LGBT: Information and Talking Points for Laypeople

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February 2015

When concerned citizens formed Billings (MT) Family Action to (successfully) oppose a nondiscrimination ordinance (NDO), some of us had only basic knowledge of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) issues. A search of the Internet, and social, political, and legal action organizations, yielded much useful information but no summary or talking points paper. So I researched and wrote such a paper that laypeople used as a resource to write and speak about LGBT matters. This is an improved version of that work.

The purposes of this paper are to:

Help concerned laypeople get up to speed on LGBT issues.

Provide talking points they can use when writing and speaking about LGBT matters.

Several competent people reviewed this material. Key references are listed at the end. Send improvement suggestions to gdelivery777@gmail.com. Feel free to use part of the paper or to edit it to suit your needs, putting your name or the name of your organization on it.

When considering the LGBT debate, keep in mind that 2.6 percent of the U.S. adult population identify as LGBT (2.3 percent as homosexual or bisexual [Centers for Disease Control, 2014] and 0.3 percent as transgender [Williams Institute, 2011]), of which only a portion are LGBT activists.

Compassion for LGBT People

All people have inherent dignity because every person is made in the image of God; therefore, we must extend respect, compassion, and friendship to LGBT people where opportunities arise, though not in a way that signals approval of their behaviors. Similarly, the Church must act with love and compassion toward LGBT people, yet never affirm their conduct as morally right.

Pain and devastation often come with LGBT lifestyles,¹ and many LGBT people say they long to establish a different pattern of life; therefore, we must also extend hope for change to LGBT people, remembering that it seldom occurs without help and encouragement from others.

¹LGBT lifestyles often involve sexual promiscuity, infidelity, short-term relationships, physical disease, mental illness, substance abuse, domestic violence, and shorter lifespan. (There is no empirical evidence to link higher rates of mental health problems with society's disapproval of homosexual conduct. Even in gay-friendly societies, research has shown that homosexuals have higher rates of mental health problems.)

Homosexual Origins

One claim put forth to justify homosexuality is that some people are born gay; that is, many homosexuals do not choose their sexual orientation, it is part of their genetic makeup from birth, thus their behaviors cannot be wrong. Homosexual activist and history professor John D’Emilio said, ‘‘Born gay’’ is an idea with a large constituency, LGBT and otherwise. It’s an idea designed to allay the ingrained fears of a homophobic society
and the internalized fears of gays, lesbians, and bisexuals. What’s most amazing to me about the ‘born gay’ phenomenon is that the scientific evidence for it is thin as a reed, yet it doesn’t matter. It’s an idea with such social utility that one doesn’t need much evidence in order to make it attractive and credible.”

Although studies have shown some indirect congenital influences that may increase the likelihood of homosexual development, this is far different from proving congenital determinism. Especially significant are twin studies, which have shown that all prenatal biological factors have, at most, a weak and non-determinative role in the development of homosexuality. The evidence strongly supports the view that homosexuality develops primarily as a result of postnatal experiences and influences. Factors may include childhood sexual abuse, less gendered socialization/education at an early age, relationships with parents, a homosexual parent, parental divorce during childhood, and culture.

The fact is, homosexuality is not determined at birth, nor is heterosexuality or any other human behavior. Homosexuality develops as a result of postnatal experiences and influences. Homosexuals are not born gay and their sexual orientation can change.

Civil Rights

LGBT activists say they are fighting for basic civil rights denied them by an oppressive society; however, a closer look at LGBT people shows that they are not an oppressed minority. They do not meet the three criteria that characterize minority groups that have received special legal protection:

   Economic Deprivation. As a group, LGBT people are among the most advantaged people in the country. Research shows that homosexuals fare at least as well or better than the rest of the population.

   Political Powerlessness. LGBT people display political power far beyond their numbers. Only 2.6 percent of adults identify as LGBT, and not all of them are activists.

   Immutable (Unchangeable) Characteristics. Homosexuality is not determined at birth and sexual orientation can change.

LGBT people are the only group to claim minority status based on behavior – unnatural, unhealthy, and immoral sexual behavior.

