the three - four who volunteer or are chosen for Group B.

2. Have all members of Group A form one circle facing inwards. Ask them to grasp hands with the people on either side.

3. Group B members should stand about 20 feet from the circle.

4. Give the following instructions:

   "The task of the people in Group A is to keep out anyone who tries to break into your circle. The members of Group B are to try whatever means they choose (within reason) to try to break into the circle. Any questions?"

5. Instruct one (1) member of Group B to approach the circle and to try to break into it.

6. After about one (1) minute, send another member of Group B.

7. In another thirty (30) seconds, send the last one or two participants.

8. At this point, usually at least one Group B member successfully breaks into the circle.

9. End this part of the activity and ask participants to sit sown in a circle for processing.

10. The following are suggested processing questions:

    a. How are you feeling right now?
       Expect answers, such as: tired, frustrated, disappointed, angry or sore.

    b. To Group A: What were your strategies to keep them out?
       - work together
       - huddle close together

    c. To Group A: How did your feelings change as more and more B-ers tried to get in?
       - was harder to keep them out
       - frustrated/angry

    d. To Group B: What were your strategies?

e. To Group B: What were you feeling as you tried to get into the circle?

- frustrated
- excited
- increasingly angry

f. (If Group B succeeded):

To Group B: How did it feel to finally break into the circle?

To Group A: How did it feel when Group B got in?

g. How is this activity similar to what it's like when members of different minority groups try to "break into" the mainstream of society?

- members of the "in group" fight to keep "them" out
- both sides feel frustration and anger
- it's hard if only just one person works alone, but it gets easy if all the members of the minority group work together from different angles and avenues
- sometimes people get hurt in the process
- the in-group doesn't give up easily

h. How does it feel to be members of "out groups" - minorities?

- alone
- angry
- powerless
- like something's wrong with me

11. Finish processing by summarizing relevant points that relate to the issue of gays.

Suggested ideas:

"Most gays live their lives looking in from the outside. They watch a 'straight' world as an outsider, a stranger. And if they try to get legitimate recognition from the rest of society-recognition that they are 'ok' - that being gay is a valid alternative lifestyle, they most likely meet incredible resistance and anger and pain - just like Group B members did. During the rest of this workshop we will do a lot of talking, sharing,and questioning as we try to learn a bit more about what it is like to be gay in today's society. For our next activity. . ."

III. Small Groups: What is Homosexuality?

The purpose of this activity is to illustrate the difficulties of trying to define such a complex term.

Instructions:

1. Divide the participants into small groups of about four members.

2. Give them these directions:

   "You have three minutes to develop a comprehensive definition of the term homosexuality. Challenge whatever ideas are suggested and try to find something wrong with them. Then suggest a different idea. Appoint someone to take notes and to be ready to report your definition to the whole group."

3. Groups may need a few more minutes to reach a consensus.

4. Ask each small group to present their definition of homosexuality.

5. As each group presents its definition, ask for one or two comments from the whole group critiquing the statement. (Note: You may need to "poke holes" in each definition if they don't.)

6. a. During the definition discussion, expect comments and questions, such as:

   definition: Homosexuality is when someone loves someone of the same sex.

   critique: But people love their brothers and sisters. And you can love friends, but not in a sexual way.

   new definition: Homosexuality is when someone has sex with someone of the same sex.

   critique: But a lot of adolescents experiment and aren't gay. Plus, in prisons and in the military, sometimes people have a relationship because there aren't any people of the other sex. And they go on to live exclusively heterosexual lives.

   new definition: It's when two people of the same sex are "in love".

   critique: Many people experience very erotic/"in love" feelings for someone of the same sex, but never act on them. Are they gay?

   next try: It's when people dream and fantasize about having sex with people of the same sex.

   critique: A lot of people in this room probably have occasional dreams and fantasize. Are they gay?

   next one: It's when people are sexually attracted to members of the same sex.

critique: We'd all be surprised how many people would fit under this category, but who believe they are heterosexual.

b. Suggested definitions to use:

- A homosexual is someone "who is motivated in adult life by a preferential erotic attraction to the same sex, and who usually (but not necessarily) engages in overt relations with them." (psychiatrist Judd Marmor)

- Someone who has a continuing erotic preference for and is sexually attracted to partners of the same sex and (usually) chooses to act on these feelings.

7. Once all groups have presented their ideas ask them the following:
-What are your reactions to this activity?
Expect/invite the following comments:

- Some of them were so broad, a lot of heterosexuals could fit under it.

- I never thought you could think you were gay even if you'd never had sex with someone of the same sex.

- It was so hard to define it.

8. Close this activity with some summarizing comments, such as: "It's dangerous to try and categorize or label people based on limited information or gossip. Labels are powerful and can cause useless and needless damage. It's critical that people who are exploring their sexuality are allowed to put names and labels on their own activities and feelings when and if they are ready."

IV. HOMOPHOBIA: A LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

Note:
This can be a very short (five minute) large group question/answer discussion where participants explore the concept of homophobia.

Suggested questions:

1. What is homophobia?

   - "phobia" means an illogical/irrational fear of something/someone
   - an irrational and extreme rage against gays
   - an illogical/intense fear of gays
   - a fear of having same sex relationships

2. Why are some people homophobic?

   - fear of the unknown
   - overly defensive, possibly because they are trying to cover up their own homosexual feelings, thoughts and/or actions
   - feel threatened
   - are against any differences in society (that aren't a part of the white-male-middle class system)
   - fear that gays are undermining the traditional fabric of our society

3. What are some of the results of people being homophobic?

   - people are afraid to show affection for members of the same sex
   - people are hesitant/afraid to exhibit any behaviors or characteristics of the traditional sex role stereotype of the other sex for fear of being labelled as gay
   - gays internalize societal stereotypes and learn to hate themselves and all gays
   - some may block/repress their homosexual feelings and thoughts
   - people strike out aggressively and violently against gays

4. Put up a piece of newsprint with the Homophobia Scale developed by Dr. Dorothy Riddle on it. (refer to next page) Briefly explain each stage. Ask participants to individually/silently figure out where they would fall on the continuum. Then ask participants where they think the following groups would be: "society" in general; most college students; most faculty; most parents; etc.

RIDDLE HOMOPHOBIA SCALE

In a clinical sense homophobia is defined as an intense, irrational fear of same sex relationships that becomes overwhelming to the person. In common usage, homophobia is the fear of intimate relationships with persons of the same sex. Below are listed 4 negative homophobic levels, and 4 positive levels of attitudes towards lesbian and gay relationships/people. They were developed by Dr. Dorothy Riddle, a psychologist from Tucson, Arizona.

HOMOPHOBIC LEVELS OF ATTITUDE

1. **Repulsion** — Homosexuality is seen as a "crime against nature". Gays/lesbians are sick, crazy, immoral, sinful, wicked, etc. Anything is justified to change them: prison, hospitalization, negative behavior therapy, electroshock therapy, etc.

2. **Pity** — Heterosexual chauvinism. Heterosexuality is more mature and certainly to be preferred. Any possibility of "becoming straight" should be reinforced, and those who seem to be born "that way" should be pitied, "the poor dears".

3. **Tolerance** — Homosexuality is just a phase of adolescent development that many people go through and most people "grow out of". Thus, lesbians/gays are less mature than "straights" and should be treated with the protectiveness and indulgence one uses with a child. Lesbians/gays should not be given positions of authority because they are still working through their adolescent behavior.

4. **Acceptance** — Still implies there is something to accept. Characterized by such statements as "You're not lesbian to me, you're a person!" or "What you do in bed is your own business," or "That's fine with me as long as you don't flaunt it!"

POSITIVE LEVELS OF ATTITUDES

5. **Support** — The basic ACLU position. Work to safeguard the rights of lesbians and gays. People at this level may be uncomfortable themselves, but they are aware of the homophobic climate and the irrational unfairness.

6. **Admiration** — Acknowledges that being lesbian/gay in our society takes strength. People at this level are willing to truly examine their homophobic attitudes, values and behaviors.

7. **Appreciation** — Value the diversity of people and see lesbians/gays as a valid part of that diversity. These people are willing to combat homophobia in themselves and others.

8. **Nurturance** — Assumes that gay/lesbian people are indispensable in our society. They view lesbians/gays with genuine affection and delight, and are willing to be allies and advocates.

V. MYTHS ABOUT HOMOSEXUALITY: A SOCIOGRAM ACTIVITY

Note:
It is vital that participants learn new information that challenges the prevailing societal myths about gays. During the first part of this activity, the participants are asked to demonstrate their feelings about specific "facts" about gays by participating in a sociogram or an "either-or"/forced choice activity. The second half of this section will give participants the opportunity to discuss other myths/beliefs that people have about gays in a large group setting. It is critical that the facilitator be very knowledgable about every specific myth. Refer to the supportive data handout in this lesson plan.

Instructions:

1. Have participants individually/silently fill-out the handouts entitled:

   "What Do You Know About The Gay Lifestyle?"
   and
   "What Do You Feel About The Gay Lifestyle?"

   - You may need to give them verbal instructions and at least one example.
   - Tell them that no one will see how they answered on their sheets, so they can be honest with their answers.

Note:
They will not discuss the values handout at this time, but it is helpful to have them begin to see their own values as they begin to explore the myths.

