

U G B T

GLOBAL ACTION GUIDE

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thanks

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It is our hope that this guide will prepare you to combat the ignorance that submits to hate and oppression against people not for what they have done, but for who they are. All oppression based on identity (racial, gender, ethnic, sexual orientation, religion, etc.) must end. Many hands and minds went into the production of this guide. In addition to the Arcus Foundation support, I want to acknowledge the staff, board, interns and friends of the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office who made this guide possible. I want to acknowledge the work done by the UU-UNO LGBT Associate, Diana Sands, LGBT Fellow Geronimo Desumala, III, LGBT intern Margaret Wolff, UU-UNO Board President, Marilyn Mehr, Ph.D., there are many more who should be thanked; people who work at the UU-UNO and those who work with us.

Thanks to the support of the Arcus Foundation, this guide is now in your hands. The action is up to you. We add our thanks to you for taking this training, reading this guide and taking the action called for here and other action you may devise to ensure every person can lead a safe and dignified life.



Bruce F. Knotts

table of contents

I. Introduction	5
II. The Human Rights Framework Related to LGBT/SOGI	9
A. Decriminalization and Continuing Criminalization	9
B. Human Rights and Domestic Advocacy	11
C. Yogyakarta Principles	15
D. International Human Rights Law	20
III. Personal Stories and Case Studies	27
IV. What We Can Do	33
V. Glossary	35
A. The Language of LGBT/ SOGI Human Rights	35
B. Main Glossary	35
C. Terminology to Avoid	40
D. UN Terminology	42
VI. Additional Resources	45
A. Transgender and Gender Nonconformity Resources	45
B. Bisexual Resources	49
C. Recommended Additional Reading	49
D. Film and Other Media	53
E. Blogs	54
F. News Sites	55
G. Human Rights Organizations Working on LGBT and SOGI	55

If you have come to help me you are
wasting your time. But if you have come
because your liberation is bound up with
mine, then let us work together.

LILA WATSON

introduction

Welcome! This guide was created for you by the staff of the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office where we focus on promoting UU values of equality for all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity at the United Nations. This guide is intended to fulfill three purposes:

- Introduce you to LGBT/SOGI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/ Sexual Orientation Gender Identity) human rights as they are being discussed at the international level, and to help you understand the advocacy we do on your behalf at the United Nations.
- Provide resources you can use to make sure your community is well informed about LGBT/SOGI human rights at home and around the world.
- Empower you to create ways for your congregation to be active on issues of LGBT/SOGI human rights on an international level, and also to see how the human rights framework is relevant to local advocacy with which your congregation is involved.

Many UUs in the United States and Canada belong to a congregation that is a Welcoming Congregation. We love the Welcoming Congregation program, but the work of a Welcoming Congregation does not end when the program workshops are completed. Use this guide to continue to educate yourselves and others about LGBT/SOGI human rights and how to use the human rights framework in all your advocacy on issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity. The human rights landscape is constantly evolving with new issues that challenge our understanding. For that reason, we included resources in this action guide to help increase your knowledge of LGBT/SOGI human rights advocacy at the United Nations as well as how the inner workings of the United Nations can and have been used for LGBT/SOGI human rights advocacy. Thanks to the seven UU principles and many other existing UU social justice structures, UUs already have the conscience and awareness necessary to be proactive about protecting and uplifting human rights on a daily basis, not just reacting to violations when they occur.

This guide is intended to be both local and global in scope. Human rights are discussed and debated at the United Nations by representatives from almost every country in the world and the UU-UNO is often a part of those discussions. Human rights should also be discussed and debated

in UU congregations. Human rights are universal, interconnected, interrelated, and interdependent—everyone has them, whether they know it or not. Our goal is for everyone to know their human rights, and by knowing their human rights this guide will help users in their advocacy with the understanding that sexual orientation and gender identity are fully protected by international human rights law. Towards that end we have placed a special focus in this guide on the Yogyakarta Principles. The Yogyakarta Principles are an authoritative resource, which use international human rights law already in place to protect everyone regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity.

We intend for this guide to help build a foundation and provide resources for UUs to use their in local communities and in their advocacy work with the UU-UNO. It is important to recognize that local social justice issues are relevant to the work of the UU-UNO and UUs' country's representatives at the UN. The system works in reverse as well. In fact, UUs can use the human rights framework related to LGBT/SOGI human rights to support their local equality advocacy and organizing. In 2009 at the UN, the UU-UNO has witnessed some very exciting developments, such as the first ever joint statement read at the General Assembly affirming SOGI human rights and powerful affirmations of support for SOGI human rights by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navanetham Pillay. The best way to keep abreast of LGBT/SOGI human rights developments at the UN is to join the UU-UNO listserv or visit our LGBT human rights news webpage regularly, both of which can be found at www.uu-uno.org.

The principles of universality and non-discrimination admit no exception. The criminalization of different sexual orientation cannot be justified either as a matter of law or as a matter of morality.

NAVANETHAM PILLAY

It is important to note that LGBT/SOGI human rights advocacy has been happening at the UN since at least the 1970s. Today, the UU-UNO is breaking new ground by bringing the discussion to the faith-based community at the UN. While there are already some allies among the more than 400 faith-based NGOs at the UN, the UU-UNO is the only faith-based organization with a formal program dedicated to promoting and supporting LGBT/SOGI human rights. The UU-UNO also partners with allies across the NGO spectrum to move the LGBT/SOGI human rights conversation forward in the larger UN community. As representatives of a progressive, LGBT-affirming religious community, the UU-UNO has a unique opportunity to oppose religious justifications of LGBT/SOGI-based human rights abuses.

The most common debate that arises at the UN when the subject of LGBT/SOGI human rights is raised concerns the protection of human rights related to freedom of religion or belief. This debate is ongoing and not resolved. Human rights mechanisms at the UN have interpreted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to recognize that human rights are indivisible. In other words, the protection and enjoyment of one human right cannot interfere with the protection and enjoyment of another human right. For example, if a hospital operated by a religious organization denies care to individuals because their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, that would be a human rights violation. Another example that impacts many UUs relates to marriage equality. From a human rights perspective, the debate has nothing to do with religion. The religious opponents to marriage equality in the U.S. say that it is a violation of their religious freedom, when in fact their freedom

to believe what they want is protected by international human rights law. But when their freedom is used to deny the human right to freedom from discrimination, in addition to the human right to marry and found a family promised to every human being—that is a human rights violation. In both of these examples it is empowering to frame the issue with a human rights framework in order to understand how religious freedoms interact with other human rights and freedoms.

By no means is this the final word on how advocacy should be conducted. LGBT/SOGI human rights are a constantly evolving and intensely personal experience and so is the struggle for affirmation and inclusion at all levels of human civilization. As you look to the UU-UN for resources and instruction on these issues, we also look to you for your active participation, innovation, and feedback on how you have engaged your fellow UUs and community members to help promote a safe and dignified life for all people.

Contact your representatives at the United Nations:

United States

Mailing Address:
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United States Mission to the United Nations
140 East 45th Street
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Mailing Address:
Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations
One Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza
885 Second Avenue, 14th Floor
New York, NY 10017
USA

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Check out the online supplement to the LGBT Global Action Guide at www.uu-uno.org/lgbt/actionguide/

No human being should be subject to discrimination, violence, criminal sanctions, or abuse simply because of their perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. It is not easy for decades of prejudice and intolerance to disappear by the stroke of the legislator's pen, but change must be started. It is our task and our challenge to move beyond a debate on whether all human beings have rights – for such questions were long ago laid to rest by the Universal Declaration – and instead to secure the climate of implementation.

NAVENETHAM PILLAY

the human rights framework

related to LGBT and SOGI

A. Decriminalization and Continuing Criminalization

1. Decriminalization

One of the main human rights concerns the UU-UNO is addressing at the United Nations is criminalization of sexuality, sexual acts, gender identity, and gender expression. Discriminatory laws subject people in over 80 countries around the world to harassment, extortion, blackmail, incarceration, and even the possibility of capital punishment or extra-judicial murder with impunity. Sexual minorities bear the brunt of state-condoned violence, but anybody could be at risk of human rights violations based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. A few countries have officially decriminalized homosexuality in the last few years and others, like Mauritius, have made commitments at the United Nations to do so in the future. Unfortunately, in a wave of backlash against LGBT/SOGI human rights advocacy others, such as Burundi and Kuwait, have created new or extended existing laws to criminalize sexual orientation and gender identity even further. The UU-UNO is committed to being a catalyst at the UN and in the faith-based community to eliminate laws, which criminalize sexual orientation and gender identity around the world.

2. The Continuation of Criminalization of SOGI in the United States & Canada

In 2003 the remaining sodomy laws in the United States were ruled unconstitutional. Over 30 years earlier, Canada repealed its sodomy laws in 1969. These were emotional human rights victories for LGBT people and their supporters (many of whom were UUs), but it was not the end of the criminalization struggle. Same-sex couples as well as transgender and gender non-conforming people continue to have their human rights violated by legal institutions, and inequalities persist in the U.S. and Canada. In general, the dehumanization experienced by LGBT people whose full rights are not recognized by local laws—if not international laws—impacts people's ability to participate fully in society as equals with their fellow citizens. The following list gives a sample of the continuing criminalization of homosexuality and gender diversity in the United States and Canada:

- intimate partner violence – same-sex and trans partners arrested in domestic disturbances can be sent directly to criminal court instead of family court, fast-tracking them for jail or prison;
- police profiling of male-to-female trans people as sex workers means that trans women are sent to jail in disproportionate numbers;
- homeless youth kicked-out by their parents/guardians are disproportionately caught committing survival crimes including sex work, stealing, loitering, truancy and begging and are sent to jail;
- homeless same-sex couples are denied beds in homeless shelters, which can lead to loitering or vagrancy arrests;
- trans and gender non-conforming people are arrested in bathrooms by uninformed police with great frequency;
- LGBT people suffer disproportionate rates of unemployment and employment discrimination;
- LGBT people are sent to prison in disproportionate numbers for drug use, sales, and other non-violent drug-related crimes;
- LGBT people are stripped of parental rights to their children in disproportionate numbers;
- quality of life policing disproportionately targets LGBT youth of color who are criminalized for their presence in a gentrified neighborhoods;
- bi-national same-sex couples: non-citizens can be arrested and deported if marriage to or other partnership with their same-sex citizen-partner is not recognized in the U.S.; and
- students perceived as LGBT have been routinely harassed and even killed because of their perceived sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.

As we continue our decriminalization advocacy at home and for over 80 countries around the world, which still have sodomy laws, we must be sure to continue to fight the de facto ways in which homosexuality and gender identity or expression are criminalized in our own communities.

B. Human Rights and Domestic Advocacy

How the international human rights framework adds value to your domestic advocacy efforts:

International human rights standards can provide common measurements against which to compare domestic policies and expose shortcomings. One of the characteristics of almost all social justice movements is their fragmentation. There are often dozens of NGOs, small and large, working on human rights change from a variety of different perspectives. Such fragmentation often diminishes effectiveness and offers adversaries an entry point to exploit weaknesses. International standards provide a common plumb line that all can use to hold public officials and policymakers accountable.

