



HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
CAMPAIGN  
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# BRAVE SPACES

Perspectives on Faith and LGBT Justice

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## VIDEO DISCUSSION GUIDE:

Directed by award winning filmmaker Marc Smolowitz, this HRC-produced documentary brings together 20 leading faith and community leaders to examine the past, present and future of coalition building and intersectional justice.

The film asks the important question: how have faith leaders, LGBT advocates and broader communities been able to find common ground and work together to advance the causes of social justice? It traces how coalition building has played an integral part in moving the country forward on so many issues, including civil rights, HIV/AIDS advocacy and LGBT equality. It also charts how communities of faith have remained bravely at the table for decades, finding new and powerful ways to be inclusive of LGBT congregants. The film points to the prospect of a new era of intersectional justice in social movements -- one that brings together LGBT and faith communities in new ways to tackle some of our nation's biggest challenges.

### Intended audiences

- Social Justice Organizations
- Faith Communities
- LGBT Communities
- Civil Rights Organizations
- College Students

### Educational Institutions

- Universities
- Seminaries
- LGBT Studies

## COMPLETE LIST OF INTERVIEW SUBJECTS

Rev. Dr. Brad Braxton  
The Open Church/Ford Foundation

Rev. MacArthur H. Flournoy  
Human Rights Campaign

Clayola Brown  
A. Philip Randolph Institute

Bishop Yvette Flunder  
City of Refuge

Miguel De La Torre  
ILIFF School of Theology

Reina Gossett  
Barnard College's Center for Research on Women

Dr. Sharon Groves  
Faith Organizer

Bishop Tonyia Rawls  
Freedom Center for Social Justice/Sacred Souls Community Church

The Very Rev. Gary Hall  
Washington National Cathedral

Lisbeth Melendez Rivera  
Latino and Catholic Initiatives at Human Rights Campaign

Rev. Dr. Derrick Harkins  
Nineteenth Street Baptist Church

Rev. Dr. Kenneth Samuel  
Victory of the World Baptist Church

Rev. Candy Holmes  
MCC Conference for People of African Descent

Rabbi David Saperstein  
U.S. Ambassador for International Religious Freedom

Dr. Benjamin Todd Jealous  
Center for American Progress/Kapor Capital

Rev. Al Sharpton  
National Action Network

Minister Leslie Malachi  
People for the American Way

Rev. Dr. T. Anthony Spearman  
NAACP

Sarah McBride  
Center for American Progress

Rev. Dr. D. Mark Wilson  
University of California, Berkeley

### **Suggested Discussion Questions (choose, adapt and add questions to fit your audience)**

1. In thinking about the film as a whole, what is your overall impression? What are you left thinking about?
2. Brave Spaces acknowledges that for many LGBT people, faith communities have committed acts of spiritual abuse, based on particular interpretations of scripture. Through what lens does your organization tend to read and interpret scripture? What are some other frameworks that should be used or added, and do you provide a safe space to question and try out these alternatives?
3. The film offers a historical perspective on the civil rights movement, and the significance of having people from a variety of social, religious and ethnic backgrounds present. In what ways does your faith-based community or social justice movement address diversity and inclusion? Does your leadership represent the diversity you strive for?
4. The film addresses the particular needs of the transgender community. In what ways does your organization currently consider the needs of transgender people? How can you strengthen your capacity and cultural competence to be more inclusive of the transgender community?
5. Does your organization do a good job of reaching out to specific populations? What people may have a hard time feeling welcome at your organization?
6. How would your group benefit by becoming more inclusive of the LGBT community?
7. Which speaker in the film offered perspectives that resonated with you the most? Which speaker offered perspectives that you found problematic?
8. The concept of Brave Spaces is offered as a new paradigm to engage people who hold different perspectives than your own. How do you envision your faith-based community or social justice organization using this idea to move safe spaces you are engaged in towards becoming brave spaces (even if it's uncomfortable!), where all are welcome to the table?
9. Brave Spaces addresses the subject of intersectional justice, -- advocacy where multiple justice issues must be recognized and addressed. The film suggests developing organizational partnerships to address intersectional justice. How does your organization embrace intersectional justice and how might it expand these efforts through such partnerships?
10. Is your organization "locked in a silo"? Do you work with people in other organizations that engage different issues and groups?
11. Rev. Flournoy mentions, "We need to be careful not to characterize those who are not with us in ways that dehumanize them." How does your faith-based community or social justice movement act on this idea? Is it important for you?
12. What is one significant thing you can challenge yourself to do after watching this film?