



Access as a Precursor to Building a Culturally Responsive Field:  
Working with LGBTQ Survivors Intimate Partner Violence



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212-714-1184 | www.avp.org  
24-Hour, Bilingual Hotline 212-714-1141

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### Your Trainers

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### The New York City Anti-Violence Project

The New York City Anti-Violence Project is dedicated to eliminating hate violence, sexual assault, stalking, and domestic violence in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and HIV-affected communities through counseling, advocacy, organizing, and public education.

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### The New York City Anti-Violence Project

**Client Services**

- 24-hour hotline
- Short-term individual supportive counseling
- DV Shelter Advocacy
- DV Legal Clinic
- Support Groups
  - HV, SV, DV
  - Art Therapy
- Advocacy, Referrals
- Hospital, precinct, and court accompaniments
- CVB/OVS assistance

**Community Organizing & Public Advocacy**

- Education and Training Institute
- Rapid Incidence Response
- Coalition work/movement building
- NCAVP
  - National Report publication
    - HV, DV
- Public Policy Advocacy
- Volunteer opportunities
  - Speaker's Bureau
  - Hotline Crisis Counselor Training
  - Outreach/Vigils/Rallies
  - Safe Bar/Safe Nights

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## Today's Training

- Introduction
- Language and Terminology
- Oppression, Intersectionality, & LGBTQH communities
- Intersections of Intimate Partner Violence with Sexual Violence and Hate Violence
- Anti-Oppression Action Steps & Resources/Referrals

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## Training Goals

- To deepen our understanding of the ways in which gender and sexual orientation intersect with other cultural identities including race, ethnicity, age, ability, immigration status, HIV status, and the impact this has on experiencing violence
- To understand some unique experiences of LGBTQ survivors of Intimate Partner Violence
- To identify anti-oppression action steps to confront homophobia and transphobia in systems and organizations and increase cultural competency

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## Introductions

- Your name
- Your agency & your role there
- Gender preferred pronoun
- Expectations for the training
- Something about your identity you feel it's important for us to know

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## Exercise

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## Language & Terminology

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### What is "LGBTQ"?

A standard acronym:

- Lesbian
- Gay
- Bisexual
- Transgender
- Queer

\*These terms are fluid and **DO NOT** represent all sexual orientations/gender identities. It is always best to respect individuals' self-determination and honor the terms they use to identify themselves.

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### Sex vs. Gender

What's the difference?

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### Why is this Important ?

- People often live with very limited, traditional ideas about sex and gender
- Assumptions about sex and gender have a tremendous negative impact LGBTQ people everyday
- These assumptions are the where most homophobia and transphobia stem from
- The traditional ideas about sex and gender can be used as power and control tactics against an LGBTQ identified survivor experiencing violence in an intimate or dating relationship.

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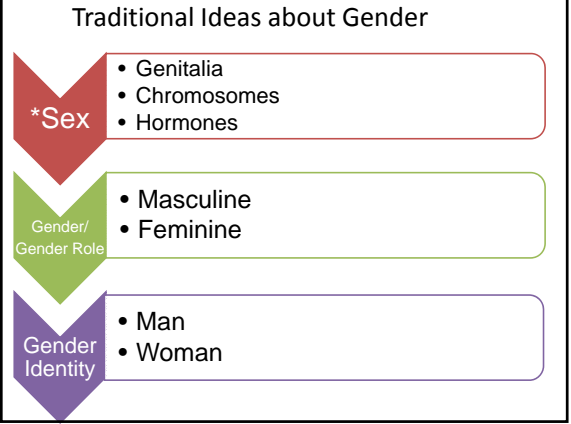
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Sex vs. Gender

- **SEX** -  
the biological and physiological characteristics that define men and women. *(World Health Organization)*

– In western culture, two sexes are institutionally recognized: *male* and *female*.

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Sex vs. Gender continued

- **GENDER** –  
refers to the roles and behaviors society considers appropriate for men and women based on their assigned sex.
- **"Masculine" and "feminine" are gender role categories.**

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### Gender Identity vs. Sexual Orientation

- **Gender Identity** "is about how you understand your own gender: whether you understand yourself to be male, female, or something else, and how you express that."
- **Sexual Orientation** "is about who you are sexually or romantically attracted to, whether you are gay, lesbian, bisexual, straight, etc."

-Sylvia Rivera Law Project, 2007.  
Report: "It's War In Here."

