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VIOLENCE OUTSIDE TO VIOLENCE WITHIN: THE EXPERIENCE OF SEXUAL MINORITIES IN SCHOOLS AND INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

by

CAROLINE LIPPY

Under the Direction of Dr. Julia Perilla

ABSTRACT

The current study explored the association between sexual minorities' experiences in schools and relationships. Socio-political-psychological theory provided a framework for the exploration of how retrospective reports of sexual orientation violence in school (SOVS) and school environment predicted the experience and perpetration of sexual minority intimate partner violence (SMIPV). Because of its relation to both school and interpersonal violence, alcohol was also hypothesized to predict rates of experiencing and perpetrating SMIPV. Group differences for all scales were explored on the basis of sexual orientation, gender, race/ethnicity, and education. Chi-square and analysis of variance analyses revealed several significant differences. Logistic regressions revealed that the experience of SOVS was not found to significantly affect the risk of experiencing or perpetrating SMIPV. However, a negative school environment was found to affect the

risk of experiencing and perpetrating SMIPV differentially by gender and race, respectively. Results also revealed that alcohol significantly predicted the perpetration of SMIPV.

INDEX WORDS: Sexual minority, Intimate partner violence, Sexual orientation violence, School environment, Alcohol

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by

CAROLINE LIPPY

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

In the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2008

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Caroline Anna Lippy

2008

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by

CAROLINE LIPPY

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Georgia State University
December 2008

DEDICATION

To my parents, whose belief in me has never wavered. You provide not only the foundation from which I make these leaps, but also the model for how to do so.

To Becky and Colin, what have we always said is the most important thing? Thank you for providing endless humor and quirky wisdom throughout this process.

Thanks to Aunt Alicia and Mommom for generously providing endless and much needed support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the following people for providing me with invaluable help. First, I want to thank my mentor, Dr. Julia Perilla, for providing unlimited encouragement, support, and humor throughout this entire process. You have instilled in me not only a better understanding and enjoyment of the research process, but also a greater awareness of the ethical responsibilities that accompany conducting research in communities.

I am grateful to Dr. Gabriel Kuperminc and Dr. Roger Bakeman for pushing me to continue refining my methodology and building my technical skills as a researcher. Conducting research under their guidance felt like a methodological and statistical immersion program. Ultimately I leave this experience wiser to the ways of research.

My colleagues and peers also provided incredible support and guidance. Josie Serrata continually provided a much needed combination of academic and emotional support. I would also like to thank the members of our research team for their contributions throughout this process. Thanks especially to JP Collier, Lindsey Siegel, Joanna Weinberg, and Leon Silvers. A special thanks also to Judith Kerr and Melissa Dobson who tirelessly and with alarming accuracy helped me enter the data.

Finally, thanks to the participants at the Atlanta Pride Festival who took time away from celebrating to participate in my study. Despite the indescribable heat and the allure of more enjoyable activities at the festival, these individuals spent time helping to further our knowledge of sexual minorities. With these results, I hope to help decrease the presence of violence in our lives.

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INTRODUCTION

Research on intimate partner violence (IPV) is increasingly incorporating the experiences of individuals in sexual minority relationships. Sexual minority relationship refers to any relationship varying from a heterosexual model, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersexed, and questioning (LGBTQIQ) relationships. Studies on sexual minority intimate partner violence (SMIPV) mostly look at prevalence rates (Ristock, 2002), psychological and physical health consequences (Potoczniak, Mourot, Crosbie-Burnett, & Potoczniak, 2003), distinctive characteristics (Letellier, 1996; Stanley, Bartholomew, Taylor, Oram, & Landolt, 2006; Sulis, 1999), and individual risk factors for abuse (Renzetti, 1992; Ristock, 2002). Specifically, the risk factors often considered include substance abuse, level of dependency, previous history of family violence, and human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) status (Renzetti, 1992).

The literature examining students' experiences of SOVS remains separate from and uninformed by the research on SMIPV. For the purposes of this study, sexual orientation violence in schools (SOVS) will be defined as violence against individuals incited by one's actual or perceived sexual orientation. The major focus of this research remains the type, prevalence, and individual-level consequences of experiencing and witnessing SOVS (Bontempo & D'Augelli, 2002; D'Augelli, Grossman, & Starks, 2006; Human Rights Watch, 2001; Pilkington & D'Augelli, 1995). The consequences include decreased school achievement, increase in mental health issues, substance abuse, risky sexual behavior, use of violence, and suicide (Bontempo & D'Augelli, 2002; Human

Rights Watch, 2001; Rivers, 2004; Russell, Frantz, & Driscoll, 2001; Savin-Williams, 1994).

Within the field of SOVS exists a growing body of literature around school-level variables that serve as antecedents of violence. Studies look at the association between elements of school climate and the rates and severity of SOVS among students. Researchers look at the effects of the presence of Gay-Straight Alliances (GSA), LGBTQIQ-affirmative teachers and staff, and LGBTQIQ-inclusive non-discrimination school policy (Goodenow, Szalacha, & Westheimer, 2006; Human Rights Watch, 2001; Sadowski, 2005; Szalacha, 2001). The theoretical assumption of this type of research is that a school's climate indicates its level of tolerance of violence against sexual minority students, which in turn influences the level of violence experienced by these students.

