

Gay and Lesbian Issues and Psychology Review

Editor
Damien W. Riggs

The Australian
Psychological
Society Ltd.



ISSN 1833-4512

Editor

Damien W. Riggs, *The University of Adelaide*

Editorial Board

Graeme Kane, *Private Practice*
Jim Malcom, *The University of Western Sydney*
Liz Short, *Victoria University*
Jane Edwards, *Spencer Gulf Rural Health School*
Murray Drummond, *The University of South Australia*
Gordon Walker, *Monash University*
Jo Harrison, *The University of South Australia*
Kirsten McLean, *Monash University*
Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli, *Deakin University*
Suzanne McLaren, *University of Ballarat*
Christopher Fox, *La Trobe University*
Vivienne Cass, *Private Practice*

International Advisory Committee

Esther Rothblum, *San Diego State University, US*
Jerry J. Bigner, *Colorado State University, US*
Meg Barker, *The Open University, UK*
Darren Langdridge, *The Open University, UK*
Todd Morrison, *University of Saskatchewan, Canada*
Elizabeth Peel, *Aston University, UK*
Sonja J. Ellis, *Sheffield Hallam University, UK*
Victoria Clarke, *University of the West of England, UK*
Peter Hegarty, *University of Surrey, UK*
Gareth Treharne, *University of Otago, NZ*
Fiona Tasker, *University of London, UK*
Jeffery Adams, *Massey University, NZ*

Aims and scope

The Gay and Lesbian Issues and Psychology Review ('the Review') is a peer-reviewed publication that is available online through the Australian Psychological Society. Its remit is to encourage research that challenges the stereotypes and assumptions of pathology that have often inhered to research on lesbians, gay men, bisexual, trans and queer (LGBTQ) people. The aim of the Review is thus to facilitate discussion over the direction of LGBTQ psychology both within Australia and abroad, and to provide a forum within which academics, practitioners and lay people may publish.

The Review is open to a broad range of material, and especially welcomes research, commentary and reviews that critically evaluate the status quo in regards to LGBTQ issues. The Review also seeks papers that redress the imbalance that has thus far focused on the issues facing white lesbians and gay men, to the exclusion of other sexual, gender and racial groups. The Review encourages the elaboration of an expansive approach to psychological research on people of a diverse range of sexual and non-gender normative groups, and publishes articles from across a range of disciplines including (but not limited to) psychology, social work, cultural studies, sociology, gender studies, politics, history and legal studies.

All submissions or enquires should be directed in the first instance to the Editor. Guidelines for submissions or for advertising within the Review are provided on the final page of each issue.

Copyright

It is the policy of the Australian Psychological Society to own the copyright to its publications, and the contributions contained therein, in order to protect the interests of the Society and its authors, and at the same time to facilitate the appropriate reuse of this material by others.

Therefore, upon acceptance of their manuscripts by the Society, authors will be sent a copyright transfer form to fill out and return to the Editor. Publication of the manuscript will be contingent upon receipt of the completed copyright transfer form.

Publications of the Society are distributed to various other publications for review and abstracting purposes. In addition, the Society has contractual agreements with various secondary publishers for the reproduction, in hard copy, microfilm or digital forms, of individual articles and journal issues as a whole.

It is the Society's position that abstracts that are published with its journal articles are indicative of and not a substitute for the work as a whole; therefore, access services are allowed free use of these abstracts without securing the permission of the Society.

Enquiries about policy and procedures relating to permission to reproduce material published in the journal should be directed to the Australian Psychological Society.

Disclaimer

Work published within the Review does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Australian Psychological Society. Whilst the APS supports the work of the Gay and Lesbian Issues and Psychology Interest Group, it also adheres to its own standards for practice and research that may at times conflict with those of the Review.

Indexing

http://www.groups.psychology.org.au/glip/glip_review/

The Review is listed on Ulrich's Periodicals Directory: <http://www.ulrichsweb.com/>

The Review is indexed by:

EBSCO (LGBT Life database)

Directory of Open Access Journals

International Information Centre and Archives for the Women's Movement

Pandora Archive NLA

ProQuest (Genderwatch database)

The Review is eligible for DEST points and is recognised on the Australian ERA journal rankings as a level C journal.

Gay and Lesbian Issues and Psychology Review

Volume 8 Number 1

Contents

Editorial 1
Damien W. Riggs

Articles

3
Gender, pain and male athletes: A qualitative analysis
Shaun M. Filiault Murray J.N. Drummond & Deborah Agnew

15
An analysis of postings on two prostate cancer discussion boards
Christopher Thomas

22
Queer refugeeities and the problematics of homo/homelands
Anne Harris

34
Homophobia to heterosexism: Constructs in need of re-visitation
Ian Patrick Smith, Lindsay Oades & Grace McCarthy

45
Heterosexuality as captivity: When desire is imprisoned
Aline da Silva Piason, Yáskara Arrial Palma, Bruna Krimberg von Mühlen & Marlene Neves Strey

52
Australian psychology undergraduate students' attitudes towards trans people
Damien W. Riggs, Karen Webber & Gregory R. Fell

Book Reviews

63
Gay, straight, and the reason why: The science of sexual orientation
Farid Pazhoohi

66
Queer company: The role and meaning of friendship in gay men's work lives
Noel Hyland



EDITORIAL

DAMIEN W. RIGGS

Readers of the journal will be pleased to note that the Australian Psychological Society (APS), in conjunction with the Gay and Lesbian Issues and Psychology Interest Group, has officially endorsed the American Psychological Association's (APA) resolution on marriage equality. This is an important step on behalf of the APS, and demonstrates its commitment to social justice and equity for all Australians, regardless of their sexual orientation.

In addition to endorsing the APA's resolution, the APS has also provided an overview of the key psychological arguments related to marriage equality. In brief, this overview highlights research findings which suggest that:

1. Couples who are married experience lower levels of depression than couples who are not married, due to increased relationship stability,
2. Social exclusion can have considerable negative mental health impacts, and
3. Exclusion from marriage can have specific mental health impacts on non-heterosexual people.

Together, these findings indicate the need for marriage reform in Australia. Such reform has been recently introduced by a Bill to parliament. We can only hope that the commitment the APA has shown to marriage equality will help weigh in on the outcome of this Bill.

Papers in this issue further highlight the deleterious effects of social exclusion, thus providing further evidence for why recognition of non-heterosexual and/or non-gender normative people is vital for ensuring the psychological well-being of these populations. A key example of this is provided by da Silva Piason,

Palma, von Mühlen and Neves Strey, whose research published in this issue indicates how lesbian women are 'held in captivity' by heteronormativity and heterosexism. Importantly, however, they suggest that some women find ways of breaking free of these bonds, and celebrate their lives despite constraining social contexts.

Elsewhere in the issue, Harris importantly troubles the ways in which claims to equality must take into account the multiple claims to belonging and identity made by non-heterosexual and/or non-gender normative people. Harris argues for a focus on the racialised and classed aspects of sexuality that are often left unspoken in debates over social inclusion.

Interestingly, Filiault, Drummond and Agnew's paper on athletes and pain suggests similarities between gay and heterosexual professional athletes. Their findings thus connect neatly with the paper by Harris, in that whilst gay athletes may well experience homophobia, they nonetheless do so as men. In other words, gender norms play as an important role in gay communities as they do in heterosexual communities. Of course this does not legitimize homophobia, but it does highlight the importance of examining the intersections of a range of identities in research on non-heterosexual and/or non-gender normative people.

Contrary to the work of Filiault, Drummond and Agnew, the paper in this issue by Thomas suggests differences between the ways in which gay and heterosexual men talk about prostate cancer. These differences, Thomas suggests, highlight the need for differential

engagement with gay and heterosexual men by service providers.

Also in this issue, Smith, Oades and McCartney explore the utility of the concepts of homophobia and heterosexism in research on non-heterosexual people. They argue that the latter term is more politically productive, and that researchers must carefully consider their use of terminology and its potential to close down particular avenues of research.

The issue closes on something of a positive note. Presenting findings from research conducted with psychology undergraduates, Riggs, Webber and Fell report generally positive attitudes towards trans people amongst their sample. More specifically, they found that women were more positive than men, and they note interesting differences on a number of factors in terms of the context-specificity of transphobia in Australia in comparison to research previously conducted in Canada and Hong Kong.

To return to the announcement regarding the APS endorsement of marriage equality, it is important to remember that change always happens both inside and outside institutions. As this issue of the journal indicates, the work of individual people in challenging discrimination is always important, but this must be supported by broader institutional change in order to ensure the longevity and sustainability of individual change.



GENDER, PAIN & MALE ATHLETES: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

SHAUN M. FILIAULT, MURRAY J.N, DRUMMOND & DEBORAH AGNEW

Abstract

Pain and injury is a common experience for many athletes. Although a number of factors may encourage an athlete to decide to play through pain, masculinity—and, in particular, 'orthodox' enactments of masculinity—has been identified as one potentially salient factor. In this qualitative, phenomenological study, 43 elite-level gay and heterosexual male athletes from Australia, Canada and the United States were interviewed regarding their perceptions of masculinity, pain and the body. Interview transcripts were thematically analysed, yielding three themes related to the experience of pain. Notably, both the gay and heterosexual athletes described the experience of pain in sport in a similar fashion, by making reference to cultural expectations of masculinity. These similar constructions of pain indicate that orthodox masculinity, rather than sexuality, may be the most salient feature for these men's experiences of sport, and that gay athletes may be complicit in the perpetuation of damaging constructions of orthodox masculinity.

Keywords: pain, athletes, masculinity, sexuality, homosexuality

Introduction

Despite the discomfort incumbent in so doing, many athletes continue sporting participation despite their experience of pain. There are many factors that influence a male athlete's decision to play in pain or with an injury (e.g. Fenton & Pitter, 2010; Gard & Meyenn, 2000; Roddick, Waddington & Parker, 2000; Masculinity may be one such component. In this analysis of male athletes' perceptions of pain, we explore the concept of masculinity and its relationship to the manner in which both gay

and heterosexual male athletes describe their experiences of pain within their respective sports.

Masculinities, Sport and Pain

It has been argued that sport serves as a means to reinforce and perpetuate orthodox constructions of masculinity (Adams, et al 2010; Messner, 1995, 2007; Pronger 1990). Indeed, male athletes are often considered the exemplars of hegemonic masculinity and are expected to embody and uphold traits related to orthodox masculinity such as physical toughness and stoicism (Anderson, 2005a; Whannel, 2002). Sport accomplishes these aims by teaching participants to privilege feelings of toughness, strength and self-sacrifice by pursuing a goal at all costs (Anderson, 2009 a,b; Messner, 1995). Similarly, sport provides the opportunity to demonstrate toughness and aggression, as the sporting arena is often transformed into a battleground in which men can exhibit aggressiveness within a controlled setting (Paechter, 2003; Grange & Kerr, 2010). Participation in contact sports reinforces this aggressiveness and leads to it becoming a socially accepted norm in which physical dominance is valued, and by which masculine identities are achieved (Connell 2005).

Given this emphasis on aggression, strength and self-sacrifice, injuries are often sustained while participating in sport, and are normalised in the sporting arena as being reflective of a man's masculinity (Connell 2005). The experience of physical discomfort, or pain, often accompanies injuries. Accordingly, sporting-related pain is glorified through the media, which celebrates heroic behaviour, thus contributing to its acceptance in society (Welland, 2002; Timpka et al., 2008). Given this glorifi-

cation, male athletes are pressured to accept injuries as a normal career expectation (Roderick, Waddington & Parker, 2000; Young et al., 1994; Young & White 1999), despite the long-term harm those injuries may cause (Curry, 1993).

Orthodox Masculinity and Gay Men

Despite heterosexuality and homophobia being defining characteristics of orthodox masculinity (Adams, Anderson & McCormack, 2010; Kimmel, 1994), gay men may also benefit from acting in accord with that model of masculine behaviour. Indeed, Connell (2005) notes that, despite hegemonic masculinity serving to stratify men, all men benefit from the patriarchal construction of contemporary Westernised masculinity. Thus, gay men may enact a construction of masculinity that has been coined 'a very gay straight' (Connell, 1992, 2005), which refers to an attempt to emulate the dictates of heteromascularity despite gay men's *a priori* exclusion from full hegemonic status. Bergling (2001) has called this gay emulation of orthodox masculinity 'sissyphobia', describing it as a flight from being perceived as feminine, therefore mitigating the effects of a gay identity in the eyes of other men.

Gay male athletes may be particularly complicit in the perpetuation of 'sissyphobia' and the emulation of heteromascularity. In a study of openly gay American athletes, Anderson (2005a) found many participants attempted to behave in accordance with orthodox masculinity to raise their 'masculine capital' in the eyes of other men. Other studies of gay athletes (e.g. Bridel & Rail 2007; Filiault & Drummond 2008) have likewise found gay men to reference orthodox constructions of masculinity when describing their experiences of sport, sexuality, and gender.

Although many gay athletes may enact orthodox masculinity, it is noted that such behaviour may not be universal among gay men. In a landmark investigation of gay athletes, Pronger (1990) suggested gay athletes may

have a particularly 'ironic' vantage point on heteromascularity within sport. Because of their exclusion from hegemonic masculinity, Pronger suggests gay athletes may be in the advantageous position of being able to understand the performative nature of gender enactment, including heteromascularity. Because of this understanding, gay athletes might be able to 'play along' with their heterosexual teammates' performances of heteromascularity while simultaneously acknowledging that masculinity is a charade. Drummond (2005) has also noted that gay men may reflect more on gender than heterosexual men, suggesting that the gay men in his study 'recognized that there was not simply one form of masculinity in contemporary Western culture. Rather, there were ranges and variations of masculinity' (p. 276). This recognition of the construction of masculinity contrasts with the responses of the heterosexual men Drummond interviewed, who tended to be less articulate and reflective when discussing issues related to gender. Because of their unique recognition of the performativity of gender, Anderson (2005a) hypothesises that gay athletes may be at the forefront of cultural reconstructions of masculinity.

Given the above trends, how contemporary male athletes regard pain is questionable. In particular, the manner in which gay athletes perceive pain has yet to be studied. While gay athletes may subscribe to orthodox visions of masculinity and pain, it is possible that, due to their exclusion from hegemonic masculinity, gay athletes' perceptions of the relationship between masculinity and pain may be different than that of their heterosexual peers. The present qualitative study seeks to understand both heterosexual and gay athletes' perceptions of pain, given the context of contemporary, masculinised sport.

Method

This study presents the combined results of two separate studies of athletes. The first considered perceptions of pain among elite players of Australian football (of the Australian

Football League, or AFL¹) (Agnew, 2007). The second investigated body image among elite-level gay athletes from the United States, Canada and Australia (Filiault 2009; Filiault & Drummond 2008, 2009a, 2010). Both studies used qualitative methods and are comparable due to similarities in procedures used in both projects. Although other publications have emanated from these studies, the data presented in this manuscript has not been analysed elsewhere. Both studies were approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the authors' home institutions. All participants provided informed written consent prior to participation.

Participants

The study of AFL players included 23 men who participated in the senior state level in their sport. The men ranged in age from 18 to 33, and all self-identified as heterosexual; however, heterosexual identity was not an inclusion criteria for the study. Participants were recruited from one South Australian football club with whom the researcher had previously worked as a trainer. The interviewer for the AFL study was a heterosexual female; however, her sexuality and gender were not discussed during the interviews.

The study of gay athletes included 17 openly gay men; during the interviews the men were asked to describe their sexual identity, with 16 men identifying as 'gay' and one man identifying as 'queer', but exclusively attracted to the same sex. Seven participants were from Australia, eight participants were from the United States and two were from Canada. The men ranged in age from 20 to 54, with most participants in their late 20s and early 30s. All participated in at least the state level of their sport, with most participating in their sport at an international level. For more information

about these participants, consult Filiault (2009). Participants were recruited through online advertisements, from gay sporting organisations, and through the personal and professional contacts of the author. The interviewer for this study was a gay identified man; his identity was acknowledged to participants before the interview (Filiault & Drummond, 2008; 2009b, provide more information about the first author and the negotiation of a gay identity when interviewing gay athletes.

All of the participants in both studies identified as being white; it is acknowledged that this limitation reflects the historical silence on issues affecting non-white GLBTQ persons, and future studies should work to rectify this bias.

Procedures

For the study of AFL players, discussions were conducted in two focus groups—one of seven participants and one of five—during which the topics of sport, pain, the use of painkillers in sport, masculinity and media constructions of masculinities were explored. The findings from these discussions were then used to refine the semi-structured interview guide employed in individual interviews, of which 11 were conducted. Both the focus group discussions and individual interviews lasted between 45 and 60 minutes.

A pilot study of individual interviews with three openly gay tennis players was used to refine themes for the study about gay athletes (Filiault & Drummond 2008). Those themes underpinned semi-structured interviews with 17 elite-level gay athletes (separate from those in the pilot study). These interviews explored topics related to sport, masculinity, body image and sexuality. Two weeks after the interview, the athletes completed a brief online questionnaire with questions similar to those in the interview; this procedure enhanced reliability and allowed for data triangulation. Those interviews and questionnaires form the basis of the data analysed in the present study. The interviews in both studies

1 For a history and comparison of football codes, including AFL, consult Markovitz & Rensmann (2010), especially chapters 1-3.

were digitally audio-recorded. They were then transcribed verbatim by the researchers.

Analysis

The transcripts from both studies were analysed inductively, via thematic analysis (Patton, 2002). Inductive analyses are a 'bottom-up' mode of data interpretation, by which themes are allowed to 'naturally' emerge from the data rather than being decided prior to reading. Each of the authors analysed the data and discussed their analyses with one another. This process of member-checking enhances the rigour of the analysis by ensuring reliability (Patton, 2002). Interview transcripts were read independently by all three authors, who each highlighted passages believed to be of relevance to the participants' experiences of pain and injury. These passages were then cut and pasted into a new word-processing document that, in turn, was read independently by each author. From this focused document, each author developed a list of salient themes, with specific interview passages noted as evidence of those themes. Each author presented his or her themes and relevant interview sections. These individual themes were discussed, and similarities between each author's analysis were noted, until agreement was reached regarding higher level themes, and interview passages emblematic of each of those themes. Ultimately, three themes were noted by each author as being of importance within the transcripts. These themes are discussed in-depth in the section below.

Results

Three themes were evident in the analysis of the transcripts: the willingness and desire of athletes' to play through pain; the need to perform well for the team; and when injury is sufficiently severe to cease participation. Discussion of these themes related strongly to the athletes' perception of masculinity, and were expressed in identical terms by both the gay and heterosexual athletes in this study. These themes, and representative interview

passages from both cohorts of participants, are presented below.

Playing in Pain

The notion of playing in pain was commonplace amongst participants. While the degree of pain varied, most men admitted to experiencing some degree of pain throughout the entire season. The athletes accepted pain as a normal career expectation. For example, one of the gay athletes said:

Everybody is walking around at some point in the season with something broken in their hands or arm. It's not unusual to see people walking around in casts or splints, or ... something, somebody is in traction because they broke their back in multiple places, or, what-not, you know? I don't know anybody who hasn't had a major injury in their career.

This sentiment was reiterated by a heterosexual footballer:

You could almost say every time you play you would have pain, but you know in terms of so much pain that would cause you discomfort to stop is a different story ... in terms of, you know, a serious amount of pain where something is actually, physically wrong, I would play probably once every two or three games with something mildly wrong.

Justifications for trying to push through the pain were widespread. Pure enjoyment of the game, and being able to achieve results they thought would not have been possible, were among the more common. A gay snowboarder who competed with a serious injury stated:

I was competing with a broken back I had broken my back in two places in training two days prior. I just remember finishing, not being able to walk, I couldn't stand, I couldn't sit, I couldn't sleep, like a rock ... that [race] felt good because I knew I shouldn't even be able to walk at that point, and here I was keeping up with people who normally are creaming the rest of us out there ... and I just went to the doctor and he said 'you're not going to do any more harm, just go ahead', so.

Successfully 'pushing through the pain barrier' was argued to be part of the fun and enjoyment of the game: simply wanting to be involved in the game provided significant motivation for some participants to continue playing while injured. As a heterosexual footballer argued:

The game is fun, people enjoy playing it and they want to play it and if you're injured you still want to play because it's fun and pain's just part of the game, people accept that.

Given that athletic careers have a limited time frame, being able to push through the pain was linked to furthering one's career. The limited nature of an athletic career is a significant motivating factor to continue playing even when injured. The discipline required to be successful at the elite level was discussed by a gay telemark skier:

Well, because I think when you train so hard, and get to a level of competition that you're actually going to potentially be successful at, but it is only there for a certain amount of time, whether it is skiing or swimming or whatever. So, you need to hold on to that little bit of moment, and push it as best you can.

To not 'push through the pain' when injured was perceived as quitting and, therefore, unacceptable. Motivated by champion cyclist Lance Armstrong, one heterosexual participant stated:

I suppose something Lance Armstrong said, pain is temporary but quitting is forever so I dunno if you can push through it, you can never remember pain ... and so if you quit while you're in pain my feeling is that when you look back on it you, don't remember the pain so you feel as if you've given up.

Taking it for the Team

The elite male athletes involved in this research also articulated their perceptions of pain through the notion of 'taking it for the team'. This 'noble' act has historical roots in literature associated with war and military. Being courageous and heroic were seen as

highly masculinised notions that are, as the men suggested, linked to the concept of respect. This orthodox form of masculinity was played out in number of ways by the men. A gay cyclist stated:

We just did a 24 hour race in June, and I got tendonitis right off the bat. And because it's a team that's on course for 24 hours, I was hurt, and the guys were impressed with that. I hung in because we had made a decision we were 'gonna' keep going. Nothing barring catastrophic injury was going to keep us off the course or disrupt us ... So they were thrilled that, like, I rode through pain. Because I rode through injury, like repetitive stress injury type pain.

Being a 'team player' was integral to the men's notion of playing in pain; in this case, his team members were "thrilled" that he rode through injury, a clear indication of the rewards incumbent upon sacrificing individual well-being for a team effort. The men regularly discussed the 'physical battering' to which their bodies had been subjected and played down this act of sacrifice as being expected of their role on a team. This vision of self-sacrifice for the good of the team was underpinned by physical acts of masculinity. A gay rugby player provides a representation of this notion by claiming that, despite being injured, he continued to play because:

We didn't really have anyone to cover for me. I felt pressure to play, and I felt like I was disappointing the coach and the captain by not playing.

Similarly, a heterosexual AFL player provides a representation of this notion:

After half time I went back out and I knew that there was something really wrong with my back. But I played out the rest of the game anyway because when I got warm it didn't hurt. As it turned out I had compression on the top of my spine ... It was coming along slowly, then I took a week off and then went back and played again and I lasted 15 minutes I went into scrum and didn't have my head in the right spot and I put my head into another

guy's shoulder and I just heard my neck, crack, crack, crack, crack, crack, like an accordion. My physio told me she didn't want me to play because it wasn't going to get better [if I did] and it was just going to get worse. But I did anyway because we needed to win the last few games to get through to the final and I had to help the team. We didn't even end up doing that.

Being courageous was clearly perceived as 'taking it for the team' by helping to advance the team effort, even if doing "anyway" meant worsening existing injuries. Therefore, the possibility of acquiring pain through injury was something that these men believed they could expect as a part of their normative masculinity within the sporting domain. Several of the men playing sports with high levels of physical contact talked about their 'acts' of courage. One heterosexual footballer claimed:

If I do something that's not as courageous and someone gets stuck into me I think 'oh well' and then you're in that situation again and you start doubting yourself so it's a sort of cycle like that. But there are times you're 'oh well I'm always proud of my efforts on the ground' but there's times in particular where you think 'oh I was really happy with what I did there' like you might take a heavy knock and you jump straight up and you just keep going. Then you look back on it and think 'oh I could have easily gone off if I wanted to but I chose not to' and that was worthwhile doing it.

