RESOURCES TO INCREASE UNDERSTANDING OF THE LGBTQI EXPERIENCE

Check our library website to find these resources:  http://guides.csbsju.edu/LGBTQI

FILMS:

**Growing Up Trans.** 2015. *Frontline.*  https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/growing-up-trans/   This documentary traces the stories of a number of trans children/youth and the responses of their parents, as well as interactions with their peers and the schools. Very articulate kids—and powerful stories of both acceptance and rejection. I use this regularly in my Sex and Gender class and students always appreciate this film.

**The Son I Never Had: Growing Up Intersex.** 2017. A short documentary film by Intersex Activist Pidgeon Pagonis, highlighting Pidgeon’s own story of surgery, deception, and coming home to self. You can also find short video-clips of Pidgeon on You-Tube. Pagonis is young, dynamic, articulate, and motivated to make a non-binary world a reality. Pagonis’ motto is “STORIES, not surgery!”  (Pidgeon was also the intersex person on the cover of National Geographic’s GENDER REVOLUTION issue—and has a video on that experience and her take on how National Geographic has gotten it wrong.)

**Intersex Children: A Journey Between Genders.** 2015  *ABC News.*  (Available through our library as an E-video.) An intersex person who was assigned a gender at birth and surgically treated, meets with the surgeon who operated on his as a baby.

**Sex Unknown.** 2011. *WGBH Educational Foundation.*  A documentary taking a scientific look at intersexuality and gender identity. Explores gender identity with contributions of psychologists and researchers, and through personal insights from the Reimer family, including candid, heartrending interviews with Janet Reimer and her son, who ultimately rejected his female identity.

**Me, My Sex, and I: Disorders of Sexual Development.** 2011. *Films Media Group.*  (Available through our library as an E-video.)  This film covers lots of territory in brief (several minutes) clips: Sexual Ambiguity, Disorders of Sexual Development (DSD), Parental Issues over DSD Children, Medical Checks to Assign Sex, Surgery and DSD, Children Kept in the Dark, DSD Team: Multi-Specialty Approach, Warning Against Surgery, Taking a Stand Against Sexual Surgery, Undiagnosed DSD, What a Child Needs to Know, DSD Challenges, DSD Identified in Teen Years, DSD Mother, Intersex Female -- One Woman's Story, DSD, Justice, and the Law.

**The Gender Puzzle.** 2005. *Films Media Group.*  (Available through our library as an E-video.)  Science is identifying new biological processes that determine a person's sex. This program explores the latest research into gender development and the medical, cultural, and legal issues at the heart of the "brain sex" school of thought. Showing how human genome research has shifted scientific focus away from chromosomes, the video examines the role of brain receptors and the discovery of the SRY protein, which establishes maleness. Interviews featuring people with intersex and transsexual experiences shed light on how gender identity emerges, and how it figured into one man's legal battle for the right to marry.

**It Doesn’t Define Us.** 2010. *New Voice Productions.*  A documentary film produced by gay students at St. Cloud State University.  Based on 40 interviews with a variety of LGBT
professionals in the area—news reporters, politicians, and activists—and with religious and community leaders. Attempts to put identity into perspective—it’s a part of who we are, not the one and only defining factor.

**Anyone and Everyone. 2007. IronZeal Films.** Documentary featuring parents from across the country, from diverse ethnic groups and a variety of religions (Christian, Mormon, Hindu, etc.) talk about their child’s coming out and the struggles they faced in dealing with friends, family, and religious and civic communities. Powerful and revealing.

**For the Bible Tells Me So. 2008.** (Now available through our library as a 2015 E-video.) Documentary tracing a number of individuals as they came out to their families—and a variety of responses. Looks particularly at the role of religion in shaping attitudes and beliefs about homosexuality. Powerful interviews with Bishop Gene Robinson (1st Episcopalian Gay Bishop) and his parents. Debunks some of the traditional interpretations of scripture that have been used to condemn LGBT persons.

**Prayers for Bobby. 2010.** (Available in our library as a DVD.) This award-winning made-for-television film is based on the true story of a devout Presbyterian family who are devastated when their son comes out as gay. They try to pray away the problem, but their refusal to accept him as he is ultimately results in his suicide.