While research on the separate areas of SMIPV and school violence continues to grow, the lack of overlap between the two fields is problematic. Socio-political-psychological models of domestic violence suggests that overlap may exist between the areas (Perilla, Frndak, Lillard, & East, 2003). The models argue that three elements within the context of violence affect its occurrence: learning, opportunity, and choosing to abuse. Experiencing SOVS may affect an individual's tendency to learn or choose to abuse in later intimate partnerships. No studies exist that look at the impact of experiencing SOVS on one's later experiences in sexual minority relationships. If relationships exist between the two constructs, then identifying school level variables that decrease the frequency of SOVS is an important avenue to prevent SMIPV.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CURRENT STUDY

The current study will examine relationships between school climate, experiencing sexual orientation violence in school (SOVS), and subsequent experience or perpetration of sexual minority intimate partner violence (SMIPV). To provide a context for the study, the literature review will discuss four key research areas. The first will outline several major theories of SMIPV. The second will look at the prevalence, characteristics, and contributing factors of SMIPV. The next area will expound on the school climate effects on SOVS, specifically discussing the role of school policies, teacher and staff training, and Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs). The last area will detail the prevalence, type, and effects of SOVS on sexual minority students. This last section will include a discussion of the significance of the timing of this violence with regard to dominant theories of sexual identity development. The purpose of this literature review is to bridge the gap between the research regarding sexual minorities' experience of violence in school and violence in intimate relationships, providing a rationale for a study combining these two fields.

Since the literature review refers extensively to specific subgroups of sexual minorities, the following explains how each subgroup within the LGBTQIQ population will be defined for the purposes of this study. Lesbian will refer to a woman who is physically and/or emotionally attracted to women. Gay will refer to a man who is physically and/or emotionally attracted to men. Bisexual will refer to men and women who are physically and/or emotionally attracted to both men and women. Transgender will refer to a person whose gender identity or gender expression falls outside of stereotypical gender norms. Queer will be used two ways. One is as an umbrella term for

all LGBT individuals. The other is in reference to queer theory (Butler, 1990), where it becomes a sociopolitical label for individuals who challenge the perceived heteronormativity of traditional gender and sexual identity systems. Intersexed will describe individuals with any anatomical variation from the "standard" male and female types. Finally, questioning will refer to individuals who are currently unsure of their sexual orientation or sexual identity.

Overview of Theories on SMIPV

Psychological Theory.

Psychological theories on SMIPV primarily emphasize the individual variables related to sexual minorities' perpetration of and reaction to abuse. Island and Letellier (1991) advocate an individual-based, gender-neutral theory that abuse occurs because of a personality disorder of the perpetrator. Many theorists argue that psychological elements like self-esteem and interpersonal dependency are related to perpetration of abuse, putting individuals with low-self esteem and high interpersonal dependency at greater risk of perpetrating SMIPV (Renzetti, 1992). Studies additionally link the psychological disorders of depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) with substance abuse , which becomes a potentially larger issue given the robust association between substance abuse and IPV (Klostermann & Fals-Stewart, 2006).

Researchers also use social learning theory to explain SMIPV. Central to this theory is the idea that individuals can learn to use or experience violence through previous exposure to violence. Research that utilizes this theoretical framework often explores associations between SMIPV and an individual's history of family violence or child abuse (McKenry, Serovich, Mason, & Mosack, 2006; Ristock, 2002). This relates to

the idea of the additive effect of violence, which postulates that exposure to violence is cumulative. Individuals who experience and witness more violence are considered at greater risk of future perpetration or experience of violence than individuals with less previous exposure (L. L. Merrill et al., 2005).

A common critique of psychological theories of SMIPV is that if no element besides the psychology of individuals influences the perpetration of SMIPV, then equal rates would be expected across individuals of different groups. In the case of gender, the rate of perpetration of violence in heterosexual relationships is a hotly debated topic, but it is commonly believed that there is a substantial difference in the rates of perpetration by men and women (Bachman & Saltzman, 1995; Kimmel, 2002; G. S. Merrill, 1996; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Clearly systemic factors play a role in the experience and perpetration of SMIPV, however the dominant psychological theories of SMIPV do not provide adequate frameworks from which to examine these factors. Furthermore, psychological theories run the risk of justifying the perpetration of abuse by assigning a pathology to the behavior, thereby overlooking elements of choice in every act of violence.

Sociological Theories.

Sociological theories of SMIPV emphasize the notion that many social factors support interpersonal violence. Family violence theory is a common sociological framework that views intimate partner abuse as a part of a pattern of abuse among all family members. Family violence theory maintains that families model the violence in society and that each family member has an equal opportunity to share or hold this power (Istar, 1996). The family violence viewpoint receives heavy criticism for its monolithic

view of families. By failing to acknowledge cultural and contextual differences between families, the family violence theory ultimately treats all families identically. This viewpoint is also critiqued for its lack of recognition of potential power differentials between family members due to such things as gender, age, education, socio-economic status, and immigration status (Perilla et al., 2003).

Sociological theories of SMIPV also maintain that other social factors support SMIPV, including societal homophobia, a lack of resources for victims, and social isolation. Allen and Leventhal (1999) argue that society in many ways sanctions violence against sexual minorities, and this makes it more difficult for sexual minorities to see relationship violence as unacceptable. Additionally, societal homophobia leads to an increase in isolation of sexual minorities, which provides greater power for abusers (whose patterns of abuse frequently incorporate isolation of their partners) and provides more obstacles for victims to seek out the limited services available (Allen & Leventhal, 1999).

Sociological theories receive criticism for being unable to explain why, if sexual minorities receive the same social forces and pressures, some sexual minorities are abusive and others are not (G. S. Merrill, 1996). Additionally, sociological theories could receive criticism for espousing an overly broad, monolithic view of sexual minority relationships which overlooks many critical contextual variables. Finally, by highlighting external factors that contribute to abuse, sociological theories may justify the abuse to some degree, failing to emphasize the personal choices abusers make in their decisions to abuse.

Ecological Theories.

Ecological theories of SMIPV address the context of violence by highlighting the importance of simultaneously analyzing multiple levels of an issue. Dalton, Elias and Wandersman (2001) explain how a model by Bronfenbrenner postulates many interrelated levels of an issue, from the individual to the macro-level. A multilevel analysis of SMIPV simultaneously considers the societal-level component of homophobia as well as individual-level qualities of the victim and perpetrator (Gunther & Jennings, 1999). Garcia (1999) addresses this idea when she argues that domestic violence should not be analyzed outside of the realm of other issues, including race, class, and immigration, globalization of economy, and wars. To focus only on domestic violence is to ignore the impact of these other issues on individuals in abusive relationships.