Noteworthy here is that performing some of the acts in 'taking it for the team' have additional 'spin offs' perceived as positive in terms of individual masculine identity. As one man claimed, and which was a claim typical of many others in the study, 'doing courageous acts' had the capacity to shape the perception of one's manhood, in their own eyes and in others'.

I definitely think that it can shape your manhood you know if you're seen as the strong one or the one that's always got their head over the ball or doing courageous acts in a game. I guess then people would be looked upon as being manly.

This sense of intrinsic value attached to culturally recognised and condoned courageous acts in elite-level sports is important for an understanding of the need to engage in them. These men, it can be said, have a significant degree of investment in their sport as a means for constructing their masculine identities: when opportunities arise to either enhance or diminish their investment, they are taken seriously and 'acted' on. Being recognised by teammates, peers on opposing teams as well as fans, viewers and commentators, adds to the level of scrutiny under which these men are placed.

The participant's use of "I guess" in the final sentence suggests the continual evaluation of these men's masculinity. Masculinity must be continually displayed and reinforced (Anderson, 2009a; Kimmel, 1994); to that end, any display of masculinity is only a fleeting reinforcement. Hence, the athlete must qualify that any display of masculinity is itself qualified and temporal, given that as masculine identity has the capacity to be maintained, enhanced, or eroded, on a regular basis. It is arguable that such erosion of masculinity can occur more swiftly than its development, in the event of culturally perceived feminised 'act'. As Drummond (1996) has argued, in sport, anything that is not seen as masculine is seen, by definition, as feminine. Therefore, if a male athlete is not prepared to place his body 'on the line' for the team then he must be less than a man. As one heterosexual footballer claims:

I don't want to look soft [laughs], yeah something like that. Oh you don't want the coaches to think you're soft and that sort of thing and that kind of viewpoint comes as much from the coaches as it does from the players so yeah I think it's probably the expectations of the people around you.

Several men alluded to the notion of being 'soft', which is a derogatory term, particularly in AFL. To be labelled as 'soft' implies something less than a man and indeed, a female (Bordo, 1999). This notion of soft as being

undesirable is underscored by the participant's laughter after stating that he doesn't want to be viewed as soft. The laughter either denotes a soft man as being a joke, or that not wanting to be soft as so self-evident as being humorous. In either case, the interpretation is clear: Ultimately, in an aggressive and physical team sport such as AFL, 'soft' also means not being a 'team man', given that one is not prepared to 'take a hit for the good of the team'. As one heterosexual man stated:

I suppose I don't want people to think of me as you know a bit soft. I want people to think of me as someone they'd go to war with and all that sort of jazz so definitely, it's a motivating factor.

Time to Stop

While many of the men indicated that they would continue to engage in sport, despite pain or injury, some participants did indicate that there was a point at which an injury would force them to stop. Often, this stopping point was a 'catastrophic injury', in the words of an ultra-distance cyclist. The athletes described incidences of such debilitating accidents. For example, a gay volleyball player described a time when an injury prevented him from playing in a match:

I dislocated this pinky ... the bone came through the skin, so it was like bloody everywhere so I had to stop.

Despite this, the athlete indicated that his first concern was not for his hand. Even faced with a serious injury, in this case a compound fracture, he still wanted to return to play quickly because:

I was one of the better players. It was just like a moment in time where there was just one chance to do it [win the state championship], and it'd be gone if I didn't.

Other athletes echoed similar sentiments. A gay rugby player recalled a time when he was forced to leave a match:

Last year I twisted my ankle ... I actually went down screaming like a girl ... I [left the game], because I couldn't really run on my ankle.

Still, despite this serious injury, the player wanted to return to the field:

I felt pressure to play, and I felt like I was disappointing the coach and the captain by not playing.

While serious injury may prompt an athlete to leave a match, the injury must be considered significantly debilitating. Following an earlier theme, these athletes indicated that if the injury is not 'catastrophic', the player should continue because to do so is required by enactments of idealised masculinity. Even when confronted with complex injuries such as the ones previously described, these men still interpreted their pain through the lens of masculinity. The salience of masculinity is evidenced by the rugby player describing his cry of pain as that of a 'girl'. Presumably, even when confronted with devastating pain and injury, a 'real' man would not cry out. To give in to pain is to fail in masculinity.

Additionally, ceasing play due to serious injury is viewed as letting the team down. The immediate concerns expressed by these men were not for themselves and their own wellbeing but for the success of the team. As elucidated earlier, for these athletes, an ideal man should not be concerned about himself but, rather, about the success of the group. Catastrophic injury does not alter that logic of putting others before self.

Discussion

The gay and heterosexual athletes in this study described pain in a similar fashion. The interview selections presented above reflect comparable attitudes toward the role of pain in sport, regardless of the sexuality of the informant. In particular, the participants highlighted the role of masculinity in framing their perceptions of pain, and decisions to participate in sport despite experiences of pain.

Thus, it is evident that sexuality is unrelated to perceptions of pain for male athletes; rather, masculinity remains the paramount concern for both gay and heterosexual participants.

These findings reflect prior research with gay athletes that has demonstrated comparability between gay and heterosexual athletes' constructions of masculinity, and considerable investment in constructions of an orthodox masculine identity (Anderson, 2005a,b; Filiault & Drummond 2008, 2009a, 2010). These results are demonstrative of both Connell's (1992, 2005) concept of 'a very straight gay' and Anderson's (2005a) notion of masculine capital. By playing through pain, both gay and heterosexual athletes are able to exemplify their masculine credentials and improve their standing in the eyes of other men. Sexuality does not alter this basic logic, indicating gay athletes are complicit in the perpetuation of such a model of manhood, as has previously been suggested by Anderson (2005a), Connell (1992), and Bergling (2001). Indeed, the ironic and playful sense of gender described by Pronger (1990) and Drummond (2005) was not evident in the words of the gay participants. In that sense, the gay athletes' constructions of gender are more similar to those of heterosexual men than they are to gay men who do not participate in sport. This similarity was irrespective of sport of participation, indicating that it is the institution of competitive sport itself that leads men to embrace orthodox masculinity rather than the particular demands of any specific type athletic endeavour.

This perpetuation of heteromascularity amongst athletes is hypothesised to be a result of sport being a 'closed system'. That is, as a tiered system of increasing exclusivity, sport effectively 'weeds out' individuals who fail to conform to team norms and the desire of coaches and other key stakeholders. As described earlier, orthodox constructions of masculinity are dominant in sporting institutions. Key stakeholders and important gatekeepers in these organisations are likely to espouse beliefs about masculinity and sport

that are reflective of orthodox masculinity, and are likely to favour those athletes who share similar beliefs (e.g. Adams, et al 2010). Ultimately, only those men who exhibit orthodox masculinity will continue sporting participation; all others will either be cut from participation by the gatekeepers, or will voluntarily withdraw (Hekma, 1998; Anderson, 2009b). As this study only included elite (state level or higher) athletes, it is likely that these men – regardless of sexuality – were both heavily invested in, and quite successful at, pleasing key stakeholders within their respective sporting organisations, and were thus allowed to continue to play at this high level of competition. It is likely that a component of such a successful demonstration of a commitment to masculinity included accepting pain. It is possible that other athletes, both gay and heterosexual, who were unwilling to play in pain had been cut at levels prior to the echelon of sport investigated in this study.

Thus, gay athletes are not insulated from, nor immune to, the cultural influences of masculinity, regardless of their sexuality. The gay athletes in this study are just as complicit as their heterosexual counterparts in the continuation of a highly restrictive and damaging (e.g. Courtenay 2000) enactment of gender. Some authors, such as Anderson (2009a) assert that masculinity may be undergoing a revolution, and becoming less harsh as it becomes more inclusive and "queer". Athletes, and gay athletes, are suggested to be at the forefront of this change. Yet, results such as those presented in this study call into question the queering of masculinity, and the ubiquity of inclusive masculinity. Instead, they represent a reflection of Bersani's (2009) sentiment that gay men can be equally culpable as their heterosexual peers in perpetuating a (self-) destructive model of masculinity, such as incumbent in contemporary competitive sport. Regardless of the logic underlying the decision to play through pain, ultimately these men suggest they will destroy their own bodies so as to achieve an outcome socially constructed as desirable – winning. Thus, the body's limits become an obstacle to be overcome, rather

than indicators of when participation has become unhealthy.

Indeed, the mechanistic view of the body that many athletes take can lead to either serious body harm, or to feelings of disempowerment (White, Young & McTeer, 1995). This held true for the men in the present study, who expressed a desire to return to play despite sustaining a serious injury during a game. Often the men's first concern was not the injury itself but when they could return to the field. This complements research by Messner (1992), insofar as the perception of the body as a machine often results in violence against themselves by participating with an injury. This view appears to lead to objectification of the self, through which the individual can become 'detached' from their body in order to endure considerable damage, which may negatively influence their long-term wellbeing. From this, it may be deduced that to be connected with the body, and to feel pain or a concern for wellbeing, would result in the athlete being rendered feminine. The work of the sport psychologist may then be to assist an injured male athlete in embracing a vision of masculinity that does not require the foreclosure of lifetime health, in the belief that to do so validates them as a 'man'.

Although these findings represent considerable diversity concerning age, nationality, sexuality and sport, future research may wish to consider other groups of men. For example, all of the athletes interviewed in this study were white. It is therefore uncertain how competitive male athletes of non-white ethnicities may consider pain in sport, given that racial identification may also influence the enactment of masculine identities (e.g. Staples, 2004). Additionally, while both openly heterosexual and gay men were interviewed, the experiences of bisexual men are not reflected in this study, which is representative of the overall cultural silence of issues related to bisexuality. Furthermore, women's experiences of pain and sport should be considered in future studies.

It is conceded that there are demographic differences between the gay and heterosexual athletes limiting the comparability of the two groups. In particular, the study of gay men included men from several nations, numerous sports, and of a broader age range than that of the AFL players. However, it is remarkable to consider that, in spite of this diversity, two separate groups expressed similar beliefs and experiences regarding pain, further highlighting the role of Westernised masculinity in framing interpretations of pain in sport.

Despite its demographic limitations, this study indicates the salience of perceptions of orthodox masculinity when considering elite male athletes' perceptions of pain, and reveals its considerable risks for elite male athletes coping with pain; one that poses a challenge both to those interested in these men's long-term wellbeing, and those responsible for shaping men's experiences and participation in competitive sport.

Author Notes

Dr. Shaun M. Filiault is a lecturer in health education/health promotion in the School of Education at Flinders University. His primary interests include men's health, sexuality, body image, and the socio-cultural aspects of sport and exercise.

Prof. Murray. J.N. Drummond is a professor of health and physical education in the School of Education at Flinders University. He is director of the Sport, Health, and Physical Education (SHAPE) research group at Flinders, and has written extensively about men's health, sexuality, and the sociology of sport.

Deborah Agnew is a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at Flinders University. Her thesis investigates the life experiences of retired AFL players.

References

Adams, A., Anderson, E. & McCormack, M. (2010). Establishing and challenging mascu-

- linity: The influence of gendered discourses in organized sport. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 29, 278–300.
- Agnew, D. (2007). "Unless you have a broken bone or you are unconscious, you get up." *Sport, pain and the social construction of masculinity*. Unpublished honours thesis. Adelaide, University of South Australia.
- Anderson, E. (2005a). *In the game: Gay athletes and the cult of masculinity*. New York: State University of New York.
- Anderson, E. (2005b). Orthodox and inclusive masculinity: Competing masculinities among heterosexual men in a feminised terrain. *Sociological Perspectives*, 48, 337–355.
- Anderson, E. (2008a). Being masculine is not about who you sleep with: Heterosexual athletes contesting masculinity and the one-time rule of homosexuality. *Sex Roles*, 58, 104–115.
- Anderson, E. (2008b). Inclusive masculinity in a fraternal setting. *Men and Masculinities*, 10, 604–620.
- Anderson, E. (2009a). *Inclusive masculinities: The changing nature of masculinities*. New York: Routledge.
- Anderson, E. (2009b). The maintenance of masculinity among the stakeholders of sport. *Sport Management Review*, 12, 3–14.
- Bergling, T. (2001). *Sissyphobia: Gay men and effeminate behavior*. New York: Harrington Park Press.
- Bordo, S. (1999). *The male body: A new look at men in public and private*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.
- Bridel, W. & Rail, W. (2007). Sport, sexuality, and the production of (resistant) bodies: De-/re- constructing the meanings of gay male marathon corporeality. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 24, 127-144.
- Connell, R. W. (1990). An iron man: The body and some contradictions of hegemonic masculinity. In M. A. Messner & D. F. Sabo (Eds), *Sport, men, and the gender order: Critical feminist perspectives* (pp. 83–96). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics Books.
- Connell, R. W. (1992). A very gay straight: Masculinity, homosexual experience, and the dynamics of gender. *American Sociological Review*, 57, 735–751.
- Connell, R. W. (2005). *Masculinities* (2nd ed.). Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- Courtenay, W.H. (2000). Constructions of masculinity and their influence on men's well-being: A theory of health and gender. *Social Science and Medicine*, 50, 1385-1401.
- Curry, T. J. (1992). A little pain never hurt anyone: Athletic career socialization and the normalization of sports injury. *Symbolic Interaction*, 16, 273–290.
- Drummond, M. J. N. (2005). Men's bodies: Listening to the voices of young gay men. *Men and Masculinities*, 7, 270–290.
- Fenton, L. & Pitter, R. (2010). Keeping the body in play: Pain, injury and socialization in male rugby. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 81(2), 212–223.
- Filiault, S.M. (2009). *Playing with the natural body: Gay athletes, body image, and the hegemonic aesthetic*. Doctoral thesis-by-publication. Adelaide: University of South Australia.
- Filiault, S.M. & Drummond M.J.N. (2008). Athletes and body image: Interviews with gay sportsmen. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 5, 311-333.
- Filiault, S.M. & Drummond, M.J.N. (2009a). All the right labels: Gay male athletes and their perceptions of clothing. *Culture, Society and Masculinities*, 1, 177-196.

- Filiault, S.M. & Drummond, M.J.N. (2009b). Finding the rainbow: Reflections upon recruiting openly gay men for qualitative research. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences*, 4, 183-192.
- Filiault, S.M. & Drummond, M.J.N. (2009c). Methods and methodologies: Investigating gay men's body image in westernized cultures. *Critical Public Health*, 19, 307-324.
- Filiault, S.M. & Drummond, M.J.N. (2010). "Muscular, but not 'roided out": Gay male athletes and performance enhancing substances. *International Journal of Men's Health*, 9, 62-81.
- Gard, M. & Meyenn, R. (2000). Boys, bodies, pleasure and pain: Interrogating contact sports in schools. *Sport, Education and Society*, 5, 19-34.
- Grange, P. & Kerr, J. (2010). Physical aggression in Australian football: A qualitative study of elite athletes. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 11(1), 36-43.
- Hekma, G. (1998). As long as they don't make an issue out of it: Gay men and lesbians in organized sports in the Netherlands. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 35, 1-23.
- Kimmel, M. S. (1994). Masculinity as homophobia: Fear, shame and silence in the construction of gender identity. In H. Brod & M. Kaufman (Eds), *Theorizing Masculinities* (pp. 119-141). London: Sage.
- Kimmel, M. S. (2008). *Guyland: The perilous world where boys become men: Understanding the critical years between 16 and 26*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Markovitz, A.S. & Rensmann, L. (2010). *Gaming the world: How sports and reshaping global politics and culture*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Messner, M. (1992). *Power at play: Sports and the problem of masculinity*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Paechter, C. (2003). Power, bodies and identity: How different forms of physical education construct varying masculinities and femininities in secondary schools. *Sex Education*, 3, 47-59.
- Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Pronger, B. (1990). Gay jocks: A phenomenology of gay men in athletics. In M. A. Messner & D. A. Sabo (Eds), *Men, sport and the gender order* (pp. 141-152). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Roderick, M., Waddington, I. & Parker, G. (2000). Playing hurt: Managing injuries in professional English football. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 35, 165-180.
- Sabo, D. (1994). Pigskin, patriarchy and pain. In M. Messner & D. Sabo (Eds), *Sex, violence and power in sport: Rethinking masculinity* (pp. 82-88). Freedom, CA: Crossing Press.
- Staples, R. (2004). Black masculinity: The Black male's role in American society. In P. F. Murphy (Ed.), *Feminism and masculinity* (pp. 121-135). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Timpka, T., Finch, C., Goulet, C., Noakes, T. & Yammine, K. (2008). Meeting the global demand of sports safety. The intersection of science and policy in sports safety. *Sports Medicine*, 38(10), 795-805.
- Welland, I. (2002). Men, sport, body performance and the maintenance of 'exclusive masculinity'. *Leisure Studies*, 21, 235-247.

Whannel, G. (2002). *Media sport stars, masculinities and moralities*. London, UK: Routledge.

White, P., Young, K. & McTeer, W. (1995). Sport, masculinity and the injured body. In D. Sabo & D. Gordon (Eds), *Men's health and illness, gender, power and the body*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Young, K., White, P. & McTeer, W. (1994). Body-talk: Male athletes reflect on sport, injury & pain. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 11, 175–194.



AN ANALYSIS OF POSTINGS ON TWO PROSTATE CANCER DISCUSSION BOARDS

CHRISTOPHER THOMAS

Abstract

This retrospective web-based study compares the difficulties encountered following a diagnosis of prostate cancer by two groups of men who posted comments onto Internet discussion boards using one of two different web sites. The study found that the men using the "prostatecancerandgaymen" site targeted towards gay men were more concerned about loss of sexual function and about psychosocial support while those using the "ProstateCancerSupport" site targeted to the general male population were more concerned about types and choices of available treatment for prostate cancer. The disparity of concerns for the two groups suggests that there is an underlying difference between the two groups accessing the two different web-sites. The implication of this study is that information provision for all men who have been diagnosed with prostate cancer needs further investigation.

Key words: prostate cancer, gay, prostatectomy, incontinence, depression, sexuality, sexual dysfunction.

Introduction

Each year, there are about 20,000 diagnoses of prostate cancer in Australia and about 3,300 deaths from this disease (Australian-Institute-of-Health-and-Welfare, 2007). Schnur and colleagues (2006) suggest that prostate cancer diagnosis can have psychological, biological and behavioural consequences for many men. They may experience anxiety, depression and uncertainty while also needing to make life-changing decisions about whether or not to choose among a range of

treatment options (see also Korfage, Essink-Bot et al. 2006).

Sanda and Kaplan (2009) explain that there are several available options for treating localised prostate cancer: surgery (prostatectomy), external beam radiotherapy, brachytherapy, androgen deprivation therapy and active surveillance. New treatment techniques include cryotherapy and high-intensity focused ultrasound (HIFU). As there is no conclusive evidence that any one treatment is more clinically effective than the others, men face a difficult and uncertain choice. The choice of treatment is often driven by its therapeutic side-effect profile with urinary, bowel, sexual and hormonal function side-effects potentially affecting the man's quality of life (Eton & Lepore 2002; Sanda, Dunn et al. 2008; Gore, Kwan et al. 2009). Some men continue to be uncertain about whether they have made the correct treatment choice.

Arnold-Reed and colleagues (2008) contend that for those men in the at-risk age group for prostate cancer (40-80 years), there is a shortfall in knowledge which might delay diagnosis and treatment. Whilst in this study the sexuality of the participants was not requested nor disclosed, it would be reasonable to assume that this group contained men who self-identified as heterosexual (straight) and a smaller group who would self-identify as homosexual (gay). A study by Asencio and colleagues (2009) indicated that gay men have a poor understanding of prostate cancer and its treatments. Both of these studies would suggest that both gay and heterosexual men on the whole have relatively poor understandings of prostate cancer.

Filiault, Drummond, and Smith (2008) found that for gay men diagnosed with prostate cancer, altered sexual function and associated implications for gay identity were of concern. Heteronormative attitudes in the health care system were also an issue for gay men following such a diagnosis. Relationship changes and strains which Filiault et al identified for gay men, it could be suggested, would similarly be problematic for those in a heterosexual relationship.

Finally, the work of Ybarra and Suman (2006) contends that Internet health information seekers are more likely to have health concerns, and that adult seekers are more likely to rate themselves as having poor health. Men diagnosed with prostate cancer would qualify for this group identified by Ybarra and Suman (2006). These men would therefore be likely to source information regarding their condition using the Internet.

The aims of the study were:

- 1) To identify areas of concern for men diagnosed with prostate cancer.
- 2) To consider whether there are different concerns for the two groups under investigation, namely gay and heterosexual men.

Method

Participants

Ethics approval for this project was obtained from La Trobe University, Faculty of Health Science. Reference: FHEC09/140.

In order to compare postings from different groups of men, websites which targeted gay men and those which targeted the general population of men were identified using a Google search for "Yahoo prostate cancer support groups". The site <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/ProstateCancerSupport/> was chosen to represent the general population of men. The front page of the website states that "This group

deals with all aspects of the support required in how to live as full a life as possible, the practical ways of dealing with Prostate Cancer, how you feel about it and it's side effects and supporting each other in a kind way including details of support groups and information lines".

Those accessing this first group are referred to here as the "Prostate Cancer Support" group. For the "Prostate Cancer Support" group, free membership to the group is made available by e-mailing ProstateCancerSupport-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. Once a member of the group, postings can be made by e-mailing the same address.

A second discussion group was sought using the search terms "Yahoo gay prostate cancer support group". The word "gay" was inserted in the search for the second prostate cancer discussion group into order that a more diverse group of men might be obtained. The site <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/prostatecancerandgaymen/> was selected. The front page of the website includes a statement that group is "A place for gay men with prostate cancer to meet and discuss health, treatment and life".

Those accessing this second group are referred to here as the "prostatecancerandgaymen" group. Free membership of this group is made by e-mailing prostatecancerandgaymen-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. Postings to the group are made by e-mailing the same address.

The message boards of both groups operate similarly in that online discussion occurs in the form of posted messages. All messages are monitored for appropriate content by the website moderators.

Coding

The qualitative data from the two websites were coded using the coding guide for researchers adapted from the South Alabama

University, College of Education (<http://www.southalabama.edu/coe/bset/johnson/lectures/lec17.pdf>). The initial step in producing codes was to develop a master theme list, achieved by assigning codes to consecutive postings of the Prostate Cancer Support group. Data collection commenced on 03/03/2009. The coding was continued until saturation was achieved. This occurred following the coding of the 50th posting. Using the master theme list, coding was then undertaken on the two websites. All the coding was conducted by the author. The advantage of this was that this process was uncomplicated and the coding structure robust. Eight classifications for the postings were identified:

(1) Loss of sexual capability

Any postings with reference to erectile dysfunction were included in this category. Issues such as drugs or other aids to overcome erectile dysfunction were included.

(2) Incontinence

Postings referring to either urinary or bowel incontinence were classified here. This included issues relating to catheters where incontinence issues were a problem.

(3) Medical community

This category was used for issues concerning which doctor or hospital or clinic may or may not offer the best available service in relation to prostate cancer.

(4) Therapy failure

Postings of this nature were seeking advice as to what course of action should be undertaken given that a particular therapy had failed.

