

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## STATION 1: Emily Newberry

### Part 1– About Emily

“Emily Newberry knew that she was not like other kids from a young age. At 6, she wanted to wear girl clothes and hang out with the girls. Despite this, she still participated in traditionally masculine activities such as football and the boy scouts to connect with her father. Emily was no stranger to shame. When her parents divorced, she moved to a conservative area where this divorce was kept secret. Here, Emily had to act like her stepmother was her birth mother. This shame trickled into other aspects of Emily’s life, leading her to suppress her unknown feelings for years to come.

Taking **pride** in her Cherokee heritage and the skills from her job in conflict resolution led to her discussing being transgender with her then wife, who responded apprehensively. By 2008, Emily knew she was transgender and began to meet with various therapists to aid in this process. It was not until Emily met with a primary healthcare provider who specialized in transgender patients that she felt comfortable enough to take hormones. As many before had either scared her or eluded to the fact that she was not ready.

After finally coming out as a woman, Emily faced barriers in both her job and social life. Suddenly, her job questioned her ability to perform her role and forced her out. After this event, she set out on a path to finding strong ties within her community through women’s groups and the Northwest Gender Alliance. In these groups, she was able to meet with other women and transgender people, both of which validated Emily at every turn. Today, Emily continues her activism on transgender issues by serving on panels in Portland and through her writing and poetry.”

After reading Emily’s story, what questions do you have? (List 2 or more)

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What is the meaning of **pride** as used in this excerpt?

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What do you take **pride** in?

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## Part 2– Talking With Emily

After watching the interview clips with your group, discuss the following questions:

How did Emily experience discrimination? How did she combat it?

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How did people react to Emily coming out?

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What was the effect of coming out for Emily?

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## STATION 2: Joanne Carrol

### Part 1- About Joanne

“At the age of 4, Joanne Carrol felt different as she liked feminine things and sought solace from the girls in her neighborhood. Her family were strong Baptists so there was no talk of gender or sex in their house, reducing Joanne’s ability to understand her identity. She lost touch with her faith around 13, which was the same time that she decided to become **punk** to limit the bullying she faced.

By 1980, Joanne had divorced her first wife and began to seek gender counseling. However, this was disrupted when Joanne met her second wife, believing that being with the right person might satiate these feelings. By 1992, Joanne had connected with the transgender community through online chatrooms and by 1997 she was again seeing gender counseling. It was also around this time that she came out to her wife, who was supportive, but still separated from her due to fear of being perceived as a lesbian. Joanne’s ex-wife remained an important figure in her life, it was because of her that Joanna got the courage to come out to her religious mother.

After coming out to her mother, Joanne’s faith was revitalized as she realized that she could be a transgender woman and a woman of faith. On February 15th, 2001, Joanne placed her old life in a box and became fully Joanne with her mother at her side. Joanne’s second name, Maureen, was chosen in homage to her parents, who choose this name for their first daughter. Recently, Joanne has continued work for transgender people and has served on the boards of many organizations and as the president of TransCentral PA. She also aims to show people that faith and the love of God are for all, no matter how you identify.”

What is **punk**?

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How are the ideas of being punk and being baptist similar? How are they different?

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How does perception play a role in our day-to-day lives?

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## PART 2 - Coming Out to Her Mother

“I can honestly tell you, Barry, that in every moment of my life from the time I became aware of what the condition might’ve been, I went to bed praying “God let me wake up fixed or make it go away.”

How did growing up religious affect Joanne’s relationship with her identity?

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Why do you think going back into her religious community was such a big step for Joanne?

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Why does Joanne continue to work on building religious community for queer people?

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## STATION 3: Maria Warren

### Part 1– About Maria

“Maria Warren grew up in a very religious family that kept growing as her parents adopted three more children. She knew that she had different feelings, but she did not know how to articulate them. She immersed herself in religion to try and rid herself of these feelings and the church reinforced to her that these feelings were wrong. Her father also held anti-LGBTQ+ views, which furthered her drive to hide these feelings. By age 12, Maria knew that she was a lesbian, but with no one else around her displaying the same feelings as her, she continued to hide them. She describes herself as being in the “odd crew” in both middle school and high school. She was known to defend herself, so people refrained from making remarks to her. It was only when she started high school that she began to hear these derogatory remarks.

At 19, Maria decided that marriage might be the solution and make these feelings go away. She had never had a partner before, and her first experience with sexual relations nearly traumatized her. A

few years into her marriage, they separated and during this separation Maria came out. They were separated for two years and eventually her family pushed her to try and save her marriage. So, she came out to her husband, and they started couples counseling. When this didn't work, her husband **outed** her to her whole family, and they separated for good. Maria stopped attending church out of shame and to protect her mother.