Contrary to claims of discrimination, there is no effort to deny LGBT people the same rights guaranteed to all Americans. They have the same rights with the same restrictions as everyone else, including the right to free speech, freedom of religion, and due process of law, to engage in commerce and enter into contracts, and to own property and vote, along with a host of other rights. LGBT people can also enter into whatever romantic relationships they wish. Yet they want more, they want special legal protection for their vaguely defined, changeable, sexual behaviors. This is contrary to the wise precedent our courts have set of limiting civil rights protections to classes of people having clearly defined, immutable, human characteristics like race, biological sex, and disability.

Simply put, the issue boils down to one of morality, not civil rights.
LGBT Agenda

LGBT activists and their allies follow a well-orchestrated agenda to:

- Gain approval and normalization of LGBT behaviors, lifestyles, and identities at all levels of society.
- Obtain special rights and protections for LGBT people beyond those afforded all citizens.
- Gain full marriage and parenting rights.
- Get LGBT-friendly policies and programs in our schools.
- Censor churches and parachurch organizations that teach biblical principles about sexuality, marriage, and family.
- Acquire the means to silence and punish those who refuse to embrace and celebrate LGBT.

Much of the success of the LGBT rights movement is attributed to a plan initially laid out in a 1987 article in Guide Magazine titled “The Overhauling of Straight America” by Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen. This was followed by the 1989 book After the Ball - How America will conquer its fear and hatred of Gays in the 90s. Kirk and Madsen stated that the first order of business is to desensitize the American public concerning gays and gay rights. To accomplish this they advised activists to:

- Talk about gays and gayness as loudly and as often as possible.
- Portray gays as victims, not as aggressive challengers.
- Give protectors (straights) a just cause (antidiscrimination).
- Make gays look good.
- Make victimizers (opponents) look bad.
- Get funds from corporate America.

As a means of portraying opponents as evil persecutors, they promoted “jamming,” in which Christians, traditionalists, and other foes are publicly smeared. This agenda, aided by a complicit media and the capitulation of many churches, institutions, governments, and leaders, has been successful.

Another factor contributing to the success of the LGBT agenda is the effort to conceal the realities of homosexual sex. Kirk and Madsen said, “In the early stages of any campaign to reach straight America, the masses should not be shocked and repelled by premature exposure to homosexual behavior itself. Instead, the imagery of sex should be downplayed and gay rights should be reduced to an abstract social question as much as possible.”

Kirk and Madsen openly admitted that the effect of their deceptive tactics must be achieved without reference to facts, logic, or proof, and that their campaign depended centrally upon a program of unabashed propaganda, firmly grounded in long-established principles of psychology and advertising. Thus, LGBT activists rely on emotional manipulation of the public and ad hominem attacks, including the reckless use of words like
“discrimination,” “hate,” “bigotry,” “intolerance,” and “homophobia,” to convince others of their alleged victimization, silence opposition, avoid the issues, and take the focus off their behaviors.

What LGBT activists ultimately seek is to create a new norm where:

- Sexuality and gender are fluid and interchangeable.
- Neither is based on biological factors but on the feelings, desires, and experiences of each person.
- Homosexuality is seen as the moral and social equivalent to heterosexuality, i.e., universal acceptance.

The result would be a society where sexual experimentation and gender nonconformity are embraced as normal and protected by special status, and where anyone who dares to say otherwise is judged as bigoted and intolerant, and is silenced.

**LGBT-Friendly Laws**

Part of the genius of the American system of government is our commitment to protecting the liberty and First Amendment freedoms of all citizens, while respecting equality before the law. However, LGBT-friendly laws, allegedly needed to prohibit discriminatory acts based on sexual orientation and gender identity, grant extraordinary legal protection to LGBT people beyond that afforded all citizens, and are among the most significant threats to religious adherents’ right to freely exercise their faith.

Nondiscrimination laws traditionally addressed clearly defined, immutable, human characteristics such as race, biological sex, and disability. LGBT-friendly laws are different. By including sexual orientation and gender identity, they codify vaguely defined, changeable, sexual behaviors. This opens a Pandora’s Box of social and legal problems, including:

- Promotion of lifestyles harmful to people and society.
- Threats to constitutional freedoms of conscience, religion, speech, and association; to traditional views of sexuality, marriage, and family; to the right of parents, churches, and parachurch organizations to teach traditional values to the next generation; to a citizen’s right to run their business the way they choose; and to a person’s right to use a personal facility without someone of the opposite sex present.
- Enforcement difficulties and arbitrary outcomes.

