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# Conversion Therapy in Contemporary Times: Grassroots Efforts to End Conversion Therapy in Oklahoma, USA

**Sage A. Mauldin**

University of Oklahoma

## **Abstract**

Conversion therapy is not a bygone practice; it is undergone in 100 countries, including the United States. In this paper, I provide an overview of conversion therapy by explaining what it is, how it is practiced on sexual and gender minority adults and youth, its harmful effects, and who have condemned it. Additionally, I discuss where conversion therapy originated and how it has evolved. I also explore the current legal landscape of conversion therapy in the United States and around the world. In order to contextualize the legal landscape of conversion therapy in the United States, I provide, as a case example, a summary of my grassroots activism to prohibit therapists from practicing conversion therapy in Oklahoma, a state in the south-central region of the United States. The present paper raises many important questions and insights. As an international community of scholar-activists, how are we writing with and talking to each other about conversion therapy? How are we recognizing that conversion therapy thrives in the shadows even as moves to ban it gather pace globally? What are we doing with this recognition? How can we collectively advocate to end conversion therapy?

**Keywords:** abuse, activism, LGBT youth, mental health, safety