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Title

Briefing on Peer-to-Peer Violence and Bullying: Examining the Federal Response

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Minority Stress and the Health of LGB Populations

Williams Institute
Founders Lunch
April 14, 2012

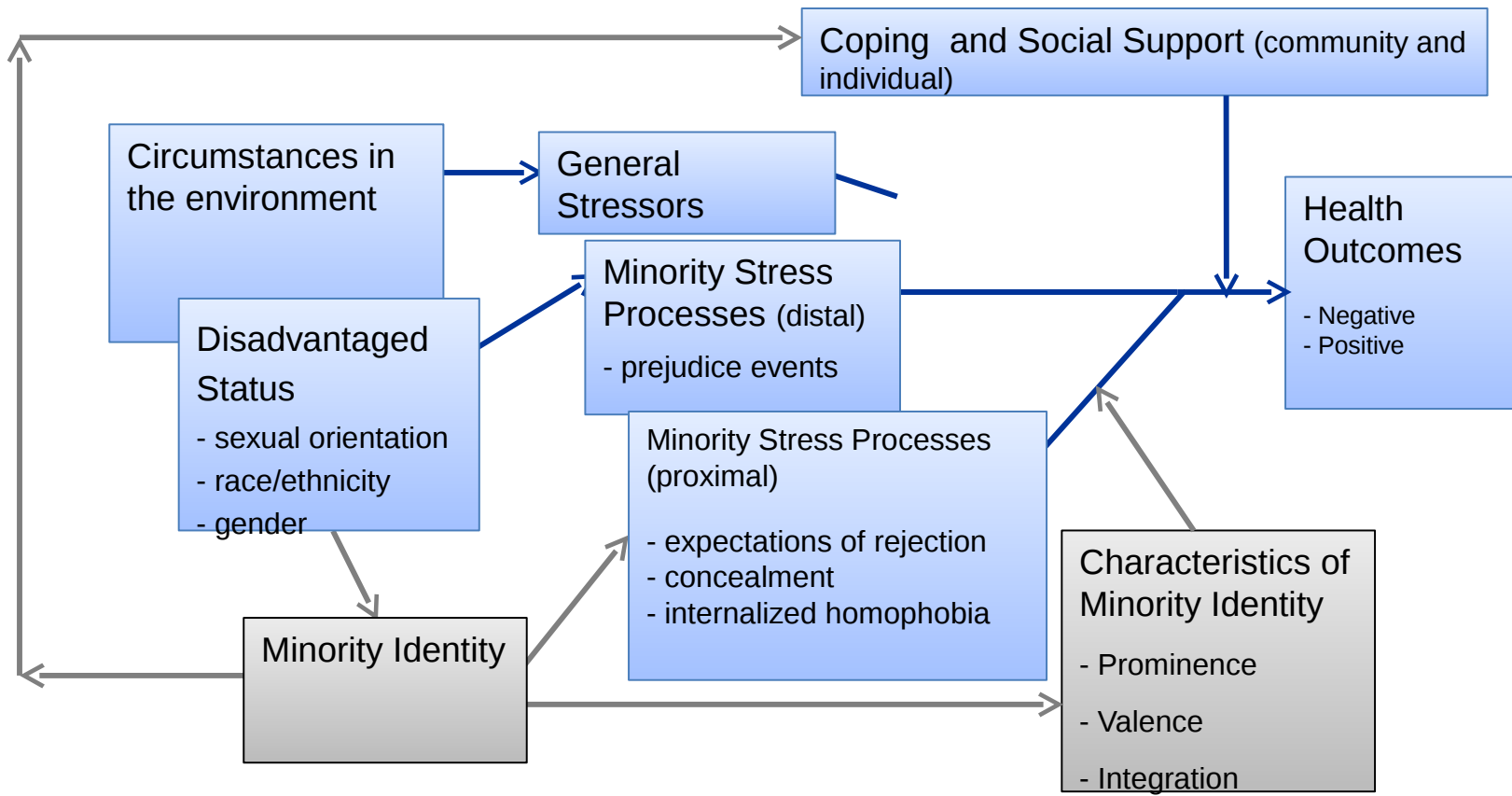
Ilan H. Meyer, Ph.D.

Minority Stress

Stigma and prejudice directed toward LGBT people, add unique stressors (i.e., added to *general* stressors) that cause adverse health outcomes

We therefore observe in LGBs more stressors and more related disorders

Minority Stress Processes in LGB Populations



Minority stress model (Meyer, 2003)

Types of Prejudice Experiences

- ❑ Major life events
- ❑ Chronic strain
- ❑ Minor events
- ❑ Nonevents

Form **1040**

Department of the Treasury—Internal Revenue Service (99)
U.S. Individual Income Tax Return

2011

OMB No.