Nondiscrimination laws and same-sex marriage go hand in hand. Courts that have redefined marriage to include homosexual couples cite the existence of nondiscrimination laws at the state level as establishing a precedent that it is impermissible to discriminate based on sexual orientation. Where same-sex marriage is legally recognized, people and institutions that have conscientious objections to facilitating same-sex marriage will likely be sued under existing nondiscrimination laws for not hiring individuals in same-sex marriages, or for refusing to extend spousal benefits to same-sex spouses, make property or services available for same-sex marriage ceremonies, or provide otherwise available housing to same-sex couples.

The question comes down to whether a society, through its laws and culture, should uphold traditional views of sexuality, marriage, and family, or give approval and encouragement to LGBT lifestyles that both the Bible
and most cultures throughout history have considered morally wrong, and that bring significant harmful consequences.

**Threats to Religious Liberty**

Religious liberty is the first freedom mentioned in the first amendment to the Constitution. Religious liberty and respect for conscience should be encouraged and protected as an effective and principled way to promote social peace and civic fraterniy. Without religious freedom, we are vulnerable to a system in which the state defines everything, which is the essence of tyranny.

Christianity represents the greatest obstacle to the normalization of LGBT lifestyles, and the Bible-based Church is the number one institution standing in the way of the complete fulfillment of the LGBT agenda. This is due to clear biblical teachings concerning the sinfulness of homosexuality in all forms, and the normativity of marriage as the union of a man and a woman. As such, a top goal of LGBT activists is to discredit and gag Christians and the Church on issues of sexuality, marriage, and family.

Government should protect our fundamental rights, encourage morality, and avoid the legal and social problems that come with LGBT-friendly laws. Private citizens, institutions, and government should encourage each other to recognize the value of religious and moral conscience, and respect them as an essential ingredient of a free, civil, and charitable society.

There is no compelling state interest in forcing all citizens to affirm or facilitate LGBT lifestyles. And it would be a profound tragedy if LGBT-friendly laws suppress the religious liberty upon which much good service to community and country is founded. Yet our local, state, and federal governments are complicit in restricting religious liberty, which should concern all citizens, because a state that can trample religious freedom is strong enough to put all of our freedoms at risk.

**Workplace Interference**

LGBT-friendly laws should also be opposed by everyone who believes in a free market economy. They create difficulties for businesses and employers by:

- Increasing government interference in the free market. (Substituting the judgment of government officials for that of private businesses and organizations regarding how to operate their businesses and what employee qualities or characteristics are most relevant to a particular job.)

- Mandating employment of homosexual and transgendered persons in occupations where such examples are inappropriate (education, childcare, youth organizations).

- Inadequately protecting faith-based businesses. (Forcing profit-making businesses like Christian bookstores, religious publishing houses, and religious television and radio stations to compromise their principles.)

- Making employers retain unproductive or unneeded workers for fear of LGBT reprisals.

- Discouraging employers from hiring LGBT people in the first place because of complications and potential liabilities created by LGBT-friendly laws.
Undermining the rights of businesses to set dress and grooming standards appropriate for each biological sex.

Creating legal costs. (Forcing legally conscientious employers and businesses to spend scarce resources seeking legal guidance to navigate the landmines raised by the uncertainty and subjectivity of LGBT-friendly laws.)

Inviting legal action. (Encouraging disgruntled current and former employees to sue for discrimination over a characteristic of which the employer may not even be aware, and encouraging customers to sue businesses for declining to affirm and support their LGBT lifestyles.)

Government should not be complicit in creating unnecessary difficulties for employers and businesses.

**Violations of Conscience**

LGBT-friendly laws make criminals out of people of good will who refuse to embrace and celebrate LGBT lifestyles. These people believe that religious liberty encompasses the right to live according to their convictions at all times in all spheres of life. They believe they should be free to abide by their faith and not be forced to violate their consciences by facilitating or expressing support for LGBT lifestyles.

