



# INVESTIGATING ANTI-LGBTQI+ HATE

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**A Reporting Guide for Journalists**

Written and Edited by Debra L. Mason and Brian Pellet

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# Introduction



# Introduction

In June 2019, during LGBTQI+ Pride month and amid celebrations to mark 50 years since the Stonewall uprising in New York demanded rights for sexual and gender minorities, [The Guardian ran a subhead that read:](#)

“Three black trans women have been killed in Texas since October, and activists believe that attacks are on the rise due to a hostile political climate.”

This news came after President Donald J. Trump [reversed an Obama-era rule that allowed transgender individuals to serve in the military](#) and as several U.S. states reinforced or adopted new laws that allow religious groups and businesses to refuse services to LGBTQI+ customers.

Social and political hostilities against LGBTQI+ people are hardly unique to the U.S. Same-sex sexual activity is illegal in about 70 countries. Local efforts to abolish these laws are often stymied by global religious pushback from institutions like [the Vatican, which in June issued an official document](#) that rejects gender fluidity, rejects the existence of intersex people and insists on the sexual “complementarity” of men and women.

Such policies and rhetoric put LGBTQI+ people in danger. For some, especially LGBTQI+ youth with hostile home lives, discrimination can lead to depression and even suicide. According to [figures reported by The Trevor Project](#), youth who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual are almost five times more likely to attempt suicide in the U.S. as those who identify as heterosexual.

Several religious institutions and faith-based nonprofit organizations are among the worst perpetrators of discrimination against sexual and

gender minorities. Their coordinated campaigns and activities bring significant harm to LGBTQI+ people domestically and abroad. Despite this reality, few journalists are tracking the money and influence of these hate groups across state lines and international borders. Doing so can be difficult and time-consuming, even more so when the groups in question are tax-exempt religious institutions, but our audiences and the communities we cover deserve to know how organizations in their backyard are harming lives around the world.

We designed this reporting guide as a practical resource to help journalists investigate U.S.-based hate groups that aim their vitriol at sexual and gender minorities in the U.S. and abroad. We start with relevant historical context to ground your reporting then explore some of the basic tools needed to investigate religious groups and nonprofit organizations.

This guide also includes tips for finding information about U.S.-based hate groups’ finances and the strategies they use to hide their activities. These groups can be chameleon-like in their ability to create new legal structures and funding streams, which is why this work is so urgent. To jump-start your reporting, we’ve included lists of known perpetrators of anti-LGBTQI+ hate, including funders, NGOs and individuals, along with organizations and campaigns working to combat anti-LGBTQI+ hate.

Anyone seeking to track anti-LGBTQI+ hate groups — or any hate group for that matter — knows the work entails countless hours of building sources and scouring public records. These topics are sensitive, the language is nuanced and the issues get to the core of people’s identities. Despite attempts to deny or erase their existence,

sexual and gender minorities live at all levels and in all realms of our societies. It is our duty as journalists to cover the LGBTQI+ community as we would any community — with fairness and accuracy.

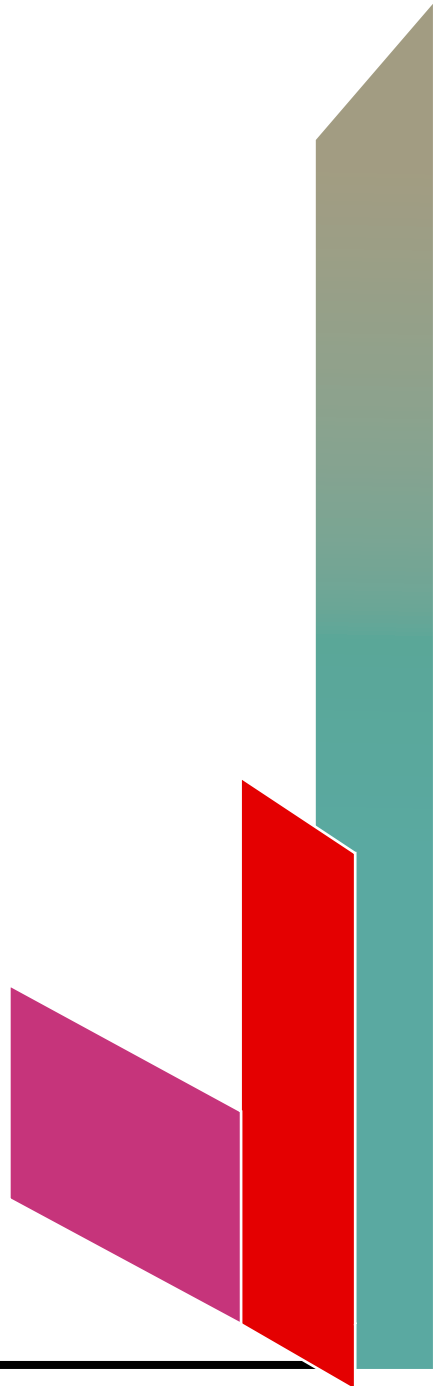
We hope you use this manual to improve your reporting on anti-LGBTQI+ hate in the U.S. and abroad. We hope that by shining a light on some of the most prominent perpetrators of this hate, some of whom may live or work in your state or community, you can better tell local and global stories that resonate within your communities and around the world.

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**Taboom Media**

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# LGBTQI+ Terminology



# LGBTQI+ Terminology

**B**efore we dive into specific investigative tips, and before you engage with the LGBTQI+ community, it's important to familiarize yourself with the relevant terminology that tends to come up in conversations about sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expressions (SSOGIE). Knowing that LGBTQI+ stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and More (+) is just the tip of the iceberg. Not every SSOIE minority chooses to use these terms and labels. Rather than trying to fit people you meet into particular identity categories, allow them to use their own vocabulary, and describe them accordingly in your interactions.

Though not exhaustive, the following definitions provide a useful starting point for journalists and a glossary for this guide.

## Complementary Reference Guides

The [GLAAD Media Reference Guide - 10th Edition](#), published in October 2016 and updated every few years, offers tools to encourage fair, accurate and inclusive reporting of SSOIE issues. The guide includes glossaries of [LGB terms](#), [transgender terms](#), [terms to avoid](#) and a summary of relevant [Associated Press and New York Times style terms](#).

The National Lesbian & Gay Journalists Associations, also known as The Association of LGBTQ Journalists, has a [Stylebook Supplement on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Terminology](#) that is intended to complement the Associated Press stylebook and those of individual newsrooms.

The [Gender Spectrum Guide to Gender Terminology](#) explains non-binary gender notions and includes relevant terminology.

The Center for Integration and Improvement of Journalism's [Diversity Style Guide](#) has an [LGBTQ glossary](#) of relevant terms.

<b>Ally:</b>	A term for human rights defenders who are supportive of LGBTQI+ people, communities and/or social movements but do not themselves identify as LGBTQI+. Most allies identify as cisgender and/or heterosexual.
<b>Bi/Homo/ Intersex/Trans/ Queer-phobia:</b>	Emotional disgust, fear, anger and/or discomfort felt or expressed toward people who don't conform to certain societal expectations around sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expressions. Biphobia, homophobia, intersexphobia, transphobia and queer-phobia are human-made constructs often fed by political, religious, legal and pseudo-medical justifications.
<b>Bisexual:</b>	A binary term for someone who is sexually, romantically and/or emotionally attracted to both males and females or men and women. The term "pansexual" is more inclusive and expansive than "bisexual" (see definition below).
<b>Cisgender:</b>	A person whose gender identity and/or expressions mostly align with societal expectations associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.
<b>Coming Out:</b>	The process of identifying to oneself and to others in accordance with one's sex, sexual orientation or gender identity.
<b>Female:</b>	A biological sex assignment based on characteristics including chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones or genitals. Females typically have XX chromosomes, a vagina and ovaries, and lower levels of testosterone than males, among other sex characteristics.
<b>Feminine:</b>	Gender attributes, behaviors and roles typically associated with girls and women. Such attributes can vary greatly across time and culture.
<b>Gay:</b>	Describes a person who is sexually, romantically and/or emotionally attracted to people of the same sex or gender. This means males or men who are attracted to other males or men, or females or women who are attracted to other females or women. The word gay can refer to any homosexual person, but mostly it refers to men.
<b>Gender:</b>	Socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities and attributes that a given society associates with men and women.
<b>Gender Expressions:</b>	How individuals present their relationships with masculinity and/or femininity through external characteristics and behavior. This can include dress, mannerisms, grooming, speech patterns and social interactions, among many other traits.

<b>Gender Identity:</b>	Refers to a person's innate, deeply-felt psychological identification as man, woman or another category. This may or may not correspond with the sex a person was assigned at birth.
<b>Genderqueer:</b>	Behaviors or gender identities/expressions that do not match typically masculine or feminine gender norms. Terms similar to genderqueer, all with different meanings, include gender diverse, gender nonconforming, gender non-binary, pangender, third gender, genderfree and gender variant. These terms emphasize that gender can be non-binary or non-fixed.
<b>Gender Dysphoria:</b>	Distress or discomfort people may experience if their gender identities or expressions do not align with societal expectations.
<b>Gender Fluid:</b>	Someone who identifies with multiple genders, or who has fluctuating gender identities.
<b>Gender Minorities:</b>	People who do not conform to societally expected binary gender norms in terms of expressions or identities around masculinity and femininity.
<b>Heterosexism:</b>	Promoting heterosexuality as superior, natural or normal, or assuming that all people are heterosexual.
<b>Heterosexual/Straight:</b>	Someone whose predominant attraction is to the opposite sex or gender (in a binary system).
<b>Homosexual:</b>	Someone whose predominant attraction is to the same sex or gender.
<b>In the Closet:</b>	Being secretive about one's sex, sexual orientation or gender identity. Also referred to as "closeted."
<b>Intersex:</b>	A biological sex assignment based on characteristics including chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones or genitals. Intersex falls between typical definitions of male and female.
<b>Key Populations:</b>	Key populations, as <a href="#">identified by UNAIDS</a> , have the highest risk of contracting and transmitting HIV and the least access to prevention, care and treatment services due to stigma or criminalization. Key populations vary somewhat by context but often include men who have sex with men, transgender persons, sex workers, intravenous drug users, prisoners and truck drivers.
<b>LGBTQI+:</b>	Acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and more (+).

<b>Lesbian:</b>	A female or woman who is sexually, romantically and/or emotionally attracted to other females or women.
<b>Male:</b>	A biological sex assignment based on characteristics including chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones or genitals. Males typically have XY chromosomes, a penis and testes, and higher levels of testosterone than females, among other sex characteristics.
<b>Man:</b>	A person who identifies as a man, regardless of sex or gender expressions.
<b>Masculine:</b>	Gender attributes, behaviors, and roles typically associated with boys and men. Such attributes can vary greatly across time and culture.
<b>MSM:</b>	Men (or males) who have sex with men (or males). They may or may not identify as gay or bisexual.
<b>Pansexual:</b>	Sexual, romantic or emotional attraction towards people regardless of their sex or gender identity. The term “pansexual” is more inclusive and expansive than bisexual, which by definition perpetuates gender and sex binaries.
<b>Queer:</b>	An umbrella term that is used by many sexual and gender minorities to describe themselves. Many value its inclusiveness in terms of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expressions. Queer was once considered derogatory but has been reclaimed in many LGBTQI+ communities. Only use this term when the sexual and gender minorities you’re engaging with use it, and when doing so is clearly not offensive.
<b>Questioning:</b>	The process of seeking information and support when uncertain of one’s sex, sexual orientation and/or gender identity.
<b>Safe Space:</b>	A positive environment that enables all persons, including sexual and gender minorities, to be free to express themselves without fear of discrimination or violation of their rights and dignity. Individual actions and reactions are key in upholding or violating a safe space.
<b>Sex:</b>	Assignment at birth as male, female or intersex based upon biological and physiological characteristics.
<b>Sex Reassignment Surgery:</b>	The surgical procedures by which some transgender people’s sexual characteristics (physical appearances and/or functions) are altered to more closely align with sexual characteristics commonly associated with their gender identities.

<b>Sexual Minorities:</b>	Refers to persons who are oriented toward or who engage in sexual activities that would not typically be considered exclusively heterosexual, and individuals who do not fall into the binary sex categories of male or female.
<b>Sexual Orientation:</b>	The preferred term used when referring to an individual's innate romantic, sexual and/or emotional attraction to other people, with regards to sex and/or gender. Heterosexual, bisexual, pansexual and homosexual are all examples of sexual orientations. A person's sexual orientation is distinct from a person's gender identity and expressions.
<b>Sexual Preference:</b>	Indicates sexual desires that are more individual and fluid than sexual orientation. Someone may have a sexual preference for people with certain physical characteristics, or they may prefer certain sexual practices. Do not refer to someone's innate sexual orientation as a preference.
<b>Sodomy Laws:</b>	Laws that prohibit consensual sexual acts among consenting adults. Such acts are seldom fully defined but can include anal and oral sex, even among heterosexual people. Sodomy laws are most often used to target men who have sex with men, but also apply to women in many jurisdictions.
<b>SSOGIE/SOGIE/SOGI:</b>	Acronyms used to refer to Sex, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expressions.
<b>Transgender:</b>	Umbrella term for a person whose gender identity or expressions differ from societal expectations based on the sex that person was assigned at birth.
<b>Transition:</b>	The process of altering one's sex and/or gender. This may or may not include medical and other physical alterations or changing legal documents.
<b>Woman:</b>	A person who identifies as a woman, regardless of sex or gender expressions.
<b>WSW:</b>	Women (or females) who have sex with women (or females). They may not identify as lesbian or bisexual.

# History of Anti-LGBTQI+ Hate



# History of Anti-LGBTQI+ Hate

**C**ultural taboos, religious dogma, legal prohibitions and media censorship have long been used to oppress sexual and gender minorities around the world. International human rights law should in theory protect LGBTQI+ people from persecution, but negative public attitudes and discriminatory local laws often stand in the way.

Hate groups take full advantage of these realities, citing religion and “traditional values” to oppose LGBTQI+ equality. By presenting narrow interpretations of religious doctrine, these groups justify and promote discrimination, hatred and oppression that endangers the lives and livelihoods of sexual and gender minorities around the world.

It’s important to note that not all religious groups and people of faith oppose LGBTQI+ equality or distribute hateful and harmful rhetoric about sexual and gender minorities. Over the past few decades, we’ve seen religious opposition to LGBTQI+ equality break down. Millions of people in diverse denominations and faith groups affirm or welcome LGBTQI+ people as worshippers, lay leaders and clergy. Other religious groups, including the Roman Catholic Church, hold that same-sex relationships and gender nonconformity are morally wrong, but couch their views in phrases such as, “Love the sinner, hate the sin.”

This doesn’t mean that all people who identify as Catholic agree with or follow official church teachings. In a 2016 Pew Research Center survey, [only 13 percent of Catholics who attend Mass weekly said contraception is morally wrong](#), despite the Roman Catholic Church teaching that it is sinful (see [“How Catholic women fought against the Vatican’s prohibition on contraceptives,”](#) published in The Conversation in June 2018). For 50 years, DignityUSA has worked to promote justice, equality and full inclusion of LGBTQI+ people in the Catholic Church and society, serving 33 chapters,

communities and caucuses across the U.S. and Canada. Such divisions between official religious teachings and congregants’ individual beliefs can lead to sharp disagreements and conflict from local to national to international denominational levels.

## United States Context

In the U.S., many people assume the so-called “sexual revolution” of the 1960s sparked religious conflicts over gender, sex and sexuality, but some religious historians peg fissures much further back. In her 2017 book, [“Moral Combat: How Sex Divided American Christians and Fractured American Politics,”](#) Washington University Professor R. Marie Griffith argues that before around 1910, Americans largely prescribed to puritanical Christian notions of sexual morality and gender roles:

*“Up through the end of the nineteenth century, whatever else Americans disagreed about—slavery, states’ rights, urbanization, immigration, labor laws—most accepted, and took for granted as natural, a sexual order in which men were heads of households, wives were to submit to husbands’ authority, and monogamous heterosexual marriage was the only sanctioned site for sexual relations.”*

Those who broke with consensus were punished or shunned. For example, early New England courts prosecuted sodomy, adultery and divorce. When a handful of groups rejected monogamous marriage for an alternative, they were rejected and forced from communities. It didn’t matter if the alternative was celibacy (Shakers), polygamy (some Mormons), communal marriage (the Oneida community) or free love (various groups).

Ultimately, within U.S. social and religious cultures, people’s reactions to modernity shaped conflicts over sex, gender and sexuality. Although resistance and reaction toward modernization have occurred at other moments in history — around technological innovation, medical advances and the rights of women and



other minorities — it was the early 20th century when attacks on “modernity” targeted norms and morality around sex and gender. Again, from Griffith:

*“Progressive gains in liberalizing or legalizing certain practices—birth control, say, or sex education in public schools—served to confirm their conservative opponents’ sense that modernity was sinful; in turn, conservative efforts to fight back and restore the old values confirmed progressives’ sense that sexual liberation was utterly crucial to progress.”*

Sexual and gender minorities have always existed, but battles over human rights based on gender, sex and sexual equality began in earnest in the U.S. with the suffragist movement and associated political battles involving women’s rights. Once women could vote (1919), birth control bans were struck down (1938) and the number of women graduating from college started to skyrocket (1930s), more and more people began questioning and challenging “traditional” gender roles.

This background provides some context for how anti-LGBTQI+ sentiments, still present in U.S. Christian-influenced culture, have spread to other parts of the world via missionary and church-funded development activities, fueling discrimination, hatred and violence. A paradoxical quirk of this western export of hate to non-western countries, especially to those in the Global South, is the false assertion that sexual and gender diversity is itself a Western — aka “foreign” — concept. Well-documented examples of pre-colonial sexual and gender diversity tell a different story.

## Global Context

The phrase “homosexuality is a foreign concept” can be interpreted in two distinct but intersecting ways: “foreign” as in strange or “foreign” as in “not from here.” When politicians and religious leaders in the Global South utter this common refrain, they often mean both — that homosexuality and gender diversity is unnatural and that it was somehow imported from the Global North (“the West”). This false propaganda attempts to erase lived realities and identities that have long existed.

The histories of diverse peoples engaging in same-

sex sexual relations and gender nonconforming behavior before, during and after colonialism are well documented. In their 1998 book, *Boy-Wives and Female Husbands*, Stephen O. Murray and Will Roscoe list some of the indigenous words used to discuss homosexuality and gender diversity across Africa in the pre-colonial and colonial era. These include *mumemke* (mume=man, mke=-woman), which appeared in the first Swahili-English dictionary in 1882, *shoga* (male homosexual or friend), *mugawe* (Meru men who wore women’s clothes and sometimes married men) and *inzili* (intersex people in Kenya and Tanzania).

In the 2014 report, [“Expanded Criminalisation of Homosexuality in Uganda: A Flawed Narrative,”](#) the rights group Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG) documents more than [21 varieties of traditional African homosexuality](#) and gender diversity from across the continent. Sylvia Tamale, a law professor at Makerere University in Uganda, lists similar examples in her 2014 Al Jazeera op-ed [“Homosexuality is not un-African:”](#)

*“The vocabulary used to describe same-sex relations in traditional languages, predating colonialism, is further proof of the existence of such relations in precolonial Africa. To name but a few, the Shangaan of southern Africa referred to same-sex relations as “inkotshane” (male-wife); Basotho women in present-day Lesotho engage in socially sanctioned erotic relationships called “motsolle” (special friend) and in the Wolof language, spoken in Senegal, homosexual men are known as “gor-digen” (men-women).”*

Shanna Collins lists further examples in [“The Splendor of Gender Non-Conformity In Africa,”](#) published in 2017 on Medium.

[“The Hidden Histories of Homosexuality in Asia,”](#) a July 2016 article in Fair Observer, looks at the Indonesian and regional context:

*“Widely regarded as the Javanese Kama Sutra, Serat Centhini ... details sex between men (gemblak) in Ponorogo, and the existence of warok (butch gay men) and jathil (effeminate gay men) in the East Javanese town. ... Other ethnic groups inhabiting the Indonesian archipelago in the past also dealt with sexuality in surprisingly tolerant ways. The Bugis people of South Sulawesi, for instance, recognize five genders: makkunrai (cisgender female),*

oroan (cisgender male), bissu (androgynous), calabai (transgender male) and calalai (transgender female). The bissu, now almost extinct, were seen to both encompass and transcend all other gender types and were therefore highly respected.”

“[How homosexuality became a crime in the Middle East](#),” a June 2018 article in the Economist, explores the history of sexual diversity in that region:

*“In the 13th and 14th centuries two celebrated male poets wrote about men in affectionate, even amorous, terms. They were Rumi and Hafiz, and both lived in what is now Iran. Their musings were neither new nor unusual. Centuries earlier Abu Nuwas, a bawdy poet from Baghdad, wrote lewd verses about same-sex desire. Such relative openness towards homosexual love used to be widespread in the Middle East.”*

“[Gender Variation and Same-Sex Relations in Pre-colonial Times](#),” a July 2017 article in Psychology Today, looks at sexual and gender diversity in the Americas and Oceania:

*“From Alaska to Patagonia, Native American cultures often held gender variant individuals in high regard, valuing them for their unique spiritual and artistic aptitudes and important economic and social contributions. ... In Samoa and the Samoan diaspora, Fa’afafine (‘in the manner of woman’) are biological males who identify as third-gender. ... A third-gender role is also recognized in other Pacific Island cultures, with, among others, the fāfifine in Niue, the fakaleiti in Tonga, the vaka sa lewa lewa in Fiji, the whakawahine in New Zealand, the rae rae in Tahiti, and the mahu in Hawaii. ... In Hawaiian culture, an aikane was a male friend of a chief, with whom he had sexual relations.”*

These and countless other examples make clear that sex and gender are universally diverse.

## Colonialism’s Lingering Legacy

Despite sexual and gender diversity existing everywhere, same-sex sexual activity remains

illegal in about 70 countries. The laws against “unnatural offenses” in dozens of countries’ post-colonial penal codes stem from the introduction of anti-sodomy laws in British protectorates in the 1800s. A [2008 report from Human Rights Watch](#) traces these laws’ origins and lingering effects.