By better integrating the context of violence, ecological theories address the claim by many researchers that previous analyses of SMIPV utilized an inappropriately heterosexual lens. Russo (1999), in discussing the specific issue of lesbian battering, states that research must focus more on being lesbian-specific, arguing that this reframing will increase lesbian involvement and motivation in addressing the issue. Ristock (2002), also speaking of lesbian abuse, describes the problem of trying to fit "others" into the dominant mold. She argues that doing so obscures the specificity and heterogeneity of lesbian abuse.

Feminist Theories.

Feminist theories that outwardly address SMIPV are a relatively new phenomenon. In the past, feminists' gender-based theories of domestic violence

proclaimed sexism and misogyny as the root of the problem, with domestic violence serving as a tool of patriarchal oppression. The phenomenon of lesbian battering remained largely overlooked or de-legitimized due to its incompatibility with this theory (Elliott, 1996). Additionally, earlier feminist theories could not explain other uses of violence by women, including child and elder abuse (Perilla et al., 2003; Ristock, 2002).

Ristock describes how some feminist gender-based theories explain SMIPV by linking heterosexism and homophobia to the misogyny of the sex-role system (Ristock, 2002). Many feminists see abusers as acting in masculine ways and victims in feminine ways. Others also argue that the heterosexual relationship still reigns as the dominant relationship model; therefore, sexism issues within the hetero model will be modeled in all relationships, including sexual minority relationships (Allen & Leventhal, 1999).

One critique of gender-based theories is the fact that gender in sexual minority relationships is not expressed as simplistically as would be required to validate the theory. In order for gender-based assumptions to be validated, same-gender relationships that feature masculine/feminine gender expression dichotomies should replicate this masculine-abuser and feminine-victim scenario. For example, in lesbian relationships with one highly masculine woman (often considered the butch partner) and one highly feminine partner (often considered the femme partner), gender-based theories would predict that the butch partner would always be the abuser and the femme partner always the victim. Instead, no consistent pattern appears to exist regarding gender expression and abuser-victim status in sexual minority relationships (G. S. Merrill, 1996; Ristock, 2002).

Others critique the theory because they see power, not gender, as the central issue behind SMIPV (Elliott, 1996). In the case of heterosexual abuse, sexism serves as the

primary oppressive force faced by couples; therefore, gender becomes the source of power in heterosexual relationships. For sexual minorities, homophobia is the primary oppressive force, which means that each partner is equally affected. As a result, the source of power can come from other places, such as class, race, education, immigration status, and even work status (Perilla et al., 2003). hooks (2000, p. 61) addresses some of these criticisms of feminist theories with the creation of the term "patriarchal violence," which she uses to describe "the belief that it is acceptable for a more powerful individual to control others through various forms of coercive force." She links violence in the home to sexism and male domination in society; however, she does so in an inclusive way that allows for the analysis of heterosexual violence, sexual minority violence, and even violence against children.

Socio-Political-Psychological Theories.

Expanding on a model originally articulated by Gilbert, Poorman, and Simmons (1990), Perilla et al., (2003) propose a model for understanding intimate partner violence (IPV) that combines many relevant aspects of the previous theories of SMIPV. The model outlines three causal elements of IPV: learning, opportunity, and choosing to abuse. The learning component of the theory incorporates the psychological elements of social learning and modeling as well as broader social factors that might reward such abuse. The opportunity component can consist of sociological elements like societal homophobia, feminist notions of gender, and/or case-specific contextual factors. Opportunity incorporates the multi-level focus encouraged by ecological theories. Finally, choosing to abuse recognizes individual-level psychological components, but it does so in a context that still focuses the responsibility of the behavior on the individual.

This final element helps explain why the person with more social power may not always subordinate his/her partner; in addition to access to power, abuse requires a willingness to use the power (G. S. Merrill, 1996).

The current study will use the Socio-Political-Psychological Theory proposed by Perilla et al. (2003) to explore the relationships between school environment, sexual orientation violence in schools, and sexual minority intimate partner violence. Specifically, the learning and choosing components of the theory are of particular relevance to the current study. Victimization in school and school environment will be viewed as avenues through which sexual minorities learn about interpersonal violence, and, given its role as a behavioral disinhibitor, alcohol will be explored as a variable that potentially increases the likelihood of individuals choosing to abuse.

Sexual Minority Intimate Partner Violence

Prevalence

As with estimates of other forms of interpersonal violence, the rates of SMIPV vary widely due to different operational definitions of abuse and different tools of measurement. The different ways researchers distinguish between physical, sexual, and emotional/psychological abuse complicates the interpretation of prior abuse rates. An additional difficulty arises when researchers differentiate sexual minority subgroups; researchers use varying definitions when classifying sexual minorities.

With these caveats in mind, the estimated rates of abuse in lesbian relationships appear to be substantial. Physical abuse in lesbian relationships range from 7% (Bryant & Demian, 1994) to 60% (Bologna, Waterman, & Dawson, 1987). Emotional abuse, often viewed as the most common form of abuse, ranges from 65% (Lie, Schilit, Bush, &

Montagne, 1991) to 90% (Lockhart, White, Causby, & Isaac, 1994) in lesbian relationships. Finally the sexual abuse rates range from 5% (Loulan, 1987) to 57% (Lie et al., 1991) in lesbian relationships, however the broader definition of sexual abuse used by Lie et al. limits its generalizability. While the wide ranges of these forms of violence make it difficult to estimate "true" levels of SMIPV, even the more conservative estimates within the ranges indicate a significant problem.