2. When everyone is finished, have participants stand together in front of you while you give them these instructions:

   - "I will read a statement about gays. You'll need to decide how you feel about the statement.
   - If you agree with the statement, then go and stand over there to my right.
   - If you disagree with it, go stand to my left.
   - If you are unsure, come stand here in the middle."

3. Read one of the myths from the handout "What Do You Know About The Gay Lifestyle?"

4. When the three subgroups have formed, tell them to discuss their thoughts and feelings with other subgroup members.

5. Then, ask a spokesperson from each group to present briefly some of the group's ideas.

6. After each group has finished, it is important that the facilitator "fill in the holes" (if necessary) by giving additional information that challenges the accuracy of the myth.

7. Give the participants another 3-5 statements and process them in a similar way.

8. Have the participants return to their seats and refer to their handout on myths.

9. Ask them what additional items they want to discuss.

10. When someone raises a question about a specific myth, ask the group members to provide information about the statement. The facilitator may need to "fill in the holes" as before.

11. Feel free to raise your own issues if the participants don't question certain items.

Note:
It would be helpful to then pass out the handout that provides supportive data for responses to the myths,

Variation:
One additional technique to explore the myth #11 would be to break the participants into small groups (4-6 members) and discuss what they think relationships are like between two lesbians, and two gay men. In this discussion they should explore how their own socialization about traditional hetereosexual sex roles affects their projections of the realities of gay relationships.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE LESBIAN/GAY LIFESTYLES?

Clarifying our attitudes and beliefs helps us to become more conscious of what we feel. The purpose in responding to the following items is not to try to change your attitudes and values, but to bring to your consciousness what those attitudes and values are. There are no "right' or "wrong" answers. The important thing is that you understand what you personally feel, not what you think you should feel. You might want to ask yourself why you feel the way you do.

Read each statement below and circle "SA" if you strongly agree with the statement, "A" if you agree with it, "N" if you are neutral, "D" if you disagree with it, and "SD" if you strongly disagree.

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

SA A N D SD	1.	I feel comfortable when I am with people I know are gay/lesbian.
SA A N D SD	2.	If I found out a close friend was lesbian/gay, I think our relationship would be less close in the future.
SA A N D SD	3.	I believe the gay/lesbian lifestyles are valid ones for those who live them.
SA A N D SD	4.	I don't mind being around lesbian/gay people as long as they don't flaunt their lifestyles.
SA A N D SD	5.	I believe that lesbian/gay people are always trying to seduce straights and win converts to their lifestyles.
SA A N D SD	6.	I'm quite uncomfortable around men who are feminine acting and women who are masculine acting.
SA A N D SD	7.	Gay/lesbian people shouldn't be teachers because they will make their students gay/lesbian.
SA A N D SD	8.	Lesbian/gay people are completely immoral.
SA A N D SD	9.	If a close friend of mine told me s/he were gay/lesbian, it would make use closer because of her/his revealing something very important.
SA A N D SD	10.	Lesbian/gay people are probably going to hell.
SA A N D SD	11.	I'm against programs and groups organized specifically to meet the social and cultural needs of lesbian/gay people.
SA A N D SD	12.	I don't really like seeing all the lesbian/gay characters on TV shows. It makes them seem too acceptable in our society.
SA A N D SD	13.	I am able to accept seeing open expression of affection between lesbian/gay people.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE GAY/LESBIAN LIFESTYLES

For many people much of what they think they know about the gay/lesbian lifestyles is based on the myths they've heard about them, not the realities of them. Sorting out the myths and realities can lead to greater self-awareness which motivates us to learn more and become more accepting of those whose sexual orientation may be different from our own.

Read each statement below and circle "SA" if you strongly agree with the statement, "A" if you agree with it, "N" if you are neutral, "D" if you disagree with it, and "SD" if you strongly disagree.

SA = Strongly Agree **A** = Agree **N** = Neutral **D** = Disagree **SD** = Strongly Disagree

SA A N D SD **1.** Gay/lesbian people can usually be identified by certain mannerisms or physical characteristics.

SA A N D SD **2.** In a lesbian/gay relationship one partner usually plays the "husband"/"butch" role and the other plays the "wife"/"femme" role.

SA A N D SD **3.** We do not know what causes homosexuality.

SA A N D SD **4.** Most gay/lesbian people could be cured by haivng really good sex with a member of the other sex.

SA A N D SD **5.** The majority of child molesters are gay/lesbian.

SA A N D SD **6.** Most lesbian/gay people regard themselves as members of the other sex.

SA A N D SD **7.** Homosexuality is not "natural", that is, it does not exist in nature; therefore, this proves it is dysfunctional.

SA A N D SD **8.** Lesbian/gay people should not be teachers because they will try to convert their students to their lifestyles.

SA A N D SD **9.** Gay/lesbian people have made a conscious decision to be gay/lesbian.

SA A N D SD **10.** There are very few "bisexuals"; most people are either completely homosexual or heterosexual.

SA A N D SD **11.** There are some significant differences among the lifestyles of lesbians and gay men.

SA A N D SD **12.** Homosexuality is a type of mental illness and can be cured by appropriate psychotherapy.

SA A N D SD **13.** One homosexual experience as an adolescent will play a large part in determining whether a person will be homosexually-oriented as an adult.

"WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE GAY LIFESTYLE?"

Supportive Data for Responses to Individual Items

1. **Gay people can ordinarily be identified by certain mannerisms or physical characteristics.**

   Gays come in as many different shapes, colors and sizes as do heterosexuals. Only a very small percentage can be identified by stereotypic mannerisms and characteristics. In fact, many heterosexuals portray a variety of the so-called gay stereotypic characteristics. Some members of different subcultures may tend to mimic or imitate specific behaviors in an effort to "fit in". (Note: Discuss how members of "popular" subcultures tend to "look alike" and "act alike"; such as: members of fraternities and sororities; "administrators"; athletes; "Punkers" and "New Wavers"; etc.)

2. **In a gay relationship one partner usually plays the "husband"/"butch" role and the other plays the "wife"/"femme" role.**

   This is an old pattern that was evident in some gay relationships when gays had only the traditional heterosexual relationship as a model. Today, most gays work to develop relationships based on the principles of equality and mutuality where they are loved and appreciated for "who they are", not for the roles they are supposed to play. There is no right or wrong way that prescribes how to divide roles between partners. Often gays perform preferred tasks and share those that are less desirable (i.e., laundry, cleaning, paying bills, etc.)

3. **We do not know what causes homosexuality.**

   This is by far one of the more controversial issues for gays. It is not yet known what specifically causes either homosexuality or heterosexuality. Some believe it is predetermined genetically or hormonally. Others maintain that all humans are predisposed to all variations of sexual/affectional behavior and "learn" a preference or orientation. Clearly, much further research is needed in this area.

   Caution:
   Some people may ask the question of causation in an attempt to "find a cure". It may be more helpful to de-emphasize the importance of exploring the causation issue by citing how homosexuality has existed in cultures around the world for centuries. It has been a constant part of societies throughout history. The question, therefore, may not be what "causes" it, but how can we come to better understand and accept all of the complexities of homosexuality.

4. **Most gay people could be cured by having really good sex with a member of the opposite sex.**

   There are no "cures". Many gays have had satisfying heterosexual experiences in their lifetime. According to the Kinsey research, some gays/bisexuals are comfortable being sexually active with heterosexuals as well.

   Gays who out of desperation or fear, choose to enter a heterosexual relationship "to get cured" may cause undue misery and pain to themselves and their partners. Most gays would never choose to be sexually active with members of the other sex and would resent and challenge the inference that heterosexuals have a corner on the market of "good sex".

5. **The majority of child molesters are gay.**

Over 90% of child molestation is committed by heterosexual men against young girls. The overwhelming majority of homosexuals have no interest in pre-adolescent children.

6. **Most gay people regard themselves as members of the opposite sex.**

Most, if not all gays, are comfortable with their femaleness or maleness. Being gay must not be confused with being transsexual, where one feels trapped in the body of the wrong sex and, therefore, may seek surgery to "rectify" the matter.

7. **Homosexuality is not "natural"—that is, it does not exist in nature, therefore, that proves that it is dysfunction.**

From a scientific point of view, it is "natural". Any animal, including humans, is capable of responding to homosexual stimuli. Research suggests that homosexuality is almost universal among all animals and is especially frequent among highly developed species. There has been evidence of homosexuality in all human cultures throughout history. In fact, one anthropological study of non-Western cultures found that 64% of their sample considered homosexuality "normal and socially acceptable" for certain members of the society.

8. **Gay people should not be teachers because they will try to convert their students to the gay lifestyle.**

Homosexual "conversion"/seduction is no more common than is hetereosexual seduction. Most gay teachers live with the fear that they will be fired immediately if they are "found out". Most, if not all, gays have no desire to "convert" students. Unfortunately, their efforts to provide support for younger gays may be misconstrued and misrepresented. If, in fact, the data are correct that suggest that sexual orientation is established by age 3-6, then contact with teachers would have no effect on students.