The unnatural offenses provision was modeled on the Parliament of England’s Buggery Act of 1533 and formalized in Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860. The text reads:

*“Unnatural offences: Whoever voluntarily has carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal shall be punished with imprisonment for life, or with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine.”*

England’s law was designed to “correct and Christianize ‘native’ custom” but also to “protect” British soldiers and colonial administrators from acquiring “special Oriental vices,” and to prevent military camps from becoming “replicas of Sodom and Gomorrah.” The law’s language soon spread to dozens of British colonies around the world.

Such language is clearly linked to Christian theological understandings, prevalent across Europe at the time that asserted sex was solely for reproduction. Because the law lacked provisions around such factors as age and consent, consensual homosexual relationships among adults became legally indistinguishable from sexual offenses such as rape and pedophilia. This context shines light on how puritanical religiosity and the policing of sexuality constructed systems and structures that continue to institutionalize homophobia and transphobia today.

What European colonialism started in the 19th century and before, U.S. groups are continuing with new waves of anti-LGBTQI+ hate. In Political Research Associates’ 2012 report, “[Colonizing African Values: How the U.S. Christian Right Is Transforming Sexual Politics in Africa](#),” author Kapyra Kaoma identifies three primary reasons U.S. organizations and networks are so influential in spreading queerphobic hate:

*“First, white people and Americans continue to enjoy influence in Africa, in an echo of past colonial relationships, both because they are*

*from powerful countries and because they have scarce money to spend. Second, these right-wing organizations and movements espouse charismatic and other conservative theologies that may not be mainstream in the United States, but resonate with many African Christians. The politicization and policy implementation of these theologies has translated into the persecution of sexual minorities and increased oppression of women through attempts to restrict reproductive freedoms. Third, the campaigners are successful in painting African campaigners for LGBT rights as dupes of neocolonial forces trying to impose an alien philosophy on the continent.”*

Although Kaoma is specifically writing about Africa here, similar forces resonate in other contexts on other continents.

## Religion, Scripture and Anti-LGBTQI+ Hate

Most perpetrators of anti-LGBTQI+ hate — especially ideology-based hate groups, parachurch organizations, religious entities and values-based organizations — portray their viewpoints as the will of a supreme being, be it God, Brahman, Allah, YHWH or something else. Many of these groups justify their hate by plucking isolated verses from religious texts that support their beliefs.

This literal interpretation technique has long divided religious groups. Differing interpretations of the same lines of scripture can affect whether or not women can become clergy, how to dress, what to eat, how rituals are performed, and what children are taught about the Earth’s creation, among countless other aspects of human belief and expression.

U.S. hate groups that cite scripture to condemn, demonize, or manipulate LGBTQI+ people align with different faiths and denominations but often use similar tactics. Rather than employing contextual interpretation to decipher scripture’s underlying intent, many use outdated, incomplete or

isolated texts to justify their beliefs. At least one quarter of U.S. Christians, especially Pentecostal believers, reject modern scholarship and new translations that include scripture fragments discovered in the past 100 years. They sometimes rely on translations and versions of the Bible that are known to include translational errors, such as the King James Version. Another common problem is inconsistent application of literal and contextual interpretative methods. Choosing to follow only some scripture word-for-word while ignoring verses that don’t align with one’s worldview reflects a somewhat arbitrary, reactive and limited understanding of and approach to scripture.

The greatest challenge to understanding religion and its relationship to LGBTQI+ people is the diversity of viewpoints. Views differ depending on the generation, the faith, various denominations and groups within a religion, and with regard to different aspects of a person’s identity and expression.

It’s also important to distinguish between a religion’s formal or official stance on a topic — any topic — and how practitioners and leaders may interpret or ignore that stance.

Despite public opinion in much of the West becoming more supportive of LGBTQI+ people, representatives of the two largest world religious groups — the Roman Catholic Church and Sunni Islam — continue to issue “official” interpretations of scriptures that are hurtful and harmful to sexual and gender minorities. At the same time, people within both of those faiths identify as queer, participate in the faith, and work in ministries or parachurch groups fighting for greater rights for sexual and gender minorities within those religions. Other faith groups under the broad umbrella of Islam and Christianity, particularly some mainline Protestants and Sufi Muslims, welcome LGBTQI+ individuals and consider sexual and gender minorities to be wholly accepted members of their congregations and clergy.

Understanding this nuance is important as journalists seek to understand distinctions between believers who oppose homosexuality but do not fuel or fund anti-LGBTQI+ campaigns and believ-

**The greatest challenge to understanding religion and its relationship to LGBTQI+ people is the diversity of viewpoints.**

ers who actively engage and fund hateful actions. The section of this guide called “Dangerous Faith-Based Activities” explains some of these actions, which include exorcisms, so-called conversion therapy and public policies that exclude sexual and gender minorities from such things as military service, adoption services and more.

It’s also important to note that LGBTQI+ people who grow up amid religious groups that preach and teach anti-LGBTQI+ viewpoints such as “love the sinner, hate the sin” often suffer from great emotional, spiritual, and psychological harm. Most sexual and gender minorities you interview will have some hurtful or hateful story about the ways people of faith have behaved toward them.

This section provides a small window into the diverse viewpoints of five major world religions toward LGBTQI+ people.

## Abrahamic Religions

The Abrahamic religions of Christianity, Islam and Judaism all share a common history, narratives, central figures and even some religious obligations. Each of these faiths’ ancient scriptures is used to justify anti-LGBTQI+ bias with similar stories and rules, in slightly varied retellings.

## Christianity

The world’s largest religion is Christianity, but there is little unity among individual Christian groups in terms of who can be ordained clergy or whether sexual and gender minorities are fully welcome to join a congregation.

Anyone — regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or relationship status — may be ordained and participate at all levels of membership in the United Church of Christ, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Episcopal Church, Metropolitan Community Church, Quakers, and Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), among others. However, individual congregations within the ELCA can avoid hiring openly gay members of clergy without denomi-

national or legal ramifications. These otherwise affirming groups and others mentioned above are constantly reviewing and revising their policies. For example, in 2003, the United Church of Christ became the first Protestant group outside of the Metropolitan Community Church to issue a policy allowing the ordination of transgender clergy candidates.

Non-celibate sexual minorities are prohibited from participating as clergy or active lay leaders in most Christian religious groups, including the

Roman Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodox groups, Southern Baptist Convention, United Methodist Church, Assemblies of God, Jehovah Witnesses, Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and Mormons. In some cases, a denomination or group will attempt conversion therapy to make queer people straight or gender-conforming — a practice the American Psychological Association has declared damaging, fraudulent, and ineffective.

Core disagreements among these Christian groups over LGBTQI+

rights most often relate to interpretations of scripture, as is true among other faiths. Some Christians believe that several well-known passages contain language that in English and other translations condemns same-sex relationships. These Old Testament passages are Genesis 19: 1-26; Judges 19; Leviticus 18:22 and Leviticus 20:13. The New Testament passages are in biblical books thought to be written by the Apostle Paul, including Romans 1:26-27; Corinthians 6:9-10; and Timothy 1:10. These passages, depending on language and version of translation, present male and female as complementary binaries and the only divinely intended partnership. They also discuss prohibitions or punishments for same-sex relationships. Other passages, cited as upholding heterosexual unions and marriage as the ideal relationship, include Genesis 1-26-31 and 2:18-24 in the Old Testament and Matthew 19:4-6; 1

**In some cases, a denomination or group will attempt conversion therapy to make queer people straight or gender-conforming — a practice the American Psychological Association has declared damaging, fraudulent and ineffective.**

Corinthians 7:1–40; and Ephesians 5:22–33 in the New Testament.

Modern scholarship since the 19th century, however, interprets biblical verses in more complex ways, especially in light of ongoing discoveries of ancient scrolls, and a growing understanding of the ways humans edited sacred scrolls for their own political, social and cultural purposes. Scholars also understand more about the literary devices used in biblical storytelling, including poetry, song and allegory. The literal interpretation of individually plucked passages—devoid of cultural context and disregarding surrounding and sometimes contradictory passages, is viewed as problematic by many biblical scholars.

Scholars point to the dangers of singling out individual verses as “proof” of God’s word when applied to today’s world. Such “proof texting” as it’s commonly known, is the practice of using Bible verses out of context or to support one’s own biases and interpretations. For example, in U.S. and British fights to end slavery, proof texting was used to both support slavery and to argue for its end. Biblical verses have been used to defend the physical and sexual abuse of women, too, and to promote complementarianism — the theological perspective that says women have a different and “subservient” role to men and only men can hold leadership within marriage and church life. Although women have been told to be subservient to men since Christianity’s founding, this use of misogynistic theological arguments emerged in the 1980s as a response to second wave feminism and it also helped bolster opposition to gay marriage. In complementarianism, marriage is limited to monogamous unions between one cisgender man and one cisgender woman, what some Christians have dubbed the “traditional” family model — a propagandistic term that became a key phrase in the culture wars, despite its subjectivity.

In the 21st century, proof texting of the Christian Bible has been increasingly used to support caustic and venomous anti-LGBTQI+ attitudes and actions. Many evangelical Christians and Pentecostal/Apostolic Christians who view the Bible as the literal word of God selectively pluck out individual passages to condemn sexual and gender minorities while ignoring other literal rules about how many days a woman must wait

after her period before having sex, what fabrics can be used in clothing, or which crimes deserve punishment by stoning. No one follows all of these admonitions.

In light of such inconsistencies, biblical scholars warn against misleading interpretations. In their booklet “[The Bible and Homosexuality](#),” the South Africa-based NGO [Inclusive and Affirming Ministries](#) advises against:

- Isolating specific verses from broader meanings or historical context.
- Inconsistently applying literal interpretations to certain Bible verses and deeming them God’s word while ignoring other verses that appear in similar parts of the Bible.
- Using isolated texts to prove your own point of view. No text speaks on its own.
- Relying on translations of the Bible that introduce ahistorical prejudices or misconceptions.
- Falling back on moralism and prescriptiveness, or categorizing certain sexual sins as worse than the sin of judgment.

As Inclusive and Affirming Ministries says, “It is irresponsible and unscientific to interpret isolated verses in the Bible literally or in a fundamentalist way. The Bible says absolutely nothing about, nor does it condemn, a committed, loving and faithful homosexual relationship as we know it today.”

Sexual and gender minorities belong to every religious group on earth, even faith groups that routinely condemn them or deny their existence. In the most hostile Christian groups, LGBTQI+ members often remain closeted. But in others, such as the Roman Catholic Church or within United Methodism, LGBTQI+ members and their advocates sometimes belong to ministries devoted to fighting homophobia and bigotry from within the faith tradition. Catholic groups such as Dignity and the Episcopalian group Integrity provide counter narratives and fight anti-LGBTQI+ policies and actions within their respective church bodies. Not all members of such groups are always comfortable speaking out on the record, but they can often help you find sources who will.

Dignity, Integrity, and similar groups show that not all LGBTQI+ people of faith flee organized religion. The Catholic Church encapsulates the

complexity of distinctions among how sexual and gender minorities are viewed within the church's official statements, by its clergy, and by its laity. The church's Catechism, which details official church beliefs, says "[men and women who have deep-seated homosexual tendencies ... must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity.](#)" But LGBTQI+ Catholics are told to remain chaste because sexuality should be practiced only in marriage, which the Church defines as permanent, procreative, heterosexual and monogamous. The Catholic Church recently reinforced its binary views about gender and gender fluidity by restating its position that only two genders exist and that it's not possible to change genders. Regardless, the Catholic Church does [oppose anti-LGBTQI+ laws that mandate death penalties](#). In addition, the Rev. James Martin, a well-known U.S. Jesuit priest who is America Magazine's editor-at-large, wrote affirmingly about sexual and gender minorities in his 2017 book, [Building a Bridge: How the Catholic Church and the LGBT Community can enter into a Relationship of Respect, Compassion, and Sensitivity](#). A 2017 Public Religion Research Institute [survey](#) found that about two-thirds of both U.S. white and Hispanic Catholics supported same-sex marriage—regardless of official church policy. These views are often significantly different, however, in the Global South.

Sourcing and storytelling needs to reflect these complex narratives. Without them, journalists investigating hate crimes are missing a piece of the puzzle. That said, the vast majority of U.S.-evangelical churches and an even higher percentage of Pentecostal or Apostolic churches and denominations are avowedly anti-LGBTQI+. A significant segment of evangelical- and Pentecostal-based organizations represent the biggest contributor to anti-LGBTQI+ Christianity-fueled hate speech. Scholars note four key elements of anti-LGBTQI+ hate speech:

1. Although anti-LGBTQI+ hate has existed globally for centuries, Christian-based U.S. hate speech has ramped up under the Trump administration. Among the faith-based actions harmful to sexual and gender minorities was the 2017 publication of a document on human sexuality called the "[Nashville Statement](#)," which was signed by 150 prominent evangelical leaders and viewed as one of several

ways in which hateful rhetoric is more openly promoted among people in power now than during the Obama administration. Points within the document say marriage is limited to the union between one cisgender man and one cisgender woman. The statement, which also promotes complementarianism, furthered tensions between older and younger evangelicals; [45% of Millennial evangelical Protestants](#) (born 1981-1996) favor same-sex marriage, compared to only 23% for those born before 1981.

2. "Religious Freedom" is the tactic or argument most often used to deny services (such as child adoption, wedding services, employment and more) to LGBTQI+ people in the United States. But with conservative evangelical Christian Mike Pence as the U.S. vice president, the politicization of religious freedom has grown more intense and partisan in recent years. Religious freedom trends that favor religious conservatives have been bolstered by [key victories](#) in the U.S. Supreme Court. And in 2019, the U.S. [Commission on International Religious Freedom](#) elected prominent anti-abortion and anti-LGBTQI+ activist [Tony Perkins as its chair](#). Perkins claimed in 2012 that Uganda's anti-homosexuality bill (which initially included a death penalty clause) simply "upholds moral conduct."

3. An outgrowth of Pentecostalism is the Prosperity Gospel, which is particularly appealing in low socio-economic regions of the world because it promises earthly, as well as heavenly, riches. Although the Prosperity Gospel dates to World War II, the increasingly connected world via online media has allowed the Prosperity Gospel proponents to greatly expand their reach, especially in the Global South. Prosperity Gospel preachers often vocalize anti-LGBTQI+ hate and practice exorcisms on queer people.

4. A number of psychologically and physically damaging actions have emerged from some Christian-based organizations. They're detailed in the "Dangerous Faith-Based Activities" section of this guide.

## Islam

The Abrahamic faiths (Christianity, Islam and

Judaism) share many similar ancient stories all told in slightly different ways. For that reason, the Christian Bible verses that Christian anti-LGBTQI+ hate groups cite and Torah scriptures some Orthodox Jewish groups cite are similar to those cited by some Muslims from the Quran.

For example, Muslims who condemn homosexuality often reference the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah as evidence that Allah (God) views same-sex sexual relationships as punishable by death. The story is described in the Quran with much the same detail as is found in the Christian Bible. Muslims, however, still read the Quran in Arabic, the language in which it was first written from oral retellings. This fact has helped give Muslims who support literal interpretations of Quranic verses a protective theological shield of

sorts when they spread hateful rhetoric against LGBTQI+ Muslims and others.

In addition to the Quran, the Muslim world has extensive legal and theological writings heavily influenced by the religious, legal, political and cultural historical events since the religion's founding in the seventh century. That history is turbulent and includes persecution, regional expansion and changing balances of power. Despite artwork, poetry, interpretations and other evidence of accepted same-sex romantic and sexual relationships in pre-modern Islamic cultures, European-based condemnations of sexual minorities influenced and helped create similar condemnations in Islamic jurisprudence beginning in the 1800s onward.

Despite this history, scholars are document-

## Prosperity Gospel's Problematic Theology

Christian churches headed by charismatic preachers who promise vast wealth and answered prayers to congregants who make generous donations are among the [fastest growing in the Global South](#). Members typically belong to lower socio-economic groups for which jobs, food, housing, health and education are scarce or unstable. Some congregants pay these churches to perform exorcisms, conversion therapy, forced marriages or even rape in hopes of curing a LGBTQI+ family member.

Prosperity theology emerged out of U.S.-born Pentecostal beliefs and worship styles following World War II. Revivals and a wave of religious growth in the 1950s included emotional services with faith healings and plentiful claims of miraculous events. Kate Bowler writes in her 2013 [Blessed: A History of the American Prosperity Gospel](#):

*"Prosperity teachers, though varying widely in interpretation and focus, agreed on three fundamental ideas. First, healing is God's divine intention for humanity. Second, Jesus' work on the cross earned not only redemption from sin but also deliverance from its penalties: namely, poverty, demonic interference, and sickness. Third, God set up the laws of faith so that believers could access the power of the cross." (p. 141)*

Regardless of the theological argument, the overwhelming message among Prosperity Gospel ministries is that sexual minorities require "healing" because their core identity is "sinful" or wrong. Bowler writes about one Durham, N.C. pastor at Victorious Faith Center who claimed to have healed a man in the late stages of AIDS. "God restored the man, said Walton (the pastor), when he was delivered of the spirit of homosexuality," Bowler writes (p. 145). Such claims, regardless of their impossibility and even cruelty, can be heard at Prosperity Gospel church services across the globe.

Prominent news investigations of fraudulent claims and mismanaged donations by Prosperity Gospel ministries have won prestigious journalistic awards, including [a Pulitzer Prize](#). These investigations require time and deep sourcing that often includes disaffected employees, former board members, disgruntled congregants and other individuals who might have access to private caches of documents that can prove a religious group's nefarious actions.



ing greater recognition of sexual and gender diversity within Islam today. In [Sexual Ethics and Islam](#), a 2016 book by Kacia Ali, the author writes that “there is no one Muslim perspective on anything.” Contemporary scholars continue to debate the statement, “The Quran does not address homosexuality or homosexuals explicitly,” Ali says.

These scholarly debates aside, policies in places such as Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates—where Islamic law and government law are intertwined—have in recent years encouraged and increased criminalization of sexual and gender minorities, including the death penalty or harsh prison sentences. Dozens of countries ruled by or influenced by Islamic law also opposed LGBTQI+ rights at the United Nations. In addition, Islamic radio stations and online broadcasts often include preaching by Muslim clergy who condemn sexual minorities and interject hate speech into the daily lives of millions of listeners. Such rhetoric is frequently broadcast in Arabic, which poses an additional challenge for reporters who do not speak the language. With global [Islam predicted to grow](#) by 70 percent in the next 30 years, this damaging rhetoric within the world’s second largest religion is also likely to grow.

Of course, just as there is nuance within Christianity, some Muslim organizations support LGBTQI+ rights and affirm Muslims who belong to sexual minorities. That said, it’s generally harder for journalists to find pro-LGBTQI+ Muslim groups than it is to find such groups among Christians.

Ishmael Bahati is a Muslim LGBTQI+ advocate and director at [Persons Marginalized and Aggrieved \(PEMA\)](#) in Mombasa, Kenya. He cites the following Quranic passage, which address hate speech and diversity. The English version of the original Arabic in Surah Al-Hujurat (49:11) come from Sahih International, as republished at [Quran.com](#).

*“O you who have believed, let not a people ridicule [another] people; perhaps they may be better than them; nor let women ridicule [other] women; perhaps they may be better than them. And do not insult one another and do not call each other by [offensive] nicknames. Wretched is the name of disobedience after [one’s] faith. And whoever does not repent - then it is those who are the wrongdo-*

*ers.”*

The existence of such affirming Quranic verses has apparently failed to sway most Muslims toward accepting sexual minorities. Transgender individuals are more accepted or at least tolerated in some majority Muslim countries. For example, the Iranian government subsidizes sex reassignment surgery. Pakistan passed a “Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act” in 2018. That law requires the government to provide protection centers and safe houses to at-risk people, among other safety measures. Despite these positive moves in a handful of majority Muslim countries, the reporting of trans people murdered and harassment worldwide are clearly rising, especially in the predominantly Christian Central, North and South Americas. The Thomson Reuters Foundation [reported](#) in November 2018 that 369 trans people were killed globally in the previous 12 months.

When searching for LGBTQI+ Muslims and allies to interview, intersectional groups can sometimes be helpful. The National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA), for example, has a number of [resources](#) to help queer Muslims with ties to that region reconcile their spirituality with their sexual and gender identity. NQAPIA, which is based in New York, lists resources for other faiths, too.

[Surveys show](#) that U.S. Muslims hold less favorable attitudes toward LGBTQI+ rights than does the general population, perhaps explaining why queer Muslims are more likely to be closeted than queer Christians or Jews. Parents, including recent Muslim immigrants, still often reject children who come out as queer, according to the Human Rights Watch Foundation. “At the traditional mosque, there’s a ‘don’t ask, don’t tell’ mentality,” says Ani Zonneveld — a straight Muslim ally who heads the Los Angeles-based Muslims for Progressive Values — in Human Rights Watch’s guide, [“Coming home to Islam and to Self.”](#)

*“Everyone has secrets that they put away when they come through the door. For LGBTQ people, that experience can be very traumatic.” Zonneveld has founded several Unity Mosques in major U.S. cities that include women and LGTBQI+ Muslims as leaders. “We get emails from LGBTQ Muslims who are suicidal because they’re traumatized by the*



*disrespect, the scorn that they hear. They ask, 'How can I continue to exist? How could God create me, just to go through all this pain?' For the devout Muslims, surrounded by rhetoric that rejects their very essence, the question becomes more than one of self-worth. It becomes, 'Why do I exist? Should I exist?'"*

## Judaism

Among the Abrahamic faiths, Judaism is by far the smallest, with about 14 million people worldwide. Just like the Old Testament in Christianity, the Hebrew scriptures include the same Creation stories and Leviticus passages that are notoriously interpreted as anti-LGBTQI+.

The trends in historical critical methods of scriptural analysis that helped scholars better include cultural and societal influences in Christian biblical interpretations also became common in Jewish scholarship interpreting the Torah—the first five books of the Hebrew Bible.

Progressive Jewish groups have been at the forefront of U.S. LGBTQI+ equality. The largest group of U.S. Jews belong to Reform Judaism, which accepts LGBTQI+ members and clergy with no distinction from heterosexual members. Similarly, Reconstructionist Jewish groups are also inclusive and affirming of LGBTQI+ members. The first LGBTQI+-centric synagogue was formed in 1972 — long before most progressive Protestant Christian groups created welcoming ministries and churches.