Research on IPV in lesbian relationships exceeds the amount of research of IPV in any other sexual minority subgroup. The group with the next largest number of studies is gay men. Again, a wide-range occurs with reports of physical abuse ranging from 11-20%, a mathematical projection by Island and Lettelier (1991), to 44% (Bologna et al., 1987). Sexual abuse rates range from 5% (Greenwood et al., 2002) to 55% (Waldner-Haugrud & Gratch, 1997). The wide range of sexual abuse estimates is partly due to differing operational definitions. The former study utilized an operational definition of sexual abuse that only considered forced sex while the second study looked at a range of sexually coercive acts. Studies looking at psychological/emotional abuse is very limited; however, a recent study looking at abuse rates for men who have sex with men (MSM) found 34% of men experienced psychological/symbolic abuse in the previous five years (Greenwood et al., 2002).

Even less research exists on bisexual and transgender populations, two other major subgroups of sexual minorities. Researchers describe how violence in the lives of bisexuals "has been subsumed into the statistics on either heterosexuals or gays and lesbians, rendering bisexuals invisible" (Istar Lev & Lev, 1999, p. 46). Therefore, current statistics on SMIPV for bisexuals remains largely unknown (Sulis, 1999). As for the

transgender community, Risser, Shelton, McCurdy, Atkinson, Padgett, Useche et al., (2005) found that 50% of male-to-female transgender individuals reported experiencing IPV. Unfortunately, the limitations of the study include a lack of knowledge about the type of abuse, the transition stage of the transgendered individual, and any information about female-to-male transgendered individuals. The Gender, Violence and Resource Access Survey (Courvant & Cook-Daniels, 1998) cited by Istar Lev and Lev (1999) found the same percentage of SMIPV for transgender and intersexed populations. Similar limitations exist with these data as well, which highlights the need for future research to explore the experience of violence in this under-researched community.

Despite wide ranging estimates and knowledge gaps, researchers by and large support the idea that rates of SMIPV remain roughly equivalent to rates in heterosexual relationships (Elliott, 1996; Island & Letellier, 1991; Potoczniak et al., 2003; Turell, 2000). To increase the accuracy of future prevalence studies, many researchers argue for the need to incorporate more knowledge about the context of abuse. For example, researchers must consider how much of the reported violence is in self-defense (Ristock, 2002). Marrujo and Kreger (1996) found that, in addition to incidents of self-defense, many lesbians reported a pattern of fighting back, resulting in the authors' classification of lesbians as either primary aggressor, primary victim, or participant (women that fought back). Consideration of similar nuances of violent relationships must be included in future prevalence studies.

Characteristics

The context of SMIPV is unique in many ways, distinguishing this form from relationship violence found in heterosexual relationships. Some of the contexts unique to

sexual minorities include “outing,” first relationships, shifting of power, and HIV/AIDS. “Outing,” which refers to disclosing of one’s sexual orientation or identity, creates many issues unique to sexual minority relationships. For many abusers, threatening to “out” a closeted partner serves as an effective form of abusive control (Elliott, 1996). Degree of “outness” can also establish a power differential in the relationship, giving the more “out” partner more power to wield in the relationship. Seeking of services by victims is also closely tied to being “out.” By seeking services for battered sexual minorities, individuals necessarily reveal their sexual orientation (Elliott, 1996). Furthermore, some individuals may not speak about the abuse with their friends because they have not disclosed their sexual minority status; this prevents them from receiving support or advice from friends about their situation (Waldron, 1996).

The context of a sexual minority’s first same-sex relationship harbors a plethora of potential issues that puts individuals at risk for SMIPV. For starters, many sexual minorities enter into a relationship with limited prior exposure to “happy, healthy same-sex relationship models” (Miller, Bobner, & Zarski, 2000), potentially lowering their expectations of experiencing a positive relationship. Additionally, Sears (1991) uncovered the belief in some youths that their sexual minority status disadvantaged them because they were largely unable to have what one youth dubbed little “test relationships” that serve as preparation and trial-runs for their first serious relationship. Coupling these concerns with the societal and often internalized homophobia that sexual minorities face when first starting to date, it should come as no surprise that sexual minorities are often highly vulnerable in the context of their first sexual minority relationship. Ristock (2002) found that more than half of the lesbians in her sample

described their first relationship as abusive. This fact remains startling due not only to its sizable quantity, but also because of the potentially lasting effects this has on sexual minorities. As Allen and Leventhal (1999, p. 79) postulate, if the first relationship is violent, how do sexual minorities "separate the experience of being queer from the experience of being battered?"

In stark contrast to heterosexual IPV, a characteristic of SMIPV remains the relative ability of power in the relationship to fluctuate. Power is defined here as "the ability to influence others, the ability to get others to do what one wants them to do regardless of whether or not they want to do it" (Waldron, 1996, p. 43). Many researchers note the way in which the roles of victim and abuser can reverse in and across sexual minority relationships (Elliott, 1996; Renzetti, 1992; Stanley et al., 2006). When this happens, a former victim of abuse may become the perpetrator within the same relationship or in a different relationship. Elliott (1996) describes how this might occur after a batterer receives help to stop his/her abusive behavior, and the former victim in the relationship may become abusive to the former batterer. As opposed to the immutable gender inequity that usually characterizes the power differential in heterosexual IPV, sexual minority relationships involve more variables that can change (Ristock, 2002). This allows for greater fluctuation of power and thus fluctuation of abusers. Naturally, this presents formidable challenges to professional services that follow the heterosexual model of separate services for batterers and victims.

An important distinction must be made between power shifts and mutual abuse. Mutual abuse is generally regarded as a myth about SMIPV (Elliott, 1996); it maintains that the abuse is equally and simultaneously perpetrated by both partners. The notion of

power shifts, on the other hand, maintains that at any given time only one partner is the primary abuser. This distinction becomes especially important in criminal and legal matters where the misconception of SMIPV as mutual abuse results in the belief that both partners are equally responsible for the violence (Elliott, 1996).

