

How to



mindfully support your LGBTQIA+
colleagues:

EFFECTIVE ALLYSHIP AND INCLUSIVE
LANGUAGE



The Intro



Name: Kat (she/her)

Nationality: Irish

Identity: Queer and bi

Experience: LGBT+ Staff Network chair

"Real" job : Senior IT Project Manager

Queer issues: In a straight-passing relationship





“Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly”
–Martin Luther King Jr.

Where does mindful support start from?



The global picture



- 71 countries still criminalise homosexuality or being trans
- 12 countries where the death penalty can be imposed
- 14 countries have laws banning transitioning or the gender expression of trans people
- 7 in 10 people in Eastern Europe and the Balkans are never or almost never open about their LGBT+ identity
- So far this year, there are 550 anti-trans bills being proposed in the USA - 31 have been passed.



The UK picture

- Conversion therapy is still legal in the UK
- It is still legal to perform Intersex Infant Surgery
- Same sex marriage only became legal in Northern Ireland in 2020
- Timescales for a first appointment with the NHS for gender dysphoria can take up to 7 years.
- 39% of the UK public have positive views of trans people. compared to 54% holding positive views for gay and lesbian people (YouGov 2023)



Hate crimes + speech

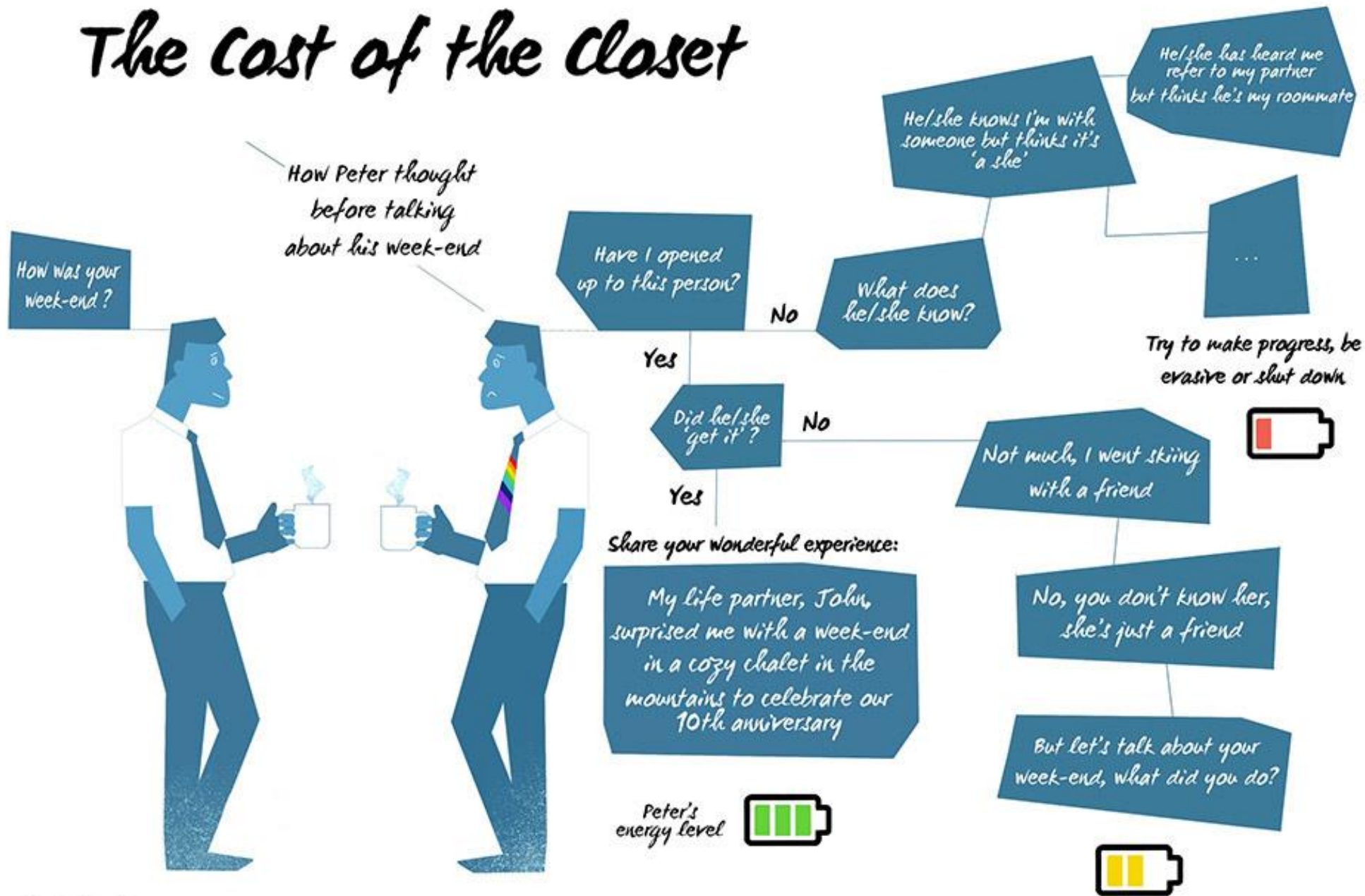
- The increase in hate crimes against trans people by 11% in a year, and by 186% in the last five years,
- Hate crimes on the basis of sexual orientation are still up by 112% in the last five years.
- LGBT+ hate crimes are the most likely to involve violence or threats of violence.
- The Government's own statistics suggest fewer than one in ten LGBT+ people report hate crimes or incidents.

POST-MISERY BREAK!

How does the societal picture affect employees?



The cost of the closet



So! How do we transform our workplaces into supportive and inclusive spaces?



✦

“Showing up for others is one of the most powerful things you can do.

Being an ally, first of all, is a constant act - not a state of being.