For the year Jan. 1–Dec. 31, 2011, or other tax year beginning _____, 2011, ending _____

Your first name and initial

Last name

If a joint return, spouse's first name and initial

Last name

Home address (number and street). If you have a P.O. box, see instructions.

City, town or post office, state, and ZIP code. If you have a foreign address, also complete spaces below (see instructions).

“ . . . Are you single or are you married or are, you know, divorced even? . . .

so I have to find myself, you know, putting a line through it and saying “domestic partner” and making sure I explain to folks what that is . . . ”

Prop 8 plaintiff Sandra Stier testimony (p. 175, 12-17)

“And I have to decide every day if I want to come out everywhere I go and take the chance that somebody will have a hostile reaction to my . . .”



Prop 8 plaintiff Kristin Perry testimony
(p. 151, 25 – p. 152, 2; p. 152, 3-7; p. 152, 8-11)

“We’d Be Free”: Narratives of Life Without Homophobia, Racism, or Sexism

Ilan H. Meyer · Suzanne C. Ouellette · Rahwa Haile · Tracy A. McFarlane

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Abstract Stigma and social inequality deprive disadvantaged social groups of a sense of social well-being. Stress researchers have focused on prejudice-related events and conditions but have not described more intangible stressors experienced by sexual minorities. We use narrative methods to examine how sexual minorities experience stigma and social inequality as we focus on the more intangible stressors that are both pervasive and difficult to measure.

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Three themes emerged in the narratives of our ethnically diverse sample of 57 adult sexual minority women and men: (a) stigma deprived them of access to critical possibilities and opportunities; (b) stigma deprives them of safety and acceptance; and (c) despite this, the experience of stigma is also related to the adoption of a positive and collective orientation towards their stigmatized identities. Recognizing these stressors and related resilience can direct policy makers toward interventions that go even beyond eliminating prejudice by including goals to strengthen minority communities.

Keywords Sexual minorities · Stigma · Prejudice · Stress · Social well-being

Introduction

Minority stress theory suggests that sexual minorities (lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals [LGB]), like members of other disadvantaged groups, experience excess stress due to their social position. This stress is chronic because it is tied to enduring social structures; it causes disorders, including mental disorders; and, therefore, it plays a key role in creating and exacerbating observed health disparities between heterosexuals and sexual minorities in the United States (Meyer 2003). The concept of minority stress originated, in part, from social and psychological theories about the importance of understanding the person in the context of his or her social environment (Durkheim 1951;

“What do you think your life would be like without homophobia, racism, and sexism?”

Posted on Advocate.com November 03, 2011 07:00:00 AM ET

How Would Your Life Be Different if Homophobia Did Not Exist?

By Ivan Villanueva

A new study featured in the journal of *Sexuality Research and Social Policy* asked, "What do you think your life would be like without homophobia, racism, or sexism?" Four hundred lesbian, gay, and bisexual New Yorkers participated in the study, which sought to document how sexual minorities experience social stigma and inequality in today's world. While the answer may seem fairly obvious at first, the responses, comprised of the participants' own narratives, were varied.



GETTY IMAGES

The following are the major thematic responses to this particular question. Please add your own suggestions as to how your life would be different without homophobia, racism, and/or sexism in the comments below.

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“I Probably Would Be at Home” Lost Possibilities



ation ...
different,
been

Would Still Be With Family

"I would most likely be at home with my family — where I came from."

Meyer, Ouellette, McFarlane, 2011

“I Would Be Louder” Safety and Acceptance

“... we could walk down the street and hold hands.... I look for the day ... when you can just kiss your partner on the subway or at the bus stop or on the bus or, whether you're in the Village or in a restaurant or in the midtown or in the Bronx”
(Black man).



More PDA (Public Displays of Affection)

"We would be able to hold hands in public, and kiss in any restaurant."

“Oppression Doesn’t Just Stop Things” Positive Marginality (Unger)

“I wouldn’t be who I am, that’s basically what I have to say, because racism and homophobia affect every single aspect of your life” (Latina).

“...in some ways I’m, I’m almost grateful that I am lesbian, because it was sort of the only thing that saved me, you know, from a life of [a] pretty, pretty limited world view . . .” (White woman).

How Would Your Life Be Different if Homophobia Did Not Exist?

By Ivan Villanueva



Loss of Struggle, and Character?

Respondents found what's called "positive marginality," identifying character because of their sexuality. "I wouldn't be who I am if I hadn't gone through what I did."

New Projects

- ❑ Project Access – experiences, stress, and health and well-being of GBTQ male youth of color
- ❑ Perception of Prejudice (PoP)