(5) Types/Choice of therapy

These postings were often from those who were newly diagnosed with prostate cancer and were trying to determine exactly what options were available. It was evident from many of these postings that insufficient information had been given to

a particular patient or perhaps the relevant information had been supplied but was not understood by the patient. Such non-comprehension could readily occur as many patients are often in shock or denial at the time of diagnosis.

(6) Psychological issues/ social support.

This category of coding was used to cover those areas where a patient or partner was expressing concerns regarding mental state in relation to prostate cancer. For example: Depression, anxiety, sadness, fear, loneliness, anger and/or loss of self-esteem. There were some postings included under this heading where a person was seeking some type of social support having become isolated/unemployed following a prostate cancer diagnosis/treatment.

(7) General advice

Postings under this heading were direct requests for specific information. For example: "Will my health insurance company pay for procedure X, Y or Z?" "Where can I obtain information to read regarding prostate cancer treatments?"

(8) Therapy side-effects. Issues such as post biopsy side-effects and loss of ejaculation were coded under this classification.

Results

Having established the coding system, the first 50 postings for both websites were examined and coded for the months March, April and May 2009, a total of 300 postings; avoiding over representation of a current "hot topic" yet allowing common posting threads to be identified. Distribution of postings across the two groups can be seen in Table 1 over the page.

The frequencies of the eight codes as they appeared across the two groups can be seen in Table 2 over the page.

THOMAS: ANALYSIS OF POSTINGS ON TWO PROSTATE CANCER DISCUSSION BOARDS

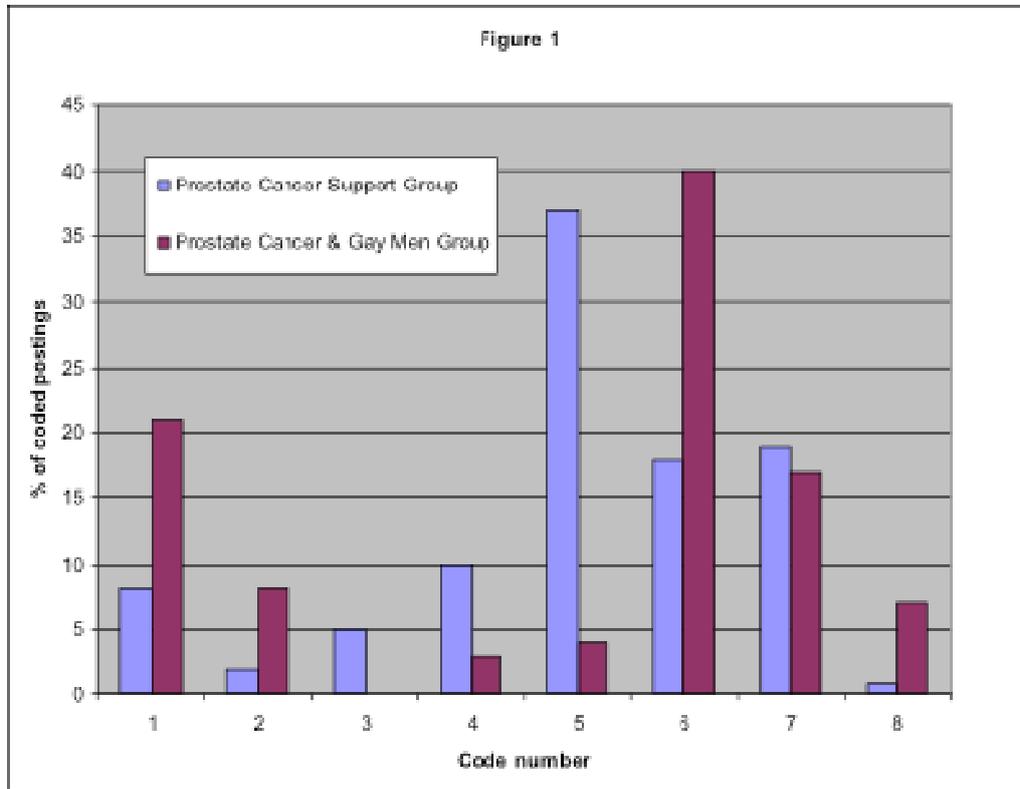
Table 1. Frequencies for each group

Yahoo Group	Year in which the Yahoo group commenced	Number of postings coded for the three month period March, April, and May 2009	Total number of postings for the three months March, April and May 2009	% of postings coded for the three month period March, April, and May 2009.	Total number of postings for 2009
Prostate Cancer Support Group	2002	150	903	16.6%	3603
Prostate Cancer and gay men group	2001	150	440	34.1%	2902

Table 2. Frequencies for each code

Code	Coding Description	Number of coded postings for Prostate Cancer Support Group	Number of coded postings for Prostate Cancer and gay men group
1	Loss of sexual capability	13 (8%)	33 (21%)
2	Incontinence	3 (2%)	12 (8%)
3	Medical community	8 (5%)	0 (0%)
4	Therapy failure	16 (10%)	5 (3%)
5	Types/choice of therapy	59 (37%)	6 (4%)
6	Psychological/social support issues	29 (18%)	62 (40%)
7	General advice concerning prostate cancer	30 (19%)	26 (17%)
8	Therapy side-effects	2 (1%)	11 (7%)
		160 (100%)	155 (100%)

Figure 1. Percentage of coded postings for each website vs code number



A comparison of these frequencies by group can be seen in Figure 1 above.

For those in the "ProstateCancerSupport" group, "Types/choice of therapy" (59) received the most postings followed by "General advice concerning prostate cancer" (30) and then "Psychological/social support issues" (29).

For those in the "prostatecancergaymen" group, "Psychological/social support issues" (62) received the most postings followed by "Loss of sexual capability" (33) and then "General advice concerning prostate cancer" (26)

Discussion

As highlighted in Table 2, the results of coding for the internet postings of the two websites

suggest that loss of sexual capability, incontinence, psychological/social support issues and therapy side effects are shown to be of greater concern to the "prostatecancerandgaymen" group. Medical community, therapy failure and types/choice of therapy were more of a concern to the "ProstateCancerSupport" group. It would be expected that there would be no differences between the two groups if the two groups were drawn equally from the general population. These results indicate that there is some difference between the two groups accessing the two different websites.

Figure 1 indicates that two distinct patterns emerge in relation to the eight codes presented on the X-axis of the graph. The key to Figure 1 is seen at code 7. This code refers to "General advice concerning prostate cancer". Although the two groups show little difference

in postings referring to general advice, the differences are noted in more specific issues. That is, for the "ProstateCancerSupport" group, types and choices of therapy is the most important issue, while psychological/social support issues are more important to the "prostaecancerandgaymen" group. This implies that the two groups have different agendas in relation to a diagnosis/treatment of prostate cancer. Clearly the two populations of men accessing the websites are seeking different sets of information and these needs can never be met adequately if the total population of men with prostate cancer is considered to be a homogeneous group. The needs of the two populations must be addressed independently of each other.

Table 1 shows that for both websites for 2009 there were 1000's of postings. Such large numbers of postings would suggest that although men have little knowledge concerning many aspects of prostate cancer, they are keen to find information. It is interesting to note that Broom (2005) suggests that "online support groups provide some men with a method of managing constraints posed by dominant constructions of masculinity within their experiences of prostate cancer". This idea may shed light onto why Australian men have a very poor knowledge of prostate cancer. That is, this situation may have arisen not because men do not want to know about this condition, but rather that social constraint makes it difficult for these men to pursue the myriad of questions which arise following a prostate cancer diagnosis. Broom (2005) continues with the thought that such support groups allow "for increased sharing and intimacy by limiting inhibitions associated with face-to-face encounters". Further research is required to test the validity of Broom's ideas in regard to both men in general and to particular groups of men in the community.

Limitations

- 1) It must be noted that the sexuality of any person posting onto either site

was never discussed in the course of this study.

- 2) The websites that were chosen may not have been representative of all websites available.
- 3) In coding the postings only one coder (the author) was involved, hence coder bias may be an issue.

Conclusion

The results of this study show that the areas of concern for those accessing the two websites were: Loss of sexual capability, incontinence, medical community, therapy failure, types/choice of therapy, psychological/social support issues, general advice concerning prostate cancer and therapy side-effects.

Analysis of the postings indicated that there were different concerns between the two groups accessing the websites. Accounting for such observed variation, together with a focus on ways the different concerns of the two groups might best be addressed, will ensure that the needs of all men diagnosed with prostate cancer are adequately met in the future.

Author Note

Christopher Thomas is a PhD candidate in the School of Human Biosciences and Public Health at La Trobe University. E-mail: c4thomas@students.latrobe.edu.au

References

- Arnold-Reed, D., D. Hince, et al. (2008). Knowledge and attitudes of men about prostate cancer. *Medical Journal of Australia*, 189, 312-314.
- Asencio, M., T. Blank, et al. (2009). The prospect of prostate cancer: A challenge for gay men's sexualities as they age. *Sexuality Research & Social Policy*, 6, 38.
- Australian-Institute-of-Health-and-Welfare. (2007). Cancer. Retrieved 23 September, 2011, from <http://www.aihw.gov.au/cancer/>.

- Broom, A. (2005). The eMale. *Journal of Sociology, 41*, 87-104.
- Eton, D. T. and S. J. Lepore (2002). Prostate cancer and health-related quality of life: a review of the literature. *Psycho-Oncology, 11*, 307-326.
- Filiault, S., M. Drummond, et al. (2008). Gay men and prostate cancer: Voicing the concerns of a hidden population. *Journal of Men's Health, 5*, 327-332.
- Gore, J. L., L. Kwan, et al. (2009). Survivorship beyond convalescence: 48-month quality-of-life outcomes after treatment for localized prostate cancer. *Journal of the National Cancer Institute, 101*, 888-892.
- Korfage, I., M. Essink-Bot, et al. (2006). Anxiety and depression after prostate diagnosis and treatment: 5 year follow-up. *British Journal of Cancer, 94*, 1093-1098.
- Sanda, M. G., R. L. Dunn, et al. (2008). Quality of life and satisfaction with outcome among prostate-cancer survivors. *New England Journal of Medicine, 358*, 1250-1261.
- Sanda, M. G. and I. D. Kaplan (2009). A 64-year-old man with low-risk prostate cancer. *JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association, 301*, 2141-2151.
- Schnur, J., T. DiLorenzo, et al. (2006). Perceived risk and worry about prostate cancer: a proposed conceptual model. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine, 32*, 89-96.
- University-of-South-Alabama. College of Education. Retrieved 1 March, 2009, from <http://www.southalabama.edu/coe/bset/johnson/lectures/lec17.pdf>.
- Yahoo2. Prostate Cancer Support. Retrieved 12 April, 2009, from <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/ProstateCancerSupport/?v=1&t=directory&ch=web&pub=groups&ec=dir&slk=1>.
- Yahoo. Prostate Cancer and Gay Men. Retrieved 1 July, 2011, from <http://health.dir.groups.yahoo.com/group/prostatecancerandgaymen/>.
- Ybarra, M. L. & M. Suman (2006). Help seeking behavior and the Internet: A national survey. *International Journal of Medical Informatics, 75*, 29-41.



QUEER REFUGEITIES AND THE PROBLEMATIC OF HOMO/ HOMELANDS

ANNE HARRIS

Abstract

Race, gender, class and LGBTQ identities are interconnected in ways that have been problematised for more than thirty years. While both queer theory and contemporary faces of an 'equal love' movement make claims for progress, some like Kumashiro (2001) and Holloway (2009) return us to the relationality of all marginalisations. This article uses an autoethnographic framing to interrogate the ways in which place, identity and belonging intersect with hegemonic discourses of race, class and gender and thus can increase feelings of refugeity and isolation. This paper argues that such feelings and marginalities which can be termed 'refugeities' (Harris, 2010a) productively bond racialised and sexualised minorities as we seek refuge from a hegemonic heterosexist global culture. Using the AIDS Walk, recent victories of the marriage equality act, and recent instances of queer refugees in resettlement, this article takes a long view of LGBTQ politics to problematise homelands and history in the contemporary queer movement.

Keywords: queer, refugeity, race, gender, belonging, diaspora

Introduction

AIDS... was about people in power not caring about the lives of people who didn't have power...and while certainly it was about gay men, it was also about race and sex and class and it was all the same issues (Northrop, 2003).

Identities – queer Muslim and otherwise – are intimately related to culture and consciousness. A properly critical hybridity recognises

the material grounding of identities... (Abraham, 2009, p. 91).

This article is constructed as a performance autoethnography in order to interweave and unlock questions of identity, place and homeland for one lesbian researcher who nevertheless speaks (as we all do) from multiple positionalities. As an American-Australian immigrant, a gay adoptee, a dislocated Eastern European Jew, and a woman over thirty, this research reflects my personal and political life and culture, and this article seeks to embrace such intersectionalities. The performative structure of this article reflects continuing developments in qualitative research (Prosser 2007) which acknowledge researchers as gendered, sexualized, and racialised subjects within communities of practice in ways that are both intercultural and intergenerational. Within LGBTQ communities, and in the wider community, LGBTQ researchers are tracking notions of place and belonging as they intersect with our identities-in-motion as marginalised (and marginalizing) Others.

This article seeks to contribute to this growing body of research (Riggs, 2011; Raj 2010; Abraham 2009; Yip 2008; Kumashiro, 1999; Diaz 1998; Sears 1995) by interrogating links between coming out, racial and cultural diversity and the need to 'move away' from both real and imagined home and homelands (Harris, 2010b; Kumashiro 2001; Pallotta-Chiarolli 2000). While those like Abraham (2009) articulate the ways in which his research with queer Muslim Australians is not ethnographic, this paper takes the view of Anzaldúa and others who suggest that borderlands are best understood through the voices of those who inhabit and traverse them. Indi-

vidual needs to abandon homelands are of course infused with religious, cultural and socio-economic push-factors; they encompass explicit reasons (as with LGBTQ refugees seeking legal assistance for resettlement from hostile home countries) or implicit reasons

(including those who move away for reasons rooted in wellness and identity-formation). By blending layers of past and present, this article seeks to immerse the reader in this author's own experience in which the past informs the present in both performative and discursive ways.

*The truth is that even before I had left New York,
my heart was already on this path,
because as a queer kid from the country,
I came to believe I was alone.
Exiled in my head, in my room.
A refugee in my own white trash town.
So even before I chose exile, I had been exiled.
The geographical move just confirmed and externalised what I
had felt for so long inside.
So, I left.
Just like that.
One afternoon.
Instead of going to the laundromat.
I was walking down 8th avenue, and I just...
I didn't think about it.
I didn't say to myself "Pick up the washing... or Australia?"
I just walked along finishing my latte,
Contemplating the end of another should-have-worked relationship,
And suddenly I was out.
Over the edge.
Flying.
I do things big. I can't help myself.
I'm Polish. Too much starch in the diet.*

*When I first got to Australia,
I'd say I was a refugee from capitalism, from George Bush,
from Broadway. So cavalier. I thought I was clever.
Then I started volunteering with real refugees
struggling through resettlement,
and I saw the differences.
My feelings of refugeity went underground.
As a high school teacher of refugee-background students,
I understood their rage about
how resettlement makes your identity static,
how you're forever seen as a 'refugee', (an American, a dyke).
You become a noun.
Calcified.*

*Last year I visited Joe and Greg, two high school boyfriends, back in New York.
We are each the only kids in our families to have moved away,
all gay.
Are we gay refugees? I asked them.
'I had to leave home to come out,' Joe said. "I had to go someplace where I was not the only one."*

Interweaving Lifeworlds

Invisible marginalities can create compounded feelings of refugeity (Harris, 2010, p. 73) and contribute to institutionalised exclusion. While both an 'equal love' discourse and some forms of legislative progress are gaining ground from New York to Australia, and many LGBTQ and questioning young (and older) people are successfully navigating the "crossing, bridging and bordering of 'worlds'" (Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2000, p. 32), such improvements do not always address internalised (and externalised) self-perceptions of community/cultural breakdown and subcultural not-belonging. "Belonging is about boundaries but it is also about hierarchies which exist both within and across boundaries" (Anthias, 2006, p. 22; Anthias, 2001), and queer border-crossers know that context always determines which identifier takes pride of place. As a migrant teacher, my Americanness took precedence over my lesbian identity. While campaigns like the *It Gets Better* videos go viral and focus on the positive mental health and wellbeing of young queers, some wonder whether LGBTQ 'culture' is indeed anything like a culture – or indeed – a discernable community anymore in the 21st century.

As diverse agendas gain traction, splinters within the community threaten not to strengthen but to fragment the fragile sense of cultural/community unity some of us have felt in past eras. AIDS councils today support people with the disease in their living, not only in their dying. Gay-straight alliances are proliferating in schools worldwide, no longer just in the US, and Ellen is finally queen of the talk shows in post-Oprah daytime TV. Yet LGBTQ refugees routinely get deported, denied and repatriated to murderous countries-of-origin (Hebert, 2010; IRQR, 2011), and queer refugees are under stringent demands to 'prove' their homosexuality (Molly C., 2011). Additionally, the harassment, torture and murder of queer activists like David Kato in Uganda often go uninvestigated (CNN, 2011).

As noted by one Australian community action organisation, "out of 204 countries where the information is available, a total of 77 countries (50 for lesbians) carry some form of punishment for homosexuality" and researchers have identified "200 cases of people seeking asylum in Australia on the basis of homophobic persecution between 1996-2000" alone (CAAH, 2009). In Canada, the United States and Europe, 186 have been resettled since 2005 just from Iran (Mullins, 2011). Increased coverage of queer refugees and refugeity only more urgently brings home the question: do LGBTQs have a 'homeland', and if so, where? Clearly – and queerly – we still have a long way to go.

The Iranian Railroad for Queer Refugees (IRQR) continues to prove that more work is needed in this area, as they this year became the first Iranian queer contingent to march in a Pride Parade in Canada (IRQR, 2011). The borrowing of the underground railroad metaphor from the African American anti-slavery struggle is purposeful and powerful: it demands that we make connections not only between raced and sexualized minorities, but also geographical 'roads to freedom'. And while not all 21st century queers risk their literal lives by coming out 'at home', most still risk emotional and mental wellbeing by doing so. Recent research on sexualities and cultural diversity shows that homophobia at home is more religious-based than cultural (Harris, 2011). And Australia appears significantly harsher in its treatment of queer refugee applications than Canada, for example, yet detailed research tracks consistently difficult standards of proof (Janoff, p. 102).

Sexualised minorities stand in solidarity with racial and religious others like the IRQR group, who still often must relinquish homelands in order to find safety and freedom of expression. For some, "Homophobia is just another form of racism...as it manifests exactly the same way" (Nguyen, 2008, p.45); importantly, though, scholars are rejecting race/sexuality binaries and foregrounding the ability of young people who are "assertively interweav-

ing lifeworlds" (Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2000, p. 31) and living to tell the tale (Langley, 1998; Tillman, 2010) of coming out as/and going home. This article reminds us that, while queers may no longer feel that our only option is to move to queered spaces and places like Christopher Street in order to find or become

ourselves, today the invisibility and fractured nature of sexual minorities pushes us to find both new geographical but also new perspectival locations (Miller, 2010). It asks the question: if there is no such thing, or no need for a 'homo homeland', why then does queer culture so nostalgically cling to the mythology of one?

Before

It is 1984.

*I have just left home to start college
and I'm just coming out as a lesbian.*

It's confusing.

My brothers and I were adopted and raised by religious white working class Catholics in upstate New York on the banks of the mighty Hudson River, where my mother marched with anti-abortion activists in 1975, and warned me not to become a feminist because feminists were 'angry women' and she should know, because she became one (not a feminist, just angry).

*Her cautionary tales and my insatiable need for belonging
Led me to a relationality roadblock, an ambivalent addiction
to both autonomy and intimacy which was
"always at play and in conflict"
(Hollway 2009, p. 218).*

*We were taught to be grateful refugees from the welfare system,
not left to rot in the orphanages.*

*Frustrated in their own aspirations to normalcy,
our parents taught us*

*to not think about our first families, our birth names,
or anything else that interrupted their mythology.*

We were meant to make up for what had gone wrong.

And, as children do, we all disappointed them in our own ways.

*My way was coming out when I was 17, at the
University of New Hampshire.*

In the dead of winter,

*sitting on the floor of my dorm room,
while my mother slept next door,*

*I came out to my best friend Lisa, with whom I was madly in love,
(and whose parents were both coming out as well, poor Lisa)*

*and Lisa had to hold that secret all the five hour drive back to Albany with my mother saying,
"So what did you two talk about anyway?"*

"Nothing much."

They got stuck in a snowstorm and had to spend the night on the mountain in Vermont and still Lisa held my secret.

She's a good friend.

Alliances can be made across sexualities and other borderlands,

But it demands enormous effort.

*Eventually I take myself off to New York City where people can
Come Out.
It's not as fun as I thought it would be.
My dorm is two streets away from the jazz of MacDougall Street,
The Bitter End,
The Blue Note Café,
and most importantly
Christopher Street and the Village.
But it's 1984. My timing sucks.*

*The first case of AIDS had been identified three years before, but there was still mostly confusion
and fear.*

*The Gay Men's Health Crisis had started two years earlier.
By 1986, two years after I arrived in NYC for my coming out party,
GMHC reported 32,000 U.S. infections, 16,000 deaths
and Ronald Reagan still refused to use the word AIDS.
In 1986 I went to the first AIDS Walk New York
with my first girlfriend Debbie.
We cried and screamed, and felt part of something, sort of.
We had never known a different kind of gay and lesbian community.
So we celebrated as we could, amongst all the grieving.
If it was hard being in the closet,
it was hard being out too.
Not only did the government and the straight world
seem happy to let us die,
but there was sorrow and fighting within the gay community as well.*

*In 1987 ACT UP was formed, and I went to a couple of meetings, but
the anger frightened me.
My coming out coincided with the gay movement's coming in,
shutting down.
I started writing for a gay and lesbian magazine and used it as an excuse to educate myself about
the movement:
In 1994 I interviewed Sarah Schulman about her new book "My American History: Lesbian and Gay
Life during the Reagan/Bush Years" and
Amber Hollibaugh about the invisibility of lesbians with AIDS.
(Harris 1996)
Because they existed. Do still exist.
I got to know Black, Latina, Muslim people for the first time in New York because I grew up in a
monochrome, monoclass, monosexual bubble that is taking me a lifetime to get over.*

I work, as I said earlier, largely with intercul-
tural and migrant youth, some from refugee
backgrounds. The fact that in the beginning I
felt a strong affinity with the 'outsider status'
experienced by some, did not impress them. I
imagined this was due to the invisibility of my
own queer outsider status. So I stopped talk-

ing about it, went back in the closet. Yet the
questions continued to plague me, and I be-
gan to see certain productive parallels be-
tween what we in the academy might call
"diasporic perspectives" and queer or LGBTQ
perspectives. Yet simple notions of represen-
tation might not be enough to counter a

haunted history made up of “not so much a history of damaging and false images, but is instead a certain absence of participation in the representations of the mainstream media” (Sullivan, 2004, p. 213). For while those like Dunye and Gomez have troubled an ab-

sent Black lesbian representation, this absence can be linked to displacement, stereotypes and unequal material conditions which supercede “this society’s race-sex hierarchy” (Dash, 1992), all contributors to prevailing conditions of refugeity within our LGBTQ culture.

During

There’s a saying in Alcoholics Anonymous that is cloying but gallingly applicable to almost everything:

“First I came, then I came to, then I came to believe.”

I think of my time in Australia like this:

my own personal 12-step program in exile.

Coming to consciousness (and coming out) is a never-ending process of rehabilitation;

resettlement is a never-ending state of refugeity.

