

Human Sexuality

October 28, 2009

Sexual Orientation

Definitions

- Sexual orientation = erotic and emotional orientation towards members of same or other gender
- Sexual identity = self-identity as homosexual, heterosexual, bisexual, or asexual

Prevalence of homosexuality and bisexuality

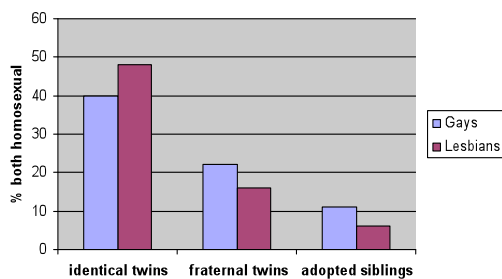
	USA*	Canada
Bisexual		
Men	1.8	0.6
Women	2.8	0.9
Homosexual		
Men	2.3	1.3
Women	1.3	0.7

*based on sexual identity

What determines sexual orientation?

- Nature vs. Nurture
 - 54% of Canadians believe it is biological
 - Another 8% believe it is nature + nurture
- Biological theories:
 - Prenatal development
 - Stress during pregnancy, HY antigen, being left-handed, 2D:4D ratio in gay men more similar to women
 - Brain hypothalamic differences
 - Exposure to hormones
 - Genetics

Genetic link to homosexuality?



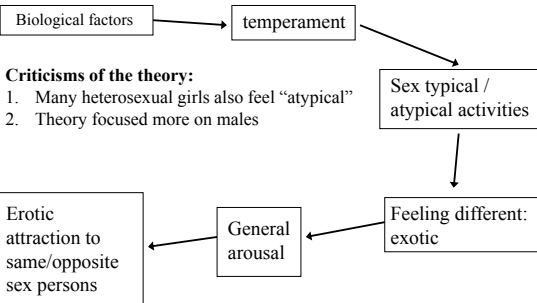


Sven Bocklandt of UCLA's medical school studies the DNA of gay and straight male twins.

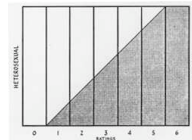
Psychological Theories

- Freud's psychoanalytic theory
 - Homosexuals do not successfully master the phallic stage and maintain a love for the same-gender parent
- Behavioral learning theory
 - Homosexuality due to punishments and rewards
- Sociological theory
 - Early labelling can affect behaviour to make it consistent with that label

Bem's theory: Integrating biology and environment



Is Sexual Orientation plastic?



KINSEY SCALE

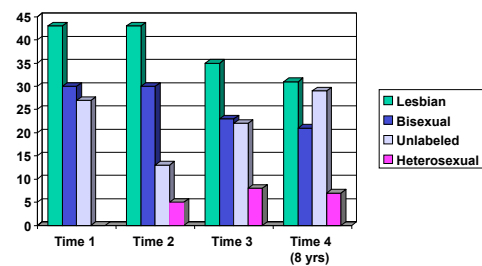
- 0- Exclusively heterosexual with no homosexual
- 1- Predominantly heterosexual, only incidentally homosexual
- 2- Predominantly heterosexual, but more than incidentally homosexual
- 3- Equally heterosexual and homosexual
- 4- Predominantly homosexual, but more than incidentally heterosexual
- 5- Predominantly homosexual, only incidentally heterosexual
- 6- Exclusively homosexual

"Males do not represent two discrete populations, heterosexual and homosexual. The world is not to be divided into sheep and goats. It is a fundamental of taxonomy that nature rarely deals with discrete categories... The living world is a continuum in each and every one of its aspects" (p 639).

Sexual Orientation and Female Development

- Are adolescents attracted to the gender or to the person?
- Diamond, 2005
- N = 80 women followed for 8 years beginning in adolescence
- "How would you label your sexual identity?"

Diamond, 2005



Conclusion: sexual identity development is fluid and takes place over a period of time

Do men and women differ on sexual orientation plasticity?

