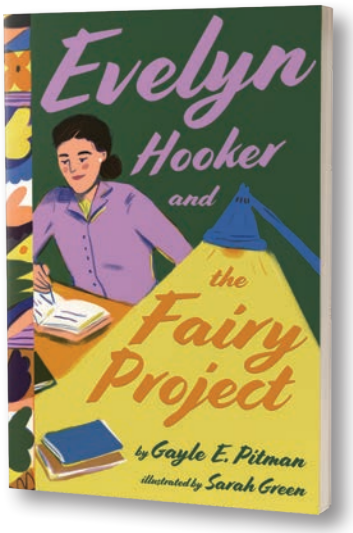
AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Celebrate LBGTQ History by Becoming an Ally



Evelyn Hooker is the extraordinary woman behind the research, advocacy, and allyship that led to the removal of the "Homosexuality" diagnosis from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. A pioneering psychologist, Hooker was also a poet and a towering figure in LGBTQ+ rights.

Evelyn Hooker and the Fairy Project, written by Stonewall award-winning author Gayle Pitman, captures Hooker's groundbreaking work like never before.

At the end of the book, a "Note to Readers" provides information about how to be an effective ally to LGBTQ+ people; other end matter included are a timeline, discussion questions, reading list, and additional resources, all written by Sarah Prager.

Here's an excerpt from the "How to be a LBGTQ+ Ally" section:

Limerick for Dr. Bieber

There once was a doctor named Irving
whose theories were rather unnerving.
It seems so cliché
that moms made their sons gay.
A theory that's not worth preserving!

Evelyn Hooker wasn't gay, but she helped gay people live better lives through her actions. That's what an ally does—advocate on behalf of a group of people they are not a part of.

Someone inside the LBGTQ+ community who advocates for gay rights isn't an ally, they're an activist. You have to be outside the group to be an ally. The word comes from war talk—your ally in a war is not your own armed forces, but forces that fight on the same side against a common enemy.

Here are ways to be an effective Ally:

Be Inclusive: This book focuses on gay people because that's where the discussion was centered at the time. The LBGTQ+ community is made up of many more kinds of people than just gay and lesbian people. To be an ally to one, you should be an ally to the whole extended community.

Be a Follower: Being an ally is often about listening. Allies don't tell their LBGTQ+ friends what they should do or how they should do it; they help their friends carry out what their friends want...they just help where they are needed and follow the direction of the group they want to help.

Be Proactive: While following is important in many situations, so is taking initiative in other contexts. Don't expect an LBGTQ+ person to explain everything about being LBGTQ+ to you. Try to do your own research before asking. It's also the job of an ally to speak up for LBGTQ+ people in a situation where someone says something mean or incorrect about them. You can speak up without speaking over or instead of LBGTQ+ people.

Be a Student: Learn from your mistakes and realize that you'll always be learning. Learn about: LBGTQ+ history, gender-neutral pronouns, and current issues important to the LBGTQ+ community. When you make a mistake, own it, apologize, and move on.

Be a Friend: Like you would for anyone, be a kind friend to LBGTQ+ people around you. Listen, offer support, respect people's pronouns and identities, and show up when you are asked to. In the end, being an ally is being a friend.

This Article's Author

Gayle E. Pitman, PhD, is a professor of psychology and women's studies at Sacramento City College. Her teaching and writing focuses on gender and sexual orientation, and she has worked extensively with the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community.

Sarah Prager is dedicated to raising awareness of LGBTQ+ history through writing, speaking, and her app, Quist.