

16 Sexual Prejudice: Advances in Conceptual and Empirical Models

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Considerable advances have occurred in the study of prejudice against sexual minorities (e.g., lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender individuals) across multiple fields of psychology in recent years. With this growing attention, scholars have proposed more refined and nuanced conceptualizations of sexual prejudice, documented varied ways in which it is expressed, identified multiple underlying predictors, and pointed to emerging issues that require concerted interdisciplinary approaches to address. There is also a substantial literature base documenting discrimination against sexual minorities and its many physical, mental, and behavioral health consequences (Katz-Wise & Hyde, 2012; Meyer, 2003). For the purpose of this chapter, however, we focus on the construct of sexual prejudice itself and seek to provide an understanding of individual factors and social processes that contribute to its development and perpetuation.

Operationalizing Sexual Prejudice

Scholars have proposed and used varying terminology for the continually evolving concept of sexual prejudice as it is now understood; of these terms, “homophobia” (largely attributed to Weinberg, 1972) has been the most enduring and widely used in research and popular culture. Herek (2004) provided a rich review and critique of these terms, with an emphasis on homophobia, and considered the historical and societal context in which this term first originated and was later revised. In his critique, Herek noted important limitations to the term “homophobia,” including (a) it rarely refers to an intense, irrational fear of sexual minorities; (b) it is framed through the lens of psychopathology but is not meant as a diagnosis; (c) it has inadequately reflected the role of broader social norms and processes in shaping individuals’ attitudes; (d) more recently its operationalization has become diffuse as a consequence of being applied to a rather large range of ideas; and (e) it is often considered synonymous with prejudice toward gay men specifically rather than sexual minorities more expansively. Consequently, although many researchers use the term “homophobia” to

capture a range of interrelated concepts (e.g., individuals' negative attitudes toward non-heterosexuals, discriminatory social policies or institutions), it has steadily been replaced by terms such as "sexual stigma," "heterosexism," and "sexual prejudice," which we describe next.

Sexual stigma may be defined as the collective belief among members of society that non-heterosexual identities, feelings, or behaviors are wrong and inferior to heterosexual identities, feelings, or behaviors (Herek, 2004). As denoted by its name, sexual stigma incorporates facets of the social-psychological concept of stigma (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998; Goffman, 1963; Major & O'Brien, 2005). As a stigmatized group, non-heterosexual individuals are thus wholly defined and treated on the basis of this singular aspect of their identity, occupy a subordinate position in the hierarchy of society, and face marginalization and discrimination.

Heterosexism refers to the ways in which social institutions and systems perpetuate the normativity of heterosexuality, sexual stigma, and the marginalization of non-heterosexuality (Herek, 2004). For instance, heterosexism is exemplified in laws that define marriage as between only one man and one woman or that prohibit adoption by same-sex couples, language that assumes heterosexuality or denotes non-heterosexuality as subordinate, as well as ideological norms and positions espoused by certain institutions (e.g., political or religious institutions) that endorse or condone stigma against non-heterosexuality.

Finally, *sexual prejudice* can be defined as negative attitudes toward individuals based on their non-heterosexual group membership, such as lesbian, gay, or bisexual individuals and their communities (Herek, 2004). Thus, sexual prejudice – as an attitude – represents a general tendency for an individual to make a negative evaluation of another person, in this case based on that person's sexual minority group membership (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Herek, 2004). This contemporary shift in how sexual prejudice has been defined, as well as sexual stigma and heterosexism, is particularly relevant for social psychologists. Essentially, it moves the conceptualization from a clinically based framework to a framework founded on core social psychology theories and issues such as those on intergroup relations and conflict, social stigma, and broader research on prejudice.

Identifying a Comprehensive Set of Factors Contributing to Sexual Prejudice

Studies have identified a range of factors linked to sexual prejudice that offer a more comprehensive explanation for why some individuals are more likely than others to hold stronger sexual prejudice attitudes. As noted in the prior section, although a range of terms has been used across these studies, their focus has still coalesced around the study of negative attitudes toward sexual

minorities (primarily lesbians and gay men). In this section, we review some of the most prominent and widely studied factors associated with sexual prejudice. There are several ways to organize these factors as they relate to one another. Broadly, some represent individual psychological constructs, whereas others reflect a set of interpersonal and social constructs. We first review individual factors associated with sexual prejudice and then extend this focus to interpersonal and social factors.

