



## ROBERT MOON

by Kathy Bieschke  
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Robert Moon, a young assistant professor, is teaching a group counseling course this semester. Typically, both graduate and undergraduate students take this course. The day before the first day of classes, one of the enrolled students drops by Robert's office for a private conference. The student begins the conversation by noting the LGBT Support Network sticker on Robert's office door. The student then says, "I have an odd request for you that is difficult for me to talk about. Although I'm listed on your class roll as 'Josephine Briggs,' I'd really like you to call me 'Jay,' or, if you address students by last name, 'Mr. Briggs.' In other words, I'd like you to think of me as a he, not a she, and I'd appreciate it if you'd use male pronouns for me in class when you're referring to me indirectly." The student goes on to say that he has long felt that he has a male gender identity and that he would like to "try out" being a man in a situation where others have not known him as "Josephine." Jay has been subtly transitioning over the past year, with dress and pronouns. He shares with Robert the opposition he is encountering from his parents and other significant people in his life as he experiments with his gender. Despite this opposition, he thinks that trying to "pass" might provide him with invaluable information. Robert knows little about transgender issues; however, he is inclined to be affirmative of the student because of his knowledge and affirmation of LGB-identified people.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT MOON CASE

1. What could Robert do to handle this situation?
2. Should Robert honor Jay's wishes?
3. What would happen if Robert refused to honor Jay's wishes? How might Jay feel about this?