

## Backed into a Corner

By Rachael Arsenault

Writing queer books and being in the closet can be fraught.

While I've never been a target of scrutiny myself (I would need to sell far more work for that to happen), I've watched it unfold with other authors. Authors who wrote the stories they needed to tell, who explored love and identity through fiction, who questioned by proxy through their characters. Some readers turned to them with a critical eye. They combed through bios. Checked over interviews. Determined the author must be straight because nothing was stated otherwise.

I understand the intent. They want to read Own Voices books (books in which the author and the main character share the same marginalized identity), and they don't want people telling stories that aren't theirs to tell.

But I think, sometimes, people forget what "invisible minority" means. And I think they miss how important that invisibility can be.

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When I worked in food service in my early 20s, I made the split-second decision to come out to my coworkers as bi.

Not because I thought it was safe. Not because I thought I would find community. But because I was tired of hearing them throw around words like "fag" as a joke. If I just called them on it, I would be a buzzkill, and they would probably say it more. But coming out to them as bi meant they had to give pause.

"Oh, I didn't mean it like that."

(Then how did they mean it?)

"Shit, Rachael's working. I can't use my favorite word anymore."

They stopped using gay slurs at work. But I don't question that they continued using them elsewhere. Sometimes, I wondered what they called me when I wasn't there.

I did not come out at my next job.

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Not everybody has the luxury of being treated with acceptance, or even indifference, when they come out. Some face harassment. Some are forced out of their workplace, fired for bullshit reasons that cover up the reality of the situation. Some are attacked.

Anyone in the public eye faces additional risks. Even without

## Untitled

By Vantage



*Vantage is an explorer, photographer, artist, and writer.*

the jeopardy incurred by being part of a marginalized or oppressed community, fame means attention, and attention can mean obsession. Stalking. Entitlement.

Add in factors like queerness, and the risks become that much higher.

And that's just from strangers. If someone is publicly well-known and they come out, that means friends, family, and community members can easily learn this information as well. It might be fine to tell strangers across the globe that you're queer. But telling your family? That's a different story entirely.

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The people in my life mean well, but sometimes understanding bisexuality comes with a steep learning curve.

"Wait, she got married? But I thought she was bi? Isn't she just going to change her mind later?"

"I don't know if she's really bi, though. Yeah, she's dated women, but her only long-term relationships have been with men. I think she just likes the attention."

"He acts so gay, sometimes. But he has a wife! I don't get it."

It's a lot to explain, and re-explain, and re-explain. Every time you think you've gotten through to someone, they parrot another one of these long-held misconceptions—or, worse, dig

*Rachael, continued on page 7*

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This issue's theme is Out at Work—or Not. This was the prompt:

“Whether to disclose our bi+ identities, and—if yes—how best to do so, are questions we must address throughout our careers every time we change jobs, coworkers, or supervisors. Does your workplace have an LGBTQIA+ employee group or support LGBTQIA+ people in other ways? Has that changed recently? We invite you to share your decisions and experiences—both good and tough—about being out at work.”

We know there's value in visibility. We also know that, for the bi+ community in particular, we constantly face situations where we have to make a judgment call about that value, sometimes in a split second. This is particularly fraught in workplaces: there has never been a time when the choices we make around being out at work haven't been complicated and fraught with potential (and, in many parts of the world, increasing) risk. We also know that visibility can be tremendously rewarding.

In this issue, you'll hear from folks across generations and geography—not to mention a wide range of workplaces and career experiences!—about how their identities, and the extent to which they've shared them, have impacted then at work. We hope that, whatever your own experiences have been, you'll feel seen and understood by the voices and stories in this issue.

Our next issue theme is Body Image, and we'd love to hear from you! Keep in mind that we welcome submissions from folks of diverse gender identities and experiences—however you identify, we honor that you are the single person who can decide whether or not we're the right publication for you based on your experiences, history, and personal alignment.

We look forward to covering the Bi+ World Conference in our next issue! In the meantime, we wish you all a very Happy Bi+ Visibility Month. If you're in a position to support our work, your donation goes a long way towards keeping BWQ free and accessible to people in search of connection and community, particularly as the cultural and political climate in so many places becomes more hostile to the LGBTQIA+ community.

With gratitude,

*Robyn, Emily, Avery, Melissa, Lejla, Marya, Jo-Anne, Gail, and ALL of the amazing folks who share their creative work and/or volunteer for BWQ*

## Upcoming in Bi Women Quarterly

### Call for submissions:

### Winter 2027: Body Image

Bodies are complex, and our relationships with them can change over time. We want to hear your stories about navigating body image as a queer person. How has being bi+ shaped the way you see your body? Are there certain clothes, books, films, or people that have helped you feel more affirmed or changed your perspective? **Submit by November 1, 2026.**

### Spring 2027: Quotes We Live Bi

Mantras and phrases help us get through life, giving us motivation and inspiration to get through the toughest of times. Is there a quote or saying that is important to you? Tell us the quote, who it's by, and what impact it's had on your life. Consider using a quote or saying as a jumping off point for a short story, poem, or work of art. **Submit by February 1, 2027.**

We welcome essays, reviews, poetry, short fiction, news articles, and visual art. Our submission guidelines are on our website. Send your submissions and suggestions for future themes to [biwomeneditor@gmail.com](mailto:biwomeneditor@gmail.com). If you prefer, you may use a pseudonym.

Sheri reads BWQ at  
Seattle's 2026 PrideFest.

Send a picture of your-  
self reading BWQ to  
[biwomeneditor@gmail.com](mailto:biwomeneditor@gmail.com).



*Bi Women Quarterly* (ISSN 2834-5096) has been in continuous publication since 1983. It began as a project of the Boston Bisexual Women's Network (BBWN), a feminist, not-for-profit collective organization whose purpose is to bring women and nonbinary folks together for support and validation. Through the production of *Bi Women Quarterly* and related activities, we seek full acceptance for bisexuals and those with other nonbinary sexualities. More broadly, we work through an intersectional lens and seek the liberation of people of all genders, sexual orientations, abilities, nationalities, and racial and ethnic identities.

# AROUND THE WORLD: AUSTRALIA

## A Conversation Between Professor Christy Newman and Bree Mountain

**Christy Newman** (they/them) is a Professor at the Centre for Social Research in Health, and Deputy Dean Research for UNSW Arts, Design, and Architecture in Sydney, Australia.

They are a qualitative sociologist with more than two decades' experience contributing to collaborative research on social and cultural aspects of health, gender, and sexuality.

**Bree Mountain** (she/her) is a Social Worker, Sexologist, and Community Advocate, currently working as a counselor within a leading LGBTQ+ community health service in Australia.

***Bree:** I would love to start off by asking a little bit about your identity and the communities you align with. I'll preface this by sharing that I always like to recognize that when discussing labels, not everyone identifies with labels significantly or might use different labels depending on which context we're in. Are there some words that you would closely align with or some words that you might passionately embrace?*

**Christy:** This is something I've thought a fair amount about, both personally, but also through my work. And sometimes I think that maybe I went into my area of research partly because I have always found this interesting personally.

Right now, I mainly describe myself as queer and nonbinary. In both cases, that's partly because it's complicated to explain exactly what that means to me, so it works like a holding place for both gender and sexuality and their intersections for me. But bisexual as an idea has given me so much through my life, and I'm grateful for it.

I'm 50, so when I was growing up in Western Australia pre-internet, access to ideas about gender and sexuality came from family, school, church, and the small pieces of popular media access I could get. Music videos, magazines or books, I read everything. I think that at that point, I mean, certainly in the 80s, queerness, if you use that term for how people were kind of presenting themselves, was all through popular culture. In music videos, everyone was genderqueer. And at some point I came to understand that there were people who didn't identify as either straight or gay and the concept of bisexual was available to me.

That didn't feel like it was available to me as a safe option; however it did give me personal solace that there was another option outside of heterosexual and lesbian.

It [bisexual] was a very complicated feeling and word for me at many points in my life, because it meant constantly disappointing everybody. The straight people in my life kind



Christy Newman

of also just wanted me to be a lesbian. I looked like a lesbian and I mostly was dating women. Then the lesbians were disappointed in me because I think some people genuinely felt I was betraying them by ever being attracted to, or having relationships with cis men.

I know what it's like to feel not legitimate enough in queer or in straight spaces. I credit the 2019 Sydney Mardi Gras parade [which included the first bi+ float in over a decade], as a renaissance in my life. It was a return to a sense of possibility in connecting to community in ways that I didn't even realize I had been grieving not having in my life. That there was a new generation [that] just didn't have the same sense of shame or outsidership with which I had historically really grappled was so inspiring.

The other realization for me at that point was understanding that you could be bi+, you could be committed to that kind of language and also be trans-inclusive.

***Bree:** I agree, and we are expanding language beyond the binary. However, I think there is still room for growth in this area, especially within our community when it comes to supporting trans and gender diverse people.*

**Christy:** I agree. Gender, gender-affirming care, trans rights, and trans activism are what I'm most passionate about now.

So, for me, queer is political, it is a particular way of thinking

about the world, a questioning of norms and a questioning of assumptions about how to live and conduct yourself in order to be a good person. Bisexual to me indicates the potential for me to have attraction to people of more than one gender.

**Bree:** *Thanks for sharing so much, particularly around the different terms and their meaning for you. Even though we have so many words now, being asked how you identify can be very stressful; it is a question of “needing to fit within the boxes that are created.” I think many of us in the bisexual+ community have been or are on that journey of trying to find different words, and seeing what fits nicely.*

*As a counselor, I did some recent training with an excellent counselor named Ari Heart, and one of the things that really stood out for me was to leave the label outside of the therapy room so we’re not talking about terminology and labels. If that’s something we want to get to, we can do that later on in the process, but we want to explore what feels right to you, what you want, what actions would feel authentic, what things you want to engage with. Often the label can come later, after these ideas and feelings have been explored.*

*And, like you say, there is such a push towards queer identity as it rejects the idea of needing to fit into a specific box. We see much online discourse between bisexual, pansexual, omnisexual—queer is such a lovely way of just saying “I don’t need to find the exact word you know, I am this expansive political being.”*

*You’ve recently led the largest, bi+ specific, sexual health study: the Bi+ Sexual Health and HIV (BiSHH) Study.*

*It’s so good to not just be the little addition to gay and/or lesbian, where all of the questions are geared towards those cohorts, and we’re lumped in.*

*But in discussing this research, I’m interested to learn how you find people to engage in bisexual+ specific studies, recognizing that many bisexual+ and multi-gender attracted people may not openly identify or have access to the more typical areas in which we seek LGBTQ+ research participants. They might not have any connection to the LGBTQ+ community, so how do we find them?*



**Christy:** As a sociologist who works in gender, sexuality, and health, this tension between identity and practice is never really resolved. It is very complicated, particularly in areas shaped by stigma.

Historically, particularly within the HIV sector, research very much was focused on “gay men.” So you had these two ideas in there, gay and man. Both of which we think about differently now. So what

has been fascinating is that in the last few years we’ve started properly looking at how to bring our research tools and systems up to speed with our contemporary understandings of gender and sexuality. What do we mean by man and who is included in that? What about bi men, what do they need to feel included in our ways of asking about their sex lives? And what about the non-binary people who also participate in gay men’s sexual culture, who are on Grindr and so on?

So building on the work already happening, to collaborate with a group of amazing bi+ researchers and advocates and allies, it’s a bit of a life’s work outcome for me. And we did this from the ground up. It was built entirely from community knowledge and facing directly into those tough questions.

In this study, we decided to focus explicitly on people who identify with some part of the bi+ umbrella. And yet, out of more than 2,000 completed surveys, we found that only half of respondents were out to their families, and only 15% were out at work. So even though people had to opt into a bi+ study, a significant number are still very careful about who they tell in their lives. This reminds us that a lack of safety is not imagined. For many people, it is still a genuine, legitimate concern.

**Bree:** *I’m really glad you named that. That’s another area I’m quite passionate about within my therapeutic work with the broader LGBTQ+ community. I think there’s often this narrative that when we come out, we’re going to declare it to the world, that we will post it on our socials and it’s going to be this amazing, proud, courageous moment. And the reality is that that can be dangerous. That it can have safety risks.*

*And there is risk of loss of connection, love and support that can come with it. It’s permission giving with some of my clients to say: you don’t owe coming out to anyone and you get to decide within all the many different facets of your life. It is okay if you decide, that’s not someone you want to bring in and there shouldn’t be shame attached to that. I think it’s a dialogue and a conversation we need to be continually having, and a message that so many community members would be very thankful to be hearing.*

**Christy:** I have a huge amount of compassion for that experience. It’s super tough. And if you don’t feel like you have it in you, if you don’t have the resources or it’s not safe, we need to provide grace to those people and see how we can support them and continue to be there.

**Bree:** *You’re so right. When we’re providing support to these community members, whether professionally or socially, if there are parts of our life where we can’t express that part of ourselves, often we’ll look at the spaces where we do feel that comfort. How do we amplify them? Where can we bring joy and facilitate connection when there are parts of our lives where we might not be able to experience them.*

*Would you be open to sharing a bit about your personal journey with your gender identity?*

**Christy:** Nonbinary is the place I feel most comfortable today. I had a classic COVID lockdown realization, equal parts unbelievably exciting and absolutely mortifying. I had been around trans friends and worked in the field, but was clueless about it in myself until I was forced to stay at home for an extended period and sit with myself.