They can provide a common language. “Human rights” refer to concepts that cut across race, ethnicity, and culture. They describe universal problems and promises and claims to justice that transcend any one nation but have the imprimatur of the global community. When problems are framed in human rights terms, all affected groups can identify with the issue and feel solidarity with one another, thus reducing competition for attention and remediation. The human rights frame is especially important to some immigrant populations who come from countries where international standards offer the most protection—sometimes the only protection—to individuals against human rights abuses.

They can provide a common vision and help build a “movement.” Social movements do not emerge by magic. They require intentional organizing and entail frequent frustration, not least regarding the agendas and priorities of putative allies. By offering common standards and language, as well as a common framework for understanding issues and potential solutions, human rights standards provide a vision around which disparate groups can rally, network, create coalitions, and eventually build movements for change.

They can expand the circle of allies and help domestic struggles “go global.” Human rights standards and language appeal to a wide variety of groups by the very fact that they emerge from the global community. A message framed in human rights terms often resonates in particular with potential allies across borders. And the impact of foreign governments raising concerns with U.S. authorities about American practices, as they did so frequently regarding Guantanamo Bay, for example, ought not to be underestimated.

They can underscore the seriousness of a violation. U.S. Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ) said of mistreatment of immigrants in U.S. detention facilities, “At some point this becomes more than a legal issue; it becomes a human rights issue.” Human rights violations carry a connotation in the United States (derived in part from the erroneous assumptions we

My administration has partnered with the LGBT community to advance a wide range of initiatives. At the international level, I have joined efforts at the United Nations to decriminalize homosexuality around the world. Here at home, I continue to support measures to bring the full spectrum of equal rights to LGBT Americans.

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

¹ This material “The Power of Justice: Applying International human rights standards to American domestic practices” by William F. Shulz was created by the Center for American Progress (www.americanprogress.org)

described earlier) that they apply only to the most brutal foreign regimes and not ourselves. This is particularly true of beatings, torture, slavery, and disappearances—the most profound insults to human dignity. For an abuse to be elevated to the level of a human rights violation, therefore, implies that it is very serious, deserving of international censure, and certainly not worthy of the United States. If the violence and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered children in schools, for example, is understood to be a violation not just of school rules or even U.S. laws but an infringement upon those children’s human rights, the issue suddenly takes on a far different cast. If not invoked so frequently that they lose their impact (and advocates must judge carefully when such rhetoric really provides a “value-added” dimension to a strategy), human rights standards and terminology can often be effective in making clear to the media and the public that a community or the United States as a whole really has a problem on its hands.

...human rights delineate the positive obligations a nation must fulfill in order for its residents to live fully human lives. Collectively, these liberties and obligations define “the common good” and implicate government to be proactive in the establishment and maintenance of that good.

They can put flesh on the concept of “the common good.” It is popular in progressive circles to refer to “the common good,” “social goods,” or “public goods.” But it is not always clear what that means or what should be included in those categories. Consultation with international human rights law and standards can shed some light on these terms. By definition, human rights describe the boundaries beyond which a nation may not go in its treatment of its residents and still claim the mantle of a “civilized society.” These are sometimes referred to as “negative liberties.” At the same time human rights delineate the positive obligations a nation must fulfill in order for its residents to live fully human lives. Collectively, these liberties and obligations define “the common good” and implicate government to be proactive in the establishment and maintenance of that good.

They can introduce new ways of thinking about old problems. To reorient our thinking to “public goods” derived from recognized human rights forces us to consider social problems in new ways. If, for example, efforts to provide a decent living environment in New Orleans or assure access to adequate health care for all are no longer understood to be matters of charity or choice but common public goods that human beings have a right to expect, then our thinking about the obligations of government changes. If human rights are not something to be earned but something that automatically accompany humanness—whether one is a citizen or an undocumented worker—all the debate about whether undocumented workers and their children should be denied access to schools or to anything beyond emergency health care melts away.

A society that wants to affirm the public good of avoiding cruel and inhuman treatment of prisoners will reconsider the use of long-term solitary confinement to which at least 25,000 prisoners are currently being subjected in U.S. super-maximum prisons and which has been shown to lead to severe forms of mental illness. Such reconceptualization of issues can be particularly effective at the local level. A few years ago, the Atlanta Transportation Board proposed to raise bus and commuter train fares and eliminate routes that were serving poorer communities. Activists posed their objections in terms of damage to rights, such as the right to work or access to health care, since jobs and hospitals would be harder for the

poor to reach. Startled by this reframing, the board backed down from its proposals.

They can provide new language that helps reframe an issue.

Sometimes merely the use of language derived from international human rights instruments can prompt new thinking. Northwestern University Law Professor Bernardine Dohrn has described how discourse informed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child—referring to the “child” rather than the “juvenile” or the “delinquent” in describing those under the age of 18 who are accused and convicted of criminal offenses, for example, or “children deprived of their liberty” rather than “incarcerated minors”—encourages authorities to understand the responsibility of the criminal justice system toward children in creative new terms.

They can discourage the “blame game” and encourage a focus on problem-solving. How international human rights instrumentalities determine whether violations exist or their degree of severity is sometimes different from traditional American standards and those different measurements provide a resource for encouraging review of current conditions. The United States, for example, is accustomed to judging the existence of racial discrimination by whether the accused party intended to discriminate, i.e., by whether discrimination was the purpose of the act or condition. But the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, or CERD, to which the United States is a states party, defines discrimination not only in terms of “purpose” but “effect.”

“In seeking to determine whether an action has an effect contrary to the Convention,” the CERD general recommendations say, “[the Committee on Racial Discrimination] will look to see whether that action has an unjustifiable disparate impact upon a group distinguished by race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin.” This means, for example, that the existence of a higher percentage of people of color in U.S. prisons proportionate to their representation in the total population is worthy of inquiry whether or not it results from intentional discrimination.

Similarly, after the City of San Francisco committed in 1998 to standards derived from the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, local officials began examining whether conditions existed that implicitly prevented women from accessing work—for instance, lack of available child care—even though those conditions were not the result of intentional discrimination. One of the advantages of approaching social justice issues through an international human rights lens is that it shifts the conversation from one seeking to blame people for intentional acts to one that asks, “Do we have a systemic problem here, and if so, what can we collectively do about it?”

They give voice to the victims of violations. One of the features of many international human rights instrumentalities is that they require sensitivity to the cultural contexts in which government authorities act—to the social, religious, and linguistic needs of people affected—and that, when people experience discrimination, mistreatment, or a failure by government to help meet basic human needs, they be consulted about the redress of their grievances. In this way a human rights lens empowers victims of violations

to be heard and to participate in the repair of conditions.

They expand accountability from government to other power structures. While governments are the focus of international human rights law and standards, they are not the only ones to whom these standards apply. Increasingly, human rights expectations are being extended to corporations and international financial institutions. John Ruggie, the U.N. Secretary General's Special Representative on Human Rights and Transnational Corporations, for example, has described in considerable detail the obligations corporations have to respect human rights and remedy their violation. These emerging norms provide activists additional ways to hold power structures other than governments to account for their performances.

They can provide alternative channels for review of cases beyond the U.S. justice or political systems. Despite a restraining order against him, Jessica Lenahan Gonzalez's husband abducted and killed their three children. When her domestic violence protection claims against Colorado police for failing to enforce the restraining order were denied by the U.S. Supreme Court, Gonzalez took her case to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, which heard it in October 2008 and where a decision is pending. In 2006, local activists conveyed their frustration to the U.N. Committee on Torture about a lack of action on torture by the Chicago Police. The committee subsequently noted its concerns about the impunity that exists within the Chicago Police Department and called on the United States to "promptly, thoroughly, and impartially" investigate the allegations. The U.S. Human Rights Network, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, and others have submitted "shadow reports" on U.S. compliance with CERD to the U.N. Committee on Racial Discrimination, which in turn has highlighted a host of areas of concern that require government attention. These are but three examples of ways in which international human rights mechanisms can be used to keep attention focused on a case and pressure focused on American authorities.

They can help protect against rollback. Once a public good has been established as a "right," it is far easier for that good to be sustained and far more difficult, though not impossible, for opponents to foster regression. It is almost inconceivable, for example, that the right not to be subjected to discrimination in the workplace could ever be formally vitiated (which is not to say of course that discrimination does not still occur). The right to same-sex marriage, on the other hand, has not yet been widely established and therefore, as Proposition 8 in California attests, is still vulnerable to rollback. Framing issues in terms of "rights" congruent with international standards, where that is appropriate and defensible, lends them a degree of protection when they are ultimately recognized as rights that they would not otherwise have.

C. Yogyakarta Principles

1. Introduction to the Yogyakarta Principles

(pronounced: joog'-jakarta)

In 2006, in response to well-documented patterns of abuse, a distinguished group of international human rights experts met in Yogyakarta, Indonesia to outline a set of international principles relating to sexual orientation and gender identity. The result was the Yogyakarta Principles: a universal guide to human rights which affirm binding international legal standards with which all UN Member States² must comply. They promise a different future where all people born free and equal in dignity and human rights can fulfill that precious birthright.

Human rights violations based on people's real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity represent a systemic concern everywhere in the world. These human rights violations include, but are not limited to:

- extra-judicial killings;
- torture and ill-treatment;
- sexual assault and rape;
- invasions of privacy;
- arbitrary detention;
- denial of employment and education opportunities;
- denial of immigration rights; and
- serious discrimination in relation to the enjoyment of other human rights.

As an issue that affects people everywhere in the world, the UN is the ideal place to engage the global community about concerns over SOGI-based human rights violations. Although human rights mechanisms of the UN have already affirmed the obligation of UN Member States to protect people from SOGI-based discrimination and violence, the international response has been fragmented and inconsistent. The need for a clear understanding of the entire system of international human rights law as it applies to issues of sexual orientation and gender identity is evident. The Yogyakarta Principles address this need.

The Yogyakarta Principles apply international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI). The Principles identify the obligation of all governments to recognize and protect SOGI human rights. Each principle is accompanied by detailed recommendations to governments explaining how it must be fulfilled.

² The term "States" should not be confused with the word "states" as it relates to the United States. In this context, "States" refers to one of the (as of publication) 192 member states of the United Nations.

Read the Yogyakarta Principles:
www.yogyakartaprinciples.org

The Yogyakarta Principles were developed and unanimously adopted by a distinguished group of international human rights experts, from diverse regions and backgrounds, including grassroots activists, NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations), judges, academics, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson, UN Special Rapporteurs, and members of UN treaty bodies. The group met in Yogyakarta, Indonesia (the origin of the name of the Yogyakarta Principles) in November 2006 in order to ensure that the work was grounded in the Global South. The Yogyakarta Principles were officially released March 2007, and continue to set the standard for SOGI human rights around the world.