Don’t get me wrong, Australia is a wonderful country.

It’s enough like the USA to be recognisable to a Yank,

the language (if not the humour) understandable,

and all the most popular crappy American television shows.

It’s fantastic: all the froth without the biting espresso aftertaste of my homo homeland.

I have health care, even when I don’t work.

I can afford to get my teeth cleaned, and even a filling now and then.

I own my own (homo) home,

I got paid by the government to do my PhD

and I got a tenured position when I finished.

These are the things of mythology back in New York.

Still, there is the exhausting and never-ending identity of an outsider.

Just when it starts to fade, someone new will hear me speak

and say, “Where are you from?”

triggering sometimes-welcome links back to the geography of my childhood:

Birch trees instead of eucalyptus,

Bluebirds over magpies,

the silence of snow blizzards.

One of my doctoral supervisors is a New Yorker who has lived in Australia for 25 years. She told me the only reason she is worried about growing old in a foreign country is that she will end up in a retirement home ranting about the Jewish deli on West 16th Street where she grew up, and the attendants will think she’s got dementia.

There is fear in diasporic existence. And there's grief. No matter how you cut it, it's painful. Yet the difference between Ugandan lesbian refugee Brenda Namigadde and me is that I can go home. It is a significant difference, but not absolute. I argue there are links between LGBTQ and others who felt they had no choice but to leave (Harris, 2010a), and that this is a fluid and discursive position as well as at times a material one. The ability to choose is one symptom of some white, Western, and middle-class existences, or as Riggs claims, a process of "recognizing this queerness of whiteness [which] entails enquiring as to what silences, hidden histories and myths have operated in the function of legitimating white hegemony" (2010, p. 347). Yet this is precisely the burden of proof many current LGBTQ asylum seekers are faced with: how does one prove reasonable fear, and how does one prove gayness? Either way, the 'queerness of whiteness' does not save us from the pitfalls of refugeity.

The fact that my old boyfriend Joe knew his leaving home to 'be gay' involved moving to what he called a 'ghetto' did not bother him: he was willing (in fact, relieved) to accept that fact. To him it meant community. Ghettos are seldom talked of in diasporic or intercultural discourses as safe havens or liberating liminal spaces. The study of queer diasporas might teach us much about identities-in-motion and the deconstruction of binaries like ghettos as marginal in relation to the so-called centre. For some queer kids, the ghetto *is* the centre, and warmly embraced; similarly, some "positioned as 'white, Anglo and middle class' are not always so" (Palotta-Chiarolli, 2000, p. 35). Static notions must always be interrogated for slippages, particularly in queer diasporas.

Those gay ex-boyfriends and I thought we were on to something. Why did we feel we needed to leave home, when clearly we had found the only other two queers in the village? Joe had his reasons, but Greg's story is even stranger: both his parents identify as gay and lesbian too. When we were going out in high

school his mom used to say, "You two are just like me and Greg's father!" and boy was she right. Yet in Greg's family, even with two out gay parents, he is the only one of four children who moved away. When I asked him why, he said he just 'had to' in order to be an out gay man, that back home he always had a sense of otherness. Refugeity does not always have a direct bearing on real world conditions.

Why then do so many LGBTQ youth need to move away from home in order to become who we are, and what is the price for this leaving? Replacing families of origin with 'chosen families' in exile does not always seem to alleviate feelings of refugeity. It does open new possibilities, to be sure, but as Riggs reminds us, "sexual identities are always already racialized" (2010, p. 349), yet our post-post-modern queer identities remind us not to conflate raced, gendered, classed and sexual positionalities. Certainly contemporary race-, religion- and sexualities researchers (Minwalla, 2005; Yip, 2008; Abraham, 2009) are showing the unavoidable intersectionality of queer citizens' multiple identities, or what Yip calls 'minority-within-minority' status/identities (2008, p. 103).

So what is it? Perhaps we are united in multi-definitional queer diasporas, scattered far and wide from our diverse homo homelands, a strategic alliance of necessity. Or perhaps, as Abraham suggests, queer diasporas remain identities-in-motion, in which "...the queer community would no longer 'just be about same-sex attraction, it will be about the different things – family, religion and cultural background – that create an individual'" (Abraham, 2009, p. 95).

Yet this paper argues there *are* space- and place-based geographical implications (or homo homelands) inherent in queer diasporas. If we are diasporic in thinking, feeling, perceiving, what is our relation to homelands, and to what extent are these homelands the idealised childhood homes of most refugees, or the mythologised homelands of an imagined 'queer culture'? Places such as Christo-

pher Street, lesbian Los Angeles, Sydney's Mardi Gras sometimes celebrate their historicity with less complexity than a functional role today.

As with UNHCR-recognised refugees, there are political, economic and environmental reasons why LGBTQ people leave their home towns, states, countries and regions. There is diversity of motivation, yet there are traceable patterns. The invisibility of LGBTQ people's Otherness often makes it hard to include us in discussions of cultural marginalisation, as seen in the contested basis of sexual orientation for refugee claims.

Yet attempts to uncover the characteristics of a discernable LGBTQ culture, or even community, turn the conversation back to diversity. While Pallotta-Chiarolli argues that being "a same-sex attracted young person raised within an ethnic group requires the negotiation and interweaving of varying and multiple regulations, expectations, and social codes" (2005, p. 303), I would argue that all queer, same-sex attracted or LGBTQ persons experience this dance of multiplicities. Yet a core resistance or confusion regarding queers as a 'multi-cultural' identity, is the tension between

queers and differing or absent definitions of home or homeland.

While Sudanese and other former refugees speak of their homelands in diverse ways, they can identify a national or bordered unity in that vast and diverse geographical place. LGBTQs never quite get there. As Aizura productively asks, "What are the connections between the borders of gender and those between nations?" (2006, p. 289). He suggests further that a "politics of home renders invisible the transnational mobility that has been necessary for some transpeople [and other LGBTQers] to live their lives" (2006, p. 302). While both Aizura unearths some problematics with Prosser's (1998) politics of home, yet its ongoing usefulness within sexualities and gender diversities work. Within discourses both academic and popular, notions of home and mobility suggest increasingly complex possibilities. For many LGBTQ people, the coming-out story is perhaps our closest relic to 'home'. I'm interested in these in-between spaces, these narrative layers: why LGBTQ people both leave and don't leave, and what stories they tell about this leaving/not leaving. I am interested in whether LGBTQ is a community, or a culture, or neither.

After

GMHC reports that in 2010, AIDS is the leading cause of death for African-American women age 25-34 (in the USA).

The leading cause. Does that surprise anyone else besides me?

Lesbians and AIDS has always been a raced and classed issue, a skeleton in our queer closet (Harris, 1996).

The LGBTQ 'movement' was always diverse, we just didn't always admit it.

Last year, on May 16th in New York City, the 25th AIDS Walk NY happened, and I wasn't there.

This year, on June 24th in New York State, gay marriage passed by a whisker and a roar.

These days, I am simultaneously a Melbournian and a New Yorker: my life has moved on (geographically, generationally, socio-politically)

from my days down on Christopher, and yet -

Homeward looking -

spiritually I'm still there.

Arm raised, mouth open,

at the intersection of race/class/sexuality and gender streets,

because these things are indistinguishable in times of strife and celebration.

They cross, interweave, dissolve.

*In the gay and lesbian community, our coming out is our rite of passage, but it never seems to end.
If we survive, we retell the story over and over, and in some ways
It comes to define us
(Hickey-Moody, Rasmussen and Harwood, 2008).
Sometimes with laughter, sometimes with tears.
It is both spatial and temporal, in that
we can all recount the time and place of our coming out, and yet
all GLBTI people know that we never stop.
coming out / going home.*

*So many of us ran to the streets of the Village back then, in order to safely become outwardly who
we already were inwardly.
Some of us did not survive.
Some of us changed.
Christopher Street itself has changed.
Being gay today is more than a place.
More than a street in the West Village of New York City.
More than any street in any city.
Yet still Gay Mecca's beckon, (not only for those who must run, like
Brenda Namiggade), and
there is power in the way they hold our histories,
our memories,
these sites of our community wars,
resistance, reconstructions, and revolutionaries.
We are more than Christopher Street.
But we need to know it's there.*

*This article challenges
confronts
sticks its tongue out at
notions of Other as represented in dominant/minority dialectics, because
it troubles the notion of The Centre itself.
The lesbian I am now has learnt to live in the 'borderlands' (Conquergood 1991),
and it's a skill that has served me well.
We aging queers who wear our
slowing but still radical transgressive
bolshie
activist
bitch-you-better-back-off
hearts on our sleeves,
problematise notions of Centre and Margin because, as we know,
queers can be in the centre and the margin at once.*

*I find convergences in raced/classed/sexualised oppressions and
If there is a community to which I belong, or cultural practices which I can trace back in my queer
family tree,
It is not a geographical location, but an enacted one.
Yet they are inseparable, and queers worldwide know
That we make geographical choices everyday, for
Our survival and our 'thrival'.*

*I have taken you on a tour of one place where I came
to meet one version of myself,
when homo and home were, briefly,
blissfully
found in the same place.*

"My skin is a map of my world...t tells you where I've been" (1994, p. 321), Miller tells us, and points - as does Butler (1993) - toward a corporeal geography through which identity is discursively and constitutively performed. Where does this leave me, and is my dance within this anti-teleological queer world a participation in community, culture, or neither? My presence here might simply constitute, as Ahmed cautions, an "unhappy performative," an "absent presence" (2004, p. 1), which neither confronts racist connotations of sameness, nor resists the intersectional paradoxes of which she and Kumashiro speak.

Queer refugees seek safety and freedom (whether literal or figurative) in any place we can find it (both literal and figurative). Such questions and quandries are my current plague - neither guilty nor sad - which replaces some of the people, places and communities of practice which characterised my youth.

Where, then, do they - and I - belong? Those of us who have lived through epidemics and emigrations know that just when you thought something was over, it's back again. As of 2010, in the United States alone, there are 56,000 new HIV infections per year (GMHC, 2010). In Australian schools, GLBTI students are still not universally protected by anti-homophobia legislation. Under the new Australian refugee 'swap deal', asylum seekers will be removed to Malaysia, a country from which we have accepted queer refugees (Ozturk 2011)., While some of us fight for the right to marry, others fight to stay alive, at home and away.

Questions of refugeity and belonging are central to our multiple identities as raced, classed and gendered bodies. Queers from smashed and broken communities, from mainstream wedding receptions, from life-threatening

families and countries of origin, are self-recognising as a varied and vibrant mosaic culture and struggling to give language to those multiplicities. We are more than the drag queens in Pride marches, and the dykes on bikes. We are more than just an acronym, a ghetto, a street. This mosaic, this possibility of differentiation, "gives meaning and value to [our] crisis" (Ellis, 2004, p. 32), and continues to be worth fighting for. And, importantly, worth celebrating.

Acknowledgement

The author would like to acknowledge the Elders, families and forebears of the Boonwurrung and Wurundjeri tribes of the Kulin Nation who are the custodians of the land on which she lives and works, and that the Kulin Nation people's living culture has a unique role in the life of this region. She would also like to gratefully acknowledge the editor and multiple anonymous reviewers and readers who have contributed to the improvement of this article.

Author Note

Dr Anne Harris is an American-Australian playwright and Senior Lecturer in Creative Arts Education at Monash University (Melbourne), and has published widely in the areas of ethnocinema, diaspora studies, and sexualities diversity. She is a graduate of New York University. Her book *Ethnocinema in Arts Education* (Springer) is forthcoming in December 2011.

References

- Abraham, I. (2009). 'Out to get us': Queer Muslims and the clash of sexual civilisations in Australia. *Contemporary Islam*, 3(1), 79-97.
- Ahmed, S. (2004). Declarations of whiteness:

- The non-performativity of anti-racism. *Borderlands e-journal* 3(2). Available from: <http://www.borderlands.net.au/issues/vol3no2.html>. [Accessed 9 October 2011].
- Aizura, A. Z. (2006). Of borders and homes: The imaginary community of (trans)sexual citizenship, *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, 7, 289-309.
- Anthias, F. (2006). Belongings in a Globalising and Unequal World: Rethinking Translocations. In N. Yuval-Davis, K. Kannabiran & U. Vieten (Eds.), *The Situated Politics of Belonging* (pp. 17-31). London, UK: Sage.
- Anthias, F. (2001). New hybridities, old concepts: The limits of culture. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 24(4), 619-641.
- Butler, J. (1993). *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Community Action Against Homophobia (CAAH) website. (2009). Available from: <http://www.caah.org.au/queerrefugees>. [Accessed 12 August 2011].
- Conquergood, D. (1991). Rethinking ethnography: Towards a critical cultural politics. *Communication Monographs*, 59(2), 179-194.
- Dash, J. & b. hooks. (1992). Dialogue between bell hooks and Julie Dash. In *Daughters of the Dust: The Making of an African American Women's Film*. New York, NY: New Press.
- Diaz, L. (1998). *Latino gay men and HIV: Culture, sexuality and risk behavior*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Ellis, C. (2004). *The Ethnographic I: A Methodological Novel about Autoethnography*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
- Gay Mens Health Crisis. (n.d.) Available from: <http://www.gmhc.org/>. [Accessed 10 May 2011].
- Harris, A. (2011). *Teaching Diversities: Same-sex attracted young people, CALD communities, and arts-based community education*. Melbourne: Centre for Multicultural Youth. Available from: <http://www.cmy.net.au/TeachingDiversities>. [Accessed 11 October 2011].
- Harris, A. (2010a). *Cross-Marked: Sudanese Australia Young Women Talk Education*. Melbourne, VIC: Victoria University.
- Harris, A. (2010b). Back seat girls: Where do dykes sit with queer theory?. *InterAlia Journal*, 5, 1-16. Available from: http://www.interalia.org.pl/en/artykuly/current_issue_2010_5.htm. [Accessed 10 August 2011].
- Harris, A. (1996). The invisibility of lesbians with AIDS. In G. Vida (Ed.), *The New Our Right to Love* (pp. 108-111). New York, NY: Touchstone.
- Hebert, E. (2010). Passing Lines: Queer Refugee Claimants' Journeys, Testimonies, and Liquid Identities. Canadian MFA Documentary Media. (YouTube film) Available from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5xZYxrDq-4o>. [Accessed 8 Aug 2011].
- Hickey-Moody, A.; Rasmussen, M.L. & Harwood, V. (2008). How to be a real lesbian: *The Pink Sofa* and some fictions of identity. In S. Driver (Ed.), *Queer Youth Cultures* (pp. 123-138). New York, NY: State University of New York.
- Hollway, W. (2009). Relationality: The inter-subjective Foundations of Identity. In M. Wetherell & C.T. Mohanty (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Identities* (pp. 216-233). London, UK: Sage.
- Iranian Railroad for Queer Refugees (IRQR). (2011). [webpage]. Available from: <http://www.irqr.net/>. [Accessed 1 September 2011].
- Janoff, D. V. (2005). *Pink blood: Homophobic violence in Canada*. Toronto, CAN: Univ of Toronto Press.
- Kumashiro, K. (Ed.). (2001). *Troubling intersections of race and sexuality: Queer students of color and anti-oppressive education*. New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Kumashiro, K. (1999). Supplementing normalcy and otherness. *Qualitative Studies in Education* 12(5), 491-508.
- Langley, J. (1998). Coming Out/Going Home. In M. Pallotta-Chiarolli (Ed.), *Girls' Talk*. Lane Cove, NSW: Finch Publishing.
- Lesbian Avengers. New York Times Magazine, 1994-04-24. 'SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 1994; Fire-Eating Lesbians'. Available from:

- <<http://www.nytimes.com/1994/04/24/magazine/sunday-april-24-1994-fire-eating-lesbians.html>>. [Accessed 5 May 2010].
- Miller, J. (1994). Autobiography as Queer Curriculum Practice. In W. Pinar (Ed.), *Queer Theory in Education* (pp. 365-374). London, UK: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
- Miller, L. (2010). Queer is in the eye of the newcomer: Mapping, performance & place-based media. *InTentions journal*, 4, Fall.
- Molly C. (2011). Temporary injunction stops UK lesbian's deportation to Uganda. *The Civil Rights Cause 2*. Available from: <<http://www.care2.com/causes/update-brenda-namigaddes-deportation-delayed.html>>. [Accessed 12 August 2011].
- Mullins, K.J. (2011). Iran queer refugees learn freedom in Canada. *Digital Journal Reports*. Available from: <<http://digitaljournal.com/article/308668>>. [Accessed 12 August 2011].
- Northrop, A. (transcript, n.d.). (2003). *ACT UP oral history project*. Interviewed by Sarah Schulman. Available from: <<http://www.actuporalhistory.org/interviews/images/northrop.pdf>>. [Accessed 28 April 2011].
- Nguyen, P. (2008). 'Please explain': Is it that hard to link homophobia and racism?. *Gay & Lesbian Issues and Psychology Review*, 4, 45-47.
- Osturk, S. (2011). Fears for gay refugees under 'swap deal'. *SX online*. Available from: <<http://sxnews.gaynewsnetwork.com.au/news/fears-for-gay-refugees-under-swap-deal-009061.html>>. [Accessed 10 August 2011].
- Pallotta-Chiarolli, M. (2005). Ethnic Identity. In J.T. Sears (Ed.), *Youth, Education, and Sexualities: An international encyclopedia* (pp. 303-306). Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group.
- Pallotta-Chiarolli, M. (2000). 'Coming Out/Going Home': Australian Girls and Young Women Interrogating Racism and Heterosexism. In J. McLeod & K. Malone (Eds.), *Researching Youth* (pp. 31-43). Hobart: Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies.
- Prosser, R. (2007). Recognition factors. *Gay & Lesbian Issues and Psychology Review*, 3, 171-174.
- Prosser, J. (1998). *Second Skins: The Body Narratives of Transsexuality*, New York: Columbia University Press.
- Raj, S. (2010). Moving representations: Queer refugee subjectivities and the law, (BA Honours thesis, Univ of Sydney). Available from: <<http://uts.academia.edu/SenthorunRaj/Papers/544291/Moving-representations-queer-refugee-subjectivities-and-the-law>>. [Accessed 8 August 2011].
- Riggs, D.W. (forthcoming 2011). Intersecting identities. In R. das Nair & C. Butler (Eds.), *Beyond rainbows: Diversity in lesbian, gay and bisexual communities*. Wiley Blackwell.
- Riggs, D.W. (2010). On accountability: Towards a white middle-class queer 'post identity politics identity politics'. *Ethnicities* 10(3), 344-357.
- Sears, J.T. (2005). *Youth, education, and sexualities: An international encyclopedia*. Westport CT: Greenwood Press.
- Sear, J.T. (1995). Black-gay or gay-black? In G. Unks (Ed.), *The Gay Teen* (pp. 135-137). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Sullivan, L.L. (2004). Chasing Fae: *The Watermelon Woman* and Black Lesbian Possibility. In J. Bobo, C. Hudley, & C. Michel (Eds.), *The Black Studies Reader* (pp. 211-224). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Tillman, L. (2010). Coming out and going home: A family ethnography. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16, 116-129.
- Yip, A. (2008). The quest for intimate/sexual citizenship: Lived experiences of lesbian and bisexual Muslim women. *Contemporary Islam*, 2(2), 103-129.



HOMOPHOBIA TO HETEROSEXISM: CONSTRUCTS IN NEED OF RE-VISITATION

IAN PATRICK SMITH, LINDSAY OADES & GRACE MCCARTHY

Abstract

Although the concept of homophobia has been used extensively in the literature since the early 1960s, researchers have shown growing concern for its relevance in present day research. Additionally, there has been variance in its definition leading to an array of ambiguities resulting in methodological limitations in empirical studies with a disregard for ensuring that definitions used match the focus of study. There have been numerous attempts to locate the construct within a theoretical framework and this has also resulted in weak empirical design. These weaknesses in research on homophobia have resulted in the coining of the construct heterosexism as a more contemporary and more appropriate definition than that of homophobia to indicate anti-gay discrimination. This review considers both terms with regard to their appropriateness and distinction and the utility of the construct heterosexism as it is applied to contemporary research on non-heterosexual communities. It is concluded that homophobia can no longer be framed as a straightforward function of individual psyches or irrational fear and loathing and that heterosexism is more appropriate in defining prejudiced behaviours and their consequences for non-heterosexual communities.

Key words: homophobia; heterosexism; terminology; methodology

Introduction

Sexual orientation discrimination includes acts which range from subtle or slight slurs (speech-acts) to physical attacks (queer bashing) and even murder (Silverschanz, Cortina, Konik & Magley, 2008) Yet despite the signifi-

cance of all of these forms of discrimination, empirical research has struggled to straightforwardly investigate this phenomenon, particular due to the fact that some researchers have attempted to combine definitions with theoretical underpinnings (for example, Bernstein, Kostelac & Gaarder, 2003; Lyons, Brenner & Fassinger, 2005; Smith & Ingram 2004; Waldo, 1999), whilst other researchers have not employed a theoretical framework in which to locate their research (for example, Drydakis, 2009; Silverschanz, Cortine, Konik & Magley, 2008). Furthermore, there are methodological issues arising from research on sexual orientation discrimination, with a large number of sampling, data and analysis problems (for example, Croteau & Lark, 1995; Croteau & von Destinon, 1994; Fyfe, 1983; Hall, 1986; Hudson & Richetts, 1980; Levine & Leonard, 1984; MacDonald, 1976; Weinberg, 1973). These problems are complex and range from a lack of clarity around conceptualisation of theoretical constructs to encapsulate the distinctive features of the discrimination that non-heterosexual individuals are subjected to, and the chosen theoretical paradigm to conceptualise these attitudes and behaviours, held both individually and by the community at large.

Further compounding these issues facing researchers attempting to measure sexual orientation discrimination, is the fact that a large pool of insufficient scientific language exists to describe negative attitudes and behaviours towards sexual minorities (for example, Brenner, Lyons, Fassinger, 2010; Fassinger, 2000; Powers, 1996). Having the correct language to describe, understand and research sexual orientation discrimination is one step in helping researchers to create an opportunity for soci-

ety to not only accept, but recognize the varied sexual orientations and attractions found in non-heterosexual individuals, despite their minority membership. Two key terms utilised within the literature on sexual orientation discrimination are homophobia and heterosexism, terms that have been reviewed and critiqued in relation to the numerous definitions put forward by researchers in the context of sexual orientation discrimination (for example; Brittin, 1990; Herek, 1990, 1992, 2000, 2004; Kritzinger, 2001; Sears, 1997; Weinberg, 1960, 1972). This review considers both terms with regard to their appropriateness and distinction, and the utility of the construct heterosexism as applied to research on non-heterosexual communities.

Homophobia

For nearly fifty years the construct of homophobia has been defined in many different ways based on either 1) the theoretical paradigm used (for example, Adam, 1998; Bernstein, Kostelac & Gaarder, 2003; Lyons, Brenner & Fassinger, 2005; Matthews & Adams, 2009; Smith & Ingram, 2004; Szymanski, Kashubeck-West & Meyer, 2008), or 2) the researcher's bias (for example, Lyons, Brenner & Fassinger, 2005; Silverschanz, Cortina & Konik, 2008; Smith & Ingram, 2003). These methodological factors have resulted in the following list of definitions for homophobia as presented in Table 1 (over page), which illustrates key results from a literature search on homophobia and heterosexism. The search was carried out using a front-end/search service accessing all library databases and open source journals (used by the University of Wollongong), which yielded 41 journal articles. Of the 41 articles, 19 were selected as relevant. Relevance was determined by articles which contained definitions of homophobia and/or heterosexism by seminal authors in the field. Seminal authors were identified as having published over five peer-reviewed articles since research began to appear in this field. These 19 articles were located in 13 different journals.