Individual Factors Associated with Sexual Prejudice

Individual attributes and several major belief systems have been connected to sexual prejudice. In the interest of space, we focus on patterns that have been identified based on gender, gender ideology, social dominance orientation, right-wing authoritarianism, and identity centrality. Still, we note that multiple other individual factors have been connected to sexual prejudice, including empathy and perspective taking, religious ideologies, and political ideologies (Johnson, Brems, & Alford-Keating, 1997; Pearte, Renk, & Negy, 2013; Whitley, 2009). While outside the scope of this chapter, these too warrant continued attention.

Gender differences and gender ideology. At a basic level, gender differences in sexual prejudice are robust across many studies, with men reporting higher levels than women (Herek, 2000; Hollekim, Slaatten, & Anderssen, 2012; Kite & Whitley, 1996; Monto & Supinski, 2014). At the same time, there is variation in this pattern when considering prejudice toward specific sexual minority populations. For instance, some findings indicate that these gender differences apply to prejudice toward gay men, but that gender differences are less sizable or are nonsignificant for prejudice toward lesbian women (Kite & Whitley, 1996; Whitley & Ægisdóttir, 2000). In other studies, heterosexual men report greater prejudice toward gay men than they do toward lesbian women, whereas heterosexual women do not make this distinction in their attitudes (Herek, 1988; LaMar & Kite, 1998; Mata, Ghavami, & Wittig, 2010). Still other studies have shown gender differences between heterosexual men and women on their attitudes toward bisexual men but not on their attitudes toward bisexual women (Mulick & Wright, 2011), possibly because heterosexual men hold less negative attitudes toward bisexual women than bisexual men, thus attenuating these gender differences. Indeed, similar to patterns found when looking at prejudice toward gay men and lesbian women, heterosexual men report greater prejudice toward bisexual men than they do toward bisexual women, whereas heterosexual women do not make this distinction (Yost & Thomas, 2012). These findings underscore the need for research to consider sexual prejudice toward specific populations of sexual minorities and by specific dominant groups. Doing so would allow researchers to identify whether a unique set of factors contributes to these specific forms of sexual prejudice and explain why these different patterns emerge based on gender.

Masculine ideology beliefs offer a potential explanation for the distinct gender-based patterns for sexual prejudice toward gay and bisexual men and toward lesbian and bisexual women. Although multiple forms of masculinity have been described, the prevailing form of masculine ideology in society remains one that includes explicit sexual prejudice, particularly toward gay men (Epstein, 2001; Kimmel, 1997; Mahalik et al., 2003; Pascoe, 2007; Pleck, Sonenstein, & Ku, 1994). Men are socialized from childhood through adulthood to adhere to this belief system, and many report feeling pressured to prove both their masculinity and heterosexuality to their peers (Pascoe, 2007; Phoenix, Frosh, & Pattman, 2003). Indeed, there are significant associations between traditional masculine ideology beliefs and sexual prejudice (Mahalik et al., 2003; Parrott, Adams, & Zeichner, 2002; Pleck et al., 1994; Stotzer & Shih, 2012). This socialization of masculine roles and beliefs among men that includes a denigration of gay men (or non-heterosexual men more broadly) could partly explain why heterosexual men report stronger prejudice toward gay and bisexual men than do heterosexual women, as well as why this pattern may be weaker for prejudice toward lesbian or bisexual women. Similarly, in a sexist society female same-sex and opposite-sex relationships are sexualized and objectified by heterosexual men and women's agency is devalued (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Hill & Fischer, 2008); because of their marginalized position based on gender, non-heterosexual women's violation of heterosexist norms may be viewed as less threatening among heterosexual men.

Dominance and authoritarianism. Social dominance orientation (SDO) and right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) are two prominent ideologies that have been examined extensively in the social psychology research on prejudice (Sibley & Duckitt, 2008). First, SDO is based within social dominance theory, which stipulates that hierarchies exist in societies wherein some groups are in positions with greater power and access to resources than others (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994). SDO represents one's level of support and preference for group-based hierarchies, and these anti-egalitarian beliefs are used to justify the existence and acceptability of hierarchies in which some groups are dominant over others (Pratto et al., 1994). Second, RWA is based in the authoritarianism literature (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950; Altemeyer, 1988) and reflects adherence to traditional social conventions, submission to those deemed legitimate authority figures, and support for the punishment of those who break such conventions (Altemeyer, 1988). Both SDO and RWA are strong predictors of prejudice, often acting in a parallel and additive manner (Duckitt & Sibley, 2007; Duckitt, Wagner, du Plessis, & Birum, 2002; Levin, Pratto, Matthews, Sidanius, & Kteily, 2013; Sibley, Robertson, & Wilson, 2006). For a recent review of the effects of SDO and RWA on prejudice, see Duckitt and Sibley's chapter on the dual process model (Chapter 9, this title).