If you would like to read the Yogyakarta Principles in their entirety, they are available online in all six official UN languages here: www.yogyakartaprinciples.org. The Yogyakarta Principles use plain language to inform readers about SOGI human rights. You are invited to include these Principles in your understanding of your rights as a human being and in your local grassroots efforts to protect all people from sexual orientation and gender identity-based discrimination and violence. Recently added resources include Jurisprudential Annotations to the Yogyakarta Principles and a recent article by Michael O’Flaherty and John Fisher, “Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and International Human Rights Law: Contextualizing the Yogyakarta Principles” (available in PDF).

2. Additional Reading on the Yogyakarta Principles

Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and International Human Rights Law: Contextualising the Yogyakarta Principles (PDF)

<http://www.yogyakartaprinciples.org/yogyakarta-article-human-rights-law-review.pdf>

Jurisprudential Annotations to the Yogyakarta Principles

<http://www.yogyakartaprinciples.org/yogyakarta-principles-jurisprudential-annotations.pdf>

3. UU Principles and the Yogyakarta Principles

Affirmed and promoted within UU congregations, our UU principles are the backbone of our religious community. All members of our community commit to upholding these principles in our lives and in our relationships in the world. Much like these principles, human rights are a framework, which recognize that all human beings are born free and in equal dignity and rights.

This section of our action guide seeks to link our UU Principles to the Yogyakarta Principles – to this interpretation of international human rights law for all people no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity. While governments have committed to upholding international human rights standards, this does not always happen for people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities.

1. Community or small group exercise: Split into small groups or discuss each of our own UU principles in relationship to some of the stories

included in this guide. Which of our own principles are being violated in the lives of the people in our stories? How have the stories you have heard struck your heart? How are people unable to live in fulfillment of our principles because of the oppressive cultures they live within? In what ways might you be able to relate to them in your own life? Also, consider best practices. Have you seen examples where human rights activism has succeeded in overcoming oppressive practices? Discuss the best ways to promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

2. Community or small group exercise: Split into small groups, one group for each of the UU principles. Use this guide below, where we have included Yogyakarta Principles underneath our UU Principles. Read the longer descriptions of these rights (in the Yogyakarta Principles document) and, in your small groups, reflect on the similarities and differences between the principles. Would you include the Yogyakarta principles under a different UU Principle as well?

UU Principle: The inherent worth and dignity of every person

- Yogyakarta Principle: (1) The right to the universal enjoyment of human rights.
- Yogyakarta Principle: (4) The right to life.
- Yogyakarta Principle: (9) The right to treatment with humanity while in detention.
- Yogyakarta Principle: (10) The right to freedom from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

UU Principle: Justice, equity and compassion in human relations

- Yogyakarta Principle: (2) The rights to equality and non-discrimination.
- Yogyakarta Principle: (3) The right to recognition before the law.
- Yogyakarta Principle: (5) The right to security of the person.
- Yogyakarta Principle: (7) The right to freedom from arbitrary deprivation of liberty.
- Yogyakarta Principle: (8) The right to a fair trial.

UU Principle: Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations

- Yogyakarta Principle: (20) The right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.
- Yogyakarta Principle: (21) The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

UU Principle: A free and responsible search for truth and meaning

- Yogyakarta Principle: (6) The right to privacy.

- Yogyakarta Principle: (16) The right to education.

UU Principle: The right of conscious and the use of democratic process within our congregations and in society at large

- Yogyakarta Principle: (19) The right to freedom of opinion and expression.

UU Principle: The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all

- Yogyakarta Principle: (12) The right to work.
- Yogyakarta Principle: (13) The right to social security and to other social protection measures.
- Yogyakarta Principle: (14) The right to an adequate standard of living.
- Yogyakarta Principle: (15) The right to adequate housing.
- Yogyakarta Principle: (25) The right to participate in public life.
- Yogyakarta Principle: (26) The right to participate in cultural life.

UU Principle: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

- Yogyakarta Principle: (1) The right to the universal enjoyment of human rights.
- Yogyakarta Principle: (27) The right to promote human rights.
- Yogyakarta Principle: (29) Accountability

A UU Yogyakarta Prayer

We invite groups to utilize this prayer, as it is appropriate to their needs.

We begin this prayer in the memory of our sisters and brothers who have had their human rights violated because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. We offer these moments to remember the dead and forgotten. We hold them in our hearts and lift up the beauty of their lives, lost to hatred, intolerance and discrimination.

Let us allow the memory of these lost sisters and brothers remind us that before death there is life; that their struggles continue to live on in hearts that still beat.

We remember the living: those who suffer in secrecy; those who are told their lifestyles are illegal; those who face discrimination, hatred and intolerance; and especially those who daily risk their lives by living their truth. May we stand in this moment in our strength and offer our solidarity with members of our human family.

Let each of us open our hearts and minds to these stories in the realities of others. May their lived experiences open our awareness and ability to participate in change.

Here in this community, we stand to offer the hope of a new world, as partners in the work to realize human rights for all people. We recognize these Yogyakarta Principles as an application of international human rights law for all people, regardless of their sexual orientation and gender identity.

In each of our hearts, we hold these principles and the lives of our sisters and brothers and pray for a different world where the respect for the inherent worth and dignity of every person is a reality.

Amen

D. International Human Rights Law

1. International Human Rights Treaties and Protocols, and their Ratification around the World

A. SIMPLE GUIDE TO THE TREATY BODIES BY INTERNATIONAL SERVICE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS³

A 'treaty', 'convention' or a 'covenant' is an international legal instrument. A treaty imposes legal obligations upon a State who is a party to that treaty. A State can become party to a treaty by ratifying it, which means that the State voluntarily decides to be bound by the provisions of the relevant treaty. When a State becomes party to a treaty, it is obligated under international law to uphold and implement the provisions of the relevant treaty. This implies that the domestic legislation of the State party must be in conformity with the provisions of the treaty and cannot contradict them in any way. In some cases, a State may declare a reservation to a particular article of a treaty that it has ratified. If the reservation to the relevant article is deemed admissible, then the State may no longer be considered to be bound to fulfill that particular provision. If the reservation is found to be contrary to the spirit of the relevant treaty, however, it will be deemed inadmissible and the State will be considered bound by that particular provision. Some of the international human rights treaties have been expanded upon by the creation of an optional protocol, which may increase protection in a particular area, or contain additional procedures that allow for further monitoring or receipt of individual communications. In order to be bound by an optional protocol, a State must ratify it separately in the same manner that it ratifies a treaty or a convention.

The treaty bodies were created in order to monitor and encourage States to uphold and implement their international obligations under the international human rights treaties. The treaty bodies are international committees of independent experts who monitor State parties' implementation of each of the seven core human rights treaties and their optional protocols. The implementation of each of the international treaties is monitored by its own committee.

The members of the treaty bodies are independent experts who are of recognized competence in the field of human rights, and 'of high moral standing', or 'of acknowledged impartiality', as stipulated by the relevant treaties. The most important point to note is that even though the members of the treaty bodies are elected by States, they are meant to serve in their personal capacity and to carry out their duties with absolute impartiality and objectivity. The treaty bodies are intended to serve as autonomous expert bodies, and not political or inter-governmental bodies such as the UN Human Rights Council or the UN Security Council. Equitable geographical distribution in addition, adequate representation of different legal systems and cultures is to be maintained in the selection

³ http://www.ishr.ch/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=108&Itemid=419&utm_source=ISHR+Publications+and+News&utm_campaign=1c005eb90e-Simple_Guide_updated4_15_2009&utm_medium=email

of members of all treaty bodies.

All treaty bodies can:

- Receive and consider reports submitted by State parties
- Issue concluding observations/recommendations to assist State parties in implementing their obligations
- Develop general comments/recommendations interpreting provisions of their respective treaties both substantively as well as procedurally

B. TREATY BODIES AND LGBT/SOGI HUMAN RIGHTS

The vast majority of treaties, covenants, and conventions cover human rights concerns which intersect with human rights concerns related to sexual orientation and gender identity or expression. Opponents of LGBT/SOGI human rights maintain a position that since the words “sexual orientation” and “gender identity” are not written in the treaty documents, these treaties don’t protect the LGBT community. However, legal authorities of treaty bodies and Special Procedures, including the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, have interpreted the words “sex,” “gender,” “and other groups” to include sexual orientation and gender identity or expression. However, even without special reference to a particular group of people in some human rights instruments, human rights are understood as universal, so no person could ever be told that a given human rights treaty, covenant, or convention does not protect their rights as human being.

Another common attack on LGBT/SOGI human rights takes the form of a “values” or religion-based defense. What this position does not take into account is the interrelated, interconnected, and indivisible nature of all human rights. The very important right to freedom of religion or belief is governed by these same principles and so, like all other human rights, cannot be used to justify the violation of other human rights and freedoms. Therefore, to deny one person their right to education because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity or expression based on a religious repudiation of a given sexual orientation, gender identity or expression is a human rights violation. But to be any given sexual orientation, gender identity or expression and realize one’s right to education does not violate anyone’s human rights to believe in whatever religious doctrine they choose. Those persons can go on believing and practicing their religion without interfering with another’s access to education. At the United Nations, we rely upon treaty bodies and other human rights instruments and procedures to uphold and protect these core human rights values for every human being.

C. RATIFICATION BY MEMBER STATES

United States:

The United States and UN Human Rights Treaties: http://wilpf.org/files/WILPF_US_HumanRightsTreaties.pdf (PDF) (Explains some political details.)

Note, two are missing:

1. The Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (CMW)
2. The Committee on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities (CRPD)

Canada:

These websites contain all Member States' signing and ratification records:

- <http://www.bayefsky.com/>
- <http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/Statusfrset?OpenFrameSet>

D. CESCR GENERAL COMMENT ON DISCRIMINATION⁴

The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) has adopted a General Comment on Non-Discrimination. Treaty bodies like the CESCR are mandated to monitor [Member] States' compliance with their international obligations under international treaties such as, in this case, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). General Comments provide the Committee's interpretation of the provisions of the ICESCR. A General Comment on Non-Discrimination is therefore extremely significant in reflecting the grounds on which discrimination is prohibited and the scope of States' obligations.

In December 2008, ARC International, IGLHRC [International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission], ILGA [International Lesbian and Gay Association] and CWGL [Center for Women's Global Leadership] put in a joint submission urging the Committee to include sexual orientation and gender identity in the General Comment, asking them to take note of the Yogyakarta Principles, and supporting the inclusion of a clause on multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

On 25 May, the Committee adopted its General Comment E/C.12/GC/20 on Non-Discrimination. Among other things, the General Comment:

(i) affirms that "other status" as recognized in article 2(2) of the Covenant includes sexual orientation. This is a simple, strong and clear affirmation of the legal principle that the non-discrimination provision of the International Covenant prohibits discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation. The General Comment continues "States parties should ensure that a person's sexual orientation is not a barrier to realising Covenant rights, for example, in accessing survivor's pension rights."

(ii) affirms that "gender identity" is also recognized as among the prohibited grounds of discrimination, and continues "for example, persons who are transgender, transsexual or intersex often face serious human rights violations, such as harassment in schools or in the work

⁴ The following was written by John Fisher, Co-Director of the Canadian LGBT rights organization ARC International.

place.” Historically, this is the first time ever that gender identity has been explicitly recognized by a treaty body in a General Comment as a prohibited ground of discrimination in international law.