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### A note on the term transgender

- Transgender is a term used:
  - To describe people whose way of understanding their gender is different than the sex they were assigned at birth.
- What may fall under this umbrella are terms such as:
  - Gender non-conforming (gnc)
  - Two-Spirit
  - Genderqueer

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Transgender or Trans	Transexual	Boi	Genderqueer
Drag King/Queen	Cross Dresser	Multigendered	T-Girl
Two Spirit	Gender non-conforming	Intersex	Trans Man or Transman
Trans Woman or Transwoman	Transition	Man	Woman

### Gender Identity Terms You May Hear

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### Additional terms to avoid

Re: Sexual Orientation

- Homosexual(s)
- Gay or Lesbian "Lifestyle"
- Sexual Preference

Re: Gender Identity

- Transvestite
- "Real" or "Genetic" or "Biological" Man or Woman
- "It"

ALWAYS  
refer to a  
person as  
they refer  
to  
themselves

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### Language: Helpful Tips

- **DO** refer to people in they way that they prefer
  - This includes the names they prefer to use and their partner's name
- **DO** call people by the pronoun they currently use
- **DON'T** assume people's sexual orientation based on their gender identity
- **DON'T** go "sightseeing" into people's lives – ask yourself your questions are relevant to your work

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### Oppression: How does it affect LGBTQ Communities?

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### Oppression & Intersectionality: Context & Principles to Guide Our Work

- Race, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, and culture impact the way people experience intimate partner violence
- Our own race, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, and cultural experiences influence how we do the work
- We are constantly learning and growing in this work.

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### How Oppression Looks for LGBTQ People

#### **INSTITUTIONAL BIAS and DISCRIMINATION**

- Police Misconduct & Violence – profiling, harassment, failure to respond, violence
- Employment discrimination
- Lack of/unequal access to legal protections
  - NYS Fair Access to Family Court Bill
- Lack of access to DV Shelters
- Re-victimization by Service Providers
  - Having to educate the provider on LGTBQ sensitivity
  - Not knowing if services are open to LGTBQ people
    - Invisibility in agency settings
    - Facing biased or unwelcoming intake forms
  - Fear of coming out/being outed
    - Around sexual orientation/gender identity, HIV status, substance use, immigration status, or other factors
  - Experiencing ridicule and mistreatment
  - Fear of losing services/receiving substandard care
  - Unequal access to safe restroom facilities

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### How Oppression Looks for LGBTQ People

#### **INTERPERSONAL**

- Bias Attacks/Hate Violence
- Anti-LGTBQ Harassment/Discrimination
- Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)
- Pick-Up Crimes
- Sexual Violence
- Profiling
- Family rejection

#### **INTERNALIZED RESPONSE**

- Having negative beliefs about oneself or one's identity based on personal, group, cultural, or institutional messages received

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**Why It Matters: Rethinking Victim Assistance for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Victims of Hate Violence & Intimate Partner Violence**

Issued in March 2009 by the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs and the National Center on Victims of Crime, the Report Found:

- **Lack of LGBTQ Specific Outreach:** 69-92% of respondents lacked LGBTQ specific outreach materials or strategies
- **Lack of LGBTQ Training:** 68-93% of respondents stated a lack of training as their biggest challenge in serving LGBTQ survivors, with the highest need being training to work with trans identified survivors
- **Lack of LGBTQ Linkages:** 43% of sexual assault and IPV service providers, and 78% of prosecutors' offices reported they had no partnerships with an LGBTQ organization.

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**Intersectionality and LGBTQ People**

*"Within the lesbian community I am Black, and within the Black community I am a lesbian. Any attack against Black people is a lesbian and gay issue, because I and thousands of other Black women are part of the lesbian community. Any attack against lesbians and gays is a Black issue, because thousands of lesbians and gay men are Black. There is no hierarchy of oppression."*

~Audre Lorde

(Homophobia and Education New York: Council on Interracial Books for Children, 1983).

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**Consequences of Oppression**

- LGBTQH people do not get the care they want/need
- LGBTQH people may not feel comfortable sharing their full history
- Providers may misinterpret vagueness and gaps; (e.g. labeling people as substance abusers, "uncooperative," "non-compliant")
- Stereotypes about LGBTQH people may lead a provider to miss family related issues
- Providers may not offer appropriate safety planning
- LGBTQH people may not feel that the communication with their provider is adequate and may thus not follow provider suggestions

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## The Intersections of Violence: Impact on LGBTQ Survivors

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## The Intersections of Violence

- LGBTQ survivors, like so many survivors, of intimate partner violence experience high rates of **sexual violence** as part of the controlling and coercive behavior on the part of the abuser.
- LGBTQ survivors of intimate partner violence may also experience **hate violence** by their partner, and/or by society at large. Hate violence often includes components of sexual violence, including “corrective rape.”
- LGBTQ survivors also experience **sexual violence** on the street, from new dates, from strangers, during sex work.