Gender is such a public version of something that is deeply private. Coming out at work in my 40s while in a leadership role was really challenging. There are very few nonbinary or trans people in senior leadership roles in higher education. But I was resourced with experience, employment security, and a very strong network, and I felt that I had a responsibility to approach that new coming out process with courage, so it would hopefully be easier for others in the future.

Coming to understand and express my gender differently felt like it was supported by my bisexuality. I wasn't locked into a sense of "I am this gender and attracted to that gender." And I have found that my bisexuality provides others with that room, too. If I'm attracted to you, I'm attracted to you; we can both change, and there is space for all possibilities.

I feel very strong in my trans identity now and have been fortunate to be able to access gender-affirming care, and to have medical leave periods supported in my workplace. Given how much these opportunities are now being threatened for others, I have become most deeply passionate about advocating for the rights of trans people, and for access to gender-affirming care for all those who desire it.

**Bree:** *Thank you so much for sharing so much of your journey today. In discussing these important topics, what can the cisgender bi+ community do better to support, welcome, and advocate for trans and gender-diverse people at this time?*

**Christy:** Bisexual people and trans people have always had the embodied knowledge that social norms around gender and sexuality constrain us in harmful ways.

Seeing the liberation of trans people as enmeshed with liberation for bi+ people is essential, I think.

There is no separation because wherever we see attacks happening that relate to gender, they are also going to be happening in ways that will impact the lives of bi+ people. Partly because the frameworks that are used to pathologize or stigmatize trans people create a kind of monstrous representations of trans lives, are entirely made-up constructs which are intended to control or even eliminate the natural diversity that exists in every society.

Bi+ people know all too well, if they've had the opportunity to reflect on the times their sexuality has been misunderstood, that it can feel terribly unsettling to be questioned about whether we really know our own needs: "Are you really sure?", or, "Why can't you just make things easier for yourself, and for us?" It's the same social impulse that is happening now with trans people. It's the same social impulse to control difference.

And it's also very clearly a political matter right now. Trans people are being used as scapegoats because their presence, their existence, their joy demonstrates you can live outside of social norms, which is a threat to those who want communities to be compliant.

What I love at the heart of bisexuality is that it reminds us that something as profoundly important and almost universal as human attraction can exceed all efforts to make it predictable and easy to categorize. Both trans and bi+ people remind us of the expansiveness of human nature, and hold space for all of the possibilities in us. And so I believe we should explicitly welcome trans people into every bi+ space. And sometimes this needs to be stated explicitly, right? Because trans people, and for good reason, have to read for safety.

And bi+ women in particular have an important role to play in this, because trans women experience the most direct and harmful forms of violence, prejudice, and discrimination. Cis women can really help to create that safety.

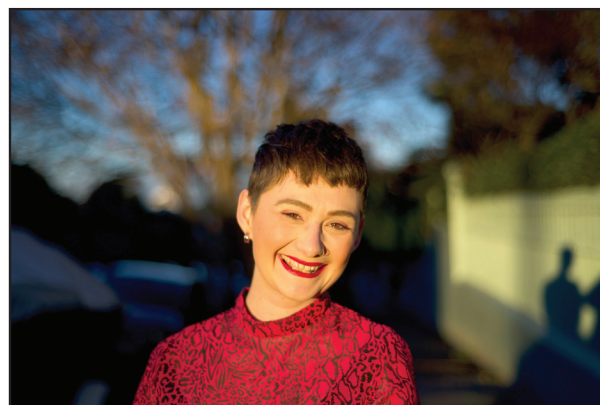
One of the things that has been most satisfying to me through the BiSHH survey process is being part of creating a survey from the ground up where we thought really carefully about every single question. Are we being inclusive across gender? Are we thinking carefully about sexuality? Are we making room for different relationship types? How are we going to make sure everybody feels like they can answer these questions?

Having bi+ people of all genders, including trans people and particularly trans women, tell me that they've never experienced answering a survey that felt like it was written for them before was so satisfying.

**Bree:** *You all should be so proud. I can't wait to see the waves this research makes both in Australia and internationally.*

*Thank you so much for speaking with me, for all you do for community, and I can't wait to see what you do next!*

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Bree Mountain

# Out at Work: My Bi-Pan Pastor Life

By Rev. Dawn Bennett

The only way I can really write this article, in full transparency, is with a little snark. Yes, you heard that: snark. Pastors have snark—or maybe, maybe it's just this pastor. After all, I live the bi-pan pastor life out loud, smack dab in the middle of the Bible Belt. And sometimes, that “belt” gets mighty tight. To be clear, lots of people suck. Heck, even the national news outlets recently claimed Tennessee to be the worst place in the U.S. to live right now. To that I say, whoa there, that's not entirely true. We may have a homophobic governor, and we may be living under oppressive political laws, but don't be fooled: we have a very vibrant LGBTQ+ community here. I live in Nashville, one of only two blue dots in the state. Yet even in rural areas, many LGBTQ+ communities have popped up. I guess you could say we are a small but mighty bunch.

Yes, I'm a pastor, ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament in the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America). I'm thankful to be serving in this season of public life because ordination wasn't always possible. In 2009, the national denomination experienced a split (similar to the United Methodist Church split in 2024), offering safe passageway out for more conservative congregations who decided to uphold their narrow-minded view of scripture. Nonetheless, we are still the largest Lutheran denomination in the United States. I am fortunate to be able to serve as an out bi-pan woman. I have the support of my clergy colleagues, my family, and a large contingent of people who have followed my public ministry for years.

And even with all this support—there is still hell to pay. I say that tongue in cheek because I certainly won't be making a one-way trip to that place anytime soon [besides, it's empty anyway]. I've had to grow a thick skin over the last several years.



I'm no longer made of *only* “sugar, and spice, and everything nice.” I have devoured a heaping serving of “snakes, and snails, and puppy-dog tails.” Suffice it to say, I'm a well-rounded, strong, empowered, confident pastor. I am very clear about what my call is in this world: to create space for hard conversations, and to make space for others who don't have the privilege to speak up

and have their voices heard. As a white woman, I know I walk in privilege. As an out, gay woman (at work and everywhere else!), I know I walk in privilege. I walk in privilege because of my skin tone. But I also walk in privilege because I cannot be fired on the sole basis of my sexual orientation. My gender is protected from discrimination only because I am cisgender. Let me be clear on that. Tennessee is a leader among the worst anti-LGBTQ+ laws in the nation and for years we earned the name “state of hate.”

I have not experienced the degree of spiritual abuse that many people in this part of the country have experienced. Have I been spat on? Yes. Have I been publicly attacked and defamed? Yes. Still, I think I'm too much of a brat to accept the negative nasties that have been said about me to my face and in print. I know my value and I know my worth. It's not up for grabs. And it's not up for sale. I too have earned my hashtag: #HolyHellion.

One of the most wonderful and life-giving aspects of being out at work is that it affords me the opportunity to help people, at a core level. I spend my days preparing life-giving messages rooted in scripture, to be delivered from the pulpit, come Sunday. I spend endless hours talking with people on the phone, and in person, who have experienced religious trauma, and whose families have been dismantled by the political landscape here in the Deep South. I write books, give talks, say prayers at civic meetings and bring a fresh air of unconditional love to each space I enter.

I find the most life-giving opportunities happen when I can take off my clergy collar (which I rarely wear, actually) and allow people to see me transparently. I am a grandmother; I am a mother; I am a sister; I am an auntie; I am a lover; I am a friend; I am a fierce advocate; I am a public speaker; I read and write voraciously; and I am a priest.

I have worked hard in my career to gain the trust of the LGBTQ+ community because many of us here have experienced spiritual hurt and harm at the hands of people who stand where I stand and do what I do. I too am one of those who grew up in a faith tradition that did not affirm folks being gay. My current faith tradition not only affirms us and welcomes us, it ordains me to continue my public theological work and to bring hope and healing to others.

Years ago, I developed a pedagogy (teaching method) I call the “3 R's.” It stands for *reframe, reform, reclaim*. In my preaching role, I work to *reframe* harmful and negative messages that have abused sacred texts—to reshape and remold their messages into life-giving, edifying, and empowering life lessons. In my teaching role, I am fortunate to partner with people along their journey of life and sprinkle seeds in the garden of their

hearts and minds, to help them *reform* the narratives that have governed their lived experiences. And finally, in my advocacy role I lead, journey with, and empower LGBTQ+ people of faith to put what they have learned into practice—and to *reclaim* the space that holds their spirit and strengthens them to stand on their own faith feet. *This work is not for sissies*, as my mentor likes to tell me. But he's a crotchety old straight white dude of 86 years, so I give him some grace because I know he means well. He keeps the wind in my sails, a constant need for me.

At the end of the day, well, and at the beginning of the day, and everywhere in between, I am proud to be who I am. Yes, the road has been long and winding and I've received lots of bumps and bruises along the way. Still, I wouldn't change a thing. I wouldn't give back a single day because I wouldn't know which one to pick. Every single day thus far has brought me to where I am today. I am not a religious person but I am a very faithful one, and for that I am grateful.

*Reverend Dawn Bennett is an author and award-winning preacher living and serving in the buckle of the Bible Belt, Nashville, Tennessee, in the U.S. She hopes you look her up and she admits there is no shortage of true, speculative, sensational, tender, and empowering examples of her public life.*



*Rachael, continued from page 1*

their heels in and insist on their point. It's tiring. It's tiring from the closet, and I didn't want to imagine how much more tiring it would be if I stepped out into the light.

So I didn't bring my true self into those conversations.

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Watching other authors get harassed by champions of Own Voices stories to the point that they felt forced into coming out turned my stomach into a knot of dread.

I am not a well-known author. I don't know if I ever will be. But I love writing, and I want people to read my stories, and I want to always write books with bi characters (especially bi women) at their center. What if early reviewers scrutinize my social media profiles, see no obvious indication of queerness, and declare me a straight author capitalizing on queer audiences? Will they believe me if I come out after the fact, especially when bisexuality is already seen as "fake"? Do I want to be forced into coming out, or do I want to come out on my own terms?

Can I even come out on my own terms?

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In 2022, I added "bi" to my profile on my social media platforms. I did it as a preventative measure, for fear of being called fake or a liar.

Sometimes, that little word on my profile looks like pride.

Sometimes, it looks like I was backed into a corner.

I'm one of the lucky ones. Whatever misconceptions or misunderstandings the people in my life present toward my sexuality, I am in no danger. But for others, invisibility is a shield. Not being seen as their whole, true self means not being attacked, rejected, fired, kicked out, etc.

When I look at the "bi" on my profiles, and when I think of the harassment to others that spurred me into that decision, I think of how the protectiveness intended by Own Voices champions turned into its own kind of violence.

Nobody should feel forced to come out to anyone, for any reason. Privacy is safety, especially for invisible minorities.

*Rachael Arsenault is a bi Canadian author who currently lives in New Brunswick with her son. She primarily writes contemporary fantasy featuring bi women who are in over their heads and some variety of plant magic.*

# Stepping into the Spotlight

By Angela N.

Choosing to be more visible at work was, in many ways, more complicated than coming out as a widow, which is its own coming out of sorts. I work at a theatre and there are many LGBTQ+ employees on our small team. It should be easy, stepping into the full-color spotlight on the stage alongside everyone else. But it feels more vulnerable somehow. Like flipping a rock in the woods and revealing the complicated dark underbelly, squirming with life. Essential, a core part of the ecosystem, but ugly. Better to remain in the dark. A cat fully sprawled with its soft belly revealed but fully prepared to swat away the danger, claws held back but ready to pop out at any moment.

When my husband died, it wasn't simple either. He was an alcoholic. We were in the middle of a divorce because I couldn't continue to watch him slowly kill himself, but there was nothing that I could do to save him. He was never fully comfortable with my bisexuality, even though he was aware of it from the start of the relationship and I've always been a very monogamous person. I loved him—but it was difficult. I couldn't feel fully visible without him feeling sensitive that it'd mean I wanted someone else. We both knew that if the relationship ended, I might never date another man again. But that wasn't a commentary on the love I had for him. I like to think that underneath the alcohol, the self-hate, and deep insecurity, he knew that.

I didn't date until almost a year after his passing, while I went through the full range of self-doubt around my widowhood: When was too early? How would it change how people saw my relationships, both past and present? Here was this brand-new layer of invisibility. "Her husband died and she turned gay," I imagined his family thinking. "Maybe that's why he was an alcoholic; she probably never actually loved him the whole time." I never fully hid who I was, and most people I was friends with on social media had probably already come to the conclusion that I wasn't entirely straight, but there's still something different about tagging a picture of you kissing your girlfriend on the same Facebook where you're still connected as "in a relationship" and marked both as a widow to your almost ex-husband. But you can't be marked as a widow and in another relationship on Facebook. I'll never not be a widow. It's a separate kind of erasure.

To bare it all at work felt terrifying. To be truly seen, after so long being invisible, is indescribable. Our annual gala was coming up, and as a fundraiser it's our biggest event of the year. It'd gotten too exhausting hiding who I am. I brought my girlfriend. I introduced her as such to board members and donors. I let go. I wore a long bright red dress; she wore a similar one in a deep burgundy. The spotlight was on us, but



it felt warm and beautiful and free, instead of the cold isolating glare that I'd come to expect and fear. I was all on display. Wife, widow, girlfriend. All of me. And I've never felt more grateful to be visible.