Just like most evangelical Christians who interpret scripture literally, many Orthodox Jews read the Torah and rabbinical teachings as forbidding certain specific sexual activities and have policies prohibiting specific types of sex such as anal sex. The U.S.-based movement called Conservative Judaism also has policies that say members are prohibited from engaging in specific sexual activities; yet Conservative rabbis welcome LGBTQI+ Jews into their synagogues. Although there are transgender Orthodox rabbis, Orthodox rabbis

**Surveys show that U.S. Muslims hold less favorable attitudes toward LGBTQI+ rights than does the general population, perhaps explaining why queer Muslims are more likely to be closeted than queer Christians or Jews.**

generally do not support sex reassignment surgery. The more moderate Conservative movement approves of it for people who experience [gender dysphoria](#).

Yet even with prohibitive religious interpretations, signs of change have begun. In spring 2019, Rabbi Daniel Atwood became the [first openly gay](#) Orthodox rabbi to be ordained in Israel.

Interestingly, some Talmudic scholars say rabbinic literature names several different gender categories. These names include “saris,” translated as eunuch; “tumtum” meaning someone whose sex is unknown because their genitals are covered; and “androgynos,” which translates as intersex.

As is true for most religions, the most strictly literalist practitioners of Judaism — a group collectively known as Hasidic or sometimes Ultra-Orthodox Jews

— strongly reject LGBTQI+ rights. When trans activist and former Hasidic rabbi [Abby Stein came out](#) to her family in 2015, she was shunned.

## Asian Religions

Several major religions — Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism — originated in ancient and medieval India. Views about LGBTQI+ equality and rights in these religions is more diverse and complex than among the Abrahamic faiths. In each case, attitudes today are greatly influenced by contemporary culture, politics and societal pressures as well as the region’s colonial history. Here we look at the two largest of these religions, Buddhism and Hinduism.

### Buddhism

Buddhism is the second oldest major world religion after Hinduism. Its largest presence is in Southeast Asia, including China. Like all world faiths, Buddhism is tremendously diverse and has undergone a variety of interpretations in the more than 2,400 years since the religion’s name sake, Siddhartha Gautama (the Buddha) lived. The two

major branches are Theravada Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism.

As with Abrahamic texts, Buddhist scholars typically interpret admonitions against or punishment of sexual and gender minorities and relationships as indicative of how the faith's founder viewed LGBTQI+ inclusion. Among the oldest Buddhist scriptures are Theravada Buddhism's [Pali Canon](#), which do not mention any such admonitions. Rather, scriptures and interpretations by early monks warn against actions that bring disharmony to family and home, including having sex with a child, someone who is engaged or married, or someone who has taken a religious vow of celibacy. [Theravada Buddhist monks](#) have, at times, explicitly said that a person's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression have no bearing on sexual misconduct.

The Dalai Lama, the revered leader of Tibetan Buddhists worldwide, has [stated in a number of interviews](#) that he interprets sexual misconduct to include any sex other than penis-vagina intercourse, including oral sex, anal sex, and masturbation. He indicates that this applies only to Buddhists, however; among non-Buddhists, no such exclusion exists.

Buddhist ethical norms are expressed in the Eight Fold Path and Five Precepts, which include the overall aim of Buddhism, which is to remove all earthly "attachments." For Buddhists, that includes suppressing any craving for sensual pleasure and avoiding sexual misconduct—[regardless of sexual orientation](#), gender identity or gender expression. Monks and nuns who take a vow of celibacy, however, must remain chaste, according to Buddhist prohibitions.

Although sex and lust are generally viewed in Buddhist discourse among monks as a hindrance to reaching an enlightened state, one historical exception is the celebration of love in Japan between young male novices and older monks, as expressed in the [Abhidharmakosha](#), a fourth or fifth century writing.

Unlike Theravada Buddhism, in which enlightenment can take many lifetimes to achieve, Mahayana Buddhism teaches that a person only needs one lifetime. To assure the speediest path to enlightenment, monks in the fourth century BC were forbidden in the Vinaya, the Buddhist monastic community regulations based on

ancient scriptures, to have sexual relations with any of [the four genders](#) mentioned: male, female, intersex (ubhatovyanjanaka) and pandaka, which is [defined broadly](#) as anything from transgender women to eunuchs to impotent men.

Buddhism in western locations often focuses on social inequities, tolerance and compassion. As such, U.S., Canadian and other western-based Buddhist groups have been viewed as gay-friendly. Chinese Buddhism and the new Buddhist religious movement known as [Soka Gakkai International](#), which has been offering same-sex wedding services since 1995, support full human rights for LGBTQI+ practitioners.

## Hinduism

Despite the 2018 decriminalization of gay sex in India, where the vast majority of Hindus live, the public still [largely eschews](#) open discussion of LGBTQI+ rights and issues on a broad national basis—a holdover from colonial Britain's influence and its quashing of LGBTQI+ visibility and rights. As Reuters reported in a [2018 story](#):

*"In a 2016 survey of 100 Indian LGBT employees, the Mission for Indian Gay and Lesbian Empowerment (MINGLE), an advocacy group, found that 40 percent had been harassed at work and the majority were not covered by LGBT workplace protection policies.*

*The World Bank estimates that homophobia costs India \$31 billion a year due to lower educational achievements, loss of labor productivity and the added costs of providing healthcare to LGBT people who are poor, stressed, suicidal or HIV positive."*

Although India has now decriminalized gay sex, it's clear there is a long way to go before true LGBTQI+ equality exists.

Hindu culture has had complex representations of sexual and gender minorities throughout its history, most notably among the faith's thousands of deities. Hinduism is a monotheistic religion with a supreme being named Brahman, but Hindus are guided in their daily lives by the worship of lesser deities. These deities include a spectrum of sexual and gender minorities; festivals and celebrations give them prominence in various regions within India. For example, a group of people known as Aravanis ritually marry the deity Aravan

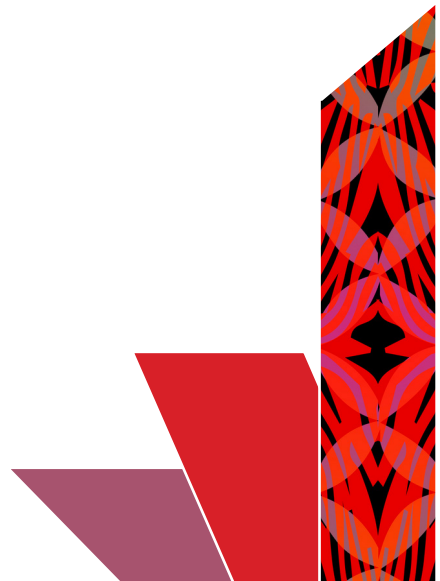
or Lord Koothandvar and then mourn the lord's death during [a festival](#) in the northeastern town of Koovgam, India. More broadly, the festival is known as an annual celebration of transgender and transvestite individuals. The Aravanis or more commonly [hijras](#) are sometimes called in Hindu philosophy a "third gender." Scholarship in recent years has uncovered a rich historical legacy in Sanskrit references that confirm the existence of this third gender concept going back to Hinduism's oldest Vedic scriptures.

In their book "[Same-Sex Love in India](#)," Ruth Vanita and Saleem Kidwai meticulously identify sacred Hindu scriptures that have discussed and debated same-sex desire in myriad ways, from critical to playful to celebratory. Similarly, the book "[Tritiya-Prakriti: People of the Third Sex](#)" by Hindu monk Amara Das Wilhelm shows examples of how ancient references to sexual minorities were more positive than today's mixed rhetoric. "Early Vedic teachings stressed responsible family life and asceticism but also tolerated different types of sexualities within general society," according to Wilhelm.

Depictions of Hindu deities who are intersex, deities who display three gender identities, deities born from a single man or single woman, deities who switch genders, deities who are born from two women or two men, and deities who partner with the same gender or none are all part of the rich representation of Hinduism in its diverse sacred literature. But just as millions of Hindus pray to [Ganesha](#) — an elephant-headed deity with a four-handed human body—the gender and sexual fluidity present in Hindu deities [does not necessarily translate into real-life openness](#) and acceptance for LGBTQI+ people today, despite recent decriminalization. The issue is complicated because some Hindu texts such as the Manusmriti, among the first Hindu texts translated to English in the late 1700s, portray same-sex relationships as criminally punishable. This ancient text became the basis for British colonizers to create laws for India—thus starting the criminalization of homosexuality in Indian law.

Hinduism is not a monolithic religion; villages and cities ritually honor specific deities and guidance as to what to believe and what not to believe still rests largely with high and priestly caste members of a region. Views are diverse. Some priests have performed same-sex weddings; others forbid it.

Hinduism itself does not export funding for hate groups outside of India. It may, however, benefit from actions by Hindus outside the country. The British Hindu Council, which represents all Hindus in the United Kingdom, adopted a statement in 2009 that says "Hinduism does not condemn homosexuality." Activists are optimistic, especially since India's Supreme Court in September 2018 [overturned](#) the ban on gay sex for the country of nearly 1.4 billion people.



# Modern-Day Manifestations of Anti-LGBTQI+ Hate



# Modern-Day Manifestations of Anti-LGBTQI+ Hate

**N**ow that we've flagged some of the religious scripture used to justify anti-LGBTQI+ hate, let's analyze how these bits of text feed into larger systems of oppression and discrimination. This section unpacks several intersecting narratives and myths U.S. groups exploit to sow anti-LGBTQI+ hate domestically and abroad and mentions some of the discourse-based tactics used to advance their goals. We also highlight some of the physical practices and crimes that arise from such rhetoric -- including conversion therapy, "corrective" rape, exorcism and deliverance ceremonies, and genital mutilation -- all of which violate the human rights of sexual and gender minorities. Finally, we look at the broader fallout of such discrimination including privacy violations, stigma, arrest, unlawful detention, prosecution, denial of autonomy over sexual health choices, removal of children from parental custody, housing discrimination, employment discrimination, educational discrimination, healthcare discrimination, mental health issues, suicide attempts, homelessness...the list goes on.

## Dangerous Discourse and Policies

The ramifications of dangerous rhetoric, social hostilities and anti-LGBTQI+ laws are readily seen in the news every day. What starts as dangerous discourse can quickly become strategic relationship-building among like-minded anti-LGBTQI+ civic and private organizations, sometimes with deadly results.

The Global Philanthropy Project (GPP)'s 2018 report "[Religious Conservatism on the Global Stage: Threats and Challenges for LGBTI Rights](#)" outlines five dichotomies that sometimes frame the discourse and tactics opponents to LGBTQI+ equality use to advance their missions. Together, these approaches can transcend traditional alliances for the sake of attacking a shared target — sexual and gender minorities.

### 1. Intra-religious vs. Interreligious

Groups that cite scripture to oppose LGBTQI+ equality often work within their own faith communities but also interreligiously. Perhaps the most prominent and powerful example of such interreligious collaboration is the Vatican's strategic alliance with Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) countries. Some interreligious alliances have existed for centuries and may not always be aimed at promoting anti-LGBTQI+ initiatives, but it's important for journalists to check such work.

### 2. Clerical vs. Civil

Civil actors, including academic, political, judicial and NGO representatives, sometimes coordinate with clerical authorities to restrict LGBTQI+ equality, among other freedoms. Some religious leaders and groups also establish their own NGOs to restrict LGBTQI+ equality, allowing them to bypass legal restrictions to advancing their agendas within political, legal and international institutions.

### 3. Religious vs. Secular

Religious actors opposed to LGBTQI+ equality often use secular discourse to support their moral and religious arguments, appealing to people of different faiths and none. Such rhetoric appeals to notions of tradition, culture, morality, sinfulness, science, psychology, and legality. It also includes human rights discourse, emphasizing religious freedom and family and children's rights in opposition to LGBTQI+ equality. Secular groups without underlying religious identities or motivations also form to oppose LGBTQI+ equality.

### 4. Politicized vs. Depoliticized

In many political contexts, conservative religious morals have been codified into law. This is true of so-called "sodomy laws". As mentioned before, the language of India's 1860 Penal Code punishing "carnal intercourse against the order of nature" [remains on the books](#) in dozens of former British colonies. Religious conservatives sometimes disguise the political nature of their anti-LGBTQI+ agenda by framing it as objective, true and indisputable.

### 5. Local vs. Transnational

Arguments that LGBTQI+ equality would threaten national culture and state sovereignty are increasingly common. This line of reasoning asserts that LGBTQI+ equality is part of a foreign plot to undermine local customs and identities. Local support for the protection of local values and customs becomes transnational when institutions such as marriage, heterosexuality and the traditional family are considered universal. Religious and political institutions—including the Vatican, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Russian Orthodox Church—and civil society actors are at the forefront of global efforts to oppose LGBTQI+ equality transnationally and at the United Nations system level.

The Global Philanthropy Project report also outlines strategic discourses and concepts, many of them myths, that religious groups use to oppose LGBTQI+ equality. These include:

#### 1. Protection of values and the "traditional/natural" family

The protection of certain "traditional/natural"

values, including a singular family model that is heterosexual, procreating, monogamous, married, and nuclear, is increasingly used to oppose LGBTQI+ equality, particularly same-sex marriage and child adoption by same-sex partners. The most extreme argument in this realm asserts that same-sex marriage will somehow lead to the extinction of humanity.

#### 2. Anti-imperialism and sovereignty of states

Some religious conservatives, especially those in the Global South, use anti-imperialistic discourses to oppose LGBTQI+ equality. Sexual and gender minorities' rights are thus presented as an imposition of Western/Global North/foreign/imperial/colonial attitudes in which the use of human rights instruments is considered a threat to states' sovereignty. Anti-colonial rhetoric still resonates with progressive movements and pro-independence campaigners in many countries, helping anti-LGBTQI+ advocates appeal to the political left.

#### 3. The pathologization of LGBTQI+ expressions and harm to children

Another common anti-LGBTQI+ myth asserts that children raised outside of a "traditional/natural" family are deprived of healthy socialization and mental development opportunities. The assumptions are that LGBTQI+ expressions and identities are pathological, an argument long debunked by global mainstream psychiatry but still advanced by opponents to LGBTQI+ equality (including the Catholic and Russian Orthodox Churches), subjecting some sexual and gender minorities to ineffective yet damaging conversion therapies.

#### 4. Religious Freedom

Religious conservatives sometimes frame religious freedom as being threatened by LGBTQI+ equality movements. Such framing has occurred when bakers, florists, dressmakers, restaurants and wedding venues use religious objections to refuse service to same-sex couples. These objections pit anti-discrimination laws against laws guaranteeing religious freedom rather than seeking solutions through which both rights may be preserved.

#### 5. "Gender Ideology"

Opponents to LGBTQI+ equality describe "gender ideology" as an attempt to delegitimize what

they deem to be “natural” sex, sexual orientation and gender binaries. They portray “gender ideology” as a false concept that threatens the moral fabric of society and “traditional family values.” The lives of intersex, transgender and non-heterosexual people have shown throughout history that binary and fixed attitudes toward human expression are inadequate. The conservative “gender ideology” — the notion that people assigned male at birth will become heterosexual men who marry heterosexual female women and have sex only for procreation—deserves its own scrutiny.

The GPP report’s case study on Christian conservatism in Eastern Europe, though specific to one faith in one region, outlines common tactics U.S. and international religious groups use to undermine LGBTQI+ equality globally. Many of these discourse-based tactics are defamatory myths or distortions of human rights principles. They typically assert that:

- Minorities (LGBTQI+ advocates) are oppressing the majority, and the “silent majority’s” rights must be protected
- Democracy should favor the majority’s will
- The right to conscientious objection (manifested as belief-based discrimination) should apply to sexual health and reproductive rights and the protection of children’s rights with regards to sex education and adoption services for same-sex partners
- LGBTQI+ equality threatens national sovereignty
- “Modernist and globalist agendas” must be opposed
- LGBTQI+ equality would distort the “natural” order and threaten the human population
- Sexual and gender minorities are linked to pedophilia, zoophilia, and necrophilia
- Traditional/family values must be preserved

In addition to the techniques described above, such discourse put into practice to oppose LGBTQI+ equality can involve:

- Street protests and demonstrations
- Grassroots mobilizing (lectures, trainings,

youth camps, social media)

- Prayer rallies
- Online and offline petitions
- Advertising campaigns
- Mainstream news media appearances and coverage
- Entertainment media production such as films, soap operas and novels
- Establishing new media channels (traditional and online/social)
- Citizen-initiated referendum initiatives
- Hate speech and libel litigation

These strategies and discourses can be used to increase social hostilities, prevent the recognition of LGBTQI+ equal rights, and maintain or expand laws that criminalize LGBTQI+ people. The statistics and trends speak for themselves. According to a June 2019 OutRight Action International [report and other data](#):

- 68 countries and several territories still criminalize same-sex relations;
- 12 jurisdictions mandate the death penalty for same-sex sexual activity. At least 6 of these implement the death penalty – Iran, Northern Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen – and the death penalty is a legal possibility in Afghanistan, Mauritania, Pakistan, Qatar and UAE. Executions have been reported in ISIS-held territory in Iraq and Syria in recent years;
- Another 26 nations impose maximum penalties for same-sex sexual relations of between 10 years and life imprisonment;
- In 55 countries LGBTQI+ organizations cannot legally register, potentially subjecting them to financial or legal penalties;
- In 30 countries no LGBTQI+ organizations exist at all, whether registered or unregistered;
- Adoption of children by gay individuals and couples is illegal in nearly all of Africa, Asia, Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, and parts of Central and South America. Only 27 countries allow LGBTQI+ couples to jointly adopt children;
- Efforts to exclude LGBTQI+ people at the

United Nations level have strengthened, even by nations which, in the past, were champions of LGBTIQ+ equality;

- Efforts to exclude LGBTIQ+ people from civil service have grown, with the U.S. rolling back rules that allowed transgender men and women to serve in the military;
- Global leaders ranging from Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro, to Russia's Vladimir Putin, to the U.S.'s Donald Trump, have expressed openly homophobic and/or transphobic comments;
- 32 U.N. nation members have laws restricting freedom of expression on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, including bans on the promotion of homosexuality;
- Workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is outlawed in 73 nations;
- Nine countries enshrine protection against other accusations of discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation within their constitutions;
- Same-sex marriage is illegal in more than 87% of all U.N. member nations — it is legal in only 26 countries;
- Hate crimes on the basis of sexual orientation are illegal in 42 nations, while acts of incitement to hatred, discrimination or violence against queer people are criminalized in only 39.

The broader fallout of anti-LGBTIQ+-based bigotry and discriminatory discourse can include privacy violations, stigma, arrest, unlawful detention, prosecution, denial of autonomy over sexual health choices, the removal of children from parental custody, and discrimination in employment, housing, healthcare and mental health.

Dangerous discourses and alliances can also lead to harmful religious practices aimed at LGBTIQ+ people, as the next section shows. Such religious practices are sometimes protected by arguments that prohibiting them could limit religious freedom, making them especially difficult to change.

## Dangerous Faith-based Activities

Most of the religious practices described below exist around the world. Whereas some are not explicitly included within official church doctrine or jurisprudence, they are nonetheless given credence and spread by religious exhortations, pronouncements, sermons, writings, recordings, trainings, workshops and family counseling. The articulation of these practices can occur anywhere from a local neighborhood church to the single most powerful religious headquarters in the world: The Vatican. Together with political and civic actions, these actions help stoke the flames of anti-LGBTIQ+ hate.

**1. “Pray the Gay Away”** is a phrase used to describe the practice of asking families or friends of LGBTIQ+ people to pray that God or another spiritual energy will change LGBTIQ+ people. Found most often in Christian Prosperity Gospel churches but also in other religious contexts, a donation or fee is paid to receive clergy help in speaking directly to God. Sometimes LGBTIQ+ people willingly participate in such ceremonies; other times they are forced to do so. The core assumption is that there is something wrong with an LGBTIQ+ person that requires celestial intervention to “fix.” Although some individuals claim such interventions have changed their core identity, most evidence suggests that such activities alienate or psychologically harm LGBTIQ+ people.

**2. Conversion or Reparative Therapy** subjects LGBTIQ+ people to psychological activities intended to “convert” them into fitting a heteronormative world view. Although it has existed for at least 100 years, conversion therapy became part of some professional practices in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 2015, a [United Nations](#) report called on countries to ban conversion therapies. In fall 2018, the 37,800-physician member [American Psychiatric Association](#) responded to broadcast entertainment shows depicting conversion therapy by restating its 1998 position that the “APA opposes any psychiatric treatment, such as ‘reparative’ or ‘conversion’ therapy.” In 2013, the APA strengthened its opposition, saying it

*“does not believe that same-sex orientation should or needs to be changed, and efforts to do so represent a significant risk of harm by subjecting individuals to forms of treatment which have not been scientifically*



*validated and by undermining self-esteem when sexual orientation fails to change. No credible evidence exists that any mental health intervention can reliably and safely change sexual orientation; nor, from a mental health perspective does sexual orientation need to be changed.”*

Damage from such therapy, which is often aimed at teens, is significant, including the possibility of patients experiencing depression, guilt, helplessness, hopelessness, shame, social withdrawal, and an increased risk of suicide. The APA has asked state lawmakers to ban the practice, and by mid-2019, it had been outlawed in 14 U.S. states plus the District of Columbia. Strong opposition to bans exists in states with religious-based colleges or universities, as well as states with a powerful evangelical lobby. Although bans can control state-licensed therapists, they usually do not regulate non-licensed individuals who work via, for example, a Christian therapy practice or via pastoral counseling. Conversion therapy techniques can include traditional talk therapy and aversion therapies such as shock treatment, induced nausea or induced vomiting. A 2018 [UCLA study](#) estimates that nearly 700,000 U.S. adults have received conversion therapy, about half of them as adolescents. Another 57,000 U.S. youth ages 13 to 17 could receive conversion therapy before they turn 18 years old, researchers noted.