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## Hate Violence

Generally, anti-LGBTQ hate violence is defined as any act that an offender commits against a person or a person's property because of the offender's bias towards or hatred for that person's actual or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity and expression. ~NCAVP

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## What We Know About Hate Violence

- They are attacks on the individual **and** the community that the individual is thought to represent.
- They are usually **more brutal** than other kinds of attacks: involving weapons that require excessive use of force like hammers, boots, bats...
- Most bias attacks involve so-called "**overkill**"- multiple injuries, such as repeated kicks, 20 stab wounds, or multiple fractures
- Offenders outnumber victims in most cases
- **Sends** the message that there can be no safety

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## Affects of Hate Violence

- Victims may believe that their sexual orientation puts them at a higher risk for all kinds of negative experiences.
- Victims of hate crimes based on sexual orientation have been found to suffer greater psychological distress than victims of non-bias-related crimes (Herek et al., 1998).

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## Sexual Violence

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### What we know...

- We know that survivors of sexual violence are often forced, coerced and/or manipulated to participate in unwanted sexual activity.
- This is also a reality for many survivors of domestic violence.

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### Sexual Violence and LGBTQ Communities

- According to research, LGBT people are at approximately the same risk as heterosexuals of being sexually assaulted by someone they know.
  - 52% of participants in a study of sexual coercion in gay/lesbian relationships reported at least one incident of sexual assault/coercion.
  - In this study, gay men reported 1.6 incidents per person on average; in comparison the 1.2 incidents per person reported by lesbians.

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### Sexual Violence and LGBTQ Communities

- LGBTQ people are often identified as outsiders, and sexual deviates, and are scapegoated as perpetrators of sexual violence.
- Homophobia and heterosexism in our culture puts LGBTQ people at greater risk for sexual violence.
- It is common for perpetrators to use sexual violence as a way to punish and humiliate someone for being LGBTQ.
  - A common example of this is when individuals who think they can "change" a woman's sexual orientation specifically target lesbians and bisexual women for sexual violence.

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### Myths about LGBTQ Communities and Sexual Violence

- LGBTQ people are sexually deviant
- LGBTQ people are pedophiles
- Gay men stereotyped as promiscuous
- Lesbians stereotyped as asexual
- LGBTQ relationships are inherently abusive and involve strange sexual practices
- Men can't be raped
- A woman can't be raped by another woman
- Lesbians can be 'converted'
- People are gay because of bad experiences with the 'opposite' sex

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### Intimate Partner Violence & LGBTQ Communities

The intersections

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## What we Know

NCAVP DV Report

- Research on Domestic/Intimate Partner Violence Research and literature on heterosexual domestic violence began in earnest in the 1970's and 1980's with the emergence of the battered women's movement.
- Until the late 1980's, there was virtually no research on domestic/intimate partner violence within the context of LGBTQ communities, and even now the majority of research on domestic/intimate partner violence has been conducted in a heteronormative context.
- Members of LGBTQ communities who are survivors of violence within intimate relationships are often either missing from this research entirely or they may be there, but invisible—bisexual and lesbian women assumed to be straight, only those identified as non-transgender female being studied, or subjects of the research being offered only binary options for gender identity (i.e. male or female) which do not accurately demonstrate the gender identity and expression of some survivors.

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## Unique Challenges for LGBTQ Survivors of Domestic/Intimate Partner Violence: Intersecting Identities

- NCAVP has found that intersecting identities expose survivors to intersecting and mutually reinforcing forms of abuse.
- Abuse within their intimate relationships is exacerbated and reinforced by larger societal bias, discrimination and even hate violence in a survivor's family, workplace, neighborhood and the world at large.
- This oppression is based on bias and stigma against or hatred for actual or perceived identity, including about gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, age, socio-economic status, immigration status, HIV status, language and other factors.