*Originally from Buffalo, New York and currently living in Connecticut in the U.S., Angela N. (she/they) is a full-time fundraiser by day and a part-time Escape Room Operator and creative by night.*

*If you are able, please support our work with a donation at <http://giveoutday.org/organization/Bi-Women-Quarterly>.*

# A Little Sapphic Sound

By Celine Izsak

Say, I want a voice, a wing-singing, small sound,  
so I can send Tahquitz Twister to tie-dyed tongues—  
even with the ocean falling from the sky,  
desert mouths stay dry.

When the birds sever the last liquid sunshine,  
winds wind through the mouths of krill who overlay their  
pink transparent bodies onto sunset, then die.  
Even then, sounds sound outside.

Creosote soaks petrichor when night sky gives  
mouth to mouth, wind to breath. Then I'll try pigeon post,  
fly the birds to my selfsame address—I hope  
letters beget betters.

On that draft, below this door crack, I underhear  
her scream under that mouth that isn't hers—his—  
I, I sink an undersea grunt fish behind breathing doors to  
undersee night sounds.

I want to pull the plug, so the moon can plunge  
into ocean—so Io never heard of Zeus—so I never heard of  
his  
plastiscenes making fun of pink-lined women's thighs.  
No. Those are cellulite skies.

He makes a ragdoll of you—names it love, undoes you.  
Even with the ocean falling, I hear you—  
desert-dry, still sounding outside his mouth.  
Mermaid, harpy—sound your sound.



*Celine Izsak (she/her) is a poet-educator based in Joshua Tree, California in the U.S. She has served as a Visiting Assistant Professor at the University of Iowa, where she held the Provost's Visiting Writer appointment and taught advanced poetry seminars; she holds an MFA from the Iowa Writers' Workshop and is currently a PhD candidate in English at the University of California, Los Angeles.*

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# Out at Work

By Jane Barnes

When Linda came  
To pick me up from  
My typing job and  
Said Hi honey are

You ready? I died.  
She was dressed  
In sports clothes  
Stood tall at 5' 8"

I was proud and appalled.



*Jane Barnes has published work in BWQ for more than 14 years, and has poems in Gay & Lesbian Quarterly, Ploughshares, River Styx, The Massachusetts Review, and Wrongdoing. Her work appears in the anthologies Bi Any Other Name and Getting Bi. She lives in New York City, in the U.S.*

# Unlearning Purple

By Helen K.

The first icebreaker question at a new employee orientation was, “who is your celebrity crush?” I answered both Andre Iguodala and Jessie Graff back when I still classified myself as straight and before dying my hair a striking indigo. During my lunch break in the back-alley parking lot, the maintenance guy, Kevin, asked if purple hair meant I was gay. “I just like purple” was not a sufficient answer for Kevin in his quest to identify my dating potential. In hindsight, it was fair to assume the lady with glasses who drives a Subaru and works at an “abortion clinic” in a rundown strip mall is a lesbian. Any answer can be an invitation to be hypersexualized, so I decided on the conventional but effective reply from women who want men to leave us be: I have a husband. A man. Boring response. Good enough for Kevin, apparently.

Later. Just a lot of misconceptions, including my own, in a place full of rainbows and trans-pride-colored gift bags. A clear, cheap silicone dildo can double as a stress-grab toy during phlebotomy. Where all the bathrooms are gender-neutral and we have team meetings that address the proper protocol for condom inventory. Who you are fucking and the genitalia involved doesn’t necessarily equal sexuality, but men who have sex with men are automatically gay men. Unlearning requires the ability to be wrong.

So, you start asking yourself questions like oh, do I just like purple? Most people’s first hunch is lesbian until they meet my husband. Then, straight. And I felt like an awkward thirteen-year-old again (she’s always present) while texting a few friend-colleagues: “I think I’m Bi?” (The question mark included.) I felt the visceral panic of being a beginner because unraveling yourself is terrifying work.

Yet, I sit with strangers’ most intimate disclosures on the daily. I am witness to their messiness and discomfort and capability to grow. Gender and sexuality are often front-row themes that shift over the months between appointments. I try not to see my patients as a checkbox or ICD10 code as we review their HIV labs and how their best-laid wellness plans were disrupted by shitty insurance, loss of housing, and the catch-all phrase “barriers to care.” It is hard to create safety in fifteen minutes after a lifetime of medical trauma. But I try, however imperfectly, in a busted healthcare system.

My CV implies without stating, “I am an expert at listening to the vulnerability of others.” My own vulnerabilities can elicit expert-level dissociation. That’s a learned ability often necessary for survival, but one that can adapt.

Which is why I am a science-lover that flirts with tarot cards and astrology to return back to myself. The wounded healer of Greek mythology, Chiron, is squaring my Virgo moon. This translates to friction between needs and unsettled emotions,



craving comfort but often choosing a vault. Eventually patients ask indirect questions about me and I skillfully pivot back. But I don’t always have time to answer when one gleefully announces, “We are all gay here!” And can they give me a hug? Side hug. Yes, I can accept that and I do.

There’s a weird line around maintaining professional boundaries and being earnest. I sat with the work kids at a smoky dive bar while eating BBQ chicken wings and drinking a mediocre old fashioned. We were biding time before drag bingo while discussing the value of lived experience and parents who didn’t approve of identities. And the parents at the table who support their kids without reservation. Bar conversation weaved as it does. I shared that assumptions can be disheartening. Like, y’all may assume otherwise but I’m part of the community too. The responses were unfazed and supportive. “Oh, I knew it!” “Okay, cool, that makes sense!”

The kids are alright, the events start too late, and the smoke gives me a massive headache. The stars say that my wallflower era is over, which I won’t interpret as an invitation to party like I’m 23 with my co-workers on routine Wednesdays. Perhaps, rather, just a call to show up as myself fully when the timing is right.

I’ll also argue that wallflowers are hardy plants whose name derives from the ability to take root in the smallest cracks of a stone wall. And there is even a loud purple version.

*Helen K. lives in the Southwestern U.S. where she works as a Family Nurse Practitioner and HIV Specialist, saving the world one syphilis case at a time. She has finally made space for creative writing after a years-long hiatus. Her first novel (handwritten in pencil) is lost somewhere in a childhood closet.*

# Finding a Door that Led Right Back to Me

By Diana Martínez

My name is Diana Martínez, I am a software engineer. I'm Mexican. I was the lead of the regional LGBTQ+ Employee Resource Group in my company. And I'm openly bisexual. My coming out to myself, at work, and in my ERG happened pretty much at the same time. I joined a large tech company about three years ago, and one of the first things I loved about it was the existing ERGs. I have always advocated for what I feel is right, and that was true even when I considered myself only an ally to the LGBTQ+ community. I am an empath, and meeting people and hearing stories about their struggles just because they existed in a way others didn't understand made me angry.

I have always been bisexual—that part is clear now—but I didn't realize it earlier. I was born and raised in Mexico, and Latin American culture, like many others, is heavily heteronormative. Because of the media, I knew gay people existed and had heard about “men who dress up as women”—these were not considered good things to be. Rather, they were something you laugh at, something you whisper about, something shameful. It also didn't represent my feelings, because I liked boys, so I figured I could not be anything but straight with particular feelings towards girls. Joining my company directly from college meant moving from a small town to a big city, leaving my parents, and learning to live by myself and with myself. It meant a lot of self-discovery and asking myself uncomfortable questions.

I was already vocal about my allyship. I began learning and exposing myself to unique queer spaces that I wanted to understand. When I learned the company had a group specifically to advocate for LGBTQ+ rights, I knew I wanted to be a part of that.

It was a safe space, there were a lot of people, and we got together and shared our stories: about coming out, about activism, about the workplace. There was one particular story about a bi+ person that made everything inside me click. *That was me.* I had exposed myself to experiences far from mine because I wanted to understand them, but I had failed to explore my own feelings. I had defined bisexuality as feeling romantic and sexual attraction to men and women equally. But I am attracted to nonbinary folks, and I experience attraction to femininity and masculinity in different ways, so I brushed off the possibility of being bi myself. I didn't give myself time to explore, time to think, time to redefine what bisexuality or the general bisexual experience was.

I thought my feelings were those of a straight woman (who apparently could date non-men if they asked her out first because that's still 100% straight and not just her being shy)

because I never asked someone else about it. I didn't ask my straight friends how they felt, and I didn't know any bisexual people yet. It took some time for me to come to terms with it, to admit it to myself first, and then to others. I remember I told my ERG board first. The first time I ever said it out loud (I hadn't even done that to myself either) was to people I had known for maybe two weeks because I felt safe, seen, and cared for. I knew they would get it, and they would stand by me.

Bisexual advocacy in the workplace for me meant finding a door that led right back to me, the real me. It meant finding a place where I belong and where I can thrive. It meant identifying biphobia and intolerance within my work group and realizing all the tools I had to speak up against it and bring about change, which empowered me to not only stand up for myself but for others; my company had my back, too. I honestly didn't feel safe to come out to all my peers back then, but I changed groups and became my LGBTQ+ ERG lead and now I'm out in my team, too. I want to be that person for others, I want my story to resonate with someone, or to be the person someone feels safe to reach out to when they're struggling or questioning.

This is why targeted advocacy is important: people with different identities have different needs, and especially for those with nonbinary identities, belonging is always hard. We need people to understand our specific struggles and to help us overcome them and become the best version of ourselves, just as my ERG helped me find myself.

*Diana Martínez is a Mexican software engineer who came out as bisexual in 2019. Her background is in mechatronics but shifted to software once in the workforce. She was head of the Pride Employee Resource Group in her company for four years and has been a vocal ally for the entire LGBTQIA+ community for most of her life.*



# Silent No Longer: A Workplace Journey

By Robyn Ochs

Just before my 18th birthday  
I realized I was most *definitely* bisexual  
I was terrified.  
I didn't know what it would mean for my life  
I feared it would cost me family, friends, jobs.  
I feared.  
And so I remained silent.

Finally, at age 23, I told one person.  
Then another.  
And another.  
Finally, I was out.  
I felt SO much better.

I moved to Boston  
Got a job working at a university.  
(we have *lots* of universities here in Boston)

At my first job, I didn't mention my girlfriend.  
I didn't tell anyone I was bi.  
I was afraid of how my co-workers might respond.

At my second job, rumor was the boss was uncomfortable  
that an unmarried couple was living together.  
A man-woman kind of couple.  
I decided it wouldn't be safe to come out as bi at this job!  
I didn't tell anyone I was bi.

At my third job, I decided  
I could be silent no longer.  
It was time to come out.  
I waited a whole year.  
Why did I wait?  
I was afraid my sexuality would distract people from my  
competence.  
I was afraid people would judge me.  
I was afraid people would see me as less competent.  
I was afraid people would see me as less professional.

For a year, I didn't tell anyone at work I was bi.  
Then I finally came out.  
What a relief.

A few people made strange comments:

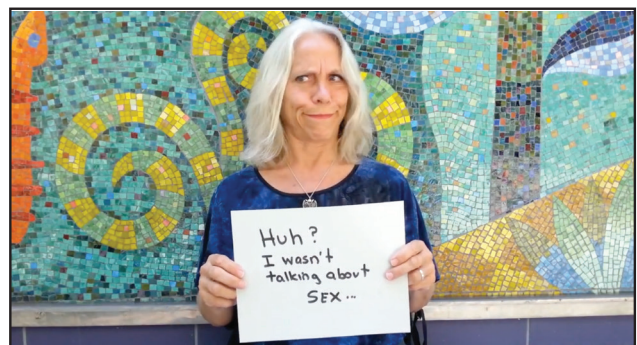
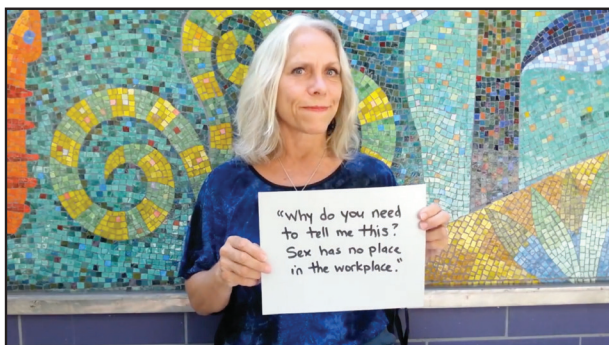
"So, you're bi? How does your partner feel about sharing  
you with other people?"  
Huh? I said I identify as bisexual.  
I did not say I was in an open relationship.  
That's a different subject.

"Why do you need to say this? Sex has no place in the work-  
place."  
Huh? I am not talking about sex.  
I am telling you my identity.  
I am telling you who I have capacity to love.  
I have *never* discussed what I do in the bedroom.  
Besides, you talk about YOUR marriage all the time.  
I hardly ever talk about my relationship at work.  
It's hard to come out as bi because people think you're  
talking about sex...  
...when you're really talking about identity

Did you know that bi folks are much less likely than lesbians  
or gay men to be out at work?

Still, it was a relief to finally be out at work.  
Finally, I felt whole.

I went to a meeting of a new employee group formed to  
address workplace issues facing lesbian and gay people.  
A few of us made sure that they added "bisexual" to the  
name.  
There was pushback, but "bisexual" was added.  
Still, lots of people continued to say "lesbian and gay."  
That made me feel erased, ignored, excluded.  
But I stuck it out.  
Out of the 40 or so regular members, I was one of only two  
out bi folks in our group.  
When someone would say something offensive to bi folks,



Everyone would turn and look at me and Marcia,  
Waiting to see if we would say something.