The conceptualisations in the definitions outlined in Table 1 begin from the early 1960's. Prior to 1967, scholarly writings on homosexuality both mirrored and legitimised the negative attitudes about the 'sin' of homosexuality, the 'sickness' of gays, and the 'unhealthiness' of the homosexual 'lifestyle'. Early causes of homophobia were described as 'irrational fears of the opposite sex' and a 'deep fear of disease or injury to the genitals' (Bieber, 1976). Bieber also reported that the homosexual 'lifestyle' was due to the 'disturbing psychopathology of its members'.

The first attitudinal shift away from those described above came from George Weinberg (1972), who argued that the 'pervasive denigration' of homosexuals (by both heterosexuals and homosexuals alike) represented a social rather than a personal pathology. Weinberg (1972) contended that the problem with homosexuality rested not in the condition itself, but rather in the way it had been constructed by society as an illness. This shift of attitude to a sociological conceptualisation of the relationship between normal society and the homosexual sub-culture resulted in Weinberg (1960) coining the term homophobia. He first described it as a heterosexual person's fear, contempt and hatred of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals (LGB). In 1972 Weinberg described it as a heterosexual person's irrational fear and dread of being in close quarters with LGB individuals. This term is taken to be an extension of Churchill's construct (1967) of homoerotomania which he described as the fear embedded in society for erotic or same sex contact with members of the same sex. Research, however, indicates that Weinberg arrived at the concept of homophobia before Churchill's book was published (Herek, 2004), thus calling into question the origins of this construct. Nevertheless, Weinberg's use of the word 'irrational' is noteworthy for two reasons. Firstly, it permitted a delegitimizing of mainstream condemnation and fear of homosexual individuals. Secondly, it implicated society in the perpetration of violence, deprivation and separation that

Table 1. Definitions of homophobia

Author	Date	Definition
Weinberg	1960's	Heterosexual people's fear, contempt and hatred of LGB people.
Weinberg	1972	Heterosexual person's irrational fear and dread of being in close contact/quarters with LGB persons
Macdonald	1976	An irrational persistent fear and dread of homosexuals
Morin & Garfinkle	1978	An individual's irrational fear, as well as a cultural belief system that supports negative stereotypes about gay people
Hudson & Ricketts	1980	A uni-dimensional construct composed of several emotional responses (e.g. fear, anger, disgust) that persons experience while interacting with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning individuals
Fyfe	1983	Consists of negative attitudes, culture bound commitments to traditional sex roles and personality traits
Brittin	1990	Fear and dislike of lesbians and gay men
Adams et al.	1996	A construct that consists of negative attitudes, affect regulation and malevolence towards lesbians and gay men
Sears	1997	The prejudice, discrimination, harassment or acts of violence against sexual minorities, including lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgendered persons, evidenced in a deep-seated fear or hatred of those who love and sexually desire those of the same sex.
Adam	1998	Negative attitudes toward lesbian, gay and (sometimes) bisexual people
Herek	2000	The marginalisation and disenfranchisement of lesbians and gay men.
Kritzinger	2001	One way in which strict adherence to gender role stereotypes is enforced and gender oppression maintained.
Herek	2004	Refers to individual's beliefs and behaviours emanating from personal ideology. Individual or social ignorance or fear of gay and /or lesbian people. Homophobic actions can include prejudice, discrimination, harassment, and acts of violence and hatred.

Weinberg considered to be the consequences of homophobia.

This was an important step forward, as it emphasised that it is not a person's sexual orientation that is the problem, but rather, being a member of a sexual minority which makes one

vulnerable to discrimination (Brooks, 1981; Meyer, 1995). It is this minority group membership which then leads to the marginalisation and discrimination of individuals; what Meyer (1995) refers to as the Minority Stress Model. This discrimination arises from societal views and attitudes of the majority group,

which the individual experiences in the dominant culture. Minority Stress Theory is described as the manner in which individuals from stigmatised social categories experience excessive stress and negative life events because of their minority status (Brooks, 1981; Kelleher, 2009; Meyer, 1995, 2003). This stress stems from relatively stable underlying social structures, institutions and processes, rather than from biological characteristics of the person or from individual conditions (Meyer, 2003). According to Meyer's (1995) Minority Stress Theory, non-heterosexual individuals often experience dystonic psychological states as a result of existing in environments in which they are virtually always minorities, given their difference and exclusion from these normative underlying structures.

Homophobia in early research was taken to represent ways in which marginalisation is manifested towards gay and lesbian people and their sub-cultures. These early attitudes and behaviours were premised on stereotypes of gay and lesbians as being 'sexually aggressive' and predatory (paedophiles), 'excessively effeminate' (in the case of gay men) or overly masculine (in the case of lesbians) (Herek, 1984). The construct of homophobia represented a perception of a significant and dangerous pathology which was directly related to anti-gay victimisation. Some theorists have gone so far as to report that the effects of homophobia have fostered 'queer bashing' and thus violence and discrimination against non-heterosexual individuals (Petersen, 1991) based on their sexual orientation (see Fox, 2009 for a review). The critique of this construct in its early use is that it posed a real threat to non-heterosexual individuals by instilling a self-hatred and fear that kept these individuals 'in the closet', thereby preventing them from disclosing their same sex attraction. It may therefore be surmised that the misuse of the word homophobia and its poor conceptualisation led to the belief in the majority culture that homosexuality is an individual's pathology instead of a societal issue.

Homophobia as a construct is thus rife with negative consequences as it results in the formation and acquisition of a negative homosexual identity (internalised homophobia) where non-heterosexual individuals develop a 'self-loathing' related to being a member of a minority group (Weinberg, 1972). This is then compounded by the development of negative feelings around one's own minority status resulting from the stigmatisation experienced from being a member of the minority group (Smith, Dermer, Ng & Barto, 2007). It is important to note that the construct of homophobia was created in the midst of strong political rebellion against the medicalisation and pathologising of homosexuality, therefore placing it out of context in present day studies as it is no longer viewed as a pathology. Homophobia is thus limited in its representation of discrimination as basically the product of individual fear, that is, the fear of being close to gay and lesbian individuals. Homophobia, therefore, does not as a construct encapsulate the dangerous societal pathology that is directly implicated in anti-gay and lesbian, bisexual and transgender victimisation. Homophobia is consequently an inadequate term with which to frame the many experiences of prejudiced behaviours and their consequences against non-heterosexual communities.

Heterosexism

As a result of growing awareness in research of these negative attitudes and behaviours and the consequences of the historical unfolding of the construct of homophobia, it appears that concerns about its use and focus on individual thoughts, actions and behaviours of the homophobic person, have led to the decreased useage of the term. Kitzinger (1987) argues that the concept of homophobia and the scales used for measurement have been embedded in a liberal-humanistic framework which emphasises the similarities between lesbians, gay men and heterosexuals and the present tolerance of gays and lesbians, thereby complicity reinforcing heteronormativity in its liberalism (Brickell, 2001). That is, there is a call for researchers to abandon the

concept of homophobia because of its location within and promotion of a liberal construction of homosexuality and to adopt heterosexism as a more viable concept, which gets to the roots of sexual orientation oppression (Clarke, 2005), as is now discussed.

Heterosexism was first used within the women's and gay liberation movement as a way to offer a political meaning and to present a common language with which to raise concerns around the systemic oppression of non-heterosexual individuals (Kitzinger, 1996). The construct of heterosexism was thus defined initially as an ideological system that 'denies, denigrates and stigmatises' any non-heterosexual 'form of behaviour, relationships of community' (Herek, 1990). Heteronormativity sustains the dominant norm of heterosexuality by rendering as marginal any normal structure that falls outside of this 'norm' (Hudak & Giammatei, 2009). The heteronormative presumption is that everyone is heterosexual unless proven otherwise. This is commonly expressed by the concept of the 'closet', a metaphor for keeping one's sexual orientation or sexual identity a secret. Sedgwick (1990) called the closet 'the defining structure for gay oppression in this century' (pg. 71). Intrinsic to heteronormative assumptions are beliefs about 'correct' or 'normal' gender, sexuality and family. It is the combination of these three structural components that constitute heteronormativity as a system of privilege.

Peel (2001) uses lesbian feminist politics to explore subtle forms of heterosexism in language, a social phenomenon which she terms "mundane heterosexism". Peel refers to mundane heterosexism to everyday subtle incidents of heterosexism, which are either unnoticed or unnoticeable because they are socially normative and because of their everyday nature. One way in which people engage in this is to suggest that reverse discrimination is occurring in some form, i.e. there is prejudice against heterosexuals. Drawing on discursive psychology and feminist understandings of subtle sexism, she refers to three forms of

mundane heterosexism which people engage in: (1) prejudice against the heterosexual, (2) non-heterosexuality as a deficit and (3) refusing diversity. Peel argues from a feminist perspective that mundane heterosexism is founded on the assumption of a false equivalence between lesbians and gay men and heterosexuals, and so works to reinforce the heterosexual assumption.

The concept of heterosexism thus moves the conceptualisation of discrimination away from the individual to the cultural and in ecological terms (Smith, Dermer, Ng & Barto, 2007). That is, where the majority group status (being heterosexual) is assumed to be the status for all individuals in the society or community, unless there is evidence to the contrary, which might entail an individual openly disclosing their homosexual orientation (Smith, 2004) referred to as coming out. Thus, heterosexism refers to the cultural ideology of an assumed heterosexual status, that maintains societal prejudice against sexual minorities and that this prejudice may take many forms, from provocative slurs, snubs and queer jokes (Silverschanz, Cortine, Konic & Magley, 2008), offensive epithets to overt hostile harassment and physical violence (Bernat, Calhoun, Adams, & Zeichner, 2001), such as occurs in 'gay bashings' and even murder as mentioned earlier. Heterosexism is then used to describe a belief system that positions the 'superiority of heterosexuality over homosexuality' (Morin, 1977).

Additionally, the term cissexual has been used for defining individuals who do not experience dissonance between the sex assigned to them at birth in accordance with their physical body, and the gender or 'subconscious sex' that they know and feel themselves to be. It is important to note that a cis person may dislike the gender stereotypes and roles which are forced on them by a patriarchal society, but they do not feel this sense of dissonance between their physical sex (their body) and the sex their brain identifies with. Therefore, while a female may not identify with the term "woman" as they have come to understand it

in a patriarchal society, they do not feel any internal mental and/or physical rejection of being gendered female. The literature consists of an overlap with heterosexism, which also includes this definition. This review however, is not aimed at exploring this specific delineation.

Numerous definitions of heterosexism have proliferated since the early 1980s, attempting

to delineate the nuances involved in this complex phenomenon of sexual identity discrimination. The following table outlines these definitions as obtained via a literature research carried out as described earlier.

From a review of these definitions, it can be determined that there is an absence of a universal definition which clearly defines the construct as it is used in research. Definitions

Table 2. Definitions of Heterosexism

Author	Date	Definition
Weinberg	1960's	Heterosexual people's fear, contempt and hatred of LGB people.
Weinberg	1972	Heterosexual person's irrational fear and dread of being in close contact/quarters with LGB persons
Macdonald	1976	An irrational persistent fear and dread of homosexuals
Morin & Garfinkle	1978	An individual's irrational fear, as well as a cultural belief system that supports negative stereotypes about gay people
Hudson & Ricketts	1980	A uni-dimensional construct composed of several emotional responses (e.g. fear, anger, disgust) that persons experience while interacting with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning individuals
Fyfe	1983	Consists of negative attitudes, culture bound commitments to traditional sex roles and personality traits
Brittin	1990	Fear and dislike of lesbians and gay men
Adams et al.	1996	A construct that consists of negative attitudes, affect regulation and malevolence towards lesbians and gay men
Sears	1997	The prejudice, discrimination, harassment or acts of violence against sexual minorities, including lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgendered persons, evidenced in a deep-seated fear or hatred of those who love and sexually desire those of the same sex.
Adam	1998	Negative attitudes toward lesbian, gay and (sometimes) bisexual people
Herek	2000	The marginalisation and disenfranchisement of lesbians and gay men.
Kritzinger	2001	One way in which strict adherence to gender role stereotypes is enforced and gender oppression maintained.
Herek	2004	Refers to individual's beliefs and behaviours emanating from personal ideology. Individual or social ignorance or fear of gay and /or lesbian people. Homophobic actions can include prejudice, discrimination, harassment, and acts of violence and hatred.

have diverse elements such as (1) a display of homophobia in society, (2) the promotion of a heterosexual lifestyle, (3) a system that stigmatises any non-heterosexual form of behaviour, (4) a system that operates on an individual and cultural level, (5) the ideology that maintains prejudice against sexual minorities and (6) a system that posits the superiority of heterosexuality over homosexuality. It is therefore a researcher's choice to decide whether these definitions are similar, interrelated, distinct from one another or indeed outdated and irrelevant due to misleading or lack of empirical data to support these conceptualisations.

Furthermore, the numerous definitions locate the construct as either a social, individual or combined phenomenon. In a number of the definitions, heterosexism is seen as being bound to the identity of the self which internalises the consequences of heterosexism, resulting in what is now termed 'internalised heterosexism' (Szymanski & Meyer, 2008) previously referred to as 'internalised homophobia' (Weinberg, 1972). This adds a further dimension to the definition as it brings with it the construct of self-identity as non-heterosexual and the individual's identity formation process which will determine the individual's position on their identity and hence the manner in which they view themselves and their world. This also impacts and influences one's decision to disclose their sexual orientation in various settings.

The other concern with this construct is its use in isolation from a theoretical framework. Only a few researchers have attempted to combine definitions with theoretical underpinnings (for example, Bernstein, Kostelac & Gaarder, 2003; Lyons, Brenner & Fassinger, 2005; Smith & Ingram 2004; Waldo, 1999), with a number of researchers having no theoretical framework in which to locate their research (for example, Drydakis, 2009; Silverschanz, Cortine, Konik & Magley, 2008). The lack of a consistent theory further dissipates the validity of definitions used. There is, however, a growing body of literature which indicates a leaning towards

Minority Stress Theory (Meyer, 1995) as the dominant theoretical framework. This theory encapsulates and highlights the negative experience, negative life events and stress GLBT members experience because of their minority status.

From the above, it can be seen that criticisms of the definitions for heterosexism are numerous and connected to methodology due to: 1) The theories used to posit them and the lack thereof, 2) the bias of the researcher and 3) researcher's failure to reflect the intolerant attitudes and behaviours of the majority group. Scientific enquiry is therefore hampered by methodological limitations such as a lack of clarity around conceptualisation of theoretical constructs. Thus understanding complex phenomena such as homophobia and heterosexism, particularly when there is a lack of agreement upon the use of constructs within research, is problematic for a researcher.

Other terms such as sexual prejudice (Herek 2004), homosexual prejudice (Reiter, 1991) and heterosexist harassment (Silverschanz, Cortine, Konik & Magley, 2008) have been used to capture the negative attitudes and hostility based on sexual orientation. Prejudice, as a construct, is helpful to define an attitude based on judgment which is directed at a specific social group, involving negativity and hostility, in contrast to the term homophobia, which implies a fear with the encounter of the minority group. Homophobia is inconsistent with studies indicating that heterosexuals do not have a fear for homosexuals, but rather experience an intense anger and disgust for homosexual individuals and their 'behaviours' (Fyfe, 1983), which is inconsistent with the definition of a phobia.

'Queer hate', as expressed by Fox (2009), is another proposed term, which includes the variety of sexualities and sexual lives which are often placed on the margins of society and ways in which these marginalised minorities experience discrimination in many forms from 'speech acts' to 'physical acts'. Fox chooses

the term 'queer hate' over homophobia, as he feels that 'homophobia' does not capture the 'true essence' of the queer people's experiences of discrimination. 'Queer hate' also includes the varied sexualities who also suffer the same issues as homophobia, thus not limiting the awareness to homosexuals only. Queer hate is therefore a more informative and inclusive term as the discrimination experienced by queer individuals is not merely a phobia, but rather is also an intolerance and hatred for the queer individuals.

Furthermore, due to the necessity of including the expanded range of possible heterosexist behaviours to include actions which create a climate of negativity towards sexual minorities, Herek (1990) has introduced additional constructs to attempt to account for these negative attitudes such as institutionalised favouritism and psychological heterosexism (p.316). These represent individual-level heterosexism that may be manifested through both feelings/attitudes and behaviours and is usually discussed in terms of how it promotes and perpetuates violence against non-heterosexual people. Additionally, Silverschanz, Cortina, Konik & Magley, (2008, p. 178) also refer to heterosexist harassment, which they define as insensitive verbal and symbolic (but non-assaultive) behaviours that convey dislike toward non-heterosexuals.

Conclusions

Despite the concerns raised above, the advantage of using the construct heterosexism over homophobia, which is arguably the most recognised term to describe the marginalisation and disenfranchisement of gay men and lesbians (Herek, 2000), is that it acknowledges the collusion in anti-gay attitudes at all societal levels. The broad definition of homophobia is restrictive in its understanding of the negative reactions to gay individuals (Fyfe, 1983).

Heterosexism has been used in the literature as a more appropriate conceptualisation for a number of positive reasons. The construct is more inclusive as it includes the mental and

physical health problems resulting from invalidating social environments created by the stigma, prejudice and discrimination carried out by the majority group (Fisher & Shaw, 1999; Gee, 2002; Meyer, 2003). Additionally, it takes into account social injustice, which has been seen to contribute to diminished physical and mental health of non-heterosexual individuals due to their being exposed to acts of oppression, discrimination and bias (Matthews and Adams, 2009). One such bias noted in the literature is that of biased evaluations of competence of non-heterosexual individuals within the workplace (Drydakis, 2009), where it is assumed that customers will be uncomfortable dealing with homosexual workers and thus take their business elsewhere.

Moreover, heterosexism is seen to include political or legislative action (Russell, 2000), where ramifications for both the environmental level (from relatively contained local systems to larger, national, political systems) and the person level, through social individual empowerment. This results in the manifestation of heterosexism in two primary ways; namely through societal customs and institutions (cultural heterosexism) and through individual attitudes and behaviours (psychological heterosexism, namely prejudice, harassment and violence). Heterosexism also centres on the normalising and privileging of heterosexuality, rather than merely a fear of homosexuality. It is therefore not limited to the phobia or fear of homosexuals, or to violent episodes, but conceptually includes prejudice toward bisexual men and women as well, thus preventing the assumption that only 'homosexuals' suffer from the effects of discrimination due to sexual orientation. Heterosexism highlights the persistence of threats and the perpetuation of false stereotypes held by heterosexuals about non-heterosexual individuals and with regard to gender identity in general.

The construct also takes into consideration the minimising of alternate sexual orientation and the unsupportive responses which lead to non-heterosexuals feeling 'invisible' (Smith & In-

gram, 2004) in numerous settings, one of those being the workplace, where it is surmised that the level of openness is a trade-off between disclosure and possible discrimination (Badgett, 1995).

Heterosexism therefore operates on many levels and is inclusive of all forms of stigma, prejudice and discrimination. It lays bare the belief in the superiority of heterosexuality in which non-heterosexuality or non-heterosexual persons are consciously or unconsciously shut off from daily activities (Sears & Williams 1997). It thus exposes the notion that other sexual orientations are not considered and are even silenced, thereby promoting the notion of heteronormativity.

To conclude, this review has described (1) the out-dated and inappropriate use of the construct homophobia compared with the conceptualisation of heterosexism, despite homophobia being arguably the most popular term used, and (2) the lack of a universal definition of what is meant by the construct heterosexism and the lack of a theoretical framework when using the construct, to encapsulate all the nuances and invisible experiences of heterosexism. Political opinions and discourse about sexual orientation have changed over time as advocates try to win constituents and change laws. Homophobia can no longer be framed as a straightforward function of individual psyches or irrational fear and loathing. In its place, heterosexism highlights group beliefs, maintaining heterosexual privilege. Heterosexism strives to move beyond understanding homophobia solely in psychological terms and to invoke more dynamic ways of thinking about prejudiced behaviours, however it is a term in need of ongoing refining and conceptual clarity.

Acknowledgements

Support for this work was provided by a University of Wollongong grant and a St John of God Health Care Scholarship which the first author holds.

Author Notes

Ian Smith is a clinical psychologist, the Director of Allied health at SJOGHC and is a doctoral candidate at the University of Wollongong. ian.smith@sjog.org.au

Lindsay Oades (PhD.) is a clinical psychologist and the Director of the Australian Institute of Business well-being, Sydney Business School, the University of Wollongong

Grace McCarthy (PhD.) is the Program Director of the Masters of Business Coaching, Sydney Business School, the University of Wollongong.

