

Daily effects of straight privilege:

This article is based on Peggy McIntosh's article on white privilege. These dynamics are but a few examples of the privilege which straight people have. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer-identified folk have a range of different experiences, but cannot count on most of these conditions in their lives.

On a daily basis, as a straight person...

- I can go for months without being called straight.
- I am not asked to think about why I am straight.
- I am never asked to speak for everyone who is heterosexual.
- People don't ask why I made my choice of sexual orientation.
- People don't ask why I made my choice to be public about my sexual orientation.
- Nobody calls me straight as an insult.
- People do not assume I am experienced in sex (or that I even have it!) merely because of my sexual orientation.
- If I pick up a magazine, watch TV, or play music, I can be certain my sexual orientation will be represented.
- When I talk about my heterosexuality (such as in a joke or talking about my relationships), I will not be accused of pushing my sexual orientation onto others.
- I do not have to fear that if my family or friends find out about my sexual orientation there will be economic, emotional, physical or psychological consequences.
- I can go home from most meetings, classes, and conversations without feeling excluded, fearful, attacked, isolated, outnumbered, unheard, held at a distance, stereotyped or feared because of my sexual orientation.
- I can be sure that my classes will require curricular materials that testify to the existence of people with my sexual orientation.
- I can easily find a religious community that will not exclude me for being heterosexual.
- I can count on finding a therapist or doctor willing and able to talk about my sexuality.
- I am guaranteed to find sex education literature for couples with my sexual orientation.
- Because of my sexual orientation, I do not need to worry that people will harass or assault me.
- My masculinity/femininity is not challenged because of my sexual orientation.

- I am not identified/defined by my sexual orientation.
- If my day, week, or year is going badly, I need not ask of each negative episode or situation whether it has sexual orientation overtones.
- I can hold hands or kiss in public with my significant other and not have people double-take or stare.
- I can choose to not think politically about my sexual orientation.
- I did not grow up with games that attack my sexual orientation (IE fag tag or smear the queer).
- People can use terms that describe my sexual orientation and mean positive things (IE "straight as an arrow", "standing up straight" or "straightened out") instead of demeaning terms (IE "ewww, that's gay" or being "queer").
- I can be open about my sexual orientation without worrying about my job.

Adapted from

http://www.cs.earlham.edu/~hyrax/personal/files/student_res/straightprivilege.htm