That was bad ally behavior.  
*They* should have spoken up.  
*They* should have said something.

There were other folks in the group I knew identified as bi  
But they didn't feel comfortable speaking up.  
That made me sad.  
That group stopped meeting.

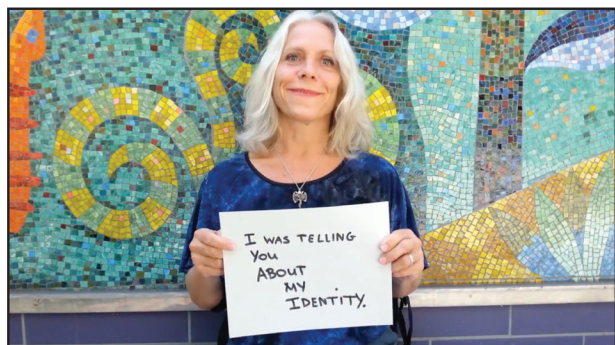
Fast forward several years:  
We started a *new* LGBT employee group.  
A few bi folks showed up, and stayed.  
Bi folks were visible in our ERG from the start.  
Our employer made significant policy changes to address the  
needs of LGBTQ+ people.  
Bi folks were welcome because we were visible in leadership.  
For a while, I served as co-chair of the group.

It's important to show up.  
It's important to be visible.  
It's important to speak up.

invisibility really hurts us.  
visibility really helps us.  
Speak up if you can!  
By being visible you can make a difference.  
You can be a beacon.

I have now identified as bisexual for 40 years. So far.  
I am silent no longer.  
I am #stillbisexual.

*Robyn Ochs lives in Boston, Massachusetts, in the U.S. She is a global speaker, a writer, and editor of Bi Women Quarterly. She wrote this 10 years ago for a #stillbisexual video. You can find this video and many powerful stories on YouTube at [youtube.com/hashtag/stillbisexual](https://youtube.com/hashtag/stillbisexual). Oh, and Robyn has identified as bisexual now for 50 years, so far, and she is #stillbisexual.*



## Oblivion 3

By Nasta Martyn



*Nasta Martyn is an artist, graphic artist, illustrator, poet, and writer. She graduated from the Academy of Slavic Cultures and has a bachelor's degree in design. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in art history. In 2005, she created a series of graphics dedicated to the Chernobyl disaster, and in the same year, she wrote the series "The Red Book." In 2022, she participated in international exhibitions in China, Taiwan, and the United States. In 2024, she received the Jury's Special Prize for her poster in China.*

# Biding In Plain Sight

By Jen Bonardi

I'm at a meeting in the university where I work. Eric from the Center for Public Service is running a debrief on the Volunteer Vacations that I and a few other staff "chaperoned," for lack of a better word. The college students that we traveled with on spring break obviously didn't need supervision but they did need two employees over age 25 to rent and drive the vans.

My buddy Gerald, who works in the main library, had told me about the Queer Volunteer Vacation in Philadelphia and wanted me to be the other chaperone. Most of the students on the trip were not themselves queer, but they did an incredible job volunteering for LGBTQ non-profits. I overheard one of them, as she swept the floor in a homeless shelter for trans people, gently telling a journalist to interview the people living there instead of her. Another was visibly moved when we discussed some of the struggles we witnessed within the queer community.

Gerald couldn't make the meeting, so I alone share anecdotes with Eric and the university staff who were on the three other Volunteer Vacations. The Philadelphia trip was the only one that centered on a particular community, and its participants' excellent work bodes well for similar programs in the future.

"I do have one bone to pick," I tell Eric. "Gerald is asked to chaperone every year, but I wouldn't have even known about this program if he hadn't reached out to me. It's important that queer university staff—beyond Gerald—be alerted to these opportunities."

The ostensibly straight woman next to me quickly jumps in to say, "I think we all should be alerted to them." To his credit, Eric ignores her and asks me to continue. "Gerald and I added value to the trip by contributing our lived experience," I say, resisting the urge to look pointedly at her. "But Gerald isn't the only out queer person on staff at this university."

Every time this school wants LGBTQ staff representation on some committee or a limited program, they ask Gerald. He told me this when we were sitting in the van together, waiting for the group to finish its volunteer task for the day. Despite the fact that he's exhausted by these duties, and that other queer staff would love to be offered such opportunities, the phenomenon persists.

I'm not sure where (if?) this gig was advertised, but it bears mentioning that my job includes maintaining the university events listserv. As for marketing to the queer community here, Gerald and I recently formed an LGBTQ staff social group that has had one event so far. It follows that I should have been among the first people to hear of the need for staff to attend a queer spring break trip.

So why hadn't I?

It's not Eric's fault; this has been going on for years. I've seen people at posts higher than his show little care for DEI beyond tokenism. It's easier for them to find one person who fits the bill and keep riding that wagon until the wheels fall off. And what

does "fitting the bill" constitute? I don't believe it's by chance that Gerald is gay, white, and mildly effeminate—that is, enough to be clocked as gay but not overly so.

There's one more factor...and this is where I get irked. It's the implication that the reason some university employees don't know I'm bi is because I don't want them to. I have always been out at work, threading the needle by proactively revealing my sexual orientation but not discussing sex in the office. It's an effort.

Let me be clear: passing is an intentional act, and implying in word or in deed that I am passing is an accusation that I am misrepresenting myself. There is no such thing as "passing privilege" among out bisexuals. I am not benefiting from being excluded from the queer community against my will.

When people describe bisexuals as passing, what they're really describing is being closeted. I've been out as bisexual since I was 18, and I'm in my 40s; my work with the queer community has been on my resume for my entire adult life. Five months prior to spring break, I self-published a book on bisexuality, copies of which could be seen in my office. I literally wrote the book on bisexuality. And I'll tell anyone who will listen.

Isn't the problem that these folks have no idea what bisexuality looks like, and aren't looking for us anyway? To paraphrase Desiree Akhavan in the video series *The Slope*, "You're trying to make me feel bad because you don't think I'm as gay as [Gerald]. And it really hurts my feelings that you're saying this because how much gayer can I get?"

Here's some hard-won wisdom that I am pleased to offer: when people "in" you at the office—the opposite of "outing" someone—that is their failing, not yours. Coworkers who assume I'm straight despite all signs to the contrary are fooling themselves. I don't have to do anything to fix it; in fact, I can't, because it's about them.

Around this time, I'm at another meeting on the working board of a grant-making foundation. It is important for us to know that our grant recipients have a staff/board that mirrors the demographics of those most affected by their issue. We ask that each applicant list the numbers of those involved by race, age, gender, and sexuality.

I remark that as far as sexuality and gender identity goes, maybe the applicant does have queer folks on their staff/board but they are not out. A fellow board member replies that that also indicates a failure of the organization. After all, maybe the LGBTQ people there don't feel like they can be out in that environment. This is a thought-provoking answer to the question, "Why don't I know who the queer people are in my workplace?"

Another answer is that maybe they are out and you're so oblivious to bi+ folks that you don't see us.

*Boston, U.S.-based Jen Bonardi is a frequent BWQ contributor and loves all things bi+.*

# That Circular Hole in the Wall

By Gianna Sumner

In the wall there it was  
A circle lined with dark wood.  
The perfect spot to sit, lay, or to look through at what  
is happening in the next room.  
It is a perfectly cut out circle.  
No beginning or end  
just like the cyclical nature of time  
or so it felt to me.

Walking down the stairs I stop.  
To my left, there it is,  
the circle through the wall.  
When I peer through it,  
I see my family sitting together next to the lit tree  
opening the gift of our connection.  
Time works like this right now,  
my life must keep going in a big circle  
always coming back to these moments.

Mischievously, the gaping and smooth hole in the  
wall welcomes me to sit,  
and I do.  
Peering from above,  
a voice, firm, yet filled with love, tells me to get down  
so instead  
I go through the circle in the wall.

Life will always be cyclical like this  
coming back to this house full of love  
and sitting here in the hole in the wall,  
hoping to always hear the voice telling me to get  
down  
and always letting me go through.

*Gianna Sumner is a Detroit-based illustrator and mixed media artist, originally from Grand Rapids, Michigan in the U.S. She is studying Illustration at the College for Creative Studies. Currently, Gianna is working on a film titled, "For Lovada and John," exploring the generational love and tradition passed down through her family from her grandparents, and how family continues that legacy.*

# Visible

By Suzanne (Beers) Nassise

I read a Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) study released in April 2024. At its core, the study—of more than 100,000 women spanning the course of four decades—found that bisexual women in the study had a 37% higher risk of premature death compared with heterosexual women. I knew we, bi women, weren't okay; the study printed it in black and white. We aren't okay, not because of who we are, but because of the chronic stress and coping mechanisms we weave into our worlds to deal with biphobia and bisexual invisibility. But to understand my coming out at work story, we have to go back.

Like many of my fellow Gen X and Millennial peers, I grew up on the street. Sesame Street. This is where I learned what it meant to exist in community, and yet still sometimes be invisible.

Everyday I would tune in to see Maria and Mr. Hooper, our good friends Bert & Ernie, Big Bird, and Mr. Snuffleupagus. For me, Mr. Snuffleupagus caused massive amounts of anxiety in my little four-five-year-old brain and body. Not because of who he was—a massive 1,000-pound elephant-like creature, of the species Snuffleupagus, in fact—but because for the better part of a decade I watched the fullness of his identity all but erased, boiled down to Big Bird's "imaginary friend."

There they'd be, existing beautifully alongside one another, Big Bird and his best friend, Mr. Snuffleupagus, doing the things friends do: playing games, hunting for cabbages, eating meals together, comforting each other during rough times. At the end of their visits, "Snuffy" as Big Bird would call him, would round the corner towards home, and ultimately Big Bird would explain to a neighbor about their time together, only to have that adult or friend placate his story as the imaginings of one very creative Bird.

"TURN AROUND, MARIA!!! HE'S RIGHT THERE!!!" Kindergartener Suzanne would scream at the box TV set.

This persisted until 1985. The adults finally got their proof, although if I take this metaphor too far, obtaining proof becomes a bit of a different narrative. Not to digress...

What about being out at work? It only took me half a lifetime. Why?

The reality of this is nuanced. I feel that I, as many bisexuals, tried to find community, especially at work. I'd been a member of at least three different organizations' LGBTQ pride spaces. The first two were comprised of out gay men, and the rest of us identified as allies. In these first spaces, I would find no queer-identifying women at all. Not an L, not a B. Not. One.

I try to be an honest person, or as best as I can be, and so my work life and my personal life diverged here a bit. I wasn't out to everyone; coming out as bi is always so strained and awkward, but I've always been out to those who matter most, including and especially my husband and my children. I knew, after navigating isolation and invisibility in my youth and young adulthood, I had to be visible to my kids and their peers. It has been a necessity for my soul to do this. To feed the inner kiddo who needed me then but found no one; not on TV, definitely not

in real life, just a big fat no one. And I have to say, anecdotally, it seems to be succeeding.

Okay, great! But cut to the \*out at work\* part already!

It sort of happened in two phases. The first was when I joined my current company's Pride Employee Resource Group (ERG) in 2022 and folks were introducing themselves in an online chat forum. I saw a flesh and blood lady I know IRL say in printed words, "Hi I'm \*DivaLady\* from IT, and I'm a B in the LGBT."

Reading her words felt visceral, and I jumped at saying the same! This was a closed and safe forum, only members of the nascent group were there, and we adhere religiously to not outing anyone outside of that space. So even though it was maybe 30 people, I knew so many of them, we worked together, and they weren't all queer themselves. But I did it—I wrote the words!

I know visibility is not equally available to everyone. Coming out at work requires a level of safety, support, and trust that not everyone has; some people do not have the option to remain invisible, and others do not have the option to safely be visible. I am grateful that, in this moment and in this workplace, I was able to choose visibility.

I felt laid raw, and yet so much lighter. It's confusing and cathartic. I could wax poetic here, but I wasn't fully out at work, not yet. That took another year and a half, during which I surgically reached out to those important in my life, and I let them know about me. I invited people in.

It went as you'd expect. Lots of questions. Some erasure. Sometimes the folks I thought would be accepting were less so than the folks I thought might give me trouble, and vice versa. "But aren't you married for 20 years now?" is of course my favorite. But a couple folks said some of the most affirming things in the world: "I always thought so!" "Congratulations!" "I am proud of you."

I think if you're reading this, this array of responses likely resonates.

So, on we noodle through my journey—back to the JAMA study. When I read the findings of the study, it literally sent chills through me. Here was empirical evidence that illustrated the real-world consequences of the invisibility and erasure we navigate. In a loop. Straddling two worlds, yet finding no real community. Then constructing elaborate coping mechanisms: we smoke more, we drink more, we hold the stress of hiding or explaining or being afraid of never being enough. We exist, yet we are invisible. When humans experience chronic stress without enough support, the brain looks for relief. We can't be ourselves fully, so we try to find ways, often quite unhealthy ones, to exist.

So the following month, our Pride ERG asked if I wanted to include on the company website (1200+ people) a short biography for Pride Month. I'm not sure I've ever felt more awkward, or more free, than the day that was published. It began:

"Hi, my name is Suzanne and I use she/her pronouns. I am a senior analyst in Information Technology and I have been with the company for two years. I am a wife, a mother to two amazing daughters, and a bisexual. In my free time..."

