Sexuality runs along a continuum. It is not a static “thing” but rather has the potential to change throughout one’s lifetime, and varies infinitely among people. We cannot fit our sexuality into nice neat categories, which determine who and what we are. Bisexuality exists at many points along the continuum.

**Myths and Realities of Bisexuality**  
(adapted from Western Michigan University, *Safe on Campus Resource Manual*)

**Bisexuality doesn’t really exist. People who consider themselves bisexual are going through a phase/confused/undecided/fence sitting. Ultimately they’ll settle down and realize they’re actually homosexual or heterosexual.**

Some people go through a transitional period of bisexuality on there way to adopting a lesbian/gay or heterosexual identity. For many others, a bisexual orientation remains a long-term orientation. For some bisexual people, same sex attractions were a transitional phase in their coming out as bisexual. Many bisexual people may well be confused, living in a society where their sexuality is denied by gays and straights alike, but that confusion is a function of oppression. Fence sitting is a misnomer; there is no “fence” between same-sex or different-sex orientations except in the minds of people who rigidly divide the two.

**Bisexuality doesn’t really exist. People who consider themselves bisexual are really heterosexual, but are experimenting/playing around/trying to be cool/liberated/trendy/politically correct.**

Whether an individual is an “experimenting heterosexual” or a bisexual person depends on how they define themselves, rather than some external standard. While there certainly are people who engage in bisexual behaviour because they think it is trendy, this does not negate the people who come to a bisexual identity amidst pain and confusion and claim it with pride.

**Bisexuality doesn’t really exist. People who consider themselves bisexual are actually lesbian-gay, but haven’t fully accepted themselves and finished coming out of the closet.**

Bisexual orientation is a legitimate sexual orientation. Many bisexual people are completely out of the closet, but not on the lesbian/gay community’s terms (it is worth noting that many lesbians and gay men are not completely out of the closet and their process is generally respected; it is also worth noting that the lesbian/gay community whose “terms” are in question here has tended to be quite different for working class lesbians, gays of colour, etc.) Bisexual people in this country share with lesbians and gay men the debilitating experience of heterosexism and homophobia, but also experience biphobia which can be just as pervasive within lesbian or gay communities as in straight spaces.

**Bisexual people are shallow/narcissistic/untrustworthy/hedonistic/and immoral.**

This myth reflects our culture’s ambivalence over sex and pleasure. The “sex” in bisexuality gets overemphasized, and out culture projects onto bisexual people its fascination with and condemnation of sex and pleasure.
Bisexual people are equally attracted to both sexes. Bisexual means having concurrent lovers of both sexes.

Most bisexual people are primarily attracted to one gender more than others, but do not deny the lesser attraction, regardless of whether they act on it. Some bisexual people are never sexual. Bisexual people can have lovers of any sex, not must have lovers of all sexes. Some bisexual people may have concurrent lovers, but they do not need to be with different sexes in order to feel fulfilled.

Bisexual people are promiscuous, hypersexual swingers who are attracted to every person they meet. Bisexual people cannot be monogamous, nor can they live in committed relationships. They could never be celibate.

Bisexual people have a range of sexual behaviours. Like lesbians, gay men or heterosexual people, some have multiple partners, some have one partner, and some go through periods without any partners. Promiscuity is no more prevalent in the bisexual population than in other groups of people.

Bisexual people spread AIDS to the heterosexual and lesbian communities.

This myth allows discrimination against bisexual people to be legitimized. The label “bisexual” simply refers to sexual orientation. It says nothing about whether one practices safer sex or not. AIDS occurs in people of all sexual orientations. AIDS is contracted through unsafe sexual practices, shared needles, and contaminated blood transfusions. Sexual orientation does not “cause” or “spread” AIDS.

Politically, bisexual people are traitors to the cause of lesbian/gay liberation. They pass as heterosexual to avoid trouble and maintain heterosexual privilege.

Obviously there are bisexual people who pass as heterosexual to avoid trouble. There are also many lesbians and gay men who do this too. To “pass” for heterosexual and deny the part of you that loves people of the same gender is just as painful and damaging for a bisexual person as it is for a lesbian or gay man. Politicized bisexual people remain aware of heterosexual privileges and are committed enough to LGBTQ rights not to abandon LGBTQ communities when in heterosexual relationships.

Bisexual women will always leave their lesbian lovers for men.

Although this does happen sometimes, one can also find examples of bisexual women who have good long-term relationships with lesbians. There are bisexual people for whom same-sex attraction is a phase; there are also lesbians for whom same-sex behaviour is a phase. There are bisexual and lesbian women who never really come to grips with their sexuality and internalized homophobia. Bisexual women who truly accept themselves and their sexuality will leave a relationship when it no longer works for them. The same could be said of lesbians who accept themselves. As hard as it is to get clear about the reasons a relationship may end, and as many challenges as lesbian relationships may face, the notion that bisexual women can’t handle lesbian relationships is just a stereotype.
Bisexual people get the best of both worlds and a doubled chance for a date on Saturday night.

Combine our society’s extreme heterosexism and homophobia with lesbian and gay exclusion of bisexual people into their communities, and it might be more accurate to say that bisexual people get the worst of both worlds. As to the doubled chance for a date theory, that depends more upon the individual’s personality than it does upon their sexuality. If a bisexual individual has a hard time meeting people, their sexual orientation won’t help much.

Bisexual people are desperately unhappy, endlessly seeking some kind of peace they cannot ever find.

Like lesbians and gay men who have been told that they will live awful lives, bisexual people can also respond that much of the pain comes from oppression. People concerned about the “awful lives” of bisexual people should join the fight against biphobia and homophobia. It is important to remember that “bisexual”, “lesbian”, “gay”, “trans”, “queer” and “heterosexual” are labels created by a homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, heterosexist society to separate and alienate us from each other. We are all unique and don’t fit into distinct categories. We sometimes need to use these labels for political reasons or to increase our visibility. Seeing the beauty in our diversity while acknowledging and accepting the differences facilitates our sexual esteem.