When Maria moved to York, she got in contact with and joined **PFLAG [Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays]**, a support group that became her rock in the community. They were there for her at her loneliest time. She is still an active member there, helping those who came after her so that they do not have to go through the same experience as her. Her children found out about her sexuality at different moments, but all of them offered nothing but support to their mother.

**PFLAG** is the largest organization for LGBTQ+ people, their families, and allies providing them with support, information, and a safe community. Since their establishment in 1973, they have spread across the United States, creating over 400 chapters that serve people in every state. They have spoken out against many harmful practices such as electroshock therapy, “religious treatments”, and traumatic residential treatments that children are sent to in order to be “fixed.” They have also helped remove anti-LGBTQ+ legislation that allowed for LGBTQ+ students to be expelled from school on the basis of their sexuality and were a major contributor to the legalization of LGBTQ+ marriage.”

What does it mean to be **outed**? Why is this harmful?

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Why are organizations like PFLAG an integral part of the LGBTQ+ community?

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## Part 2– Interview

How did Maria's children react when she came out to them? Why did Maria wait to tell her youngest son? What do you think about her decision to wait?

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Why did Maria only feel partial freedom when she first separated from her husband?

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Is there a time where fear has stopped you from expressing yourself or your feelings?  
How did you combat this fear?

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How did different societal pressures affect Maria? Were the societal pressures different after coming out?

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How are Maria's experiences similar and different to Joanne's in regard to religion?

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#### **STATION 4: Lindsay Snowden**

##### **Part 1—Meet Lindsay**

“Lindsay Snowden, whose pronouns are sirb or they/them, grew up in Philadelphia with their grandmother and later moved in with sirb’s mother and siblings. Sirb grew up in an open family and some of sirb’s cousins had already come out as gay. So, sirb was not a stranger to the LGBTQ+ community. Lindsay began to experiment with girls, however, sirb felt the expectation of society that sirb should be with a man, so by 11, sirb was interested in boys again. Sirb had a great work ethic as sirb started working when they were 10 and sirb’s mother taught them the value of a dollar. Even with sirb’s open family, there was always the expectation that sirb should be with a man. Sirb’s Baptist upbringing also reinforced this message, and while sirb did not necessarily believe this message, it was always lingering in the back of their mind.

Lindsay joined the military as a nurse at 17 and it was during this time in the military at age 20 that sirb began to discover their sexuality. Before this time, sirb saw their attraction to women as platonic and friendly. But one day at lunch sirb was with some friends when sirb remarked that they liked some girl's boots, a compliment that would not make them be seen as gay. That woman later called the office that sirb was in and asked her out, while also saying that she knew other men who were looking to enlist. Sirb went to meet this girl to get these names. They ended up kissing and this was when sirb realized that they in fact, liked girls. Sirb broke off their engagement as sirb realized that they loved their partner as a person. It also made sirb realize they could not go without being with a women. Which would not bode well for their military career.

Lindsay came out to their friends and family, who were not surprised, and their mother told them it was a hard life to live. Sirb left the military in 2002 due to the **“Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”** policy which put them at risk for a dishonorable discharge due to their sexuality. When sirb returned to Harrisburg, sirb noticed the lack of Black performers in the drag scene. After performing in a free pageant, sirb was able to break into the local drag scene. Sirb created the first all-Black drag trope, House of Gain, that gave sirb a platform to perform from as well as highlight Black performers. This was a family of people who had similar struggles and understood each other better than anyone.

Lindsay also started a magazine, Studs, with sirb's wife where they celebrate women's accomplishments and highlight masculine identifying women by showing that anyone can wear the clothing they want. Together, they also created a calendar to highlight various bodies and spread body positivity wherever they could. Sirb's sexuality has helped to normalize being gay to sirb's family and it pushed them to be **intersectional** in their political ideology, ensuring that sirb's identity as a Black, queer individual is protected by policymakers. Though, sirb says that at times they have to give up their Blackness to assimilate into queer culture, sirb would still rather be friends with queer individuals than anyone else due to the acceptance the community provides.”

What are neopronouns?

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What is “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”?

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What is intersectionality? Are your identities intersectional?

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## Part 2– Interview

How does Lindsay’s relationship with masculinity affect sirb’s day to day life?

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How did “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” affect queer military members? According to Lindsay, what were the reactions to the policy being removed?

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Why do you think queer military members and veterans reacted to the removal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” in the way they did?

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How has Linday built their community?

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### Post-Station Questions

Using the notes from station discussions and questions, answer the following questions.

What are some different ways queer people build community? Where do they build community?

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What are some different ways coming out can affect an individual? Is coming out always a good thing? How does the act of having to “come out” affect queer individuals?

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How does intersectionality affect people? Give at least two examples of intersectional identities.

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What do you think the main factors are when someone is deciding to come out?

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