**3. Exorcism/Deliverance** occurs in Christian Pentecostal, Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches, as well as in some Islamic communities. Exorcisms are viewed as delivering someone from a demonic possession or spirit and is done for an assortment of reasons. As with “Pray the Gay Away,” individuals may pay an exorcist and/or clergy member to perform the exorcism. Exorcisms, like conversion therapy, assume something about an LGBTQI+ person is fundamentally flawed and needs changed. Furthermore, exorcists usually blame Satan or “the devil” for controlling someone’s sexual or gender identity and expression. Exorcisms, which are typically highly emotional, may include convulsions, falling down on the floor, screaming and other actions. Ceremonial

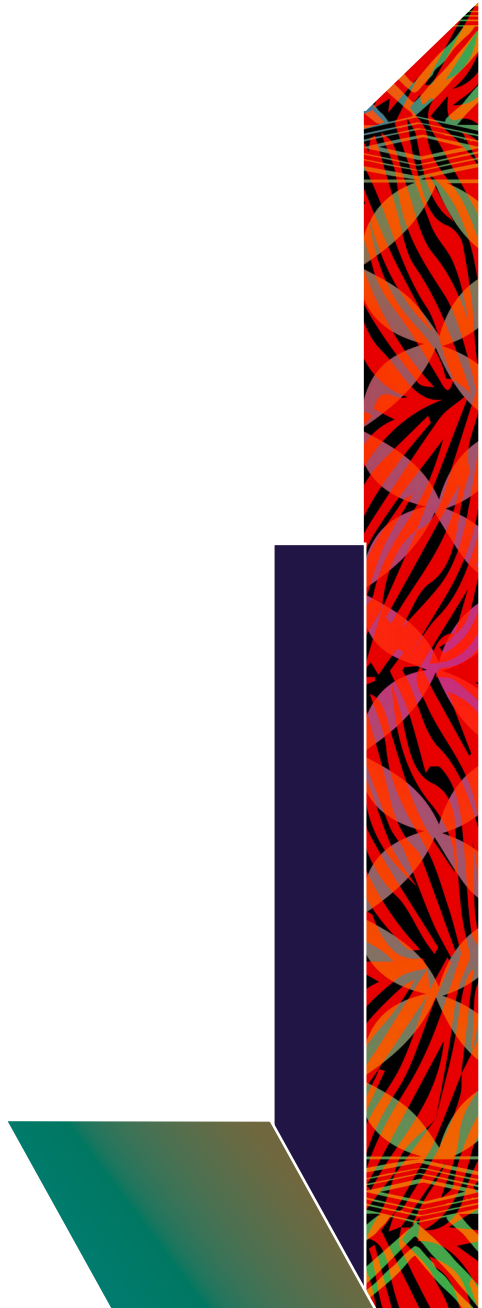
lancing, beatings, plastic bags over heads and partial drownings have all reportedly occurred during exorcisms—which often are coerced. Last year in Padang, Indonesia, the police even helped round up a group of more than 30 Muslims who were then forced to undergo an Islamic exorcism. [ABC News Australia](#) reported that the Indonesian TV show “Ruqyah” routinely broadcasts Islamic exorcisms. In one episode, the exorcist reports he performs exorcisms by reading from the Quran as well as hitting the person on their backs with a special broom. In 2018, the Vatican said it was conducting training for Catholic priests to learn how to perform exorcisms because of rising requests.

**4. Disowning/Banishment** can occur when a family’s other attempts to change LGBTQI+ people’s identity have failed or been rejected. Disowning is given more authority when prescribed by religious leaders, sometimes publicly but often in private. Banishments can separate children from their parents, parents from their children, partners from one another and friends from one another. Most importantly, it can cause emotional and psychological trauma on all sides, fueling depression, guilt, anger, and reinforcing bigotry and grief. Physically, it is a leading cause of homelessness and financial crises for LGBTQI+ adolescents; being kicked out of one’s home can further hurt a person’s ability to advance via a college education and more. In addition to complete banishment, a subtler and more widespread problem is the shunning or bullying of LGBTQI+ youth, sometimes by religious schools or authorities. For example, in June 2019—celebrated as Pride Month across the globe—the Vatican’s Congregation for Catholic Education issued a [document](#) reaffirming the church’s belief in “traditional families” and rejecting the notion of intersex people and gender fluidity. [Such statements](#) place targets on any LGBTQI+ youth or parent at a Catholic-affiliated school, increasing the likelihood of rejection and bullying.

**5. Sexual Violence and Homophobic Rape**, sometimes called “curative” or “corrective” rape, is a hate crime that uses sexual violence, most often against women, with the distorted notion that it will change the sexual orienta-

tion or gender identity of LGBTQI+ people. Although it is a hate crime, scholars believe queerphobic rapes are undercounted because sexuality-based rape may not be registered as such. At times, it is prescribed or even carried out by religious leaders. The goal is both punishment for people who do not conform to heteronormative standards, as well as the misguided notion that a rape will change the victim's sexuality. Researchers have documented gang rapes as homophobic rape as well, although they acknowledge challenges in knowing when a rape is homophobic versus misogynistic. Rapes, especially in countries such as India with a long history of violence against women, are also notoriously underreported — even more so in countries where LGBTQI+ relationships are criminalized. In 2015, the United Nations UNAIDS recommended the use of “homophobic” rape rather than “corrective rape” because corrective rape suggests something needs to be corrected. Psychological trauma, mutilation, guilt, social shunning, and even suicide are just a few of the lifelong impacts of rape. In its most extreme form, sexual violence against sexual and gender minorities includes mutilations of sex organs and even forced sterilization.

The ways in which religious institutions can impose homophobic attitudes on sexual and gender minorities are innumerable, but these are among the most common.





# Key Propagators of U.S. and Global Anti-LGBTQI+ Hate

# Key Propagators of U.S. and Global Anti-LGBTQI+ Hate

Countless mainstream and fringe religious institutions, parachurch organizations, civil society groups, political parties, and individuals work to promote LGBTQI+ hate and discrimination in the U.S. and abroad. In this chapter we look at the funding streams that empower this hate and profile some of the most prominent U.S. individuals and organizations working to undermine or oppose LGBTQI+ equality. We also include several resources to help you identify potential story links to your own audience and community.

## Funding Streams

As you'll see in the next chapter on investigative tips, tracking the flow of money from U.S. religious groups to anti-LGBTQI+ causes can be difficult, given laws that exempt such groups from needing to file certain financial statements. Canada, Australia, Hong Kong, New Zealand, the U.K. and some other countries do require religious groups and charities to file reports and disclose their finances. For major international religious groups such as the Catholic and Mormon church, you might uncover interesting data and story angles by cross-referencing financial filings from other countries.

The Global Philanthropy Project and other sources document several mechanisms religious and faith-based institutions use to finance their anti-LGBTQI+ efforts. These include:

### 1. Congregational Fundraising

When a church passes around its collection plates, parishioners open their wallets and purses. If the church opposes LGBTQI+ equality, money donated helps to advance that mission. Donating or paying religious tithes is often considered a religious duty and is not unique to Christianity. Some Orthodox Jews give 10 percent of their income to charity and Muslims are expected to donate 2.5 percent of their wealth as a religious obligation called zakat. Fundraising drives are also done online.

### 2. Donations from Conservative Grantmakers and Private Donors

Private organizations, foundations and individual donors provide both in kind support and millions of dollars to NGOs that mobilize locally and globally against LGBTQI+ equality. Donor-advised funds, discussed in some detail below, present an increasingly popular means to funnel funds anonymously. Examples of prominent conservative donors and donor-advised funds are listed in subsequent sections. One coordinating force is The Gathering, an annual meeting where prominent conservative donors convene to decide which causes to support. Opposing LGBTQI+ equality has long been on their agenda.

### 3. Private Businesses

Religious institutions own real estate and operate businesses, including private hospitals and media channels, worth billions of dollars. A [2012 Reuters report](#) estimated that the Mormon Church's buildings were worth \$35 billion globally. A [2018 report by the Sydney Morning Herald](#) found that the Catholic Church owns property worth more than \$30 billion in Australia alone. In Brazil, Nigeria and Russia, churches operate radio and television channels as private businesses, allowing them to broadcast their messages directly to millions of audience members. Trinity Broadcasting Network, Eternal Word Television Network and Christian Broadcasting

Network operate similarly in the U.S. If a religious institution opposes LGBTQI+ equality, revenue generated from their various enterprises can advance that cause.

#### 4. Public Financing and State Support

Religious institutions receive government funding in some countries. In 2018, [Argentina allocated nearly \\$4.6 million \(USD equivalent\)](#) from its public

budget to finance the salaries of Catholic Church officials. In Russia, between 2012 and 2015, [the Russian Orthodox Church and its associated structures received 14 billion rubles \(189 million USD equivalent\)](#) from the state. In several European countries, including Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Sweden and Switzerland, members of some religious congregations (and in some cases members of the general public) pay

## A Closer Look at Donor-Advised Funds

Donor-advised funds (DAFs) are the fastest-growing charitable giving vehicles in the U.S. In 2017, there were 463,622 individual DAFs in the U.S. with \$110 billion in total charitable assets according to a [National Philanthropic Trust report](#). More than \$19 billion was distributed in grants to qualified charities that year.

DAFs allow individuals and organizations to make charitable contributions, receive immediate tax deductions and then advise fund managers how to distribute money to charities over time. This middleman approach makes it difficult to track the flow of funds from specific donors to specific charities.

A [March 2019 report by Sludge](#) showed that between 2015 and 2017 **the National Christian Foundation (NCF)**, America's largest Christian-focused DAF provider, distributed \$56.1 million to 23 anti-LGBTQI+ and anti-Muslim nonprofits identified by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) as hate groups.

**Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF)** received the vast majority of this sum — \$49.2 million. ADF is a conservative Christian legal group based in Scottsdale, Arizona that has supported the criminalization of homosexuality in the U.S. and abroad. ADF also promotes and develops legislation to permit anti-LGBTQI+ discrimination using religious liberty arguments.

**The Family Research Council (FRC)** received \$5.3 million from NCF between 2015 and 2017. SPLC [notes](#) that FRC "often makes false claims about the LGBT community based on discredited research and junk science. The intention is to denigrate LGBT people as the organization battles against same-sex marriage, hate crime laws, and anti-bullying programs."

Other prominent anti-LGBTQI+ groups that received funds from NCF during this three-year period included **the American Family Association, Liberty Counsel and the Pacific Justice Institute**. A 2016 Inside Philanthropy [article](#) described NCF as "probably the single biggest source of money fueling the pro-life and anti-LGBT movements over the past 15 years."

Though most donors are anonymous, known NCF donors include billionaire **founder of Hobby Lobby and the Museum of the Bible, David Green, the Maclellan Foundation** (which has given more than \$100 million to NCF), **the Bolthouse Foundation** (\$9.6 million in 2017), and **the family foundation of Foster Friess** (\$2.5 million in 2017).

NCF is by no means the only DAF directing funds to anti-LGBTQI+ hate groups. Sludge [found](#) that Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund (the largest charity and DAF provider in the U.S.), Schwab Charitable Fund, and Vanguard Charitable Endowment Fund gave a combined total of nearly \$2.7 million to ADF alone in 2015-17. All of the top six DAF providers have given to 501(c)(3) organizations the SPLC considers hate groups.

taxes that support religious groups. In the U.S., the tax-exempt status religious institutions enjoy represents a tangible benefit. Faith-affiliated groups in the U.S. can also receive government grants to perform humanitarian, educational, medical, housing and other services. Even if such funding is not directly earmarked to oppose LGBTQI+ equality, overhead costs can contribute to the general operating budgets of some organizations that do so.

### 5. Funds Transfers Between Organizations

The transfer of money from anti-LGBTQI+ organizations and religious institutions in the Global North to those located elsewhere in the world is incredibly difficult to track. Kapyka Kaoma, a U.S.-based Zambian scholar, has documented such flows from U.S. churches and NGOs to churches and individual religious leaders in Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria and elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa. Such funding is sometimes designated as humanitarian or development aid and at times comes with the requirement that recipients sever ties with pro-LGBTQI+ groups. Notably, such support is at times interdenominational:

*“For example, although the Providence Christian Reformed Church in Holland, Michigan, is not an Episcopal congregation, it gave \$115,000 to the Anglican Church in Uganda and has continued to support the Ugandan diocese of Mityana. Similarly, non-Episcopal congregations in Mississippi support Anglican projects in Kenya, and the Rev. Rick Warren, minister of the Saddleback Church in California, has established partnerships with Anglican churches in Uganda, Kenya, and Rwanda,”* Kaoma wrote in his 2009 report, [“Globalizing the Culture Wars. U.S. Conservatives, African Churches and Homophobia.”](#)

## Individuals and Organizations

Here we profile some of the most prominent U.S. individuals and organizations propagating anti-LGBTQI+ hate domestically and abroad. Some of these actors are extremely vocal in their opposition to LGBTQI+ equality, including those from GLAAD’s Commentator Accountability

Project. Others work more quietly and behind the scenes to advance their missions, including some of the individuals and organizations highlighted in Human Rights Campaign’s [Export of Hate report](#) and the Southern Poverty Law Center’s [Hate Map](#).

## GLAAD’s Commentator Accountability Project

GLAAD’s [Commentator Accountability Project](#) aims to put critical information about frequent anti-LGBTQI+ interviewees into the hands of newsrooms, editors, hosts and reporters.

The project highlights commentators’ false, defamatory and dangerous anti-LGBTQI+ statements and calls attention to the sentiments behind them.

Prominent individuals highlighted in GLAAD’s Commentator Accountability Project, with a few examples of their most incendiary or problematic rhetoric as it pertains to LGBTQI+ equality in the U.S. and abroad, include:

### 1. **Tony Perkins**, president of the Family Research Council in Washington, D.C., and chair of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), a federal government commission:

- [Insisted that pedophilia is “a homosexual problem”](#) despite abundant evidence to the contrary.
- Dedicated seven minutes of a radio show to framing scientistically discredited “ex-gay” therapy as [“successful, encouraging gays to “escape the homosexual lifestyle.”](#)
- Claimed in 2012 that Uganda’s anti homosexuality bill (which initially included a death penalty clause) simply [“upholds moral conduct.”](#)
- Said the [Ten Commandments should be the law of the land](#).

### 2. **Bob Vander Plaats**, President of The Family Leader in Iowa:

- Received national and local condemnation over his “Marriage Vow” for 2012 U.S. presidential candidates, which included language suggesting that children were [better off under slavery than](#)

[they are today](#) (later removed); likened being gay to [polygamy, adultery, and polyandry](#); attacked gay people as a public health risk; said being gay is a choice; and called for all pornography to be banned.

- [Said of marriage equality](#): “[W]hat we know is it goes against the law of nature, and the law of nature’s God, which means, again, it’s against the Constitution.”
- Praised Russian president Vladimir Putin [for his country’s draconian ban on “homosexual propaganda.”](#)
- Claimed “that lifestyle [homosexuality] is [outside of God’s design](#) for the family.”

### 3. **Brian Brown**, President of the National Organization for Marriage in New Jersey:

- Testified in favor of a Russian law banning same-sex adoptions saying, “[Every child should have the right to have normal parents: a father and a mother.](#)”
- Encouraged parents to attend a Love Won Out so-called “ex-gay” conference, calling it a [way to “prevent your child from embracing this destructive way of life.”](#)
- [Claimed credit](#) for Trump administration rolling back trans rights in the military.
- Headed the [International Organization for Family](#), an international anti-LGBTQI+ group.

### 4. **Candi Cushman**, Education Analyst at Focus on the Family in Colorado:

- Claimed that “gay activists” are “[infiltrating classrooms under the cover of ‘anti-bullying’ or ‘safe schools’ initiatives.](#)”
- Her Day of Dialogue and associated website is rife with so-called “ex-gay” materials. The site pushes one-sided dictums [detailing God’s supposed one and only design for sexuality](#) and describes being gay as “broken” and gay students as “[those who struggle.](#)” A section called “fun things to do” instructs students to [invite a speaker](#)

[“who has experienced homosexuality and walked out of it to share their story,”](#) suggesting that Exodus International, a former “ex-gay” Christian umbrella organization that pushed harmful conversion therapy and was dissolved in 2013, is a good resource for finding possible speakers.

### 5. **Bryan Fischer**, Former Director of Issues Analysis for the American Family Association in Mississippi:

- [Wanted to re-criminalize sodomy](#): “If injection drug abuse is contrary to public policy, homosexual conduct should be too. And for the same reasons.”
- Called for an “[Underground Railroad to deliver innocent children from same-sex households.](#)”
- Said gay people [must be criminalized and treated like drug addicts](#); asking ([at 2:29](#)): “Do you put them to death, do you lock ‘em up ... what do you do?”
- Praised Uganda’s short-lived Anti-Homosexuality Act, saying [it proves this is a “winnable war.”](#)
- The Southern Poverty Law Center [classified](#) American Family Association (AFA) as an anti-gay hate group in 2010. Fischer was fired from his position in January 2015 for his extreme statements but still hosts the talk radio program “Focal Point” on American Family Radio.

### 6. **Maggie Gallagher**, Founder and former president of the National Organization for Marriage in New Jersey:

- Called on the George W. Bush administration to [dedicate research dollars to “ex-gay” therapy.](#)
- Defended the “ex-gay” organization JONAH (Jews Offering New Alternatives to Homosexuality), claiming the scientifically discredited therapy is [simply “help” for gay Jews.](#)
- [Said](#) “I oppose extending anti-discrimination laws to gays.”

### 7. **Peter LaBarbera**, President of Americans for Truth About Homosexuality (AFAH) in

## Illinois:

- In 2013, gave a speech at a “pro-family” conference in Jamaica [telling that nation to preserve its laws criminalizing homosexuality](#) and that homosexuality is a choice and is associated with pedophilia.
- [Claimed](#) that when President Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton advocate for equal protections for LGBTQI+ people abroad, they were “spitting in God’s eye.”
- Said citizens should [refuse to comply with](#) a Supreme Court ruling that brought federal marriage equality.
- [Called](#) equality for gay Americans “one of the most spectacularly successful anti-God movements in human history.”
- [Praised](#) Uganda’s Anti-Homosexuality Law and warned any steps toward decriminalizing homosexuality would open a “Pandora’s box” of dangerous rights and freedoms for LGBTQI+ people.

## 8. [Scott Lively](#), President of Abiding Truth Ministries in Massachusetts (and California):

- Author of *The Pink Swastika: Homosexuality in the Nazi Party* (1995), which purports that the “Nazi Party was entirely controlled by militaristic male homosexuals throughout its short history.”
- Is directly linked to anti-gay legislation in Uganda. Said his 2009 conference in Kampala was a “[nuclear bomb against the gay agenda in Uganda](#).”
- Sent a letter to Russian President Vladimir Putin saying “homosexualization” must be fought so that we can “[redeem the future of mankind from a Fascist Leviathan, just as we did in World War II](#).”
- Advocated for [anti-gay activism in Moldova](#).
- Claimed homosexuality “[portends the End Times](#)” and that President Obama is the Antichrist who would oversee this end.

- In 2014, Lively partnered with LaBarbera under the Coalition for Family Values to support Russia’s crackdown on gay “propaganda” and to call for the passage of similar laws elsewhere, including in the U.S.

GLAAD’s [Commentator Accountability Project](#) highlights quotes and media appearances from nearly 100 other anti-LGBTQI+ commentators including:

- [Matt Barber](#), Associate Dean at Liberty University School of Law and prominent spokesperson for the Liberty Counsel, an anti-LGBTQI+ legal outfit
- [Bill Donohue](#), Head of the Catholic League, which opposes positive depictions of LGBTQI+ people and issues
- [Robert P. George](#), Catholic legal scholar and professor who espouses anti-LGBTQI+ ideology, co-founder of National Organization for Marriage, and former Chairman of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom
- [Franklin Graham](#), President and CEO of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, which supports conversion therapy
- [Al Mohler](#), President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, which opposes LGBTQI+ equality
- [Pat Robertson](#), Founder and Chairman of The Christian Broadcasting Network, the American Center for Law & Justice (ACLJ) and Regent University. Robertson has long promoted conversion therapy. After the gay nightclub shooting in Orlando left 50 people dead he [said](#), “the best thing to do is to sit on the sidelines and let [LGBTQ rights advocates and Muslims] kill themselves.”
- [Todd Starnes](#), Fox News radio host and contributor who uses platforms to ridicule LGBTQI+ people
- [Mat and Anita Staver](#), Chairman and President (respectively) of the Liberty Counsel, which the Southern Poverty Law Center [designates as an anti-LGBT hate group](#)
- [Brian Camenker](#), President of MassResistance, which the Southern Poverty Law Center [designates as an anti-LGBT hate group](#)



- [Michael Brown](#), Head of the Coalition of Conscience. In 2014, Brown defended Uganda's Anti-Gay Law and traveled to Peru to discourage lawmakers from "normalizing homosexuality"

## Human Rights Campaign's 'Export of Hate'

In 2014, Human Rights Campaign (HRC) published [EXPOSED: The Export of Hate](#) documenting the global advocacy efforts of American anti-LGBTQI+ extremists.

In addition to Scott Lively, Peter LaBarbera, Brian Brown and Mat Staver, already mentioned above under GLAAD's [Commentator Accountability Project](#), the report profiles the people and organizations below. It also outlines connections among these individuals and groups and lists countries where they have actively undermined LGBTQI+ equality.

### American Center for Law & Justice in Washington, DC

The ACLJ, founded by televangelist Pat Robertson in 1990, has collaborated with other conservative religious groups to try to keep sodomy illegal, oppose marriage equality and restrict other rights for LGBTQI+ people in the U.S. and abroad.

ACLJ has affiliate offices in Israel, Pakistan, Zimbabwe, Russia and France with additional presence in Kenya and South Korea to "engage in domestic and international litigation, provide legal services, advise individuals and government agencies, and counsel clients on human rights issues." As reported by Human Rights Campaign:

*"In 2010, the ACLJ opened an East African office in Nairobi with the explicit purpose of lobbying the Kenyan government 'to take the Christians' views into consideration as they draft legislation and policies.' To that end, the group spent tens of thousands of dollars trying to defeat a draft version of the Kenyan constitution, which they argued was too permissive*

*toward LGBT Kenyans and would allow 'abortion on demand.' Although the ACLJ was unsuccessful at defeating the draft constitution, it pledged to go to court to continue the fight and to carry out civic education to "warn people of the dangers of homosexuality."*

In May 2019, efforts to decriminalize same-sex sexual activity failed in Kenya's High Court.

**The ACLJ, founded by televangelist Pat Robertson in 1990, has collaborated with other conservative religious groups to try to keep sodomy illegal, oppose marriage equality and restrict other rights for LGBTQI+ people in the U.S. and abroad.**

The ACLJ has undertaken similar work in Zimbabwe. In Brazil, it has opposed hate crime legislation, marriage equality and employment protections for LGBT people.

### National Organization for Marriage in New Jersey

Several voices highlighted in GLAAD's Commentator Accountability Project have held leadership positions at the National Organization for Marriage (NOM) including Brian Brown, Maggie Gallagher and Robert P. George. NOM was founded in 2007 to oppose marriage equality and has since worked to oppose same-sex adoption and transgender rights.

