

## Examples of Homophobia

- Looking at a gay or lesbian person and automatically thinking of their sexuality rather than seeing him or her as a whole, complex person.
- Failing to be supportive when your gay or lesbian friend is sad about a quarrel or breakup.
- Assuming that a gay or lesbian relationship is just about sex and not like a loving heterosexual relationship. "*After all, it's not like they're married.*"
- Changing your seat in a meeting because the person in the chair next to you "looks" gay or lesbian. "*I can spot one anywhere.*"
- Using phrases like "gay lifestyle" or "sexual preference" to dismiss or marginalize gay or lesbian persons.
- Treating gay or lesbian persons as if they made a choice to be gay or lesbian, rather than a choice to live honestly with their sexual orientation.
- Using the term "gay" or "lesbian" as accusatory. "*She admitted she was a lesbian.*" "*He is a confessed homosexual.*"
- Not asking about a gay or lesbian friend's partner, although you regularly ask "How is your husband/wife?" when you run into a heterosexual friend.
- Greeting people, but being afraid to shake hands with a gay or lesbian person.
- Thinking that if a gay or lesbian person touches you he or she is making sexual advances.
- Stereotyping gay or lesbian persons as promiscuous, "recruiters", sexual predators, pederasts, separatists, or radicals. Using those terms accusingly.
- Feeling repulsed by public displays of affection between gay men or lesbians, but accepting the same affectionate displays between heterosexuals as natural.
- Wondering which one is the "man/woman" in a gay or lesbian couple.
- Feeling that gay people are too outspoken about gay rights.
- Assuming that everyone you meet is heterosexual.
- Feeling that a gay or lesbian person is just a man or woman who couldn't find the right woman or man.
- Avoiding mentioning to friends that you are involved with a gay rights organization because you are afraid that they will think that you are gay.
- Not confronting a heterosexist remark for fear of being identified with gay or lesbian people.

Adapted from: Lesbians; A Consciousness Raising Kit, By The Boston NOW Lesbian Task Force