9. **Gay people have made a conscious decision to be gay.**

(Refer to #3 for the issue of causation).
While researchers continue to disagree on the specific "causes" of homosexuality, they mostly agree that there is some sort of predisposition or genetic relationship involved. The "decision" may not be whether one is going to be gay or not, but rather whether one is going to acknowledge the existence of personal homosexual feelings and behaviors. "Coming out" is a very complex and difficult process. It may take a long time for many gays to "choose" to accept thier homosexuality as a valid and normal lifestyle. Those who struggle with their gay identity may suffer enormous anxiety, pain, and anger as they work to rectify the inherent incongruence between societal messages and their own feelings and preferences.

10. **There are very few "bisexuals"; most people are either completely homosexually or heterosexually oriented.**

The pioneering studies of Dr. Alfred Kinsey and his associates are most frequently cited on this question. This data suggested that, in fact, few people are either predominantly heterosexual or homosexual. Most people fall somewhere on the continuum between these two ends of the scale, and thus have the capacity to experience both affectional and sexual feelings for members of both sexes.

11. There are some significant differences between the lifestyles of gay men and lesbians.

Ideally, there should be no inherent or "prescribed" differences in intimate relationships of any kind; however, current societal pressures on all men and women often result in distinct differences. All men, not just gay or straight, are typically "expected" to be "macho" and allowed to engage in more short-term relationships than women. Consequently, it may be more difficult for gay men to develop and maintain long-term and stable monogamous relationships. In addition many women are socialized to believe that long-term monogamy is "right". Those who maintain that "people are people regardless of gender" may in fact believe that once societal sex role stereotypes are discarded, then everyone will feel more free to choose from among a variety of lifestyles. Until this happens all gay men and lesbians suffer from the predominance of heterosexual sex roles in a society where few gays have chosen to provide alternative role models for the "public eye".

12. Homosexuality is a type of mental illness and can be cured by appropriate psychotherapy.

In 1973 the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from its list of mental disorders.

In 1975 the American Psychological Association went further to state that, "Homosexuality, per se, implies no impairment in judgement, stability, reliability, or general social or vocational capacities."

Most, if not all, psychiatrists have had little real success in their attempts to "cure" gays through psychotherapy.

13. One homosexual experience as an adolescent will play a large part in determining whether a person will be homosexually-oriented as an adult.

Many young boys and girls (far more than 10% of our population) have homosexual experiences in their childhood as part of the natural exploration of one's sexuality. If this statement were true, then the percentage of gays in the population would be far greater than 10%.

Prepared for the workshop "Opening Doors to Understanding and Acceptance", presented at ACPA, Boston, 1985.

VI. CONCENTRIC CIRCLES

Note:
This activity is designed to give all participants the chance to talk on a one-to-one level on several different topics. It is a "warm up" activity for the more threatening discussions on stereotyping and values. These topics are more informational than value-laden. Facilitators will need to select the 4-6 topics that are most appropriate for the group. Note items (c-f) are intended as lead-ins for the next section on stereotyping. It would be helpful to use at least either (c or d) and (e or f) to help the participants to begin thinking about these topics.

1. Instruct participants to find a partner.

2. Have partners face each other and join with other pairs so that the entire group has formed two concentric circles (an inner and an outer circle).

3. Give the following instructions:

   I will give you a phrase or question to discuss with your partner. First, one of you will speak for 30 seconds, and then the other one will get a chance to talk.

   When I signal, the people in the inner circle will move one person to their right to find their new partner.

   I will give you another topic and you'll discuss it as before. We'll continue in this way for about 10 minutes.

   Any questions?

4. Discussion Phrases/Questions/Topics

   a. What is your first memory of dealing with the issue of homosexuality?
   b. What did you learn when you were growing up about homosexuality from your parents? your church? TV or movies?
   c. What kinds of words do people use to describe gay men?
   d. What kinds of words do people use to describe lesbians?
   e. What are some of the stereotypes of gay men?
   f. What are some of the stereotypes of lesbians?
   g. How do you think it feels to grow up in a heterosexual culture knowing that you are gay?
   h. Why do some gays choose not to "come out" publicly?
   i. How are more "out" and "visible" gays treated on campus?
   j. What do you do to support gays on campus?
   k. Why do you think gays as a group have a high incidence rate of substance abuse?

Prepared for the workshop "Opening Doors to Unverstanding and Acceptance" that was presented at ACPA, Boston, 1985.

VII. Stereotypes: A Large Group Brainstorming Activity

Notes to Facilitators:

This activity is an effective follow-up to the discussions in the concentric circle where participants began to explore the issues of stereotyping and socialization. The purpose of discussing all of the derogatory gay stereotypes and labels is to first, acknowledge their existence, and then to explore their unfortunate consequences for gays and non-gays alike. Facilitators can expect some participants to feel uncomfortable during this activity. They may hesitate to participate in the large group brainstorming session and/or respond to their anxiety with laughter and giggling. It may be important to allow group members to "have fun" with this activity in order to release some nervous energy and to encourage them to discuss as many labels and stereotypes as possible. It is equally important to process their laughter and discomfort with this activity after it is finished.

This is a more difficult activity to facilitate effectively. It might be helpful for inexperienced facilitators to first observe someone processing this experience before they attempt it.

Introduction:

1. In our society we use a wide variety of words to label/describe gay men and lesbians. It's important to know these words and to be able to recognize their impact on others. Let's just brainstorm them and I'll write them up on newsprint.

Note:

Participants may need a lot of encouragement and reinforcement to share these words/labels. Many phrases may include profanity and other offensive material. It is important that all of these labels/words are openly discussed in order to de-sensitize them for the participants.

2. WORDS/LABELS

Let's start with gay men. What words are used to describe/label them?

Note:

These lists are not comprehensive.

GAY MEN

fag	faggot	queer	cock sucker	fudge packer
wimp	fruit	sissy	princess	momma's boy
effeminate	ass licker	fairy	drag queen	butt-fucker
neely	queen	pansy		

- What messages do these words carry?
- How would someone feel when called these names?

3. STEREOTYPES

Most people assume they can "spot 'em a mile away". We think we can tell if someone is gay just by looking at them. What mannerisms/characteristics are part of the gay male stereotype?

small frames	high voice	effeminate	promiscuous
weak	"GQ" look	limp wrists	horny
had overbearing mothers	had distant fathers	gourmets/cooks	not attractive to women
moustache	lisps	prissy/swishy	wiggle walk
fashion-oriented -latest styles	molest children	short-cropped hair	good dancers
want really to be women	recruit new gays	not sports-oriented	have multiple partners
	have AIDS	one night stands	
	have some disease	have VD	

4. What careers/jobs are gay men assumed to have?

hairdressers	actors/theatre people	musicians
interior decorators	gourmet cooks/chefs	English teachers
dancers/ballerinas	artists	art gallery owners

5. What words/labels are used to describe lesbians?

LESBIANS

dyke	bull dyke	butch/femme	bull dagger
tomboy	amazon	queer	lesbo
lezzie	muff diver		

F. What mannerisms/characteristics are part of the lesbian stereotype?

masculine	athletic
tough	strong
ugly-not attractive to men	short fingernails
black watch	short hair (curly)
fat or at least husky	wears men's clothes
hiking boots/boots in general	no makeup
hairy legs/armpits	ride motorcycles
into leather	

6. What career/jobs are part of the lesbian stereotype?

construction workers	P. E. teachers	truck drivers
old maid school teacher	bartenders	bouncers
mechanics/plumbers	professional athletes (especially team sports)	Girl Scout leaders
Camp Counselors		military

7. How did we learn these stereotypes?

-parents	-movies	-friends
-church	-books	-teachers
-magazines	-television	-jokes

8. Stereotypes/assumptions about people can be very damaging. What are some possible negative consequences from these stereotypes about gays? for gays? for non-gays?

- gays may believe these stereotypes/myths and often have a difficult time developing a positive gay identity
- gays suffer untold harassment and abuse from derogatory comments and jokes based on these stereotypes
- non-gays who exhibit some of these characteristics may suffer abuse and harassment
- stereotypes block understanding and acceptance.

9. How do you think it feels to be gay and to grow up in our society hearing these comments/stereotypes all the time?

- ashamed
- guilty
- insulted
- sad
- ugly
- isolated
- left-out
- like you're not good enough
- like something is wrong with you
- like you should fit into the stereotype

10. Close this activity by summarizing major points that challenge the accuracy of these stereotypes.

VIII. Values Clarification Activities

Facilitator's Note: There is a wide variety of teaching methods for values exploration. Refer to section in appendix for additional ideas. These two activities are included in this workshop because they work well with participants who are more dualistic in their perspectives and who may not take the risks to be truly honest about their negative feelings in an environment where they think they "should" feel differently. These activities provide participants with the opportunities to articulate and to experience a wide variety of diverse opinions and attitudes regarding gay issues without having to own personally any particular viewpoint. Developmental progress for dualists is for them to begin to acknowledge the legitimacy of other points of view besides their own. If after these activities the participants express less absolute statements and/or some mild confusion about what they feel and believe, then this experience has been "successful".

A. Values Discussions in Small Groups: Arguing All Sides of the Issue

Note:
In this activity participants are asked to take values statements/questions and to discuss all of the different ways that someone might feel about the issue. It will be important that these discussions are facilitated by trained personnel. These discussions would be most effective in smaller groups of four to six participants; however, it is more important to have discussion leaders. Therefore, it may be necessary to use a large group method.