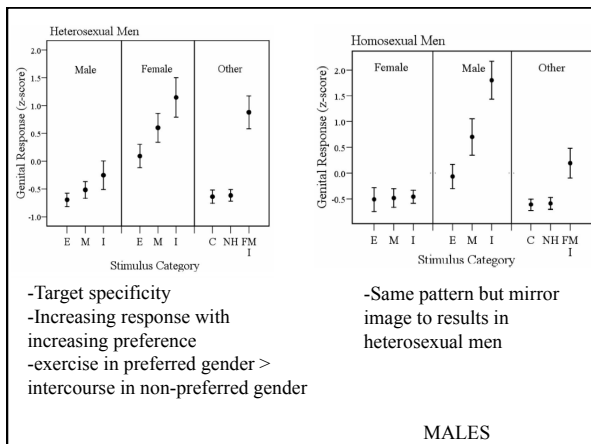
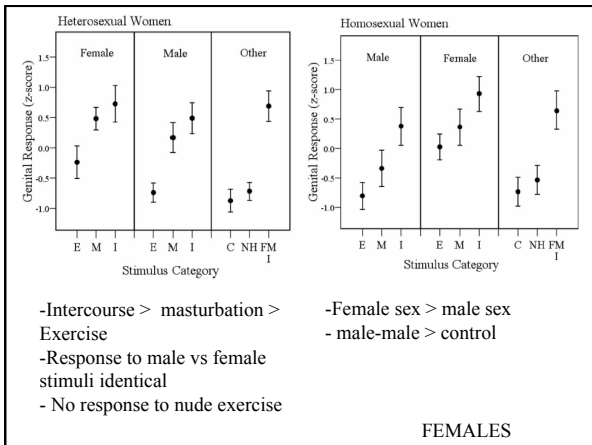
- Men show category specificity on physiological and subjective sexual responses:
 - Gender
 - Age
- Women show category nonspecificity for physiological arousal
- Women show mild category specificity for subjective arousal

Why is there a gender difference in genital target specificity?

- Raises two fundamental questions:
 1. What makes a sexual stimulus sexual?
 2. Do the features that make a stimulus sexual differ for men and women?
- Chivers (2007) explored actor gender vs sexual activity cues in male and female actors

Chivers et al., 2007

- Heterosexual and homosexual men and women
- Female genital response: vaginal photoplethysmography
- Male genital response: mercury-in-rubber strain gauge
- Film stimuli: nude exercise, masturbation, nonhuman sex, female-female intercourse, male-male intercourse, male-female intercourse



Responses to Primate sex?

- Women (homosexual and hetero-) show genital response to bonobo sexual intercourse but no subjective response
- Men show neither genital nor subjective sexual response

Why do women show responses to non-preferred and primate stimuli?

- Excitation transfer
- Male inhibition of response
- Female flexibility

Automaticity of female responding

- No response to male nude exercise
- Genital arousal response almost immediately in laboratory studies
- Evolutionary benefit of automatic genital response

Sexual orientation and sexual responding in women

- groups differ in their threshold for when the effect of sexual activity cues exceeds the effects of gender cues
- Lesbian women more male-typical
- Are heterosexual women really bisexual?

Spitzer (2003)

- Hypothesis:
Can some individuals whose sexual orientation is predominantly homosexual be made predominantly heterosexual following some form of reparative therapy?
= any one of a number of treatments designed to turn LGBs into heterosexuals

Spitzer's study: Sample

- N=200: 143 males, 57 females: 95% White
- Homosexual prior to therapy (60/100)
- Post-therapy, 10 pt. move to heterosexual end of scale
- Ex-gay religious ministries, NARTH, therapists

Independent variable

- Reparative therapy = tx whose goal is to change sexual orientation (homosexual → hetero.)
- Psychologists, pastoral counselor, psychiatrist
- Support group, hetero. role model, bibliotherapy, prayer
- Relationships/childhood experiences, "variety of psychological issues", "relationship with God".
- Developing non-sexual same-sex relationships, thought-stopping, avoiding "tempting" situations
- Mean duration of tx. 5 - 15 years

Dependent Variable(s)