Specific to sexual prejudice, SDO and RWA are both significantly associated with this form of prejudice when they are considered independent of each other

(Duckitt & Sibley, 2007; Haddock, Zanna, & Esses, 1993; Mata et al., 2010; Poteat, Espelage, & Green, 2007; Poteat & Spanierman, 2010; Whitley, 1999). When their joint contribution is considered, however, studies suggest that RWA is more strongly associated with sexual prejudice than SDO. For example, when controlling for the effect of RWA, the unique effect of SDO in predicting sexual prejudice often is reduced to nonsignificance (Duckitt & Sibley, 2007; Poteat & Spanierman, 2010; Webster, Burns, Pickering, & Saucier, 2014). RWA may be a particularly strong predictor of sexual prejudice because sexual minorities are often viewed as challenging and threatening historical, cultural, and religious norms; traditional values; and conventions (Haddock et al., 1993; Miceli, 2005). Although SDO contributes less to the prediction of sexual prejudice relative to RWA, it remains relevant and offers an explanation for why some individuals endorse stronger levels of sexual prejudice. Just as masculine ideology beliefs provide a partial explanation for gender differences on sexual prejudice, so too does SDO. Mata and colleagues (2010) found that SDO partially mediated the differences between adolescent boys and girls on their levels of sexual prejudice. As found in the SDO literature, individuals in dominant groups (e.g., heterosexual men) often report higher levels of SDO than those in subordinate and marginalized groups (Guimond, Dambrun, Michinov, & Duarte, 2003; Pratto et al., 1994). Thus, countering sexual prejudice among some individuals likely will require addressing both their dominant and authoritarian beliefs.

The fact that sexual prejudice is associated with both RWA and SDO could also capture the somewhat contradictory claims made by those who hold negative attitudes toward sexual minorities: namely, that sexual minorities are simultaneously considered to be a serious threat (a point that would elicit negativity from high-RWA individuals) while they are also stereotyped as weak and subordinate (a point that would elicit negativity from high-SDO individuals). Notwithstanding the robustness of these findings and the strength of the associations between SDO, RWA, and sexual prejudice, there is still a need for future research to consider whether SDO and RWA vary in the strength with which they are associated with prejudice toward specific sexual minority populations. It might be, for example, that SDO is particularly important in predicting antigay prejudice, as gay men are often stereotyped as ineffectual. Conversely, lesbian women do not face this same stereotype, and prejudice toward them may be less conceptually related to hierarchy maintenance. Potentially, this more specific focus could offer clearer explanations for how these ideological beliefs are associated with sexual prejudice and suggest mechanisms by which they come to predict prejudice toward certain sexual minority populations.

Identity importance and centrality. The importance and centrality that heterosexual individuals place on their sexual orientation identity (i.e., being “straight”) in relation to their overall sense of identity is associated with their level of sexual prejudice and antigay behavior (Poteat, DiGiovanni, & Scheer, 2013). Similarly, men who report a stronger desire that their gender identity and expression not be interpreted in a way that would misidentify them as

non-heterosexual also report stronger levels of sexual prejudice (Falomir-Pichastor & Mugny, 2009). These associations can be framed within social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). As noted in this theory, individuals engage in behaviors to differentiate themselves from outgroup members to create positive ingroup distinctiveness, and to decrease any threat of being misclassified as a member of an outgroup (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). For individuals who hold strongly negative attitudes toward sexual minorities, their sexual orientation social identity may be particularly salient and thus be a primary category that they use to classify others as either an accepted ingroup member or a highly derogated outgroup member. Further, because people high in sexual prejudice ascribe such negative attitudes toward individuals in the non-heterosexual social category, they may be especially averse to others misidentifying them as a member of that group. Individuals who identify more strongly with their ingroup are more likely to engage in differentiating behaviors (Jetten, Spears, & Manstead, 1997). Antigay behavior may be one overt form of differentiating behavior among individuals who hold strong sexual prejudice attitudes. Consequently, individuals may engage in antigay behavior as a way to emphasize their heterosexual group membership to others and to preemptively abate any anticipated threat from others to classify them as a sexual minority.