(iii) references the definitions of “sexual orientation” and “gender identity” in the Yogyakarta Principles. This is the first explicit recognition of the Yogyakarta Principles by a treaty body.

(iv) affirms the principles of multiple and systemic discrimination, recognizing that our identities are complex and intersecting, and that we are entitled to protection from both direct and indirect discrimination in relation to all aspects of our identity.

The General Comment now sets the standard against which [Member] State actions will be measured in all their future reports to the Committee, strengthens the work of other international human rights mechanisms in this area, and provide a clear legal framework.

2. United Nations Special Rapporteurs

A. BACKGROUND

Special Rapporteur is a title given to a person working on behalf of the United Nations with a specific mandate from the UN Human Rights Council to investigate, monitor and recommend solutions for specific human rights concerns.

Special Rapporteurs are well-established human rights scholars and advocates appointed by the UN Secretary General to work for the United Nations without pay for a term of 1 or 3 years for country and thematic Rapporteurs, respectively, subject to renewal. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights provides logistical and personnel support for Special Rapporteurs. Although Special Rapporteurs work independent of any government, they may only investigate human rights abuses in countries to which they have been invited. This could pose an obstacle when it comes to contentious human rights topics such as religion and sexuality.

You may already be imagining the ways in which Special Rapporteurs could be used to document human rights abuses motivated by actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity or expression. Some of the work Special Rapporteurs are mandated to do includes assessing the human rights landscape in a country, investigating complaints from victims of human rights abuses, and, if the complaints are substantiated, sending an urgent letter of appeal to the responsible government. NGOs in the United Nations community use urgent appeal letters from Special Rapporteurs to help bring attention to immediate LGBT/SOGL human rights concerns. Currently there is no Special Rapporteur on sexual orientation and gender identity so, for example, if human rights defenders are being raped while in the custody of the state because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity and expression, the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment would be contacted to investigate and write an urgent appeal letter. As you can see on the website listed below, there are

Special Rapporteurs for a wide range of human rights issues and in the last couple of decades they have been active where the subject of their mandate intersects with LGBT/SOGI human rights concerns.

An updated list of Special Rapporteurs can be found here: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/chr/special/> under 'country mandates' and 'thematic mandates'.

B. SHADOW REPORTS

In the absence of a Special Rapporteur's mandate, NGOs can play a role in making sure LGBT/SOGI human rights concerns are addressed at the UN. An independent shadow report gives NGOs the opportunity to report human rights violations to a treaty body such as the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) or the UN Human Rights Council when a Member State's obligations to the treaty or convention are being reviewed. NGOs can critique or supplement human rights accountability information being provided to the committee by a government and members of the committee have the option of citing the shadow reports in their interventions and recommendations to the government under review.

To use an exciting recent development as an example, our friends at the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) have created a resource for NGOs working to promote and protect LGBT/SOGI human rights around the world called "Equal and Invisible: Crafting Inclusive Shadow Reports for CEDAW." This guide is designed to help NGOs create shadow reports for CEDAW which document human rights violations against women based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity and expression. Shadow reports can play a key role in holding governments accountable for their LGBT/SOGI human rights record at the UN.

A PDF version of "Equal and Invisible: Crafting Inclusive Shadow Reports for CEDAW" is available at: <http://www.iglhrc.org/cgi-bin/iowa/article/publications/reportsandpublications/945.html>

3. On ECOSOC Consultative Status and LGBT human rights NGOs

The main avenue through which non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as the UU-UNO engage with member states and treaty bodies at the United Nations is the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). To give an idea of the size of this community, 41 NGOs were granted consultative status by the council in 1946, by 1992 more than 700 NGOs had attained consultative status and today there are over 3,000 NGOs.

Consultative status is granted by an ECOSOC vote following a recommendation from the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs, which is comprised of 19 Member States. For decades this committee has been a formidable obstacle for LGBT human rights organizations seeking ECOSOC consultative status. To this day, the small number of LGBT human rights organizations which have obtained ECOSOC consultative status have done so with a 'no' recommendation from the ECOSOC Committee

This year was the first time a shadow report from an LGBT group was submitted from our country... When I was preparing the report, I was told that we would run into problems with the government and I would personally have issues. But I don't think those things are important because everything we do gets us a step closer to realizing our rights.

NIGYAR NAGHIYEVA,
ACTIVIST FROM GENDER
AND DEVELOPMENT
SOCIAL UNION,
AZERBAIJAN

on NGOs only to squeak by with a simple majority in the subsequent full ECOSOC vote. This process is sorely in need of reform—an issue the UN-UNO is engaged with as an NGO with ECOSOC consultative status.

4. UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY STATEMENT ON SOGI HUMAN RIGHTS

The statement:

<https://dsgduuno.pbworks.com/f/UN+SOGI+GA+statement.pdf>

A background and timeline:

https://dsgduuno.pbworks.com/f/UN+GA_statement_backgrounder_timeline.doc

Be who you are and say what you
feel, because those who mind
don't matter and those who matter
don't mind.

DR. SEUSS

personal stories & case studies

Case 1

A Meaford, Ontario transgender woman alleged she was humiliated when a female security guard escorted her out of a women's washroom at Casino Rama in Orillia, Ontario. Carol Ann Kotsopoulos, 38, who has been transitioning for 2.5 years, is taking action against Casino Rama over the alleged treatment she endured on March 27, 2008. Kotsopoulos has filed a complaint with the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario, Canada and is awaiting a mediation session with Casino Rama and an adjudicator. "I almost tried to commit suicide by taking pills. They humiliated me," Kotsopoulos said. According to Kotsopoulos, she and roommate Glenda Killby were in the women's washroom when a female security guard shouted at Kotsopoulos, who was sitting inside a closed stall. "She asked me, 'Are you a woman or a man?' " said Kotsopoulos. "I told her I'm a transgender woman, Do you want to look? I joked with her. Then she said, 'You cannot use this washroom, you'll have to use the unisex washroom.' She said she was called there due to a complaint by another patron. "There is no unisex washroom that I have ever seen there." "It was so unprofessional. I was in total shock," she said. Jennifer Ramsay of Human Rights Legal Support Centre, which represents Kotsopoulos, said transgender people who elect to undergo sex re-assignment surgery, are counseled to express their gender identity for years before undergoing surgery. "It's a long, arduous process and we know that a lot of people suffer discrimination during this process. There is a lot of harassment generally and for someone to be publicly humiliated by someone in authority is especially troubling," said Ramsay.⁵

Questions:

1. How would you define Carol Ann's gender identity? What is the difference between sex and gender, and how do those terms relate to this story?
2. Had there been a unisex bathroom at the casino, do you think Carol Ann should have used that one instead of the women's bathroom? Why or why not?

⁵ Original story: <http://www.torontosun.com/news/torontoandgta/2009/07/09/10071636-sun.html>

3. Do you think there is a more respectful way that the security guard could have addressed her concerns with Kotsopoulos? Do you think the security guard should have addressed the issue at all?

Case 2

Ellen and Joan

by Lesbian and Gay Social Work Group, McMaster University⁶

BACKGROUND

Two elderly women, Ellen and Joan, live in a large seniors' residence. They are more or less confined to wheel chairs and need a considerable amount of physical care. They have developed a close and affectionate attachment over several years. While they would almost certainly not define themselves as lesbians, they spend most of their time together, share everything and are physically affectionate—they hold hands, kiss each other goodnight, etc. Staff in the institution find their relationship unbearable and refer to their relationship disparagingly: "sick", "disgusting." Ellen and Joan's request to share a double room was refused. Labeling them "difficult," staff have sought to separate them as much as possible, for example by positioning their wheel chairs at different ends of the room. The women are distressed at this enforced separation, and are becoming increasingly withdrawn and uncooperative with staff.

Questions

1. How would you define what is happening to Ellen and Joan in this setting?
2. What issues would you have in mind in intervening on Ellen and Joan's behalf?
3. This scenario challenges the traditional view of the family. How might you begin to talk with Ellen and Joan about this situation?

Case 3

From 2002 through 2005, Antoine D., a bisexual youth, was subjected to serious acts of physical and mental abuse at the hands of California Youth Authority (CYA) staff and wards based on his sexual orientation. Although Antoine was never accused of or charged with a sex offense, CYA automatically placed him in a sex offender unit, simply because of his sexual orientation. Because Antoine was labeled a sex offender and was known to be bisexual, he was targeted for sexual assault. Wards regularly exposed themselves to him, threatened him on the way to the showers, and propositioned him for sex. When Antoine refused to comply with these sexual demands, he was physically attacked. On one occasion, a youth slashed Antoine in the face, resulting in a wound that required

⁶ Gay and Lesbian Social Work Group (May 1996). "Ellen and Joan". Case Study found in *Towards Anti-Heterosexist Social Work: Issues and Resources*. School of Social Work, University, Hamilton, Ontario, p. 17.

hundreds of stitches to close and will leave him permanently scarred. Staff exacerbated the problem, calling him homophobic names, making sexualized references toward him in front of the other wards, and failing to take any steps to protect him from abuse other than placing Antoine in isolation. On numerous occasions, CYA staff confined Antoine to his cell for up to 23 hours a day and excluded him from school and other group activities “for his own safety”. Because he was unable to attend school, he completed less than half of the credits required to earn a high school diploma.

For over two years Antoine did not tell anyone about what was happening. It wasn’t until he was slashed in the face that his attorney became aware of the extent of the abuse. Many of the youth in DJJ (Dept. of Juvenile Justice - the new name of CYA) custody are not aware of their rights or what to do to enforce them.⁷

Questions:

1. What could you do to help make youth in DJJ aware of their human rights and of how to enforce them?
2. Why do you think Antoine’s sexual orientation led to his placement in the sex offenders’ unit?
3. What are some attitudes, beliefs, or feelings that you think might contribute to homophobia? What are some actions you can take to decrease homophobic viewpoints?

