Heteronormative Bias and Discrimination in Public Health

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March 21, 2011
The Socio-Ecological Model
Objectives

1. Define heteronormative & other useful terms
2. Explain how heteronormative bias & discrimination affect public health
3. Suggest strategies to address these problems in our work
What is Bias?
What is Bias?

Shared assumptions among members of a group
Defining “Heteronormative”

What does normative mean?
What does heteronormative mean?
Other Useful Terms
Other Useful Terms

- Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Gay
- Transgender
- Queer
- Questioning
- Intersex
- Two-spirit
- Sexual and Gender Minorities
- LGBTQ2-S
- Sexual and Gender Minorities
Heteronormative Bias in Public Health

- Clinical Care & Healthcare Delivery
- Public Policy
Sexuality and Gender: Implications for Health Care

What are the relationships among the following concepts?

- Biological sex
- Sexual orientation
- Sexual identity
- Sexual attraction
- Sexual behavior
- Gender identity
- Gender expression
Sexuality and Gender: Implications for Health Care

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Sexuality and Gender: Implications for Clinical Care & Program Planning
PAPS MATTER FOR TRANS MEN

If you’ve ever been sexually active (in any way) and have a cervix, you need regular Paps. Check out our websites for more information and tips on how to make getting a Pap easier.

checkitoutguys.ca
Public Policy
Janice Langbehn with her children
There are few moments in our lives that call for greater compassion and companionship than when a loved one is admitted to the hospital. In these hours of need and moments of pain and anxiety, all of us would hope to have a hand to hold, a shoulder on which to lean -- a loved one to be there for us, as we would be there for them.

Yet every day, all across America, patients are denied the kindnesses and caring of a loved one at their sides -- whether in a sudden medical emergency or a prolonged hospital stay. Often, a widow or widower with no children is denied the support and comfort of a good friend. Members of religious orders are sometimes unable to choose someone other than an immediate family member to visit them and make medical decisions on their behalf.

Also uniquely affected are gay and lesbian Americans who are often barred from the bedsides of the partners with whom they may have spent decades of their lives -- unable to be there for the person they love, and unable to act as a legal surrogate if their partner is incapacitated.

For all of these Americans, the failure to have their wishes respected concerning who may visit them or make medical decisions on their behalf has real consequences. It means that doctors and nurses do not always have the best information about patients' medications and medical histories and that friends and certain family members are unable to serve as intermediaries to help communicate patients' needs. It means that a stressful and at times terrifying experience for patients is senselessly compounded by indignity and unfairness. And it means that all too often, people are made to suffer or even to pass away alone, denied the comfort of companionship in their final moments while a loved one is left worrying and pacing down the hall...
...uniquely affected are gay and lesbian Americans who are often barred from the bedsides of the partners with whom they may have spent decades of their lives -- unable to be there for the person they love, and unable to act as a legal surrogate if their partner is incapacitated.
“...the right to designate visitors who shall receive the same visitation privileges as the patient’s immediate family members, regardless of whether the visitors are legally related to the patient.”
Legal Discrimination against Same-Sex Parents
Global Progress
Discrimination and Persecution around the Globe
Discrimination and Persecution around the Globe
Health Consequences of Repressive Laws:

HIV prevalence in men who have sex with men (MSM) in the Caribbean

Countries that criminalize sex between men

20-32%

Vs.

Countries that do not criminalize sex between men

1-8%
Health Disparities in Sexual & Gender Minority Populations in the United States
Health Disparities in Sexual & Gender Minority Populations in the United States

• Tobacco

Gay men & lesbians are 1.5 - 2.0 times as likely to smoke as their heterosexual counterparts
Health Disparities in Sexual & Gender Minority Populations in the United States

• Tobacco

Gay men & lesbians are \textbf{1.5 - 2.0 times as likely to smoke} as their heterosexual counterparts

• Suicide

Lesbian, gay, and bisexual adolescents are \textbf{≥2 times as likely to report suicide ideation or a suicide attempt} as heterosexual adolescents
freedom to speak, to choose, to marry, to participate, to be, to disagree, to inhale, to believe, to love, to live. it's all good.

the people of santa fe natural tobacco company

No additives in our tobacco does NOT mean a safer cigarette.

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking By Pregnant Women May Result In Fetal Injury, Premature Birth, And Low Birth Weight.

www.nascigs.com

Natural American Spirit is a registered trademark of Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Company.
The Family Acceptance Project

**Illegal Drug Use**

Low Rejection  Moderate Rejection  High Rejection

**Level of Family Rejection**

As with risk for suicide, gay and transgender young people with high levels of family rejection were more than 3 times as likely to use illegal drugs compared with LGBT young people from families with little or no rejection. Their use of illegal drugs was cut in half when families were moderately rejecting.

**Risk for HIV Infection**

Low Rejection  Moderate Rejection  High Rejection

**Level of Family Rejection**

LGBT young people from highly rejecting families were more than 3 times as likely to be at high risk for HIV and sexually transmitted diseases as young people from families who were not rejecting. Their risk was cut in half when families were moderately rejecting.

**Lifetime Suicide Attempts (1 or more times)**

Low Rejection  Moderate Rejection  High Rejection

**Level of Family Rejection**

This drawing shows the serious impact of high levels of family rejection on LGBT young people, ages 21-25. These parents tried to prevent their children from being gay or transgender or told them they were disappointed or ashamed at having a gay or transgender child. And they disapproved of their LGBT child in other ways. (See page 5 for a list of some rejecting behaviors that are very harmful for LGBT youth.)

In this drawing, LGBT young adults who had many experiences of rejection during adolescence were at much higher risk for trying to commit suicide than those in families who were only a little rejecting or were not at all rejecting (low rejection). LGBT youth from **highly rejecting families** were more than 8 times as likely to try to take their own lives by the time they were young adults. In families that were **moderately rejecting** (had some negative reactions to their LGBT child but also had some positive reactions), those young people were only about twice as likely to try to kill themselves.
Heteronormative Bias in Public Health Research and Surveillance

ATTN: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
IT'S TIME TO COUNT EVERYONE!

Are you (check all that apply):
- Lesbian
- Gay
- Bisexual
- Transgender
- A Straight Ally

Everyone deserves to be counted. It's time to QueerTheCensus.org
Public Health Research: The Good News
GOAL:

“Improve the health, safety, and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals.”
How Can We Take Action as Public Health Professionals?
References