Several issues need greater attention in this area of research. Although the association between sexual orientation identity importance and sexual prejudice has been identified, more research is needed to test the causal order and longitudinal associations between these factors. As noted in developmental intergroup theory (Bigler & Liben, 2006), establishing the psychological relevance and salience of a social category can lead to the formation of stereotypes and prejudice based on the use of that category. This process would suggest that raising the salience of sexual orientation identity among heterosexual individuals could lead them to form stereotypes and negative attitudes toward sexual minorities. In turn, holding strong negative attitudes toward sexual minorities could reinforce and maintain the ongoing salience of this social identity among these heterosexual individuals because, for them, the negativity of being misclassified as a sexual minority would be particularly elevated.

Another unique issue to be addressed as part of this area of research is the visibility of sexual orientation identity. Relative to other social identities, sexual orientation identity may not be as readily visible or as accurately assumed by others (Stern, West, Jost, & Rule, 2013). It is possible that such uncertainty could affect how individuals interact and potentially magnify associations between identity salience and prejudice or between identity salience and differentiating behavior compared to these associations for other social categories. Because sexual orientation may be more of a hidden identity, there may be uncertainty or hypervigilance around identifying ingroup and outgroup members and signifying one's own group identity. For instance, heterosexual men might make deliberate statements about their heterosexuality when they engage in actions that might lead others to question their sexual orientation (Bosson, Prewitt-Freilino, & Taylor, 2005; Pascoe, 2007).

Interpersonal and Social Factors Associated with Sexual Prejudice

Despite growing attention to sexual prejudice, the predominant focus has been on individual psychological factors underlying these attitudes. Much less attention has been given to the broader social context in which these attitudes are socialized and expressed or to how the broader social context exerts effects on sexual minorities (Birkett & Espelage, 2015; Mustanski, Birkett, Greene, Hatzenbuehler, & Newcomb, 2014; Poteat, 2007). Nevertheless, the sizable literature base on prejudice in general has underscored the effects of social factors and interpersonal experiences in shaping individuals' prejudiced attitudes. In this section, we focus on two factors: the effects of intergroup contact and friendships with sexual minorities and the effects of peer socialization and group norms.

Intergroup contact and friendships. There is much support for Allport's (1954) intergroup contact hypothesis that under optimal conditions, contact with outgroup members can reduce prejudice and discrimination (refer to Chapter 6, this title). The benefits of intergroup contact are especially high within the context of peer friendships (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Congruent with this larger literature base, direct contact and friendships with sexual minorities are associated with lower sexual prejudice (Herek, 2002; Herek & Capitanio, 1996; Hodson, Harry, & Mitchell, 2009; Smith, Axelton, & Saucier, 2009). Heterosexual individuals who have more sexual minority friends report lower sexual prejudice than those without these friendships (Herek & Capitanio, 1996; Hodson et al., 2009; Vonofakou, Hewstone, & Voci, 2007). These studies have also considered various mechanisms by which intergroup contact and friendships with sexual minorities predict lower sexual prejudice, including lower intergroup anxiety and greater attitude strength (Mereish & Poteat, 2015; Vonofakou et al., 2007). These findings thus indicate that intergroup anxiety may be a strong driver of sexual prejudice and that such anxiety is amenable to change through contact.

More research is needed to examine mechanisms by which direct contact and friendships with sexual minorities could reduce sexual prejudice. In addition to giving continued attention to the factors of intergroup anxiety and attitude strength, studies might focus on other factors known to be strongly associated with sexual prejudice in particular, such as SDO, RWA, or masculine ideology beliefs. Do intergroup friendships modify these beliefs and, in turn, sexual prejudice attitudes? Do sexual minority friendships tend to have stronger effects on some beliefs more than others? Also, studies should consider attributes of the relationships that heterosexuals have with sexual minority peers (e.g., length of the friendship, level of closeness) as well as attributes of sexual minority peers themselves that magnify or attenuate the effects of such friendships on sexual prejudice. For example, bidirectionality is likely at play. That is, just as contact reduces sexual prejudice in heterosexuals, it is likely that sexual prejudice also drives contact. For example, it is unlikely that someone high in sexual prejudice will seek out sexual minority friends. Interestingly, it is those who are presumably most resistant to contact with sexual minorities who would benefit from it

the most. Understanding how sexual minority friendships are developed and encouraged should therefore also be a focus of future research. Broadly, these factors could give a clearer indication of optimal conditions under which sexual prejudice is reduced. Finally, as we later note, certain group norms and interpersonal dynamics should be considered in terms of how they shape individuals' sexual prejudice.