Following are some of a multitude of examples of the cost of conviction:

- Adoption agencies. The Catholic Church has had to close several of its adoption agencies for not agreeing to let same-sex couples adopt children.

- Bakery. Sweet Cakes by Melisa in Oregon was forced to close because the owners refused to bake a wedding cake for a same-sex wedding.

- Clothing company. Hands On Originals in Kentucky is facing a recommended ruling saying they have to make T-shirts for LGBT events and that employees must take diversity training.

- College. Gordon College in Massachusetts faces possible loss of accreditation for its biblical stand about human sexuality.

- Facility owner. Liberty Ridge Farm in New York State was fined for not holding a same-sex wedding reception and will no longer rent out their facility for weddings.

- Florist. Arlene’s Flowers in Washington State is being sued for declining to do floral arrangements for a same-sex wedding.

- Innkeeper. Aloha Bed & Breakfast in Hawaii was ordered to provide rooms to same-sex couples that wish to stay there.

- Photographer. Elane Photography in New Mexico was fined for declining to create pictures of a same-sex commitment ceremony.

Many other people have been sued, lost their jobs or businesses, or have been ordered to reeducation classes for simply standing by their religious or moral beliefs about LGBT lifestyles.
Bathroom Politics

LGBT activists want bathrooms and locker rooms to be open to both sexes in order to accommodate their “gender identity” preferences. Allowing transgender biological males access to female facilities literally opens the door to indecent exposure, voyeurism, and sexual predation, and creates confusion and anxiety among girls and women. Biological females need segregated, secure facilities where they can attend to biological facets of their lives such as menstruation, pregnancy, and breastfeeding, and to duties related to babies, small children, and elderly companions.

Those seeking to degender personal facilities substitute the new ideology of gender fluidity for the biological reality of male and female. Sheila Jeffreys, a lesbian feminist who opposes degendering public toilets, recognizes this reality and pushes to keep girls’ and women’s bathrooms segregated by gender. She says mixed-gender restrooms provide males with opportunities for sexual stimulation from, and harassment and violence toward, females. Danger may come from both male-bodied transgenders and non-transgender males wearing women’s clothes. Jeffreys says a woman is in no position to work out which males they need to be particularly vigilant about while seeking a safe place to urinate. She also points out that sex-segregated bathrooms came about so females could have better access to workplaces, schools, and other public places.

We should not allow people to use personal facilities based on what sex they think they are or pretend to be. Separate personal facilities for females is a fundamental right involving privacy, dignity, and safety. Degendered personal facilities would be a step backward for girls and women. No one, including males, should be forced to engage in natural functions, changing clothes, or showering in the presence of the opposite sex. Public decorum and safety must take precedence over transgender rights.

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Additional topics.

Choice

People may not choose to have same-sex attraction, but there is a choice as to whether or not to act on it. Bisexual people make a choice every time they engage in homosexual sex rather than heterosexual sex. Heterosexual people may choose to have a homosexual relationship. The fluidity in sexual orientation, found especially in lesbians but also in gays, indicates choice of sexual attraction.

Discrimination

LGBT activists twist words to make opponents look bad and keep policymakers in check. Fear of these words causes some to throw traditional values and constitutional freedoms overboard to appease others and “protect” themselves. Such words include “discrimination” and “intolerance.”

“Discrimination” means the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people. All citizens should oppose this type of discrimination. It also means the act of distinguishing by discerning or exposing differences. Everyone does this all the time. We discriminate regarding how we use our time, the people we associate with, the activities we do, and so on. We discriminate between danger and safety, honesty and dishonesty, politeness and impoliteness, and more. All of us have criteria we use to judge what is and is not
acceptable. So when you read or hear LGBT activists use the word “discrimination,” do not automatically assume the worst, but take a moment to consider whether, or what kind of, discrimination may be occurring.

In the case of the Billings MT nondiscrimination ordinance, supporters claimed that LGBT people are denied housing, employment, and public services, and that the community should have a safe and welcoming environment to everyone. Yet LGBT activists were hard-pressed to point to verifiable cases of noteworthy discrimination, abuse, or shunning. Therefore, for lack of “unjust or prejudicial treatment,” it appeared that the proposed ordinance was a solution in search of a problem.