Case 4

Suczhañay Case (pronounced suh-KOO-shen-y’eye)

The two brothers from Ecuador had attended a church party and stopped at a bar afterward. They may have been a bit tipsy as they walked home in the dead of night, arm-in-arm, leaning close to each other, a common tableau of men in Latino cultures, but one easily misinterpreted by the biased mind. Suddenly a car drew up. It was 3:30 a.m. Sunday, and the intersection of Bushwick Avenue and Kossuth Place in Bushwick, Brooklyn, a half-block from the brothers’ apartment, was nearly deserted — but not quite. Witnesses, the police said, heard some of what happened next. Three men came out of the car shouting at the brothers, Jose and Romel Suczhañay—something ugly, anti-gay and anti-Latino. Two of the men have since been charged, Hakim Scott, 25, and Kevin Phoenix, 28. Vulgarisms against Hispanics and gay men were heard by witnesses, the police said. One man approached Jose Suczhañay, 31, the owner of a real

⁷ Bridging the Gap between Rights and Reality for Youth Incarcerated in California, UC Davis Journal of Juvenile Law and Policy, Winter 2008 (12 U.C. Davis J. Juv. L. & Pol’y 263)

More information: http://74.125.47.132/custom?q=cache:vprvSXgYQeYJ:www.nclrights.org/site/DocServer/Youth_Rights_Article_Davis.pdf%3FdocID%3D3401+bisexual&cd=12&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us&client=google-coop-np

estate agency who has been in New York a decade, and broke a beer bottle over the back of his head. He went down hard. Romel Sucuzhañay, 38, who was visiting his brother from Ecuador, bounded over a parked car and ran as the man with the broken bottle came at him. A distance away, he looked back and saw a second assailant beating his prone brother with an aluminum baseball bat, striking him repeatedly on the head and body. "At that point Phoenix struck Jose several more times, full force, with crushing blows to his head," said Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly. The man with the broken bottle turned back and joined the beating and kicking. At least five calls were made to 911. Jose Sucuzhañay suffered skull fractures and extensive brain damage. He was on life support systems and in a coma for five days before dying. Once in custody, Mr. Scott "made a full confession." Mr. Phoenix made a claim of self-defense which the Police described as unsupported by any of the facts in the case. Phoenix can be seen online in a video taken at a bridge tollbooth 20 minutes after the attack laughing so hard that his body shook.⁸

Questions:

1. Why do you think Mr. Phoenix claimed self-defense as a reason for attacking the Sucuzhañay brothers?
2. How do you think witnesses could have intervened to stop the attackers other than calling 911?
3. How do race, ethnicity, nationality and perceived sexuality intersect in this case?

Case 5

Even as a young girl, Ann Gordon felt sure she was meant to be a boy. She played football every afternoon, clearing the snow off her yard in winter so she could practice the moves of her idol, NFL quarterback Roman Gabriel. One of her happiest moments as a teen was playing Joseph in a Christmas pageant and hearing the minister tell her: "Ann, you look handsome." Even with her success, however, Gordon felt empty, unbalanced, as if she were acting a part. In 2004, on a trip to the Alaskan coast, walking along what felt like the very edge of the Earth, she finally dared to ask herself what was missing. Then she found the courage to act on her answer. Never during her eight-month-long transition did she question whether God would want her to renounce her femininity. She was sure God had intended her to be male; her woman's body was meant to challenge her. And, perhaps, to push her church toward a fuller understanding of Christ's love. "Maybe this is my gift to the church. Maybe part of the reason I became pastor was this very moment," Phoenix said. In 2006, after 46 years of feeling like a soul trapped in the wrong body, the Rev. Ann Gordon became the Rev. Drew Phoenix. Phoenix, now 48, describes the transition from female to male as a homecoming. "For me, now it's very much about being embodied, my spirit is in a body now," Phoenix said in an interview. As a female, "my spirit was just, like, homeless." The 40-odd members of St. John's, who say they

⁸ Original story: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/26/nyregion/26arrest.html?scp=7&sq=Suczhanay&st=cse>

pride themselves in being the most accepting and inclusive Methodist church in Baltimore, said their minister's sex change was no big deal. They had some questions, which Phoenix answered in individual meetings, but no large theological hang-ups. Baltimore-Washington Bishop John Schol reappointed Phoenix, reasoning that the Methodist's Book of Discipline has no rule forbidding transgender pastors. At a meeting of the Baltimore-Washington Conference following the reappointment, several pastors questioned whether the ministry should be open to transgender people. Schol's decision to reappoint Phoenix had been challenged by several ministers in the conference who said the church needs to have a discussion about the theological implications of transgenderism.⁹

Questions:

1. Do you think the fact that Ann Gordon's love for football is part of the traditional gender binary of Western society?
2. How might Unitarian Universalists respond to having a transgender reverend?
3. What do you think is meant by the "theological implications of transgenderism" mentioned in the end of the story?

Case 6

Hamid, 35, developed a speech impediment from strain and grief after the murder, in April 2009 in Baghdad, of his partner of ten years. When Human Rights Watch spoke to him three weeks later, he still could only haltingly force out words. Two friends who had helped him flee Baghdad accompanied him. All had been in hiding through the intervening time. He said: "It was late one night in early April, and they came to take my partner at his parents' home. Four armed men barged into the house, masked and wearing black. They asked for him by name; they insulted him and took him in front of his parents. All that, I heard about later from his family. He was found in the neighborhood the day after. They had thrown his corpse in the garbage. His genitals were cut off and a piece of his throat was ripped out. Since then, I've been unable to speak properly. I feel as if my life is pointless now. I don't have friends other than those you see; for years it has just been my boyfriend and myself in that little bubble, by ourselves. I have no family now-I cannot go back to them. I have a death warrant on me. I feel the best thing to do is just to kill myself. In Iraq, murderers and thieves are respected more than gay people. Their measuring rod to judge people is who they have sex with. It is not by their conscience, it is not by their conduct or their values, it is who they have sex with. The cheapest thing in Iraq is a human being, a human life. It is cheaper than an animal, than a pair of used-up batteries you buy on the street. Especially people like us."¹⁰

⁹ More information: http://www.usatoday.com/news/religion/2007-10-18-transgender-methodist_N.htm and <http://articles.latimes.com/2007/sep/09/nation/na-transgender9>

¹⁰ Original story can be found in the Human Rights Watch report, August 16, 2009: "They Want Us Exterminated": <http://www.hrw.org/en/node/85049/section/2>

Questions:

1. What are some ways in which your congregation can be involved in ending SOGI human rights violations in Iraq?
2. How can your congregation be supportive of someone who “has no family” because of their sexual orientation, as in Hamid’s case?
3. Do you think that people in same-sex relationships outside of the United States always use the term “gay” to define their sexuality? How is this word culture-specific and why might some individuals choose not to use it?

Gays and lesbians in many parts of the world live under constant threat of arrest, violence, even torture. The persecution of gays and lesbians is a violation of human rights and an affront to human decency, and it must end. As Secretary of State, I will advance a comprehensive human rights agenda that includes the elimination of violence and discrimination against people based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

SECRETARY OF STATE
HILLARY RODHAM
CLINTON

what we can do

when we hear about violations of LGBT/SOGI human rights

Never doubt that a small, group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

MARGARET MEAD

- Contact the UU-UNO at lgbt@uu-uno.org to find out the inside scoop and to see if we are organizing any action. We can also help you develop an idea.
- If your congregation or District has a UU-UNO Envoy (or Envoy team), invite them to collaborate with you. You can contact envoycoordinator@uu-uno.org to find out who the Envoy is in your congregation or District.
- Find a local LGBT group to offer solidarity. Look for LGBT groups within a particular denomination that might have a special interest in the issue you are concerned about.
- Find a local diasporic group to engage in dialogue about a specific incident in their country of origin.
- Talk with your family, friends, and neighbors about these issues.
- Hold a teach-in at your congregation, or even better, an interfaith discussion anywhere on a specific LGBT human rights topic.
- Host a screening of *Dangerous Living*, a great 60-minute documentary which paints the global LGBT/SOGI human rights picture. Use the discussion period after the film to focus on a specific issue of concern.
- Collaborate with another committee (e.g. Social Action Committee) on a workshop about an LGBT/SOGI human rights topic
- Have a meeting with your government representatives. If it is an international issue, call the US State Department or Canadian Foreign Affairs country desk to let them know about the issue and that there are people who care about it.
- Write a letter to the editor to your local newspaper.
- Organize a letter-writing campaign such as a write-a-thon. Pick a place, time, and date and provide sample letter expressing concern about an LGBT/SOGI human rights issue. Participants can sign copies of the letter and send them in to you representatives at the United Nations.
- Blog about it.

- Document LGBT human rights abuses in any given country and share them with the UU-UNO to be submitted in a shadow report.
- Attend the UU-UNO Intergenerational Spring Seminar to learn more about the work of the UU-UNO on this and other human rights issues.
- Consult the Welcoming Congregation Handbook and/or the Welcoming Congregation leadership in your congregation to seek ideas for activities related to addressing the issue of concern to the congregation.
- Invite a speaker to come and talk about the issue of concern to your congregation or local community. UU-UNO staff are available for speaking engagements, but you can also look for local advocates, academics, and survivors of similar violations. Ask your speaker to address the issue from a human rights perspective, but if they cannot, then you can provide it (using this guide for help if you need it).
- Check the UU-UNO LGBT/SOGI human rights news website (www.uu-uno.org) for current topics to discuss on a regular basis with concerned members of your congregation.
- Donate \$50 and become a member of the UU-UNO. We need your support to continue representing UUs in this unique work promoting and defending LGBT/SOGI human rights at the United Nations.

glossary

The price of the democratic way of life is a growing appreciation of people's differences, not merely as tolerable, but as the essence of a rich and rewarding human experience.

JEROME NATHANSON

A. The Language of LGBT/ SOGI Human Rights

The language of LGBT/SOGI human rights is international in scope and therefore necessitates a level of non-specificity, which may seem unwieldy to people who are accustomed to using culturally-specific terms in their advocacy. In our advocacy we try to be as broad as possible in our descriptions of people who are victimized based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity unless a specific situation and documentation lends itself to specifics. We do this to be as inclusive and international as possible, and we also do not want to apply Western ideas about sexual and gender identity to people who do not experience abuse in Western contexts.

A Note About the Term "Gay":

While the word "gay" is frequently used as a synonym for homosexual men and women, it may not apply to or be embraced by non-heterosexual people outside of the mainstream (often white-dominated) LGBT movement in the United States. Some have suggested that the word "gay" has been forced upon non-Western cultures through imperialist ideology that is spread by globalization and the proliferation of the internet. Imposing a gay identity on those outside of the mainstream, American, LGBT movement may actually restrict individuals' sexual expression and opportunities to develop an organic sexual identity.

B. Main Glossary

The Glossary is provided to help you understand the terminology used in this guide and in other SOGI/LGBT human rights resources. The definitions assembled here are collected from diverse sources¹¹. We have chosen the ones we think are the most accurate and relevant to the LGBT/SOGI human rights work of the UU-UNO.

¹¹ Provided by the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), www.glaad.org

asexual means that a person has little or no romantic, emotional and/or sexual attraction toward other persons. Asexuals may also be described as nonsexual. Asexuality is different from celibacy, which is a choice not to engage in sexual behaviors with another person.

bisexual refers to a person who is attracted to both sexes within the traditional sex binary of male and female. Alternatively, “pansexual” refers to a person who eschews the traditional sex binary of male and female and is attracted to people regardless of their sex or gender identity.