Like a tiny ripple in a pond, my next step was to do a presentation to our ERG about what that all meant to me and to the bi community. I got some presentation chops, learned a lot about bi erasure, and spoke enough to learn that my words impacted others. My visibility made them feel seen and safe. Others came out because I came out. We are a community.

So, yes, I am out at work, and these are some of the reasons why.

*Suzanne (Beers) Nassise lives in Easton, Massachusetts, in the U.S., with her husband and their two daughters. She is an IT analyst and LGBTQ+ advocate passionate about visibility, belonging, and human rights.*

## Blessed Friendship

*By Melissa Kulig*



*Melissa Kulig received her BFA from Emmanuel College in 1989 and her MFA from the Art Institute of Boston under Lesley University in 2009. She has exhibited her art for decades throughout New England and New York City. She is a retired art teacher and has taught art to children as young as four years old, and to retirees in their 80s.*



# Hi, I am Bi

By Rhonda D'Vine

Hi, I am Bi.

Coming out is always a journey. I am very well aware of that, because I did it multiple times. And we all know, coming out is often enough a repeated thing anyways. A wise person once said (which also describes myself quite well): "I am pansexual, polyamorous, and non-binary. Which means I haven't made a single decision in my whole life."

Hi, I am Bi.

I always was. Actually, I only found out about it and it seriously puzzled me when I realized that other people are not. That they are subconsciously or even actively excluding a fair amount of humans from the idea of feeling close to them. I still have a hard time grasping the concept of choosing against so many human beings that are awesome, just because of some assumed bodily features?

Hi, I am Bi.

"So you only like men and women? What about trans people!!" Exactly! What about trans people? Because the thing is: Trans and cis women are women. Trans and cis men are men. But even if you are a transphobic bigot and consider it the other way round, they still are men and women, even in your own strangely wired mind. At least try to be consistent with your hatred.

Hi, I am Bi.

"But that excludes non-binary people! Haha, now I got ya!!" Hello, I still am non-binary myself, why would I exclude people like me from my potential dating pool? And haven't you read the Bisexual Manifesto from 1990? "Do not assume that bisexuality is binary or duogamous in nature; that we must have 'two' sides or that we MUST be involved simultaneously with both genders to be fulfilled human beings. In fact, don't assume that there are only two genders."

I repeat: This was written in 1990. Over three decades ago!!

Hi, I am Bi.

And still people ask, "Oh, so you are a Lesbian now?" when I date a woman. I wonder if I should return the question with, "Oh, so you are aromantic now?" when they are single? Stop erasing people's sexuality based on who they date or when they

don't. It doesn't work like that and even monosexual people should understand that by now.

Hi, I am Bi.

And I'm tired. Of all these discussions over and over again. But I know they are important and needed. And repeated. Since way too long. Only once in a while I want to say:

Bi the way, I am Hi... I mean, I am Bi

I receive a happy smile, not have to explain it, get it questioned, and just be able to turn around, and walk away.

*Rhonda D'Vine is a longstanding activist in various queer circles. She was a founding member of visiBi\*lity Austria, is on the board of the non-binary organization Venib, gives speeches at demonstrations, does panel discussions, and also uses Poetry Slam as a tool of activism.*



Rhonda D'Vine performs this poem at the Bi + World Conference in Amsterdam. Photo credit: Farnaz Abdoli

# Squirm: a Story of Bisexuality and Workplace Harassment

*By Alexa*

A plastic green plant with small leaves on stems, protruding from a white ceramic pot with a semi-circle in shades of pink and orange.

K laughed and mumbled something to another coworker. I came closer to ask about the joke, with no expectation that it was at my expense. Then, not quite embarrassed but as if she knew it was unkind and didn't care, she said it was fitting that I brought it in: a fake plant in a lesbian-flag pot brought in by a "fake-lesbian."

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Before K was hired, my bisexuality rarely came up at work. Sometimes with other queer coworkers, as we got to know each other. We work with young people, so creating a safe space for queer kids in our program is important. My values of supporting and protecting my community are connected to my identity; being bi plays a role in my work simply as a part of who I am.

In K's cover-letter, she talked about her experience as a lesbian woman raised in a rural area and how it shaped her. When she started, I was glad to have another person representing joyful queer adulthood. For myself, and the queer kid I once was, I felt lucky to work with someone who had 10 years and so much experience on me.

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When I was younger, it wasn't just my sexuality that I needed validated by other people—it was everything about me.

But by age 22, I was in a better place, and in a three-year monogamous relationship with a really wonderful guy. Working, for the first time, in an office. I felt simultaneously like this job saved me from work I found unsatisfying and also felt the overwhelming sea of a Real Adult Job, threatening to drown me in office-culture rules and email etiquette. Not fully confident in myself, but I'd made huge strides.

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When K started working with us, she seemed to click with everyone. I felt like being myself with her. She was proudly, loudly a lesbian, and I was inspired by her self-expression. As a bisexual woman dating a cis man, I wanted to feel seen in queer friendships.

She invited me to hang out outside of work many times, and I made excuses not to. I wanted to be friends, but I could tell something else was there. Some glances were a little too lingering, the quiet signaling of sapphic flirtation becoming more obvious. I finally agreed to a show one night, and spent

the evening trying to enjoy it, but knew it was giving her the idea that I might feel something more. I didn't know how to act.

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K lived by the value of freedom. The more I listened to her, the more I worried I'd been living my life too cautiously. She appeared to be well-liked by the whole office. A chaotic but welcome distraction. Then a stress-inducing one.

Sitting at my computer each day with the twitchy inattention of someone expecting to be interrupted, I'd look through emails, not getting far before opening the messages she sent from across the room. She loved games, especially "guess what I'm thinking," giving hints and pressing for more guesses when all I wanted to do was give up and stop thinking about her hints, her suggestions...her.

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K wanted me to write a song with her. She hadn't made music in a while and I admitted to having no musical abilities, but I could write lyrics. She decided, then insisted, that we write a song together. She sat close as we listened to instrument tracks on GarageBand.

My stomach was as low in my body as could be, boiling in the pit of my gut, walking into work. Knowing that I'd smile and shrug avoidantly when asked about lyrics.

Each day she suggested lines, implying she wanted to write a love song about two women. The butterflies sensation could be compared to what I was feeling. Only, I was her crush, and I felt at all times, in all these scenarios, more like an ant under a magnifying glass getting hotter and hotter.

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Like the adults in the house I grew up in, nothing mattered more to them than appearing to have it all together. Admitting I wasn't okay was pointless at best. At worst, it could shatter my precariously held-together sense of self.

If I'm grateful for anything that happened between K and me, it's that her increasingly abusive behavior led me to a breaking point. The glass cracked.

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I wasn't threatened, but my self-trust disintegrated. I felt controlled by a compulsive urge to do what K wanted. When I thought about not playing along, I dreaded sharing office space and work projects. It was easier to give her small responses she liked, instead of facing her attitude at rejection. I didn't want to sit in meetings ignoring her burning glare from across the table.

I was vulnerable, but I didn't make it entirely easy for her either, and she let me know it. K felt that I was lying about my feelings for her. She teased me in light-but-cutting terms, saying I was no fun, boring. Her favorite line was "grow up," which felt like "Give up. Give in."

I knew I didn't feel for K what she felt for me. I thought she was someone I wanted in my life, but her attention made me squirm, leaving me exhausted and stressed. She was fun, but then she would do or say something hurtful, sending a ripple through the ever-blurrier picture I had of her.

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I nodded along with the beats and tried to imagine words in the song. I'd listened to a folklore podcast on Asmodeus, a demon prince, earlier. When she asked what I was thinking of writing about, I said I could see writing a western "cowboy" song about a modern-ish, misunderstood Asmodeus. Her face fell, her eyes rolled. She asked something like "what if you wrote about a woman instead of a man?"

I tried to ignore it. Her disappointment was palpable when I didn't flirt back, when I didn't answer how she wanted: an answer that would continue the subtle flirtation, without denying her.

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The Monday at work after we went to the show, she told me she had feelings for me.

I went home anxious, feeling sick, and told my partner everything. That our hangout felt weirdly like a date. I was worried she would say this, my worries were realized, and I didn't understand what I was feeling.

I told K that I felt so conflicted, and I just wanted to be friends and coworkers. I was happy in my relationship and didn't want to explore any feelings between us. It was hard because it wasn't what she wanted to hear, but I'd feel rotten with guilt if I let her think I was interested enough to end my relationship. She got upset at first, but then turned playful. It scared me. She said something like, "I'm not gonna give up that easy."

I told myself that because I had the courage to say it, she had to understand and respect me. She didn't. She thought that I was in a compulsive heteronormative relationship, shackled to male validation. If I'd let her, she could free me from it.

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I held back, even when I was lost in self-doubt. Even when I excused her behavior, a part of me knew it was wrong.

Through months of this tense dynamic and trying to put distance between us, she took out her frustration on me, often by invalidating my bisexuality in small ways. The summer "Good Luck Babe" by Chappell Roan came out and played everywhere, she would shoot me a look with something in the eyes saying, "This song is gonna be about you."

I know some of her biphobia was the unprocessed grief and trauma of homophobia she experienced. Maybe that fueled her as much as my rejection, hurt not only from my response but her past. She wanted me to question myself, and whether I felt I could honestly claim queerness.

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Before K suddenly quit, she'd been bad-mouthing me to coworkers, commenting that another young co-worker and I were bad at our jobs, and a whole lot of other cruel stuff that came to light in the wake of her leaving. She had been isolating us and pressuring several of us to stay silent.

Two of my co-workers and I grew close after talking through what happened. I've come to know myself more deeply because of these friendships, and through rebuilding my self-trust after this experience.

There isn't a satisfying ending where I stood up for myself, defending my identity and my relationship in the face of a biphobic, mean person who spent months derailing me because she was in a position where she could. The ending, instead, is gratitude that it's over, and for the pieces I've been picking up since the glass shattered: pride, community, and most importantly, the validation I give myself.

*Alexa is a writer and poet from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in the U.S., whose work often centers around the aching opposites of life; the grey areas where conflicting things can be true. Her work has appeared in Blue Mountain Review and Running Wild Anthology, among others. She enjoys listening to bisexual podcasts, co-hosting community art events with her friends, and reading Substack newsletters (hers is [inthenudeneeds.substack.com](https://inthenudeneeds.substack.com)).*



# Alpenglow & Phalaenopsis

By Chella Courington

## Alpenglow

Amy, the recent hire, who was, of all things, an economist, had just started on her third glass when a loud knock brought silence over us. The door opened and revealed a delivery guy in a red and white shirt with a tower of pizzas.

"Looks like the inciting incident in a bad porno movie," Amy said, her smile crooked and adorable. I paid him and carried the pies to the cherry table. The women, mostly teachers celebrating Friday and freedom from school, turned back to the charming females around them while I spread the boxes, making way for each and every guest to find what she wanted.

They ate their pizza. Some used their right hand, folding each slice like a New Yorker then gobbling it down. Another treated it like a piece of meat, cutting it with a knife before picking it up with a fork. Amy fingered her pizza, stripping asparagus bits from the top before pulling off strands of mozzarella as she worked her way down to the crust.

"Anyone ready for decaf?" I asked, counted fingers, and left for the kitchen.

"I'll help," Amy said.

I looked at her Joni Mitchell t-shirt, newly filled wine glass, and cowboy boots, wondering if the red spot next to Joni's hair was tomato sauce or cabernet.

"Mugs," I said and pointed to the cupboard then moved to the coffeemaker, adding ground coffee and water.

"How many?" Amy asked.

"Five. How are you settling in?"

"Comme ci, comme ça."

"Any problem finding a place?" I asked.

"I got a new one-bedroom at Vaughn Lakes," Amy said.

"Is that the complex with gorgeous pools?"

"Do you swim?" Amy asked.

"I like the water, but mostly float."

Leaning against the counter, her jeans just tight enough, Amy looked like a swimmer. About 5'10" with long arms and a slim figure, she appeared younger than I. Only a trace of gray and her wrinkles seemed more from mirth than worry. Her neck was smooth and uncreased, not yet leathery from too much sun.

"You have a spot," I said, dampening a towel and handing it to her.

Looking down, she inspected her shirt. "I do," she said.

I watched as she slowly rubbed in circles, red turning to faint pink.

I felt my sweatshirt cling to my skin and opened the window above the sink. The coffee's finishing hiss called me back.

After Amy filled the blue pitcher with milk, I placed it on the tray and added a plate of biscotti.

"What else can I do?" she asked.

"Do you mind serving?" Pouring the coffee, I tried to hit that mark where either black or white can still be a full cup.

Amy rearranged them for balance, glancing up at me—pausing for what could have been an eternity before she walked out of the kitchen to the table.

I observed her leave, hips sliding with the tray's weight. And I was wet, drenched in a way that rarely ever happened. An overripe fruit suddenly burst. With cold water, I splashed my face. Outside, the setting sun covered the mountains in pale gold.

## Phalaenopsis

Jenny doesn't remember when she quit listening to Ana, smiling now and then as Ana recalls another of her nude dreams. In her flannel PJs, she leans against the cupboard door, never dropping a syllable. Like a bird's nest, her grayish-blond hair is sprigged when she wakes. Last Christmas, Jenny gave her a satin pillowcase, but Ana rarely uses it.

"Did you listen to what I just told you?" she asks.