In addition to direct contact, the extended contact hypothesis suggests that an individual's knowledge that another ingroup member has outgroup friendships can decrease prejudice (Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe, & Ropp, 1997). These extended friendships predict lower prejudice over and above direct friendships (Turner, Hewstone, & Voci, 2007). Such types of extended friendships with sexual minorities are related to lower sexual prejudice (Hodson et al., 2009; Mereish & Poteat, 2015). Additional research is needed to examine the connection between extended friendships with sexual minorities and sexual prejudice. Direct contact or friendships with sexual minorities may not always be possible, especially in contexts where sexual minorities may face elevated risks for self-disclosing their sexual orientation. Future research should identify specific mechanisms by which knowledge of another heterosexual peer's friendships with sexual minorities leads heterosexual individuals to evaluate or change their own sexual prejudice attitudes or the conditions under which this process is most likely to occur. For example, are heterosexuals with sexual minority friends more likely to challenge the sexual prejudice of their peers who do not have sexual minority friends? At an even broader level of extended contact, future research might consider the effects of increased visibility of sexual minority characters, actors, and public figures on television and in other forms of social media.

Peer socialization and group norms. As noted earlier, intergroup contact through peer friendships can have a powerful effect on reducing prejudice. More broadly than having sexual minority friends, peers in general exert a significant influence on one another across developmental periods from childhood to adulthood (Arnett, 2008; Prinstein & Dodge, 2008). Peers come to have an even larger role in socializing attitudes and behaviors during adolescence as individuals come to spend more time with peers (Brechwald & Prinstein, 2011). Social network theories (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001) provide a framework for examining and understanding these peer-related patterns. In general, individuals tend to affiliate with peers who express similar attitudes and behaviors, and this selection effect results in basic peer homophily (McPherson et al., 2001). Beyond this selection effect, peers can influence one another over time through ongoing socialization processes (e.g., establishing and enforcing group norms) that can result in even greater peer similarity and influence members' attitudes and behaviors (Brechwald & Prinstein, 2011). Emerging findings, primarily among adolescents, are beginning to show how these processes apply to sexual prejudice and discriminatory behavior.

There is initial evidence for peer similarity on sexual prejudice, supportive of the basic homophily principle of social network theories (Birkett & Espelage, 2015;

Poteat, 2007). These studies collected friendship nominations among adolescents within schools, in which social network analysis was used to identify cohesive friendship groups. Based on these identified group memberships, adolescents within the same peer group report similar levels of sexual prejudice and engage in similar rates of discriminatory behavior (Birkett & Espelage, 2015; Poteat, 2007). There is also evidence of ongoing peer socialization of these attitudes and behaviors: The sexual prejudice of adolescents' peers predicts their own ensuing levels of sexual prejudice and discriminatory behavior (Birkett & Espelage, 2015; Poteat, 2007).

Although peer similarity and socialization have been identified in relation to sexual prejudice, some issues remain to be addressed. For instance, it is likely that most individuals do not deliberately select their friends based specifically on their level of sexual prejudice. Rather, individuals may select friends based on broader and more overarching worldviews, morals or values, or ideological beliefs that, in turn, could result in a level of shared prejudice or anti-prejudice attitudes. This process should be tested directly in future research. Similarly, certain factors could magnify or attenuate the level of similarity among peers in their sexual prejudice. For instance, some individuals may indeed select peers who share closely similar prejudice or anti-prejudice attitudes if this is an important quality to them. Also, some individuals give greater preference to shared behaviors and interests over shared attitudes and beliefs, something that has been connected in the general literature to low and high levels of self-monitoring (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). Self-monitoring could also account for why some individuals are more similar to their peers than others on levels of prejudice and should be examined.

Other beliefs and behaviors of adolescents' friends that collectively reflect peer group norms account for individuals' sexual prejudice over and above effects attributable to the individual. In this case, we revisit the relevance of SDO and RWA, discussed earlier for their contributions as individual ideological beliefs. In addition to individual-level SDO, social dominance theory stipulates that individuals in hierarchy-enhancing environments will report higher levels of prejudice than individuals in hierarchy-attenuating environments (Pratto et al., 1994). Hierarchy-enhancing environments are those that reinforce and condone social inequality, whereas hierarchy-attenuating environments are those that reject social inequality and promote egalitarianism. For instance, individuals' own levels of prejudice and SDO have been examined in relation to their membership in hierarchy-enhancing and hierarchy-attenuating careers (Pratto, Stallworth, Sidanius, & Siers, 1997; Sidanius, van Laar, Levin, & Sinclair, 2003).