“**corrective**” **rape** is a term used to describe cases in which a person is raped to “cure” or “correct” an actual or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity or expression.

decriminalization is used in reference to the abolition of criminal penalties in relation to sexual acts between people of the same sex and in relation to gender identity or expression. While decriminalized sexual acts are no longer crimes on the books, they may still be the subject of regulation or social stigmatization.

gay is a synonym for homosexual in English and some other languages. It is sometimes used to describe only males who are attracted primarily to other males.

gender is a socially constructed concept, or social classification, of certain sets of behaviors, character traits and roles as “feminine” or “masculine.” Though the specifics of what may constitute feminine/female and masculine/male behaviors can vary across cultures and societies, they uniformly impose a set of restrictions and rules on how each man or woman should behave in all areas of life.

gender expression refers to the external manifestation of one’s gender, usually expressed through “masculine,” “feminine” or gender variant dress, appearance, mannerisms, speech patterns, and behavior. Gender expression is not necessarily an indication of sexual orientation or gender identity.

gender identity refers to a person’s deeply felt sense of identification with a gender, usually in relation to the social construction of masculinity and femininity. A person’s gender identity may be male, female, or something other than or in between male and female. A person’s gender identity may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth. Since gender identity is internal, one’s gender identity is not necessarily visible to others. Gender identity is different from sexual orientation.

gender-based violence is violence directed against a person on the basis of gender or sex. Gender-based violence can include sexual violence, domestic violence, psychological violence, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, harmful traditional practices, and discriminatory practices based on gender or sex. The term originally described violence against women but is now widely understood to include violence targeting both women and men because of how they experience and express their gender.

gender non-conforming or gender variant describes individuals who do

not conform to prescribed social “norms” regarding “gender appropriate” conduct and presentation, whether or not they identify with the gender associated with their sex assigned at birth.

genderqueer is a catchall term for gender identities other than man and woman. People who identify as genderqueer may think of themselves as being both male and female, as being neither male nor female, or as falling completely outside the gender binary altogether. The terms “transgender” and “genderqueer” are not synonymous, but there is some overlap between people who identify as transgender and people who identify as genderqueer. Some genderqueers prefer to go by the conventional binary pronouns “he” or “she,” while others prefer gender-neutral pronouns such as “ze”, “sie”, and “hir” or singular “they” instead of her/his. Some genderqueer people prefer to have people alternate between he and she (and/or gender neutral pronouns) in reference to themselves, and some prefer to use only their name and not use pronouns at all.

heterosexism refers to the belief that heterosexuality is the only “normal” or legitimate expression of sexual desire, intimacy and family life. It is institutionalized in societies around the world through laws, practices and cultural traditions, and enforces a gender dichotomy that degrades femininity and fosters homophobia. As a result, non-heterosexual relationships as well as heterosexual non-procreative sexual practices are stigmatized and often criminalized. The term heteronormativity is similarly used to refer to the idea of heterosexuality as the norm. The closely related term heteropatriarchy refers to the intersection of heterosexuality and patriarchy as oppressive forces that reinforce each other.

heterosexual refers to a person who is primarily attracted to people of the opposite sex within the traditional sex binary of male and female.

homophobia refers to an irrational fear or a hatred of homosexuality and people who are (or are perceived to be) gay or homosexual. Similarly, biphobia refers to an irrational fear or a hatred of bisexuality and transphobia refers to an irrational fear or a hatred of transgender and gender variant people. All of these phobias manifest themselves in various forms, including but not limited to: harassment, prejudicial and negative treatment, physical, sexual, and emotional violence, and discrimination.

homosexual refers to a person who is primarily attracted to people of the same sex.

“honor” crimes refers to gender-based violence which is committed by a person’s male relatives and justified in the name of restoring family “honor.” In many societies around the world, family honor is defined in terms of a person’s behavior, i.e. adherence to traditional gender norms, particularly dictates on sexual behavior or gender expression. People can become targets of “honor” crimes for being victims of rape, violating traditional gender norms, requesting a divorce, being suspected of homosexual conduct, or being rumored to engage in premarital sex or adultery. “Honor” crimes are often committed with impunity as law enforcement refuse to get involved in private “family” business.

intersex refers to when a person’s biological anatomy varies from the

standards usually used to classify bodies as male or female. Intersex variations describe a large variety of conditions where a body varies from the male or female standard in areas such as chromosomes, hormonal makeup, and genitalia. Intersex variations may be noticeable at birth or develop later in life. In the past the word “hermaphrodite” has been used to describe intersex people, but is now considered very offensive.

lesbian refers to a female who is primarily attracted to other females.

LBT is an abbreviation for lesbian, bisexual and transgender often used in human rights discussions specifically pertaining to the rights of women. This umbrella term is generally meant to include lesbians, bisexual women, transwomen (male-to-female transgender persons) and transmen (female-to-male transgender persons). LBT people are marginalized in their societies on the basis of their sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression and therefore more vulnerable to human rights abuses.

LGBT is an acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender. Generally it is used in Western contexts and is understood to include people who do not necessarily self-identify with one of those four categories as well as those who do identify with them. Other inclusive terms for groups and identities associated together in this way are “sexual minorities” and “queer,” but there are some who do not feel represented by those terms.

NGO is an acronym for Non-Governmental Organization, a distinction used to identify organizations which do not represent governments in an inter-governmental organization (IGO) such as the United Nations or the Organization of American States (OAS).

outing is the act of publicly declaring (sometimes based on rumor and/or speculation) or revealing a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity without their consent. Outing or the threat thereof can have especially catastrophic consequences in places where some sexualities, gender identities, and practices are criminalized or badly stigmatized.

pansexual refers to a person who eschews the traditional sex binary of male and female and is attracted to people regardless of their sex or gender identity.

passing means that a trans person is seen by others as the gender with which they self-identify. For example, a transgender man who most people see as a non-trans man.

queer was once a negative term for a lesbian or gay man, “queer” has recently been reclaimed by some gay people as a self-affirming reference for anyone of a non-heterosexual orientation or gender identity. It is best not to use this word to refer to specific individuals without their consent.

sex is the classification of bodies as male or female within the traditional binary. At birth, infants are assigned a sex based on the socially constructed understanding of a certain combination of biological characteristics as representative of either male or female. These characteristics include: chromosomes, hormones, internal reproductive organs, and genitals.

sexual minorities refers to a group of people whose sexual identity, orientation, or practices differ from the majority of the surrounding society.

sexual orientation describes an individual's physical, romantic, emotional and/or spiritual attraction to another person, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, and heterosexual orientations. The term categorizes people according to the sex of the object of desire - that is, it describes whether a person is attracted primarily to people of the same sex, or to others.

sodomy laws are laws which criminalize sexual acts between people of the same sex. Although the word 'sodomy' technically only describes anal sex, sodomy laws are used to incarcerate, blackmail, threaten, and otherwise generally persecute people based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. Around 80 countries in the world criminalize sexual acts between people of the same sex at press time. The punishments for sodomy law convictions range from probation or fines to death.

SOGI is an acronym for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity or Expression, but is understood in the international human rights advocacy community to encompass sexuality, sexual rights, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression. It is the preferred term for international contexts because it does not refer to a culturally-specific category of people (such as 'gay'), but rather refers more generally to people's practice and expression. The term is also useful for including people whose human rights are violated based upon their 'actual or perceived' identity and/or sexual behavior, which is very common.

transgender or trans is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity, expression or behavior is different from that typically associated with their assigned sex at birth, including but not limited to transsexuals, travestis, transgenderists, cross-dressers, genderqueer, and gender non-conforming people. Transgender people may be heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, or pansexual. Transgender as it is used in the US has limited resonance in many other countries. The term does not convey the multiple and diverse expressions of gender identity or the intersecting expressions of sexual desire, intimacy and gender nonconformity. For example, Metis in Nepal, like Zanas in Pakistan and Travesti in Argentina, are effeminate men who have not surgically altered their bodies or transitioned to being women. Hijra in India may or may not be castrated and have sex with straight men but not gay men. In some places, the terms third gender or other gender are frequently preferred over "transgender."

transgender man refers to a person who identifies as male or masculine, but was assigned the female sex at birth and may or may not have been raised as female. Also known as "transman" or "FTM" (female-to-male).

transgender woman refers to a person who identifies as female or feminine, but was assigned the male sex at birth and may or may not have been raised as male. Also known as "transwoman" or "MTF" (male-to-female).

transition is the period during which a person begins to live as another

gender. There are infinite ways to transition. Things like binding, packing, tucking, electrolysis, hormones, surgery, or changing names, legal sex, and preferred gender pronoun are some of the possible steps of a gender transition. Trans people can make all, some or none of these changes, in any order, and for any amount of time.

two-spirit is a contemporary term that references multiple-gender traditions in many indigenous North American cultures. Some indigenous North American people who are queer identify as Two-Spirit. According to the cultural traditions of many Nations, being Two-Spirit carries both great respect and additional commitments and responsibilities to one's community.

Yogyakarta Principles are the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity. www.yogyakartaprinciples.org

Human diversity makes tolerance more than a virtue; it makes it a requirement for survival.

RENE DUBOS

C. Terminology to Avoid¹²

Offensive: "homosexual" (n. or adj.)

Preferred: "gay" (adj.); "gay man" or "lesbian" (n.)

Please use "lesbian" or "gay man" to describe people attracted to members of the same sex. Because of the clinical history of the word "homosexual," it has been adopted by anti-gay extremists to suggest that lesbians and gay men are somehow diseased or psychologically/emotionally disordered — notions discredited by both the American Psychological Association and the American Psychiatric Association in the 1970s.

Offensive: "homosexual relations/relationship," "homosexual couple," "homosexual sex," etc.

Preferred: "relationship" (or "sexual relationship"), "couple" (or, if necessary, "gay couple"), "sex," etc.

Identifying a same-sex couple as "a homosexual couple," characterizing their relationship as "a homosexual relationship," or identifying their intimacy as "homosexual sex" is extremely offensive and should be avoided.

As a rule, try to avoid labeling an activity, emotion or relationship "gay," "lesbian" or "bisexual" unless you would call the same activity, emotion or relationship "straight" if engaged in by someone of another sexual orientation.

Offensive: "sexual preference"

Preferred: "sexual orientation"

The term "sexual preference" is typically used to suggest that being lesbian, gay or bisexual is a choice and therefore can and should be "cured." Sexual

¹² Provided by the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), www.glaad.org

orientation is the accurate description of an individual's enduring physical, romantic, emotional and/or spiritual attraction to members of the same and/or opposite sex and is inclusive of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and heterosexual or straight men and women

Offensive: "gay lifestyle" or "homosexual lifestyle"

Preferred: "lesbian," "gay," "bisexual," "transgender"

There is no single lesbian, gay bisexual or transgender lifestyle. LGBT people are diverse in the ways they lead their lives.

Offensive: "special rights"

Preferred: "equal rights" or "equal protection"

Anti-gay extremists frequently characterize civil rights and equal protection of the law for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans as "special rights" in an attempt to energize opposition to family recognition, anti-discrimination protections and equal opportunity laws

Problematic: "transgenders," "a transgender"

Preferred: "transgender people," "a transgender person"

Transgender should be used as an adjective, not as a noun. Do not say, "Tony is a transgender," or "The parade included many transgenders." Instead say, "Tony is a transgender person," or "The parade included many transgender people."

Problematic: "transgendered"

Preferred: "transgender"

The word transgender never needs the extraneous "ed" at the end of the word. In fact, such a construction is grammatically incorrect. Only verbs can be transformed into participles by adding "-ed" to the end of the word, and transgender is an adjective, not a verb.