Jenny smiles. "Definitely," and she hands her two glasses of filtered water. "Would you put these on the table?" The sun cuts through the kitchen window, warming Jenny's pale shoulders beneath the red and black plaid bathrobe. After five years, she has learned how to appear engaged when Ana goes on about her dreams. Every morning a new narrative that must be spoken before anything else.

Jenny hears the rise and fall of Ana's voice. The changes in volume, the shift in tone. The way she lisps where an s and z sound like th in thunder, her tongue catching between her teeth. Cute, even sexy, when they first met at a yard sale. Ana chattered about Sienna Dinnerware on the lawn—salad plates and saucers fringed in green, camouflaged by blades of crabgrass. But now? Her words are mostly white noise.

Jenny takes her cereal to the table while Ana spreads peanut butter on an English muffin. They sit across from each other, a pink moth orchid in the center.

"She looks sad," Jenny says, reaching out to the lowest bloom, rubbing a petal between her right index finger and thumb. Gently to avoid damage.

"It's just a flower," Ana says.

Jenny remembers how her mother tossed a plant as soon as the bloom was off. When she was thirteen, her mother sent her to Miss Howard's School for Girls in Waycross, Georgia.

"She's been with us as long as we've been together," Jenny says, poking her finger in the soil to see if she were dry and pouring just enough water into the clay pot to humidify the roots.

"So has the couch," Ana says, wiping peanut butter from her lips.

"I never liked that couch," Jenny says.

"I've never been good with flowers," Ana says

Sliding her hand around the sides of the cool pot, Jenny knows the orchid and how easily she can be traumatized if left untended. Mealy bugs spread their cottony mass over her buds and stems and suck her sap, leaving a sticky path in the wake. Jenny lifts the plant.

Ana takes their plates to the sink. "Orchids are too much trouble," she says.

Jenny listens to the retreat of Ana's footsteps and moves the orchid near the window so morning sun can shine through the blooms, turning them into a spectacle of light.

Blossoms fall to the dusty floor.

*Chella Courington is a cis, bisexual woman born and raised in Southern Appalachia in a storytelling family who taught her how to value the word. Courington's creative publications include one novel, one novella, several chapbooks of poetry and fiction, and poems and stories in journals and*



*anthologies. Her fiction and poetry have been nominated for Pushcart, Best of the Net, Best New Poetry, and Best Short Fiction. With teaching as her livelihood, she moved from Montgomery, Alabama, to Santa Barbara, California, in the U.S. 20 years ago, giving her the space and distance to understand her past.*

## First Love Never Really Dies

By Amanda Steel

I wondered what I was doing there as I watched Adrian dancing with some guy he'd just met. He had told me I should go to a nightclub at least once in my life, because life was too short and I could die tomorrow. I was only 23. As much as I wanted to die right there and then, I knew I probably wouldn't for a long time.

I couldn't dance.

As if reading my thoughts and taking them as a challenge, a pretty blonde woman who seemed to be around my age caught my eye from across the room. She smiled, and I wondered if I knew her. Or maybe this was one of those embarrassing situations where if I smiled back, it would turn out that she was smiling at someone behind me.

I turned to look as discreetly as I could, but behind me, there were only more people dancing, drinking, or both.

Nobody else had noticed her.

When I turned back, she was walking toward me.

"You're not dancing," she pointed out.

I stopped myself from remarking on her observation skills.

"No, I can't dance. I'm just here with my friend over there." I pointed to Adrian, who was whispering something to his new friend.

"Neither can he," she said.

We both laughed. Adrian might have been a good friend most of the time, when he wasn't talking me into going to places that I didn't want to be, but his dancing skills were non-existent.

"You have a nice smile," she told me, then introduced herself as Sarah.

"I'm Amanda," I said, wondering what I was meant to say next. I wasn't great with new people. That's probably why Adrian kept talking me into things, hoping that someday, I'd suddenly be "cured" and would no longer be the shy, awkward friend who wasn't out having fun all the time.

Sarah took my hand before I had time to argue, then led me onto the dance floor.

"Just follow my lead," she said.

It seemed easier with her there, and I just moved in the same way she did.

We didn't talk until the song had finished, then she offered to buy me a drink, and we found a slightly quieter corner and managed to have a half-shouted conversation over the music.

Sarah told me she was from Leeds and had lived there her whole life. As I'd grown up in Bradford, I knew some of the places she talked about. I had moved to Manchester not long before, but

was visiting Adrian for the weekend. He was probably the only friend from school I kept in touch with. We were two of the most bullied children at the school I attended for almost a year.

Sarah openly talked about her last girlfriend and how things had ended six months earlier. I told her about the only relationship I'd had up until that point, which was with a guy in Nottingham who abused me physically and emotionally, often threatening to kill himself if I left. I'd felt responsible for keeping him alive, which sounded ridiculous to me even as I said it.

Sarah didn't mince her words and told me that was nonsense, only using much stronger language than that.

I didn't question why I was being so open with her. We'd only just met, but she was so easy to talk to. It didn't feel like I needed to be anyone but myself.

After years of trying to fit in and feeling like I didn't belong in most circles, she listened and made me feel accepted.

When the last song came on, Adrian came over and jokingly said, "Get back on the dance floor, you two lovebirds."

Three hours had passed so quickly, and I felt flustered at his words and disappointed that the night was almost over.

I wasn't a lesbian though, and despite a few one-off experiences that I could explain away at the time, I had always been interested in men.

Yet, when Sarah leaned in and kissed me, I didn't pull away. I moved closer and let it happen, getting caught up in the moment, until Adrian's laughter made me remember where I was.

"I said, I'm going back to Stuart's place, but I can get the taxi to drop you off at mine on the way."

As it was late and the buses had stopped for the night, I agreed, and said goodbye to Sarah.

She took hold of my hand, and I thought she might kiss me again, as I struggled to understand the disappointment in the pit of my stomach when she didn't.

But she put a piece of paper in my hand, which I realised had her telephone number written on it. I took it and thanked her, then left with Adrian and Stuart.

All the way back to Adrian's flat, I couldn't stop thinking about that kiss. I barely even noticed the two of them making out in the seats behind me.

The next morning, I went back to Manchester, with my head full of questions. I wanted to call Sarah, but I wondered if she would even remember me.

My self-doubt told me that if she kissed me so easily like that, then maybe it meant nothing to her. That she kissed random women in clubs all the time. And what did it even mean anyway?

I was straight... Except for that time when a girl I was friends with at school kissed me, but never spoke to me again after and I pushed it to the back of my mind. Or the job I had where I found myself thinking a lot about a woman I worked with...

So, maybe I was bisexual, I relented.

Still, would Sarah be happy to hear from me if I called?

I kept hold of her number, but I couldn't bring myself to call.

Then a week later, I was waiting in the laundrette, and I took out my phone, not brave enough to call, but I sent a text.

It just read: It's Amanda from last week. Do you remember me?

Her message came back within a few minutes, saying of course she did, and that she thought I had "lost" (in quotes) her number.

I found myself typing that I didn't know if she would want to keep in touch.

Her response was that she wouldn't have given me her number if she didn't want to hear from me, as if it really was that simple. And she asked me if I thought she went around kissing women in clubs all the time.

Luckily, the laundrette was empty, because that made me laugh. That's exactly what I had wondered.

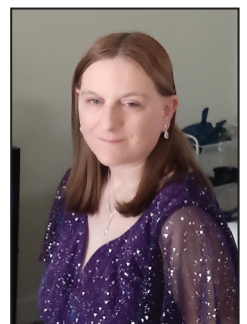
We spent the next hour texting until my phone credit ran out, as we didn't have unlimited text bundles back then.

A week later, on Valentine's Day, she tried to surprise me by turning up at my flat to spend the day together, but realised on the way that she didn't have my address, so had to call me and ask.

It became my best memory of Valentine's Day. We had breakfast, walked along the canal, before I stopped to kiss her, then we just sat and talked for hours, discussing everything we hadn't had time to in the club.

It would be decades later before I eventually realised I was bisexual, despite the six-month relationship Sarah and I went on to have. Unfortunately, that was cut short when she died, but she will always be my first love and have a special place in my heart.

*Amanda Steel lives in Manchester, U.K., and is the author of the forthcoming poetry chapbook, Before and After the Storm, which explores the relationship mentioned in her essay, sharing her experiences of love and loss.*



# Braver Because of You

By Joshlyn Peace

Dear Minnesota,

You taught me a language I never knew existed.

After graduating from college, I believed I had a clear understanding of myself, and I set aside certain experiences related to my gender identity and sexual orientation because I felt they were no longer relevant. I did not see a need to address these aspects publicly, especially in a work environment. At my first official 9-5, I quickly faced challenges, including open hostility from two female colleagues during my first few months. My supervisor, PJ, was supportive and offered practical guidance, but he was not fully aware of the gendered nuances of the situation I was experiencing.

Seeking support, I connected with the women's Employee Resource Group (ERG) to find a mentor who could help me navigate these difficulties. While I was able to contribute, the fit was not entirely seamless. It was one of the biggest ERGs, yet I felt alone. My experience was not the same as the other group members. It was like drinking scalded hotel coffee when what I really wanted was a smooth iced macchiato—it aided my caffeine headache but was not quite right.

I continued searching and found PRIDE. During my very first ERG meeting, Dario invited me to introduce myself, and it was the first time I publicly shared, "Hi there! I am Joshlyn Peace, and I am bisexual." The mix of excitement and nervous sweat drenched my ugly polo in the freezing lobby. Dario responded with a wide smile, "Welcome." He then passed the conversation onto you, Minnesota, to discuss HR initiatives. You communicated effectively and thoughtfully regarding the benefits for the LGBTQIA+ community, the development of inclusive policies, and strategies for enhancing collaboration across our global organization.

I was scheduled to be in the conference room discussing sales strategies, but intuition said the PRIDE call was more important. PJ came looking for me at break time. There I was perched on a stool smiling, flustered, slightly damp, and actively processing the information I had just received. He used his baseball-mitt-sized hand to gently guide me back to the conference room, offering his support with a soft smile and nod. That day's presentations faded into the background as I kept reflecting on that impactful meeting.

At our second PRIDE gathering, we discussed ideas, and I proposed hosting a happy hour outside of our regular monthly meetings. Dario and Rodrigo immediately supported the idea—was that the validation I was seeking? Having someone acknowledge my idea on a company-wide platform, especially when I had felt vulnerable, gave me a thrill I continue to cherish. You offered to assist with the proposal, and our initial



half-hour conversation extended into an hour, then another. We connected daily, discussing work, pride, and our personal lives. Together, we successfully organized this meaningful event with support from our community. The success of the happy hour provided a foundation for us to hold additional meetings, fostering ongoing engagement. We partnered with other ERGs to actively break down organizational silos, a priority you mentioned in our first meeting. Through your efforts, you not only influenced me personally but also contributed to positive change across the entire company. Your willingness to share your story, despite a demanding workload, is genuinely appreciated.

Although we have both moved on from the company, I still consider you my work wife, Minnesota. Your authenticity and dedication to inclusive language have deeply impacted me. Sharing your experiences as a transgender woman with openness has expanded my understanding of gender identity and fostered a supportive environment for exploring concepts related to sexual orientation. You helped me realize that my identity does not hinge on my relationship status. I am able to confidently embrace and express who I am, thanks to the language you have shared.

And I am forever grateful for it.

With love,  
Joshlyn Peace

*Joshlyn Peace (they/she) is based in Washington, D.C., in the U.S. They are a sculptor, writer, and multidisciplinary creative drawn to shaping ideas into tactile, visual, and narrative forms.*

# No Pain at My Party

By Amber D. Dodd

I'm a Black bisexual writer. While compiling research for a Bisexual Health Awareness Month feature story, I found some pretty grim shit.

Bisexuals are the largest population within the LGBTQ+ community. Less than 1% of actual funding for queer organizations is bisexual-centered. Depression, domestic violence, and social exile via biphobia are common experiences. We are 58% of America's queer population, yet the least taken care of.

Personal testimony is data too.

In 2009, my father saw MySpace list my interest in both men and women. He immediately made me change it to just men. In the seventh grade, a classmate announced my bisexuality after overhearing my "what'd you do over the summer" answer to two friends. It created a crowd reaction of disgust. Removing the public display of my affections didn't mean they didn't exist. I played house with a girl named Aaliyah in pre-kindergarten. My very first crush's name was a walnut-brown boy named Niko.

The Western world's dichotomized ideas on gender and sex interrupt queerness because of its instinct to make us choose heteronormativity, but bisexuality's added layer of fluidity creates a particular confusion. We were grouped into a collective queer quilt, which made us question what stitched us together if we were never recognized as individual threads?

Living in Washington, D.C. is Black queer paradise. Kickball for the sporty gays. Sweaty dancefloor nights at Thurst, currently the only Black gay bar. A Les Linq festival full of vendors, live performances, and tarot readers. I caught the final D.C. Black Queer Women mixer this summer too. Whatever you want, we got it. But there isn't an outright bisexual space, let alone a Black bi space.

During Black Pride Weekend, I could not make it through the door without speculation. I had been without any partner for

seven years, frolicking in my singleness without wonder of who, or their gender, would be best for me. I am currently with a man. In social spaces, I soon realized bisexuality wasn't "valid." And, if you were a bisexual person, you were automatically considered polyamorous. I have fielded more questions about if I'm a sharable asset than how my partner and I got together. With every sexual assumption came less room for personhood, less dancing, more talking over the beat to inquire.