NOM operates a 501(c)(4) political advocacy group and a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization (NOM Education Fund) to carry out different aspects of their larger agenda. As of 2019, their primary focus seems to be the Marriage Anti-Defamation Alliance, which is "dedicated to protecting and defending the right of pro-marriage Americans who are being harassed and discriminated against for their heartfelt beliefs on marriage to exercise their rights and share their pro-marriage convictions by telling their stories and lending them aid." NOM's definition of "marriage" only includes opposite-sex marriage.

### Paul Cameron, Chairman of the Family Research Institute (FRI) in Colorado

Sociological and psychological professional organizations have long considered Cameron's academic writing on the supposed dangers of homosexuality illegitimate. Nevertheless, it is

still cited by some judges, religious leaders and legislators around the world to oppose LGBTQI+ equality. This was true when Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Bill was first drafted in 2009. With [revenue under \\$50,000 in 2017](#), FRI is one of several anti-LGBTQI+ organizations that exist primarily to advance an individual's or family's agenda.

Cameron has worked in Russia, Moldova and Poland to help lobby against equality. As reported by HRC:

*"In 2013, Cameron addressed a Duma roundtable on 'family values' in Russia. His presence was intended to bolster support for a bill that targeted gay and lesbian parents and threatened to take away their children. Cameron's testimony was full of false statistics, including the 'fact' that one in three gay people support having sex with children. Duma member Alexander Sidyakin later tweeted that Cameron's testimony was evidence that children should be taken away from LGBT parents and adopted by other families."*

### **Family Watch International in Arizona**

Family Watch International (FWI) works within the United Nations and in countries around the world to oppose LGBTQI+ equality. In [designating it an anti-LGBT hate group](#), Southern Poverty Law Center says FWI founder Sharon Slater "promotes anti-LGBT pseudoscience that includes the falsehood that homosexuality is a mental disorder derived from childhood trauma, and that so-called conversion therapy can effectively eliminate same-sex attraction." FWI's [total revenue in 2017 was more than \\$500,000](#).

FWI has consultative status with the U.N.'s Economic and Social Council and hosts annual Global Family Policy Forums and other events to train U.N. ambassadors and delegates on "issues related to life, family, children, gender, sex education and sexuality (i.e., the sexual rights agenda)," according to their website. HRC reports:

*"The forum often includes testimony from people who claim to have been 'cured' of homosexuality by damaging 'reparative therapy,' and participants have included representatives from Africa, Asia, the Middle East and the Caribbean. Slater's stated goal is to*

*'lobby African governments to withstand the anti-family agenda at the U.N.'. She has traveled extensively in Africa and has addressed legislators, policymakers and religious leaders across the continent. She organized two 'pro-family' conferences in Nairobi and Mozambique in 2002 and 2006. Slater has been particularly active in Nigeria, urging the Nigerian government to resist efforts to decriminalize homosexuality, which she said would result in more AIDS cases."*

### **Robert Oscar Lopez, Professor of Humanities at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Texas**

Robert Oscar Lopez runs the Texas chapter of the anti-LGBTQ group MassResistance. Lopez has addressed "pro-family" activists at rallies in France and Italy, advancing anti-equality messages and opposing same-sex adoption. HRC reports:

*"Robert Oscar Lopez is given credibility as an 'expert' on gay parenting because he was raised by lesbian mothers. Lopez also claims to be an ex-gay man and often recounts his experience of falling into a life of drugs and promiscuity as a young man before marrying a woman and becoming a father. Lopez cites this as evidence of the toxicity of gay culture and a reason to deny LGBT people equality."*

### **Janice Shaw Crouse, Senior Fellow at Concerned Women for America**

Janice Shaw Crouse is a senior fellow at Concerned Women for America, a conservative evangelical Christian nonprofit, and is the former executive director of World Congress of Families, which opposes LGBTQI+ equality and is discussed further below. She led the 2015 World Congress of Families summit in Salt Lake City.

HRC reports: "As far back as 2007 she was urging the Ugandan government to take 'a biblical and cultural stand against the radical homosexual agenda' and she has traveled to Russia on several occasions with the World Congress of Families to promote 'pro-family' policies. She participated in a November 2013 World Congress of Families seminar on Capitol Hill in the United States on 'what America should learn' from countries like Russia on family policy."

## Scott Stirm, Executive Director of Belize Action and Vice President of the National Evangelical Association of Belize

Scott Stirm is an evangelical missionary from Texas who has lived in Belize for more than 25 years. His organization Belize Action, which has not updated its web presence in several years and may be defunct, lobbied to retain Belize's ban on same-sex sexual activity, which he called "a good law that protects human dignity." Stirm has also [said](#) that gay people "cannot reproduce" so they must "recruit" children. Belize's Supreme Court declared the country's anti-sodomy law unconstitutional in 2016. As of 2017, Stirm was vice president of the National Evangelical Association of Belize, a role he has used to vocally [oppose the decriminalization ruling](#). HRC reports:

*"Belizean activists believe that the country's heated anti-LGBT rhetoric is largely an import from the United States and Stirm has received financial and legal support from some major American organizations, including the Alliance Defending Freedom and the Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute."*

## Southern Poverty Law Center's Anti-LGBT Hate Map

In 2018, the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) tracked [49 anti-LGBT hate groups in the U.S.](#) Many have already been profiled above under the organization's name or one of its leaders. Four additional groups deserve a closer look.

### Alliance Defending Freedom in Arizona

As mentioned above in reference to donor-advised funds, ADF is a behemoth and well-resourced anti-LGBTQI+ Christian legal organization. In designating it a hate group, [SPLC notes that ADF](#) has "supported the recriminalization of homosexuality in the U.S. and criminalization abroad; has defended state-sanctioned sterilization of trans people abroad; has linked homosexuality to pedophilia, and claims that a 'homosexual agenda' will destroy Christianity and society. ADF also works to develop 'religious liberty' legislation and case law that will allow the denial of goods and services to LGBT people on the basis of religion."

ADF has four offices in the U.S., five in Europe, one in Mexico City, and one in New Delhi. Its

website states, "Along with hundreds of allies, we are engaging in legal advocacy before national and international institutions and courts, including the European Court of Human Rights, the European Parliament, and the United Nations." HRC reports:

*"The ADF's rationale for expanding operations overseas is that American courts are often influenced by the outcome of cases elsewhere. To that end, the group has intervened in cases involving Russia, Italy, Ireland, Mexico and Argentina."*

### World Congress of Families in Illinois

The World Congress of Families (WCF) is a conservative Christian coalition that opposes same-sex marriage, pornography and abortion. In designating it a hate group, [SPLC notes](#): "Though its origins are in the American Christian Right, the WCF has built a web of influence in different countries, providing a point of networking for global anti-LGBT forces and working as a political power broker as an anti-LGBT group in its own right. Its legacy includes the mainstreaming of the so-called 'natural family' doctrine, one that has been used to curtail LGBT and reproductive rights across the world. A cornerstone of the natural family doctrine rests on anti-LGBT and anti-reproductive rights junk science, which originates in the United States and which WCF helps spread overseas."

Since 1997, WCF has held World Conferences in the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Mexico, Poland, the Netherlands, Spain, Australia, the U.S. (Salt Lake City), Georgia, Hungary, Moldova and Italy. HRC reports:

*"Many mainstream American conservative organizations are dues-paying members and help fund its conferences. The George W. Bush administration provided extensive support for the World Congress of Families during its eight years in office."*

Political Research Associates compiled the report "[Everything You Need to Know About the Anti-LGBTQ World Congress of Families](#)" in 2015, which offers useful background on several affiliated organizations.

### The Center for Family and Human Rights in New York City and Washington, D.C.

The Center for Family and Human Rights (C-Fam), originally called the Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute, was established in 1997 to “monitor and affect the social policy debate at the United Nations and other international institutions.” SPLC [reports](#):

*“C-Fam is heavily focused on global anti-LGBT work, charging that international law is advancing a ‘radical social agenda’ that needs to be stopped. It has claimed that UN efforts to further LGBT rights will lead to ‘hate crime charges being brought against Christians’ who oppose ‘the homosexual agenda.’ In 2012, its president, Austin Ruse, attacked a UN global study of anti-LGBT violence, saying it was a ‘dishonest’ ploy to legitimize homosexuality.”*

Political Research Associates [reports](#):

*“Ruse — C-Fam’s most visible spokesman — has made many inflammatory statements over the years...While hosting a show on American Family Radio, he said that ‘hard left, human-hating people that run modern universities’ should ‘all be taken out and shot.’ He has also publicly voiced support for*

*Russia’s draconian anti-LGBT laws and called ‘the homosexual lifestyle’ harmful to public health and morals.”*

C-Fam has strong ties to Human Life International, a Catholic anti-abortion, anti-contraception organization from which C-Fam has obtained funding.

### Faithful Word Baptist Church in Arizona

Steven Anderson founded Faithful Word Baptist Church in 2005. He describes Faithful Word as “an old-fashioned, independent, fundamental, King James Bible only, soul-winning Baptist church.” In designating it a hate group, [SPLC notes](#):

*“Much of [Anderson’s] venom was aimed at homosexuals, who he suggests should be killed (‘The biggest hypocrite in the world is the person who believes in the death penalty for murderers but not for homosexuals’). He has described gays as ‘sodomites’ who ‘recruit through rape’ and ‘recruit through molestation.’”*

Anderson has made [international headlines](#) in recent years for being banned from or denied

## In 2018, 49 Anti-LGBT Hate Groups Across the U.S. Were Tracked

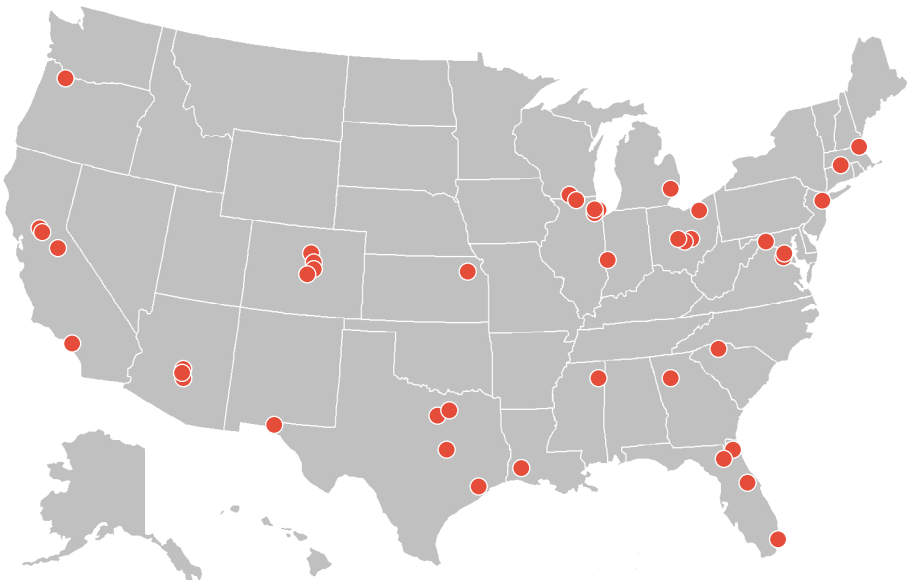
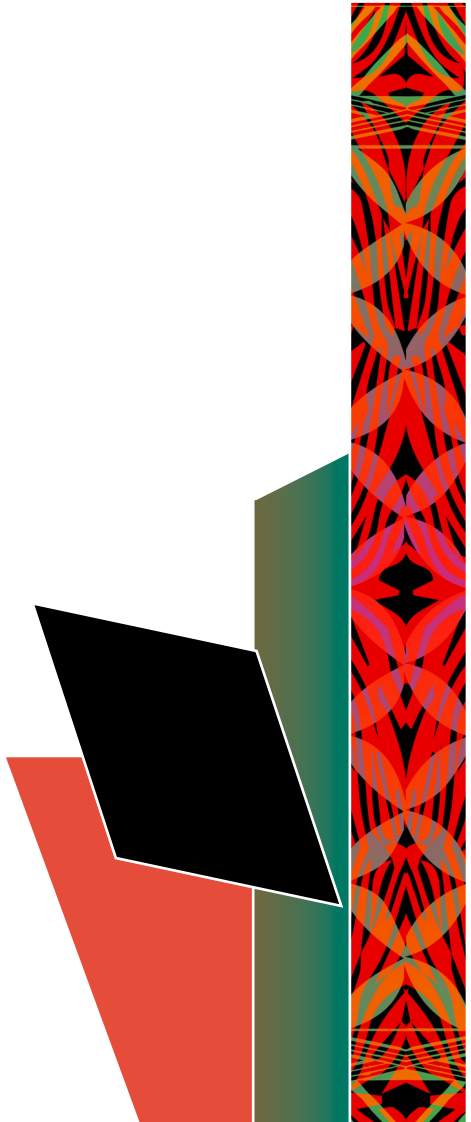


Image credit:SPLC

entry to several countries where he intended to preach anti-LGBTQI+ hate, including South Africa, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Botswana, Canada, Jamaica and the Netherlands, bringing with it a ban that extends to the entire Schengen Area of 26 European countries.

Visit the SPLC website to explore an [interactive map](#) and learn more about designated anti-LGBT hate groups.



# Investigating U.S.-Based Anti-LGBTQI+ Hate Campaigns



# Investigating U.S.-Based Anti-LGBTQI+ Hate Campaigns

**I**nvestigating religious groups and nonprofit organizations is quite different from investigating public entities. The vast majority of financial records belonging to religious institutions are private — and at least in the U.S., there are few requirements to make them public.

This section highlights the few public documents that do exist and that can be useful in investigating U.S.-based anti-LGBTQI+ groups. As is always the case: Follow the money. Journalists and activists digging into public records can uncover misused funds, lack of checks and balances, family members on payrolls or the transfer of funds to other groups that may serve as front organizations for hate groups.

The IRS collects information from all organizations that seek nonprofit status through its annual tax return, known as Form 990. Although churches and religious institutions are exempt from filing tax returns, many religious-affiliated agencies, parachurch entities and other charitable organizations classified as 501(c)(3) by the IRS are required to file Form 990s.

## 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organizations

A veil of secrecy shrouds the activities of most advocacy, nonprofit and religious organizations, regardless of whether it hides anything uncouth or nefarious. This is due to Section 501(c)(3) of the tax code, which exempts such organizations from filing extensive corporate financial paperwork and paying taxes. These exemptions make it harder to obtain information about nonprofits than to obtain information about publicly traded organizations.

Several [IRS tax guides](#) online expand on the following requirements, considered to be the

basic elements necessary for an organization to receive federal tax exemption:

- The organization must be organized and operated exclusively for religious, educational, scientific or other charitable purposes.
- Net earnings may not inure to the benefit of any private individual or shareholder.
- No substantial part of its activity may be attempting to influence legislation.
- No significant intervening in an individual's political campaign or financial support of a politician's campaign is allowed.
- The organization's purposes and activities must be legal activities as allowable under federal and state law.

While tax-exempt groups have a constitutionally protected right to operate as they will, exempt from government scrutiny and most paperwork, when they expand into the entrepreneurial arena, such rigid protections begin to ebb. It is in these cases, in particular, that journalistic investigations can gain traction.

## IRS Form 990

The single most valuable document for investigations of U.S.-based nonprofits and religious groups is Form 990. That's the tax return document that most nonprofits must file with the federal government. The online database [GuideStar](#) by [Candid](#) provides free copies of nonprofits' Form 990s (for registered users, registration is free), although often, the most recent years are not yet available.

With resources formerly belonging to [The Foundation Center](#), Candid also hosts data on private foundations, including family and corporate foundations. Its databases allow you to search where a foundation gives money and can help you detect relationships among similar groups or where funds might be funneled from one group

to another. Some of the information found at Candid comes at a cost, but it's very often worth the expense.

Here are some important facts and reminders about Form 990s for anyone investigating a hate group:

- A 990 is a factual representation of a group's income, expenses, and key individuals, but its accuracy is only as good as the people filling it out. It's always good to verify the information if possible.
- Some groups are exempt from completing 990s — specifically any group legally classified as a house of worship. Churches, synagogues, temples, mosques and other such places of worship are never required to complete the form.
- Although houses of worship don't need to submit a 990, related ministries such as social service groups that provide housing, food, education or other services generally must be separately registered as a nonprofit and must file a 990. These associated groups are common sources of anti-LGBTQI+ hate.
- The IRS requires that 990s be viewable to the public but not necessarily viewable online. Viewing might need to take place in-person at an organization's office. In addition, the "public viewing copy" provided by organizations does not include all the additional tax schedules or subpages of information required by the IRS. An accountant familiar with nonprofit tax returns can explain what information remains legally hidden from the public. This might explain why a 990 provided by a former employee might differ from the public viewing copy.

Some questions an IRS Form 990 might help you answer:

- Who is responsible for how an organization adheres to its fiscal roles?
- What are the top employees' salaries?
- What investments does the organization hold?
- What potential ethical problems might exist, such as conflicts of interest among the board of directors?
- What financial relationships exist among

other organizations?

- How is the organization spending its money?

Form 990s can help reporters investigate whether a group is misusing its nonprofit status, which according to U.S. law must be for the public good. They reveal to journalists if organizations receive money from or send money to foreign countries, if they accept lavish gifts (think cars, airplanes or boats), and whether or not they might be involved in some sort of tax shelter. Form 990s can also help you identify additional names of potential sources within an organization you may wish to contact for an interview.

Comparing 990s from multiple organizations can shine light on salary or expenditure irregularities. Investigators should pay attention to how salaries and key individuals change from year to year. People who are former employees or board members might be excellent sources of information about the sorts of activities that fuel anti-LGBTQI+ activities abroad.

The IRS requires all nonprofits to assign its expenses into categories called functional expenses. These include salaries, wages, taxes, grants, legal costs, accounting, fundraising and lobbying expenses. Although it's up to nonprofits to report these accurately, disproportionate spending on fundraising, salaries or other categories can raise red flags. Unfortunately, it's difficult to prove that a nonprofit is reporting these expenses improperly, even by looking at a 990.

## **Bypassing 990 Roadblocks**

If you can't get your hands on a 990 for the organization you are investigating, don't despair. Loan documents, liens and Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) filings can offer reporters a master key to seemingly impenetrable fortresses of secrecy erected around religious organizations or personalities.

UCC filings create legally traceable records of debtors' payment plan commitments. Lenders are responsible for filing UCC documents with the appropriate local or state agency, be it the county clerk, secretary of state or the parish clerk of court where the debt originated. These filings are listed under the borrower's name and are commonly available online.

Loan documents and liens are usually found at the



county clerk's office and will turn up by conducting a title search. Searching for property holdings, both by the organization and by individuals associated with the organization's operation (and their spouses, children, siblings and extended family), can help a reporter piece together the scope of a particular enterprise and discover new lines of inquiry and evidence for use in the investigation. Looking up building plans, permits and inspections can also yield bountiful results.

Most budget numbers have to come from the religious or nonprofit organizations themselves. However, some database information is maintained by the government. When requesting government database information, it's important to:

- Know the law in your state regarding what is and isn't available to the public.
- Know exactly what information you want.
- Know in what format the information is kept.
- Find out the itemized cost (you may have to pay duplication or other fees).

## IRS Form 1023 and Other Publications

To become a 501(c)(3) charitable organization in the United States, groups must submit to the government IRS Form 1023, which documents the organization's tax-exempt purpose, states its financial status and includes additional forms of information, known as schedules, based on the type of organization.

The Tax Guide for Churches and Religious Organizations, [IRS Publication 1828](#), is a helpful place to start when researching a faith-based nonprofit because it can show how a group might be abusing its privilege as a U.S. charitable organization. The guide also details how the IRS regulates and exempts religious institutions.

The IRS has an online version of [Publication 78](#), which allows journalists to see which groups the government recognizes as charitable organizations. Although it's not always 100 percent accurate and up-to-date, it's a good place to quickly check a group's claim, particularly if it is receiving donations from the public. Note that an organization's nonprofit status is usually retroactive to the date it was incorporated at the state level and not the date on its application to the IRS.

## Freedom of Information Requests

The [Freedom of Information Act](#) (FOIA) was enacted by Congress in 1966 to give the American public greater access to federal government records. The Electronic Freedom of Information Act Amendments of 1996 expanded FOIA's scope to include electronic records and required the creation of electronic reading rooms to make records more easily and widely available to the public. Signed into law by President George W. Bush in 2005, [Executive Order 13392, "Improving Agency Disclosure of Information,"](#) requires federal agencies to make their FOIA programs "citizen-centered and results-oriented."

However, agencies may withhold information based on certain exemptions in the statute. The FOIA applies only to federal agencies and not to records held by Congress, the courts, or by state or local government agencies. Each state has its own public access laws, often called Open Records and Sunshine Laws. The [National Freedom of Information Coalition](#) can help reporters navigate the FOIA process. Other helpful records include civil or criminal court cases, which can point you to disgruntled individuals who may be willing to share inside information about an organization, and estate records, which often are in probate courts when someone dies. They show relationships among beneficiaries and the movement of wealth.

## Public Records

At the outset of an investigation, ask these questions:

### 1. What documents are available about this organization and its subsidiaries? These might include:

- Form 990
- Incorporation or charter papers
- Organizational bylaws
- Property ownership/assessment records
- Building inspections
- Licensing/inspections for day care or food operations
- Lending hold on property title/mechan-

ic's liens

- Roster of officers, boards of directors, membership directory

## 2. What information exists about the individuals involved with the leadership of this organization?

- What property do they own; how much is it worth; are there any liens?
- Can you find their CVs or LinkedIn profiles to cross-check past employment and affiliations?
- Have they said or listed anything noteworthy on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc?
- Does their background information check out?
- Have the organization or key individuals been named in any lawsuits?
- What sort of media coverage has been generated in the past about them and what other sources can be identified through that coverage?

## Dealing with Data

Precise numbers can be hard to come by when investigating religious or anti-LGBTQI+ hate groups. Self-reported data from an organization is sometimes inflated to give the impression that it has more support than it really does. Here are some important reminders when dealing with statistics related to religious groups and anti-LGBTQI+ hate groups, especially those with a faith-based mission:

- The U.S. Census, the usual standard for counting people and their characteristics, does not ask people about their religious affiliations.
- Roman Catholics have one pope and a highly structured hierarchy that tracks membership, but in many religions, such as Islam, there is no official governing body and no official membership count.
- Some faiths, such as the Pentecostal movement, include people from many denominations, so there is no central record-keeping. Evangelical Christians are difficult to count because they often belong to specific

denominational churches, nondenominational churches or sometimes no church at all.

