Intercultural Happenings

Stonehill College, Office of Intercultural Affairs

Safe Zone Workshop
Monday, October 19, 2-4:30pm, Cleary Dining Room, Registration via Diversity@stonehill.edu

Our Safe Zone program is designed to educate students, staff and faculty who want to serve as allies to individuals who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT). Community members participate in the workshop to better understand information, terms, and experiences of those who identify as LGBT.

A Frank Conversation about Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual People & Christianity Webinar for Faculty & Staff
Tuesday, October 20th, 9-10am, Registration via Diversity@stonehill.edu

Engage in a unique on campus professional development opportunities provided by NASPA. We will be offering 1 hour “Equity and Inclusion Modules” throughout the year. The webinar aims to open a dialogue about the intersections of religious and spiritual identity and sexual identity, discuss common challenges that gay, lesbian, and queer people face in conservative Christian communities, and strategize how to advocate and support the diversity of individuals within gay, lesbian, and queer communities on college campuses.


Living out Islam documents the rarely heard voices of gay, lesbian and transgender Muslims who live in secular democratic countries. It weaves original interviews with Muslim activists into a compelling composite picture that showcases the importance of the solidarity of support groups in the effort to change social relationships and achieve justice. This nascent movement is not about being out as opposed to being in the closet. Rather, as the voices of these activists demonstrate, it is about finding ways to live out Islam with dignity and integrity, reconciling their sexuality and gender with their faith and reclaiming Islam as their own. Available in hardcover in MacPhaidin Library Main Stacks (Call number: BP188.14.H65 K84 2014)

Did you know MacPhaidin Library has an LGBTQ LibGuide?

View it here: http://libguides.stonehill.edu/c.php?g=16703

Inclusive Excellence Grants

Stonehill students, faculty, and staff members are invited to apply for the Office of Intercultural Affairs’ Inclusive Excellence Grants. We seek proposals for innovative and educational projects, programs, and activities that aim to create or improve programs which address the importance of including diverse views, cultures, or methods of teaching and learning; encourage the participation of all community members in diversity initiatives at the College; educate ourselves and others in issues of social justice, diversity, intercultural dialogue and communication; increase learning and support of groups from historically underrepresented groups; develop sustainable programs that increase awareness of the importance of a diverse community and/ or increase opportunities for collaborative learning and inclusive excellence. For more information on award criteria, funding, and deadlines, please see: http://www.stonehill.edu/offices-services/intercultural-affairs/inclusive-excellence-grant/
Three Questions Trans* People Are Tired of Answering

I get it: you’ve seen all the media coverage about Caitlyn Jenner, Laverne Cox, and other transgender celebrities, and you want to learn more about transgender individuals. Normally, I don’t mind questions! I want people to learn, to be educated, and to empathize with trans folks. At the same time, there are certain questions that are invasive, uncomfortable, and rely on problematic assumptions. Here are three:

1. Have you had “the surgery”?
   We put a lot of emphasis on trans folks’ genitals when we would never ask a cisgender person (the term for someone who identifies as the gender they were assigned at birth) what kind of genitals they have. It puts the emphasis back on someone’s sex, or their physical characteristics, instead of their gender, or what they feel emotionally and mentally aligned with. If a person identifies as transgender, we should respect the gender they identify as regardless of surgical status. Not only that, but gender reassignment surgery often involves multiple surgeries and is expensive, ranging anywhere from $10,000 to $50,000 and not typically covered by medical insurance, so it isn’t a possibility for many in the trans community who may want it.

2. So who do you date?
   Even though transgender is included in the LGBTQ acronym, it isn’t the same as sexuality. Gender is where one feels they fit on the gender spectrum, while sexuality is whom one is romantically and/or sexually attracted to. Sexuality among trans individuals is as varied as it is among cisgender people; some are gay, some are straight, some are bi, some identify as something else. Being trans doesn’t determine someone’s sexuality.

3. So you’re an atheist/agnostic?
   Maybe it’s because we’re at a Catholic college, but I do get this question a lot. Many people seem to think that because someone identifies as GLBTQ, they can’t take part in religion. It’s true that a lot of people leave their churches due to discrimination, which is terrible, but there are many that still identify with a specific religion and believe in God – though they often don’t agree with everything their religion teaches about gender and sexuality minorities. Personally, I believe in God, and many of the people who make up my support system are Catholic. Believing in God and identifying as a gender or sexuality minority certainly are not incompatible!

If you’re going to ask a trans person a question about their gender, then ask about their preferred pronouns, or inquire about the support they’re receiving. But please, stay away from these questions and anything else that is invasive or relies on inaccurate assumptions.

About the author: Gavin Damore is a senior English major graduating this semester. A life-long theatre enthusiast, he’s currently a publicity intern for the internationally-touring play “Kutar's Mime” as he pursues a public relations career within the theatre industry. He identifies as a transgender man.