Where were these questionnaires during my seven years of singlehood, when I was dating women? Where was the need to probe my sexual spectrum then? When I was being intimate with women who wouldn't return favors or go down on me? Did anyone check on me when I lost friends for recognizing their attractions to me and their inevitable ghosting to avoid facing their fluidity?

Instead of sipping on the brewing interrogative jealousy, I knew I had all the tools to pull off a bisexual-focused party during Pride Month. Dance floors have always been a place of refuge, return, and reconnection for our community. I have my own relationship to rhythm, becoming a DJ in 2022 to fortify an internal love for music, its spiritual sauce, and anthropology.

Social survey ensued. Ashlei and I were pre-gay friends; a bond made from sports and native Marylandness. Think of the most motivational, mean rich auntie to your kids. Once we found out we were both bisexuals, shared experiences of misunderstanding tightened our sisterhood.

"Bitch, if you don't do it yourself," she bluntly asked, as I shared my desire to create agency and party bisexually, "who the fuck are you waiting on?! You got all the fuckin' tools. You know how to DJ."

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On May 8, 57 minutes after my introductory pitch email, Alaina, owner of the lesbian Black bar Mixxed, got back to me.

"How many people do you think will come?" she asked.

"I'm sure with Pride, and the help of our previous event partners, we will bring in more than 60 folks. I also did a survey of those interested in a Bisexual Pride Party. About 50 people responded yes." "Great, we would love to build with you and make this a regular thing, possibly once a month." We set the date for Saturday, June 13.

Alaina's beige heart-hands emoji instilled a deep sense of gratitude, responsibility, and reality that I'm doing the thing—building the world I craved through a bisexual basement bash.

Mixxed's Adams Morgan location was pristine for the community. Sinners & Saints, a queer safe haven, primarily for trans folks, foot traffic, and any curious partiers willing to pay at the door, were reliable attractions.





Branding the bisexuals meant using our Pride flag's colorways. Everywhere. I sketched up animated ambassadors via Canva, picking racially ambiguous, genderedly androgynous, undeniably cunt partiers to sport blaQplight (my own media outlet's) logo on their shirts. Their hair, lipstick, and shirt colors were flipped in sundried lavender, bright cobalt blue, and hot pink three ways. Perfect given the DJs performing.

I chose three allies; one cis gay man, a trans woman, and a nonbinary Jamaican. All Black. It was important that others in our queer diaspora served bisexuals that night. Much of solidarity is service. Promotional materials included a daily Instagram sharing and TikTok posting. It worked.

I amassed nearly 700 likes on Instagram in 10 days. Bisexuals really did want a place for us, by us. And the momentum toward the event took me by surprise. Even my roommate commented on the TikTok flyer, not knowing it was me. "You coulda just sent me this!!!! I'll see u there after rehearsal!" Many asked if they could really come because their other friends were lesbians or trans, even white. "Sure," I answered one DM. "But if you do some anti-Black shit, you will be asked to leave." Asking did show consideration and respect, but, as some bisexuals have been ostracized in queer spaces, hesitation was an understood trauma response. (I had already been used to Black folks bringing their non-Black partners into strictly Black spaces anyway.)

By June 12, we were at 180 tickets.

I bought 200 bisexual stickers, peppered them throughout the basement bar nook, and allowed Mixxed's gay decor to do the rest. I couldn't tell if my nerves were from a funky no-turnout hunch or The Knicks being two quarters away from their first championship this millennium. The people came. Nerves ceased while the Spurs fizzled and blew another 15-point lead.

"Are you the owner of this event, love?!" I turned around hesitantly. It was Clara, a bisexual who hosts D.C.'s Bi Night. She was currently on break. "This is so cool! We should collab one day!"

We made the walls sweat. We danced. We poured body shots. We made friends. We yelled loudly every time I or a DJ asked

where the FUCK were the bisexuals at, like a silly adult game of peekaboo. This easily became a night not about success, or making a bar minimum, but unity, being seen without begging. Blending without asking.

I saw the very reason I cultivated the space. I saw freedom. I saw carefreeness. I saw spectrums of bisexuality I never considered but never clashed with my own. I heard bisexual and pan artists of our time as we ground into ourselves to Janelle Monáe's "Lipstick Lover," envisioning vibes of Isaiah Rashad's pool party with DoeChii.

Personally, the most fulfilling piece of it all was watching friends from other corners of life attend. Fellow event curators like Phillips, who gave me my first DJ live performance on a whim, came. Ace, a nonbinary singer and gritty community member, worked the door. My best friend Steven came and entertained Ace, but also stood by as security for folks brushing past Ace. I got a chance to playfully press my new friend Jenae about why she didn't tell me about being a Pulitzer Center Fellow when first introduced.

And I will not lie—who didn't want to dance after the Knicks won? East Coast love is real. As the crowds swelled into the basement, Alaina came down the steps carefully. She balanced seven tequila shots on a silver saucer. "New York, we back, baby! Who wants one?!" she yelled. Her moment of rejoice coincided with the DJ's transition into Charli XCX.

Bump the Knicks. Bisexuals were back.

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Citations: Lawther, A., & Lee, A. (2021). (rep.). 2021 RESOURCE TRACKING REPORT LGBTQ Grantmaking by U.S. Foundations (pp. 13–23). Washington, D.C.: Funders for LGBTQ Issues.

*Amber D. Dodd (she/her) is a Marylander who lives in Washington D.C.'s H Street Corridor in the U.S. She is a nonfiction writer, editor, and journalist whose works contextualize Black America. Amber currently serves as the National LGBTQ Task Force's Producer and Content Manager. She enjoys cilantro, SEC football, and telling sonic stories as DJ Ekletik.*



# Thank You Letters to the Hollywood Actresses Who Helped Me Realize I Was Bi

By Sarah Wallace

Ladies, I hope you will forgive my writing to all of you at once. You see, classic movies are intrinsic to who I am, and you all impacted me in a different way, so I knew I couldn't possibly pick just one of you.

Dear Jean Peters,

Thank you for looking so fucking gorgeous when lighting your cigarette in the moonlight in *Three Coins in the Fountain*. Rewinding to watch those few seconds again (and again) was my lightbulb moment. Also, thank you for looking so incredibly beautiful falling onto the bed in Rossano Brazzi's arms. Did I want to experience something like that? Or did I just want to look like you as I did it? I think we both know the answer.

Dear Gloria deHaven,

Thank you for years of being one of my favorite actresses because the retrospective of that really helped confirm my suspicions. Also, thank you for making a blouse, a blazer, high-waisted shorts, and high heels look glamorous in *Summer Stock*. That is such a fucking weird ensemble and you make it look classy as hell. Also, thank you for being in a film noir. It's a crime that you weren't cast as a *femme fatale* more often because holy shit would I have believed men doing unthinkable things for your sake.

Dear Ann Miller,

Thank you for letting me pretend that I wanted to be you when I grew up. I never took a single tap dance lesson. But I did watch your dance numbers on repeat and admired your legs. Oh, and on that subject: thank you for wearing skirts that pulled apart and showed off your legs. That was very generous.

Dear Loretta Young,

Thank you for being another aha! moment for me. When Robert Williams described you as one of the boys in *Platinum Blonde*, I was shook. No one as gorgeous as you could ever be overlooked. That shock really helped to guide me on my way to my bisexuality.

Dear Gina Lollobrigida,

Thank you for *Come September*. You are an absolute goddess in that movie. Literally everything you wear is stunning, even when it includes a weird little hat. You were another golden retrospective for me when I started to come to terms with my identity.

Dear Katharine Hepburn,

Thank you for looking sexy as fuck in *Sylvia Scarlett*. I still don't entirely understand what that movie was trying to be but seeing you masquerading as a boy made me feel a lot of things. I'll be completely honest here: I had already figured out that I was bi by the time I watched that movie, but you were a fantastic confirmation.

Dear Marlene Dietrich,

Speaking of fantastic confirmations, thank you for being so devastatingly attractive in *Morocco*. I hope you know how iconic your tuxedo and top hat look is now. This is less along the lines of bisexuality, but I think you should know that you are one of my fashion icons and dressing in masculine vintage outfits gives me a gender euphoria unlike anything else.

Sincerely,

Sarah Wallace

*Sarah Wallace lives in Florida in the U.S. with their cat, more books than she has time to read, a large collection of classic movies, and an apartment full of plants that are surviving against all odds. They only read books that end happily.*



# Be Kind, Rewind

By Amanda Benson

Animal Pictures, founded by Maya Rudolph and Natasha Lyonne, produced a film in 2022 called *Crush*, now streaming on Hulu. It's an entertaining coming-of-age comedy that I wish had been around when I was growing up. Its writing speaks to the sublime spectrum of sexuality while emphasizing how we're here to express ourselves and find our people along the way.

There is a wonderful character in the film who is bi and an artist and is somewhat private about both. AJ Campos, played by Auli'i Cravalho, is smart and perceptive. She feels real and more fully formed than your typical teen movie character. Honestly, I wanted her to be the protagonist or for us to have a spin-off to look forward to! *Crush* delivers on a lot of levels. Paige, its main character, sets out to write an essay about her "happiest moment," to get into the Cal Arts summer program. While dealing with common themes from lots of movies, *Crush* solves this and other problems in completely new ways and is a total blast to watch! It's the queer rom-com I didn't know I needed!

I haven't seen a high school queer comedy that provided this many laughs since *But I'm a Cheerleader*, starring Natasha Lyonne. That being said, I love that she chose to produce this one! This time the themes aren't heavy like that 1999 satire about conversion therapy. In fact, it's cool to be queer at the high school in *Crush* and the main character's mom, played by Megan Mullally, is incredibly supportive. She borders on being too supportive, providing awkward comic relief. I love that this is a direction romcoms are going in. It's a genre I love to enjoy!

*Yellowjackets*, on Showtime, is one of my favorite shows on TV. The creators do a wonderful job of transporting the viewer to high school in the '90s, and since I graduated in 1999, I was instantly on board. These characters are unique and nuanced in their attractions and I was thrilled to see the show's cast includes at least four queer characters. "Van" or Vanessa Palmer is played by Lauren Ambrose and won me over from the start. When we visit her in the present, she owns a video store somewhere in Pennsylvania. This show features some of my favorite music and movie references from the '90's and really exemplifies how media can bring us back to a very specific time and place.

I remember watching the mesmerizing Angelina Jolie in *Gia* (1998) on HBO and subsequently discovering *Foxfire* (1996) starring her, Jenny Shimizu, and Jenny Lewis. These films led me to find *All Over Me* (1997) starring Leisha Hailey before she was cast in *The L Word*. I still love listening to the soundtrack from *Velvet Goldmine* (1998). It transports me right back to seeing its colorful musical montages and costume changes for the first time! The world was different then, but we are still dealing with a lot of the same inequities today.



Most of my favorite queer films from the '90s get progressively bleaker as they play, and for good reason: times were tough. I do have a dark sense of humor, and maybe the repetitive nature with which I watched these films is partly why. *Yellowjackets* definitely translates some of the melancholy of the times, which is just as relevant now. But despite its heartbreaking subject matter, I really appreciate its celebration of female friendships and all the women the show employs in front of and behind the camera.

Finding a current film like *Crush* is so affirming and uplifting, no matter what your age, because it shows queer women as dynamic and unique individuals. It shows us creating art, finding love, and experiencing success as wonderfully complicated and creative human beings. *Crush* shows queer women supported by their friends and family. And above all, this movie really makes me laugh. Our stories can be fun and fulfilling to watch, over and over again through to the end. That's what I want for us: to see bi+ characters experiencing joy in wonderful ways at any age because that is the reality I want to live in!

*Amanda Benson is a freelance graphic designer living in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in the U.S. Her goal is to create authentic branding for businesses and help people reach their audience with uplifting design. Find her at [airborndesigns.com](https://airborndesigns.com).*



# B+ Well Conference

By Mimi Hoang

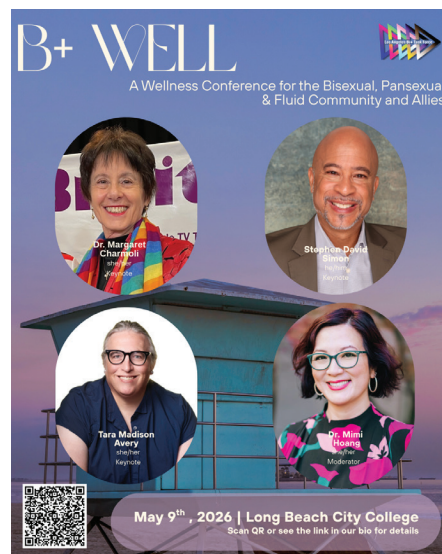
We did it! On May 9, 2026 the Los Angeles Bi+ Task Force pulled off our third annual B+ Well: A Wellness Conference for the Bisexual, Pansexual, and Fluid Community and Allies, held on the campus of Long Beach City College. The event's focus was on wellness: self-care, healthy relationships, and personal and professional growth.

It was super exciting moderating our esteemed keynote panel featuring OGs and OOGs Dr. Marge Charmoli and Tara Madison Avery (both of whose work has appeared in *BWQ*), and Stephen David Simon, discussing their coming out journeys in the '70s, '80s, and '90s and how far the community has come.

