

## WHAT DOES BIPHOBIA LOOK LIKE?\*

- Assuming that everyone you meet is either heterosexual or homosexual.
- Supporting and understanding a bisexual identity for young people because you identified “that way” before you came to your “real” lesbian/gay/heterosexual identity.
- Expecting a bisexual to identify as heterosexual when coupled with the “opposite” gender/sex.
- Believing bisexual men spread AIDS/HIV to heterosexuals.
- Thinking bisexual people haven’t made up their minds.
- Assuming a bisexual person would want to fulfill your sexual fantasies or curiosities.
- 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).
- Feeling bisexuals just want to have their cake and eat it too.
- Believing that bisexual women spread AIDS/HIV to lesbians.
- Using the terms “phase” or “stage” or “confused” or “fence-sitter” or “bisexual” or “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.

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\* Sexuality, biological sex, and gender are not binary. The language is inadequate to express our new understandings. Therefore, in some instances quotes are used with certain words (i.e. “opposite,” “same”) to highlight problematic areas.

- Assuming that bisexuals, if given the choice, would prefer to be in an “opposite” gender/sex coupling to reap the social benefits of a so-called “heterosexual” pairing.
- Not confronting a biphobic remark or joke for fear of being identified as bisexual.
- Assuming bisexual means “available.”
- Thinking that bisexual people will have their rights when lesbian and gay people win theirs.
- Being gay or lesbian and asking your bisexual friend about their lover or whom they are dating only when that person is the “same” sex/gender.
- Believing bisexuals are confused about their sexuality.
- Feeling that you can’t trust a bisexual because they aren’t really gay or lesbian, or aren’t really heterosexual.
- Expecting a bisexual to identify as gay or lesbian when coupled with the “same” sex/gender.
- 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 so called “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.

Adapted by Lani Ka’ahumanu and Rob Yaeger/BiNet USA, 1996, from Rape Crisis Center of West Contra Costa County, CA, and from *Lesbians: A Consciousness Raising Kit*, by the Boston Lesbian Task Force, and by Building Bridges, March, 1995.