

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Knowledge Community

The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) Issues Knowledge Community provides avenues for both social and professional involvement. Knowledge Community activities allow for personal and professional growth, increased awareness and acceptance of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender professionals and students, and promote understanding of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender professional and student needs.

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3. Make sure to attend Regional and National conferences and attend the GLBT Issues Knowledge Community events!



Social Media

- **Twitter**
 - **@GLBTKC**
 - **#BeyondBinaries**
- **Instagram**
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Bisexual Pride and Bi Visibility Day

September 23rd



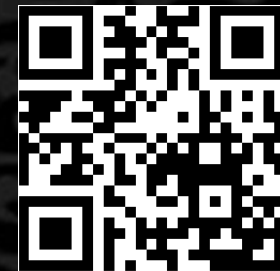
“conceived as a response to the prejudice and marginalization of the bisexual persons by some in both the straight and greater LGBT communities.”

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Beyond Binaries: Supporting Bisexual, Pansexual, Fluid, and Queer-Identified Students

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Overview

- Purpose
- Learning Outcomes
- Language
- Theory & Literature
- Overview of Studies
- Findings & Implications
- Recommendations
- Resources & Tools



Purpose

- Provide an overview of language, terminology, and theory that pertains to nonmonosexual, bisexual, pansexual, fluid, and queer (BPFQ) students
- Highlight two recent studies exploring the untold stories central to BPFQ and nonmonosexual sexual identities at public four-year universities
- Engage participants in the emergent themes, implications for campus climate, and recommendations for practice



Learning Outcomes

- Gain insight into nonmonosexual/BPFQ student experiences at large, public institutions
- Engage in discussion about inclusive and affirmative language for nonmonosexual/BPFQ and all LGBTQIA* students
- Engage in discussion about best practices used to support nonmonosexual/BPFQ college students
- Gain practical tools and knowledge in order to support students with nonmonosexual/BPFQ identities

Language

- **Bisexual** – A person emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to males/men and females/women.
- **Pansexual** – A person who is sexually attracted to all or many gender expressions.
- **Fluid** – a sexual or gender identity that that exists beyond a binary system of either gay or straight, man or woman. People with a fluid identity may resist using labels or choosing boxes to define themselves. Also used by people whose sexual or gender identity is not fixed on one point of a continuum.
- **Queer** – This term is sometimes used as a sexual orientation label instead of 'bisexual' as a way of acknowledging that there are more than two genders to be attracted to, or as a way of stating a non-heterosexual orientation without having to state to whom they are attracted.



Conceptualizing Language

- Move towards broader conceptualization of nonmonosexual community
- Capacity, not based on behavior or experience
- Independent of the way relationships function
- Labels and definitions are adaptive to participant self-identification

Monosexism: Assumed Monosexuality

- Promotes exclusive heterosexual, lesbian, or gay behaviors (Rust, 2000a)
- **Binegativity: denial of existence of nonmonosexuality** (Horowitz & Newcomb, 1999; Rust, 2000a)
- Assumptions based on perceived gender (Horowitz & Newcomb, 1999)
- **One-drop rule of monosexuality** (Zinik, 2000)
- “Best of both worlds” (Rust, 2000a)
- **Extra- or hyper-sexuality** (Paul, 2000; Rust, 2000a)
 - “Inherently unfaithful” (Hoang, Holloway, & Mendoza, 2011)
 - More likely to spread sexually transmitted infections (Herek, 2002)

Monosexism Perpetuated by Monosexual Identity Models

- Lesbian and gay monosexual identity models
(*Cass, 1979, 1990; D'Augelli, 1994; Fassinger, 1991; Savin-Williams, 1988, 1990; Troiden, 1979, 1988*)
- Leads to belief that nonmonosexual people are:
 - Transitioning between monosexual identities
 - “Fence-sitting” (*Ochs, 2001*) or “fence-straddling” (*Herek, 2002*)
- Affects nonmonosexual people:
 - Live in two closets (*Horowitz & Newcomb, 1999*)
 - Bracket and closet parts of themselves

Nonmonosexual Identities, Clarified

- Healthy, multidimensional identities (*Balsam & Mohr, 2007*)
- Capacity, not behavior (*Firestein, 1996; Hemmings, 2001; Hoang et al., 2011; Horowitz & Newcomb, 1999; Matteson, 1995; Rust, 2000a*)
- Weinberg, Williams, & Pryor (1994) identity model
 1. Initial confusion
 2. Finding and applying the label
 3. Settling into the identity
 4. Continued uncertainty

Defining Sexuality

- "Fluid with an emphasis in male identified individuals."
- "...my desire is definitely fluid, same with gender"
- "I am physically attracted to both males and females."
- "I am attracted to people and do not exclude people by gender. I just go with the flow."
- "I love regardless of gender."
- "I do not look at gender. I am attracted to people and their personalities."
- "I use queer to describe both my sexuality and sexual identity, and with my queer sexuality comes a politic[s]."

