

Sexism, Heterosexism, and Trans* Oppression: An Integrated Perspective

QUADRANT 1

Name of Activity: Gender Socialization

Instructional Purpose of the Activity: The purpose of this activity is to engage in reflective thinking about gender and sexual orientation.

Learning Outcomes:

- o To think more deeply about the impact of socialization on current identities
- o To explore the consequences of resisting socialization

Time Needed: 60 minutes total (20–30 minutes in groups of 3)

Materials Needed: Questions for participants

Degree of Risk (low, medium, high): Medium- to high-risk

Procedure:

- In groups of three people, participants should discuss the following questions:
 - o How did you learn how to “appropriately” act out your gender from:
 - i. Parents, siblings, other family?
 - ii. Peers?
 - iii. Teachers, school?
 - iv. Religious institutions?
 - v. Popular media?
 - o How did you learn expectations for your sexual orientation from:
 - i. Parents, siblings, other family?
 - ii. Peers?
 - iii. Teachers, school?
 - iv. Religious institutions?
 - v. Popular media?
- After completing this exercise, bring participants back into the large group to discuss the following questions:
 - i. What aspects of gender and sexual orientation socialization were most powerful for you?
 - ii. How did you resist gender and sexual orientation socialization?
 - iii. How did family and school react to young people who resisted their gender and sexual orientation socialization?
 - iv. What connections between gender and sexual orientation socialization can you identify?

- v. Do you remember friends or classmates who did not conform to gender or sexual orientation expectations? How were they treated by peers? By teachers?
- vi. Where did you get information about lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans* people?
- vii. As an adult, how do you experience pressures to conform to gender and sexual orientation expectations?

Facilitation Notes:

- Participants should be encouraged to share in a way that is comfortable, and not feel pressured to reveal anything they do not wish to disclose (such as sexual orientation or gender identity). In setting up the activity, facilitators should offer that if participants do not want to publically reflect on their past gender, then they can use their current gender identity, or choose to pass from sharing in their small group.
- Consider the dynamics of the group and how much comfort was developed in the first few activities. If you notice the group does not seem to be cohesive, then consider changing the groups of three to individual reflection on paper.

Recommended Readings/Materials for Students: Harro, Cycle of Socialization; Tatum, Who am I?

Recommended Supplementary Materials/Readings for the Instructor or Facilitator: Harro, Cycle of Socialization; Tatum, Who am I?

Names of Those to Credit for this Activity: Pat Griffin and Chase Catalano