- Sexual attraction scale
- Sexual orientation self-identity
- Bothered by homosexual feelings
- Freq. of sex (both)
- Yearning for emotional intimacy
- Looking with lust/daydreaming
- % masturbation with hetero/homosexual fantasies
- Use of gay porn.
- % of heterosexual sex with homosexual fantasies
- Emotional satisf. with heterosexual reltnshp.
- Physical satisf. “

Design

- Retrospective
- Self-report
- Semi-structured interview
- Telephone

Results

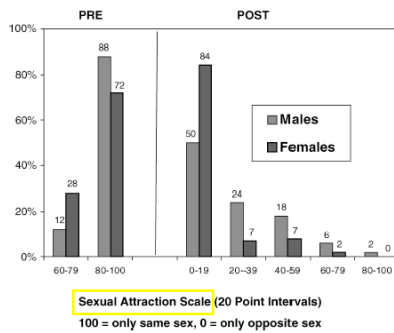


Fig. 1. PRE and POST frequency of 20-point intervals of the Sexual Attraction Scale.

Results cont.

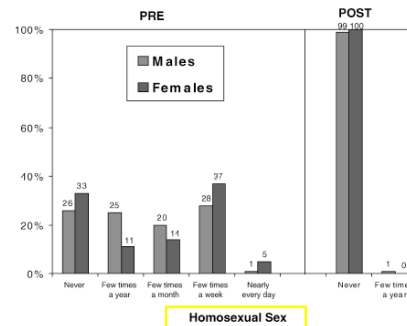


Fig. 3. PRE and POST frequency of homosexual sex.

Results cont.

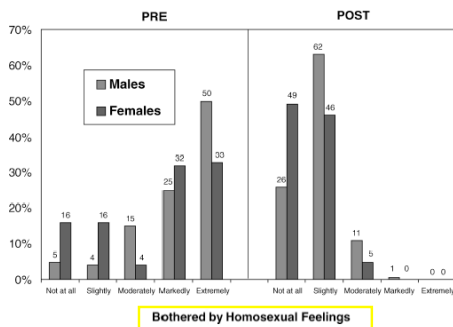


Fig. 4. PRE and POST severity of being bothered by homosexual feelings.

Conclusions

- Spitzer concludes that his data support his hypothesis and that reparative therapy may be useful to some people. Do you agree?
- The study is an improvement on previous studies, but it still has significant limitations
- Limitations: methodological, ethical, conceptual

Analysis of the study: Pro's

- Larger sample size than previous studies
- Detailed, multi-item measures
- Assessed not just behaviors but fantasies, attitudes, desires, and level of satisfaction
- Structured interview
- A good first start at investigating a very controversial issue

Analysis of the study: Con's Methodology

- Sample selection biases
- Exclusively self-report measures
- Retrospective design
- Reparative therapy not well-defined
- Does not prove causality

Analysis of study: Con's Ethical

- Lack of informed consent → confidentiality
- Potential harms or risks of reparative tx.

Analysis of study: Con's Conceptual

- What are the implications of saying that some people can change their sexual orientation?
- Why would someone want to be “cured” of their same-gender sexual attractions or homosexuality?
- Should reparative therapy be available?
- If homosexuality is curable, does that mean it is a mental illness?
- What are the implications of publishing this study?

Legal Status of Gay Marriages in Canada – A timeline

- **1967** - Supreme Court of Canada → life imprisonment as the maximum penalty for homosexual behavior
- **1969** - Attorney General Trudeau wrote bill C-150 to decriminalize homosexual behavior. "*The state has no place in the bedrooms of the nation*"
- **1977** - Quebec became first province to include sexual orientation in its Human Rights Act.
- **1978** - *Canadian Immigration Act* altered so it no longer prohibited homosexuals from immigrating into the country

Timeline cont.

- **1982:** *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* approved. It defined many protected classes based on race, sex, religion, etc. (sexual orientation not initially included)
- **1989:** *Canadian Human Rights Commission* ruled that same-sex couples should be considered families
- **1992:** Military lifted its previous ban of promotions, postings and career training for homosexuals

Timeline cont.

