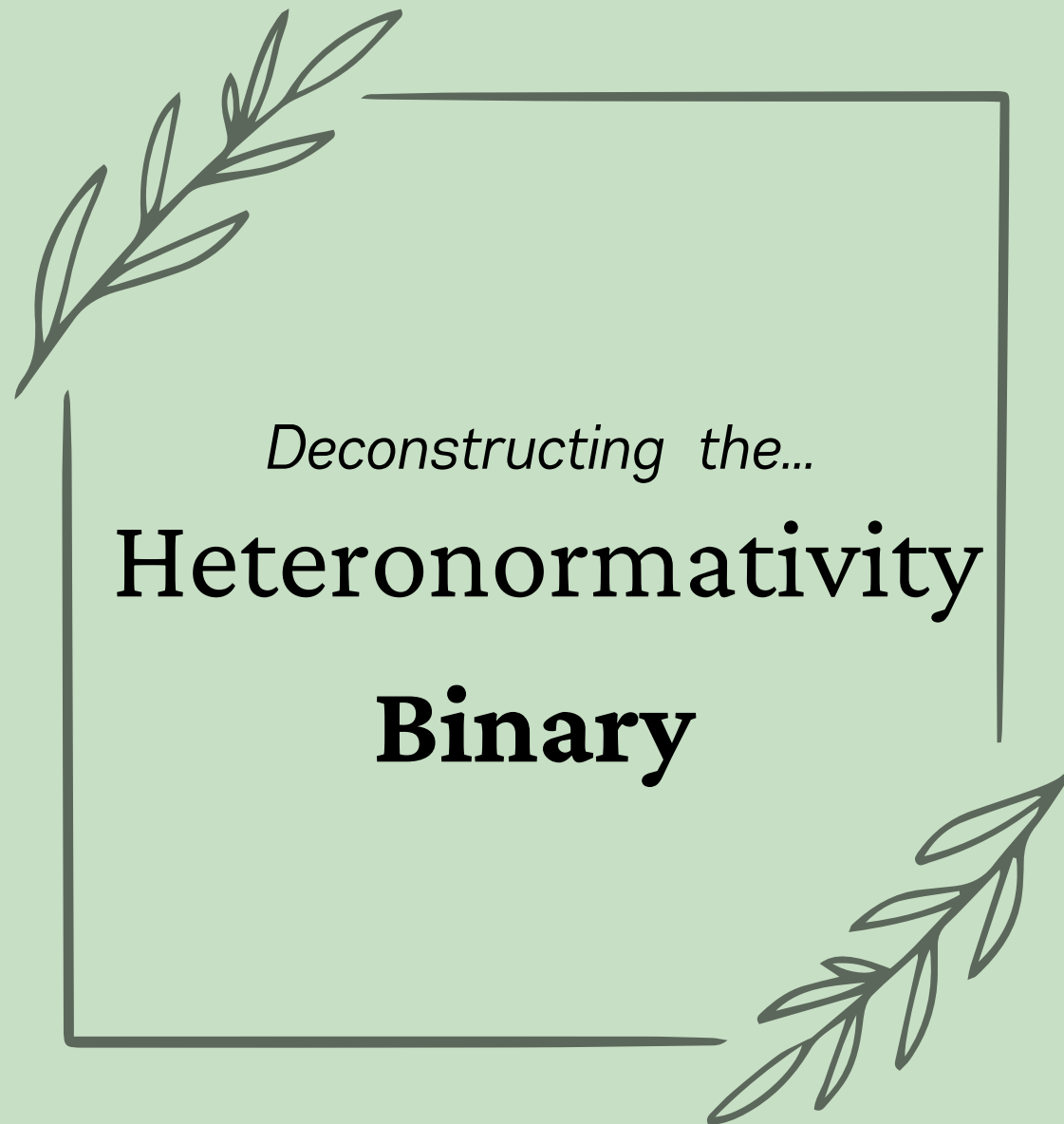


a queer sex ed community curriculum zine



A zine exploring the "gay vs. straight" binary, the consequences of compulsory heterosexuality, and the naturalization of heteronormativity.

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What is the **heteronormativity** binary?

In our society, heterosexuality is compulsory.

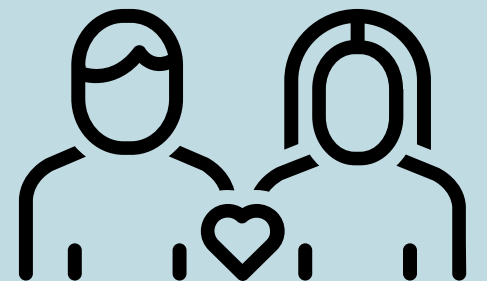
(What does that mean?)

Compulsory heterosexuality means that everyone is assumed to be straight.



Heterosexuality is **normalized** and **naturalized**.

All other types of sexuality are subsequently seen as **deviant** and **unnatural**.





Naturalizing heterosexuality makes non-heterosexuality seem "unnatural."



In reality, all sexualities are **natural** and **normal**.

Allocating "naturalness" to a single sexual orientation creates an imbalance of power.

The gay/straight binary **allocates social power** to heterosexual (or straight) people through these **false assumptions** about normal and natural human behaviors.

The gay/straight binary can also lead to the **pathologizing** of non-heterosexual orientations.

Why are non-hetero sexualities seen as a mental illness?

In the past, folks who identified as anything other than straight were labeled as **sexually deviant**.

They could be imprisoned, sterilized, or confined in unsafe facilities.

These reactions are born out of an **enforcement of heteronormative norms**, and a societal **fear of de-naturalizing heterosexuality** (thus losing some social power).



Children understand heteronormativity.



Parents and educators of young children often believe that their children are **too young** to learn about sexuality.

But this doesn't mean that young children aren't receiving messages about what is seen as normal in their society.

Young children learn about heterosexuality every day.

By not talking about sexuality with young children, parents, and educators are reinforcing the idea that heterosexuality is the "normal" sexual orientation.

The gay/straight binary creates a ton of **misinformation.**

There are so many myths about sexuality.

Myth

Sexuality is fixed: "you are what you are."

People are either straight or they're gay.

People "choose to become" gay.

Reality

Sexuality is fluid & it changes throughout your lifetime.

There are numerous sexual orientations, and these can change overtime too.

The social and biological origins of sexuality are complex and unknown, but we do know that people do not "turn gay."

The gay / straight binary creates a **burden** for non-heterosexual folks.

One of the many consequences of **compulsory heterosexuality** is the idea that non-heterosexual people have to "come out."

This creates a **burden** for people who aren't straight.

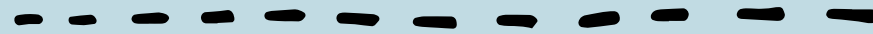
(It also creates intense restrictions for people questioning their sexuality.)

"Coming out" can be **liberating** and **inspiring**

but

"Coming out" can also be **violating**, **scary**, and **dangerous**.

There is no binary of sexual orientations.



The gay/straight binary leads us to believe that:

1. *People are either gay or straight*
2. *Being straight is "normal" and anything else is deviant.*

When we break down the binary, it is easier to understand that sexual orientations are **varied**, **complex**, and **fluid**.

Human sexuality is influenced by so many factors
(*culture, gender identity, our minds & bodies*).

It is absurd to **categorize** people by their sexuality or to only validate **one of many** sexual orientations.

Sources

- <https://openbooks.library.umass.edu/introwgss/chapter/sexualities/>
- <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/understanding-heteronormativity#quiz-0>
- <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352154620300383>