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## Unique Challenges for LGBTQ Survivors of Domestic/Intimate Partner Violence: Intersecting Identities

- Gender identity and expression are used as major indicators in screening for primary aggressors in heterosexual relationships. Studies of violence within heterosexual relationships have shown men to be more likely to be perpetrators than women.
- These gendered assumptions may be present, although not useful, in law enforcement's assessment of violence in LGBTQ relationships as well as service providers  
*(NCAVP 2009 DV Report)*

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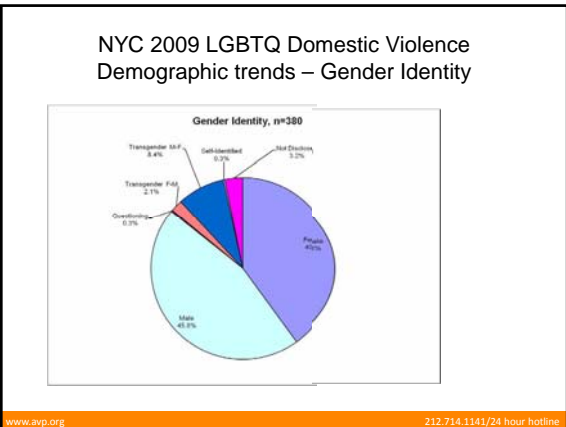
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### Examples of Power & Control Tactics in LGBTQ Relationships

**INTERNALIZED**

**Note:** LGBT survivors may experience increased shame, fear, and isolation as a result of homophobia and other forms of prejudice

- Telling partner they deserve the abuse
- Touching body parts partner doesn't want touched or calling body parts by names offensive to the partner
- Claiming "this is how *real* men/women/lesbians/gay men have sex"

**INTERPERSONAL**

- Using of homophobic/biphobic/transphobic slurs
- Hiding or throwing away hormones, clothes, etc
- Fetishizing or eroticizing the partner without their consent
- Controlling partner's gender expression
- Negating personal decisions about medical care, clothes, make-up, etc.
- Refusing to have safer sex

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**Examples of Power & Control Tactics  
in LGBTQ Relationships**

**INSTITUTIONAL**

- Denying access to medical treatment and/or hormones
- Threatening to "out" the partner if they report the abuse – to family, work, landlord, school, etc.
- Denying partner access to information about LGBT issues or forbidding them to discuss topics related to their sexual orientation or gender identity
- Threatening to reveal HIV/AIDS status of a partner
- Threatening to jeopardize custody of children
- Threatening to jeopardize immigration status

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**Reasons Why LGBTQ People Stay**

- Fear/terror
  - Harm or death – of self or other loved ones
  - No safety can be found
- Fear of being without a partner in a dangerous world
- Guilt/shame – about IPV and about identities
- Caring/concern for an LGBTQ partner in a dangerous world
- Economic limitations
- Lack of support
- Low self-esteem

–adapted from Northwest Network

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**Safety planning with LGBTQ  
Survivors of IPV**

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### Safety Planning

- Respect preferences around identity & disclosure
- Respect confidentiality
- Consider social location & context
  - Race, class, religion, education, ability, etc.
- Discuss the potential benefits and risks of disclosures and interactions with police, medical system, criminal justice system, service providers
- Include resilience/strengths
  - What has worked for you in the past?
  - What are the tools you use to cope/survive?
- Listen and learn about the survivor's life, environment, and safe options for them

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### Safety Planning

- Ask who knows about their relationship
  - Who are they out to?
    - Family, friends, work, school, children, etc.
- Plan for routinely running into their partner (if they have chosen to leave)
- Have they worked with other service providers in the past? What was that experience like?
- Are they comfortable with you disclosing their identity to another provider if you need to refer them out.

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### Action Steps and Helpful Tips to Incorporate an LGBTQ Analysis into our Anti-Oppression Work

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### Individual Action Steps

- Assess your own values/beliefs regarding sexual orientation & gender identity
- Identify and begin to address your internal biases
- Educate yourself - don't tokenize/objectify clients
- Acknowledge what you don't know
- Know your personal limits
- Seek peer/ally support & supervision

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### Interpersonal Action Steps

- Use inclusive language (such as "partner")
- Respect self-identification & self-determination
- Don't assume gender identity or sexual orientation
- Avoid gender binaries
- Be vigilant against stereotypes
- Allow space for clients to build trust with you
- If you make a mistake, do not over-apologize
- Confront discrimination & prejudice (jokes, comments)

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### Institutional Action Steps

- Create LGBTQ-inclusive forms, materials, procedures
- Create all-gender, non-segregated restroom options
- Post "safe space" symbols in organizational spaces
- Train ALL staff- especially security, reception, intake – in LGBTQ sensitivity and anti-oppression work
- Develop resources – create connections with LGBTQ service providers & programs
- Review employment policies procedures and hire staff reflective of community diversity (inclusive of LGBTQ identities)
- Create advisory boards inclusive of LGBTQ individuals to shape/inform institutional policies

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Thank You!

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