We have extended this examination to look at how sexual prejudice might be present in peer groups that are more hierarchy-enhancing or hierarchy-attenuating in nature (Poteat et al., 2007). We found that adolescents who were members of peer groups that collectively reported higher levels of dominance than other groups (i.e., were more hierarchy-enhancing) also reported higher levels of sexual prejudice,

even when controlling for each individual's level of SDO. In effect, an individual who was a member of a hierarchy-enhancing peer group reported even stronger sexual prejudice than another individual who espoused equivalent levels of SDO but who was a member of a peer group that was less hierarchy-enhancing. Consequently, individuals who reported the strongest levels of sexual prejudice were those who held strong SDO beliefs and whose peers also held strong SDO beliefs. The same kind of peer group contextual effect has been found for RWA: Individuals who are members of highly authoritarian peer groups report even stronger levels of sexual prejudice, over and above levels that would be anticipated based on their own level of RWA (Poteat & Spanierman, 2010). In fact, similar to patterns that have been identified at the individual level (Duckitt & Sibley, 2007), collective RWA group norms are stronger predictors of an individual's sexual prejudice than collective SDO group norms (Poteat & Spanierman, 2010).

Finally, studies have noted the negative effects of prejudice on individuals' intergroup interactions (e.g., Dovidio, Kawakami, & Gaertner, 2002), but there has been much less attention to whether prejudice affects interactions among close friends. Recent findings have shown that levels of sexual prejudice within peer groups do affect the interpersonal dynamics and quality of interactions among peers in the group (e.g., Poteat, Mereish, & Birkett, 2015). We found that adolescents who reported stronger sexual prejudice reported poorer interpersonal interactions with peers they had nominated as friends. We also documented contextual effects tied to collective levels of prejudice at the group level. In effect, adolescents who reported the most negative interactions with their friends were those who personally reported high levels of sexual prejudice and whose friends also reported high levels of sexual prejudice. This effect was evident even when accounting for the overall aggressive nature of the group, as well as sexual orientation, age, gender, and group size and sexual orientation composition. Moreover, adolescents in groups with stronger initial group-level sexual prejudice reported progressively worse interactions with their peers seven months later.

Of interest, group-level sexual prejudice only predicted ensuing negative interactions, not positive interactions. Because relationship qualities are multi-dimensional (Furman, 1996), some relationships have many negative qualities even when exhibiting positive qualities. If the effects of holding prejudice attitudes were unilaterally negative, this would likely risk a breakdown of peer groups. Because some relational needs (e.g., emotional support) continue to be met in groups espousing high levels of prejudice, prejudice may endure despite some of the more caustic interactions that it exacerbates. Several processes could explain why sexual prejudice predicts increasingly poorer peer relationships. As sexual prejudice is associated with dominance, ongoing attempts to establish and maintain dominance within these groups could lead to increasingly negative interactions and homophobic exchanges among these peers. Similarly, these peers may engage in certain antagonistic behavior to "prove" their heterosexuality. Ultimately, these findings suggest why prejudice

can be difficult to change: Prejudice attitudes and associated behaviors serve a relational function (Connolly, 2000; Guerin, 2003; Pascoe, 2007) despite their other negative effects. Continued attention to how peers contribute to the perpetuation of prejudice as well as attention to how prejudice itself affects the interactions that occur within peer groups is critical.

The Development of Sexual Prejudice: The Need for More Dynamic Models

Up to this point, we have considered a range of individual and social factors that account for variability across individuals in their sexual prejudice attitudes. However, with the exception of our discussion on peer socialization and intergroup contact, there has been a general assumption of relative stability in these attitudes as held by any one individual. Granted, one defining feature of an attitude is that it is relatively enduring (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993); yet, when considering individuals' sexual prejudice over an expansive period of time, it is quite possible that their attitudes exhibit some degree of change. Individual changes in sexual prejudice could occur as a result of direct and formalized interventions (e.g., through a school's use of an anti-bullying program that addresses bias-based harassment or guest speakers in college courses) or from naturally occurring processes or circumstances (e.g., continual development of one's own worldviews or a friend's disclosure of his or her sexual minority identity). Nevertheless, longitudinal studies, or even cross-sectional cohort comparisons, on potential developmental changes in sexual prejudice are few in number. Moreover, the lack of research is pronounced for periods prior to adulthood. The absence of research during these periods is especially concerning because stereotyping and prejudice could be more malleable to change in earlier developmental periods compared to adulthood given the many simultaneous advances in other aspects of development (e.g., cognitive development) that could contribute to variability and change in prejudice (Bigler & Liben, 2006).