Instructions:

1. Divide participants into small groups of four to six members.

2. Assign each group a trained discussion leader.

3. Each leader should have a list of 3-5 values statements/questions to discuss and notes on the various responses to each issue.

4. Give the following instructions to the entire group: "Your leader will give you a topic and your task is to discuss all of the possible ways people might feel about or respond to the topic. The group leader will lead the discussion and move on to the next topic when you have covered most of the possible perspectives. As an example, your first topic is to respond to the statement: "I don't mind being around gay people as long as they don't flaunt their homosexuality." Now, as a group you need to discuss how people feel if they agree with this statement and if they disagree with it. Try to answer it as a non-gay would, but also try to imagine how gays might respond to this statement. Any questions?"

5. Allow at least twenty minutes for this small group activity. Expect that most groups won't get through all of the values topics.

6. In a large group, process this activity by asking what, if any, topics were hard to find different arguments for. If one group got stuck on a certain one, ask other groups to provide alternative perspectives.

Note:
One of the aspects of this activity which will have the most impact on some participants is that their peers articulate different and controversial points of view; therefore, it may be important for the facilitator to first solicit peer responses and then reinforce them so that an "Authority" agrees, as well.

B. Values Clarification: Role Plays

Facilitators' Note:
The previous activity may be most effective with participants who appreciate learning through more abstract discussions. Many participants, especially the more dualistic ones, may prefer to learn through a more experiential activity; therefore, it is important to include both kinds of learning strategies in a workshop. Through role plays participants have the opportunity to experience physically and emotionally a small part of life through the eyes of gays. Participants watching these role plays may be able to attend to their true feelings more effectively than in impersonal and abstract discussions. It is important to lead into these role plays with the first activity so that participants know the various perspectives to act out in their skits.

Instructions:

1. Divide the group into different small groups. (If possible, have the facilitators from the last activity each observe a small group and add ideas if necessary.)

2. Give them these instructions: "Each small group will be given a different scenerio to role play for the whole group. Your task in small groups is to spend about five minutes developing a skit/role play that brings out the central conflicts or issues in the scenerio. Make sure everyone in your group has a part in the skit. Do not resolve the issues or solve the conflicts. Leave the audience 'up in the air' so we can discuss the possible outcomes as a whole group. Any questions?"

3. Tailor the scenerios to the specific needs of the participants. The following is a list of possible topics that would be helpful for most groups:

   a. a gay coming out to a roommate

   b. a son/daughter coming out to his/her parents

   c. student confides in a staff member that s/he is confused but thinks s/he is in love with his/her roommate.

   d. a parent finds out a teacher of their high school-aged child is gay

   e. several people are sitting at a cafeteria table during dinner and joking/gossiping about a floormate being gay

   f. several students verbally harass/abuse a gay student who is sitting office hours in the Gay Alliance office

4. After each role play, process the activity using the following suggested questions:

   a. (To role-players) I'd like each of you to discuss what you were feeling as you tried to play your role.

   b. (To role-players) What was difficult/easy about playing your role?

   c. (To audience) What are your feelings/reactions to this role play?

   d. (To All) Whom did you identify with? Why?

   e. (To All) Whom did you like? dislike? Why?

   f. (To All) What are some strategies to resolve this conflict/situation?

   g. (To All) How could this situation have been handled differently? or avoided?

5. The group may need about fifteen minutes to view and discuss each role play. However, the time invested in this activity should help participants to begin to empathize and understand a little bit about what it feels like to be gay and to live in a hostile environment.

6. It will be important to close this activity by processing how they felt about these two values clarification exercises. The following may be useful summarizing questions:

   a. How are you feeling after these two activities: The small groups and the role plays?

   b. What are some of your thoughts? reactions? comments?

7. It may be effective to end this section with a closing statement, such as: "Non-gays can never really fully understand what it feels like to be gay; but, from doing these role plays and having these discussions, maybe we can get a glimpse of what parts of their lives are like. Sometimes prejudice, hate and discrimination happen because people don't really know about or understand whatever it is they feel so strongly about. By trying to see life through the eyes of others, we can begin to understand, not necessarily to accept, but at least to try to empathize with them and their realities. If people saw those who are <u>different</u> as human beings, and understood more about who they are, then maybe they wouldn't hate them or persecute them so much."

IX. COMING OUT

Note:
The purpose of this section is to familiarize participants with some of the key aspects of the coming out process so that they will be better prepared to interact with the gay/bisexual members of the panel during the final activity of this workshop.

a. Introductory Statement

The term "coming out" (of the closet) refers to the life-long process of the development of a positive gay identity. It is a very long and difficult struggle for many gays because they often have to confront many homophobic attitudes and discriminatory practices along the way. Many gays first need to struggle with their own negative stereotypes and feelings of homophobia which they learned as they were growing up. Before these gays can feel good about who they are, they will need to challenge their own attitudes and change them from the lower end of that homophobia continuum (repulsion, pity, tolerance) to feelings of appreciation and admiration. But it often takes many years of painful work to develop a positive gay identity. Then, many gays begin to make decisions about whom to tell that they are gay. Many gays are afraid to "come out" to their friends and family.

- What might they be afraid of?
  - rejection - loss of relationships
  - gossip
  - harassment/abuse
  - being thrown out of family
  - being thrown out of house
  - being forced to undergo psychotherapy
  - having their lover arrested
  - loss of financial support
  - losing their job
  - physical violence

- Why might gays want to come out to friends/relatives?
  - end the "hiding game"
  - feel closer to those people
  - be able to be "whole" around them
  - stop wasting energy by hiding all the time
  - feel like they have integrity
  - to make a statement that "gay is ok"

- How might gays feel about their coming out to someone? Why?
  - scared
  - relieved
  - vulnerable
  - wondering how the person will react
  - proud

- How might someone feel after someone comes out to them?
  - scared
  - shocked
  - disbelieving
  - uncomfortable
  - not sure what to say
  - not sure what to do next
  - wondering why the person "came out"
  - supportive
  - flattered
  - honored
  - angry
  - disgusted

- What do you think gays want from the people they come out to?
  - acceptance
  - support
  - understanding
  - comfort
  - closer friendship
  - that knowing won't negatively affect their relationship
  - a hug and a smile
  - an acknowledgement of their feelings

Note:
Tell participants that they will have a chance to learn more about the different choices gays make during the process of coming out from the members of the panel at the end of the workshop.

X. READ AROUNDS

Note:
This activity gives participants the opportunity to come face-to-face with some factual accounts that document discriminatory laws and practices, homophobic statements and incidents of violence against gays. Most participants react with shock and disbelief as they hear these anecdotes read by their peers. Facilitators can use a couple different techniques with this activity:

1. Give each participant a copy of all of the read-arounds and have different people read assigned anecdotes as everyone else reads along silently.

2. The facilitator can develop a series of 3x5 cards, each card with a different anecdote on it. Hand out 1-2 cards to each participant and have them read aloud to the group in turn.

   Instructions:

   1. Distribute read-arounds on 3x5 cards.

   2. Give these directions:

      "Please read your cards. Then, in a random order, I'd like you to read your cards to the group. We'll discuss them after all the cards are read, but if you have an important question or comment after any specific card, just go ahead and speak."

   3. After all the cards have been read, ask the participants for their reactions to this information/activity. Expect that they will feel shocked, surprised, angry and possibly ashamed. Reiterate that these are documented incidents and that they are typical of things that happen daily to gays across the country.

Note:
It will be important for facilitators to develop additional read-arounds that are both more current and specific to your region. A couple anecdotes about harassment/discrimination on you own campus or in your own town will have far more impact.

READ AROUNDS: UPDATE

1. The Court of Appeals in Missouri ruled that a Missouri lesbian is unfit to have custody of her four children because of her gay lifestyle.
   -Diamond Edge, October 1987

2. The Reverend Rose Mary Denman is the first Methodist minister to be brought to church trial under the church rule which forbids ordination of "self-avowed, practicing homosexuals".
   -Diamond Edge, September 1987

3. The Department of Defense has asked a federal court in San Francisco to reconsider a ruling that ended anti-gay job discrimination, on the basis that gays are more of a security risk.
   -Philadelphia Gay News, October 1987

4. John Silber, president of Boston University, claimed that anti-gay violence is not an issue on campus because there are no gay or lesbian students.
   -Philadelphia Gay News, October 1987

5. Gay men in Los Angeles are being held blackmail by a group identifying itself as the "Community Control Group of the Lord's Order". The group threatens exposure of these men to employers, friends and family members unless they pay the group $3,000.00.
   -The Baltimore Alternative, October 1987

6. A bomb threat failed to stop a performance of "Lesbo A-Go-Go" at Whiteaker School in Eugene, Oregon. The school and the producers had received numerous phone calls from angry people who didn't want a lesbian event in a school building.
   -from Womens' Press, reported in Lesbian Connection, September 1987

7. Five professors of women's studies and the director of the women's studies center at the University of California at Long Beach were recently forced out of their positions, according to The News. The dismissals were the result of an investigation of the women by the Evangelical Grace Bretheran Church of Long Beach and Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum. According to the womens' attorney, the groups wanted to "purge" the faculty of suspected "radical feminists", by which they meant lesbians.
   -from Gay Community News reported in Lesbian Connection, September 1987

