

**“All students have a right to safe and appropriate restroom facilities.”**

**Who does this benefit?**

- People with disabilities
- Genderqueer
- Transgender
- Cisgender
- Mothers
- Fathers
- Children
- People who feel more comfortable with privacy to change or nurse their baby
- People with body image issues
- YOU!



**“Provide an easily accessible unisex single stall bathroom for use by any student who desires increased privacy... [and] encourage more than one gender neutral bathroom.”**

**What you can do...**

- SIGN THE PETITION!!  
-Signature collection will be at the MLK Commons on November 19-23 at various times and petitions to sign are also available at the Women’s Resource Center and LGBT Resource Center
- Contact us to join the cause via email  
-mhenry2@niu.edu
- Visit the LGBT Resource center  
-7th floor of Holmes Student Center
- Women’s Resource Center  
-Located at the corner of Normal Road and Lincoln Highway
- Prism Student Association

**“The lack of safe bathroom access is the most frequent form of discrimination faced but the least acknowledged by policy makers.”**

**WORKS CITED:**

- [www.transgenderlaw.org](http://www.transgenderlaw.org)
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transgender>
- <http://www.campusprideindex.org/>
- <http://www.ohio.edu/lgbt/>

Genderism and the Bathroom Problem: (re)materializing sexed sites, (re)creating sexed bodies. Written by: Kathe Browne

**How Safe Do You Feel When You Have to Go?**



**Make campus restrooms accessible and safe for all!**

An Action Project for WOMS 230 done by:  
Madison T. Henry (mhenry2@niu.edu), Cyndi Holman,  
Joli Patel, Angela Versluis, and Hannah Savage  
(Z1674184@students.niu.edu)

## Quick Facts

Most buildings on campus do not have any unisex bathrooms. Although there are several single occupancy restrooms at NIU, almost all of them have gendered signs. Out of more than 70 buildings on the NIU campus, the Holmes Student Center and the Women's Resource Center are the only two that have unisex restrooms.

Davis has only 2 female bathrooms, one of which is all the way on the top floor by the observatory. This makes it almost inaccessible when a women needs to go in the middle of class, while exiting the building, etc.



According to the **American Restroom Association (2006)**, a single-stall restroom offers flexibility and privacy, serving "people with shy-

bladder and those in the transgendered community."

Transgender advocacy groups in the United States have taken up the cause of unisex bathrooms.

They see unisex bathrooms as a solution to eliminate harassment and other inconveniences for trans people in using conventional bathrooms. In 2005, there were **only 5 American cities**, including San Francisco and New York, with regulations for public restroom access based on person's perceived **gender identity** rather than their birth sex.

## How Can It Affect Everyone?

In the article "Genderism and the Bathroom Problem: (re)materializing sexed sites, (re)creating sexed bodies", written by Kathe Brown, it "...centralizes 'women' who are read as men and those who do not identify with either sexed category both of whom confront the necessity of defining oneself in relation to dichotomously sexed sites such as toilets (in this case women's toilets)." Many females have no idea the struggles women have with public bathrooms on a daily basis. An example of this struggle is exposed in Brown's interview with an masculine built female:

**KB:** Do you get mistaken for a bloke [man] often?

**Janet:** Like I said to you, every single day. Every single day I get, I can't use public toilets I have been thrown out of clubs... **It was toga night so I was wearing my bed sheet and a sports bra. And one of my mates was getting sick and so I was in the toilets with her and someone screamed there was a man in the toilets.** And three bouncers came in a chucked me out of the club and I was wearing a sports bra. **Yeah I haven't got much up top, but you know I was wearing a sports bra.** And by that time I was just like wearing a sheet around my waist and that was it and they still chucked me out... I can't use service station toilets. **I have had old women batter me out of toilets before.**

**KB:** Really?

**Janet:** Yeah, I am being serious. I am usually in there with my Mum and they used to have a go at me and my Mum just used to walk up to them and go 'you lot are so just, you are so fucking rude'. D'you know? 'That's a girl'. And **you know they don't look at my face or anything they just look at my build and look at my height and look at my haircut and they just instantly assume that I am some dirty man in the women's toilets.**

## What have others done?

Ohio University is one university that took action on this bathroom issue. This excerpt is directly from the Ohio University LGBT center website "Several years ago the LGBT Center worked to make restrooms on campus more accessible to transgender students, faculty and staff, as well as others who wish to use a single user restroom. There are currently over 30 restrooms on campus that are not gender specific, however many of these have limited access The restrooms that have been converted are single user restrooms with a lock on the main door or new ones created in renovations or new construction. Below is a current list of the single user restrooms. Efforts continue to increase the number of single user restrooms in academic and administrative buildings."

Universities that have taken action on this issue with establishment of unisex bathrooms:

- UIC, University of Chicago, Eastern Illinois University, University of Arkansas– Fort Smith, Stanford, Ohio State, University of Michigan, Cornell, Princeton, Indiana University, and many others.

## LGBT-Friendly Campus Climate Index

- The University of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Chicago both have received the top score of 5 stars on the LGBT-Friendly Campus Climate Index. One of the main reasons they received this score, ranking higher than Northern Illinois University, was because both schools have created gender-neutral/single occupancy restrooms in both academic and housing settings. **Northern Illinois University has the opportunity to be ranked with these top institutions by including gender-neutral restrooms in academic and housing settings!**