Whatever we call ourselves - an ally, an accomplice, a co-conspirator - we must do better to understand, empathise, and take action to care for each other” - Shakirah Bourne

✦



The Allyship Iceberg

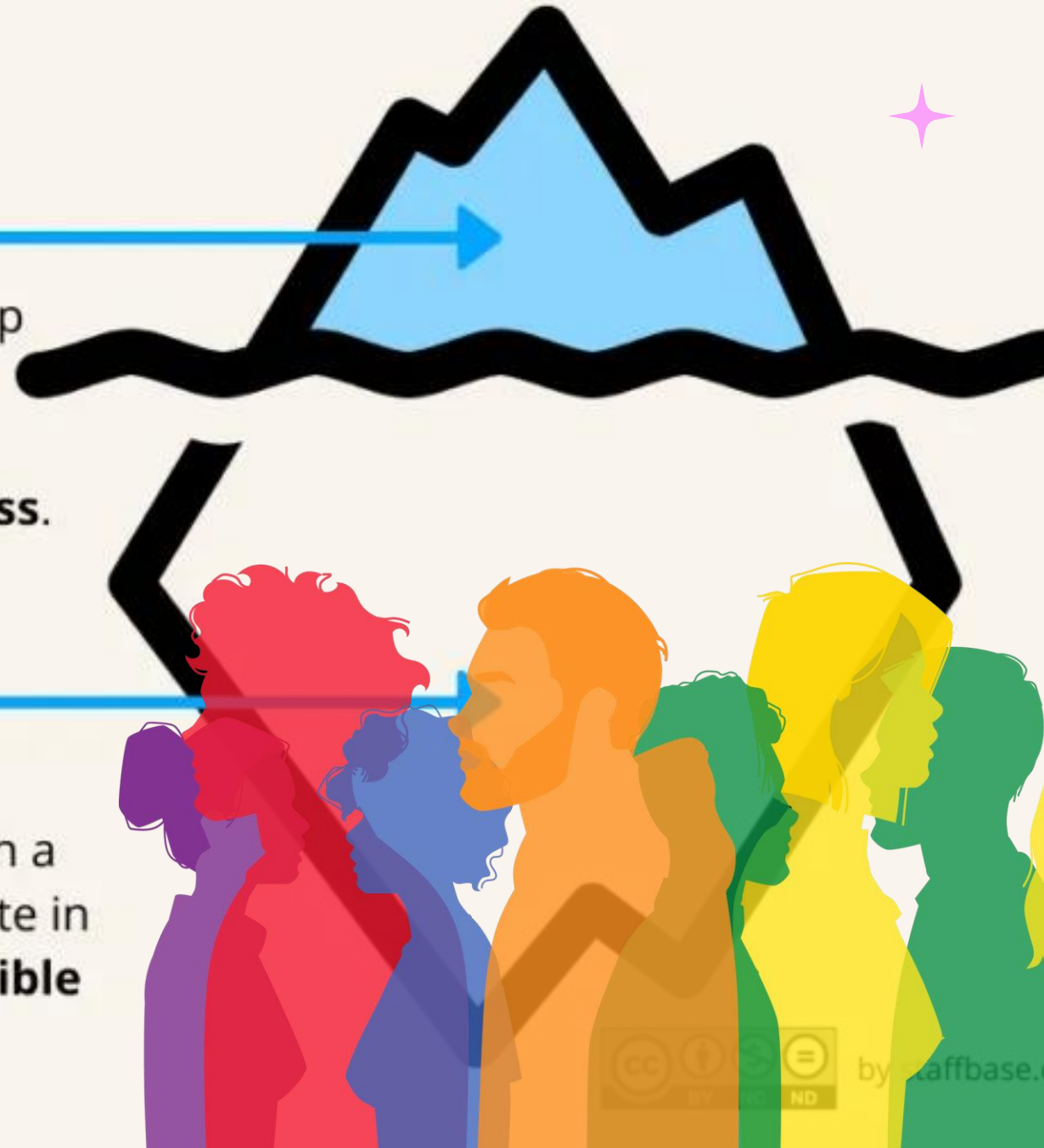
- **Performative Allyship**

When someone from a non-marginalized group professes support and solidarity with a marginalized group in a way that isn't helpful.

This is also known as performative wokeness.

- **Allyship**

An active, consistent, and lifelong practice of unlearning and re-learning in which a person in a position of privilege and power seeks to operate in solidarity with a marginalized group. **Not a visible practice you'll see on social media.**



You are going to mess up.

Ever tried.

Ever failed.

No matter.

Try again.

Fail again.

Fail better

- Samuel Beckett.



So. You're going to get it wrong. How do you deal with that?

- Don't make it about you. It sucks. It also sucks for your LGBTQIA+ employee
 - Reflect. How did you get it wrong. How do you do better tomorrow?
 - Be vulnerable with others.
 - Create a culture of safety to share your missteps.



Now, inclusive language! What does it look like?



Language tips 101

- Don't use 'gay' if you mean all our community! Use LGBT+, LGBTQ+, LGBTQIA+, queer – pick it and own it!
- Just pronouns – not preferred pronouns
- Queer is not a bad word. But it does have a history.
- If you don't know how to identify someone, ask them.
- Singular they/them pronouns are in fact grammatically correct



Language tips 101

- Consider your policy language – do you call it maternity/paternity leave or parental time off?
- Talking about relationships? Use partner/partners or spouse or significant partner
- Be explicit in talking about confidentiality – don't out people!
- Don't define straight or cis people as “normal”
- Don't call people “it”.



LEARN PROPER LANGUAGE

Incorrect—

✗ He is ~~a~~ transgender

✗ He is transgendered

'Transgender' is an adjective. Using it as a noun or verb is not only grammatically incorrect but also dehumanizing, or implies something has happened to us trans which is false.

✗ He transgendered last year

✗ He changed genders

I didn't change my gender. I changed my presentation. I've always been myself—a boy, a man. I just haven't always had the words or resources or confidence to explain that.