We have so much strength, talent, and resilience within our community and we really have all the answers we need, even in the challenging political climate here in the U.S. Some people came up to me to share how much they learned about the community and about themselves, with renewed hope and confidence. And like Dr. Charmoli said, "Be yourself because no one else is uniquely like you. No one else has been and no one ever will be."

It was a joyful gathering of new and old faces from the local area and also people from Northern California and beyond. Love, joy, and warmth radiated throughout our wonderful day of wellness.

I also couldn't have pulled this off without the talented and dedicated B+ Well team who planned this with me for nine



months, friendly and energetic volunteers, generous sponsors, and supportive community partners. It really takes a village to maintain a village and I am so very proud of what we created together.

LABTF's FB and IG pages also have short video interviews with the speakers @LABiTaskForce. Our website: LABiTaskForce.org.

*Mimi Hoang is a bisexual badass and psychologist, life coach, and educator based in Los Angeles, California, in the U.S.*

## APA Recognizes Dr. Mimi Hoang for Bi+ Advocacy

Dr. Mimi Hoang was presented with a Community Engagement and Advocacy award today at the Division 44 Awards Ceremony at the convention of the American Psychological Association held August 6-8, 2026 in Washington, D.C.

About this, she wrote:

"I'm incredibly honored to receive the Bisexual Issues Committee's Community Engagement & Advocacy Award from APA Division 44—Society for the Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity. I feel tremendously grateful to receive this prestigious award from my national professional association and to be recognized for being a psychologist who wears many hats as a clinician, scholar, educator, and community builder who uplifts the marginalized and often invisible bisexual, pansexual, and sexually fluid community."

This is a newer award sponsored by the Bisexual Issues Committee, and it is only in its second year—the inaugural award was given in 2025 to the extremely deserving Dr. Tania Israel, another bicon of the U.S. bi+ community. Readers of this publication may know her as the writer of *bikus* (bisexual haikus).

Here is a description of the award: "The BIC Community Engagement and Advocacy Award recognizes individuals who have made impressive contributions to advancing the well-being of plurisexual people. The award honors advocacy, education and community-building efforts to support plurisexual people across all areas of society. This award was created to celebrate a broader range of achievements beyond research and more traditionally scholarly accomplishments."

Dr. Mimi Hoang (right) with Emily McIltrout, the Bisexual Issues Committee Co-Chair



# Building Bi+ Organizational Funding Support: The Visibility Impact Fund

By Ellyn Ruthstrom

For more than 30 years, I've been involved in building and strengthening the bi+ community. One thing I've learned is that while bi+ organizations are doing vital work, they are too often underfunded and overlooked. They provide crucial support, create visibility, educate communities, and build connections—yet many struggle to find the financial resources they need to grow.

That reality inspired Neil Aasve to bring together a group of bi+ leaders—Lauren Beach, Camille Holthaus, Jim Larsen, Belle Silverman, and Meg Weireter—to found the Visibility Impact Fund (VIF) on Bi+ Visibility Day, September 23, 2020.

As VIF's founding Project Director, Neil saw firsthand the gap that prevented many bi+ organizations from thriving. "The need is strong, and many organizations serving the bi+ community have difficulty receiving funding from both LGBTQ+ and mainstream foundations. VIF has provided seed funding for new organizations such as Bi+ Georgia, supported groups hosting their first bi+ events, and funded books, visibility materials, and educational programming. In many cases, VIF has supported projects that likely would not have been funded elsewhere because they focus specifically on bi+ communities."

Through the Giving Circle platform on Grapevine, donors make monthly contributions that are combined to provide grants to bi+ organizations across the country. Giving Circle members also vote in the grant allocation process, offering another way to help guide the work of VIF. Although VIF is not currently a 501(c)(3), it is fiscally sponsored by the Social

Good Fund, allowing all donations to be tax-deductible and managed securely and professionally.

I am currently serving as VIF's Project Director, and I'm excited about what we can accomplish together as a community. But we need more people to join us—not only as donors, but also as volunteers on the Leadership Team that keeps the organization moving forward.

Since our founding, VIF has awarded more than \$50,000 in grants to strengthen bi+ organizations and projects. This fall, we'll award another \$8,000. While we're proud of that impact, the need is far greater than our current resources. In our most recent grant cycle, we received 33 applications and were only able to fund four.

The publication you are reading right now—*Bi Women Quarterly*—has been a recipient of VIF grants, which enables BWQ to pay its assistant editors and to continue producing a global publication that connects thousands of bi+ readers around the globe.

Imagine what would be possible if hundreds more people joined our Giving Circle. Small monthly gifts, when combined, become meaningful investments in bi+ organizations that are creating safer communities and ensuring that bi+ people are seen, supported, and celebrated. If you've ever wished there were stronger organizations serving the bi+ community, this is one concrete way to help make that happen.

Please visit [www.visibilityimpactfund.org](http://www.visibilityimpactfund.org) and click the Donate Now button to join our Giving Circle. If monthly giving isn't right for you, one-time donations are also welcome. And if you'd like to become involved with VIF as a volunteer or learn more about our work, I'd love to hear from you. You can reach me at [info@visibilityimpactfund.org](mailto:info@visibilityimpactfund.org).

*Ellyn Ruthstrom is a long-time bi+ activist, former editor of *Bi Women Quarterly*, former President of the Bisexual Resource Center, and current Executive Director of *SpeakOUT Boston*.*



The Visibility  
Impact Fund



# Loraine Hutchins Memorialized on the National LGBTQ Wall of Honor

By Robyn Ochs

On June 25, 2026, Loraine Hutchins (1948-2025) was added to the National LGBTQ Wall of Honor at the Stonewall Inn in New York City. (Yes, that Stonewall Inn!)

The National LGBTQ Wall of Honor is a memorial located inside the historic Stonewall Inn at 53 Christopher Street in New York City's Greenwich Village. It honors deceased LGBTQ+ pioneers, trailblazers, and other heroes who shaped the fight for civil rights, culture, and social justice. It was created in 2019 as a joint endeavor of the Imperial Court and the National LGBTQ Task Force, with 50 original inductees, including bicon Brenda Howard. Each year since, approximately five honorees are added to the wall. In 2025, ABilly S. Jones-Hennin became the second bi+ advocate (though certainly not the second bi+ person) added to the wall. This year, Loraine joins them.

I was invited to speak at the ceremony to share what Loraine Hutchins meant to me. The ceremony took place on the second floor of the Inn. Though I grew up in New York City and often visit family and friends there, I had somehow never been to the Stonewall Inn. The place is steeped in history and symbolism. Next door to the Inn is the Stonewall National Monument which, so far, has managed to survive the current administration's rampage of cultural and historical destruction.

For those not familiar with her work, Loraine was a bisexual activist and writer, most well-known for co-editing *Bi Any Other Name: Bisexual People Speak Out* in 1991 which, after being mislabeled as a "Lesbian Anthology" by the Lambda Literary Awards, sparked a campaign to force the addition of bisexual categories to the awards, which finally succeeded in 2006.

Loraine fought for bi visibility, for bi+ inclusion, for racial justice, and for sexual liberation locally, in the Washington, D.C. area where she lived, and nationally; and she continued this work for decades.



An Imperial Court queen with bi+ advocates Kierra Johnson, Executive Director of the National LGBTQ+ Task Force; Amber Dodd; Robyn Ochs; Estraven; and Dennis Slade. Photo credit: National LGBTQ Task Force

Loraine was brave, and she was ethical. For her entire adult life she did her very best to walk her talk, to practice her values in her daily life and work.

Loraine believed (I'm quoting from her [website](#)) that "social justice and equality are all that really matter and that erotic justice, economic justice, and environmental justice are all connected" and that "none of us are free until/unless all of us are free; sex and spirit are one, and our most sexually alive moments—if we would just realize it—are also our most spiritually potent ones."

I am grateful to my friend and co-conspirator Loraine for doing so much, for so long, for shining light on the B in LGBTQ+, and for providing for me and so many others a role model for how to live our values.

*Note: Loraine wrote several articles for BWQ, which can be found by searching "Loraine Hutchins" on our website.*

*Robyn Ochs is a global speaker, a writer, and editor of this publication.*



# RESEARCH CORNER

By Robyn Ochs

A report issued by the Williams Institute compared cisgender bisexual adults to cisgender lesbian and gay adults in the workplace. The report was based on a survey of 935 U.S. LGBT adults conducted in May 2021.

Here are a few of their findings:

**OUTNESS:** Cisgender bisexual employees are less likely than cisgender lesbians and gay men to report being out at work. Approximately one third (36%) of cis bisexual employees are out to their supervisors, compared to three quarters (75%) of cis gay men and lesbians.

## **DISCRIMINATION:**

- o Overall, bisexual workers are significantly less likely than lesbians and gay men to report experiencing discrimination at work.
- o But this difference shrinks when looking only at those who are out. Among cisgender LGB people who are out at work, the reported level of discrimination is similar for lesbian, gay, and bisexual employees.

## **HARASSMENT OVERALL:**

- o Overall, bi cis employees were less likely to report experiencing harassment in the workplace than their lesbian and gay counterparts.
- o However, when you focus only on those who are out at work, the study found that bisexual men in particular experience high rates of workplace harassment. Out bisexual women's rate of reported harassment was similar to that of lesbians.

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT:** 29.2% of out bisexual women reported experiencing sexual harassment, compared to 17.4% of lesbians.

The authors state that:

“Overall, we find that cisgender bisexual employees are significantly less likely to report experiencing discrimination and harassment in the workplace than cisgender gay and lesbian employees. However, our analysis suggests that higher rates of concealing LGB identity among bisexual employees may mask the extent to which bisexual employees experience unfair treatment at work. When we focus only on employees who are out to at least some people in the workplace, we find that cisgender bisexual employees face similar or higher rates of discrimination and harassment as cisgender gay and lesbian employees. Once we control for who is out in the workplace, our analysis also shows that in many instances workplace experiences also differ by gender, with cisgender bisexual and gay men often reporting higher rates of unfair treatment compared to lesbian and bisexual women.

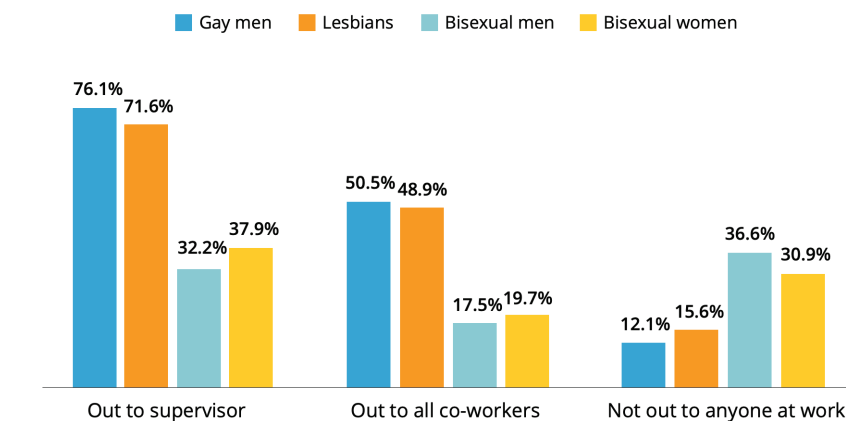
The report concludes with a recommendation that LGB employees not be treated like a monolithic group.

The entire report can be found at [williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/sogender-discrimination-work/](http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/sogender-discrimination-work/).

Citation: Christy Mallory, Brad Sears, and Andrew R. Flores, *The Role of Sexual Orientation and Gender in Workplace Experiences of Cisgender LGB Employees*, Williams Institute, 2022.

*Robyn Ochs is a global speaker, a writer, and editor of this publication.*

Figure 1. Openness about being LGB at work among cisgender LGB employees



Bold text indicates statistically significant difference between bisexual and gay and lesbian employees

# CALENDAR



## Invitation to our readers EVERYWHERE:

Please join the Boston Bisexual Women's Network and Bi Women Quarterly at one (or all) of our digital brunches. We are proud of our community of women (trans and cis) and nonbinary folks, and we would love to make connections across the country and globe. Grab your coffee or tea and some food while we chat about bi+ issues and other fun topics.

**Digital brunches will be held on the following dates starting at 1 p.m. EDT/EST:**

Sunday, September 13  
Saturday, October 3  
Sunday, November 8  
Saturday, December 12  
Sunday, January 10

Please join us! Info/RSVP: [BWQEvents@gmail.com](mailto:BWQEvents@gmail.com)  
(Note: Dates are subject to change.)

## Bi+ World Meetup November 20

Join us at the 21st Bi+ World Meetup on Friday, November 20 at 4 p.m. EST/ 10 p.m. CET. Bi+ people *everywhere* are invited to join us on Zoom. We'll use breakout rooms to give folks an opportunity to join each other in a friendly and free setting. The meeting is in English and is facilitated by Barbara Oud (the Netherlands) and Robyn Ochs (U.S.). Pre-registration is required.

Register at <https://biplus.nl/biplus-world-meetup>.

## Metro-Boston Bi+ Women and Nonbinary Folks:

Keep up with local events. Subscribe to our Google group: <https://groups.google.com/g/biwomenboston>

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**Consider this:** If you rarely (or never) see people like yourself represented in print, your voice is especially important. When you lift your voice, someone, somewhere will **FINALLY** see their own experiences reflected, perhaps for the first time. Our calls for writing are on page 2.



BWQ's Editorial Team: Emily, Robyn, Avery, and Melissa