

[Excerpt] “Silent Lives: How High a Price ~ For Personal Reflections and Group Discussions about Sexual Orientation.” Author Sara L. Boesser.
 © Provided with permission of the publisher, Hamilton Books, an imprint of the University Press of America, Inc. All rights reserved.
<http://www.hamilton-books.com/>; www.univpress.com.

Contents

PREFACE	ix
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	xi
INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR	xiii
Part One—The Personal Price of Silence:	1
What are the personal costs for individuals who pass as heterosexual?	
1. Secret Lives: The veil of silence	3
<i>Moments to reflect: questions for personal reflection, journaling, and group discussion.</i>	6
2. What is the price for children who realize they are “different”?	11
<i>Reflections—Guided Meditation: Discovery</i>	20
3. What is passing’s price as individuals continue to grow?	25
<i>Relationships</i>	26
<i>Family</i>	27
<i>Friends /Co-workers</i>	28
<i>Health</i>	29
<i>Employment /Careers /Volunteer Work</i>	31
<i>Religion</i>	33
<i>Questions for Reflection</i>	38
<i>Exercise: Biblical Prohibitions</i>	41
<i>Curriculum Exercise: Exploring Sexual Orientation</i>	43
4. How does it feel? What personal price is paid?	45
5. How would people be different if they didn’t pass?	49
6. How do lesbian, bisexual, and gay people feel about famous/successful people who pass?	51

Part Two—The Fabric of Our Lives: What are the costs to society?	53
7. What are the ripple effects when people pass?	55
<i>Family as a social structure</i>	55
<i>Family as a legal structure for adults and children</i>	66
Marriage	66
Foster parents/Adoption	76
<i>Loss of talent</i>	79
<i>Drug and alcohol abuse</i>	80
<i>Society's loss of integrity</i>	81
<i>Ripple effects—unexpectedly ever-present</i>	82
<i>Reflections</i>	85
<i>Editorial for Reflection (“It’s a Biblical disagreement, not a threat”)</i>	87
8. How do the societal pressures that demand passing hurt everyone?	91
<i>Whom does passing serve?</i>	91
<i>Personal impact over a lifetime: broader scope than expected</i>	92
<i>Gender role restrictions</i>	95
<i>Questions for Reflection</i>	102
<i>Reflections—Guided exercise: Arbitrary Safety Zones</i>	104
<i>Inhibiting protection of children and the healing of adults</i>	107
<i>Perpetuating fear</i>	113
Fear of one another	113
Fear for one another	117
<i>Reflections</i>	123
Conclusion—Silent No More	129
9. The Personal	131
10. The Political	133
11. Beyond Silence	137
<i>Reflections</i>	142
12. Everyone Can Come Out, A-Z: Ideas for straight allies, and for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and intersexual people	147
<i>Ideas for coming out</i>	147

Contact Information:	155
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians & Gays (PFLAG): support for families and friends, and for lesbian, gay, bisexual, intersexual, and transgendered people.	157
Bisexual Resource Center: serving the bisexual community since 1985.	161
Transgender: The International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE).	163
Intersex Society of North America (ISNA).	165
Straight Spouse Network (SSN).	167
ENDNOTES	169
REFERENCES	181
INDEX	187
ABOUT THE AUTHOR	195