

CIVIC

Ending Discrimination & Abuse of LGBTI
in U.S. Immigration Detention



Supplemental Reading Material
for CIVIC Visitor Volunteers





**Ending Discrimination & Abuse of LGBTI in U.S. Immigration Detention:
Supplemental Reading Material for CIVIC Visitor Volunteers**

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CIVIC is dedicated to ending the isolation and abuse of persons in immigration detention by building and strengthening community visitation programs across the United States. Visitation programs connect persons in civil immigration detention with community members. These volunteer visitors provide immigrants in detention with a link to the outside world, while also preventing human rights abuses by creating a community presence in otherwise invisible detention facilities.

CIVIC is a national organization with affiliated community visitation programs across the United States. CIVIC provides capacity-building support to current visitation groups, resources and training to new groups, and a communication platform for all visitation groups. CIVIC combines this practical approach to social change with a vision of social justice, setting in motion a national movement to combat the isolating experience of immigration detention.

CIVIC created this packet of reading material to supplement its online training video, Transgender 101: A Presentation by Orange County Female-to-Male (OCFTM). OCFTM's founder, Pat Magee, delivered this training to a group of visitor volunteers with Friends of Orange County Detainees in California. Special thanks to Jim Magee for producing the video. Watch the full training at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gzKRpa617zY>. Special thanks also to Karyl E. Ketchum, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Women & Gender Studies at California State University, Fullerton, for her guidance in selecting some of the readings in this packet.

For more information about CIVIC, please visit our website at <http://www.endisolation.org>.

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Pat Magee

CIVIC created this 1-hour training video for visitor volunteers working with LGBTI people in immigration detention across the United States. Special thanks to Orange County Female-to-Male (OCFTM) for their presentation.

Queer Theory, Gender Theory: An Instant Primer

Riki Wilchins

This excerpt is meant to offer you some potential new ways to think about gender as it is differentiated from, and variously related to, biological sex (bodies) and sexuality (desires). The ideas presented by Wilchins may be new to you and may even challenge some of what you thought you understood about identity. Therefore, we encourage you to practice "metacognition" as you read. In other words, think about and take note of how you are thinking about the ideas presented: how is your mind reacting as you read? We suggest this tactic because Gender Theory's greatest strength is in the way it expands and challenges categories of knowledge that rely on binary (or dualistic) ways of knowing (by "binary ways of knowing," we mean sets of opposites: good/bad, masculine/feminine, gay/straight, etc). Such binary ways of knowing can be difficult to otherwise transcend because they are simplified and reinforced through our language. The expanded ways of thinking proposed by Gender Theory and Queer Theory can help us to stretch our understanding outside of these easy categories, revealing them to be more obfuscating than true! Also, by cultivating a more complex understanding of identify, you will be in a much better position to empathize and to support LGBTI people in immigration detention, since much of their lives, experiences, and identities, only come into focus through non-binary thought—thought that is based on "both/and" instead of "either/or."

LGBT Migrants in Immigration Detention

Shana Tabak and Rachel Levitan

Originally produced in the Forced Migration Review, www.fmreview.org. As countries increasingly use detention to control migration flows, sexual minority migrants find themselves in detention facilities where they may face multiple violations of their human rights.

Social and Legal Barriers: Sexual Orientation and Asylum in the United States

Timothy J. Randazzo

This reading is intended to give you a brief history of U.S. immigration practices and laws as they have been influenced by questions of gender, sexuality, and biological sex; the very particular legal barriers faced by LGBT asylum seekers; and, some thoughts on advocacy and human rights regarding this population.

A Model Immigration Detention Facility for LGBTI?

Christina Fialho

Originally produced in the Forced Migration Review, www.fmreview.org. This is a case study on the Santa Ana City Jail in California, which has the only “dedicated protective custody unit” for gay and transgender people in immigration detention. The article argues that the United States has taken some positive steps to improve the treatment of gay and transgender asylum seekers in immigration detention, but the United States could be a model for the world if it completely eliminated the detention of asylum seekers, particularly those who are LGBTI. In the short-term, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) needs to make improvements in four key areas: officer training, health care, transfers, and visitation.

Thoughts from a CIVIC Visitor Volunteer

Karen Vance

A visitor volunteer with Friends of Orange County Detainees and a mother of a transgender son talks about her first experience visiting gay and transgender people in immigration detention at the Santa Ana City Jail.