8. In Providence, Rhode Island, a Family Court judge has placed restrictions on a divorced woman's custody of her 12 year old daughter because the mother is a lesbian. The court ruled that the mother must not have a live-in homosexual lover, must not expose the child to any homosexual activities, and cannot bring the child into contact with anyone the mother has a homosexual relationship with.
   -from newspaper clippings from Providence, Rhode Island, reported in Lesbian Connection, January 1988

9. Canada Custom's seizure and detention of books on their way to Toronto's Glad Day Bookstore is continuing. Recently the focus has been on lesbian novels. In some cases it has taken up to 6 months for confiscated materials to be returned.
   -from Rites, reported in Lesbian Connection, January 1988

10. The three largest national newsmagazines (Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News and World Report) totally ignored the March on Washington, despite the fact that it was one of the largest civil rights demonstration in our nation's history.
    -Lesbian Connection, January 1988

11. The U.S. Marine Corps charged two female Marines Feb. 24 with committing "indecent sex acts with other women" at a training camp for women recruits. At least eight other women are under investigation in what military rights advocates are calling the military's latest anti-gay witchhunt. A court martial hearing for the two women, a captain and a sergeant who deny the charges, is scheduled for early March. Last year 68 Marines were discharged for being gay. Eigthy-eight were discharged in 1986, 105 in 1985 and 116 in 1984.
-Gay Community News, February 28, 1988

12. "Superman won't 'play gay'": A ten-year-old screenplay for a movie with a gay theme continues to have problems with casting for lead roles. The film has been shuffled from producer to producer and has been rewritten several times. According to The Weekly News, the director of The Front Runner offered $1 million to Christopher Reeves to play a gay track coach. The former Superman turned down the offer, apparently because he "played gay" once before in the film version of "Deathtrap", and is worried about his image.
-Gay Community News, February 28, 1988

13. In November 1983 Sharon Kowalski was severely injured in a car collision by a drunk driver. The accident left Sharon with a "closed head injury" and little mobility. When her parents learned of her relationship with her partner, Karen Thompson, they went to court and successfully got guardianship of Sharon, and then quickly denied Karen any rights to visitation or communication with her life partner. Karen has been unsuccessful as of yet to win her "rights" in subsequent court battles.
-Bay Windows, February 25, 1988

14. AIDS Update: As of January 18, 1988, there were 51,361 CDC documented cases, and 28,683 deaths.
-Bay Windows, February 25, 1988

15. Two women in San Anselmo, CA won a $500.00 settlement from an apartment owner who refused to rent to them because they are lesbians. The women filed a "sexual preference" discrimination complaint with the State department of Fair Employment and Housing in June, after they were told by the landlord that she would not rent a 3-bedroom duplex to them because the current tenant did not want a lesbian couple living above her.
-from the Bay Area Reporter, reported in Lesbian Connection, January 1988

16. Those who watched last summer's tennis championships at Wimbleton may have noticed something new. While cameras routinely panned to the boyfriends and husbands of the female tennis stars, they did not neglect Martina Navratilova's off-court partner, Judy Benson, who was regularly seen reacting to Martina's plays on television.
-from Lesbian News, reported in Lesbian Connection, January 1988

17. Among the regular characters in "Private Practice" (an upcoming ABC midseason replacement series set in a women's clinic), is a nurse practitioner named Marilyn McGrath, who happens to be a lesbian. Esther Shapiro, executive producer of the two-hour pilot and co-creator of "Dynasty", says, "Middle America had accepted ("Dynasty's bisexual) Steven Carrington, and I have respect enough for the public to believe that they can accept Marilyn. We will just deal with her sexual orientation matter-of-factly." Gail Strickland has been cast in the role.
-from TV Guide, reported in Lesbian Connection, January 1988

18. In Stockholm, the Swedish Parliament has passed two laws concerning gay rights. An anti-discrimination law makes it illegal for commercial establishments to refuse services to gays or for property owners to refuse to sign contracts because of sexual orientation. The other law gives gay couples living together the same rights as common-law heterosexual partners. In Sweden, unmarried sexual couples have virtually the same legal status as married couples; for example, unmarried couples can file joint tax returns, inherit property from a partner in absence of a will, and sign leases as couples.
-from the Washington Blade reported in Lesbian Connection, January 1988.

19. Washington, D. C. police have reestimated the crowd size of the National march on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights as 650,000, according to Bravo San Diego. A National Park Police estimate of 200,000 was widely reported in the mainstream media the weekend of the March. The new figure makes this march the largest demonstration ever in Washington, surpassing the Civil Rights March of 1963 and the Viet Nam Moratorium of 1969.
-from Outlines, reported in Lesbian Connection, July 1988

20. A report released this month by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) revealed that anti-lesbian/gay harassment and violence reached a record high in 1987. Across the U. S., 7,008 incidents were reported to NGLTF, compared with 4,946 incidents reported in 1986. These incidents, indicating a 42% increase in one year, were documented by 64 organizations in different states and the National Gay/Lesbian Crisisline. NGLTF stressed that the anti-lesbian/gay statistics gathered for 1987 accounted for only a "very small fraction" of the actual total.
-from Gay Community News, June 19, 1988

21. Two gay men who were scheduled to participate in a discussion about sexuality at the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity at the University of Vermont (UVM) decided to forego the speaking engagement when they spotted a car outside the frat house with the words "kill queers" painted on its fender. The president of the fraternity was quoted in the UVM Cynic as saying the message on the car was merely a part of a spring ritual called "Car Wrecking Weekend." This incident followed on the heels of a similar gay hate-message from another UVM frat where the message, "Drink Beer, Kill Queers" appeared on the Lambda Iota fraternity's bus parked in front of its house.
-from Gay Community News, June 12, 1988

22. The Boulder County, Colorado Department of Social Services approved an application by a lesbian living with another woman to adopt a child. An administrator for the social service agency said the woman's bid was considered as a single-parent adoption. "We look at individuals regardless of their sexual preference."
-from News of the Columbus Gay and Lesbian Community, reported in Lesbian Connection, July 1988

Homophobic Violence

Robbed or assaulted AT LEAST once in connection with their gayness (1978, Bell/Weinberg)
- **38%** of **black** gay men
- **21%** of **white** gay men

Violently assaulted by **nongay men**: (1982/ Harry)
- **17%** of gay men who stated they were "very masculine"
- **22%** of gay men who considered themselves "masculine"
- **39%** of gay men who considered themselves " a little or very feminine"

More than **93%** of assaults and harassments occurred from people the **victim did not know** (Bohn, 1983)

Methods of murder
- **53% were stabbed**
- **19% were shot, usually in conjunction with beating/stabbing**
- **19% were beaten to death**
- **6% were strangled/smothered**

37% - assailants were **armed**
25% - the assailant **outnumbered the victim**
(average number of assailants - **a ratio of 4:1**)
35% - perpetrators were **BOTH armed and outnumbering**
3% - equal numbers and unarmed

43% were assaulted when **alone**
29% when accompanied by **one other male**
23.5% when accompanied by **more than one male**
3% when with **1 female**
1.5% by **more than 1 female**

civilian harassment/violence -**78%** of this study
police harassment/violence-**22%** of reported victims

lesbian violence/harrassment: 2-10%

Source:

Bohn, Ted R. Homophobic Violence: Implications for Social Work Practice. In Schoenberg, R., Goldberg, R., S. and Shore, D. A., (Eds.), With Compassion Toward Some: Homosexuality and Social Work in America. Binghamton, New York: Harrington Press,1985, pps. 91-112.

Kathy Obear, The Human Advantage, 1989 (413) 584-0812

XI. PERSONAL STORIES

This technique can be effective because it allows participants to experience actual situations/feelings through the eyes of gays. The following four personal stories explore the issues of coming out to parents, life in the closet, and lesbians in love. It would be helpful for workshop presenters to gather additional stories from colleagues, students, and community members that illustrate other issues, such as: life as a gay male; gay parenting; child custody conflicts; gays and substance abuse; discrimination against gays; coming out; developing a positive gay identity; the struggles to develop a healthy relationship in a homophobic world.

There are several ways to use these stories:

1. Give all participants copies of the stories and have individuals take turns reading each story a paragraph at a time.
2. Have several students spend time during a break preparing for dramatic readings of the stories.
3. Have workshop facilitators read the stories.
4. Have participants read them silently.
5. Use a fantasy/relaxation technique when facilitators read story(ies) to participants.
6. After participants have heard/read the stories, lead a large group discussion exploring their reactions and feelings.

It is most effective to read 2-3 different kinds of personal stories, discuss them, and then give the participants handouts on the others for further reference.

Prepared for the workshop "Opening Doors to Understanding and Acceptance", for ACPA, Boston, 1985.

1.

Do you know what it feels like to have to hide everything all of the time? to have to pretend that you are someone you are not? for fear that "they" will find you out and guess that you really are gay? that you truly love another woman? that you want to spend the rest of your life sharing your joys and sorrows, your triumphs and failures with her? The horrible, frightening fear of disclosure. . . the fear you will lose your job, lose your friends. . . that you will be disowned by your family, thrown out by your parents.

The anger, the resentment when everyone else talks about their "dates" and their desires. . . and everyone looks at you as if you're not good enough to have a lover. . . and all the time you bite your lip and hold everything inside. . . and you know that you are lovable. . . that you are deserving of love and affection. . . or do you?