Problematic: "sex change," "pre-operative," "post-operative"

Preferred: "transition"

Referring to a sex change operation, or using terms such as pre- or post-operative, inaccurately suggests that one must have surgery in order to truly change one's sex.

Problematic: "hermaphrodite"

Preferred: "intersex person"

The word "hermaphrodite" is an outdated, stigmatizing and misleading word, usually used to sensationalize intersex people.

Defamatory: "deceptive," "fooling," "pretending," "posing," or "masquerading"

Gender identity is an integral part of a person's identity. Please do not characterize transgender people as "deceptive," as "fooling" other people, or as "pretending" to be, "posing" or "masquerading" as a man or a woman. Such descriptions are extremely insulting.

Defamatory: "she-male," "he-she," "it," "trannie," "tranny," "gender-bender"

These words only serve to dehumanize transgender people and should not be used.

D. UN Terminology

accreditation the process by which an NGO that fulfils certain criteria is granted the 'credentials' to attend or participate in UN meetings by an authorizing body.

capacity-building refers to the activity of enhancing the skills or competencies of a State to address a particular problem. This could be achieved through providing financial or technical assistance.

concluding observations the official observations and recommendations issued by a treaty body after consideration of a State report.

exhaustion of domestic remedies refers to pursuing all available national mechanisms, such as local courts, to address a case of violation of human rights.

follow-up monitoring through dialogue, reporting, question and answers, country visits or any other means, the extent to which a State party has implemented its obligations or any other recommendations that have been directed towards it.

general comment/recommendation the official interpretation issued by a treaty body on the scope of a right contained in the convention which it is monitoring, to a broader thematic issue, or even regarding a procedural matter, that can provide guidance on the implementation of the particular treaty.

Human Rights Council the official interpretation issued by a treaty body on the scope of a right contained in the convention which it is monitoring, to a broader thematic issue, or even regarding a procedural matter, that can provide guidance on the implementation of the particular treaty.

inquiry procedure procedure where a treaty body can investigate well-founded allegations of systematic violations of human rights by a State party.

international human rights obligations provisions of an international human rights treaty or international human rights treaties, which a State party is legally bound to respect, protect, and fulfill.

list of issues/questions a list of issues/questions is formulated by the treaty body on the basis of the State report and information from specialized agencies, NGOs, etc; it is transmitted to the State party in advance of the session at which the treaty body will consider the State report.

mandate refers to the collective objectives, powers and procedures that an individual or group is authorized to employ or undertake.

optional protocol a separate treaty linked to a principal treaty, which imposes additional legal obligations on States that ratify them, such as individual communications procedures.

parallel event event organized by one or more NGOs regarding a specific issue that is simultaneously held during plenary sessions of the treaty bodies or other relevant UN mechanisms such as the Human Rights Council.

periodicity refers to the timetable for submission of reports by State parties to the treaty body; set out in accordance with the terms of the treaty.

ratification a definitive, legal expression of consent that fully binds a State to the provisions of a treaty.

reservation a declaration made by a State party, which excludes or alters the legal effect of certain provisions of a treaty in their application to the State.

shadow report/NGO report/alternative report/parallel report additional information provided by national or regional NGOs relating to the implementation of a treaty in a particular country.

signature a preparatory step indicating a State's intention to be fully bound by a treaty at a later date.

special procedure/special rapporteur/mandate-holder an independent expert appointed by the Human Rights Council to examine, monitor and publicly report on human rights situations in specific countries or on specific human rights and issues through reports, interactive dialogues and country missions.

state party a state that has ratified or otherwise expressed its consent to be bound by an international treaty.

treaty body or committee a group of independent experts appointed to monitor implementation of an international human rights treaty.

treaty/convention/covenant an international legal instrument that imposes obligations on States that have ratified it.

universal periodic review a new mechanism of the Human Rights Council, which comprehensively reviews the implementation of all the human rights obligations of a given State. The first cycle of the UPR will begin in 2008.

additional resources

A. Transgender and Gender Nonconformity Resources

1. Being Good Transgender Allies

There are so many positive things you can do to be ally to trans people, even if you do not have much experience with trans communities. Start with being honest about how much you know, or don't know. It is refreshingly wonderful to hear someone say, "Actually, I don't know anything about trans people. I want to support you and respect you, so please forgive my ignorance. I'm going to start educating myself." Almost all of us started out ignorant of trans issues – even trans people! The important thing is to pro-actively learn more once you become aware.

EDUCATE YOURSELF AND TAKE ACTION!

- Look at books, websites, films.
- Talk to other non-trans people who know more than you do.
- Start an unlearning transphobia group with other non-trans friends.
- Help write a non-discrimination policy for your school or workplace that protects gender identity and expression.
- Invite some trans people to do an educational presentation for your group or organization.
- If you work in a school, faith-based organization, governmental agency, or a social justice, social services or healthcare organization, try to integrate trans-inclusive policies and services.
- Work to create bathrooms that are accessible for all genders (for example, single-stall gender-neutral bathrooms)
- Think critically about your own gender and your participation in the binary gender system.
- Reflect on how you can be a better ally to trans people.

SELF-IDENTIFICATION

We encourage you to use a transgender person's chosen name. Often

trans people cannot afford a legal name change, are not yet old enough to change their name legally, or simply do not want to change their name. A person who identifies as a given gender, should be referred to using the pronouns appropriate for that gender. They should be afforded the same respect for their chosen name as anyone else who lives by a name other than their birth name (celebrities, for example). By doing this you are saying, "I see you, I support you, I respect you." By not doing this, you transmit another message, "I don't understand you and I'm not trying to." Being referred to or treated as the wrong gender feels painful and disrespectful.

PREFERRED GENDER PRONOUNS (PGPs)

If it is not immediately clear to you what gender pronoun to use to refer to someone, we also encourage you to ask people for their pronoun preference. A simple and polite question, "What is your preferred gender pronoun?" is much appreciated when the alternative could be an embarrassing or hurtful mislabel. To offer your own PGP in return would be considerate. By asking someone in the right way, you can indirectly communicate: 'I want to be respectful of you and I don't want to make any assumptions. I see your gender ambiguity and/or fluid gender expression as a positive, fabulous, creative and honest (need I go on?) thing.'

If it is not possible to ask the person which pronoun they prefer, use the pronoun that is consistent with the person's gender presentation or gender expression according to your experience. Be open to being corrected. If you are sincerely respectful of self-identification, people will know. Apologize once and get it right the next time. Misidentifying or being unable to classify someone's gender does not have to be an awkward or shameful experience.

If you are telling others about a human rights violation against a transgender or gender non-conforming person, be sure to use gender pronouns that match the gender identification or gender expression of the victim. For example, "I am very concerned about an attack against a trans woman in Toronto last week in which she was brutally castrated by her attackers."

2. Videos

"Toilet Training"

<http://srlp.org/films/toilettraining>

By Sylvia Rivera Law Project

Peeing in Peace: A Resource Guide for Transgender Activists and Allies

<http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org/publications.html#bathrooms>

The guide provides cutting edge information to transgender people, activists, and allies about creating bathroom safety. Whether you want tips on how to address harassment, ideas for getting good bathroom policies passed, or an outline for doing a bathroom safety campaign, PiP is for you. The guide also contains sample letters, information on creating a

Don't forget to check out the online supplement of this guide with constant updates:
www.uu-uno.org/lgbt/actionguide/

Also, join our social networks on Facebook and Twitter: @uu_uno

grassroots organization, and a resource list.

Transgender Basics

<http://www.gaycenter.org/transgenderbasics>

Free online 20-minute video which gives an overview of transgender identities and concept models

100% Woman

<http://www.100percentwoman.com/>

Shot over two years, 100% Woman is an adrenaline-fueled ride-along on Michelle Dumaresq's controversial foray into international women's mountain biking competition.

Southern Comfort

<http://www.logoonline.com/video/southern-comfort/1585368/playlist.jhtml>

A documentary about Robert Eads, a transgender man dying of ovarian cancer. Highlighted are the often poor medical attention transgender people receive and the love expressed between family members faced with terminal illness.

No Dumb Questions

<http://www.logoonline.com/video/no-dumb-questions/1585361/playlist.jhtml>

Three young children, ages 6, 9, and 11, learn about and struggle to understand their uncle's gender transition into their aunt.

Georgia Girl

http://www.pbs.org/pov/georgiegirl/film_description.php

A transgender woman of Maori descent becomes a Member of the Parliament of New Zealand.

3. Curricula

Opening the Door to the Inclusion of Trans People: The Nine Keys to Making Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Organizations Fully Transgender-Inclusive

http://www.nctequality.org/Resources/opening_the_door.pdf

By National Gay and Lesbian Task Force & National Center for Transgender Equality

Teaching Transgender

http://www.nctequality.org/Resources/NCTE_Teaching_Transgender.pdf

By National Center for Transgender Equality

Gender Identity & Our Faith Communities: A Congregational Guide for Transgender Advocacy

<http://www.hrc.org/issues/religion/11618.htm>

By Human Rights Campaign

4. Organizations

The Gender Identity Project

<http://www.gaycenter.org/gip>

The New York City LGBT Community Center's program for transgender and gender non-conforming people and their communities offers a variety of resources and services.

New York Association for Gender Rights Advocacy

<http://www.nyagra.com/>

NYAGRA is involved in a number of advocacy projects at a legal level.

5. Action Ideas for Communities of Faith

- Hold transgender-themed worship services, such as celebrating the transgender experience or commemorating the Transgender Day of Remembrance.
- Include examples of transgender people in sermons and other public speaking occasions.
- Invite transgender people to speak or preach in worship; to serve as liturgist, musician/cantor or communion server; or to lead educational classes on any topic.
- Provide pastoral caregivers who are knowledgeable about transgender issues.
- Be prepared to address the theological issues as applicable to your faith tradition, including hospitality, diversity of creation, justice-making, etc.
- Include transgender people widely in your community, as members of councils, teachers of religious education, leaders in worship, etc.
- Ensure that your religious education of children include sessions on gender identity or expression.
- Ensure that there are gender-neutral bathrooms available in the building.
- Work to be sure that the policies of your local congregation/community and your denomination/wider religious community that apply to ordination of religious leaders and membership include transgender people.

B. Bisexual Resources

Bisexual Erasure on Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bisexual_erasure

Myths and Realities about Bisexuality

<http://www.hrc.org/issues/3306.htm>

Bisexual Resource Center

<http://www.biresource.org/>

BiNet USA

<http://www.binetusa.org/>

Ambisextrous in a Right-Handed World (Article about Bisexuality)

<http://www.examiner.com/x-17829-Bisexual-Examiner~y2009m7d30-Ambisextrous-in-a-RightHanded-World>

Legal Article

<http://www.kenjiyoshino.com/articles/epistemiccontract.pdf>

C. Recommended Additional Reading

Civil Rights within the Context of Human Rights

<https://dsgduuuno.pbworks.com/Civil-Rights-within-the-Context-of-Human-Rights>

An excerpt from “The Power of Justice: Applying international human rights standards to American domestic practices” by William F. Schulz, Senior Fellow, Cener for American Progress

Scant Justice in South African Murder Case; Courts Must Value Lesbian Lives!