Finally, the context of HIV/AIDS status presents obstacles for sexual minorities experiencing IPV. As with degree of "outness," HIV/AIDS status can serve as an oppressive tool of the abuser, and it puts the victim at greater risk of experiencing abuse in the first place. Letellier (1996) describes how using HIV/AIDS status as a weapon occurs when the victim is positive (i.e. abuser withholds medication, threatens to disclose partner's status) or when the abuser is positive (i.e. threatens to infect the partner, "plays sick", inflicts survivor guilt). Issues also revolve around seeking IPV services; like "outness," HIV/AIDS-positive individuals most often will have to disclose their status in order to receive services. Additionally, they must consider whether IPV services even have the necessary resources to address their medical needs (Letellier, 1996).

Correlates of Abuse

Researchers study a variety of correlates of IPV in sexual minority relationships, including self-esteem, interpersonal dependency, substance abuse, and previous history of family violence. Self-esteem and interpersonal dependency both appear correlated to SMIPV through substance abuse. Renzetti (1992) describes how abusive partners' dependency was the strongest factor associated with IPV and that it manifested itself through alcohol abuse. McKenry et al. (2006) explain that low self-esteem is also related to substance abuse. While causal relationships between these variables have not been confirmed, findings regarding alcohol abuse are worrisome due to research that indicates

that, at least for women who engage in same-sex sexual behaviors, they have a significantly higher rate of alcohol abuse than do heterosexual women (Cochran, Keenan, Schober, & Mays, 2000; Sandfort, de Graaf, Bijl, & Schnabel, 2001).

Finally, many researchers study the effects of witnessing or experiencing family violence on future perpetration or experience of violence. Ristock (2002) explained how some women in her study described the abusive dynamic in their relationship as familiar due to prior family violence. Additionally, Renzetti (1992) found that men and women who experienced family violence were ten and six times more likely to abuse their partners, respectively. In a qualitative study of gays and lesbians referred for perpetrator treatment, all participants reported experiencing psychological abuse, about 90% reported experiencing physical abuse, and 67% of men and 94% of women reported experiencing sexual abuse during childhood (Farley, 1996). The author admits that these staggering rates may be inflated, however, due to question-wording and the noted tendency for perpetrators to see themselves as victims (1996). Lie et al. (1991) found that either experiencing or witnessing violence in one's family of origin puts an individual at risk for being in a currently aggressive relationship. The study also found additional risk factors for lesbians who were in previous aggressive relationships with men or women, and for lesbians who were previously aggressive with male and/or female partners. Lie et al., mirroring the results of many other studies, concluded that "a history of aggression, whether the person is a target or observer of aggression, is a risk factor for subsequent experiences with aggression" (1991, p. 133). The risk involved with a history of aggression creates an impetus to examine other areas of sexual minorities' lives that may

feature aggression and violence, which leads to the next two sections on sexual minorities' experiences in schools.

School Climate

In the field of school climate research, a major concern of the literature is exploring correlations between school climate variables and the occurrence of sexual orientation violence in schools (SOVS). The Gay and Lesbian School Education Network (GLSEN), a LGBTQ youth advocacy group, released a report in 2005 that showed that 69% of self-identified LGBTQ youth felt unsafe in schools because of their sexual orientation, and this resulted in 32% of respondents skipping a class and 31% missing a day of school in the previous month (Kosciw & Diaz, 2005). In comparison, a study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics found in a nationally representative sample of 12-18 year olds, 6% of students reported being afraid of attack or harm at school (Dinks, Cataldi, Lin-Kelly, & Snyder, 2007). Furthermore, Goodenow, Szalacha, and Westeimer (2006) describe how students experiencing hostile school environments can suffer a host of mental health problems, including emotional distress, depression, anxiety, and suicide. Goodenow et al. (2006) demonstrated that general school safety does not effectively extend to sexual minority students, requiring schools to make special efforts to address this population's specific safety needs.

A plethora of findings suggest that addressing school climate variables in any number of ways can greatly impact the experience of sexual minority students in schools. Szalacha (2001) conducted a study looking at the implementation of recommendations from Massachusetts' Safe Schools Program, a program designed by the statewide Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth to enhance the safety of schools for sexual

minority youth. That study found that implementation of only one or more of the program's numerous recommendations resulted in sexual minority students' reports of decreased levels of homophobia and heterosexism in the school and increased levels of personal safety. The factors associated with school climate in this study as well as in many others include policies, staff and teacher training, curricula, and Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs).

Researchers point to the need for schools to include sexual orientation explicitly within discrimination policies (Goodenow et al., 2006; Human Rights Watch, 2001; Muñoz-Plaza, Quinn, & Rounds, 2002). As the Human Rights Watch (2001) explains, without a school policy holding school officials responsible for the safety of sexual minority students, the responsibility falls on the students themselves to advocate on their own behalf. While experimental studies looking at causal effects of such policies are limited, Goodenow et al. (2006) demonstrated that sexual minority specific anti-bullying policies had a strong negative association with suicide attempts.

Another major area of school climate research is teacher and staff training on sexual orientation issues. Previous research has indicated that teacher and staff competency around sexual minority concerns needs improvement. In one study of 211 health teachers, only one-quarter saw themselves as very competent to teach about homosexuality (Telljohann, Price, Poureslami, & Easton, 1995). More generally, Sawyer (2001) showcased that few of the staff interviewed in her study felt adequately trained to provide support for sexual minority youth. Of school counselors and psychologists, the majority were found to have little or no professional training on sexual orientation (Savage, Prout, & Chard, 2004).

Competency issues become even more crucial with the realization of the important role teachers and staff members play in the lives of sexual minority students. Through hundreds of qualitative interviews, the Human Rights Watch (2001) uncovered a pattern of counselors serving as the first school official to whom students turned for information about sexual orientation and gender identity. Furthermore, the Human Rights Watch found that in virtually every case where sexual minority youth had positive school experiences, the youth attributed it in part to the presence of supportive teachers. Numerous studies demonstrate the important role of teachers. Positive experiences with teachers is associated with a decrease in "school troubles" (Russell, Seif, & Truong, 2001), a decrease in risky behavior (Blake et al., 2001), decrease in suicidality (Goodenow et al., 2006), an increase in positive attitudes about school (Sadowski, 2005), and a general improvement in perceived school climate (Szalacha, 2003). Therefore, training teachers and staff members to respond appropriately to the needs of sexual minority students is critical to ensure the safety of this population.