How many women "buy into" the myths and stereotypes of our society? How many lesbians really believe that the reason that they are gay is because they truly aren't a "good enough" woman to deserve a man? How many feel that they are disgusting? abnormal? a pervert? a degenerate? a failure? a family tragedy? How many apologize for their lifestyle and make excuses? and try to find solace in "causes" and reasons why they "turned out this way"?

How can we do this to other women? How can we force them to feel dirty and ugly? feel less than human? Are you so sure you are right that you will treat gays as second class citizens? and continue to deny them the basic human rights of security and safety? Will you continue to deny them the right to feel good about who they are? deny them the chance to celebrate their choices? to celebrate their relationships?

I could go on in this angry and political vein, but I want to let you know just how it feels to be gay. I am proud of who I am. I feel good about my skills and my talents that I share with others. I am a wonderful woman, and I am gay. I love people, and I am in love with a woman. And yet, I have chosen a profession in which I cannot be open about my lifestyle without fear of losing my job and jeopardizing my future. Like a Jew trying to "pass" in Nazi Germany, I live in fear that someone will find out that I am not one of "them." I am different. And they are threatened and frightened by me. I honestly do not understand why.

One of the worst things is that I sometimes have trouble living with myself. . . I have trouble feeling good about my decision to remain pretty "closeted" right now. Where is my integrity if I fail to challenge homophobic statements and jokes? How can I truly feel whole if I sit by and allow my colleagues and constituents to remain ignorant about the details of my life? How can I sit back and watch other gays experience blatant discrimination and suffer violations of their human rights?

And yet, I believe in my work and the good that I do in my job. . . which do I choose? Will I ever be happy until I have it all? Will I ever have it all? Will I ever come close?

I wish I could just live in a cabin on a mountain with my lover and our golden retriever. . . life would be so simple then. . . so free from pain and anguish. . . and I wonder if I ever truly will know what it means to be happy and contented. . . sometimes I wish I would. . . sometimes I hope I never do.

God, how I wish I could change things. . . I wish I could change you. . . I can't do that, though. I hope you do.

2.

How dare you assume I am heterosexual?
How dare you persecute me with your jokes and comments?
How dare you make me live a lie?
I am a schizophrenic; I hide so much of myself from you.
I live in horrible fear of someone finding out.
What if you see me at a workshop or at a lecture about gays?
Or at a women's concert? or with my lover?
What if you visit my home? Should I hide all of my books and posters?
I have to lie about how I spend my time and how I spend my weekends.
I have to change my lover's name or refuse to share anything about me at all. . .
You don't know me, and you never will. Not unless you try to understand what it means to have to live two lives, to live a lie.
WHY DON'T YOU JUST LEAVE US ALONE!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?

3.

People are so ignorant. It's so sad. Why do they hate what I am? Why is it dirty? Why is it sick and unclean? How can they tell me that I can't love her? Why do they mock me? If it was of a visible minority, like blacks and women, then it would be more accepted. But the thing is that it can't be seen--very few people can tell who is and who isn't. The stereotype doesn't fit.

Too many questions and too many wonderings. I just want to let people know that it is not ugly, and it is not abnormal. It is one of the most stable, comforting parts of my life. It is beautiful. No, it's not for everybody, and no, not everyone has to like it. But I wish for a little understanding and a little expanding of the mind. A little more education.

It's all very warm and close. When I'm with her, everything around me takes on new and deeper meaning. We play alot, laughing, joking, creating new forms of loving that neither of us have ever experienced. To be in love is to be free. Our eyes often lock and we search for a sign, a movement, a light. We can be with others, yet make gestures, suggestions that only we understand. We have an unspoken language of touch.

She occupies my mind. She makes me think. She notices things I've never thought of before.

When she sings to me, her voice carries me along to the places I want to be. To the times and places where we can be together. It's much like flying.

When two people come together to make a whole, what you really have is two half people. When two whole people come together, then there is magic.

4.

"Honesty is the best policy" - so they say. But, then again, they will say a lot of things. I was honest. Honest to myself, honest about my feelings, honest to those I love. But nobody ever labeled me honest. Being honest has never gotten me into so much trouble and pain.

I told them because they asked, because I love them, and because I think they have a right to know. So, I jumped in--closed my eyes and took a step. Before I knew it, I was in the middle of something I still am unable to put into one word.

My parents felt they had lost me, so they desperately tried to get me back. The truth was they hadn't lost me, but my words meant nothing.

I watched my mother cry and run through the house screaming 'til she finally fainted upstairs. I saw my father's anger, his tears and remember his desperate calls on the phone. I remember crying, crying so much that it hurt, so I doubled over to make it hurt less. That action in my parents' eyes meant I had no feelings, that I wasn't capable of showing emotion so I certainly was unable to love--I couldn't move.

The screaming, the pounding, the crying would last into the early morning when I would be so exhausted it hurt to think. At this time, my mom or my dad, sometimes both, would come to me crying, saying they loved me and wanted me to hug them. I held them, sometimes for as long as an hour, never did I close my arms to them—I love them. Other nights, I would go to them crying and wanting just to hug them and say I love them, and they would look me in the eye and say, "No you don't. Quit lying to us." And they would push me away.

They wanted me to see a priest—so I honored their request. I was not afraid to talk to him. He knew me from our parish, but how little he really knew of me. We sat in a restaurant where he calmly asked me some questions.

(1) He asked me if I had done this for money or for an expensive item.
(2) He asked if I had been seduced.
(3) He asked me if I was Christ.

An anger burned inside me as I quietly responded no to his questions. How dare he treat me in such an unkind fashion. But it was then on that I ceased existing as a person. I was no longer their daughter. I had no name. I certainly wasn't a woman. I had become to them an empty shell upon which they attached various labels then expected me to perform as such. I was no longer human—I was a thing to be disgusted at and ridiculed.

I talked to the priest another time, once again at my parents' request. This time, he listened to me, no accusations, just an ear to hear my thoughts. He saw me without a shell, without labels. He smiled, did not condemn me, but instead remarked that my parents were lucky people. Needless to say, we never talked to this priest again.

I was mistrusted, misunderstood, betraying, deceitful, sick, abnormal, lost, worthless, sick to look at, terrible to think about, a failure, secretive, a liar, dishonest, cheap, tramp, thing, emotionless, nothing, a hypocrit, and godless to mention <u>just</u> a few.

I was all of a sudden all of these things. Nothing in my past mattered anymore because I had just destroyed it. In my parents' eyes, I had destroyed my life and their lives totally and will continue to devastate the lives of those people I meet.

My life, myself as a thinking, feeling human being did not exist anymore because of one aspect of my personality. They did not see me - they saw a stereotype. They mixed me in with these stereotypes of gross images. So how does a thinking, feeling human being react to people when they are stripped of all emotion and feelings and dignity and honesty in another's

eyes? You try to understand. You hurt—pain is incredibly more intense when that person is denied feeling it or is told it doesn't exist.

I refuse to be a non-entity, a stereotype, a thing. Nor will I let myself be trampled upon, looked over, examined, as if I were something stretched out on a table on display, something to gauk at--NO! I am here, full of feeling, wanting to give and share, longing to be received. What is between two people is just that--between those two people. They know what they share should not be ridiculed and kicked by those who do not understand what is going on--least of all by those who claim to "know it all."

My anger is not directed towards my parents but rather toward ignorance. People that are misunderstood through blinding ignorance feel a pain unequalled by any other—you struggle to be understood or at least heard and all you get is anger or blank stares, but you keep on trying.

I'm back at school now--the reality of this possibility was slim a few months ago. The anger, disappointment, and disapproval was in my parents' eyes a few days before I was to return to campus.

My father whole-heartedly opposed my return, associating my present status with the school I'm attending. My mother felt she owed me my four years, so she said she would put me through on one condition: that I would be honest with her.

I was honest, once again. After two weeks into the semester, my parents phoned. It was a very tense conversation. Finally my dad asked me if I still thought it was right, and I said yes. My mom then asked me if I was going to see her still, and I said yes. Silence occurred at the other end of the phone. I became scared, wanted to say I love you, then I remembered being pushed away—we hung up.

The next morning (8:30 a.m.) I was awakened by another phone call. It was my father. He was alone and sad. He needed someone to talk to, so he called me. I listened. I listened with care about his sadness, then I listened when he told me that he had told my mother to cut off all financial aid. I had no remark. He said he couldn't support something he didn't believe in—I understood--damn it, I understood.

I am a graduating senior, very much involved on campus, so the thought of leaving left me speechless. I had no money, just a small job. Financial Aid helped get some money, but not enough. You see, I cannot get a loan without my parents' information. I cannot be declared an independent student for 2 years, even though I am probably as independent as anyone else. I still do not have enough money to graduate, but I refuse to give up.

I kept receiving phone calls that turned into one-sided conversations—theirs. I sat and listened, my stomach aching, my eyes closed. For the longest time, my father would talk to me in the third person as if it wasn't me at the end of the phone. The phone calls were harsh, ugly, and completely insensitive. Once again, I was reduced to nothing more than a cheap whore.

They wanted me to speak with some people at the church, so I did. These people were kind. We talked, and they agreed with me. My parents were furious. They said the only reason these people agreed with me was because I had the power to change their words—I was evil.