✗ He was born a girl

✗ When he was a girl

✗ Before he became a boy

These imply I was once a girl. But I never was truly a girl. Though I may have "looked like" or presented as a girl, I have always been me; a boy, a man. Even when I couldn't explain that. For me, this extends to "FTM" as well. When relevant, I prefer to say I was "assigned female at birth, and identify as male," instead.

✗ Being trans means you're gay.

✗ Did you get *the* surgery?

Correct—

✓ He is transgender

✓ He is a transgender man

✓ He transitioned last year

✓ He transitioned

✓ He was assigned female at birth

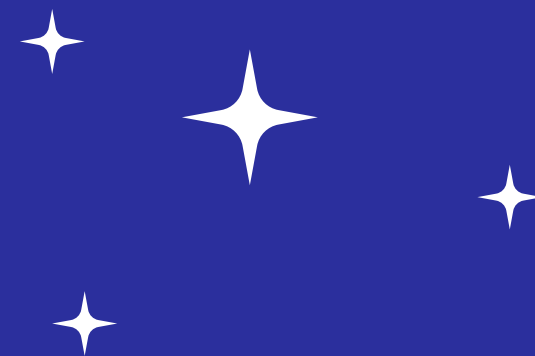
✓ When he presented as a woman OR
When he was perceived as a woman

The difference between these two is that the former implies the trans person intended to present as a woman, whereas in the latter, it's just about others' perception.

✓ Before he transitioned

✓ Gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same

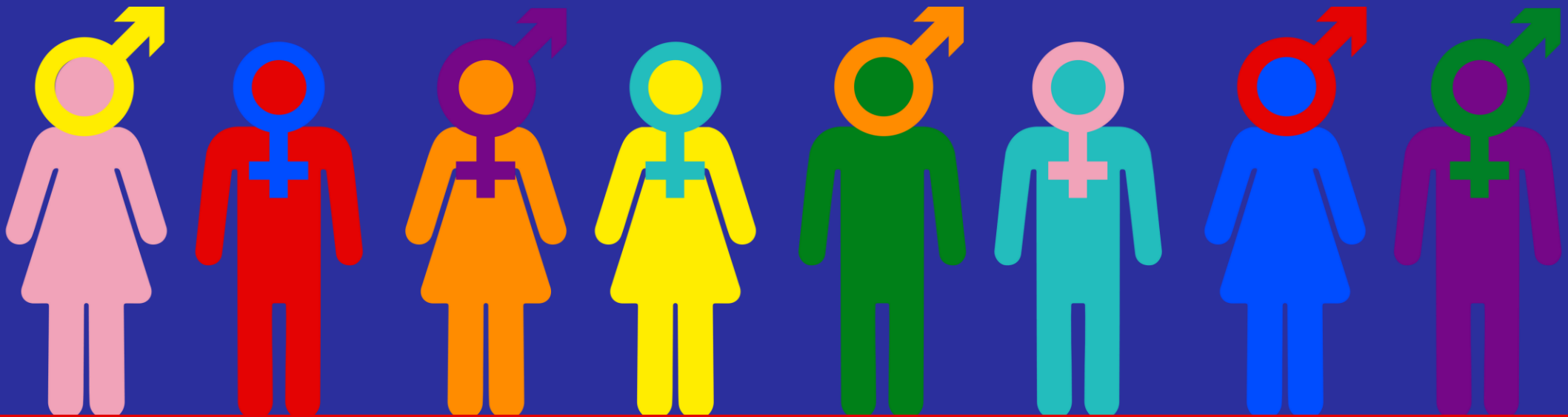
✓ Don't ask about surgeries and/or private parts unless a person explicitly invites that conversation!

