

Breaking the binary barrier

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at bisexuals and think, 'I couldn't date him...he will just end up leaving me for a woman.' [But] it's just as likely that he will leave you for another man. Gender is irrelevant. If the relationship isn't strong, it won't be bisexuality that causes its undoing."

Myth: Bisexuals suffer from homophobia and lack of solidarity with gays and lesbians.

"Some gays and lesbians seem to believe that bisexuals are hiding behind that label to avoid the risks and pressures of being gay or lesbian. There is a certain level of cultural acceptance for bisexuals...more so with women," notes Dillinger. "Gays and lesbians sometimes harbor some resentment toward bisexuals...because they feel like bisexuals won't join them in solidarity in the gay rights movement."

The madness

"Gays and lesbians have blamed bisexuals for everything from the failure of monogamy to the AIDS epidemic," says Williams. "We've been called liars and indecisive and non-existent...I mean, look at [Hollywood actress] Anne Heche. She fell in love with a man and the gay media made her out to be a fame-grubbing, two-faced, manipulative poser. What about the possibility that, after a great, loving relationship with [lesbian comedian] Ellen DeGeneres, their relationship fell apart and she fell in love with someone else? Would she have been so demonized in the press if she had fallen for another woman? I don't think so."

But mention Heche's name in certain circles, and sharp words would be flying and chairs could be broken. Deb France, a lesbian architect who is not only in a committed relationship with a bisexual woman, but who also worked through her own homosexual identity during a long marriage, points the finger at people like Heche for misconceptions of bisexuals.

"I blame those like Anne Heche, the bitch!" France exclaims. "Seriously, when do we know if our partner is really on board with our sexual identity or if they are simply following the flavor of the day? Is sex like Baskin-Robbins' 31 flavors? There seems to be a need for some clarity."

But 31 flavors sound good to Williams. "One's inherent sexuality is a subconscious weaving of one's fantasy, biology, psychology and sometimes merely one's changing fancy or the flavor of the day," he says. "There are so many more flavors to ice cream than vanilla and chocolate. There are hundreds of colors in the rainbow. There are a myriad different ways people are sexual."

"When do we know if our partner is really on board with our sexual identity or if they are simply following the flavor of the day?"

—Deb France

Dillinger remarks, "It is a strange sociological phenomenon when an oppressed group will turn around and oppress another group." He attributes the action to inherent human need for power and control. "If a person is being oppressed as a minor-

ity, he or she will often find a way to find that control and power by oppressing someone else," he says.

As a bisexual, James senses different vibes from different subsets of the lesbian community. In addition to feeling threatened, older dykes—those who have fought harder than she has to openly proclaim their sexuality—are jealous about what is taken for granted today. She says, "They don't seem to want those bisexual impostors riding on the coattails of that hard-won privilege."

Branden theorizes: "Discrimination affords an oppressed group of people—in this case gays and lesbians—to have an expendable sacrificial group during the fight for equality. Every march to



Scott Dillinger is a gay social worker and therapist at Oregon Health & Science University

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