Haven't heard from them by phone for a while. My dad writes me and sends me passages from the Bible proclaiming I am the devil and a heretic and it's his duty to save the world. Other times, he'll write blaming my situation on himself, so the letters are strewn with guilt. I write him back words of encouragement. I say I love him. At least in writing he can't say no to my face. He doesn't even sign his letters "dad" anymore; instead, it's "Father."

In many ways, I'm dealing with two different people who claim to be acting as one—they are not. My father, a staunch Catholic, sends me letters of disgust. My mother doesn't answer my letters. She will call me needing my support—which I extend without thinking. Then my father will call condemning me. My mom calls now concerned with my father. She will say, "Your father is a devastated man, and who knows what will happen to him--how will you feel when something does??"

Nothing in the way of feelings has changed for me during this whole thing. Even now I am honest. I love them very much, and I love her even more. I don't want anyone's pity, anger, or empty words. I don't want a pat on the back and a statement of "you gotta be tough; it'll probably get worse." I don't need anyone's words because it makes them feel better to say them. I don't need blanket statements of encouragement.

Don't pity me; learn from me. Ignorance will only make it worse. I do not hate anyone. My ideas of love are, I'm sure, very similar to yours. I've always felt people don't make love--they can't. But, people can share love, give love, express love and watch how love is given to them.

I love her very much. Do me a favor—learn. Nobody has to agree, but for God's sake, the only thing more dangerous than a noneducated person is a half-educated one.

Stereotypes lack creativity, imagination, and one's self strength. To take characteristics that no one is able to validate and apply them to a human being like oneself. Are we so insecure in our ownselves that we cannot go beyond a characteristic? I don't know of anyone who would be content with a shallow, misrepresentation of themself. What too often happens with stereotypes is people are falsely represented to fit another's lack of vision. And an often greater injustice is when the persons being stereotyped feel they must assume these characteristics in order to be accepted or recognized within our society, regardless of the falsity of the representation. This is hypocracy and injustice started by those who are unaware, selfish, scared. This is further fed by these person's ignorance--definite injustice!

Everybody always knows how you feel, what you feel, why you feel it, how you think, what you think, and what you will do next. Too bad it's not true—it would save in communication time. Franky, I don't like being told what I feel, how I feel, and how I should react. Yet, this is how I was treated. . .

So why have I chosen to stay?

Magic. . .

It's that precious point somewhere between space and time that can be reached just by looking in her eyes. It's that special feeling of joy and excitement, warmth and depth that flows through every part of my body, mind, and senses when she returns the same look into my eyes.

She speaks with a simple touch and her silence is comforting. She shields me from ignorance and its pain and supports me in facing myself and my fears.

She has captured various aspects of me that I was afraid to share, but she held them carefully, taking care not to suffocate them but just to keep them near and warm. She has helped me grow when I thought it not possible. She has taken me and held me by her side ever so gently.

So, you see, she is a part of me, a very real part of my life. The magic culminates in feeling as one. Time, distance, and pain are all second to magic and becoming one.

XII. FANTASY

A fantasy exercise can be a very useful method to help participants to individually "get in touch with their feelings." The following are suggestions for using this techniques:

1. Darken room as much as possible.

2. Make environment totally quiet, if possible.

3. Use a carpeted room so participants can lie down and relax on the floor.

4. Minimize all distractions from windows and doorways.

5. Read the fantasy with a very soft, slow and articulate/theatrical style.

6. Avoid using this technique if participants are extremely tired or have recently eaten a large meal. They may fall asleep.

7. If the room temperature is too warm, they will get drowsy.

The following fantasy is include- to give workshop facilitators a model from which to create variations on other themes, such as: coming out to parents/friends; the possibility of losing your job if "found out"; the possibility of losing custody of your children; life in the closet; using alcohol/drugs to deaden the pain of isolation and homophobia, etc.

A SENSITIZING EXERCISE FOR HETEROSEXUALS (READER AVAILABLE)

The leader of the workshop encourages the participants to assume comfortable positions and to relax. The leader then reads the following:

Take a minute or two to get relaxed. Close your eyes and try to get in touch with the last time you spent an evening or afternoon with someone very special — a lover, a girlfriend or a boyfriend. Remember all the things you did. Maybe you went for a walk through campus or in the (fill-in the name of a popular place on campus). Maybe you went to the movies. You might have gone to (fill-in the name of a shopping mall) to do some shopping. Remember holding hands, putting your arm around your special friend. Remember maybe kissing this person while you walked or were at the movies. Picture yourself being very close to this person and how you felt about that closeness. Remember all the different things you two did that afternoon or evening. Think about the people you ran into while you were out together — old friends, co-workers, acquaintances. Remember how it felt for you to be seen with this special person, how other people reacted to the two of you holding hands, or the smiles you might have gotten if you kissed.
(Pause)
Now, imagine that the world was different. Imagine thet the "norm" is homosexuality. The vast majority of people on the face of the earth are gay. Heterosexuality is illegal and considered sick. Imagine that afternoon or evening you spent with that special friend in that world. How would things have been different? What would you have done differently? What couldn't you have done? Go back over everything that you and your special friend did together that last time you spent together, but in a world that said,"No, you can't do that!"
(Pause)

Take a minute now to let those feelings about that interaction come to the surface. How does it feel to be with this person you love in this different world? How do you feel about your friend? About yourself? About the world?

As these feelings come to the surface, and as words form around the feelings, say the words out loud.
(After participants have seemed to express their feelings. . .)
Relax now. Take a deep breath and let yourself feel comfortable. Come back to this world and back to the people in this room. When you are feeling comfortable you can open your eyes.

The leader can at this point have a discussion about the feelings that surfaced during this exercise.

Prepared by the Lesbian/Gay Male Advocates (Human Sexuality Office), University of Michigan counseling Services, 3404-07 Michigan Union, Ann Arbor, MI 48109.

Used by permission at ACUHO '81 "Gay Awareness in Residence Halls."

Suggested Questions for Processing

1. What are your feelings right now?

2. How did it feel to be a member of a scorned minority?

3. How do you think gays feel?

4. What are other times besides those in the fantasy when gays probably feel alone, isolated, and invisible on this campus?

XIII. KINSEY SCALE AND OTHER RELEVANT STATISTICS

Note:
The pioneering work of Dr. Alfred Kinsey and his associates is still referred to in most of the current literature on gays. There are other studies that provide helpful statistics for gay workshops, though the number and variety of these projects is very disappointing. Facilitators are encouraged to refer to the appendix for a summary of the Kinsey material and to research additional statistics on both a national and local scale. Data about specific policies, incidents of discrimination and harassment, and numbers of gays on your campus (students, faculty and staff) will be very powerful statistics for your participants. The following is a suggested outline for this section.

a. Kinsey Scale

There have been a number of reputed studies on homosexuality in recent decades. The most widely discussed material came from the work of Dr. Alfred Kinsey and his associates in the late '40s and early '50s. His results have more recently been supported by further research by Masters and Johnson and others.

The most revealing point from these studies is that there is a broad spectrum of sexual orientations, not just two lifestyles: heterosexual and homosexual. Instead of picturing sexual orientation as an either/or issue, Kinsey developed a seven point continuum based on the degree of sexual responsiveness people have to the members of the same and other sex: (put scale up on newsprint)

0 - exclusively heterosexual
1 - predominantly heterosexual, incidentally homosexual
2 - predominantly heterosexual, but more than incidentally homosexual
3 - equally heterosexual and homosexual
4 - predominantly homosexual, but more than incidentally heterosexual
5 - predominantly homosexual, incidentally heterosexual
6 - exclusively homosexual

He suggested that it is necessary to consider a variety of activities in assessing an individual's ranking on the continuum:

- fantasies
- dreams
- thoughts
- frequency of sexual activity
- emotional feelings

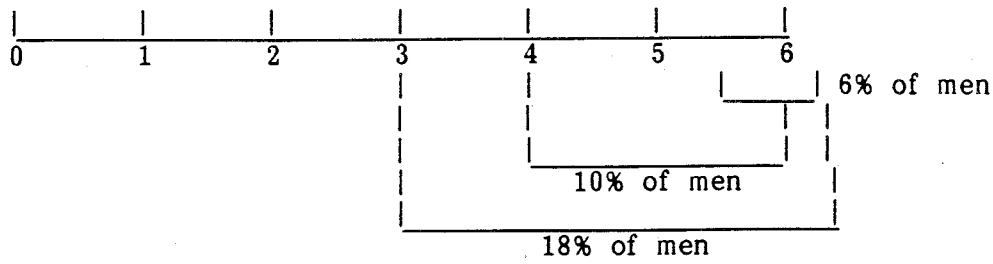
Therefore, many "heterosexuals", in fact, would fall somewhere between number 0-3 because they occasionally think/dream/fantasize about sexual activities with members of the same sex and/or occasionally act on these feelings. (Put on newsprint a graph illustrating the following statistics.) This graph illustrates some of the key findings from the Kinsey research:

1. 6% of the adult male population ranked a "6" over a three period
   10% ranked 4-6
   18% ranked 3-6

2. Ranks for women were about one-half that of men.

Note:
This research was conducted in the '40s and early '50s during a time of lower sexual activity for women.)

Suggested graph:



The interesting results for women concerned the relationship of incidence of gay relations with post-high school education: 17% of college educated women and 24% of women with graduate degrees had at least one gay experience since puberty.