To our knowledge, no studies have considered stereotypes or attitudes toward sexual minorities prior to early adolescence. During these later developmental periods, however, cross-sectional cohort comparisons do suggest a general trend of decreasing sexual prejudice from early to late adolescence and from late adolescence into adulthood (Hoover & Fishbein, 1999; Horn, 2006). Although this overall trend provides a foundational pattern, several limitations come from cross-sectional comparisons. It is difficult to differentiate the extent to which cohort differences represent actual changes in attitudes within individuals from the effects that could be due to unique characteristics of each cohort. More importantly, these findings convey only a singular pattern of change when it is quite likely that there is substantial variability across

individuals in whether or how their sexual prejudice attitudes change during any developmental period. Further, beyond the identification of different trends, research is needed to identify factors that account for patterns of change in sexual prejudice.

A few studies have begun to use longitudinal data from individuals to identify patterns of change in sexual prejudice, and to identify factors that account for different patterns of change. For example, using data from four time points to consider changes in sexual prejudice among adolescents from ages 12 to 18, Poteat and Anderson (2012) identified several patterns of change. Boys reported initially higher levels of sexual prejudice toward gay men and lesbian women than did girls; moreover, while sexual prejudice toward gay men decreased among girls from early to late adolescence, boys showed no significant decrease in their sexual prejudice toward gay men. In contrast, boys and girls reported significant and comparable decreases in prejudice toward lesbians from early to late adolescence. Finally, fluctuations in individuals' SDO over this period corresponded significantly with fluctuations in their sexual prejudice toward gay men and lesbians.

With data from older age groups, a study by Hooghe and Meeusen (2012) also considered patterns of change in sexual prejudice using two time points of data from individuals when they were age 18 and then when they were age 21. Congruent with the findings of Poteat and Anderson (2012), these authors also found that men reported initially higher levels of sexual prejudice than women (the study considered sexual prejudice in general and not toward specific sexual minority populations). Also, sexual prejudice among women decreased more than it did among men between the first and second time points. The authors also found that having more sexual minority friends at age 18 predicted decreased sexual prejudice at age 21, though more so for men than for women. Finally, they found that higher levels of SDO and conservative gender role beliefs at age 18 predicted increased levels of sexual prejudice at age 21.

These emerging findings point to the need for continued longitudinal research on developmental changes in sexual prejudice, and they highlight several key issues that require greater attention. As we have noted in other sections of this chapter, research needs to consider attitudes held toward specific sexual minority populations. This need was highlighted by the findings of Poteat and Anderson (2012) showing distinct patterns of change for boys in their attitudes toward gay men and attitudes toward lesbians. Not only may individuals hold distinctly different degrees of prejudice toward specific sexual minority populations (Whitley & Ægisdóttir, 2000; Yost & Thomas, 2012) but also changes in their attitudes toward one group may not automatically imply equivalent changes in their attitudes toward other sexual minority groups. Building on the findings of both of these studies, future research should also identify other individual and social factors that could capture variability across individuals in whether and how their attitudes toward sexual minorities change over time. Also, expanded beyond the focus on sexual prejudice, research should consider whether

trajectories of change in sexual prejudice align with or are distinct from trajectories of change in other forms of prejudice. Such studies should consider factors that could account for any similarities or differences in these patterns. For instance, several models have been proposed that suggest certain ways in which individuals cluster various minority groups together, as well as different stereotype dimensions along which certain minority groups are categorized and associated with one another (Asbrock, Sibley, & Duckitt, 2010; Duckitt & Sibley, 2007; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002). It would be informative to determine if trajectories of change in prejudice attitudes are similar for attitudes held toward those groups that tend to fall within the same cluster or along similar stereotype dimensions.

The Intersection of Sexual Orientation with Multiple Stigmatized Identities

An overarching issue that must be better addressed in future research on sexual prejudice relates to points of intersectionality across social identities (e.g., in reference to how sexual orientation intersects with other social identities such as race, gender identity or expression, social class, or disability, among others). How is sexual prejudice expressed similarly or differently toward individuals based on their other privileged or stigmatized identities? How do individuals in dominant groups view sexual minority individuals with multiple marginalized identities, some of which may be more visible than others (e.g., sexual minorities of color, sexual minorities with disabilities, or sexual minorities living in poverty)? Attention to these issues could highlight complex cognitive processes that produce variability in sexual prejudice toward specific populations of sexual minorities. Given that individuals come to be wholly defined and treated based on their stigmatized identity, how does this process occur when some individuals have multiple stigmatized identities (e.g., do some identities take precedent, are individuals with other stigmatized identities assumed to be heterosexual)? Are multiple forms of prejudice activated for individuals in dominant groups when they encounter sexual minorities from these backgrounds? The fact that some studies suggest that individuals with multiple stigmatized identities experience even greater health concerns (Mustanski, Garofalo, & Emerson, 2010; Russell, Everett, Rosario, & Birkett, 2014) further underscores the need to consider these issues in future research.