- Individual denominations and religions count their members differently, if at all, so it is difficult to compare their sizes. For example, the Southern Baptist Convention, which does not baptize infants, counts people who are baptized. The United Methodist Church, which baptizes infants, counts people once they are confirmed. Mosques don't require membership, so estimates of Muslims are just that — estimates.
- Formal affiliation with a religious group doesn't give the complete picture. Only about half of Jews in the U.S. are affiliated with synagogues, so the National Jewish Population Survey uses other questions to determine Jewish identity.
- Categories are controversial. Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (commonly referred to as Mormons) consider themselves Christian, but many Christian groups do not. Messianic Jews, who believe Jesus was the Messiah Jews await, consider themselves Jewish, but most Jews consider Messianic Jews to be Christian.

## Tips for Citing Statistics

All the general guidelines of good journalism apply when quoting statistics in stories about anti-LGBTQI+ hate groups. It's important to contextualize self-reported data from groups so as not to mislead your audience with potentially inflated figures. Be specific about what numbers represent (worship attendance, membership, baptism, etc.), and be careful with comparisons. If you have apples and oranges, say so and note that two groups' definitions of "member" differ.

When statistics are vague or open to interpretation, use the following tips to add context:

- Give a range of numbers or qualify statistics if they are imprecise: "There are 5 to 7 million Muslims in America," according to X credible surveys. "There are more than 1 million Hindus," according to X credible expert.
- Note when numbers are disputed: Say a

group reports it has 5 million followers, but others (specify who and why) say otherwise.

- Quote multiple numbers from different sources.
- Characterize the amount, if the specific number is not necessary. Sometimes the number is not controversial in a story and it is enough to say that the group has “more than doubled,” without debating whether it has tripled.
- Sophisticated advocacy groups promote their own polls, which support their own agendas. Beware of spin.

## Investigative Sourcing Tips

Current NPR News Western Bureau Chief Jason DeRose worked as a journalist at Chicago Public Radio for about 10 years, primarily focusing on religion topics and LGBTQI+ issues. On a beat where groups “don’t want to talk to you, don’t have to talk to you, don’t want to keep documents and don’t have to keep documents,” he said no investigative tool served him better than honing the arts of conversation and relationship building.

Investigating anti-LGBTQI+ groups requires these skills. Some groups, such as large religious denominations, have complex hierarchies that control the flow of information. Other groups may not be familiar with how media function — and likely mistrust journalists. A large part of investigating religious groups and nonprofit organizations is about journalists broadening their contact bases. Valuable sources may include people working within an organization who can share copies of records or provide story tips and experts and scholars who can help contextualize your story.

When investigating anti-LGBTQI+ hate groups, try these tips to find relevant sources:

- Go to where an organization’s members congregate. This could be a house of worship, bookstore, hobby group, sports game, conference, festival or public march/protest.
- Sign up for newsletters and other publications compiled by organizations, nonprofits, charities and houses of worship. These can be great sources of information about what

is going on and who is active within the organizations. They can also provide phone numbers and email addresses for individual members.

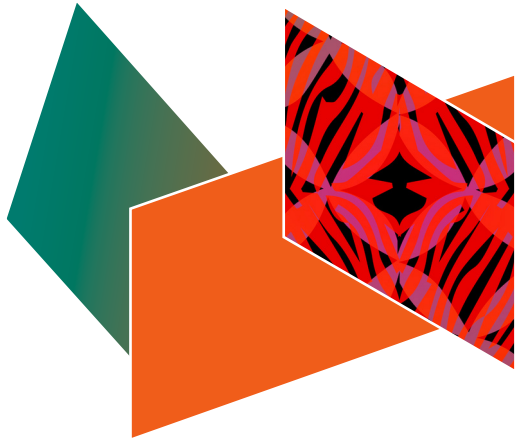
- Start from the bottom up, by identifying local representatives of national organizations and speaking to them first for context before reaching up to the top.
- Get to know religious leaders, congregants, philanthropists and nonprofit groups’ leaders in your community.
- Look for the views of “real people.” Don’t limit your investigation to leaders, the loudest voices or polar extremes when exploring an issue. Nuanced stories often emerge from gaps between the extremes.
- If you discover legal proceedings against an organization, ask lawyers representing plaintiffs to provide access to documents and sources that may be useful.
- Trawl advocacy and support sites, blogs, Facebook pages, subreddits, or other groups dedicated to challenging or monitoring the activities of a particular group.

## Nonprofit Watchdogs

Several organizations have made it their mission to monitor the activities of nonprofit and religious organizations. Although the purpose and intent of each watchdog group differs, most exist to ensure that groups claiming public charity status operate with as much transparency, accuracy and efficiency as possible.

Other watchdog groups serve as support groups for targets of hate or abuse. For example, the [Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests \(SNAP\)](#) has provided vital information to journalists about priests accused of sexual abuse.

Another watchdog, the [Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability \(ECFA\)](#), monitors the financial transparency of more than 2,000 U.S.-based Christian groups that are registered as tax-exempt nonprofit organizations. Member organizations pay to be monitored, and data about them can be found in a searchable database on the ECFA site. There is no searchable category for LGBTQI+-related issues, so journalists will need to check several categories including “missions: foreign,” “education,” “Bible study



and engagement,” “counseling,” “family and child services,” “literature/pub distribution,” “public policy” or “evangelization,” among other categories.

The watchdog [Charity Navigator](#) evaluates nearly 10,000 nonprofit organizations based on how they use funds and other criteria. Organizations must pay to be rated and submit their information to receive a rating or “score.” Nearly 10,000 nonprofits are listed. Charity Navigator’s site includes other helpful resources on evaluating nonprofits.

The American Institute of Philanthropy’s [Charity-Watch](#) site informs donors about how a limited number of national charities spend their money. At present there are about 600 nonprofits listed. The site gives nonprofits an overall “grade” and evaluates categories such as transparency and governance. Only the largest groups are included, and it does not include a “religion” search category.

The Better Business Bureau’s Wise Giving Alliance provides [free ratings of more than 600 charities](#) based on certain evaluation criteria. The database allows users to search for “religious” or “human services,” among other relevant terms.

[MinistryWatch](#) is an online database that profiles several hundred Christian church and parachurch ministries in the United States. MinistryWatch emphasizes that it puts donors first, rather than serving the organizations listed on its site.

## Other Investigative Resources and Helpful Sites

The following sources can be helpful places to find court records, other IRS data and more when investigating groups that spread anti-LGBTQI+ hate:

- [The National Center for Charitable Statistics at the Urban Institute](#) provides a database of IRS Form 990s and other financial reports for charities.
- [Public Access to Court Electronic Records \(PACER\)](#) is a service of the Federal Judiciary that allows users to obtain case and docket information online from federal appellate, district and bankruptcy courts.
- [Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies](#) brings together data collectors from American faith groups, a rich pool of potential sources.
- [Consolidated Federal Funds Reports](#) from the U.S. Census Bureau is a database of all federal money that goes to states, counties and local agencies, including Social Security payments, grants and direct loans.
- [Federal Audit Clearinghouse](#) operates on behalf of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Its Single Audit database can be used to examine local nonprofits and state or local government agencies that receive substantial assistance from the federal government.
- [USASpending.gov](#) is the official source for spending data for the U.S. government. Its mission is to show the American public what the federal government spends every

year and how it spends the money. It also includes federal financial assistance award transactions.

- [SearchSystems.net](#) provides free, centralized access to more than 70,000 databases by type and location to help you find property, criminal, court, birth, death, marriage, and divorce records, licenses, deeds, mortgages, corporate and business registration records, and other public resources.
- [Trinity Foundation Inc.](#) is a nonprofit organization that monitors religious media, conducts investigations and reports on fraud and abuses of public trust.
- [The Berman Jewish DataBank](#) is a project of the Jewish Federations of North America Contemporary. It provides open access to quantitative studies and related materials on North American Jews and Jewish communities.
- [The World Christian Database](#) provides comprehensive statistical information on more than 9,000 Christian denominations, 13,000 ethnolinguistic peoples, as well as data on 5,000 cities, 3,000 provinces and 234 countries and regions.
- [Bishop Accountability](#) documents the Roman Catholic Church abuse crisis and aims for accountability of U.S. bishops under civil, criminal and canon law.
- [The Association of Religious Data Archives](#) provides free access to authoritative religion statistics, data and church membership reports from around the world.
- [ATLA Religion Database](#) provides an international collection of research, scholarly and popular journals, magazines and news on religious organizations and people, although much of the content is old.
- [The National Freedom of Information Coalition](#) promotes press freedom, legislative and administrative reforms and litigation to ensure open, transparent and accessible state and local governments and public institutions. It features reviews of public records laws from 50 states, federal and state resources, audits and open records surveys, state FOIA laws, and sample FOIA letters you can adapt for your needs.

Other resources and documents that may enhance your investigation include:

- Tax dispute records, which are informal decisions in matters submitted to the IRS for advisory opinions, and decisions by state and federal tax courts;
- Financing records of tax-exempt revenue bonds that are issued by economic development authorities, educational facility financing authorities, downtown redevelopment authorities and other government agencies;
- Loan records, liens, lawsuits, Uniform Commercial Code filings, bond prospectus, board meeting minutes, foreclosure petitions, state inspections and appeals reports, insurance commission reports, corporation filings and property tax records;
- Local and national church, denomination and diocesan records (sometimes found in seminary or university libraries);
- Auto leasing records, building and zoning permits, divorce papers of leaders, municipal water department records, motor vehicle registrations, secretary of state's corporation records;
- County records including assumed names files, real-estate records, tax appraisal records, and legal filings;
- Records with the district court and federal bankruptcy records;
- Federal contract applications — Audits, Inspector General's reports, contracts from federal agencies and legislation involved in awarding money.

# Covering Sexual And Gender Minorities



# Covering Sexual and Gender Minorities

**R**eporting on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expressions (SSOGIE) can be tricky. Stereotypes, social hostilities, legal prohibitions and editorial censorship often distort coverage of these sensitive topics. Add religion to the mix, and producing responsible journalism on LGBTQI+ issues can seem impossible.

The following sections, adapted from our reporting guide on covering sexual and gender minorities and religion in Sub-Saharan Africa, aim to show that ethical and sensitive coverage of marginalized individuals and communities is not only possible but necessary.

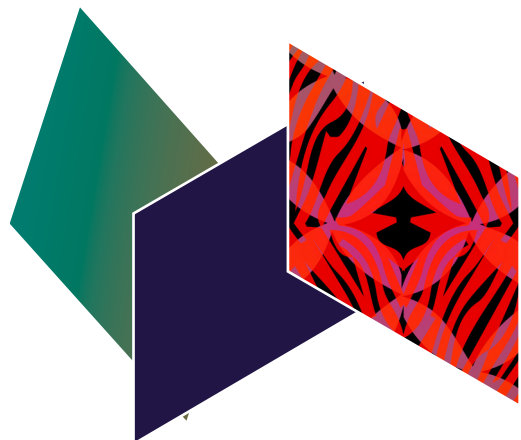
## Reporting Principles

Sexual and gender minorities remain disadvantaged, stigmatized and excluded from many aspects of economic, political and social life around the world. Alarming levels of discrimination, prejudice and violence make LGBTQI+ people particularly vulnerable to human rights violations.

As journalists, we have the power to replace dehumanizing stereotypes with nuanced and accurate portrayals of

LGBTQI+ people's lived realities. Doing so requires us to put biases aside and to embrace the core teachings of our profession.

After each journalism training Taboom Media leads on covering SSOIE issues, our journalists collaboratively update and improve the following reporting resolution on best practices for covering sexual and gender minorities. This latest version emerged from regional trainings in May 2019.



# Reporting Resolution

**As journalists, we adhere to our profession's principles of honesty, fairness, accuracy, transparency, sensitivity and thoroughness. When reporting and editing on LGBTQI+ rights, we resolve to:**

1. Independently develop our knowledge of different SSOIGIE (Sex, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression) issues.
2. Avoid mentioning SSOIGIE status when such information is not directly relevant to a story.
3. Carefully consider word choice and framing around sexual and gender minorities. Use sources' preferred terminology when appropriate.
4. Allow marginalized and underrepresented people to speak for themselves and in their own voices.
5. Strive to include moderate voices in our reporting, not just the extremes.
6. Seek out diverse, knowledgeable sources capable of providing accurate information and analysis.
7. Always consider the motivations and potential biases of our sources.
8. Be especially diligent in verifying all details when covering sensitive news and ask for clarification when needed.
9. Avoid including dangerous hate speech in our stories.
10. Avoid sensationalizing or capitalizing on marginalized identities.
11. Avoid using imagery that depicts sexual and gender minorities in stereotypical or dehumanizing ways.
12. Take all measures possible to provide anonymity when necessary to protect the safety and security of individuals and communities.
13. Practice the qualities of responsible, ethical journalism by minimizing harm and verifying or refuting hearsay and rumor before publication.
14. Encourage diversity in our newsrooms.
15. Ensure that our personal beliefs and biases do not influence the objectivity of our reporting or limit the topics we cover. If our beliefs somehow make it impossible for us to cover a story fairly, we should pass it onto a colleague.



# Sorting Myths from Facts

Sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SSOGIE) are often considered taboo topics. As journalists, we have a responsibility to discuss and help debunk sensational stereotypes and dangerous myths about marginalized communities and to help others sort fact from fiction.

Below you'll find a mix of common tropes and truths about sexual and gender minorities. Cover the right column with your hand or a piece of paper and read each statement on the left from top to bottom, revealing and distinguishing myths from realities as you go.

The following table was inspired by and partially adapted from earlier guides produced by Gay and Lesbian Memory in Africa (GALA) and Taboom Media.

CLAIM	REALITY?
Homosexuality is a mental disorder	<b>Myth:</b> Major international mental health organizations, including the 10,000-member American Psychiatric Association, have long agreed that homosexuality is not a mental disorder.
People are LGBTQI+ because they were abused as children	<b>Myth:</b> Speak with a diverse range of LGBTQI+ people in your community. Some may have been abused as children, as is true of the general population, but most will say their identities and expressions are not a result of childhood abuse.
If a lesbian has sex with a man, she will be "cured"	<b>Myth:</b> Same-sex attraction is not a mental disorder that needs to be "cured," and sexual orientation is enduring. So-called "corrective rapes" of lesbians are serious criminal violations of human rights.
Scientists still don't know what causes a person's sexual orientation	<b>Reality:</b> Theories abound, but none have been decisively proven.
You can't tell a person's sexual orientation just by looking at them	<b>Reality:</b> Gender expression may be displayed, but sexual orientation is innate and cannot be determined merely by looking at a person.
Same-sex relationships always have 'male' and 'female' roles	<b>Myth:</b> This is not true, and many LGBTQI+ people consider the premise offensive.
People become queer from hanging out with other queer people	<b>Myth:</b> Sexual and gender diversity is not contagious.

## CLAIM

## REALITY?

People can change their sexual orientation through prayer	<b>Myth:</b> Sexual orientation is an individual's innate and enduring romantic, sexual and/or emotional attraction to other people with regards to their sex and/or gender. Prayer will not change it. Although conversion therapy remains legal in a majority of U.S. states and in many places internationally, the American Psychological Association <a href="#">condemns it</a> for representing "a significant risk of harm by subjecting individuals to forms of treatment which have not been scientifically validated and by undermining self-esteem when sexual orientation fails to change." The same risks extend to deliverance and exorcism attempts.
LGBTQI+ people are capable of having healthy, long-term relationships	<b>Reality:</b> Many sexual and gender minorities have been happily partnered for decades. Seek out such sources in your community.
Sexual and gender minorities often face higher rates of violence and discrimination than the general population	<b>Myth:</b> Same-sex attraction is not a mental disorder that needs to be "cured," and sexual orientation is enduring. So-called "corrective rapes" of lesbians are serious criminal violations of human rights.
Every society has sexual and gender minorities	<b>Reality:</b> Similar to how every society has left-handed people, every society has sexual and gender diversity. Research has shown that intersex conditions, homosexuality, and gender nonconformity are universal realities. They are not confined to certain races, ethnicities or geographic borders.
Same-sex attraction is caused by witchcraft and evil spirits	<b>Myth:</b> Most credible medical and health professionals consider exorcism and deliverance attempts to remove evil spirits to be ineffective, psychologically harmful and often physically dangerous.
Gay men are more likely to abuse children	<b>Myth:</b> This disparaging myth has been <a href="#">widely disproved</a> . Consult credible local and international statistics and sources, including the <a href="#">American Psychological Association</a> .
A transgender woman is a woman	<b>Reality:</b> The words woman and man typically refer to a person's gender identity, masculine and feminine to gender expression, and male and female to biological sex. If a transgender person identifies as a woman, she is a woman regardless of biological sex, sexual orientation or gender expression.
Not all congregations are against homosexuality	<b>Reality:</b> See Human Rights Campaign's <a href="#">Faith Positions guide</a> and the books <a href="#">Behold, I make all things new: What do the sacred texts of Judaism, Christianity and Islam really say in regard to human sexuality?</a> and <a href="#">I Am Divine, So Are You: How Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism and Hinduism affirm the dignity of queer identities and sexualities</a> for examples of inclusive and affirming denominations and congregations.
Children of same-sex parents will grow up to be same-sex attracted	<b>Myth:</b> In countries where child adoption by same-sex parents is legal, research has shown that those children are not more likely to be gay than the general population. Sexual orientation is innate and enduring, not a result of one's upbringing.



# Efforts to Combat Anti-LGBTQI+ Hate

# Efforts to Combat Anti-LGBTQI+ Hate

This guide has shined a light on some of the most prominent and coordinated individuals and organizations working to foment hatred against sexual and gender minorities and to undermine their human rights in the U.S. and abroad. Amid all this hate, we would be remiss not to mention some of the many high-profile efforts that aim to combat it. The following campaigns may spark “solutions journalism” story ideas, elevating coverage of anti-LGBTQI+ hate above trauma and pain for a more nuanced look at the sort of strength that can emerge amid adversity.

## Beyond I Do Campaign

In 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that same-sex couples have the freedom to get married, yet many basic rights are still denied to LGBTQI+ Americans. As of early 2019, 28 states provide no explicit legal protections in employment, housing, or public accommodations on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. Two additional states provide some but not complete protections in these areas. That means sexual and gender minorities can be legally fired from their jobs, kicked out of their homes, or denied services like medical treatment because of who they are or who they love. The goal of the Beyond I Do campaign is to raise awareness of the discrimination millions of LGBTQI+ Americans face every day and to promote equality for all Americans.

## It Gets Better

It Gets Better is a nonprofit organization that began as a social media campaign in 2010 to give hope to bullied LGBTQI+ teens. Activist and media personality Dan Savage and his husband, Terry Miller, started the campaign to prevent suicide among LGBTQI+ youth. It features thousands of videos from queer and ally adults telling depressed and troubled teens, “it gets better” by sharing their own personal journeys to self-love and acceptance.

## International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHOTB)

IDAHOTB was created in 2004 to draw attention to the violence and discrimination SSGIE minorities face. May 17 was specifically chosen for IDAHOTB to commemorate the World Health Organization’s decision on that day in 1990 to declassify homosexuality as a mental disorder. IDAHOTB is now celebrated in more than 130 countries with thousands of local initiatives. The initiative is collectively managed by regional and thematic networks working to advance SSGIE rights at global, regional, national and local levels. IDAHOTB’s website lists several regional partners from around the world, including [LGBTI Equal Rights Association for Western Balkans and Turkey](#), [Arab Foundation for Freedoms and Equality](#), [ILGA Asia](#), [African Men for Sexual Health & Rights](#), and [Global Interfaith Network \(GIN\)-SSGIE](#).

## SOGI Campaigns

SOGI Campaigns is a collective platform and website involving hundreds of LGBTQI+ activists from around the world. It features public campaign strategies, success stories, case studies, and courses to help activists deepen their skills. The SOGI Campaigns’ website is currently man-

aged by the team that facilitates IDAHOTB. It lists [experts from around the world](#) who can serve as sources for your stories.

## Free and Equal Campaign

Free and Equal is the United Nations' global public information campaign against homophobia and transphobia. It launched in 2013 as an initiative of the U.N.'s Human Rights Office and is implemented with support from U.N. and non-U.N. partners at the country level. Free and Equal aims to promote equal rights and fair treatment of LGBTQI+ people via videos, graphics and plain-language fact sheets. The campaign's events have been organized in almost 30 countries, with visible support from local political, community and religious leaders.

## Come Forward

The projects "Come Forward: Empowering and Supporting Victims of Anti-LGBT Hate Crimes" and "Call It Hate: Raising Awareness of Anti-LGBT Hate Crime" are funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020) of the European Union. Project components include research, training, campaigning and outreach efforts to inform, enable and empower victims and potential victims of anti-LGBT hate crimes in Europe to report incidents.

## Rainbow Laces

Rainbow Laces is a campaign organized by the U.K.-based LGBTQI+ rights group Stonewall that aims to make soccer and other sports more queer-friendly. It was launched in 2013 in response to queerphobic slurs at sports matches and stigma around queer professional athletes. Prominent players and fans, especially in Europe, have worn rainbow laces on their shoes as part of the campaign. According to Stonewall, "LGBT people can have negative perceptions and experiences of sport, whether it's due to bullying in school sport, coming across anti-LGBT language on social media, down the pub or during live sports. New Stonewall research finds that most people want to see action against anti-LGBT language in sport, but only a quarter feel confident calling it out. Rainbow Laces is all about giving people the confidence and the tools to be active allies to LGBT people in sport."

## Corporate Efforts

This [Newsweek article](#) from June 2019 highlights more than 50 companies that marked Pride with campaigns that benefited LGBTQI+ nonprofit organizations including GLAAD, GLSEN, The Trevor Project and the It Gets Better Foundation. Companies on the list include Verizon, Starbucks, Disney, Chipotle, American Eagle, Under Armour, Nike, Levi's, Target and Macy's.

These specific campaigns to counter anti-LGBTQI+ hate only scratch the surface of what's being done to improve the lives of sexual and gender minorities in the U.S. and around the world. Prominent international organizations including [GLAAD](#), [ILGA](#), [OutRight Action International](#), [the Kaleidoscope Trust](#) and hundreds more do this work day-in and day-out as part of their core programmatic efforts. You can read more about these and other groups in the resource guide.