Since the 1990s, the U.S. has experienced a substantial growth in the number of gay-straight alliances (GSAs) in middle and high schools. GSAs are student run, extracurricular groups that include sexual minority youth as well as straight allies. The size and function of the groups vary widely from school to school, with some serving as peer support groups, others as social groups, and others as advocacy groups pushing for change within their schools or communities (Sweat, 2004). Even though GSAs vary enormously, their effects appear universally profound. Goodenow, Szalacha, and Westheimer (2006) found that the mere presence of a GSA, not even a student's membership in a GSA, was associated with decreased suicidality of sexual minority

students. The authors described this finding as the result of the GSA's reduction in the overall victimization of sexual minority youth in the school. Other outcomes for GSAs include greater support and less hostility for sexual minority youth (Szalacha, 2003), creating a safe space for sexual minority youth, eliciting changes in school policies regarding sexual orientation, and educating peers and teachers about sexual minority issues (Sweat, 2004). In a qualitative study, students expressed beliefs that their participation in GSAs improved their academic performance and relationships with teachers and staff, and it increased their sense of empowerment and safety within the school (Lee, 2002). Perhaps the most exciting finding is the positive correlation between participating in GSAs and the level and quality of participants' activism after high school graduation (Garcia-Alonso, 2004). This suggests potentially long-term effects of school climate on sexual minority youth.

Sexual Orientation Violence in Schools (SOVS)

Prevalence.

The literature on school climate developed as a result of the increasing knowledge about the extent of sexual orientation violence in schools (SOVS). While rates of violence differ between studies, Bontempo and D'Augelli (2002) argue that victimization at school is disproportionately associated with sexual minority status. Human Rights Watch (2001) found that sexual minority youths were three times as likely as heterosexual peers to be assaulted or involved in at least one physical fight, and three times as likely to be threatened or injured with a weapon. Pilkington and D'Augelli (1995) found that sexual minority teenagers experienced a lifetime average of three forms of victimization, 80% of which were verbal insults. Human Rights Watch (2001) cites a

study in Des Moines, Iowa that found in an average Des Moines high school, an anti-gay comment is used every seven minutes with teachers only intervening 3% of the time. The widespread extent of verbal abuse is supported by the finding that in a sample of southern sexual minority youths, 97% recalled negative attitudes about homosexuality by peers, and 50% reported regular verbal abuse from classmates (Sears, 1991).

While verbal abuse constitutes the most common form of SOVS, other forms occur with surprising frequency as well. Pilkington and D'Augelli (1995) report that 22% of males and 29% of females were physically hurt by another student because of their sexual orientation. The Human Rights Watch (2001) describes various forms of sexual abuse experienced by lesbians and bisexual students, which ranges from the 72% who were called sexually offensive remarks, to 63% who were touched in a sexual way, to the 23% who experienced a rape or attempted rape. Social isolation remains another form of SOVS, and Sears (1991) found that 95% of his southern sexual minority sample reported experiencing social isolation.

Correlates.

In addition to the school-level correlates of SOVS previously expounded in the summary of the school climate literature, many researchers study individual level correlates, including gender role nonconformity and sexual identity. Many studies reveal the positive correlation between the experience of SOVS with the extent to which students (regardless of sexual orientation or identity) deviate from traditional gender norms (Human Rights Watch, 2001; Pilkington & D'Augelli, 1995; Savin-Williams, 1994; Waldo, Hesson-McInnis, & D'Augelli, 1998). An interesting implication of this finding includes the possibility that sexual orientation does not necessarily enter the

equation; both sexual minority and straight students receive abuse because of gender non-conformity. Existing literature cannot elucidate on whether straight students receive this abuse because of perceived sexual orientation, or whether much of SOVS is based less on sexuality and more on gender role nonconformity.

The specific sexual identity label utilized by students remains another correlate of SOVS. While much debate circulates around labels, especially as the current generation of students continues to reject previous labels and invent their own (Savin-Williams, 2005), some studies show an increased vulnerability of students who identify as bisexual. In her sample of high school students, Rhee (2004) found that bisexual males experienced significantly higher rates of SOVS than any other sexual minority subgroup. One potential explanation for such findings could be the relative isolation of bisexuals from both homosexual and heterosexual communities. Donaldson describes the double jeopardy in which bisexuals can find themselves, where they can remain excluded from and sometimes even ostracized by both heterosexuals and gays and lesbians (1995). The potentially greater isolation of bisexuals might be at the root of their apparent increased vulnerability; however, more research needs to be conducted to begin to understand these findings.

As found in the literature on SMIPV, most of the research on SOVS is conducted on individuals who identify (or who are identified by the researcher) as gay or lesbian. There is limited research on the experience of other sexual minorities and even less that accounts for racial and ethnic differences. The current study hopes to elucidate the experience of a variety of sexual minorities of different racial and ethnic backgrounds. The study will provide exploratory data on these populations.

Effects.

The impact of SOVS on sexual minority students is wide-ranging and potentially long-lasting. Looking at immediate school outcomes of SOVS, researchers found that two-thirds of sexual minority students reported school related problems, with 40% reporting truancy, 60% failing a grade, and 28% dropping out of school (Savin-Williams, 1994). Another study found that sexual minority youths are four times as likely as their heterosexual peers to skip school because they felt unsafe (Human Rights Watch, 2001).

Beyond school achievement outcomes, SOVS also affects the mental health of sexual minorities. The Human Rights Watch (2001) found that a disproportionate number of sexual minority youths who witnessed harassment considered or attempted suicide. Several studies that illustrate an increased risk of suicide for sexual minority youths cite harassment and abuse by peers as the potential cause (Human Rights Watch, 2001; Savin-Williams, 1994). In addition to risk of suicide, studies also reveal higher rates of mental health issues like depression (Bontempo & D'Augelli, 2002; Human Rights Watch, 2001), and post-traumatic stress disorder (Rivers, 2004) for sexual minority students who experience SOVS. Rivers found that 17% of sexual minority adults that reported being bullied in high school showed symptoms of PTSD.

