

Australian LGBTQIA+ Buddhists

WEBINAR

Australian LGBTQIA+ Buddhists

Dr Stephen Kerry
Sociology Lecturer
Charles Darwin University

Thursday 26 November
10.30am - 11.30am (ACST)
Virtual via Zoom



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Abstract

One could be forgiven for thinking that Buddhism is accepting of LGBTQIA+ people, especially when compared to the homophobic and transphobic attitudes often associated with other religions. However, Buddhism, like all religions, is very complex and diverse. There is no one way of being a Buddhist and indeed many people who follow Buddhist practices neither identify as Buddhist nor see Buddhism as a religion. This is the case for many Australian LGBTQIA+ Buddhists. They are drawn to Buddhism for many different reasons and their experiences within Buddhism are similarly diverse. Often, their Buddhism has nothing or very little to do with their LGBTQIA+ identities or lived experiences. Having said that, for some LGBTQIA+ Australians their practice of Buddhism and their involvement in Buddhist communities is disrupted by negative attitudes and discrimination because of their LGBTQIA+ identities and lived experiences. More than half of Australian LGBTQIA+ Buddhists are reluctant to reveal their LGBTQIA+ identities to their Buddhist communities. More than half have witnessed sexism within their Buddhist communities, and one third have witnessed homophobia. And 16% have been told that their LGBTQIA+ identity is not in keeping with the Buddha's teachings.

About Dr Stephen Kerry

Dr Kerry is a lecturer in sociology and they identify as genderqueer, non-binary and use the pronouns they/them/their. Their areas of research speciality are sex, gender, and sexuality, especially the lived experiences of intersex, transgender, and sex/gender diverse people. Dr Kerry's research also explores the intersection of sex, gender, and sexuality with health and wellbeing as well as religion. They are a Zen Buddhist and, in 2019, Dr Kerry underwent their Jukai ceremony and was assigned the Dharma name Cool Monkey. They live in Darwin with two cats.

When Thursday, 26 November 2020 @ 10.30am – 11.30am

Where Online via Zoom

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