**BOOKS:**

**General Print Resources that Promote Understanding**


**Scientific American** (September 1, 2017). *The New Science of Sex and Gender.* A wide variety of articles available on-line from this issue that demonstrates that these topics are important for everyone. [https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-new-science-of-sex-and-gender/](https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-new-science-of-sex-and-gender/)

**Religion and LGBTQI Acceptance**

James Martin. 2018. *Building a Bridge: How the Catholic Church and the LGBT Community Can Enter into a Relationship of Respect, Compassion, and Sensitivity.* Harper Collins. Clear, quick reading—very inspiring, deals honestly with how gays and lesbians have felt rejected and unfairly judged; talks about both groups—church authorities and gay/lesbians—need to build bridges of understanding. The second part of the book has reflections on Biblical passages that can sustain and nourish us; includes a “Prayer for When I Feel Rejected” and ends with questions for faith groups and/or personal reflection.

O’Gorman, Marge, ed. 2013. *Living True: Lesbian Women Share Stories of Faith*. PenUltimate Press. (available through AMAZON). Lesbian women raised Catholic share their stories of struggle with family acceptance, with coming out, and with remaining true to God and God’s gifts in a church that often excludes them. A wide variety of women from across the country share their very unique and personal stories.


Salzman, Todd A. & Michael G. Lawler. 2008. *The Sexual Person. Toward a Renewed Catholic Anthropology*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press. This is a more scholarly book dealing with Catholic moral theology and its evolution over the years—becoming more and more focused on law. Excellent arguments in support of same-sex relationships and more openness toward other issues of sexual morality within the Catholic church.


Shinnick, Maurice. 1997. *This Remarkable Gift: Being gay and Catholic*. St Leonards NSW, Australia: Allen & Unwin. An older book—but it was an oxygen tank for me—and probably helped keep me in the Catholic Community. What a joy to see my combined gay and Catholic identities as ‘a remarkable gift’ rather than as a curse or a cross!

Hornbeck, J. Patrick, Christine Firer Hinze, and Michael Norko, ed. 2014. *More Than a Monologue: Voices of our Times*. New York: Fordham University Press. A collection of talks given at a series of day-long gatherings exploring LGBT issues in the Church. This volume (#1 of 2) is more pastoral, people sharing their own stories and the stories of family members and/or acquaintances who struggle with the lack of inclusion for the LGBT community in the Church. There’s a second volume that does more theological exploration of the debates within faith communities on LGBT issues.

Lopata, Mary Ellen. 2006. *Fortunate Families: Catholic Families with Lesbian Daughters and Gay Sons*. Another older book but unfortunately still very relevant and needed. The author and her husband started a support organization for Catholic parents of lesbians and gays, an organization that is still very active and helping parents across the country embrace and support their children—and celebrate who they are rather than shaming them.
Memoirs and Books to Further Understanding

Sarah McBride. 2018. *Tomorrow Will Be Different: Love, Loss, and the Fight for Trans Equality.* A phenomenal book by a young transgender political activist. This is Sarah’s own story of growing up in a boy’s body, coming to terms with her reality, coming out to her fellow students as a college student, and making her way. Powerful, engaging, revealing. Sarah captures her audience and gives us a real feel for the challenges and heartaches of being trans. She is wise well beyond her years!

Dan Savage. 2005. *The Commitment: Love, Sex, Marriage, and My Family.* New York: Dutton. Written long before same-sex marriage was legalized in the U.S., I still assign this book to my FAMILY & SOCIETY class because it does such a great job of asking all the important questions about why people marry—or don’t marry. Savage writes about his very ‘traditional’ (though gay) family—with him being the breadwinner and his male partner Terry being the stay at home parent—and their struggle with the decision about whether or not to marry. Wonderfully humorous, it will make you think…

John Colapinto. 2001. *As Nature Made Him: the Boy who was Raised as a Girl.* This book was a New York Times Bestseller. It’s the true story of the baby boy named Bruce Reimer who, due to a tragic accident during his circumcision, undergoes gender reassignment. His parents unsuccessfully attempt to raise him as a girl, but when “Brenda” learns the truth of her existence, immediately reverts to a male identity and names himself David. The book shows how psychologist John Money attempted to use this child to prove his theories of gender as a socialized reality. Hearing David’s pain and frustration throughout his childhood highlights the reality of gender as a deeply engrained reality in the brain.

Amy Ullis Nutt. *Becoming Nicole.* It’s the true story of young Wyatt transitioning into Nicole; this family lives out East. The parents, Wayne and Kelly have a lot to share about the process of transitioning.


Short Stories and Novels—a great way to expose yourself to some very serious issues and to increase your understanding while relaxing with a great book.


Jeffrey Eugenides. 2002. *Middlesex.* A novel of an intersex youth, dealing with the confusion, the shame, the mystery of identity when reality doesn’t fit the social categories.