Health risk behaviors are further consequences of SOVS. Bontempo and D’Augelli (2002) found that SOVS is predictive of substance abuse, risky sexual behavior, suicidality and mental health problems. The authors also found that sexual minority youths who experienced high levels of victimization exhibited substantially more health risk behaviors than even heterosexual youths who experienced high levels of

victimization. The increased risk of substance abuse raises interesting implications when paired with the finding that substance abuse is a correlate of SMIPV.

Finally, SOVS also relates to adolescents' greater use of violence. Murdock and Bolch (2005) found that for their sample of sexual minorities, the only significant predictor of disciplinary problems in schools was being personally victimized by peers for being a sexual minority. The disciplinary problems they looked at ranged in severity from being sent to the principal's office to expulsion. Russell, Franz, and Driscoll (2001) found that experiencing violence in adolescence was correlated with gay youth perpetrating extreme forms of violence against each other. The authors concluded that experiencing violence during adolescence plays a role in violence perpetration.

Many authors point to developmental theories of adolescence and sexuality to support this claim, emphasizing the importance of high school years on the healthy development of youth. The primary developmental task for adolescents has long been considered the need to form a coherent identity (Erikson, 1963). Many researchers argue that a coherent identity includes understanding and integrating a sexual identity (Graber & Archibald, 2001). In interviews with lesbians, Schneider (2001) discovered that many of the women understood the development of their lesbian identity as integral to their development as a whole person. Specifically, she found that many sexual minority-specific milestones like coming-out were embedded in other developmental processes, like the development of self-esteem. Additionally, through qualitative interviews Muñoz-Plaza et al. (2002) revealed that a central theme was the emergence of youths' sexual identity in the context of their high school experiences. This suggests that undergoing negative experiences like victimization could substantially impact youth at this age and at

this stage of their sexual development. More research needs to analyze the specific effects of experiencing such victimization because of sexual minority status on the sexual development of youth.

By emphasizing connections and potential overlap between the fields of SOVS and SMIPV, the current study hopes to highlight ways in which the two fields can inform each other. Specifically, discovering another potential risk factor for SMIPV could offer an additional avenue through which to prevent violence. Conversely, uncovering another potentially negative consequence of experiencing SOVS provides further support for efforts to intervene and prevent such abuse in schools.

In sum, there remain a number of areas that could greatly benefit from increased attention and research. One basic area includes more reliable rates of SMIPV for different subgroups of sexual minorities. This would help fill in gaps of knowledge and provide more consistent estimates. Another area includes research studying correlates of SMIPV, especially history of previous abuse and alcohol abuse. These two correlates seem of particular significance in the literature and deserve more attention, especially given their significance in both SOVS and SMIPV. Finally, more research on the effect of school climate on the rates of SOVS and SMIPV could be particularly helpful in understanding the context of SOVS, and it could provide substantial support for addressing both forms violence at a systemic level.

Current Study

Overview.

The preceding literature review summarized much of the existing literature on sexual orientation violence in school (SOVS) and sexual minority intimate partner

violence (SMIPV), highlighting the lack of connections between the two fields. This study proposes to address this separation, exploring overlap between the areas in an effort to expand theories in both fields. As explained in the literature review, previous experience of family violence is correlated with perpetration and experience of SMIPV. The current study will explore this connection by looking at whether the experience of school violence is correlated with relationship violence. Socio-political-psychological theory, which postulates three causal factors of SMIPV: learning, opportunity, and choosing to abuse, provides a framework for exploring this hypothesis. The experience of SOVS models interpersonal violence for students, giving sexual minority youth a way to learn the dynamics of abuse. It also increases the likelihood of choosing to abuse by putting youth at risk for alcohol abuse, a correlate of SMIPV that is often seen as a behavioral disinhibitor.

This study also explores the effects of school climate on both SOVS and SMIPV. Previous research shows that elements of school climate considered separately can affect rates of SOVS, and the present study aimed to replicate these findings with the use of a newly constructed scale that combines many of these separate elements of school climate. Research on school climate also reveals that it can exert lasting effects on students' mental health, and this finding provides a case for school climate directly affecting SMIPV. With connections between mental health issues like depression and increased risk of alcohol abuse, this again increases the likelihood that sexual minorities will experience and/or perpetrate SMIPV.

Hypothesis 1. Sexual minorities who experienced more SOVS in schools will report higher rates of both perpetration and experience of SMIPV than those who

experienced less SOVS in schools. This relationship may be moderated by race, gender, sexual orientation and/or education.

Hypothesis 2. Sexual minorities who experienced a more negative school climate will report higher rates of SOVS than those who had a more positive school climate. This relationship may be moderated by race, gender, sexual orientation and/or education.

Hypothesis 3. Sexual minorities who experienced a more negative school climate will report increased rates of both perpetration and experience of SMIPV than those who had a more positive school climate. This relationship may be moderated by race, gender, sexual orientation and/or education.

Hypothesis 4. Sexual minorities with higher levels of alcohol problems will report increased rates of both perpetration and experience of SMIPV. This relationship may be moderated by race, gender, sexual orientation and/or education.

METHOD

Participants

A total of 968 individuals from the 2006 Atlanta Pride Festival participated in the study. All participants were 18 years or older. This ensured that all participants had the opportunity to complete high school. The latter point is important given that two scales inquired about the totality of participants' experiences in high school.

A power analysis conducted prior to data collection determined that a total of 269 cases were necessary to reach a power level of .80. However, given the substantial racial and sexual diversity at the Atlanta Pride Festival, the author procured a larger sample to try to ensure sufficient statistical power to examine diverse subgroups within the sample. The sample collected resulted in a power level of .986.