**Gender Identity**

LGBT activists are trying to deconstruct one of the most fundamental concepts known to humanity and the organization of social systems – male and female gender. They say that the distinctions of male and female are merely social constructs, the sexes are interchangeable, and male and female are just two options along a fluid gender spectrum. Facebook now lists over 50 genders, for example, genderqueer, multigendered, gender nonconforming, third gender, and two-spirit.

Regardless, the gender binary is a biological reality. Maleness and femaleness are to be treasured and affirmed. The two sexes serve as the foundation of marriage, family, and subsequently, society. Male and female coexist in equal and complimentary roles, and contribute to the general betterment of civilization.

**Intolerance**

Actual tolerance is the ability or willingness to tolerate someone who has ideas or behaviors with which you disagree. It presupposes disagreement. We cannot tolerate, or put up with, someone unless we disagree with him. Tolerance is reserved for those we think are wrong. This flies in the face of the postmodern definition.

Today’s version of tolerance accepts all differing views. But if you do not agree that all ideas and behaviors are of equal value, or if you differ with someone about anything, you are judged intolerant. The inconsistency of this definition is apparent. It says there can be no tolerance for people who do not agree with universal tolerance. Hence, this new tolerance is inherently intolerant.

We need to jettison the doublespeak and get back to the true meaning of things. Tolerance involves respecting those we disagree with by treating them courteously and allowing their views a place in the public discourse. It involves being tolerant of the person even if we disagree with his ideas or behaviors.

As with “discrimination,” when you read or hear LGBT activists use the word “intolerance,” do not assume the worst, but take a moment to consider who is actually being intolerant.

**Love is Love**

Some people say that homosexuality is acceptable because love is love. What they fail to consider is that, due to the promiscuous nature of homosexuality, love may not be a factor. They also fail to consider that not all love is right, for example, if a pedophile loves a boy, that does not excuse sexual abuse. Love does not validate adultery, homosexuality, incest, pedophilia, or premarital sex, which are violations of longstanding moral principles, and come with significant harmful consequences.
LGBT activists also appeal to emotion and personal relationships by saying, "We are your neighbors, your friends, your coworkers, your classmates, and your relatives, if you respect and care about us, how can you deny us what we want?" Nevertheless, how you feel about a personal relationship with an LGBT person should not lead you to condone their lifestyle and support detrimental LGBT-friendly laws.

**Pro-Gay Theology**

The LGBT rights philosophy seeks legitimation, not just tolerance, of LGBT lifestyles. Pro-gay theology takes it a step further by redefining LGBT lifestyles as God-ordained and morally permissible. This contradicts Scripture which clearly prohibits homosexuality in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; and 1 Timothy 1:9-10, and declares marriage as an institution ordained by God in Genesis 2:24 and affirmed by Jesus in Matthew 19:4-6 as the union of one man and one woman. There is not a single passage in the Old or New Testaments that supports homosexuality or same-sex marriage – the Bible assumes heterosexuality. From the beginning, male and female is God’s design.

**Same-Sex Attraction**

We must make a distinction between same-sex attraction and homosexual practice. Not all people with same-sex attraction practice homosexuality. Some are able to reorient their sexual impulses, and some are committed to walking the path of sexual celibacy. We should encourage those desiring to forsake homosexual practice, and receive those who have succeeded in doing so.

**Same-Sex Marriage**

Marriage is the lifelong union of a man and a woman as husband and wife. It is society’s most fundamental relationship, ordained by God in Genesis 2:24 and affirmed by Jesus in Matthew 19:4-6.

All societies throughout recorded history have publically recognized marriage as a sexually complimentary public institution – the union of the two different sexual halves of the sexual whole. God instituted marriage for the good of man (restraining and channeling his sexuality), the protection and dignity of women, and the flourishing of human society. Government’s obligation is merely to recognize legally what marriage actually is.