# Resource Guide



# Resource Guide

The following websites, organizations, individuals, stories, and reports may provide useful background to better understand and track religious and conservative efforts to foment hatred against sexual and gender minorities and undermine their human rights in the U.S. and abroad.

## Secular Organizations and Websites

[GLAAD](#) is a U.S.-based media monitoring organization that works to promote understanding, increase acceptance, and advance equality for LGBTQI+ people. GLAAD's [Commentator Accountability Project](#) highlights commentators' false, defamatory, and dangerous anti-LGBTQI+ statements and calls attention to the sentiments behind them. The GLAAD Media Institute enables people to build the core skills and techniques that effectuate positive cultural change and provides education for media professionals on fair, accurate and inclusive coverage about the LGBTQI+ community.

[The Tyler Clementi Foundation](#) works to end online and offline bullying in schools, workplaces, and faith communities. Through programs such as [#Day1](#), which provides free downloadable toolkits customized for different communities, the foundation encourages leadership to create safe spaces where individuals move from being bystanders to "Upstanders" who embrace diversity. In 2017, the group Faith in America became part of the Tyler Clementi Foundation. Their [True Faith Doesn't Bully](#) campaign works to end religion-based bullying, and their website lists several [resources for faith communities](#).

[The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs \(NCAVP\)](#) works to prevent, respond to, and end all forms of violence against and within LGBTQI+

communities in the U.S. The coalition has local member programs, affiliate organizations and individual affiliates who create systemic and social change across the country. NCAVP strives to increase power, safety and resources through data analysis, policy advocacy, education and technical assistance. They produce two annual national reports on LGBTQI+ Hate Violence and LGBTQI+ Intimate Partner Violence.

[The Trevor Project](#) is a nonprofit organization founded in 1998 to prevent suicide among LGBTQI+ youth. The project offers young people free phone or text conversations with trained counselors and provides resources to parents and educators to help foster safe and accepting environments for queer youth.

[Right Wing Watch](#) is a project of [People For the American Way \(PFAW\)](#) dedicated to monitoring and exposing the activities and rhetoric of right-wing activists and organizations in order to expose their extreme agendas. Its researchers monitor dozens of broadcasts, emails and websites, and use their expertise on right-wing movements to analyze and distill that information for media, allies and the general public. Right Wing Watch has [anti-LGBT](#) and [anti-gay](#) topic tags, along with several related to transgender rights.

[The Southern Poverty Law Center](#) tracked [49 anti-LGBT hate groups in the U.S.](#) in 2018. SPLC profiles several of these [groups](#) and [individual extremists](#). SPLC's quarterly magazine [The Intelligence Report](#) monitors the radical right in the U.S. and provides comprehensive updates to law enforcement agencies, the media and the general public. The Spring 2015 issue lists [active anti-LGBT groups](#) by city and state.

[Political Research Associates \(PRA\)](#) produces investigative research and analysis on the U.S. conservative movements' domestic and international influence to help journalists, advocates, educators, scholars, and the public. PRA produces reports, articles, activist resource kits, and the quarterly magazine [The Public Eye](#); advises policy makers and social justice advocates; and offers expert commentary for media outlets.

PRA's core issue areas span reproductive justice, LGBTQI+ rights, racial/immigrant justice, civil liberties, and economic justice. Visit their [page on LGBTQ rights](#).

[Human Rights Watch's](#) website features news, reports, and other resources on LGBTQI+ rights. It also features [Country Profiles on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity](#) and [maps of anti-LGBT laws](#) from around the world.

[OutRight Action International's](#) website features hundreds of reports dating back to the early 1990s. These country-specific and global reports can be sorted by specific issues including legal discrimination, privacy and family, criminal injustice, crackdowns on activist, trans and intersex rights, and safety and security.

[Media Matters for America](#) is a web-based research and information center dedicated to monitoring, analyzing, and fact-checking conservative misinformation in the U.S. media. Visit their monitoring of [LGBT coverage](#).

The [Global Investigative Journalism Network](#) put together [this spreadsheet](#) with links to more than 50 international data sets, studies, national groups and places to find expert sources to help journalists investigate issues affecting LGBTQI+ communities. Included are links to annual surveys on global attitudes and laws, United Nations reports, major regional reports, news sources, NGO contacts and more.

GIJN also assembled a collection of [exemplary investigative reporting on issues affecting LGBTQ communities](#) and the following presentations from a [panel on investigating LGBTQ issues](#) held at the 10th Global Investigative Journalism Conference in Johannesburg in 2017:

- [Investigative Reporting: The Fundamentals](#), by Mark Schoofs
- [LGBTQI + SSOIGIE Source Development](#), by Brian Pellot
- [Documenting LGBTQI Hate Crimes & Discrimination](#), by Jabu Pereira
- [An Overview Using Data](#), by Brant Houston and Jennifer LeFleur

The [Movement Advancement Project](#) provides research and insight designed to speed equality and opportunity for LGBTQI+ people. MAP's state-specific data shines light on such issues as

healthcare, criminal justice, nondiscrimination, and religious exemptions.

[Box Turtle Bulletin](#) is a website founded by Jim Burroway in 2005 that analyzed the claims of anti-LGBTQI+ organizations and their influence in Uganda and elsewhere internationally. The site has not been updated since December 2016, but its archive remains useful.

[Republic of Gilead](#) is a blog founded by Angeline Binick that monitored anti-LGBTQI+ work of the religious right. It has not been updated since March 2017, but its archive remains useful.

[Good as You](#) is a blog founded by Jeremy Hooper in 2005 that investigated discriminatory language or actions targeting LGBTQI+ people in the U.S. The site is now rarely updated, but its archive remains useful.

## Religious Organizations and Websites

[The National Religious Leadership Roundtable](#), convened by the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, is an interfaith network for leaders from faith, spiritual and religious organizations who support equality for LGBTQI+ people. The Roundtable's website lists more than 50 member organizations and their primary contacts.

[The LGBTQ Religious Archives Network \(LGBTQ-RAN\)](#) is a virtual archive that preserves history and encourages scholarly study of LGBTQI+ religious movements around the world. Initiated in 2001 as a project of the Chicago Theological Seminary, LGBTQ-RAN has been a program of the Center for LGBTQ & Gender Studies in Religion in Berkeley, California, since 2008. The site features more than 450 biographical sketches of persons who have been leaders or prominent initiators in LGBTQI+ religious movements around the world and in-depth interviews with more than 40 early leaders of LGBTQI+ religious movements.

[Interfaith Alliance](#) was founded in 1994 amid growing entanglement between religion and politics in the U.S. It has members from more than 75 religions and belief systems and aims to protect faith and freedom by respecting individual rights, protecting the boundaries between religion and government, and uniting diverse voices to



challenge extremism and build common ground. Based in Washington, D.C. Contact: 202-466-056, [info@interfaithalliance.org](mailto:info@interfaithalliance.org).

[The Religious Institute](#) is a multifaith organization dedicated to advocating for sexual, gender, and reproductive health, education, and justice in faith communities and society. More than 12,000 clergy, seminary presidents and deans, religious scholars, and people of faith representing more than 70 faith traditions are part of the Religious Institute's national religious leaders network. Based in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Contact: 203-222-0055, [info@religiousinstitute.org](mailto:info@religiousinstitute.org).

[Auburn Theological Seminary](#) describes itself as a multifaith movement for justice that trains leaders who are working on progressive social issues, offers workshops, provides consulting, and conducts research on faith leadership development. ATS has trained more than 7,000 leaders through its programs. Based in New York City. Contact: 212-662-4315, [info@auburnseminary.org](mailto:info@auburnseminary.org).

[Faith in Public Life](#) has played an important role in changing the narrative about the role of faith in politics, winning major progressive policy victories, and empowering new religious leaders to fight for social justice and the common good. Their media expertise, rapid-response capabilities and strategic campaign development have made Faith in Public Life respected commentators in the media and valued partners with a range of religious groups working for economic and social justice. Based in Washington, D.C. Contact: 202-499-4095, [info@faithinpubliclife.org](mailto:info@faithinpubliclife.org).

[Soulforce](#) works to end the political and religious oppression of LGBTQI+ people through nonviolent resistance, research and informed strategy, political and theological education, spiritual reclamation and community healing, and creative campaigns and direct action. Based in Abilene, Texas. Contact: 800-810-9143, [hello@soulforce.org](mailto:hello@soulforce.org).

[Believe Out Loud](#) is an online network and discussion forum that aims to help Christians promote LGBTQI+ equality. Their [Welcoming Church Map](#) allows users to locate one of the more than 4,800 open and affirming churches across the U.S. from a variety of denominations. Believe Out Loud also leads and participates in grassroots campaigns engaging the online community to take offline action in order to achieve LGBTQI+ equality.

Based in New York City. Contact: 212-951-7006, [contact@believeoutloud.com](mailto:contact@believeoutloud.com).

[Reconciling Ministries Network](#) is a network of over 40,000 Reconciling United Methodists and over 1,000 Reconciling Churches and Communities that support justice and inclusion of LGBTQI+ people in the United Methodist Church. Based in Chicago. Contact: 773-736-5526, [admin@rmnetwork.org](mailto:admin@rmnetwork.org). See [United Methodists edge toward breakup over LGBT policies](#), published by NBC News in April 2019, for further context.

[Brave Commons](#) seeks to elevate the voices of LGBTQI+ students working within and beyond Christian universities in the United States. It is an intersectional, queer and POC (persons of color)-led Christian organization seeking to provoke a movement of faith and justice in the academy and beyond. Through retreats, spiritual support, and advocacy resourcing, Brave Commons works to provide equitable and holistic faith engagement for all. Based in Washington, D.C. Contact: [bravecommons@gmail.com](mailto:bravecommons@gmail.com).

[Catholics for Choice](#) was founded in the U.S. in 1973 to serve as a voice for Catholics who believe that the Catholic tradition supports a woman's moral and legal right to follow her conscience in matters of sexuality and reproductive health. CFC works with sister organizations throughout Latin America and Europe. CFC is an ECOSOC-accredited NGO at the United Nations, taking part in UN conferences and meetings. Its quarterly magazine [Conscience](#) covers issues of gender and sexuality. Based in Washington, D.C. Contact: 202-986-6093, [cfc@catholicsforchoice.org](http://cfc@catholicsforchoice.org).

[DignityUSA](#) works to promote justice, equality and full inclusion of LGBTQI+ people in the Catholic Church and society, serving [33 chapters, communities and caucuses](#) across the U.S. and Canada. Based in Boston. Contact: 800-877-8797, [info@dignityusa.org](mailto:info@dignityusa.org).

[New Ways Ministry](#) educates and advocates for justice and equality for (LGBTQI+) Catholics, and reconciliation within the larger church and civil communities. Through research, publication and education about sexual orientation and gender identity, they foster dialogue among groups and individuals, identify and combat personal and structural homophobia and transphobia, work for changes in attitudes and promote the acceptance of LGBTQI+ people as full and equal members of

church and society. Based in Washington, D.C. Contact: 301-277-5674, [info@newwaysministry.org](mailto:info@newwaysministry.org).

[Equally Blessed](#) is a coalition of faithful Catholics who support full equality for LGBTQI+ people both in the Church and in civil society. Collectively and individually, Call To Action, Dignity-USA, and New Ways Ministry are devoted to informing, supporting and giving voice to the growing majority within the Catholic Church in the United States that favors equality under law for LGBTQI+ people. Contact: 800-877-8797, [coordinator@equallyblessed.org](mailto:coordinator@equallyblessed.org).

[Integrity USA](#) is a nonprofit organization of LGBTQ Episcopalians and allies that was founded in 1974. It works for the full inclusion of LGBTQI+ persons in the Episcopal Church and equal access to its rites. At the national level and in local chapters and diocesan networks Integrity's activities include worship, fellowship, education, communication, outreach, and service to the church. Based in Houston. Contact: 617-952-9971, [Info@integrityusa.org](mailto:Info@integrityusa.org).

[The Reformation Project](#) is a Bible-based, Christian grassroots organization that works to promote inclusion of LGBTQI+ people by reforming church teaching on sexual orientation and gender identity. Their vision is of a global church that fully affirms LGBTQI+ people. Based in Kansas City. Contact: [contact@reformation-project.org](mailto:contact@reformation-project.org).

[The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries](#) is a multi-denominational group of primarily African American Christian leaders and laity representing churches and faith-based organizations from the U.S., Africa, and Mexico. The overriding purpose of The Fellowship is to support religious leaders and laity in moving toward a theology of radical inclusivity, which includes affirming LGBTQI+ congregants. Based in Oakland, California. Contact: 510-633-6316, [tfamannual@gmail.com](mailto:tfamannual@gmail.com).

[Many Voices](#) is a black church movement for gay and transgender justice that envisions a community that embraces the diversity of the human family and ensures that all are treated with love, compassion, and justice. Based in Washington, D.C. Contact: 202-333.7212, [info@manyvoices.org](mailto:info@manyvoices.org).

[American Friends Service Committee](#) is a Quaker organization devoted to service, development,

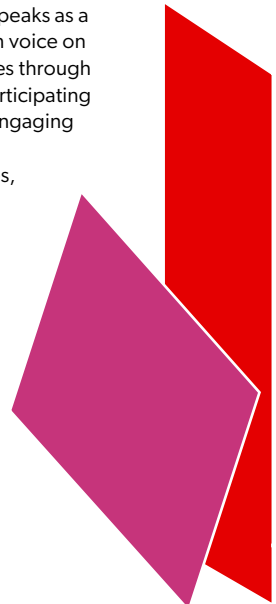
and peace programs throughout the world. Their work is based on the belief in the worth of every person, and faith in the power of love to overcome violence and injustice. AFSC has [long worked to support LGBTQI+ people](#). Based in Philadelphia but operates globally. Contact: 215-241-7000, [communications@afsc.org](mailto:communications@afsc.org).

[Unitarian Universalist Association](#) (UUA) is the central organization for the Unitarian Universalist religious movement in the U.S. The UUA's 1000+ member congregations are committed to seven principles that include the worth of each person, the need for justice and compassion, and the right to choose one's own beliefs. UUs create inclusive religious communities and work for LGBTQI+ justice and equity as a core part of their faith. Based in Boston. Contact: 617-742-2100, [info@uua.org](mailto:info@uua.org).

[Metropolitan Community Church](#) (MCC) is an international Protestant Christian denomination in 37 countries that specifically reaches out to LGBTQI+ families and communities. Founded in California in 1968, MCC was the first church to perform same-gender marriages and has long advocated for the rights of LGBTQI+ people. Operates globally. Contact: 310-360-8640, [MCCchurches@gmail.com](mailto:MCCchurches@gmail.com).

[Muslims for Progressive Values](#) establishes and nurtures vibrant progressive Muslim communities and speaks as a progressive Muslim voice on contemporary issues through policy briefs, by participating in civil discourse, engaging with the media and government entities, and by partnering with both Muslim and non-Muslim progressive organizations. Based in Los Angeles. Contact: 323-696-2678, [info@mpvusa.org](mailto:info@mpvusa.org).

[Keshet](#) works to



advance equality, justice, and dignity for LGBTQI+ Jews their families and to advance LGBTQ rights nationwide. Keshet also creates spaces in which queer Jewish youth feel seen and valued. Based in Boston. Contact: 617-524-9227, [idget@keshetonline.org](mailto:idget@keshetonline.org).

[American Jewish World Service](http://www.ajws.org) is an international development and human rights organization that supports women, girls and LGBTQI+ people, as they organize to end discrimination, stop violence and live with dignity, safety and health. Based in New York City. Contact: 212-792-2900, [ajws@ajws.org](mailto:ajws@ajws.org).

[Global Interfaith Network for People of All Sexes, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression \(GIN-SSOGIE\)](http://www.ginssogie.org) aims to promote interfaith dialogue and to strengthen LGBTQI+ voices within religious institutions and structures. They provide resources, training, and collective programmes to help individuals and organisations engage in meaningful, constructive dialogue with religious leaders and to advocate at the regional and international level for dignity and rights. Based in South Africa but operates globally. Contact: [ginssogie@gmail.com](mailto:ginssogie@gmail.com).

[The Council for Global Equality](http://www.councilforglobalequality.org) is a coalition of 30 prominent U.S.-based human rights and LGBTQI+ advocacy organizations that together encourage a clearer and stronger U.S. voice on human and democratic rights concerns impacting LGBTQI+ communities around the world. Based in Washington, D.C. Contact: 202-719-0511, [Mark@GlobalEquality.org](mailto:Mark@GlobalEquality.org).

## Individuals

[Michael J. Adee](http://www.michaeljadee.org) directs the Global Faith & Justice Project, which aims to amplify faith voices that protect human dignity and achieve equality for LGBTQI+ people and their families. From 1999 - 2012 he was executive director of More Light Presbyterians, the national Pro-LGBT organization within the Presbyterian Church (USA). Michael is an openly gay Presbyterian elder who lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Contact: [michael@lgbtglobalfaith.org](mailto:michael@lgbtglobalfaith.org).

[Joel Bedos](http://www.joelbedos.com) is executive director at the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia & Biphobia (IDAHOTB). The annual day is observed on May 17 to draw the attention of policymakers,

opinion leaders, social movements, the public and the media to the violence and discrimination experienced by LGBTQI+ people internationally. Contact: [joelbedos@gmail.com](mailto:joelbedos@gmail.com).

[Heidi Beirich](http://www.heidibeirich.org) leads the Southern Poverty Law Center's Intelligence Project, which publishes Intelligence Report and the Hatewatch blog. She is an expert on various forms of extremism and oversees SPLC's yearly count of the nation's hate groups. Contact: [Heidi.Beirich@splcenter.org](mailto:Heidi.Beirich@splcenter.org).

[Ty Cobb](http://www.tycobb.org) founded Human Rights Campaign's global department and leads a team of experts who run programs and campaigns that advance and protect the human rights of LGBTQI+ people around the world, including those who are immigrants and refugees. Contact: [Ty.cobb@hrc.org](mailto:Ty.cobb@hrc.org).

[Marianne Duddy-Burke](http://www.dignityusa.org) is Dignity USA's executive director. She works to promote justice, equality and full inclusion of LGBTQI+ people in the Catholic Church and society. Contact: [execdir@dignityusa.org](mailto:execdir@dignityusa.org).

[Shareen Gokal](http://www.shareengokal.org) is Director of Special Projects at the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) and launched the program "Challenging Religious Fundamentalisms". Her main focus has been to strengthen advocacy against the use of arguments based on religion, culture and tradition to justify violations of women's (and LGBTQI+ persons') rights in international human rights spaces and across regions and religions. Contact: [sgokal@awid.org](mailto:sgokal@awid.org).

[Sharon Groves](http://www.sharongroves.org) is Vice President for Partner Engagement at Auburn Theological Seminary. She has long worked at the intersection of faith, LGBTQI+ equality, and social justice, specializing in breaking down cultural barriers between those on opposing sides of the "culture wars." Sharon is the former Director of the Religion and Faith Program at Human Rights Campaign. Contact: [sgroves@auburnseminary.org](mailto:sgroves@auburnseminary.org).

[Michael Heflin](http://www.michaelheflin.org) is the director of equality for the Open Society Human Rights Initiative, which advocates to promote justice, equality, and participation of all, including [LGBTI individuals and communities](http://www.lgbtindividuals.org). Contact: [michael.heflin@opensocietyfoundations.org](mailto:michael.heflin@opensocietyfoundations.org).

[Fabrice Houdart](http://www.fabricehoudart.org) is human rights officer at OHCHR New York who works on issues of sexual orientation and gender identity. His team leads

the [United Nation's Free & Equal campaign](#) to promote global LGBTI rights. Contact: [houdart@un.org](mailto:houdart@un.org).

[Mary E. Hunt](#) is a feminist theologian who is co-founder and co-director of the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual (WATER) in Silver Spring, Maryland, USA. A Catholic active in the women-church and LGBTQI+ movement, she lectures and writes on theology and ethics with particular attention to social justice concern. Contact: [mhunt@hers.com](mailto:mhunt@hers.com).

[Kapyra Kaoma](#) is an Anglican priest and the former senior religion and sexuality researcher at Political Research Associates. He is the author of *Colonizing African Values, and American Culture Warriors in Africa: A Guide to the Exporters of Homophobia & Sexism and Globalizing the Culture Wars: U.S. Conservatives, African Churches, and Homophobia*. Contact: [kaoma8john@yahoo.com](mailto:kaoma8john@yahoo.com).

[Mindy Michels](#) managed Freedom House's Dignity for All LGBTI Assistance Program from Washington, D.C. Dignity for All provides emergency assistance; security, opportunity, and advocacy rapid response grants (SOAR grants); and security assessment and training to human rights defenders and civil society organizations under threat or attack due to their work for LGBTI human rights. Contact: [Michels@freedomhouse.org](mailto:Michels@freedomhouse.org).

[Peter Montgomery](#) is a senior fellow at People For the American Way, where he analyzes the Religious Right and contributes to the Right Wing Watch blog. He has studied the Religious Right movement and its right-wing political allies for more than two decades and has written extensively about marriage equality, religious liberty, and other conflicts at the intersection of religion, politics and LGBTQI+ issues. Contact: [media@pfaw.org](mailto:media@pfaw.org).

[Ross Murray](#) is the Senior Director of Education & Training at the [GLAAD Media Institute](#), which provides activist, spokesperson, and media engagement training and education for LGBTQI+ and allied community members and organizations desiring to deepen their media impact. He is GLAAD's former director of Religion, Faith & Values, a role he used to amplify pro-LGBTQI+ voices of faith, shape the public conversation about LGBTQI+ people and faith, and to respond to anti-LGBTQI+ faith-based messages. Contact: [rmurray@glaad.org](mailto:rmurray@glaad.org).

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## Reports and Books

[“All We Want is Equality”: Religious Exemptions and Discrimination against LGBT People in the United States](#) is a 2018 report by Human Rights Watch that documents how recent laws carve out space to discriminate against LGBT people in adoption and foster care, health care, and access to some goods and services. The report argues that these laws fail to balance moral and religious objections to LGBT relationships and identities with the rights of LGBT people themselves. The findings illustrate that these exemptions encourage discriminatory refusals, discourage LGBT people from seeking out services, and harm people's dignity.

[Redefining Religious Liberty: The Covert Campaign Against Civil Rights](#) is a 2013 report by Dr. Jay Michaelson published by Political Research Associates. It argues that religious conservatives have successfully reframed religious liberty debates, “inverting victim and oppressor, and broadening support for their agenda.” This tactic subverts “the traditional progressive framing of freedom versus discrimination,” effectively accusing women and LGBT individuals of “infringing on

the right of conservative Christians to discriminate against them.”

