Gay and queer men face significant discrimination globally, including the death penalty in some countries.

*Denotes a term in the glossary
QUICK FACTS

- Of the 138 series regular and recurring LGBTQIA+ characters on cable TV in the 2021-22 season, 45 were gay men, including one trans man.
- 26% of gay men are disabled, but only seven gay characters were disabled in the 2020-21 TV season.
- Over 10% of all FBI-reported hate crimes in 2019 were committed against gay men.
- Gay and queer men face significant discrimination globally, including the death penalty in some countries. The U.S. Supreme Court only fully decriminalized sex between two men in 2003.
- ~1.2 million Americans are HIV+, but only two HIV+ characters appeared in the 2021-22 TV season. As of 2020, 88% of Americans acknowledged stigma around HIV (e.g., the FDA’s discriminatory ban on queer men donating blood).

ONLINE REFERENCES & RESOURCES:

- The Atlantic: “Cruising In The Age Of Consent”
- Avert: “What Is An Undetectable Viral Load?”
- GLAAD: “Glossary of Terms: LGBTQ”
- “State Of HIV Stigma Study, 2020”
- “Where We Are on TV, 2021-2022”
- GQ: “Why Body Image Issues Pervade the Gay Community”
- Human Rights Campaign: “How HIV Impacts LGBTQ People”
- Juvenile Justice: “The Other Side of the Rainbow: Young, Gay, and Homeless in Metro Atlanta”
- Painted Brain: “Queer Men: A New Face to Body Dysmorphic Disorder”
- Pew Research Center: “The Global Divide on Homosexuality Persists”
- Talkspace: “The Mental Health Issues Gay Men Deal With”
- ThoughtCo: “The American Gay Rights Movement”
- The Washington Post: “It’s easier now for gay men to adopt. But they still face lots of pushback, and weird questions.”

GLOSSARY

- **ART, PrEP, and PEP:** Antiretroviral therapy (ART) medication treats and manages HIV in HIV+ people. Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) are used by HIV+ people at risk of getting HIV through sex or injection drug use. When taken correctly, these medications can make HIV+ people undetectable (i.e., reduce the amount of HIV in the body to untransmittable levels) and prevent the spread of HIV.

- **Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD):** A body-image disorder characterized by persistent, intrusive preoccupations with perceived flaws or defects with any part of one’s body, which, in reality, might be slight or nonexistent. BDD affects 2.2% of men and 2.5% of women in the U.S.

- **Femmephobia:** Discrimination or hostility toward someone who’s perceived to embody or express femininity (including effeminate gay men). Femmephobia can come from both cishet and queer people, often rooted in internalized homophobia and toxic masculinity.

- **Heteronormativity:** The inaccurate belief that heterosexuality is the default, natural, or normal expression of sexuality. It upholds the false gender binary and the notion that sexual and marital relationships should be between people of “opposite” sexes (i.e., a man and a woman who conform to rigid notions of gender, sexuality, and gender roles).

- **Intimate Partner Violence (IPV):** Physical, verbal, psychological, economic, or sexual violence committed by a current or former partner. While most IPV portrayals feature women in straight relationships, LGBTQIA+ people experience IPV at comparable rates but are less likely to report it due to stigma, lack of resources, and perceived power balance in same-gender relationships.

Please visit our Expanded Glossary for in-depth definitions of the above terms and definitions of additional terms: affirmative consent, femme, gender binary, gender expansive, HIV/AIDS, minority stress, mlm, polyamorous, queer, queerbaiting, queer coding, same-gender-loving, toxic masculinity, and undetectable.

In-kind support and materials for this factsheet were provided by the following partner organizations. Please contact them for additional information, story guidance, and in-room consultations.

GLAAD.org
StorylinePartners.com
SeeJane.org

HRC.org
SRC-Partners.com

A list of the most up-to-date contact information for all of our partner organizations can be found on our website: WriteInclusion.org/factsheets