Society’s longstanding marital requirements do not violate anyone’s civil rights. These requirements include two partners, not closely related by blood, of major age, and of opposite sex. People who fulfill these requirements have equal access to marriage. What homosexuals are demanding is that they be permitted to redefine marriage – to eliminate one of the conditions – that being sexual complementarity.

**Speaking The Truth In Love**

People engaged in the culture wars must be committed to doing so in a civil manner. One issue in which this presents a particular challenge is homosexuality. As strident voices are calling for the legalization of same-sex marriage and preferential rights for homosexuals, we must take a stand for a Biblical view of sexual morality and marriage. But how we take a stand is as important as that for which we stand.
One of Francis Schaeffer’s foundational principles was the need to uphold the truth in love. He wrote, “The basic problem in all these things is the same: We must exhibit simultaneously the holiness of God and the love of God.” We need to maintain the commitment to truth while having an attitude of love.

Like all human beings made in the image of God, LGBT people deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. Derogatory epithets and demeaning humor about LGBT people must be banned from our speech. They are wrong, come across as condescending, and provide justification for those who want to label us as hatemongers.

Let us commit ourselves to being winsome witnesses to the truth. If we lead with love, we have reason to expect God will bless our efforts to influence our culture positively for the cause of righteousness. If we traffic in hate, then we are likely to reap what we sow, dishonor Christ, and lose opportunities to minister mercy in a hurting world.

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**Glossary**

“Gender expression” refers to the way a person communicates their gender identity to others through behavior, clothing, hairstyle, voice, and body characteristics.

“Gender identity” refers to one’s internal or perceived sense of being male, female, or something else.

“Homosexual” means a homosexual person. The adjective form means of, relating to, or characterized by a tendency to direct sexual desire toward another of the same sex, and of, relating to, or involving sexual intercourse between persons of the same sex.

“Homosexuality” means the quality or state of being homosexual, and erotic activity with another of the same sex.

“LGBT activists” means LGBT people and their allies who advance the LGBT agenda.

“LGBT-friendly laws” means those that address sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and/or same-sex marriage.

“Sexual orientation” is the inclination of an individual with respect to heterosexual, homosexual, and bisexual behaviors.

“Transgender” is a broad term for persons whose gender identity, gender expression, or behavior does not conform to that typically associated with their sex at birth.

**Helpful Resources**

Good information is available from organizations like Alliance Defending Freedom, American Family Association, CitizenLink, Coulson Center, Family Research Council, The Heritage Foundation, and more. The following articles, except as noted, are available on the Internet:

A Call To Pastors – Part I, Speak Up Movement, 2011 (a good short read for everyone)
Are Homosexual People Really “Born Gay”?, rethinkingtheology, 2014

A Tale Of Ten Cases, Alliance Defending Freedom, 2014

Briefing On Reconciling Nondiscrimination Principles With Religious Liberty, Alliance Defending Freedom, 2013 (contact Alliance Defending Freedom)

Connecting The Dots Of The Homosexual Agenda, North Carolina Family Policy Council, 2009

Countering The Deception: Responding To Allegations About The Marriage Protection Amendment; North Carolina Family Policy Council, 2011

ENDA Threatens Fundamental Civil Liberties, The Heritage Foundation, 2013

Homosexuality And Mental Health, North Carolina Family Policy Council, 2007

Homosexuality Is Not A Civil Right, Family Research Council, 2000 and 2007

Physical Health, Facts About Youth, No Date

Pro-Gay Revisionist Theology: An Overview, CitizenLink, 2010

Same-Sex Marriage and State Anti-Discrimination Laws, The Becket Fund, 2009

Same-Sex “Marriage” And Threats To Religious Freedom: How Nondiscrimination Laws Factor In, The Heritage Foundation, 2011


Speaking Of Homosexuality: Truth With Love, Coulson Center, 2012

The Overhauling Of Straight America, 1987


The Politics Of The Toilet: A Feminist Response To The Campaign To “Degender” A Woman’s Space, Women’s Studies International Forum, 2014

The Top Ten Harms of Same-Sex “Marriage,” Family Research Council, 2011

The Top Ten Myths About Homosexuality, Family Research Council, 2010

What You Need to Know about Marriage – Questions and Answers Driving The Debate, Family Research Council et al, 2013