[Resisting the Rainbow: Right-Wing Responses to LGBT Gains](#) is a 2012 report compiled by Pam Chamberlain and published by Political Research Associates. It argues that homophobia remains one of the right-wing’s most successful tools for mobilizing political support in the U.S. and details some of the key players using this tactic. The report profiles several prominent anti-LGBT voices and organizations who were particularly influential at the time of publication.

[American Culture Warriors in Africa: A Guide to the Exporters of Homophobia and Sexism](#) is a 2014 book by the Rev. Dr. Kapya Kaoma published by Political Research Associates. The book includes: profiles of the American actors most responsible for the international assault on LGBTQ people and reproductive justice; an overview of their culture war campaigns in Africa; and guidelines for concrete action that can be taken in the U.S. to interrupt the continued export of American culture wars abroad.

[Colonizing African Values: How the U.S. Christian Right Is Transforming Sexual Politics in Africa](#) is a 2012 report by the Rev. Dr. Kapya Kaoma published by Political Research Associates. The report looks at the impact of U.S. religious conservatives on LGBTQ and women’s reproductive rights in Africa and tracks the activities of the American Center for Law and Justice (and its African chapters), Family Watch International, the Roman Catholic group Human Life International, and the Transformation Network, which connects African and conservative American churches into a global network and prescribes exorcisms to cast out the “demons of homosexuality”. The report shows that U.S. Christian Right groups continue to build organizational strength and campaign to inscribe homophobia and anti-abortion politics in the constitutions and laws of African countries.

[Globalizing the Culture Wars: U.S. Conservatives, African Churches, and Homophobia](#) is a 2009 report by the Rev. Dr. Kapya Kaoma published by Political Research Associates. It argues that sexual minorities in Africa have become collateral damage to U.S. domestic conflicts and culture wars. The report shows how the U.S. Right, once isolated in Africa for supporting pro-apartheid, White supremacist regimes – has successfully reinvented itself as the mainstream of U.S. evan-

gelicalism. Through their extensive communications networks in Africa, social welfare projects, Bible schools, and educational materials, U.S. religious conservatives warn of what they claim are the dangers of homosexuals and present themselves as the true representatives of U.S. evangelicalism, helping to marginalize Africans’ relationships with mainline Protestant churches.

[Making Love a Crime: Criminalization of Same-Sex Conduct in Sub-Saharan Africa](#) is a 2013 report by Amnesty International that analyzes the legal environment and wider context of human rights violations against LGBTI individuals in Sub-Saharan Africa. The report discusses how religion is used to justify anti-LGBTI hate and flags Western preachers including Rick Warren and Scott Lively as actively funding or promoting homophobia in Africa.

[Exposed: The World Congress of Families](#) is a 2015 report by Human Rights Campaign that focuses attention on the agendas of those who organized and participated in the World Congress of Families IX in Salt Lake City, Utah. It documents WCF’s influence in the U.S., at the U.N., and around the world.

[Dangerous Liaisons: The American Religious Right & the Criminalization of Homosexuality in Belize](#) is a 2013 report by the Southern Poverty Law Center that documented the role U.S. groups played in defending Belize’s former anti-sodomy law, which the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional in 2016. The report particularly focuses on Alliance Defending Freedom.

[Understanding Religious and Political Opposition to Reproductive Health and Rights](#) is a 2009 report by The International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS), and Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA). While not LGBTQI+-specific, the report highlights tactics used to undermine reproductive rights in the United States and around the world and addresses related issues around sexuality education, contraceptives, abortion, and reproductive health.

[The Catholic Church at the United Nations: Church or State?](#) is a 2013 report by the progressive group Catholics for Choice. The report challenges the government of the Roman Catholic Church’s permanent observer status at the United

Nations, a position held by no other religion that allows Vatican officials to attend UN conferences and vote, exerting influence over the formulation of human rights mechanisms concerning sexual and reproductive health and rights.

[Towards a Future without Fundamentalisms: Analyzing Religious Fundamentalist Strategies and Feminist Responses](#) is a 2011 report by the Association for Women's Rights in Development that examines the economic, political, and social factors behind the rise in religious fundamentalisms and evaluates religious fundamentalists' messaging and movement-building strategies.

[The Devil is in the Details: At the Nexus of Development, Women's Rights, and Religious Fundamentalisms](#) is a 2016 report published by the Association for Women's Rights in Development. It positions religious fundamentalism as a major impediment to achieving the U.N.'s Sustainable Development Goals, particularly as they relate to gender justice.

[State-Sponsored Homophobia 2019: A world survey of sexual orientation laws: criminalisation, protection and recognition](#) is an annual report by the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA). It provides a good starting point to see where homophobia is state-sponsored (where laws protect or criminalize same-sex sexual activity and related identities) and can help narrow your investigation to particular countries or regions of concern. It also provides precise references to the actual content of laws, which can aid in your reporting. Compare the 2019 report to the decade of annual reports that preceded it to get a sense of where things are improving or deteriorating. The [map](#) and charts ([Africa](#), [Americas](#), [Asia](#), [Europe](#), [Oceania](#)) are also useful for country/regional comparisons and in helping you skim over the results.

[Trans Legal Mapping Report](#) is a 2017 report by the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA) that documents how laws in different countries recognize or prevent the rights of trans people to change their identity markers on official documents. Compare the countries in this report to ILGA's State-Sponsored Homophobia report.

The [2017 ILGA-RIWI Global Attitudes Survey on Sexual, Gender and Sex Minorities](#) uses online surveys to assesses public opinion on such issues

as equal rights, workplace protections, legal gender recognition, criminalization of same-sex sexual activity, religion, and culture. The survey reached around 116,000 unique respondents in more than 70 countries.

[The Global Divide on Homosexuality](#) is a 2013 survey of publics in 39 countries conducted by the Pew Research Center. It found huge variance by region on the question of whether homosexuality should be accepted or rejected by society. The report found less tolerance for homosexuality in more religious countries.

[Public Support for Transgender Rights: A Twenty-three Country Survey](#) was conducted by the Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law in 2017. Of the 23 countries surveyed, Russia ranked the lowest and Spain the highest in terms of public support for transgender rights.

[Religious Conservatism on the Global Stage: Threats and Challenges for LGBTI Rights](#) is a 2018 report by the Global Philanthropy Project that documents the main conservative strategies, discourses, funding sources, and actors opposing the rights of sexual and gender minorities at the global level. The report includes three regionally-focused case studies from Africa, Eastern Europe, and Latin America and is also [available in Spanish](#).

[The Export of Hate](#) is a 2014 report by Human Rights Campaign that profiles some of the many individuals and organizations advocating anti-LGBT bigotry and policies beyond their borders. The report outlines the connections and associations between them, the nations in which they're active and some of the resources at their disposal.

[A mapping on sexuality, human rights and the role of religious leaders: exploring the potential for dialogue](#) is a 2014 report by Hivos that identifies progressive religious leaders, describes and analyzes the various discourses of religious leaders that address sexuality and human rights, and provides pointers on the involvement of these progressive religious leaders for intensified engagement between religious and human rights actors. The report mostly focuses on Africa.

["Covering Sexual and Gender Minorities & Religion in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Reporting Guide for Journalists"](#) is our 2017 reporting guide,



published in collaboration with Heinrich Böll Foundation Southern Africa. It includes practical tips along with a resource and source guide to assist journalists as they report on these sensitive topics.

[“America’s Growing Support for Transgender Rights”](#) lists the results of an April 2019 survey by the Public Religion Research Institute. The survey showed that 62 percent of Americans and majorities of every major religious group say they have become more supportive toward transgender rights compared to their views five years ago.

[“A Queer History of the United States”](#) is a 2011 book by Michael Bronski published by Beacon Press. Drawing upon primary-source documents, literature, and cultural histories, it charts LGBTQI+ history in the U.S. from 1492 to the 1990s.

[“The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government”](#) is a 2004 book by David Johnson published by University of Chicago Press Books. It traces the origins of contemporary sexual politics to Cold War hysteria over national security and chronicles how the myth that homosexuals threatened national security determined government policy for decades, ruined thousands of lives, and pushed many to suicide.

[“Don’t Be So Gay! Queers, Bullying, and Making Schools Safe”](#) is a 2013 book by Donn Short published by UBC Press. It considers the effectiveness of safe-school legislation around homophobic bullying. By drawing on interviews with queer youth and their allies in the Toronto area, Short concludes that legislation was more responsive than proactive.

[“Transnational LGBT Activism”](#) is a 2014 book by Ryan Thoreson published by University of Minnesota Press. It argues that the idea of LGBT human rights is not predetermined but instead is defined by international activists who establish what and who qualifies for protection.

## Stories and Documentaries

[Globalizing Hatred](#): published in Harvard Political Review in March 2019, discusses the extreme homophobia American evangelicals have helped cultivate in African countries including Uganda.

[Confused about religious freedom and LGBT rights? Most Americans are](#), published in Salon in June 2019, analyzes the results of a recent Public Religion Research Institute survey and shows that most Americans do not understand what legal protections currently exist for LGBTQI+ people, leaving the general public more susceptible to misinformation.

[How US Evangelicals Helped Create Russia’s Anti-Gay Movement](#), published in Mother Jones in February 2014, details the World Congress of Families’ support for Russia’s anti-LGBTQI+ movement and that country’s law banning “propaganda of nontraditional sexual relations to minors,” which effectively criminalizes any public expression of same-sex relationships.

[Judge says Tampa conversion therapy ban violates First Amendment free-speech rights](#), published in the Washington Post in February 2019, details how the conservative Christian legal advocacy group Liberty Counsel helped marriage and family therapists and a Christian ministry organization sue the city of Tampa over an ordinance adopted in April 2017 that barred mental health professionals from subjecting minors to conversion therapy, a highly controversial practice that attempts to change a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity.

[Activists say they are helping people flee new anti-gay purge in Chechnya](#), published by ABC News in January 2019, discusses the ramifications and knock-on effects of such laws in Chechnya where dozens of gay men have been kidnapped and tortured by security services.

[Revealed: the fringe rightwing group changing the UN agenda on abortion rights](#), published in The Guardian in May 2019, documents how the Center for Family and Human Rights (C-Fam) has emerged from the extreme right fringe on abortion, sexual orientation and gender identity to become a powerful player behind the scenes at the UN and within the Trump administration.

[Far-Right TFP Funded Launch of Conservative Catholic Activist Group in Netherlands](#), published in Right Wing Watch in June 2019, documents an example of “cross-fertilization between right-wing movements in the Americas and Europe” with the group Tradition, Family and Property helping to fund and train activists in the Netherlands who created a group called Civitas Christiana, which opposes LGBTQI+ equality.

[The Christian Legal Army Behind ‘Masterpiece Cakeshop’](#), published in The Nation in November 2017, investigates the rise and influence of Alliance Defending Freedom.

[The ‘Natural Family’: The Latest Weapon in the Christian Right’s New Global War on Gays](#), published in The Daily Beast in June 2015, emphasizes how the World Congress of Families pushed a one-woman-one-man marriage model to help ban gay adoption in Russia.

[America’s Biggest Christian Charity Funnels Tens of Millions to Hate Groups](#), published in Sludge in March 2019, documents how the The National Christian Foundation, a donor-advised fund, passed \$56 million from anonymous individuals to nearly two dozen anti-LGBTQI+ hate groups between 2015 and 2017.

[Big Money, Quiet Power: A Look at the National Christian Foundation](#), published in Inside Philanthropy in October 2016, shines a light on NCF’s grantmaking and its outsized role in the world of conservative Christian philanthropy.

[Trump’s New Ambassador Sam Brownback Could Weaponize ‘Religious Freedom’ Around the World](#), published in the Daily Beast in January 2018, outlines the role of United States Ambassador at Large for Religious Freedom and how that position’s current occupant, a conservative Christian with a long track record of anti-LGBTQI+ policymaking, has the power to affect the lives of millions of religious, gender, and sexual minorities around the world.

[Kenyan United Methodists oppose allowing LGBT clergy, pray for church unity worldwide](#), published by Religion News Service in February 2019, traces links between Methodist churches in Kenya and the Wesleyan Covenant Association (WCA), a conservative Methodist organization in the U.S. that opposes same-sex weddings and LGBTQI+ clergy.

[“Project Blitz” Seeks to do for Christian Nationalism what Alec does for Big Business](#), published in Religion Dispatches in April 2018, details how 20 model bills included in a report assembled by a coalition of Christian Right groups for an initiative called “Project Blitz” are affecting state laws and encouraging discrimination against LGBTQI+ people.

[Onward, Christian soldiers: Right-wing religious nationalists launch dramatic new power play](#), published in Salon in April 2018, details how a coalition of Christian right groups organized a legislative initiative called “Project Blitz” to advance state-level bills that would allow for discrimination against LGBTQI+ people.

[Gender Ideology: tracking its origins and meanings in current gender politics](#), published on the London School of Economics and Political Science’s Engenderings blog in December 2017, discusses how conservative actors began in the 1990s to portray the term “gender” and eventually “gender ideology” as neo-colonial tool of an international feminist and liberal conspiracy.

[Rights activists are agents of the devil - Papal Nuncio](#), published in Uganda’s Daily Monitor in February 2017, documents the Vatican’s export of homophobic hatred and misinformation to the Global South. Papal Nuncio to Uganda Archbishop Michael August Blume, who is originally from Indiana and has been the Vatican’s equivalent of ambassador to Benin, Togo and Uganda, said of human rights activists, “They tell you about condom use, infidelity, homosexuality and adultery. They talk about injectaplan and insist on abortion; they promote sale of children. None of these are human rights but works of the devil.”

[The LGBT Equality Act Began Life in 1974. It’s Still Waiting to Be Passed](#), published in the Daily Beast in April 2019, discusses the historic origins of the United States’ Equality Act, which would amend the Civil Rights Act to add protections for LGBTQI+ people in public spaces, employment, housing and education.

[The Hate Group Successfully Rolling Back LGBT Rights](#), published in The Advocate in August 2018, profiles Alliance Defending Freedom and how their success at the U.S. Supreme Court has negatively affected LGBTQI+ people’s lives.

[The Secret History of Leviticus](#), published in the New York Times in July 2018 by Idan Dershowitz,



a biblical scholar and junior fellow at the Harvard Society of Fellows, argues there is good evidence that an earlier version of the laws in the Bible's Leviticus 18 permitted sex between men.

[Gay Conversion Therapy's Disturbing 19th-Century Origins](#), published on History.com in June 2018, describes how in the late 1800s psychiatrists and doctors began to label same-sex desire in medical terms and look for ways to "reverse" it.

[Boy Erased author Garrard Conley on surviving 'gay conversion therapy'](#), published by the BBC in June 2018, profiles the trauma Conley experienced when attempting to undergo the controversial practice. Boy Erased, a film adaptation of Conley's book starring Lucas Hedges, Russell Crowe and Nicole Kidman, was released in 2018.

[Recognizing religious freedom as an LGBT issue](#), written by Human Rights Watch's Ryan Thoreson and published in The Hill, says the International Religious Freedom Report for 2017 — an annual survey on the state of religious freedom in 195 countries — offered a mixed bag for LGBTIQ+ people at a time when religious liberty increasingly is used as a pretext to license discrimination in the United States. Thoreson argues the State Department should more forcefully promote an inclusive vision of religious liberty that all can enjoy.

[Wedding cake ruling's silver lining for LGBT rights](#), written by Human Rights Watch's Ryan Thoreson and published in The Hill, notes that the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission involving a baker who objected to making a wedding cake for a same-sex couple emphasizes that "gay persons and gay couples cannot be treated as social outcasts or as inferior in dignity and worth."

[Canada's Supreme Court rules LGBT rights trump religious freedom](#), published by the BBC in June 2018, details how Canada's top court ruled in favor of denying accreditation to a Christian law school that banned students from having gay sex.

["God Loves Uganda"](#) is a 2013 film produced and directed by American filmmaker Roger Ross Williams that documents the evangelical Christian campaign to promote anti-LGBTIQ+ sentiments in Uganda and how these efforts influenced the drafting of that country's Anti-Homosexuality Bill.

["Missionaries of Hate"](#) is a 2010 documentary by Current TV's Vanguard journalism program that profiles Scott Lively and other American evangelicals who have exported messages of anti-LGBTIQ+ hate to Uganda and elsewhere around the world. The documentary is available in full on YouTube.

# Contributor Biographies



# Contributor Biographies



## **Brian Pellot**

Brian Pellot is Taboom Media's co-founding director. He speaks regularly about LGBTQI+ rights and religion at media and human rights conferences around the world. He is based in Cape Town, South Africa, where he occasionally freelances for international news and media outlets. Before Taboom, Brian served as Religion News Service's director of global strategy, as Index on Censorship's digital policy advisor, and as Free Speech Debate's online editor. He is a volunteer mentor-editor at The OpEd Project. Brian graduated from the University of Missouri with dual degrees in International

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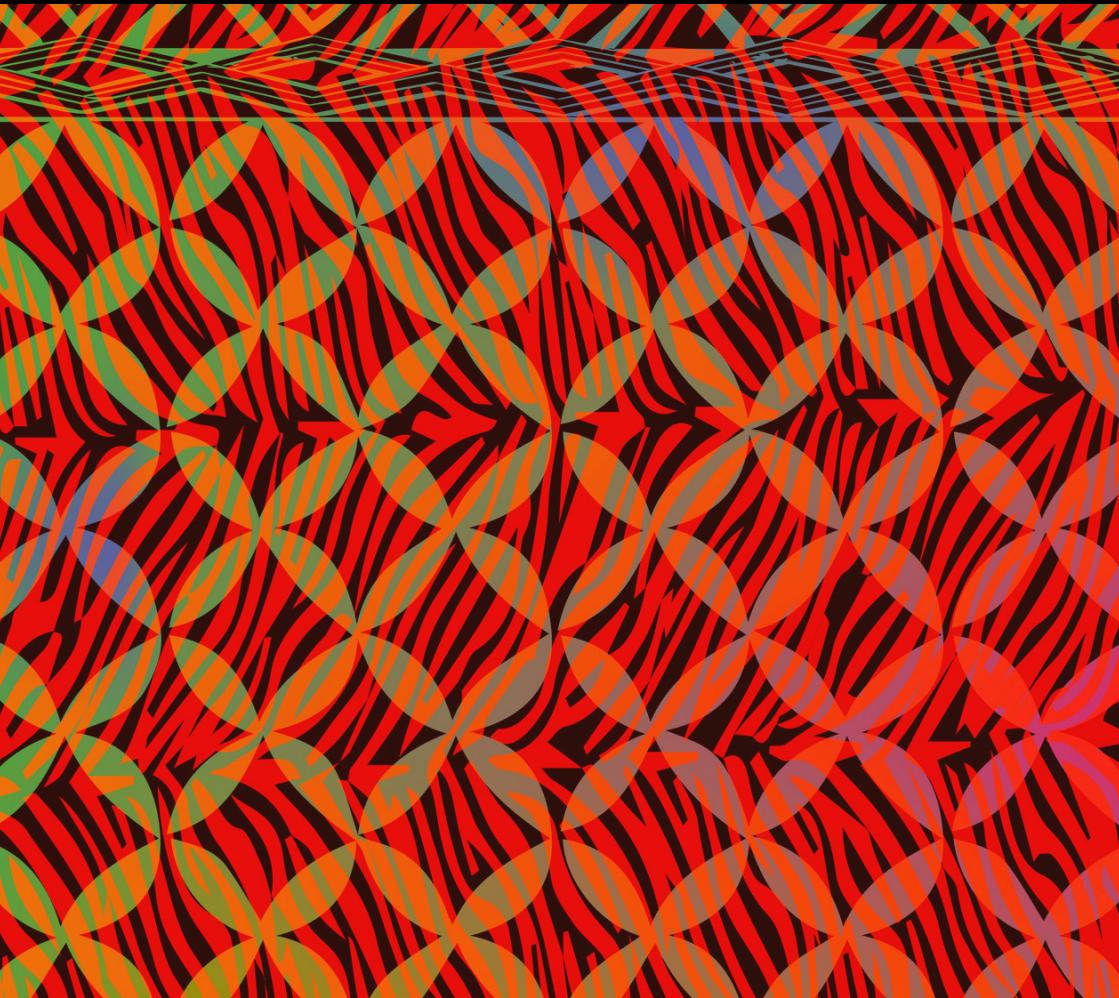
## **Dr. Debra Mason**

Dr. Debra L. Mason is co-founder of Taboom Media and its COO. She is currently an Arthur Vining Davis Teaching Fellow in Religion and the Professions at Harvard University. She is Professor Emerita at the University of Missouri School of Journalism, where she directed a Pew Center of Excellence. She led Religion News Association for 20 years, during which time she founded RNA's nonprofit arm and oversaw the acquisition of Religion News Service. As RNS publisher, she oversaw the news service's online overhaul, quadrupled traffic and expanded staff that enabled RNS to win unprecedented industry honors.

She also created the world's largest body of resources on religion by journalists, for journalists. Mason is a former award-winning journalist and a current scholar in the coverage of spirituality from origin to its emergence on digital platforms. Mason's research centers on cross-cultural communication, religious literacy and the use of mass communication to create a more compassionate world. Email: [debra@debramason.com](mailto:debra@debramason.com)

## **Taboom Media**

Taboom's media training, mentoring, publishing, monitoring and response programs catalyze ethical journalism and public discourse around taboo topics. By shining light on taboos in the news, we aim to break their power. Our global work challenges stigmas, replacing stereotypes and discrimination with accuracy and respect. We facilitate responsible media coverage to safeguard and champion vulnerable communities and to advance human rights. Taboom Media's co-founders Brian Pellot and Debra Mason started collaborating to improve ethical media coverage of taboo human rights topics in 2010 at the University of Missouri's top-ranked School of Journalism. Over the years, our customized training opportunities for media professionals, faith leaders and activists have ranged from short lectures and panels in the U.K., Canada, Kosovo, Turkey, France, Spain, Indonesia, Belgium, Austria, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Ghana and Azerbaijan to week-long workshops in the U.S., Italy, South Africa and Myanmar. We have trained, mentored and edited hundreds of journalists from dozens of countries, elevating human rights topics in local and international media around the world. To learn more about our work or to download a copy of this guide, visit [TaboomMedia.com](http://TaboomMedia.com).



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