

## Where can I find more information?

For more information on LGBT issues; questions regarding OHIO SafeZone, SpeakOUT!, and campus organizations; or to check-out a book, magazine, or video from our Resource Library; visit the LGBT Center.



The OHIO SafeZone project is a voluntary, educational effort to support LGBT & Questioning students, faculty, and staff at Ohio University by attending a two hour workshop and by displaying a SafeZone card. If you are an LGBT supporter, it is time to act!

## SpeakOUT!

### Speaker's Bureau & Education Project

SpeakOUT! is a dynamic speaker's bureau and education project that has been assisting class instructors, student organizations, and resident assistants with their speaker/education needs for years. Formats include a panel presentation, Coming Out 101, or tailor-made presentations.

### Resource Library

Our Resource Library is a collection of books, magazines, and videos on a variety of topics including LGBT history, legislation, biographies, fiction, and religion in relation to LGBT concerns, as well as coming out resources. Check it out today!

## Campus Resources

### Bi the Way

A bisexual student support and social group.

### LGBT Center Library:

*Bi Any Other Name: Bisexual People Speak Out*  
by Loraine Hutchins, & Lani Kaahumanu

*Bisexuality and the Eroticism of Everyday Life*  
by Marjorie Garber

*Getting Bi: Voices of Bisexuals Around the World*  
by Robyn Ochs

*Visa Versa*  
by Marjorie Garber

### Online Resources

Bisexual.org: [www.bisexual.org](http://www.bisexual.org)

Bi All Means: [www.biallmeans.org](http://www.biallmeans.org)

Bi.org: [www.bi.org](http://www.bi.org)



OHIO  
UNIVERSITY

# BISEXUALITY BASICS

## Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Center

354 Baker Center  
Ohio University  
Athens, OH 45701

740.593.0239  
[www.ohio.edu/lgbt](http://www.ohio.edu/lgbt)

Perhaps no other group in the LGBT family is as misunderstood as bisexuals, and yet some research indicates that bisexuals may comprise a larger group than lesbians and gay men combined! There are many myths and misconceptions about bisexuality that float around our culture. However, some significant works are being published that demystify the bisexual community. If you are one of the many who is wondering about bisexuality, read on!

## What is Bisexuality?

Bisexuality is present in many different ways in our culture. Therefore, one of the first things to know about bisexuality is that there is not just one simple definition. Strictly speaking, bisexuality is the potential to be attracted to, form primary relationships with, and/or to have sex with people who are either male or female.

People who are bisexual may find that they are not equally attracted to people of different genders but may prefer one most of the time. In fact, someone who is bisexual may not have a relationship at all and may still be considered bisexual. Others may have relationships with both men and women and yet choose not to identify as bisexual.

Some people find the term “bisexual” to be exclusive, due to the fact that it represents a very binary interpretation of gender. Some find the terms “pansexual” or “omnisexual” to be more representative of their sexuality in order to include transgender people and gender fluid people outside of the gender binary.

*Edited from material from:*

*LGBT Student Services at Iowa State University, [lgbtss@iastate.edu](mailto:lgbtss@iastate.edu). [www.public.iastate.edu/~deanstdt\\_infollgbss\\_home.html](http://www.public.iastate.edu/~deanstdt_infollgbss_home.html)*

## Facts about Bisexuality

- Bisexuality is the potential to feel attracted to and to engage in sensual or sexual relationships with people of any gender.
- A bisexual person may not be equally attracted to people of different genders, and the degree of attraction may vary over time. Some bisexuals say they are attracted to people of different genders in different ways, and others say gender just isn't relevant to who they are interested in.
- Since people are generally socialized as heterosexuals, bisexuality can be a stage that many people experience as part of the process of acknowledging their homosexuality. Others come to identify as bisexual after a considerable period of identification as gay men or lesbians.
- In our culture, it is generally assumed that a person is either heterosexual (the default assumption) or homosexual (based on appearance or behavioral cues). Because bisexuality does not fit into either of these standard categories, it is often denied or ignored. When it is recognized, bisexuality is often viewed as being “part heterosexual and part homosexual” rather than being a unique identity.
- Bisexuals, like all people, have a wide variety of relationship styles. Contrary to common myth, a bisexual person does not need to be sexually involved with a man and a woman simultaneously. In fact, some people who identify as bisexual never engage in sexual activity with one gender. As is the case for heterosexuals and gay men and lesbians, attraction does not involve acting on every desire. Many bisexuals choose to be sexually active with only one partner and have long-term monogamous relationships.

## Is Bisexuality just a phase?

Because most people are socialized to be heterosexual in our society, bisexuality can be a stage that some people experience as they come out to themselves and accept that they are lesbians or gay men. However, others come to identify as bisexual after they have spent some time identifying as gay, lesbian, or heterosexual. Especially for college students, the process of coming out often happens at a time when one is struggling to define and accept many other facets of identity. Though some may see bisexuals as being “wishy-washy” about their sexuality, this is not true. The fact is that bisexuals, just like all people, need time to stabilize their sexual identity.

## What percentage of the US population is Bisexual?

This is difficult to determine, but consider the results of Alfred Kinsey's landmark research in the '40s and '50s. Even though Kinsey was careful not to assign sexual identities based on sexual behavior and mentions bisexuality only in passing, his research is still extremely important for us to consider when answering this question.

Kinsey noted that nearly no one's behavior is either exclusively heterosexual or homosexual and that most of our behavior falls somewhere in between the two extremes.

Kinsey's best estimate was that as many as 46% of men and 33% of women engaged in behavior that would be considered bisexual. You may have noticed that in recent years, more and more people identify as bisexual as mainstream society becomes more accepting of diversity.

*Edited from material from: LGBT Community Office, University of Delaware <http://www.udel.edu/allies/resources/bifacts.html>*