<http://www.iglhrc.org/cgi-bin/iowa/article/pressroom/pressrelease/976.html>

This article expresses disappointment at the verdict from a court in Delmas, South Africa, convicting only one of three men on trial for the murder of South African lesbian Eudy Simelane. The body of 31-year old Simelane, a soccer player on South Africa’s national women’s team, was found in a field in KwaThema township outside Johannesburg in April 2008. She had been gang-raped and died from multiple stab wounds. IGLHRC joins many South African activists in believing that homophobia may have prevented the judge from fully acknowledging the role that disdain for the victim’s sexual orientation and gender expression played as motives for the crime.

September 2009

India: Government Defers Decision on 377 to Supreme Court

<http://www.iglhrc.org/cgi-bin/iowa/article/takeaction/resourcecenter/974.html>

The government of India decided on September 17, 2009 that it will not oppose the Delhi High Court verdict on Section 377 of the Penal Code, which decriminalizes homosexuality by “reading down” the section pertaining to same-sex relations between consenting adults in private. Indian activists are praising this decision as a symbol of tacit support for decriminalization in this landmark case. After reviewing the findings of the panel, the government has opted not to join the appeal and to let the Supreme Court determine the “correctness” of the High Court’s ruling.

Being Gay, Muslim and Indonesian

<http://thejakartaglobe.com/culture/being-gay-muslim-and-indonesian/331310>

This week a mainstream newspaper in Indonesia has a very even-handed story about how different gay folks in Indonesia reconcile their religious beliefs with their sexuality. Indonesia has the largest Muslim community of any country on earth but remains a secular society on paper. The Indonesian province of Aceh, known for devastation suffered after the 2005 tsunami, recently moved to increase the punishment for homosexual conduct to include cane lashings and/or expensive fines.

September 2009

Gays live — and die — in fear in Jamaica

<http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory?id=8123521>

A very recent article from the Associated Press profiling the fear and violence faced by queer Jamaicans.

July 2009

No Man’s Land

<http://www.out.com/detail.asp?page=1&id=25341>

The rights to asylum and to migrate are basic human rights, affirmed by all States in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Whether they come from Iran, Senegal, China, Honduras, Jamaica, or India, LGBT asylum-seekers and refugees have trouble finding acceptance in queer and also diasporic communities once they escape immediate (often mortal) danger in their home communities. As it happens, they also face very frustrating challenges receiving refugee or asylum status before they even arrive in their new home. This article sheds light on the experiences of Iranian LGBTs awaiting help from UN refugee agencies and struggling to adapt to their new queer-friendly resettlement cities.

June 2009

Laos tackles transgender taboos

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/8091764.stm>

Last year, a Lao government survey found the HIV rate among men who have sex with men in Vientiane was 5.6%. For Laos, that's very high - higher than the rate among other high-risk groups, including female sex workers. So now, after being largely ignored for so long, 'katheoys,' transgender women or effeminate men, are suddenly the focus of attention from the Lao government. They have emerged as the country's highest risk group for HIV/Aids - and are now the target of a special campaign. Unfortunately it sometimes takes a public health emergency for governments to acknowledge sexual orientation and gender identity minorities and to provide specialized health services for them. Hopefully in this case it will be an empowering experience for katheoys in Laos.

June 2009

Exporting Homophobia

<http://www.commondreams.org/view/2009/05/23-0>

Cary Alan Johnson, Executive Director of the International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC), has written an informative account of the faith-based push for increased state homophobia in Uganda. The effort has been led by Americans who are engaging in hysterical scare tactics to further criminalize sexual and gender diversity and incite violence and human rights violations based on real or presumed sexual orientation and gender identity. Johnson's frame of this situation as "exporting homophobia" is a very useful tool for SOGI human rights advocacy.

May 2009

Is My Marriage Gay?

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/12/opinion/12boylan.html?_r=1&th&emc=th

This is an Op-Ed piece from the New York Times in which a transgender woman describes the legal labyrinth through which gender is used to interpret marriage - and visa versa. Please take a moment to read this short article, you will be glad that you did.

May 2009

The distinction between Islam and fanaticism can't be made too often

http://ginx.com/-g9AkD#http://www.altmuslim.com/a/a/a/the_many_shapes_of_extremism

Author Naif Al-Mutawa describes a meaningful lens through which to see how the demonization of Islam has impacted students who live in Muslim societies. We must also learn from his exercise that there is no one religion or faith community that is the 'most' abusive of queer people's human rights. We could do the same activity with reports of faith-based SOGI human rights abuses and it would produce a similar result.

April 2009

Will Obama's State Department Respond to LGBT Persecution Abroad?

<http://www.rhrealitycheck.org/blog/2009/03/06/will-obamas-state-department-respond-lgbt-persecution-abroad>

Secretary Clinton assured an audience at the European Parliament that "human rights is and always will be one of the pillars of our foreign policy. In particular, persecution and discrimination against gays and lesbians is something we take very seriously." It's time to turn those words into actions. This year, in response to the State Department's findings, the Council for Global Equality has released a list focusing on the "Top Ten Opportunities for the U.S. to Respond" to LGBT-related human rights incidents that are highlighted in the report.

March 2009

Transsexual's Fight for Education Pits Egypt Law Against Islam

http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=email_en&refer=home&sid=aUUKU1wrMZFU

Twenty-one years ago, Sally Mursi, 43, went through a sex-change operation as she was about to enter her fourth year at al-Azhar's medical school, where classes are segregated by gender under Muslim traditions of piety. Al-Azhar officials expelled her, saying she couldn't go to the men's classes because she was impersonating a woman -- or to the women's classes because she was actually a man. Sally's case "is rare, but it speaks to which law rules in Egypt: the government's or the religious," said Mamdouh Nakhla, 44, a lawyer from the Kalema Center for Human Rights who is representing Mursi.

March 2009

Fighting to Free Those Found 'Guilty' of Homosexuality: An interview with Alice Nkom

<http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200902050009.html>

In 2003, Alice Nkom made a decision that has put her on a collision course with the police, prosecutors and judges of Cameroon. Nkom, who has been a barrister at the Cameroonian Bar for 40 years, was chatting with some young men whom she considers her own children. She realized they

were gay. Not only that, having gone after school to France to study and only ever living there as out gay men, they were oblivious to the extent of the persecution they faced for expressing their sexuality in Cameroon. Extortion and unfair prosecution of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people are common occurrences in the Francophone west African state. She founded the Association for the Defense of Homosexuals and has been acting as defense lawyer for LGBT people in Cameroon ever since.

February 2009

Kingdom in the Closet

<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/print/200705/gay-saudi-arabia>

In Saudi Arabia, sodomy is punishable by death. Though that penalty is seldom applied, just this February (2007) a man in the Mecca region was executed for having sex with a boy, among other crimes. This legal and public condemnation notwithstanding, the kingdom leaves considerable space for homosexual behavior. As long as gays and lesbians maintain a public front of obeisance to Wahhabist norms, they are left to do what they want in private.

May 2007

Ethiopian Gays are Organizing Themselves in Washington D.C.

<http://www.mask.org.za/article.php?cat=&id=44>

It all began when one Ethiopian gay man based in Canada saw the need to do some organizing so as to keep contact with his fellow Ethiopians (and Eritreans). The easiest way was to create a chat group on the net. After a few months, the group had grown to 80 members. After a year the group members numbered over 150. The members are not just on-line buddies, but they also meet in real life. As Ethiopia remains largely homophobic and discriminatory towards gay people, this is something that wouldn't have been easier to achieve in their homeland.

May 2005

D. Film and Other Media

Dangerous Living: Coming Out in the Developing World

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/lgbt-human-rights/dangerousliving/dangerous-living-dvd-house-party-kit/page.do?id=1106603>

Dangerous Living DVD House Party Kit from Amnesty International

For the Bible Tells Me So

<http://www.forthebibletellsmeso.org/indexc.htm>

A documentary about homosexuality and its conflict with religion, as well as various interpretations of what the Bible says about homosexuality.

A Jihad for Love

<http://www.ajihadforlove.com/>

A documentary about gay and lesbian Muslims living in the Muslim world.

I Exist

<http://www.arabfilm.com/item/307/>

A documentary featuring gay and lesbian Middle Easterners of diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds who live in the United States. The film addresses negative stereotypes revolving around both sexuality and their ethnicity.

None On Record

<http://www.noneonrecord.com/7/0/welcome.htm>

A sound documentary project that collects the stories of LGBT Africans from the African Continent and the Diaspora. Many of the stories address relationships with religion and religious beliefs.

Camp Out

<http://www.logoonline.com/video/camp-out/1591331/playlist.jhtml>

A documentary that follows gay Christian youth and the intersections of their faith and sexuality.

The Two Cubas

<http://www.logoonline.com/video/the-two-cubas/1611169/playlist.jhtml>

This documentary deconstructs many of the assumptions around what it means to be gay in Cuba.

Transgression

<http://www.logoonline.com/video/transgression/1585370/playlist.jhtml>

A transgender woman from Hong Kong discusses her experiences growing up before her transition.

E. Blogs

(The UU-UNO does not endorse any of these blogs, each one of them is imperfect. We only present them as options to be considered.)

- Queer Muslim Revolution: queermuslimrevolution.blogspot.com
- Sexuality and Religion: What's the Connection?: debrahaffner.blogspot.com
- Joe.My.God.: joemygod.blogspot.com
- Queers United: queersunited.blogspot.com
- Queerty: www.queerty.com

Follow the UU-UNO's
LGBT/SOGI blog:
[www.uu-uno.org/lgbt/
blog/](http://www.uu-uno.org/lgbt/blog/)

- Towerload: www.towleroad.com

F. News Sites

(The UU-UNO does not endorse any of these news sites, each one of them is imperfect. We only present them as options to be considered.)

- Behind the Mask (LGBT Africa): www.mask.org.za
- Pink News: www.pinknews.co.uk
- UN News Centre: www.un.org/news
- The Advocate News: www.advocate.com/news
- 365gay News: www.365gay.com
- On Top Magazine: www.ontopmag.com

G. Human Rights Organizations Working on LGBT and SOGI

- Human Rights Watch: www.hrw.org
- International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission: www.iglhrc.org
- ARC International (Canadian): www.arc-international.net
- Queer Peace International (Canadian): www.queerpeace.org
- Accord Alliance: www.accordalliance.org
- Immigration Equality: www.immigrationequality.org
- Gay & Lesbian Refugee Sponsorship Group at MCC (Canada): projects.tigweb.org/mccnewcomers
- Council for Global Equality: www.globalequality.org
- Global Rights: www.globalrights.org

The Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office remains the only faith-based organization with consultative status at the United Nations with a full-time GLBT advocacy program.

Stay up-to-date on the latest news:
www.uu-uno.org/lgbt/news/

About the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office

The Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office promotes the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all, as reflected in the United Nations Charter. Through targeted education, advocacy and outreach, we engage Unitarian Universalists in support of international cooperation and the work of the United Nations.

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