References

- Adam, B. D. (1998). Theorizing homophobia. *Sexualities*, 1, 387-404.
- Badgett, L. (1996). Employment and sexual orientation: Disclosure and discrimination in the workplace. *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services*, 4, 29-52.
- Bayer, R. (1987). *Homosexuality and American Psychiatry: The politics of diagnosis* (Rev. Ed.). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Bernat, J. A., Calhoun, K. S., Adams, H. E. & Zeichner, A. (2001). Homophobia and physical aggression toward homosexual and heterosexual individuals. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 110, 179-187.
- Bernstein, M., Kostelac, C., & Gaarder, E. (2003). Understanding "Heterosexism:" Applying theories of racial prejudice to homophobia using data from a Southwestern Police Department, *Race, Gender & Class*, 10(4), 54.
- Bieber, I. (1976). A discussion of "Homosexuality: The Ethical Challenge." *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 44, 163-166.
- Braun, V. (2000). Heterosexism in focus group research: Collusion and challenge, *Feminism & Psychology*, 10(1), 133-140.
- Brenner, B. R., Lyons, H. Z., & Fassinger, R. E. (2010). Can Heterosexism harm organisations? Predicting organizational behaviours

- of gay and lesbian employees. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 58, 321-335.
- Brooks, V. R. (1981). *Minority stress and lesbian women*. Lexington, MA: D.C. Health
- Croteau, J. M. (1996). Research on the work experiences of lesbian, gay, and bisexual people. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 48, 195-209.
- Croteau, J. M., & Lark, J. S. (1995). On being lesbian, gay or bisexual in student affairs: A national survey of experiences on the job. *NASPA Journal*, 32, 189-197.
- Croteau, J. M., & Lark, J. S. (1995). On being lesbian, gay or bisexual in student affairs: A national survey of experiences on the job. *NASPA Journal*, 32, 189-197.
- Croteau, J. M., & von Destinon, M. (1994). A national survey of job search experiences of lesbian, gay and bisexual student affairs professionals. *Journal of College Student Development*, 35, 40-45.
- Drydakis, N. (2009). Sexual orientation discrimination in the labour market. *Labour Economics*, 16, 364-372.
- Evans, O., & Steptoe, A. (2002). The contribution of gender role orientation, work factors and home stressors to psychological well-being and sickness absence in male and female dominated occupational groups. *Social Science and Medicine*, 54, 481-492.
- Fassinger, R. E. (2000). Gender and sexuality in human development: Implications for prevention and advocacy in counselling psychology. In S. D. Brown & R. W. Lent (Eds.), *Handbook of Counseling Psychology* (3rd ed., pp. 346-378). New York, NY: Wiley.
- Fisher, A. R., & Shaw, C. M. (1999). African Americans' mental health and perceptions of racist discrimination: The moderating effects of racial socialization experiences and self esteem. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 46, 395-407.
- Fox, C. (2009). It's hatred and intolerance, *Gay and Lesbian Issues and Psychology review*, 5(3), 160-166.
- Fyfe, B. (1983). 'Homophobia' or homosexual bias reconsidered. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 12, 549-554.
- Gee, G. C. (2002). A multilevel analysis of the relationship between institutional and individual racial discrimination and health status. *American Journal of Public Health*, 92, 615-623.
- Griffin, P. (1991). From hiding out to coming out: Empowering lesbian and gay educators. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 22(3-4), 167-196.
- Hall, M. (1986). The lesbian corporate experience. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 12, 59-75.
- Herek, G. M. (1989). Hate crimes against lesbians and gay men: Issues for research and policy. *American Psychologist*, 44, 948-955.
- Herek, G. M. (1984). Beyond "homophobia": A social psychological perspective on attitudes toward lesbians and gay men. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 10, (1-2), 1-21.
- Herek, G. M. (2004). Beyond "homophobia": Thinking about sexual prejudice and stigma in the twenty-first century. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy: Journal of NSRC*, 1(2), 6-24.
- Herek, GM 2004, 'Beyond "homophobia": Thinking about sexual prejudice and stigma in the twenty-first century'. *Sexuality Research & Social Policy*, vol.1, pp6-24.
- Herek, G. M. (1990). The context of anti-gay violence: Notes on cultural and psychological heterosexism. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 5, 316-333.
- Herek, G. M. (2000). The psychology of sexual prejudice. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 9, 19-22.
- Hudson, W., & Ricketts, W. A. (1980). A strategy for measurement of homophobia. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 5, 357-371.
- Kashubeck-West, S., Szymanski, D. M., & Meyer, J. (2008). Internalized heterosexism: Clinical implications and training considerations. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 36, 615-630.
- Kitzinger, C. (1987). *The social construction of lesbianism*. London: Sage
- Kitzinger, C. (1996). Speaking of oppression: Psychology, politics and the language of power. In E.D. Rothblum & L. Bond (Eds.), *Preventing homophobia and heterosexism* (pp. 3-19) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Levine, M. P., & Leonard, R. (1984). Discrimination against lesbians in the work force. *Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 9, 700–710.
- Lyons, H. Z., Brenner, B. R., & Fassinger, R. E. (2005). A multicultural test of the theory of work adjustment: Investigating the role of heterosexism and person-environment fit in the job satisfaction of lesbian, gay, and bisexual employees. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52, 537–548.
- MacDonald, A. P. Jr. (1976). Homophobia: Its roots and meanings. *Homosexual Counseling Journal*, 3(1), 23033.
- Matthews, C. R. & Adams, E. M. (2009). Using a Social Justice Approach to Prevent the Mental Health consequences of heterosexism. *Journal of Primary Prevention*, 30, 11-26.
- Meyer, I. H. (1995). Minority stress and mental health in gay men. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 36, 38-56.
- Meyer, I. H. (2003). Prejudice, social stress, and mental health in lesbian, gay, and bisexual populations: Conceptual issues and research evidence. *Psychological Bulletin*, 129, 674-697.
- Minton, H. L. (2002). *Departing from deviance: A history of homosexual rights and emancipatory science in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Morin, S. F. (1977). Heterosexual bias in psychological research on lesbianism and male homosexuality. *American Psychologist*, 32, 628-637.
- Morin, S. E., & Garfinkle, E. M. (1978). Male homophobia. *Journal of Social Issues*, 34, 29-47.
- Peel, E. (2001). Mundane heterosexism: understanding incidents of the everyday. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 24 (5), 541-554.
- Powers, B. (1996). The impact of gay, lesbian and bisexual workplace issues on productivity. In A. L. Ellis & E. D. B. Riggle (Eds.), *Sexual Identity on the job: Issues and services*. New York, NY: Harrington Park Press.
- Ragins, B. R., & Cornwell, J. M. (2001). Pink triangles: Antecedents and consequences of perceived workplace discrimination against gay and lesbian employees. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86, 1244–1261.
- Russell, G. M. (2000). *Voted out: The psychological consequences of anti-gay politics*. New York: New York University Press.
- Sears, J. T., & Williams, W. L. (1997). *Overcoming heterosexism and homophobia: strategies that work*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Sedgwick, E. K. (1990). *Epistemology of the closet*. Berkeley University of California Press.
- Silverschanz, P., Cortina, L. M., Konik, J., & Magley, V. J. (2008). Slurs, Snubs, and Queer Jokes: Incidence and Impact of Heterosexist harassment in Academia. *Sex Roles*, 58, 179-191.
- Smith, S. D., Dermer, S. B., & Astramovich, R. L. (2005). Working with non-heterosexual youth to understand sexual identity development, at-risk behaviors, and implications for health care professionals. *Psychological Reports*, 96, 651-654.
- Smith, S. D., Dermer, S. B., Ng, K. M., & Barto, K. K. (2007). From "homophobia" to "homoemasculation": A primer for counselors on sexual language discourse. *NC Perspectives*, 1, 1 1-20.
- Smith, N. G., & Ingram, K. M. (2004). Workplace heterosexism and adjustment among lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals: The role of unsupportive social interactions. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 51, 57–67.
- Szymanski, D. M., Kashubeck-West, S., & Meyer, J. (2008). Internalized heterosexism: Measurement, psychosocial correlates, and research directions. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 36, 525-574.
- Waldo, C. R. (1999). Working in a majority context: A structural model of heterosexism as minority stress in the workplace. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 46, 218–232.
- Weinberg, G. H. (1972). *Society and the healthy homosexual*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.



HETEROSEXUALITY AS CAPTIVITY: WHEN DESIRE IS IMPRISONED

ALINE DA SILVA PIASON, YÁSKARA ARRIAL PALMA, BRUNA KRIMBERG VON MÜHLEN & MARLENE NEVES STREY

Abstract

In this paper we aim to propose a reflection on the possible overcoming of captivity, with a focus on the sexual and emotional experiences of women who identify themselves as lesbian. Our works are developed from a feminist perspective, especially based on the Theory of Mindful Space of Burlae (2004). We present the reports of some women who managed to break with the captivity of a heteronormative society, taken from qualitative descriptive and exploratory research using narrative interviews to collect information, and data analysis using the analysis of discourse based on the ideas of Foucault (1986) and feminist studies of gender. Our findings suggest that heteronormativity produces captivity, where desires and behavior are imprisoned, but when lesbians can overcome them, they can go in search of happiness.

Keywords: captivity, women, lesbians, Theory of Mindful Space, heteronormativity.

Introduction

Thinking about captivity is to think about imprisonment. And imprisonment does not necessarily need to occur in physical spaces, but can also be psychological and cultural. The latter two are often those barriers that are the most difficult to remove because they are symbolic and are embedded throughout the ages. Those barriers are constituted throughout the history, in this case, of individual women. Such barriers hold women in beliefs and behaviours, shaping lifestyles and restricting possibilities.

One significant barrier is the heterosexual norm in force, which although is not typically an explicit law (though in some spaces it is), it is often treated as such. This heteronormativity serves as captivity in the sexuality of many women who, rather than follow their desires, follow what society expects of them; in other words, that they constitute a family with a man and have children.

The aim of this paper is to propose a reflection on the overcoming of possible captivity related to the sexual and affective experiences of women who identify themselves as lesbian. In previous studies (Piason, 2009, Palma, 2011), lesbian women have demonstrated a life of captivity and numerous limitations, but throughout their lives were able to break down the "walls" that are imposed by a heteronormativity society. Thus, it is considered that the study of the experiences of lesbian women can enrich our understanding of the experiences of all women, whatever their sexual orientation (Mott, 2003; Oliveira, 2006; Rich, 1980; Seal, 2007; Swain, 2002, 2004, 2008). To facilitate our analysis we draw on the theory of mindful space of Burlae (2004), which suggests that violence is the way of being captive in a space of sexist, racist, poverty, fear, cultural and physical barriers. Such captivities produce incarcerations and invasions of women's cognitive, emotional and physical spaces, which take them to experience restrictions to express their necessary mobility to develop self-defense strategies to escape this destiny. Nonetheless, Burlae suggests that many women transcend a succession of captive spaces in their lives, each one offering an emergency in a new ter-

ritory, as the findings presented in this paper demonstrate.

Captivity Building Ways of Life

Our work is developed from a feminist perspective of searching knowledge about women and their different circumstances. As Rago (1998) suggests, the "concepts from which we operate by producing scientific knowledge, the way we establish the subject-object relationship of knowledge and own representation of knowledge and truth with which we operate" (p.23) should lead us to a commitment to the pursuit of equality in diversity. We similarly agree that "women bring a different cultural and historical experience than the male, at least until the present, an experience that many have classified as the margins" (p. 24).

To think and to recognise the history of women's invisibly through the ages, we draw upon feminist theories, and especially the Theory of Mindful Space of Burlae (2004). With the proposal to discuss the theory of Mindful Space, we understand, based on this theory, that all violence is a kind of captivity or invasion that as for a rape, penetrate into spaces (body, personal and cognitive), affecting the integrity of the individual. However, women are trained by the patriarchal culture in which we live to accept this violence as normal, so not all actions of invasion or captivity are seen as violent when they occur, causing many women to only realise that they experienced violence when damaging effects appear, which is why many women remain captive of limitations and barriers throughout all their life, being necessary a conscientiousness for the interruption of the violence trajectory.

Violence as defined in the present paper is the sense of being captured by a space of sexist, racist and cultural barriers, that is, invasion as a violation of the space or the action of keeping a person in a captive space. The invasions and captivity as violence against women in patriarchal culture are normalised and common, that is, a cultural norm, in which energy and women's bodies are invaded areas, or

where women are held in a particular space. These cultural rules provide roles in which women must direct their energies to others, often in extreme ways. And what we see in our society, yet patriarchal, is exactly that. Women have expected roles attached to them, of mothers, workers, but without ceasing to be the "queens of the home", or simply "feminine" - delicates, fragile, disoriented, emotional, irrational. These are expected behaviours from women, and are the product of long histories that have defined ways of being and acting, and without many women realizing it, become naturalised to the point that many think that they are like that because nature made them that way (Colling, 2004, Scott, 2002).

Of course women are not only bound by the roles expected of them, but also the identities allowed them. In many space, heterosexuality is expected of women. The heterosexual rule requires that only an emotional-sexual relationship between a man and a woman is acceptable, reinforcing the binary model and all theories related to the fixation of male and female roles. This then places same-sex couples in the position of "deviant", and that speech carries with it the entire stigma and prejudice arising from those who expect that the rules are met (Swain, 2000, Butler, 2003, Gomide, 2007). But we cannot simply think that this "standard" exists because this is how it must be. We cannot think of it as natural because if so, anything that escapes it would be "unnatural". If the standard exists, someone has created it, and if it has been created, it must have some utility *for some people*. Whilst much has changed over the course of history in terms of the roles ascribed to men and women, much remains the same. Western society provides a clear representation of these partial transformations, where discrimination and oppression of those deemed different continues. We must then ask, what purpose do social norms serve? The immediate answer would be to keep society functioning, and organised in a particular way. But this often occurs through control, fear and oppression (Foucault, 2006). And what happens

when someone does not fit the rules? They are excluded and suffer the prejudice that arises from a society that dictates these rules and expects them to be fulfilled. Through such widespread discrimination, society has maintained a certain way, how it expects people to behave, and often reaches its goal. Again, this is what is defined here as violence.

However, violence can be predicted and prevented by an early sense of invasion or captivity. The ability to say no and have that respected is the key to protecting and maintaining all spaces. However many women do not acquire this ability because their survival in their culture may be threatened if they exercise it. Nonetheless, consciousness can cause women to at least realise that they are not the reason of those invasive arrangements that exist under a patriarchal culture, in which all women are likely to face captivity throughout their lives in some form (Butler, 2004).

And it was through the consciousness of their desire, and most importantly, to say no to violence by being in a relationship with another woman, that the following women showed us some of the struggles of women in search of their happiness. Even if to do so they are still often pointed out in the street, and still discriminated for the simply fact of wishing to be with someone of the same sex, their resistance to captivity was evident. Their stories highlight new possibilities and spaces that we address in the analysis that follows, where we examine some of the breaks they make with the violence of enforced heterosexuality, and follow their wishes for a lesbian orientation.

Method

The narratives presented below are taken from two separate masters projects. The first dealt with women who love women and their trajectories in the process of self-recognition and social visibility in relation to sexual orientation. The second addressed the issue of families made up of women who identify themselves as lesbian and have daughters and sons.

The participants of the first study were 8 (eight) women who self-identified as lesbians, aged between 22 and 44. In the second study, was interviewed eight (8) participants, aged between 29 and 51, which in addition to self-identified as lesbians, constituted families with their partner and sons / daughters. Both studies were conducted with lesbians who lived in the capitals of Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina state, in Brazil.

A qualitative approach was adopted, emphasising a descriptive and exploratory character, and used narrative interviews to data collection. The interviews were taped and transcribed, taking into account the free and informed consent term. Data analysis occurred through discourse analysis based on the ideas of Foucault (1986) and feminist studies of gender (Scott, 2002, Strey, 2004, Colling, 2004). It should be noted that for the present discourse analysis, we use fictitious names to preserve the identity of participants.

In this article, besides using the ideas coming from feminist and gender studies - which emphasize the need to take into account the power relations between male and female, where the androcentrism and heteronormativity are constitutive of that society - we also use the Theory of Mindful Space of Burlae (2004). In both studies, the theme of captivity imposed by a heterosexual norm appeared quite marked, suggesting that useful reflections may be made from this theme.

Both studies were approved by the Psychology Scientific Committee of PUCRS and the Ethics Committee of the same institution,. All norms of Resolution 196/96 of the Health Ministry, relating to research involving human beings, detailed below, were thoroughly discussed and followed.

Analysis

During the interviews some participants identified the fear of directing their desire for a per-

son of the same sex, and in that we can see captivities being formed. This fear made them deny their desire and instead make other choices, thus foreclosing the pursuit of their personal achievements in congruence with their feelings, as demonstrated in the following narratives:

I used to found some women interesting, but I found a way to suppress this. I thought wrong, it's not right. As I come from a Protestant family of Seventh-day Adventist Church, I thought it wrong (Rose).

It seems I have two lives, one internal and one external, which at home I was a person and outside I was other. I was always lying to people and saying that she was just a friend, or lying to me, not taking my true desires (July).

These narratives present the constraints that society puts on lesbian women, overwhelming the differences and using prejudice towards those who do not follow the "rules" established. Foucault (1988, 1996) presents the concept of "sexual devices", which reflects on how sexuality is produced and governed by numerous speeches that are interpreted as absolute truths; they are justified for being in the service of maintaining an 'organised society' by a heteronormativity models.

The consequences of invasion or captivity may produce abuses, and if not properly acknowledged, may become violence against themselves or against others. When women are unable to emerge into new spaces, there is often violence in their life. So when a woman cannot get out of certain situations that put them as captives that occur throughout life, we can consider that there is violence. If a woman is able to overcome such situations, one can say that she becomes open to new possibilities and new spaces (Burlae, 2004). One example of this is when a woman feels frustrated by being prohibited from expressing an emotional and sexual attraction for another woman. If that happens, she feels the effects of captivity, such as embarrassment, frustration and need for change. She feels that the

rules that govern her life are deeply offensive to her.

Direct contact with the participants enabled us to understand the process of self-acceptance, as a lesbian, which means get in touch with your sexual desire, assuming first for herself, and after that initial moment, to family, friends and colleagues. This becomes a process of struggles and internal and external renegotiations, redesigning ways of and being in the world (Lauretis, 1990). For some participants, living up to social expectations required what was experienced as prejudice against themselves. The following explain the idea:

My sister even told me once, why will you engage this guy, if it's not that what you want, right? (...) The people already saw that in me. And I fought against it, against prejudice. I fought against my prejudice, I did not want that. Was forcing me and I did not want that (Alice).

Actually, I always had a lot of prejudice, so I use to say, two men together fine, but two women, that's terrible. I had a lot of prejudice about it, but then it happened. "(July). "At first I was very afraid, it was an unconscious fear like so: I did not like, this is not what I want. My unconscious made an interpretation so strange, kind of a contradiction. It was an unconscious rejection (Manuela).

As can be seen in these extracts, the pressures on these women for them to restrict their desires and experience their sexuality in the compulsory heteronormativity model were considerable. These pressures lead to the creation of captivity that appeared to permeate these women's lives, making them powerless to fulfil their wishes. Of course for some women, prejudices came from those in their family:

She wanted me to give her a grandson. She really wanted to have grandchildren. It was an experience like that... At first when I was a teenager, immature and stuff, these things still touched me, worried me, they let me like that, is that what I want? But actu-

ally I was transferring things, very worried about my mother, my mother's desire, not mine (Faby).

Faby was charged by her mother's desire that she produce a grandson. For Faby, part of the journey out of captivity was acknowledging that she could still have children as a lesbian. It is thus important to recognize that not all lesbians are "tied" in captivity, because many can break these bonds, most of the time through suffering, but nonetheless can visualise their sexual orientation which compose their subjectivity. In this experience of "coming out the closet", in other words, to reveal their sexual orientation to family members, the narratives that are presented show that the first impact of the revelation is a surprise, disappointment, but it is one worth facing:

But one day I decided to open myself up to my father. He was in shock, said nothing, the expression seemed that someone had died. But after we got talk he got to me and said he still loved me and how his daughter, he would support me "(Joan). "(...) My mother returned from the market and she intuited something and she went look for me and she found me on the stairs with a girlfriend. She began to fight [...] and my mother threw the bunch of keys on my face and said she'd rather have a bitch daughter or a dead daughter than having a lesbian daughter [...]. She did not apologise or say anything, but she hugged me and we both started to cry. We cried a lot and have renewed the relationship. Today she accepts (Faby).

As this extract highlights, the captivities of normative sexuality can indeed be broken, but each person has his/her own time and way of doing it. It is nonetheless important to be able to question the "naturalization" of these modes of violence, whilst at the same time finding ways to negotiate complex social situations:

This story that says like that, ah! Why gays and lesbians do not come out of the closet? Like that it's like a fairy tale. Because there

is no way how to come out of the closet in your work and has no way of coming out of the closet with your father-in-law, no way to come out of the closet with your doctor (...). Because unfortunately is a super mega machoism society, that heterosexuality is the norm, there is no way to escape from the norm, then, we must have self-care like that (Clair).

Final Thoughts

Taking into account the expressed ideas, after years of forced acceptance, of invasions and captivity, the women that we interviewed had sometimes learned to relate only in the captive spaces that others considered that are "normal" relationships. However, a shift in consciousness allowed some of these women to realise that these invasive arrangements are part of a patriarchal culture, and should rather be rethought and reconsidered, towards living a full and satisfying life.

The speech below gives a good example of violence and captivity breaking with these models imposed by our society:

For the good of others, of what society think it is right, correct, and normal. So, for you to be normal you would have to follow some rules, and this part I think it's the hard one. After that you broke, that you says no! No one pays my bills to want to dictate, say you have to do this or that. Then the thing got quieter (Lucy).

And only with the collapse of standards, through a conscious ownership of their life trajectories, is it possible to think of a more full life, where the choices and decisions are made taking into account what each person believes be the best for them. Being a woman and having your sexual desire and affection directed to another woman, and, especially, that you can do whatever you want with it, inside or outside the "closets". This is a life away from captivity that traps and immobilises.

Author Notes

Aline da Silva Piason is a psychologist, PhD student in Psychology, with CAPES scholarship in Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, Ipiranga Avenue, 6681, Building 11, sala 941 – Porto Alegre/RS/Brazil.

Yáskara Arrial Palma is a psychologist, PhD student in Psychology, with CAPES scholarship in Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, Ipiranga Avenue, 6681, Building 11, sala 941 – Porto Alegre/RS/Brazil.

Bruna Krimberg von Mühlen is a psychologist, Master's degree student in Psychology, with CNPq scholarship in Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, Ipiranga Avenue, 6681, Building 11, sala 941 – Porto Alegre/RS/Brazil.

Marlene Neves Strey is a psychologist, PhD, CNPq researcher and titular Professor in Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, Ipiranga Avenue, 6681, Building 11, sala 941 – Porto Alegre/RS/Brazil.

References

- Butler, J. (2003). *Problemas de gênero: Feminismo e subversão da identidade*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira.
- Burlae, K.K. (2004). The theory of mindful space: Identifying, understanding, and preventing violence. *Affilia*, 19(1), 85-98.
- Colling, A. (2004). A construção histórica do feminino e do masculino. In Strey, M.N.; Cabeda, S.T. & Prehn, D.R. (Eds.), *Gênero e cultura: Questões contemporâneas*. Porto Alegre: EDIPUCRS.
- Foucault, M. (1988). *A história da sexualidade I: A vontade de saber* (12nd ed.). Rio de Janeiro: Graal.
- Foucault, M. (1996). *Microfísica do poder*. Rio de Janeiro: Graal.
- Foucault, M. (2006). *Vigiar e punir: Nascimento da prisão* (31st ed.). Petrópolis: Vozes.
- Gomide, S. (2007) Formação da identidade lésbica: Do silêncio ao queer. In Grossi, M.P.; Uziel, A. P. & Mello, L. (Eds.), *Conjugalidades, parentalidades e identidades lésbicas, gays e travestis*. Rio de Janeiro: Garamond.
- Lauretis, T. (1990). Eccentric subjects: Feminist theory and historical consciousness. *Feminist Studies*, 16(1), 115-150.
- Mott, L. (1987). *O lesbianismo no Brasil*. Porto Alegre: Mercado Aberto.
- Oliveira, C.S.de. (2006). Assumir-se lésbica: Desafios e enfrentamentos. In Seminário Internacional fazendo gênero, 7, 2006, Florianópolis. *Anais do Seminário Internacional Fazendo Gênero 7: Gênero e Preconceitos*. Florianópolis: UFSC. Retrieved June 7, 2010, from http://www.fazendogenero7.ufsc.br/st_20.html
- Palma, Y. A.(2011). Mamãe e... mamãe? Apresentando as famílias homomaternais. Unpublished master's thesis, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul University, Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.
- Piason, A. (2009). Mulheres que amam mulheres: Trajetórias de vida, reconhecimento e visibilidade social às lésbicas. Unpublished master's thesis, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul University, Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.
- Rago, M. (1998). Epistemologia Feminista, Gênero e História. In J. Pedro & M. Grossi (Eds.), *Masculino, feminino, plural*. Florianópolis: Editora das Mulheres.
- Rich, A. (1980). Compulsory heterosexuality and lesbian existence. In R. Parker & E. Aggleton (Eds.), *Culture, society and sexuality: A reader*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Selem, A. (2007) Liga Brasileira de lésbicas: Produção de sentidos na construção do sujeito político lésbicas. *Labrys: Estudos Feministas*, (12), Retrieved May 29, 2011, from <http://www.unb.br/ih/his/gefem/labrys12/livre/celia.htm>
- Scott, J. (2002). *Fantasy echo*: História e a construção da identidade. *Labrys: Estudos Feministas*, 2(1) Retrieved May 27, 2011, from http://vsites.unb.br/ih/his/gefem/labrys1_2/scott1.html

- Strey, M.N. (2004). Ser sujeito ou ser o outro? Algumas reflexões históricas. In M.N. Strey S.T. Cabeda & D.R. Prehn (Eds.), *Gênero e cultura: Questões contemporâneas*. Porto Alegre: EDIPUCRS.
- Swain, T. N. (2000). *O que é lesbianismo*. São Paulo: Brasiliense.
- Swain, T.N. (2002). Feminismo e lesbianismo: Quais os desafios? *Labrys: Estudos Feministas*. v.1-2. Retrieved May 20, 2011, from http://www.unb.br/ih/his/gefem/labrys1_2/index.html
- Swain, T.N. (2004). O normal e o objeto: A heteronormatividade compulsória e o destino biológico das mulheres. *Labrys: Estudos Feministas*. v.6, Retrieved July 7, 2011, from <http://www.unb.br/ih/his/gefem/labrys6/index.html>
- Swain, T.N. (2008). Os limites do corpo sexuado: Diversidade e representação social. *Labrys: Estudos Feministas*, Retrieved July 14, 2010, from <http://www.unb.br/ih/his/gefem/labrys13/leituras/anahita.html>.