A focus on intersectionality of stigmatized identities highlights the particular need for research on anti-transgender prejudice and how this form of prejudice differs from sexual prejudice. Transgender individuals are sometimes included in research examining the effects of sexual prejudice on LGB individuals, given their often shared experiences within the broader sexual minority community. At the same time, this approach has several shortcomings. First, sexual orientation and

gender identity are two distinct aspects of a person's identity; thus, transgender individuals may identify as either heterosexual or as a sexual minority. The nuanced experiences of transgender individuals are lost when research examines the LGBT community as a homogenous whole. Second, transgender individuals often face prejudice from cisgender heterosexual individuals as well as from cisgender sexual minorities (Weiss, 2003), and further attention to anti-trans prejudice within the LGB community is warranted. Third, there is great diversity within the transgender community itself, as individuals differ in gender identification, fluidity, decisions or abilities to utilize medical treatments (such as hormones or surgery), and identity development trajectories.

Some work has begun to assess anti-transgender prejudice separate from sexual prejudice. For example, Hill and Willoughby (2005) and Nagoshi and colleagues (2008) have both developed assessments of anti-transgender prejudice. The latter assessment was based on Bornstein's (1998) tool for assessing a person's discomfort with gender nonconforming people, and research with this measure has shown it to be highly correlated with stronger sexual prejudice, right-wing authoritarianism, religious fundamentalism, and hostile sexism (Nagoshi et al., 2008). As transgender people gain increased visibility, a deeper understanding of the components of anti-transgender prejudice and its association with other factors is necessary.

Finally, research is needed on cisgender and heterosexual privilege. This is in line with the broader movement of research on social issues to become more systemic. By shifting the discourse away from a solitary focus on disadvantages faced by sexual and gender minorities, and by examining advantages conferred to heterosexual and cisgender individuals, a more complete analysis of dominant power structures will be possible. This holistic perspective is better suited to demonstrate how the privileges afforded to individuals based on dominant group membership (e.g., according to race, gender, sexual orientation, religion) contribute to and maintain oppressive systems (e.g., Case, Iuzzini, & Hopkins, 2012; Israel, 2012) and is less likely to further perpetuate oppression by decentralizing dominant group members as the norm against which sexual and gender minorities are compared (Israel, 2012; Serano, 2007).

Beyond Prejudice: Extending the Focus to Affirming Attitudes

In an even broader sense than individual developmental changes in sexual prejudice, there have been gradual societal and cultural shifts in how sexual minorities have come to be seen, along with a growing awareness of the often blatant discrimination they face (Baunach, 2012; Brewer, 2014). Perhaps as a reflection of this shift, contemporary research in the area of sexual prejudice

has increasingly emphasized the need for studies to expand and incorporate attention to actively affirming attitudes and behaviors toward sexual minorities. Expressing low levels of sexual prejudice is not synonymous with holding explicitly affirming attitudes toward sexual minorities (Fingerhut, 2011; Pittinsky, Rosenthal, & Montoya, 2011). Thus, direct attention to heterosexual allies (i.e., individuals who express affirming attitudes and engage in advocacy to counter discrimination and to promote the equality of sexual minorities; Russell, 2011) is a critical and much-needed complementary focus to the continued attention to sexual prejudice and discrimination. In addition to the factors we have noted earlier in this chapter, a unique set of factors could also lead some heterosexual individuals to adopt explicitly affirming attitudes and to engage in behaviors that directly challenge established discriminatory norms against sexual minorities (Duhigg, Rostosky, Gray, & Wimsatt, 2010; Montgomery & Stewart, 2012; Russell, 2011). This represents a burgeoning and promising area for future research, and one that would offer a much more comprehensive understanding of attitudes toward sexual minorities – one that expressly includes negative and positive attitudes.

Conclusion

As the study of sexual prejudice continues to advance, emerging findings in this area have highlighted new avenues of research. In this chapter, our aim was to provide an overview of how the conceptualization of sexual prejudice itself has evolved as well an overview of the many factors that contribute to and perpetuate these attitudes; it is by no means exhaustive in its coverage of the topic. Nevertheless, our hope is that by providing this foundational knowledge and by identifying several key areas that warrant closer attention, this chapter will add to the literature in a way that promotes the next generation of studies on sexual prejudice as well as empirically informed efforts to not only reduce sexual prejudice but also to cultivate affirming attitudes and societal norms for sexual minorities.

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