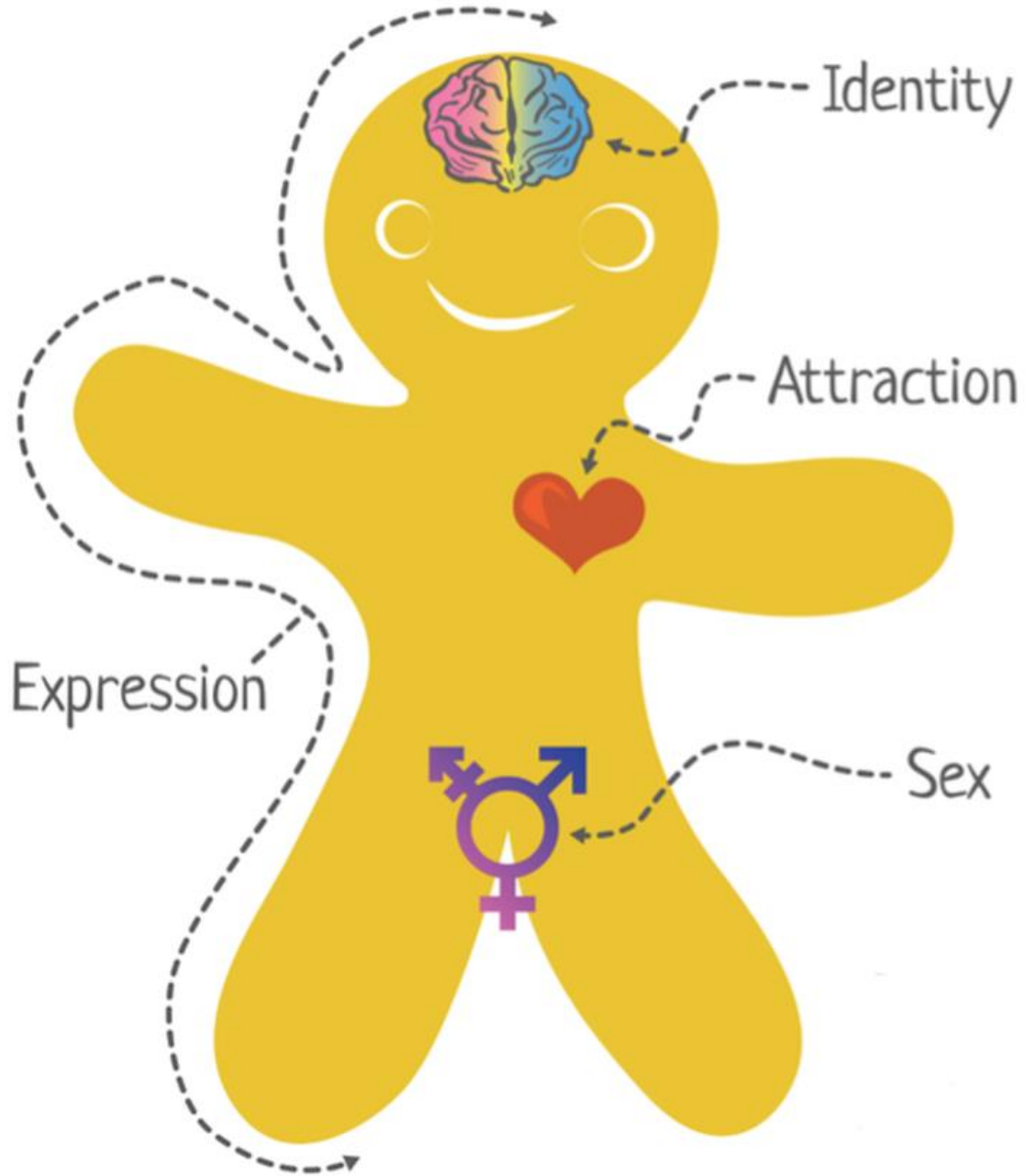




BE
CURIOUS
NOT
Judgmental

Bonus Content





The Genderbread Person

So what are the daily issues that actually face the LGBT+ community?

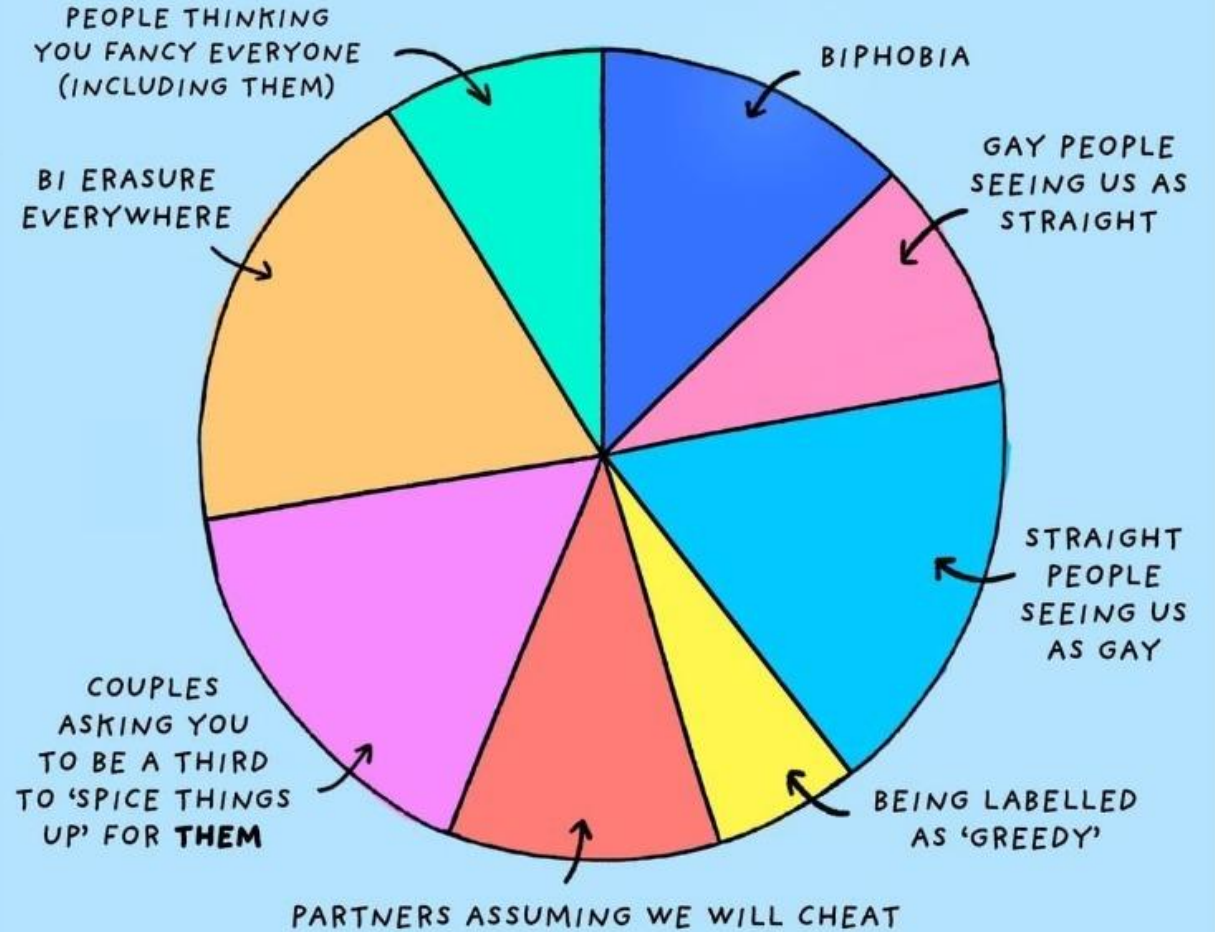


WHAT PEOPLE THINK BISEXUAL ISSUES ARE:



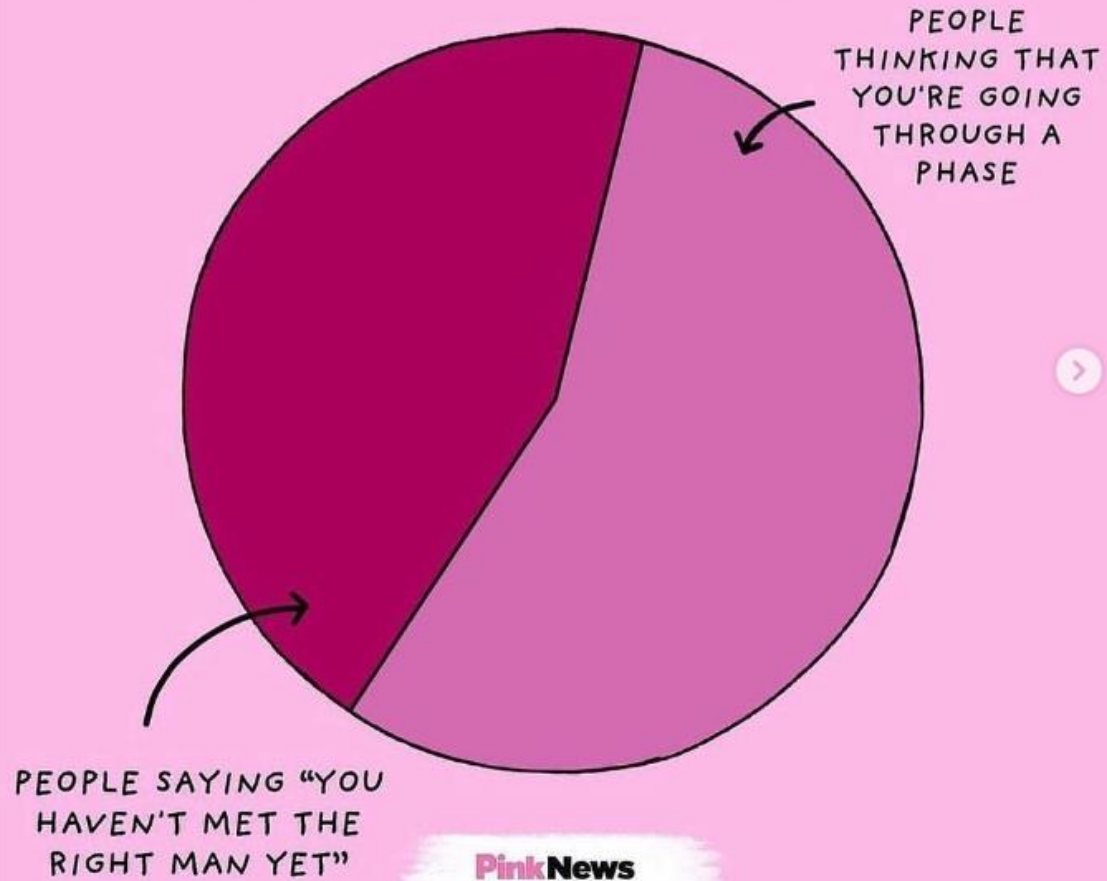
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WHAT BISEXUAL ISSUES ACTUALLY ARE:

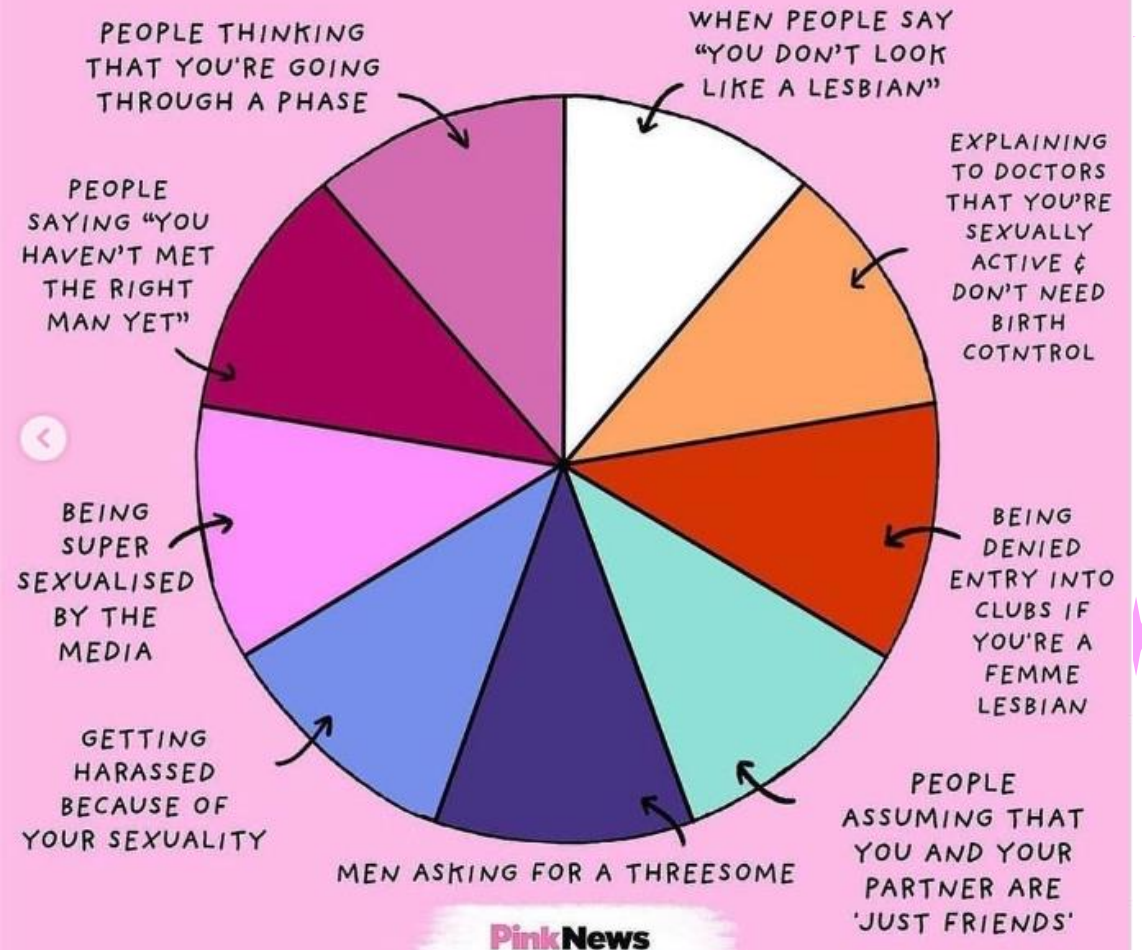


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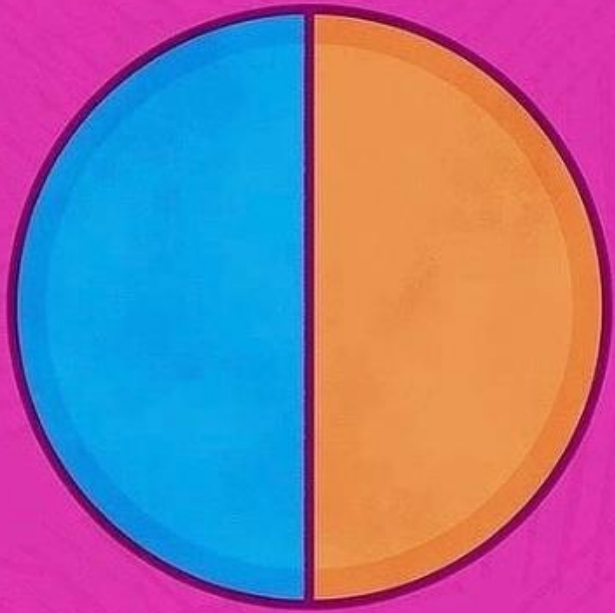
WHAT PEOPLE THINK LESBIAN ISSUES ARE:



WHAT LESBIAN ISSUES ACTUALLY ARE:



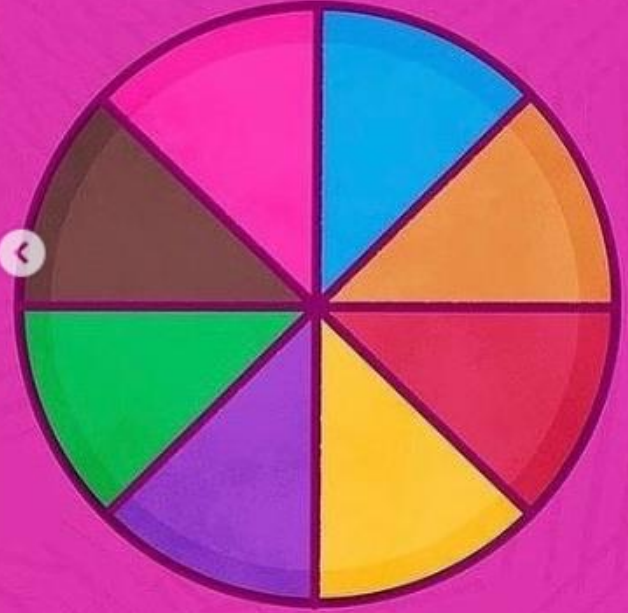
THE ONLY THINGS PEOPLE THINK ARE HOMOPHOBIA:



- USING SLURS
- PHYSICAL ATTACKS

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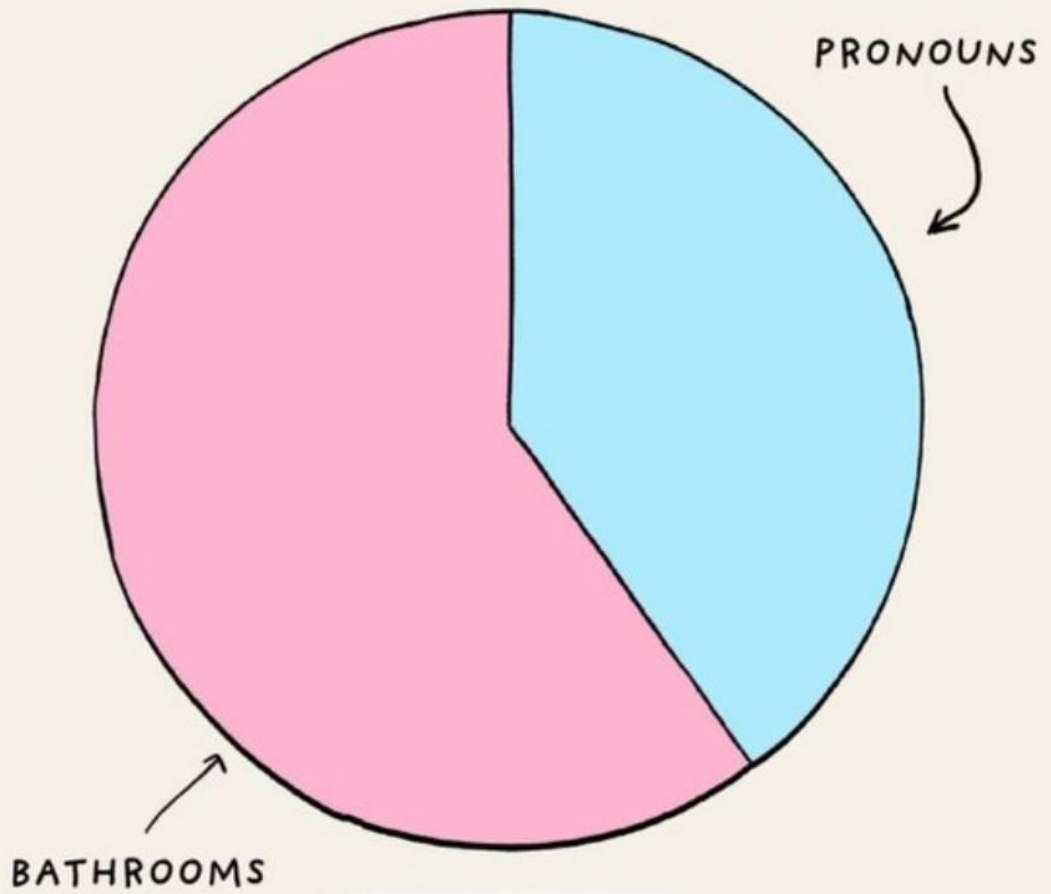
WHAT HOMOPHOBIA ACTUALLY IS:



- USING SLURS
- PHYSICAL ATTACKS
- "THAT'S SO GAY"
- LACK OF LGBT+ REPRESENTATION
- "WHAT A WASTE"
- DENIED LEGAL RIGHTS
- LEFT OUT OF HISTORY
- DISCRIMINATED AGAINST AT WORK

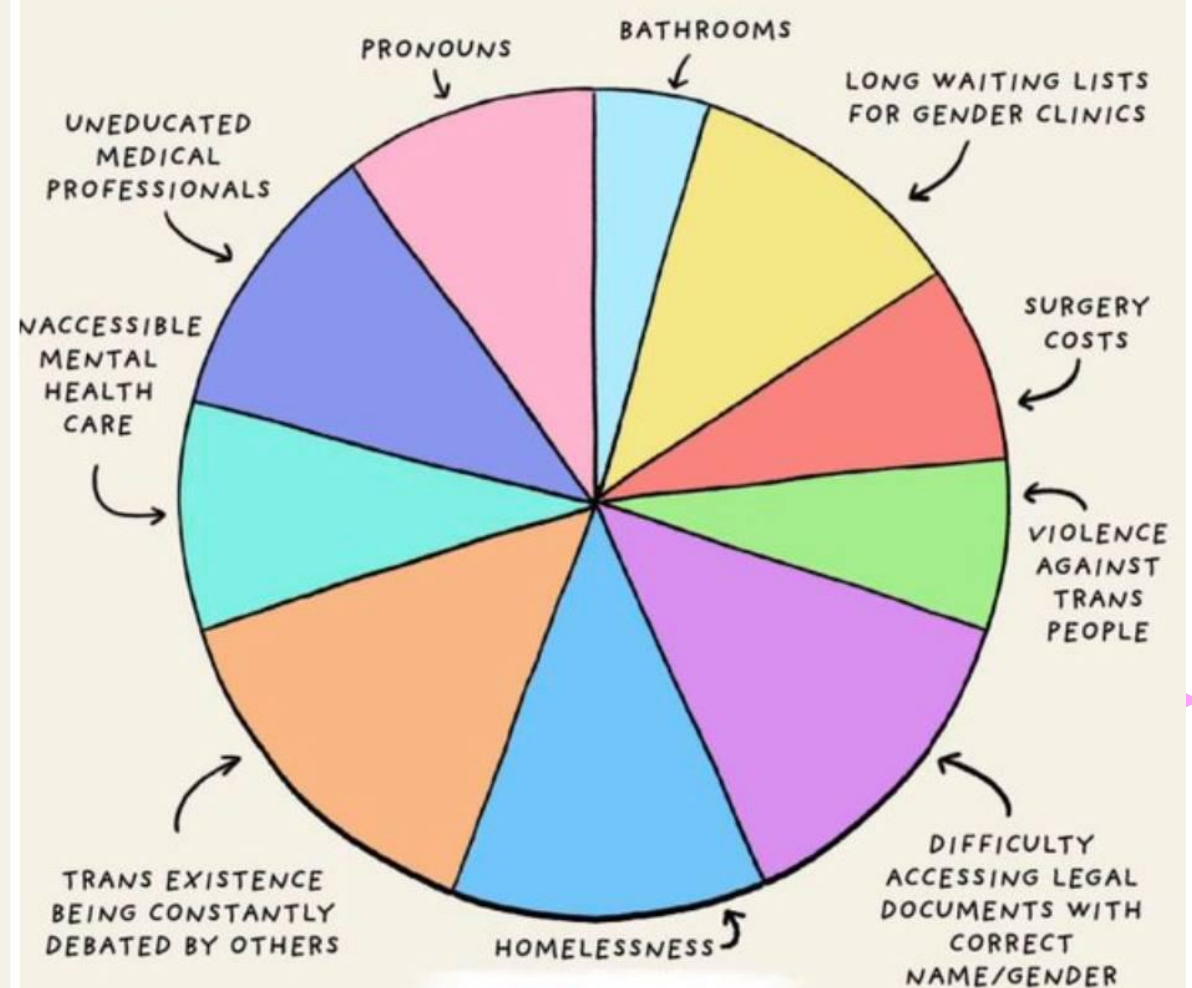
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WHAT PEOPLE THINK
TRANS ISSUES ARE



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WHAT TRANS ISSUES ACTUALLY ARE:



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Pose



A League of Their Own

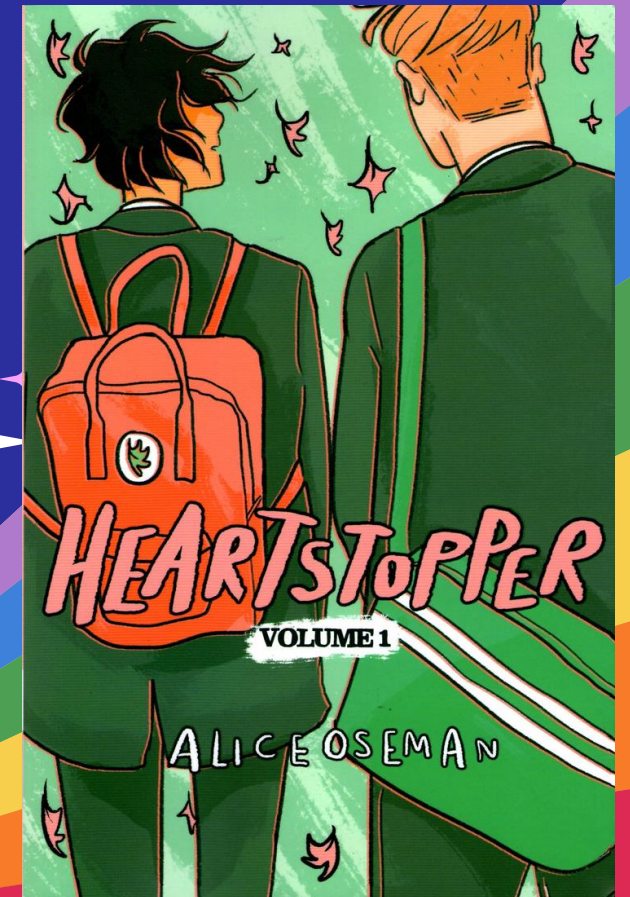
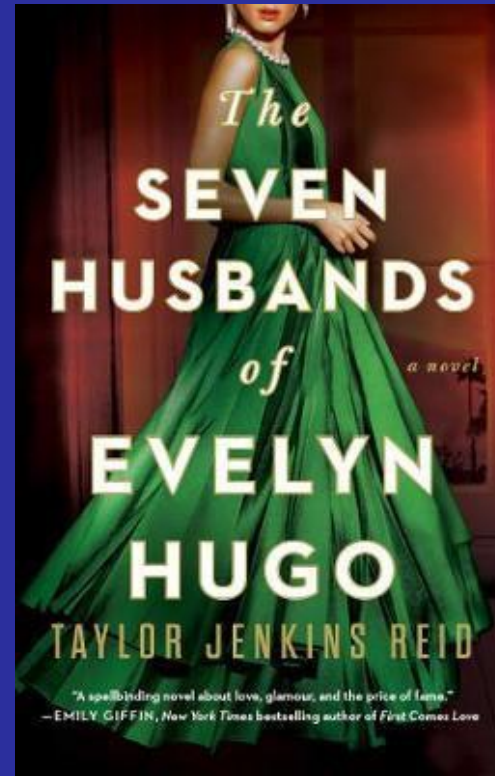
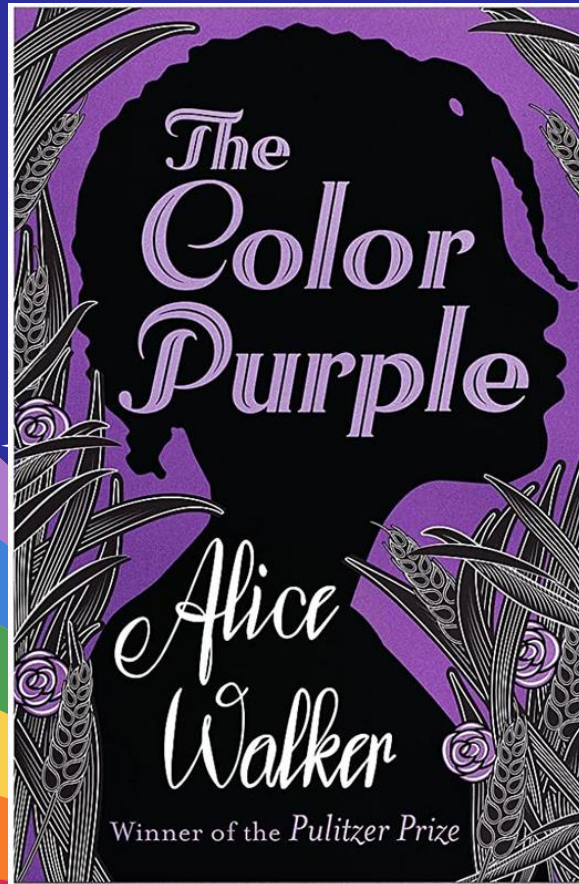
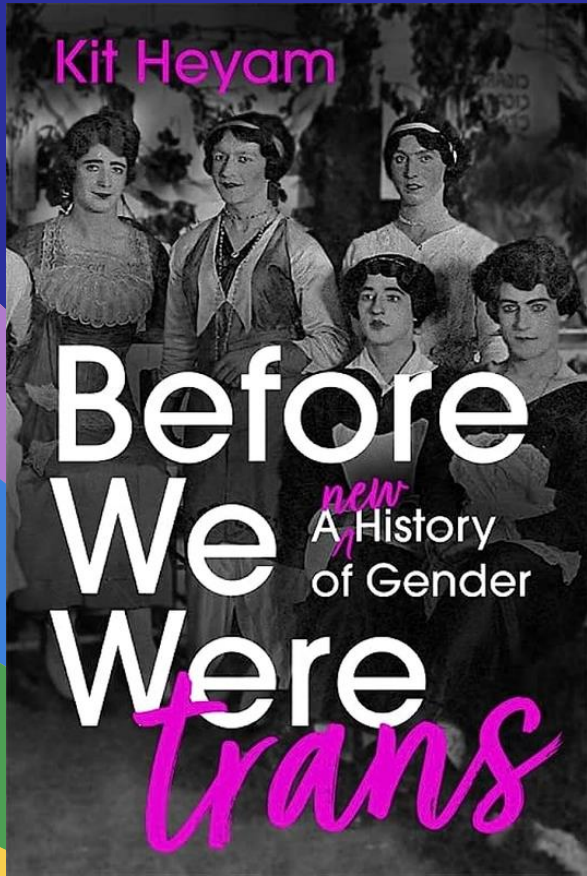


Our Flag Means Death



The Owl House





Signposting