AUSTRALIAN UNDERGRADUATE PSYCHOLOGY STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS TRANS PEOPLE

DAMIEN W. RIGGS, KAREN WEBBER & GREGORY R. FELL

Abstract

The study reported in this paper applied a version of Hill and Willoughby's (2005) Genderism and Transphobia Scale revised for an Australian population (GTS-RA) to a sample of undergraduate psychology students. Factor analysis identified three factors within the scale. Findings suggest that the sample reported overall more positive attitudes towards trans people than have been found in previous research. Specifically, it was found that females and those who had prior contact with a trans person held more positive attitudes towards trans people than did males or those who had not previously met a trans person. Additionally, higher levels of homophobia and more normative beliefs about gender predicted less positive attitudes towards trans people. Gender differences were found on a measure of homophobia, though not on the measure of beliefs about gender. Overall, the results of this study suggest that the GTS-RA is a useful research tool in the assessment of attitudes towards trans people, and that it has the potential to contribute to educational curricula aimed at addressing negative attitudes towards trans people.

Keywords: attitudes, trans people, transphobia, Australia, Genderism and Transphobia Scale

Introduction

The study of attitudes towards non-heterosexuals has a long history within psychology, so much so that there now exist many valid and reliable scales for measuring attitudes towards non-heterosexual people, and specifically lesbians and gay men. These measures have consistently found differences

across a range of variables amongst heterosexual populations in regard to their attitudes toward lesbians and gay men. What these measures cannot tell us, however, is anything about attitudes towards other groups who experience marginalisation on the basis of their gender or sexual orientation, such as is the case with trans people. The term 'trans people' is used here, following Tee and Hegarty (2006), to refer to transgender and transsexual people who both live and identify as a gender other than that associated with their natal sex, regardless of whether or not they have elected to alter their physical characteristics through surgery. When it comes to attitudes, it certainly could be suggested that trans people are subject to the same normative beliefs about gender as are homosexual people (and certainly some trans people identify as homosexual). However, trans people are also likely affected by more specific attitudes particular to the disparity between their natal sex and their gender identity.

The present paper sought to build upon a small but growing body of empirical research that has explored attitudes amongst the general population towards trans people, and specifically to assess this in the Australian context. Further, the study sought to explore gender differences in terms of attitudes towards trans people, beliefs about gender, and homophobia. Prior to presenting the findings from this study, however, the following sections first briefly summarise the existing literature on the possible causes of transphobia, and the effects it has upon trans people (in order to demonstrate why this phenomenon requires ongoing attention), as well as outlining findings from previous applications of the measure utilised in the present study to assess attitudes towards trans people.

Causes of Transphobia

Research on the possible causes of transphobia tends to suggest that the motivation lies in the maintenance of existing 'traditional' or normative understandings of gender. Witten and Eyer (1999), for example, have theorised that the motivation for violence against trans people is a need to maintain rigid boundaries between genders, and moreover to assert a belief that gender is a direct reflection of natal sex and thus cannot be changed. Applying this to their study of attitudes towards trans people, Tee and Hegarty (2006) found that participants who reported attitudes that supported a traditional, binary, biologically-based model of gender were more likely to oppose granting rights to trans people. Tee and Hegarty also examined how being acquainted with trans people influenced participant's support for trans rights, with their findings suggesting that knowing a trans person was positively correlated with support for trans rights. Finally, Tee and Hegarty found that females were more likely than males to support the rights of trans people.

In their research on the correlates of transphobia and homophobia, Nagoshi et al. (2008) found a weak but significant correlation between their measure of transphobia and a measure of sexism, where more negative attitudes towards trans people were related to higher levels of both 'hostile sexism' (a measure indicating prejudice against women) and 'benevolent sexism' (which indicated favourable attitude towards women only if they conform to traditional gender roles), and that this was particularly the case for males. They also found that aggression was weakly correlated with more negative attitudes to trans people for males than for females.

Effects of Transphobia

Understanding the causes of transphobia is of course not just an academic exercise: transphobia significantly impacts upon the lives of trans people. The Australian and New Zealand

Tranznation Report (Couch et al., 2007), outlining findings from a sample of 253 trans people, found that 87.4% of participants reported experiencing some form of discrimination or stigma, regardless of their natal sex. 53.4% of participants reporting verbal abuse or personal insults, 47.4% reporting social exclusion and 47.4 % indicated that rumours were spread about them. Discrimination was not simply verbal, however, as 28.6% of participants had been the victim of some form of violence or physical attack and 11.5% and 9.9% respectively had been sexually assaulted or raped. Discrimination in housing, employment, finance, healthcare and family law were other common complaints. The survey also reported that fear of stigma and discrimination caused the majority of trans people to modify their daily behaviour, an action that was found to increase the likelihood of depression.

Internationally, Witten and Eyer's (1999) longitudinal study of 300 trans people suggests that trans people are more likely than the general population to experience violence and victimisation. Their findings also suggest that trans people are less likely to receive the expected standard of care from the healthcare and criminal justice systems in the aftermath of these events. Similarly, Wittle, Turner and Al-Alami (2007) found in their UK study of the experiences of trans people that 73% of participants reported that they had been harassed in public places and 10% had been victim to threatening behaviour whilst in public. Discrimination and harassment pervaded many areas of their participants' lives; 37% of respondents had been excluded from family events and 45% had experienced family breakdown due to responses to their trans identity. Young trans people also experienced discrimination in their schooling environment, with 64% of young trans men and 44% of young trans women reporting harassment at school by fellow students and, in some cases, by teachers.

Finally, another large scale study conducted by Lombardi, Wilchins, Priesing and Malouf (2001) in the US with 402 participants found

that half of their sample had experienced violence or harassment in their lifetime and one quarter had experienced a violent incidence that they believed to be related to their trans identity. This study also found that trans people who had experienced economic discrimination (such as difficulty acquiring and maintaining employment) were also more likely to experience violence.

The Genderism and Transphobia Scale

Hill and Willoughby's (2005) *Genderism and Transphobia Scale* (GTS) represents the first major attempt to create and validate a measure of attitudes towards trans people. The GTS was based upon previous research by Hill (2002), and advocates for a multifaceted approach to understanding transphobia. In Hill and Willoughby's study, 'genderism/transphobia' (one of two factors) is defined as "an emotional disgust towards individuals who do not conform to society's gender expectations" (p. 534). Their second factor was termed 'gender bashing', referring to attitudes about the harassment or physical assault of non-gender normative individuals. The GTS displayed high internal reliability, with a total alpha level of .96. An application of the GTS by Hill and Willoughby, using a sample of 180 students at a Montreal university, produced scores ranging from 35-194 from a possible range of 32-224. The mean score was 100.4 ($SD = 37.7$) suggesting that, overall, attitudes fell on the more tolerant end of the midrange of the scale.

Since the development of the GTS, Winter, Webster and Chong (2008) have administered a Chinese translation of the GTS to a sample of 205 students at the University of Hong Kong. The mean of the Hong Kong sample was 107.89 ($SD = 23.15$). Like Hill and Willoughby (2005), it was found that men had significantly higher scores than women, and this difference was primarily seen in the items that described gender bashing behaviours. Unlike Hill and Willoughby, however, Winter, Webster and

Chong identified a five factor solution. The first of these factors was named 'anti sissy prejudice', which contained questions relating to prejudice against males who adopted stereotypically feminine behaviour and dress. The second was 'anti trans violence', which measured violent behaviour directed at all trans people and is roughly equivalent to Hill and Willoughby's gender bashing factor. A third factor contained questions relating to the nature of gender and the 'naturalness' of a biologically based gender binary and this was named 'trans unnaturalness'. The fourth factor, 'trans immorality', contained only two items, both of which related to moral judgements about trans people. The final factor, 'background genderism', contained miscellaneous items relating to attitudes and judgements about trans people and gender expression and was named in accordance with Hill and Willoughby's concept of genderism. Winter, Webster and Chong suggest that this different factor structure reflects the different underlying cultural conceptions of the gender and trans people between the two societies.

Gerhardstein and Anderson (2009) have also applied the GTS to a sample of undergraduate students from the US Midwest, where they found again that males reported more negative attitudes towards transpeople, and specifically that males scored higher on the gender bashing factor. Their research also examined participant's assessments of images of trans people, and found that those who assessed the appearances of trans people more negatively were also likely to display more negative attitudes towards trans people and higher levels of sexual prejudice.

In the present research, a three factor solution was identified. In many ways the factor structure resembles that found by Hill and Willoughby (2005); the first factor appears equivalent to their genderism/transphobia factor, and has been named 'genderism/transphobia' accordingly ($\alpha = .94$). It includes most of the general attitude measures as well as the questions relating to gender beliefs. The second factor includes items re-

lating to violence and confrontational behaviour, and thus is roughly equivalent to Hill and Willoughby's gender bashing factor and is named as such ($\alpha = .91$). The third factor contains items relating to teasing or making jokes. These items were included in the gender bashing factor in the Canadian study, however the fact that they load to a separate factor in the present study may be attributed to underlying differences in Australian and Canadian cultures. This factor was named 'gender teasing' ($\alpha = .78$, which is reasonable given it only contains 4 items).

Hypotheses

As attitudes towards trans people and homosexuals are likely to be theoretically linked (Hill & Willoughby, 2005; Nagoshi et al., 2008; Tee & Hegarty, 2006), it was hypothesised that scores on the GTS-RA would be positively correlated with homophobia. It was also predicted, again on the basis of the previous research, that negative attitudes towards trans people would be associated with more traditional beliefs about gender, and that prior contact with a trans person would be associated with more positive attitudes towards trans people. Finally, it was predicted that there would be gender differences in responses, such that male respondents would report more negative attitudes towards trans people than female respondents (and that this would be most pronounced on the gender bashing factor), and that male respondents would report both more homophobic attitudes and more traditional gender beliefs than would female respondents.

Method

Participants

Ethics approval for the study was granted by the University of Adelaide. Participants were 173 psychology undergraduate students from an Australian university who had the option to participate in the present research in exchange for credit in their psychology course

via an online student portal. All people who accessed the portal were recorded as having completed the research. 105 of the participants identified as female and 68 identified as male. The mean age of participants was 19.75 years, meaning the sample was slightly younger than the student samples used by either Hill and Willoughby (2005) or Winter, Webster and Chong (2008). 18 participants in the sample identified their sexuality as something other than heterosexual; these participants were retained in the sample as it was considered likely that they represent normal levels of the variance in sexual preferences amongst the broader population (in which it is typically presumed that approximately 10% of all people do not identify as heterosexual).

Materials

The study used a web based test battery comprised of three separate scales, one forced response item, and a number of demographic questions.

Modified Genderism and Transphobia Scale

A modified version of Hill and Willoughby's (2005) *Genderism and Transphobia Scale* was utilised, on which participants responded to items that each comprised of a statement followed by a seven-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (strongly agree) to 7 (strongly disagree). This version (*Genderism and Transphobia Scale – Revised for Australia: GTS-RA*) was revised to remove items that referred to people who cross-dress (as this was considered a potentially confounding factor in the original scale); to modify questions relating to beliefs about gender so that they were more specific to the gender transition undergone by trans persons; and to avoid near duplication of questions that appear in Tee and Hegarty's (2006) *Beliefs about Gender Scale* (another scale used in the present study, outlined below).

Some items were changed due to problematic wording. Item 11 ("men who shave their legs are weird") was replaced with "men who

wear high heels are weird", as male leg shaving may well be necessary for sport or simply considered fashionable by some people. Item 16 ("I would avoid talking to a woman if I knew she had surgically created a penis and testicles") was changed to "I would avoid talking to someone if I knew they had surgically created male genitals from the female genitals they were born with" because the use of the female gender in the original wording was misleading. Question 18 ("if I found out that my lover was the other sex I would get violent") was changed to "if I found out my lover was born the opposite sex I would get violent". Question 32 ("If I encountered a male who wore high-heeled shoes, stockings and makeup I would consider beating him up") was changed to read "If I encountered a person wearing high-heeled shoes, stocking and make up and I suspected that they were male, I would consider beating them up." Question 22 ("If a man wearing makeup and a dress, who also spoke in a high voice, approached my child I would use physical force to stop him") was considered problematic not only because of its poor gender descriptions but also because it could be argued that many parents would use physical force to stop any stranger approaching their child. The question was changed to "if I saw a person who I suspected to be transsexual approaching my friend on a busy street, I would use physical force to stop them". This wording still retained the main elements of the previous question (the use of physical force to stop the unwanted approach of a trans person), but removed the confusing gender descriptions and the justification of parental protection. Item 19 (Feminine boys should be cured of their problem) was considered ambiguous and changed to "Feminine boys should be taught to act more masculine". Item 21 (Passive men are weak) was deleted, as it was too broad for a survey focused exclusively on trans persons. With these changes the GTS-RA was left with 30 items.

Other Measures

Tee and Hegarty's (2006) nine-item *Beliefs about Gender Scale* was included in the battery of measures. This is scored on a seven-point Likert scale, identical to the GTS. Higher scores on this scale indicate a strong belief that sex determines gender and that people are either male or female and cannot change between the two ($\alpha = .85$).

Homophobia was measured by Wright, Adams and Bernat's (1999) *Homophobia Scale*, in which each item is scored on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). Higher scores indicate high levels of homophobia ($\alpha = .92$).

One question asked if the participant had met a trans person.

The survey also included demographic questions relating to gender, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status and country of birth. Only the first of these is used in the analyses reported in this paper as no significant relationships were found between the other demographic variables.

Procedure

Participants accessed the survey online through the psychology department's research participation page. After agreeing to the terms laid out on the consent screen they were presented with definitions of the terms 'trans persons', 'transsexual', 'transgender' and 'homosexual' to minimise any confusion over their meaning. Participants then completed the survey and submitted it electronically. Student's participation was recorded through a separate system so all participants remained anonymous. All participants had the opportunity to receive a copy of the findings.

Results

Analysis of the GTS-RA showed it to be highly reliable, with a Cronbach's α of .96.

Scores ranged from 31 to 173 out of a possible range from 30 to 210. The mean score for this sample was 85.92 ($SD= 32.95$), indicating that attitudes towards trans people within the sample overall were quite positive. As the modified version of this scale had fewer items than the original scale, comparisons with previous studies are best conducted using an item mean corresponding to the seven-point Likert scale. Respondents in the current study reported more positive attitudes towards trans people ($M = 2.94, SD = 1.10$) than those from Hill and Willoughby's (2005) Canadian study ($M = 3.14, SD = 1.18$) or Winter, Webster and Cheung's (2008) Hong Kong study ($M = 3.37, SD=.73$). In terms of the three component factors in the present study, the item means show that genderism/ transphobia ($M= 3.15, SD = 1.19$), gender bashing ($M= 1.94, SD = 1.09$), and gender teasing ($M = 3.08, SD = 1.35$) were also within the positive end of the scale.

Homophobia demonstrated a very strong positive correlation with the overall GTS-RA score ($r = .862, p < .001$), as well as with the three factors separately: genderism/

transphobia ($r = .792, p < .001$), gender bashing ($r = .830, p < .001$), and gender teasing ($r = .702, p < .001$). Homophobia was also strongly related to the respondent's gender, with men ($M = 2.35, SD = 0.74$) reporting higher item mean homophobia scores than women ($M = 1.93, SD = 0.52$), a difference that was statistically significant, $t(109.53) = 4.01, p < .001$. These strong relationships were as expected, and due to the fact that previous research has demonstrated the correlation between homophobia and transphobia, further replication of these results here is of limited utility. Thus the impact of other variables on the GTS-RA and its component factors are explored in more detail in the remainder of the results.

In regards to gender differences, Table 1 shows that males scored higher than females on the GTS-RA across all three factors, suggesting that sex differences in attitudes towards trans people are not restricted to one aspect of prejudice and behaviour. This supports the hypothesis that males will have more negative attitudes towards trans people than females, and also that this would be most pronounced on the gender bashing factor.

Table 1. *M and SD comparing item mean scores by gender across the three factors of the GTS-RA*

Factor	Male <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	Female <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Significance
Genderism/Transphobia	3.53 (1.25)	2.90 (1.09)	3.50	171	$p = .001$
Gender bashing	2.31 (1.25)	1.70 (0.91)	3.95	113.05	$p = .001$
Gender teasing	3.49 (1.31)	2.81 (1.32)	3.32	171	$p = .001$

Table 2. *M and SD for prior contact item mean scores across the three factors of the GTS-RA*

Factor	Prior Contact <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	No Prior Contact <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Significance
Genderism/Transphobia	2.63 (1.13)	3.37 (1.14)	3.90	170	$p < .001$
Gender bashing	1.46 (0.69)	2.14 (1.17)	3.95	157.10	$p < .001$
Gender teasing	2.50 (1.29)	3.32 (1.31)	3.80	170	$p < .001$

As hypothesised, GTS-RA scores were strongly, positively correlated with beliefs about gender $r = .66, p < .001$. Respondent's gender did not, however, significantly impact upon their beliefs about gender ($p = .096$).

Out of the sample of 173 participants, 53 respondents reported that they had had prior contact with a trans person. These respondents reported more positive attitudes towards trans people ($M = 2.48, SD = 0.97$) than respondents who had not met a trans person ($M = 3.03, SD = 1.11$) and this difference was significant, $t(170) = 3.09, p = .002$. The impact of prior contact with a trans person on the component factors of the GTS-RA are presented in Table 2 (previous page).

Simultaneous multiple regressions were conducted with both the overall GTS-RA score as well as each of the component factors as the outcome variable and with respondent's gender, reported gender beliefs, and whether or not they had met a trans person as predictor variables. For the overall GTS-RA scores, this model predicted 49.2% of the variance ($R^2 = .492, F(3,169) = 54.60, p < .001$). Of the three predictor variables, beta scores showed that gender beliefs contributed the largest proportion of unique variance ($\beta = .619, p < .001$) followed by respondent's gender ($\beta = .216, p < .001$). The beta value for prior contact with a trans person was not significant ($p = .209$).

Turning to the three factors specifically, for genderism/transphobia the above model predicted 63.4% of the variance ($R^2 = .634, F(3,169) = 97.70, p < .001$). Of the three predictor variables, beta scores showed that gender beliefs contributed the largest proportion of unique variance ($\beta = .729, p < .001$) followed by respondent's gender ($\beta = .160, p = .001$) and prior contact with a trans person ($\beta = .098, p = .043$). For gender bashing, the model predicted 28.1% of the variance ($R^2 = .281, F(3,169) = 22.01, p < .001$). Of the three predictor variables, beta scores

showed that gender beliefs contributed the largest proportion of unique variance ($\beta = .366, p < .001$) followed by respondent's gender ($\beta = .213, p = .001$) and prior contact with a trans person ($\beta = .199, p = .004$). For the gender teasing factor, the model predicted 33.3% of the variance ($R^2 = .333, F(3,169) = 28.06, p < .001$). Of the three predictor variables, beta scores showed that gender beliefs contributed the largest proportion of unique variance ($\beta = .465, p < .001$) followed by respondent's gender ($\beta = .177, p = .006$) and prior contact with a trans person ($\beta = .154, p = .019$).

Discussion

The findings presented in this paper provide evidence for the existence of gender differences amongst the sample of psychology undergraduate students in terms of attitudes towards trans people as well as non-heterosexual people. In regards to the hypothesis that scores on the GTS-RA would be positively correlated with homophobia, this was supported by a strong positive correlation between the GTS-RA and the *Homophobia Scale*, suggesting that people with negative attitudes towards homosexuals are also very likely to have negative attitudes towards trans people. Further, it was found that males were more likely to report homophobic attitudes than were females, thus confirming the hypothesis that there would be such gender differences. These findings are explained by previous research (e.g., Hill & Willoughby, 2005; Nagoshi et al., 2008; Tee & Hegarty, 2006), which suggests that a person who believes that individuals should behave in ways consistent with traditional gender roles (which are perceived as being determined by biological sex) are more likely to view both trans people and/or homosexual people negatively, as such people are seen as violating these roles (with it being likely that males will do this more so than will females). That there would be a relationship between homophobia and transphobia thus affirms this and further demonstrates the need for educational programmes that 1) inform participants

about the differences between non-heterosexuality and non-gender normativity, 2) present non-heterosexuality and non-gender normativity as situated on a continuum of human sexual variation, and 3) challenge participants to recognise the broad range of ways in which gendered identities are enacted even amongst those who are normatively (heterosexually) gendered.

The findings also support the related hypothesis that there would be a relationship between beliefs about gender and attitudes to trans people, but not the hypothesis that this relationship would be gender differentiated. The first finding, that of a relationship between beliefs and attitudes, is unsurprising, considering that there is much research connecting attitudes towards trans people with some measure of attitudes about gender or gender roles (e.g., Tee & Hegarty, 2006; Nagoshi et al., 2008; Hill & Willoughby, 2005). While the scale used (taken from Tee and Hegarty) does not directly test people's attitudes about the maintenance of traditional gender roles (and so does not directly examine Witten and Eyer's 1999 theory that trans discrimination is a means of maintaining western society's hierarchical gendered power structure), it does touch on concepts that underpin that structure. That the findings were not gender differentiated, however, is a surprise. Given that, at least conceptually, beliefs about gender seem related to the beliefs that appear to inform homophobic attitudes, it would seem logical that the gender differences in homophobia would be mirrored in beliefs about gender. That this was not the case warrants further research. Specifically, such research may explore whether there are differences between an individual's attitudes towards non-heterosexual and/or non-gender normative people and their own reported gender identities. In other words, future research may examine whether the relationship between homophobia, transphobia, and beliefs about gender is determined more by an individual's own sense of self as a gendered being than it is by their natally assigned sex *per se* (which,

technically, is the category used in the present research).

In terms of gender differences in responses to the GTS-RA, and as hypothesised, women showed more positive attitudes towards trans people than men. This gender difference was maintained across all three factors, though by far the largest difference was in the gender bashing/control factor. This mirrors Hill and Willoughby's (2005), Winter, Webster and Cheung's (2008) and Gerhardstein and Anderson's (2009) findings that gender differences were most pronounced on their gender bashing/anti trans violence factors, on which males scored more highly than females. Yet whilst the findings of the present study would suggest that while gender differences were most clearly obtained on the gender bashing factor, there were still gender differences across all attitudes about towards trans people reported within the sample (a finding that again mirrors Hill and Willoughby and Gerhardstein and Anderson, though differs from Winter, Webster and Cheung who only found gender differences on two of their five factors). Future studies may find it useful to include a measure of violent tendencies in order to determine the extent to which sex differences observed in GTS items pertaining to violent and confrontational acts can be explained by willingness to commit violence towards *any* person, and whether violent tendencies are indeed gender differentiated.