Overview of Studies: Institution Profiles

Study #1: Western University

- Large, four-year public research institution
- 77.1% students of color
- Ranked as a LGBT-friendly campus according to the Campus Climate Index
- Six ethnic and gender campus resource centers

Study #2: Eastern University

- Large, four-year public, land grant, research institution
- 15.8% students of color
- Ranked as a LGBT-friendly campus according to Campus Climate Index
- 1 sexuality, 1 gender, and 1 race/ethnicity resource centers

Overview of Studies: Design

Western University

- What are the experiences of BPFQ college students at a large public research university?
- 7 participants
 - 6 undergraduate; 1 graduate
 - 5 self-identify as POC
 - 1 genderqueer, 2 males, 4 females

Data Collection

- Online and phone interviews
- Reflection activities

Eastern University

- What is the essence of the experiences of nonmonosexual college students?
- 5 participants
 - 5 undergraduate
 - 2 self-identify as POC
 - 1 man, 4 women; 1 woman also identifies as genderqueer

Data Collection

- In-person interviews

Common Findings

1. Resistance to Labels
 2. Language Politics
 3. Queer People of Color Spaces
 4. Exposure to Stereotypes
1. Meaning and Use of Labels
 2. Need to Explain Identity
 3. People of Color Experiences of Race
 4. Exposure to Stereotypes
 5. Impact of Negative Experiences

Additional Findings

1. Transition to College
 2. First Year Residential Experience
 3. Fear of Initially Accessing LGBTQRC
 4. Perception of Campus Climate and Safety
 5. Campus Involvement Opportunities
 6. Internal versus Social Group Identities
 7. Factors Determining Access to Support
1. Fluidity of Gender and Sexual Orientation
 2. Relationship with LGBTQIA*
 3. Needs for Affirmation and Support



Implications for Campus Climate

- Identity exploration typically occurs in college
- Need for validation and affirmation
- Recognizing and naming self-fulfilling prophecies
- Need for visibility
- Need for outreach and resources

Students' Recommendations & Needs

- “I’d like to see a focus less on these five identity groups [LGBTQ] ... and it’s like, ‘this is the definition of what it means to be not straight and not cis in America.’” (Leonard)
- “...being in groups of people with similar sexual orientation identities is really comforting.” (Leonard)
- “...the best way to show support is just to ... validate that’s my identity ... there’s nothing else that needs to be done...” (Ellery)



Recommendations

- Conduct Assessment Regarding Fluid Identities
- Facilitate Common Ground/Join In Activity
- Implement Collaborative Orientation and Transition Programs
- Examine First-Year Residential Education
- Conduct Sensitivity and Ally Trainings
- Provide Programs Allowing for Anonymity
- Promote Campus Racial Diversity

Resources & Tools

- The American Institute for Bisexuality <http://bisexual.org/>
- [LGBTQ Architect](#) (Consortium for Higher Education Resource Professionals)
- [BECAUSE Conference](#)
- [“Bi America: Myths, Truths, and Struggles of an Invisible Community”](#) by Bill Burleson
- [“Bi Any Other Name: Bisexual People Speak Out”](#) by Loraine Hutchins and Lani Kaahumanu, Eds.
- [Bi Magazine](#)
- [BiCities TV](#)
- [BiNet USA](#)
- [Bisexual Community Needs Assessment MN \(BOP\)](#)
- [Bisexual Organizing Project](#)
- [Bisexual Resource Center](#)
- [Feisty Bis](#)
- [Journal of Bisexuality](#)
- [Robyn Ochs](#)

Tangible Tools to Use on Campus

- **Bisexual Umbrella** (Shiri Eisner)
- **“Bye, Bi Stigma!” Newsletter** (Metropolitan State University – St. Paul)
- **Common Ground Activity** (UC Riverside)
- **“It’s Not a Phase; it’s My Life”** (Maria Roumiantseva)
- **Ways To Be An Ally to Nonmonosexual / Bi People** (UC Davis)
- **Words That Are Biphobic and Why** (UC Davis)



Areas for Further Inquiry

- Fluidity of gender and sexual orientation
- Programs that attract and support BPFQ students
- How campuses provide LGBTQ services without an LGBTQ office or resource center
- Experiences of BPFQ student communities not represented in this study
- Polyamory



Questions?

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