A Campaign to Free G

CIVIC

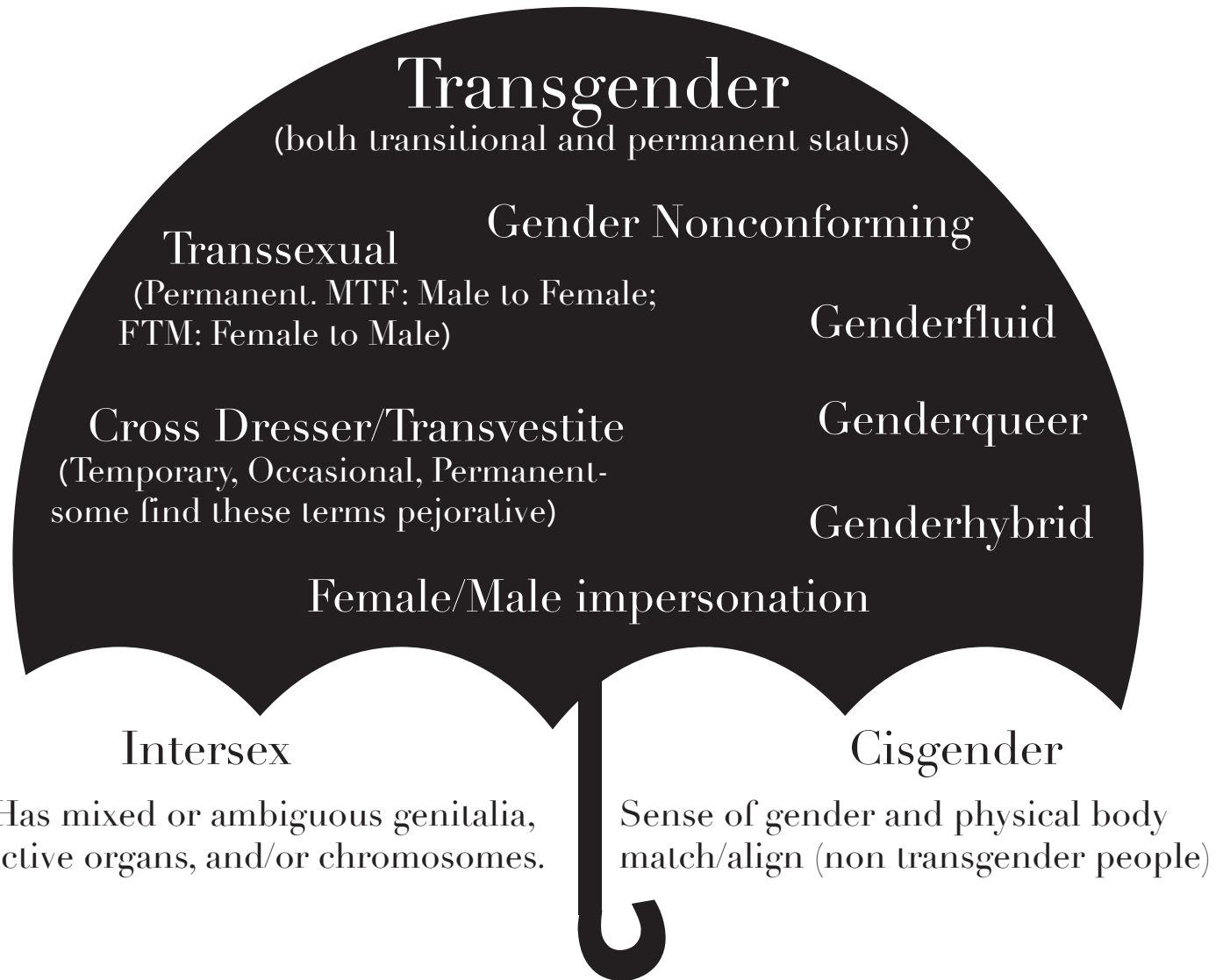
This short reading follows the experience of one transgender woman, G, who was brutally raped and discriminated against in her home country before journeying to the United States. Instead of protecting her, the U.S. government put her into immigration detention. CIVIC, the Public Counsel Law Center, and First Unitarian Church of Los Angeles joined forces to obtain her release from immigration detention.

Transgender 101: CIVIC's Training Video Agenda

- I. What is sex/gender/transgender?
 - Gender Identify, Sexual Orientation, Gender Expression, etc.
 - Transpeople can self identify as gay, lesbian, straight, asexual, etc.
- II. Vocabulary (note the widespread disagreement on terminology)
 - See next page

II. Vocabulary (note the widespread disagreement on terminology)

This umbrella is not meant to categorize people as “transgender” who may not identify with this term. What the umbrella is helpful for is to demonstrate that there may be similarities in how transgender people have been treated for gender non-conformity. These definitions are not mutually exclusive. Some people may identify with more than one or all of these terms.



Definitions in queer settings do not function in the same way as in dictionaries. They are fluid and changing all the time. People have different relationships to the terms they use to describe their identities. The best way to proceed in getting to know someone who is different from you is to ask questions and not make any assumptions. Hopefully, this will promote a sense of respectful curiosity. Similarly, one should avoid trying to understand another person within rigid categories that do not allow for difference. A good practice is to give the person you are getting to know the opportunity to define their own identity.

- III. Temporary vs. permanent changes
- IV. The transsexual experience (SOC, costs, journey, documentation)
- V. Who are transgender people?
- VI. Transgender community challenges
- VII. Global stigma, violence, and discrimination
- VIII. Police and prison reform recommendation
- IX. Transgender support groups