Finally, and as was hypothesised, participants who had met a trans person showed significantly more favourable attitudes towards trans people than those who has not met a trans person. As this was a forced response single item, no comment can be provided on the contexts in which participants had met a trans person or how this had potentially contributed to their more positive attitudes. It is of note, however, that just under a third of the sample *had* met a trans person, which is a positive outcome. That these were psychology students, however, may account for this to some degree. Future research may investigate further any differences between groups

as to the likelihood of meeting a trans person, what factors facilitate this happening, and how this impacts upon a person's attitudes to trans people in general. Given that the empirical verdict is still out on the utility of the contact hypothesis (e.g., Henry & Hardin, 2006), future research may help to clarify whether contact with trans people actually makes a unique contribution to changing attitudes, or whether it is part of a wider set of changes required for any person to examine and alter their attitudes towards trans people (and certainly the regression analysis reported in this paper suggests that it may not necessarily make a unique contribution, even if it is an important part of creating an environment for attitudinal change to occur).

Perhaps the largest limitation to this study is that it relied entirely on self report. Participants may have been tempted to present themselves in a more favourable light, thus making the sample appear to have more positive attitudes than may, in reality, have been the case. However, to obtain any measure of how people may actually treat a trans person would be both difficult and unethical. Instead, this study attempted to maximise honesty by allowing participants to access the study online, thus allowing them to do so in the privacy and safety of their homes, and by assuring them that their identities would not be linked to their data. This study also exclusively used university students as participants and so cannot be easily generalised, although this was also the case for the two previous applications of the GTS. Unlike these studies, however, the present study only used psychology students, whom Tee and Hegarty (2006) found to be generally more supportive of trans rights than students from other disciplines. Another important aspect to note in regards to the university sample from which this study was drawn is that participants opted into this particular study from a number of available studies, and this may have attracted students who were already generally positive toward trans people (or at the very least aware of trans people). Another limitation to this study was

that while it did have a reasonably large sample size, the sample itself was rather homogenous in terms of demographic characteristics. It is thus recommended that future studies aim to ensure a more heterogeneous sample. Finally, it must also be noted that while the Australian sample appeared to have more accepting attitudes towards trans people than either the Hong Kong or Canadian samples, this may be due to the changes made to the scale rather than a true difference in attitudes. Further application of the GTS-RA with other Australian populations is thus warranted.

One final aspect of the study that requires attention is that whilst a measure of beliefs about gender was included, no measure of beliefs about the aetiology of transsexualism or transgenderism was included. This is of note given the fact that there are ongoing contestations both internationally and within Australia specifically over the status of trans as a legally protected category, contestations that often centre upon the biological nature (or otherwise) of trans as a category (see Wallbank, 2004, for a discussion of this). In terms of empirical research, Landen and In-nala (2000), in their study of attitudes towards transsexualism in Sweden, found that people who attributed transsexualism to biological causes reported more positive attitudes than did people who saw it as a 'choice'. Issues surrounding the biological basis of gender itself are of course widely debated within trans communities, and whether or not a biological argument is the most useful approach to take in challenging transphobia is a question that cannot be easily answered (Whittle, 2000). Nonetheless, understanding whether non-trans people make attributions about biology as it pertains to trans people – and the relationship this has to attitudes – has an important role to play in future empirical studies of transphobia and attitudes towards trans people (Gerhardstein & Anderson, 2009).

To conclude, whilst the GTS (or here GTS-RA) is still a new instrument, it has great po-

tential to improve our understanding of attitudes towards trans people and the correlates of them, and thus to contribute to the development of educational programmes aimed at challenging transphobia.

Acknowledgements

We begin by acknowledging the sovereignty of the Kurna people, the First Nations people upon whose land we live in Adelaide, South Australia. Thanks must go to Irene Frieze for facilitating anonymous peer review of this article.

Author Notes

Damien W. Riggs is a senior lecturer in social work at Flinders University. He is the author of over 100 publications in the fields of critical race and whiteness studies, gender and sexuality studies, and family and parenting studies. He is the author of *What about the children! Masculinities, sexualities, and hegemony* (Cambridge Scholars Press, 2010). Email: damien.riggs@flinders.edu.au

Karen Webber works at the National Centre for Vocational Education Research. Email: karenmaureenwebber@gmail.com

Gregory R. Fell is a psychologist working at SA Career Consultants. Email: greg.fell@sacareer.com

References

- Couch, M., Pitts, M., Mulcare, H., Croy, S., Mitchell, A., & Patel, S. (2007). *Tranznation*. Melbourne: Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society.
- Gerhardstein, K.R., & Anderson, V.N. (2009). There's more than meets the eye: Facial appearance and evaluations of transsexual people. *Sex Roles, 62*, 361-373. DOI: 10.1007/s11199-010-9746-x
- Goodman, M. B., & Moradi, B. (2008). Attitudes and behaviors towards lesbian and gay persons: Critical and mediated relations. *Journal of Counselling Psychology, 55*, 371-384. DOI: 10.1037/0022-0167.55.3.371
- Henry, P.J., & Hardin, C.D. (2006). The contact hypothesis revisited: Status bias in the reduction of implicit prejudice in the United States and Lebanon. *Psychological Science, 17*, 862-868. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9280.2006.01795.x
- Hill, D.B., & Willoughby, B.L.B (2005). The development and validation of the *Genderism and Transphobia Scale*. *Sex Roles, 53*, 531-544. DOI: 10.1007/s11199-005-7140-x
- Landen, M., & Innala, S. (2000). Attitudes towards transexualism in a Swedish national survey. *Archives of Sexual Behaviour, 29*, 375-388. DOI: 10.1023/A:1001970521182
- Lombardi, E.L. (2001). Gender violence: Transgender experiences with violence and discrimination. *Journal of Homosexuality, 42*, 89-101.
- Nagoshi, J.L., Adams, K.A., Terrell, H.K., Hill, E.D., Brzuzy, S., & Nagoshi, C.T.(2008). Gender Differences in Correlates of Homophobia and Transphobia. *Sex Roles, 59*, 521-531. DOI: 10.1007/s11199-008-9458-7
- Polimeni, A., Hardie, E., & Buzwell, S. (2000). Homophobia among Australian heterosexuals: The role of sex, gender role ideology and gender role traits. *Current Research in Social Psychology, 5*, 47-61.
- Tee, N., & Hegarty, P. (2006). Predicting opposition to the civil rights of trans persons in the United Kingdom. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology, 16*, 70-80. DOI: 10.1002/casp.851
- Wallbank, R. (2004). *Re Kevin* in perspective. *Deakin Law Review, 9*, 1-43.
- Whittle, S. (2000). *The transgender debate: The crisis surrounding gender identities*. Reading: South Street Press.
- Whittle, S., Turner, L., & Al-Alami, M. (2007). *Engendered penalties: Transgender and transsexual people's experiences of inequality and discrimination*. Retrieved September 27, 2010, from <http://>

www.pfc.org.uk/files/EngenderedPenalties.pdf

- Winter, S., Webster, B., & Cheung, P.K.E. (2008). Measuring Hong Kong undergraduate students' attitudes towards transpeople. *Sex Roles, 59*, 670-683. DOI: 10.1007/s11199-008-9462-y
- Witten, T.M., & Eyler, A.E. (1999). Hate crimes and violence against the transgendered. *Peace Review, 11*, 461-468.
- Wright, L.W., Adams, H.E., & Bernat, J. (1999). Development and validation of the *Homophobia Scale*. *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioural Assessment, 21*, 337-347. DOI: 10.1023/A:1022172816258



BOOK REVIEW

FARID PAZHOHI

Gay, Straight, and the Reason Why: The Science of Sexual Orientation by Simon LeVay
Oxford University Press, USA; First edition
(September 29, 2010)

Simon LeVay is a neuroscientist and is best known for his 1991 article on differences in the brains of heterosexual and gay men, which was published in *Science*. He found that INAH3, which is a cell group in the anterior hypothalamus of brain, was significantly smaller in the nominally gay men in his sample than the nominally heterosexual men. Having this finding in mind, the main question that he investigates in his book *Gay, Straight, and the Reason Why* is the biological basis underpinning what makes people gay or heterosexual. LeVay tries to show that homosexuality is not an abnormality or problem and is as normal as being straight. LeVay, who declares that he himself is gay, expresses that "the association between sexual orientation and other gendered traits arises because all these traits differentiate under the influence of a common biological process—the sexual differentiation of the brain under the influence of sex hormones" (p.74) and believes that "gay people should be accepted and valued by society, even if being gay were proven to be an outright choice" (p. X). The book focuses on the role of biological factors in development of sexual orientations in men and women, mainly focusing on interaction between sex hormones and the fetal developing brain.

In the first chapter, LeVay defines terms and concepts regarding sexual orientations (e.g., homosexual, bisexual, lesbian, gay, etc). The chapter seems to be compiled of some unrelated parts and it is difficult for the reader to follow a pattern. This problem is resolved in the following chapters. Concerning sexual ori-

entations in the second chapter, LeVay reviews non-biological theories such as psychoanalytic theories and learning theories (e.g., behaviorist theory), showing how non-biological explanations are not useful for explaining the etiology of different sexual orientations, although the chapter does not give concrete arguments for the refutation of non-biological factors. LeVay, who is clearly an advocate of nature over nurture, does not think that social and environmental factors influence sexual orientation. He instead suggests many possible biological factors influencing sexual orientation. Whilst in some instances he cites evidence of social factors influencing sexual orientation, overall the book emphasises biological factors.

From the third chapter in which the main topic of book starts, the book becomes somewhat more interesting. In this chapter we learn about anatomical differences between male and female brains, but the review of these findings is superficial with no deep explanations. We learn about fetal anatomical and physiological difference between sexes and also about testosterone as the leading role in the sexual differentiation of the brain. Although the review of literature is generally based on experiments using laboratory models not humans, the author draws general conclusions despite species differences. Social factors have much more robust effects on human behavior in comparison to those species that author cites such as insects, rodents and even great apes, yet these are not adequately covered.

The fourth chapter discusses the differences between the mental and behavioral characteristics of boys and girls. Giving examples, LeVay mentions feminist and behaviorist per-

spectives, and while rejecting social effects, he justifies probable biological factors in influencing gendered traits arising early in life. Reviewing the literature using retrospective and prospective studies, LeVay shows how pre-gay children are different from pre-straight ones. At the end of this chapter we learn about some models that try to combine both nature and nurture, but LeVay remains skeptical about such a model and puts more emphasis on biological factors.

Then in the next chapter, LeVay reviews gender differences in three areas of cognition (e.g., visuospatial abilities, verbal fluency, memory task, handedness, and intelligence), personality (e.g., masculinity-femininity and occupational preferences), and sexuality, and in the sixth chapter, he reviews studies concerning hormonal effects on development of sexual orientations. We learn about different features which are affected by sex hormones, especially testosterone, the most important hormone in development of male-typical direction.

LeVay investigates whether sexual orientation is influenced by genes in the seventh chapter. He reviews sibling and twin studies and is optimistic about the existence and function of genes of homosexuality. We also learn about the "fertile female" hypothesis which explains the advantage of homosexuality from an evolutionary perspective and suggests how homosexuality genes might spread in the population. After a concise description of macroscopic anatomy of brain, chapter eight reviews anatomical differences between the brains of men and women, and brains with atypical sexual orientations. We learn that the major problem to these studies is their controversial nature and lack of replication and confirmation.

As to whether there are any external features that we can rely on as bodies of gay and heterosexual people, this question is addressed in the ninth chapter. We learn about studies that have found differences in the bodies of these people. Like other chapters of the book, this

one also contains controversial evidence. Finally, the tenth chapter is devoted to the "older-brother effect", which assumes gay men have more older brothers than straight men. LeVay attempts to support this hypothesis with biological evidences.

While being able to make some conclusions, LeVay mentions the limitations of the studies and proposes possible topics for further investigations. The uncertainty that exists throughout the book is because of uncertainty in scientific literature itself. In general, the book presents contradictory and controversial evidences and theories which make the reader lose the purpose of the argument and drop to draw an ultimate conclusion. Reading this book, one would understand how much of our knowledge of gay and heterosexual people is limited, and indeed LeVay also admits that current science is unable to explain the precise reason why some people are heterosexual, gay or bisexual. Therefore, although LeVay has strived to write chapters coherently, due to lack of determined evidence and the subject being elusive, the book swings here and there.

Although one might, from the title of book, conclude that this book would present the reason behind sexual orientations, the content of book fails to meet the promise of its title. First of all, the book just relies on probable biological factors and neglects the effects of social and environmental factors that influence sexual orientation. Second, because of controversies in scientific literature about the biological nature of sexual orientation, accordingly the book also fails to draw a robust biological conclusion. Nonetheless, *Gay, Straight and the Reason Why* reviews biological investigations concerning sexual orientation from studies conducted over the last two decades. From this perspective, the book is a great source for those who want to learn about this field, terms, concepts and scientific investigations relating sexual orientations from a biological point of view.

Author Note

Farid Pazhoohi is just graduated with an M.Sc in animal physiology investigating neuroendocrinology of reproduction in animal models. Beside physiology, psychology has been of his interests and he has conducted experiments in the fields of human perception, evolutionary psychology and physical anthropology. Email: pazhoohi@gmail.com



BOOK REVIEW

NOEL HYLAND

Rumens, N. (2011). Queer company: The role and meaning of friendship in gay men's work lives. London: Ashgate. ISBN: 978-1-4094-0191-9, pp. 216.

This book reports the findings from Rumens' structured interviews of 33 (self identifying) gay men recruited by way of a snowball. The aim of the research was to shed further light on the experience gay men have of friendship within their workplace.

Within the first chapter of the book, the author proposes that a significant shift has occurred in the manner in which (all) men relate to other men within the context of friendship. He suggests that historically and within the cultural confines of the predominantly English speaking developed nations, men's same-sex (non-sexual) friendships have been controlled by problematic, rigid and "oppressive" ideologies of gender and sexuality. In practice, men have restrained their engagement in same-sex friendships and excessively policed (consciously and/or unconsciously) both their own and others' behaviour, due to the fear of emasculation and/or homosexuality (actual and/or presumed, within self /other). In an effort to cope with such fears, men have adhered to stereotyped ideals which consistently devalue their male same-sex friendships. For example, commonly held notions such as: men value friendships with other men less than women value friendships with other women; men's friendships with each other are less intimate than women's friendships with each other; men have less need to self disclose than women. Whilst much of the more recent research confirms these notions are simply expectations not representative of actual behaviour/experience, they continue to

retain their power and impact on friendships among men (and women).

Chapter two focuses on the (nonsexual) friendships homosexual men have with each other. Here the author proposes that homosexual men have sought comfort and solidarity to protect themselves from homophobia and heterosexism, noting that such oppression originates from the sawwww.paralympic.org.au TZ331256me previously mentioned problematic and rigid ideology of gender and sexuality. It is presented that this oppression was further exaggerated by the fear generated in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic which first peaked in the eighties and nineties. For some people the oppression was so extreme that familial relationships ceased or became so strained that many homosexual men sought the alternative of "chosen family". Interestingly, this social phenomenon not only generated much needed supportive relationships, but also contributed to redefining the concept of "family" beyond the constraints of genetically determined and heteronormative ideals. This chapter notes the lack of research investigating friendships between homosexual men and: lesbians; bisexual / heterosexual men and women.

Within chapter three Rumens begins setting the stage for his research focus, by reviewing the limited research to date that has explored workplace friendships of gay men. According to his review, all of the research on workplace LGBTIQ friendships has occurred within the past 30 years and has focused particularly on experiences of: discrimination; identity disclosure (counterfeiting, avoidance, integration); stereotypes impacting on both relationships / productivity. Thus, Rumens sets his sights beyond the narrow focus of past research and

introduces his interest in workplace friendships, and the roles and meanings that they have for gay men.

Chapter four details results of a questionnaire that was also administered to participants, and reveals a varied experience of friendships within the workplace. Some respondents described workplace friendships as limited to within the confines of the workplace, and others suggested such friendships continued outside working hours and post their departure from a particular workplace. The goal of such friendships also reportedly varied, some respondents saw their workplace friendships as a means of furthering working ability/career path; others seeking confidants and sources of emotional/social support. Some participants reported tension between workplace friendships and out of workplace relations. For these people, their family of origin dynamics dictated a suspicion of others not within the family context and a sense of betrayal/failure at the notion of seeking friendship outside the family. In addition, analysis of the qualitative data revealed factors of: working hours, frequency/ease of contact and organisational hierarchy influenced the development of friendships within the workplace.

The qualitative data confirmed that many workplaces maintain a culture of heteronormativity. In response to this bias, respondents reported only selectively disclosing their homosexuality, usually to people they wished to develop a friendship with. A consequence of this selectivity was a sense of isolation, in that many gay men reported difficulty distinguishing other homosexual peers. For those who were able to identify other homosexual peers, older respondents were more likely to believe that shared sexual identity was a good basis for friendship, whilst younger respondents were less likely to do so. For younger respondents, personal factors including: personality, sense of humour, personal and professional values / interests, were necessary to facilitate relationship. Some younger respondents suggested that competitiveness and/or sexual tension made friendships with other

gay men too difficult and hence to be avoided. The competitiveness between gay peers usually focused around two themes of "task expertise" (stereotyped or actual work-related skills) and "friendship expertise" (stereotyped or actual social skills). The sexual tension between gay peers was construed as problematic due to the fear of unprofessionalism (friendship to acquire sexual favour) and manipulation (sexual favour to influence workplace politics).

Analysis of the dynamics between respondents and their heterosexual male peers revealed two polar viewpoints. Some respondents reported actively avoiding friendships with their male heterosexual peers, due to fear of homophobia. Others reported seeking friendships with male heterosexual peers in preference or as an adjunct to interactions with other gay males. The respondents who had friendships with heterosexual male peers noted both benefits (e.g., opportunity to challenge stereotypes, intimacy without sexual tension) and costs (e.g., assumption of sexual activity) of such.

Chapter six focused on the dynamics between respondents and women (either heterosexual or lesbian). With regards to friendships with heterosexual women, numerous examples of such were found. Previous ideology has presented homosexual men and heterosexual woman as a logical friendship fit due to presumptions of: both being within a position of "other" (than men) in society; and an assumed lack of sexual tension and hence assumed facilitation of friendship. Analysis of the interview scripts did reveal the presence of stereotyped ideas of both groups by both groups, which seemed to both facilitate and retard said relationships. Interestingly, the data challenge the previous ideologies in that: 1) In most cases there was no shared sense of "other" voiced by participants. Participants justified their friendships in terms of particular unique connections on an individual level; 2) In the minority of cases where a shared sense of "other" was present, the resulting mutual empathy was seen to assist the development

of friendships, counteract homophobia, heterosexism and sexism within the workplace; 3) Sexual tension was reported by participants, with reports of both participants and their female friends experiencing such. Of note, for some respondents sexual tension with their female friends resulted in sexual activity. The current study confirmed previous research in that it identified very few friendships between gay men and lesbian women. In the past this has been understood as an artefact of historical tensions and stereotypes which hinder the development of such connections. Unfortunately, the current research did not provide any further insights into the motivations for / against friendships between gay men and lesbians.

Chapter 7 explored the notion of identify within the workplace, and the impact of such on personal and professional relationships. The qualitative data illuminated a problematic phenomenon in which homosexual identity, and hence relations with people identifying as such, were often constrained by heteronormative stereotypes. Thus, gay men who were able to approximate such stereotypes (middle class, educated, privileged, partnered, monogamous...) felt an increased sense of acceptance and social inclusion, as compared to gay men who did not represent these stereotypes. This non-stereotypical cohort reported feeling further marginalised and demonised within the workplace.

In summary, the author proposed that dynamics of workplace relations with gay men and their colleagues resulted in both the maintenance and alteration of problematic and stereotyped ideals of both gender and sexuality. Positively, workplace relationships often facilitated friendships that in other contexts would not occur and enabled people a more realistic and complex insight into the unique lives of gay men. The dispelling of stereotyped ideas and realistic insight into unique lives of gay colleagues acted to challenge homophobia and heterosexism at both an individualistic and a systemic level. Rumens noted a number of limitations with the study

as is usual practice. Two such limitations which resonated particularly for me were, the biased nature of the sample, in that men who identify as gay are a particular subset of the broader homosexual / bisexual / non-heterosexual population, and the interview was not delivered to the heterosexual and lesbian colleagues at assess their experience.

In my opinion this book is a very well researched and written document, giving a sophisticated review of contemporary friendships of gay men within the workplace. I also enjoyed the extensive review of historical research and theories, which greatly added to the depth of the book and enabled the reader to obtain insight into the evolving process of how gay men have been perceived to and have actually engaged in friendships both within and externally to the workplace.

Preparation, submission and publication guidelines

Types of articles that we typically consider:

A)

Empirical articles (6000 word max)
Theoretical pieces
Commentary on LGBTI issues and psychology

Research in brief: Reviews of a favourite or troublesome article/book chapter that you have read and would like to comment on

B)

Conference reports/conference abstracts
Practitioner's reports/field notes
Political/media style reports of relevant issues

Book reviews (please contact the Editor for a list of books available & review guidelines)
Promotional material for LGBT relevant issues

The Review also welcomes proposals for special issues and guest Editors.

Each submission in section A should be prepared for blind peer-review if the author wishes. If not, submissions will still be reviewed, but the identity of the author may be known to the reviewer. Submissions for blind review should contain a title page that has all of the author(s) information, along with the title of the submission, a short author note (50 words or less), a word count and up to 5 key words. The remainder of the submission should not identify the author in any way, and should start on a new page with the submission title followed by an abstract and then the body of the text. Authors who do not require blind review should submit papers as per the above instructions, the difference being that the body text may start directly after the key words.

Each submission in section B should contain the author(s) information, title of submission (if relevant), a short author note (50 words or less) and a word count, but need not be prepared for blind review.

All submissions must adhere to the rules set out in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (fifth edition), and contributors are encouraged to contact the Editor should they have any concerns with this format as it relates to their submission. Spelling should be Australian (e.g., 'ise') rather than American ('ize'), and submissions should be accompanied with a letter stating any conflicts of interest in regards to publication or competing interests. Footnotes should be kept to a minimum. References should be listed alphabetically by author at the end of the paper. For example:

Journal Articles: Riggs, D.W. (2004). The politics of scientific knowledge: Constructions of sexuality and ethics in the conversion therapy literature. *Lesbian & Gay Psychology Review*, 5, 16-24.

Books: Kitzinger, C. (1987). *The social construction of lesbianism*. London: Sage.

Edited Books: Coyle, A. & Kitzinger, C. (Eds.) (2002). *Lesbian & gay psychology*. Oxford: BPS Blackwell.

Book Chapters: MacBride-Stewart, S. (2004). Dental dams: A parody of straight expectations in the promotion of 'safer' lesbian sex. In D.W. Riggs & G.A. Walker (Eds.), *Out in the antipodes: Australian and New Zealand perspectives on gay and lesbian issue in psychology* (pp.393-416). Perth: Brightfire Press.

References within the text should be listed in alphabetical order separated by a semi-colon, page numbers following year. For example:

(Clarke, 2001; Peel, 2001; Riggs & Walker, 2004)

(Clarke, 2002a; b) (MacBride-Stewart, 2004, p. 398)

Authors should avoid the use of *sexist*, *racist* and *heterosexist language*. Authors should follow the guidelines for the use of non-sexist language provided by the American Psychological Society.

Papers should be submitted in Word format: title bold 14 points all caps left aligned, author 12 points all caps left aligned, abstract 10 points italics justified, article text 10 points justified, footnotes 9 points justified.

All submissions should be sent to the Editor, either via email (preferred): damien.riggs@adelaide.edu.au, or via post: School of Psychology, The University of Adelaide, South Australia, 5005.