- **1995:** Ontario extended family benefits to gay and lesbian employees who are in same-sex relationships.
 - The *Supreme Court of Canada* ruled in *Egan v. Canada* that the term "sexual orientation" was to be "read in" to Section 15 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.
- **1996:** The term "sexual orientation" was added to the *Federal Human Rights Act* as a protected class.
- **1998:** Alberta was the only remaining province whose human rights legislation did not include sexual orientation. Its *Individual's Rights Protection Act* was forcibly modified by the Supreme Court of Canada to "read-in" sexual orientation as a protective class

Timeline cont.

- **1999:** *Ontario Legislature* passed Bill 5; outlawed discrimination against same-sex couples.
- *House of Commons* overwhelmingly passed a resolution to define marriage as "a union of one man and one woman"
- **2000:** The Federal government passed omnibus bill C23 which amended 68 federal statutes to extend full benefits (except marriage) to persons in same-sex relationships.
- **2001:** Two same-sex couples were married in Toronto. They could not obtain a marriage license, however, on 2003-JUN-10, the *Ontario Court of Appeal* retroactively recognized the marriages
- **2003-JUL:** The *Ontario Court of Appeal* unanimously ordered the Ontario government to issue marriage licenses to same-sex adult couples, and to register their marriages
 - Federal Government "gave in". They felt that they had to recognize the unanimous decisions of provincial courts. At a caucus meeting, the Liberal party introduced legislation to Parliament which will legalize same-sex marriage across the country.

Timeline Cont.

- **2003:** A motion by the conservative *Alliance Party* to only recognize marriage as "1 man and 1 woman" was defeated
- **2003:** Bill C-250 was passed. It added sexual orientation to the list of protected classes in Canada's hate propaganda legislation
- **2005: Feb** → Bill C-38, which would make SSM available across Canada, was introduced to parliament
 - **June** → approved by the House and the Senate
 - **July** → Bill C-38, which theoretically made same-sex marriages available across Canada was signed into law by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada (PEI held off until August).

How do Canadians feel about SSM

- N = 1056 telephone interview
- 42% in favour; 40% opposed
- 17% neither in favour nor opposed
- Differences in geographical location:
 - Quebec most in favour at 52%
 - Alberta most opposed at 50%
- More women than men supported
- More younger (18-24) supported than older
- More recently, 74% believed gays should have the same rights as straight individuals

The conservative government and SSM

- January 2006 election debates: Paul Martin stated that if his govt was re-elected, promised that the first action would be to modify the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* -- Canada's constitution -- to make it impossible for a federal government to use the notwithstanding clause.
 - That clause, unique in the world, allows the national government to pass unconstitutional laws which override portions of the Charter.
- Conservative Party discussed during campaign was his intention to initiate new Parliamentary legislation to ban SSM, while allowing existing same-sex marriages to continue. He later reversed his earlier stance on this

- December 2006 – Harper's government brought in a motion asking if the SSM issue should be reopened to support the traditional view of marriage
- Motion defeated next day (175:123)
- "Same-Sex marriage file is closed for good"

Current status of same-sex marriages in Canada

- Any 2 persons, 18 years or older, can be married unless they are opposite gender and too closely related
- Obtain a marriage license
- Performed by judge or justice of the peace

ASEXUALITY

Cole Brown

Outline

- Defining Asexuality
- Community
- Research
- Criticism, Challenges, and Goals
- Questions?

Defining Asexuality

Definitions


- Orientation:
 - A person who does not experience sexual attraction.
- Identity:
 - Anyone who identifies as asexual.
 - Grey-A, demisexual.

Asexuality vs. Celibacy

- Asexuality:
 - A lack of sexual attraction.
- Celibacy:
 - Abstinence from sexual intercourse.
- Asexuality is an internal orientation, whereas celibacy is a choice.
- There can be overlap, but they are not the same.

Asexual and LGBT Communities

Asexual Community History



2000	2001	2002	2004
First online asexual community established	AVEN founded	AVEN community takes off	Bogaert study published; first media blitz

- Now:
 - ~38,000 members internationally.
 - Supportive/procrastination space
 - Managed by volunteers
 - Used to organize local meet-ups and visibility work.

