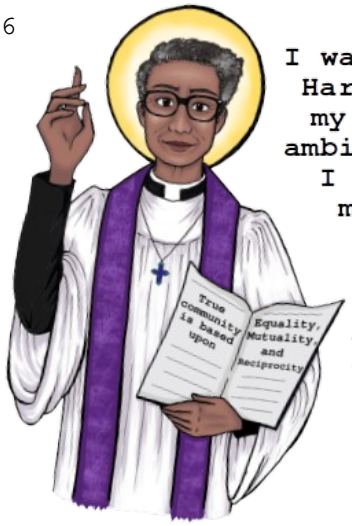
Who are Reverend Murray and Professor Boswell?

The PATRON SAINTS OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY series is a project of Amanda Cardon, OSV.

This zine is free to reproduce for non-commercial purposes. For printables, saint artwork and bios, and stickers to purchase, visit

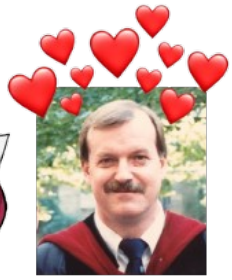
faithfulheretic.church



I was denied admission to Harvard on the basis of my sex. In spite of my ambivalence about gender, I was politically and materially a woman.

We all make trade-offs. While I wasn't a "LGBTQ activist" in my own time, through my work on the intersection of race and gender I helped to lay the groundwork for later legislation that protects LGBTQ people.

It took a long time for sexual orientation and gender identity to become legally-protected classes. The main concern for a lot of us was keeping our job and housing if we were outed as gay.



My own partner wasn't out to everyone in his life. I had to describe him as "a close friend" in my obituary.

Use as many or as few labels as you want.

These were some of mine:

DUDE

IMP

HE/SHE

PERSONALITY

All of your flags are also very pretty. We didn't have flags at all when I was your age.

Did I "identify as a lesbian"? Maybe. Who knows.

But if I wanted to flirt with women, I would probably have to go to a "lesbian bar." We had our own subcultures, our own slang, and our own tricks for identifying undercover cops. My relationships were "lesbian relationships."

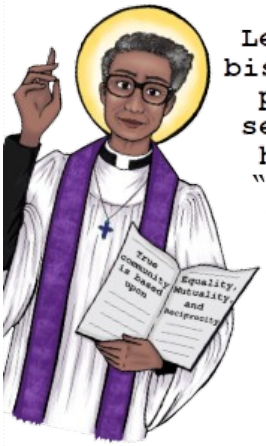
Perfectly describing your own internal sense of self is not really the point of a label. Don't discount the importance of broad umbrella terms.

Label and identity discourse is nothing new, and it's always been pretty ridiculous.

In fact, one of the major reasons why my reputation was in shambles by the 2020s is that I ended up on the "wrong side" of label and identity discourse in my own time.

Without going into it too deeply, there were some people who took issue with how I used the word "gay" in my academic writing.

The truth is that all labels are provisional. We used the words GAY and LESBIAN in order to find each other and build coalitions to fight the real-world oppression we were facing.



Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and trans people have been seen as predatory, hypersexual, and "unnatural" for a very long time.

Our labels and communities were meant to help us fight back.

We've always been diverse. Our oppression and liberation have always been intersectional.

Frankly, we're a bit envious that individualized flags and labels are the most pressing concern that some of you have, and we hope you don't forget why you can expect safety and freedom in the first place.

Our words and our histories are our gifts to you.

By the early 20th century in much of the Anglophone West, our self-expression was limited by two types of laws:

1. anti-sodomy laws, which policed private sex acts between consenting adults

2. indecency and obscenity laws, which policed gender expression and the dissemination of certain types of information

What, exactly, counted as "indecency" and "obscenity"? That was mostly up to the whims of the people making the rules, whether they were Christian clergy or secular legislators.

"Indecent" and "obscene" material could include anything related to crossdressing or gender transition, scientific information about sexual health, love poetry between men or between women, or really anything else these governing bodies determined to be "deviant."

We are ultimately marginalized because we fall outside of a heterosexual, binary-gendered cultural norm.

At best, most straight people think we're a bit weird. At worst, they want us dead.

When things get tough and they look around for people to blame, we're near the top of the list.

It helps to know exactly WHY they identify us as "outsiders," and what behaviors they try to penalize. This helps us to find communities and develop strategies to keep ourselves safe.

In general, these are the groups and behaviors that are considered "different":

MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN

GENDER-NONCONFORMING PEOPLE

TRANS PEOPLE

WOMEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH WOMEN

WOMEN WHO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY OF MEN