The following are additional statistics about men:

- 37% of all men had experienced an orgasm in a sexual activity with another male sometime in their lifetime
- 60% of all men had some type of homosexual relationship before they were sixteen
- 30% of all men had some type of homosexual relationship between the ages of 20-24

Note:
Facilitators are encouraged to do additional research in this area to develop further materials and a knowledge base to support this lecturette.

b. Relevant Statistics

Facilitators will need to gather additional statistics for their specific region. In addition it would be helpful to provide data comparing attitudes in America with those of other nations to illustrate how homophobia is a culture-bound concept.

XIV. LIFE FOR GAYS ON THIS CAMPUS

Note:
The purpose of this section is to provide participants with current anecdotes, situations, and personal stories that specifically relate to their own environments.

a. Present additional statistics, situations, etc.
b. Have participants react to this material
c. Ask them for further examples of abuse, harassment, and discrimination on campus.
d. Ask them what they think it's like to be gay on this campus and why.
   -for students
   -for faculty
   -for staff

XV. WHAT WE CAN ALL DO TO HELP

Note:
The previous section provides a good introduction to this more confrontive discussion about personal action. The purpose of this section is to have participants struggle with the difficult choices of what they will do now that they have all of these new insights and facts. Too often people are sympathetic and empathize, and yet they sit by and watch others suffer harassment and discrimination. Facilitators are encouraged to challenge participants to struggle to make their behavior/actions more consistent with their values.

a. Introduction
"So, where do we go from here? What will each of us do now that we have a whole lot more information about what gays experience on this campus?"

- How are you feeling right now about all these issues?
  (answers to hope for:)
  - frustrated
  - angry that gays suffer like this
  - sad because I know this abuse happens
  - a little confused about what I think
  - a little embarrassed/ashamed because I've told gay jokes before
  - like I need time to sort everything out

Note:

If participants don't offer these responses, be intrusive and ask them about these specific feelings. "I always feel frustrated when I learn more about some of the injustices different people suffer, because I feel so powerless. And I'm never sure what I can do to really help. But with gays there are some very specific things we can all start doing right now to make a difference. I'd like us to talk about some of them and share ideas."

- What if you're sitting with a group of friends, and a couple of them make an obnoxious comment about gays - what could you do?
  - ignore it
  - refuse to laugh
  - casually leave
  - use "soft" confrontation and tell them it's not funny or nice
  - offer information to give a different (more accurate) perspective
  - tell them your feelings/attitudes about gays
  - ask them not to make such comments around you

- What's hard about some of these responses?
  - could be ridiculed
  - they might think you're gay
  - friends might get mad at you
  - create an awkward situation

- What's the trade-off? What will you gain if you confront them?
  - gain self respect
  - gain respect from friends
  - support a closeted gay in group
  - model acceptance of differences for friends
  - a sense of personal integrity

- What could you do if a friend tells you a "rumor" that a floor member is supposedly gay?
  - ignore them
  - tell them you could not care less
  - tell them it couldn't matter to you if s/he were gay
  - tell them it's harmful to pass on such information
  - say that if s/he is gay, then it's his/her right to come out only to people s/he wants to and they have no right to violate that trust
  - ask them not to tell anyone else
  - talk about some of the abuse gays can experience from ignorant floor members

- We do a lot of programming and activities in the halls and most of it is designed for heterosexuals without considering the interests or needs of gays. What activities do we have that in some way could exclude gays or at least not recognize their needs and interests?
  - The dating game
  - date parties
  - Sadie Hawkins dances
  - all dances
  - Valentine's Day activities
  - escort dinners and other activities that match up a women's and a men's floor
  - pen pals with floor members of the other sex
  - using popular music with messages about heterosexuality, marriage, etc. (generate ones specific to your environment)

- How can we change the emphasis of these to minimize the heterosexual bias and to try to address the needs/interests of everyone?
  - don't require that people are "matched up" with someone of the opposite sex
  - always have people come in groups, not as a couple
  - celebrate all kinds of relationships on Valentine's Day: friendships, roommates, dating, etc.
  - avoid using music that is blatantly heterosexual

- How comfortable are you with your level of knowledge and understanding about the gay lifestyle?

- If you'd like to know more. . .
  - encourage them to read more
  - refer them to bibliography, resource libraries/women's centers
  - tell them about additional programs or classes on related issues
  - encourage them to talk with gays openly about their lifestyles
  - challenge them to keep thinking and feeling about these issues and to get to know themselves and their values better

Note:
Research agencies and organizations in your region and prepare an accurate listing of resources for lesbians and gay men that includes the following:

1. Groups that specifically support and advocate gay rights, such as:
   -National Gay Task Force
   -Gay and Lesbian Alliances
   -Professional Support Groups
2. Women's Resource Centers and Organizations
3. Counseling Services
4. Crisis Phone-lines
5. Substance Abuse Agencies
   -Alcoholics Anonymous
   -Alanon
6. Women/Gay Bookstores
7. Establishments that are frequented/owned by gays
   °restaurants
   °bars
   °athletic clubs
8. Parents and Friends of Gays (FLAG)
9. Health Services
10. Child Care Agencies
11. Sexual Assault Support Services
12. Domestic Violence Support Services

Give this resource list out during the workshop.

b. Button exercise

Note:
During the activity participants are asked to pin on a pink or lavendar button that reads: "I support gay rights." They will discuss if they would wear this button publicly on campus.

Instructions:

- Everyone please take this button and put it on.
- How are you feeling about wearing this right now?
- Who will wear it tonight at dinner? Why?
- Who wouldn't feel comfortable wearing it publicly? Why not?

Summary Comments:
"These buttons can symbolize what you say and do every day about gay issues. If you choose to go along with the crowd and laugh at two effeminate men walking by, what kind of button are you really wearing? If you walk away as someone calls a woman a 'fucking dyke', what button are you really wearing? You wear buttons wherever you go about a lot of different issues. I hope you are more aware of what your buttons really say and how much influence you can have on your peers - one way or the other. And I hope you do wear this button and see how people react. And then maybe you'll catch a glimpse of how it might feel for some gay students on this campus."

XVI. CLOSING/SUMMARY

Suggested Comments:
Before we move on to our last activity, the panel, I want to read you something that was written in October of 1945, by Pastor Martin Niemuller, as the world looked on at the horrors of WWII.

> In Germany the Nazis first came for the Communists, and I did not speak up because I was not a Communist.
>
> Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak up because I was not a Jew.
>
> Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak up because I wasn't a Trade Unionist.
>
> Then they came for the Catholics, and I was a Protestant, so I didn't speak up.
>
> Then they came for me and by that time there was no one to speak up for anyone.

The pains and struggles of any group are really challenges for all of us to address. "We Are The World". The lyrics from that song by U.S.A. America for the famine victims in Ethiopia are so very true for the issues of all dispossessed groups, including gays.

> "We are the world.
> We are the children;
> We are the ones who make a brighter day,
> So let's start giving.
> There's a choice were making;
> We're saving our own lives,
> It's true, we make a better day;
> Just you and me."

You can make a difference. You just have to decide that you want to and that you're willing to take the consequences for your actions. What you do and what you say will have incredible impact on the people you touch. I wish us all luck as people try to work together to make a brighter day for you and me.
Let's take a short break and come back for the panel discussion.

XVII. PANEL DISCUSSION

Introduction

- Welcome panel members
- Outline agenda/purpose
  - each panel member will have 5-8 minutes to present some issues and personal information
  - Participants will then have a chance to ask questions of panel members
- Ask each workshop participant to write down on a 3x5 card or piece of paper anytime during the program any questions they want the panelists to address
- Have panelists take turns speaking to the group
- Invite questions from the participants
- Ask questions from the participants' written ones when appropriate
- In closing, ask the panelists for any summary remarks
- Thank them enthusiastically
- Allow a short break for participants to chat informally with panelists

XVIII. EVALUATION

a. Begin by evaluating the panel discussion in the large group
   - What were your reactions to the panel?
   - What was helpful about this activity?
   - Were any of your thoughts or feelings affected by their comments? Which ones?

b. Then have each participant individually fill-out a written evaluation form that addresses a wide variety of topics: timing of workshop; facilitator style/skills; appropriateness of material and activities; what further workshops should be offered; how were they affected by this experience, etc.

c. Lead a large group discussion where participants can share some of their written comments.

d. Collect written evaluations.

e. End the workshop on some physical/unifying activity such as "Laps" (refer to The New Games Book).

f. In this "Giving Circle" the facilitator can make some final closing statements of appreciation, thanks, and pride in watching the group grow and develop throughout the workshop. Give them some type of motivational pep-talk/send-off.

The following are a few suggestions for questions/sentence stems to include in the evaluation form:

1. When I first came to this workshop I. . .

2. The three (3) most important things that I learned today are. . .

3. The activities that I enjoyed the most were. . . (please explain why)

4. The activities that I didn't like were. . . (please explain why)

5. Some things that I used to think/feel were. . .

6. Now, I believe/feel that. . .

7. Some things that I appreciate/don't appreciate about the facilitator are. . .

8. Some suggestions I have for this workshop are. . .

9. I'd like more information about. . .

10. Some things I learned about myself are. . .

11. Some things I'm going to do differently are. . .

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