Diversity in the Community

- Nationality/Language (14 languages)
- Age
- Views on sex
 - Sex-positive, sex-neutral, sex-adverse
- Arousal
- Romantic orientation
 - Hetero-, homo-, bi-, or pan-romantic
 - Aromantic: no romantic preference

Relationships

- Asexual relationships centre around the idea of intimacy without sex.
- Asexual people can define their relationships in many ways.
 - Partner-based relationships: two people in a committed and/or exclusive relationship.
 - Community-based relationships: many people form a support network.

Relationships

- Partner-based relationships can be formed several ways:
 - Asexual/Asexual
 - Asexual/Sexual
- Community-based relationships are less strictly defined.
 - Involve a group of people with which emotional needs can be met.
 - It's what you make of it.
- Compromises are made in both.
 - Distance
 - Sex
 - Time

Asexuality and the LGBT Community

- Relatively invisible
 - LGBT, LGBTQTTI, queer
 - Primary orientation may be romantic orientation
- Goals differ from LGBT goals
 - LGBT community fighting for rights
 - Asexual community fighting for visibility
- Not as controversial
 - "If you're not having sex, what's there to talk about?"

Asexuality and Vancouver

- Pride UBC
 - Increasing education with resources
- Positive Space Campaign
 - Awareness to a larger, primarily heterosexual audience
- Local meets and events
 - Monthly meet ups
 - Best attended: 14
 - Two documentaries, several articles
- CSIS

Research

Changing Definitions

- Lack of sexual orientation (Storms, 1980)
- Lack of sexual behaviour (Rothblum & Brehony, 1993)
- **Lack of sexual attraction** (Bogaert, 2004)
- Low excitatory processes (Prause & Graham, 2007)

Kinsey Scale

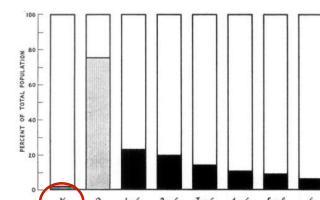


Figure 169. Heterosexual-homosexual ratings in total male population (single and married) in any single year.
Based on U. S. Corrected data (last line of Table 150). Passing experiences eliminated from data by showing only ratings which have involved a period of at least three years after the males turned 16. Percent shown as "X" have no socio-sexual contacts or reactions.

Percent shown as "X" have no socio-sexual contacts or reactions.

The Storms's Model

- 1979: Michael D. Storms publishes a two-dimensional model of human sexuality.
- Based off the Kinsey model, with the addition of asexuality.

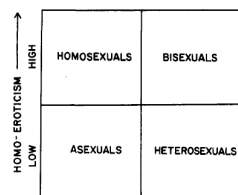


Figure 1. Four orientation categories generated by a two-dimensional model.

Anthony Bogaert (2004)

- First study to explicitly address and explore asexuality.
- National probability sample (N>18,000).
- Approximately 1% (n=195) are asexual.
- "I have never felt sexually attracted to anyone at all."



Recent Research

- Nicole Prause and Cynthia Graham (2007)
 - Based on qualitative interviews and a standardized questionnaire (41 self-identified asexuals).
 - Asexuals rated below average on scales of sexual desire and arousability.
 - There was little or no difference in sexual inhibition scales.
- Lori Brotto (2008-?)
 - Two studies completed.
 - First physio-psychological study on asexual women.

Criticism, Challenges, and Goals

Critic's Corner

- "You're too _____."
- "Were you abused?"
- "You haven't met the right person yet."
- "Are you religious?"
- "But... Haven't you tried it?"
- "Oh, there's Viagra for that."
- "Well, obviously. You haven't been with me yet."

Challenges

- Coming out to friends and family.
- Societal prejudice against queer-identified persons.
- Complications faced in romantic relationships.
- Recognition as a valid orientation.
 - To the general public
 - To LGBT groups
 - To the medical community

Goals

- Visibility and education
 - High schools and universities
 - LGBT community
 - Medical community
- Work with the scientific community to help with research for human sexuality
- Ultimately, asexual people will not feel alone and unaccepted in the future.

Questions?

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