



What is Biphobia?

Bisexual women and men cannot be defined by their partner or potential partner, so are rendered invisible within the either/or heterosexist framework. This invisibility (biphobia) is one of the most challenging aspects of a bisexual identity. Living in a society that is based and thrives on opposition, on the reassurances and "balanced" polarities of dichotomy affects how we see the world, and how we negotiate our own, and other people's lives to fit "reality."

What Does Biphobia Look Like?

- Expecting a bisexual to identify as heterosexual when coupled with the "opposite" gender/sex, or gay and lesbian when with the same sex/gender.
- Believing bisexual people spread AIDS/HIV and other STDs to heterosexuals.
- Thinking bisexual people haven't made up their minds.
- Assuming bisexuals would be willing to "pass" as anything other than bisexual.
- Feeling that bisexual people are too outspoken and pushy about their visibility and rights.
- Automatically assuming romantic couplings of two women are lesbian, or two men are gay, or a man and a woman are heterosexual.
- Expecting bisexual people to get services, information and education from heterosexual service agencies for their "heterosexual side" (sic) and then go to gay and/or lesbian service agencies for their "homosexual side" (sic).
- Using the terms "phase," "stage," "confused," "fence-sitter," "bisexual," "AC/DC," or "switch-hitter" as slurs or in an accusatory way.
- Thinking bisexuals only have committed relationships with "opposite" sex/gender partners.
- Looking at a bisexual person and automatically thinking of their sexuality rather than seeing them as a whole, complete person.
- Believing bisexuals are confused about their sexuality.
- Assuming that bisexuals, if given the choice, would prefer to be within an "opposite" gender/sex coupling to reap the social benefits of a "heterosexual" pairing.
- Not confronting a biphobic remark or joke for fear of being identified as bisexual.
- Being gay or lesbian and asking your bisexual friend about their lover only when that lover is the same sex/gender.
- Feeling that you can't trust a bisexual because they aren't really gay or lesbian, or aren't really heterosexual.
- Thinking that people identify as bisexual because it's "trendy".
- Expecting bisexual activists and organizers to minimize bisexual issues (i.e. HIV/AIDS, violence, basic civil rights, fighting the Right, military, same sex marriage, child custody, adoption, etc.) and to prioritize the visibility of "lesbian and/or gay" issues. Avoid mentioning to friends that you are involved with a bisexual or working with a bisexual group because you are afraid they will think you are a bisexual.