Table 1 presents the wide sexual and gender diversity of the full sample, including the number of individuals who checked multiple sexualities and genders. Despite this diversity, the vast majority of participants identified their sexual orientation as gay, lesbian, bisexual or straight, and their gender as either male or female.

Since participants could check as many identities as applied for each category, the author created rules to establish the placement into categories of individuals who checked more than one identity per category. The categorization system developed by the author was unique from those used by other authors due to the increased choices provided for the participants of the current study. Many studies instruct participants to choose only one identity from a smaller number of choices, so the incorporation of more categories as well as the option to select more than one category resulted in the need to develop a unique categorization system for this study. The system called for the trumping of certain identities over others such that when multiple identities were checked, only one identity was assigned to the individual. The order of sexual identities called for straight to be replaced by questioning; questioning to be replaced by queer; queer to be replaced by gay; gay to be replaced by lesbian; lesbian to be replaced by bisexual.

The author applied the sexual categorization rules to a total of 165 participants. The application of the rules resulted in a decrease in the sample size from 968 to 796 from the full to the analytic sample. Forty-four individuals were deleted because they identified as or checked multiple identities that, when the rules were applied, placed them into a category other than gay/lesbian, bisexual, or straight. Too few individuals of other sexualities completed the survey to allow statistical analyses of adequate power to be run on a sample with greater sexual diversity. Additionally, the individuals identified or

categorized as straight (n = 113) were deleted given the study's focus on the experiences of sexual minorities.

Table 1

Full Sample Sexuality and Gender Descriptives

Sexuality Endorsed	n	%	Gender Endorsed	n	%
None endorsed	2	0.21	None endorsed	1	0.10
Only Gay	327	33.78	Only Man	413	42.67
Only Lesbian	263	27.17	Only Woman	529	54.65
Only Bisexual	68	7.02	Only MTF	5	0.52
Only Queer	13	1.34	Only FTM	1	0.10
Only Questioning	9	0.93	Only Intersex	3	0.31
Only Straight	113	11.67	Only Other	3	0.31
Only Other	8	0.83			
Multiple Sexualities			Multiple Genders		
2 sexualities	132	13.64	2 genders	11	1.14
3 sexualities	28	2.9	3 genders	0	0
4 sexualities	4	0.41	4 genders	1	0.1
7 sexualities	1	0.1	6 genders	1	0.1
Total	968		Total	968	

The categorization of participants by gender used categorization rules similar to those developed for sexuality. The rules specified for females and males to be replaced

by other; other to be replaced by male-to-female (MTF) or female-to-male (FTM) transgenders; and MTF or FTM to be replaced by intersexed individuals. The author applied the gender categorization rules to 13 participants. Twenty-four individuals were deleted because they either identified as something other than male or female, or they checked multiple identities that when the trumping rules were applied, placed them into a category other than male or female. Too few individuals of other genders completed the survey to allow statistical analyses of adequate power to be run on a sample with greater gender diversity. Additionally, the categorization of sexuality was in part dependent on the participant's response to gender, which made the correct categorization of gender critical to analyses.

The three individuals who either did not provide a race/ethnicity or checked all racial/ethnic categories remained in the sample for all analyses except those investigating race/ethnicity effects. Finally, four individuals were removed from the sample because they completed so little of the study (less than 30%) as to call into question the validity of the answers they did provide.

Ultimately, this study used dichotomous groups for all demographic categories due to the limited numbers in specific demographic subgroups. The sexuality and gender groups consisted of gay/lesbian (n = 704) and bisexual (n = 92) and men (n = 372) and women (n = 424). For race/ethnicity, the two groups were homogenous white (n = 609) and heterogeneous people of color (n = 184). The impact of the heterogeneity of the latter group will receive further attention in the discussion section. The groups for education were less than college degree (n = 394) and at least college degree (n = 402). Finally, the average age across all groups was 35.36 (SD = 11.04).

Procedure

Recruiting Procedures.

Data collection occurred at the 2007 Atlanta Pride Festival. The author secured a booth at the festival from which she and several colleagues recruited participants. Based on attendance records at previous festivals, attendees at the 2007 Atlanta Pride Festival likely exceeded 300,000 attendees over the course of the weekend. Participants who completed the survey did not receive compensation.

Data Entry Validation.

The author and two undergraduate research assistants manually entered data from the paper surveys into Microsoft Excel. To confirm acceptable accuracy in data entry among the three data enterers, a random sample of 100 participants were entered a second time for comparison, producing an accuracy rate of 97% in the double-entered sub-sample.

Missing Data.

Scale scores were constructed by averaging the score for all individuals who answered at least 80% of the scale items. For those individuals who did not complete at least 80% of the items, their scale scores were calculated using expectation maximization (EM), a maximum likelihood missing variable imputation procedure. This procedure was conducted on the scale-level using SPSS Missing Variables Analysis. The percentage of individuals whose scale score was imputed using EM was 2.3% for the school environment scale, 3.1% for the school violence scale, 3.4% for the alcohol scale, 6.9% for experiencing sexual minority intimate partner violence (SMIPV) scale, and 6.6% for the perpetrating SMIPV scale.

This maximum likelihood estimator has been validated and supported as a means of handling missing data (Howell, 2007; Raghunathan, 2004; Widaman, 2006). However, to confirm its appropriateness for this data set, a comparison analysis was run using the list-wise deletion procedure, where the scale score for individuals who did not complete at least 80% of a scale was deleted. The two procedures produced nearly identical results. The data set produced using expected maximization was used for all data analyses to allow for the inclusion of a maximum number of study participants.

Measures

All participants received a survey (see Appendix A) that consisted of 5 questionnaires, for a total of 98 questions. The survey took approximately 5–10 minutes to complete.

Prior to data collection, seven youths and one group facilitator at a local organization for sexual minority youths where the author serves as a volunteer reviewed the questionnaire. The individuals reviewed the content and readability of the questionnaire, as well as the length of time it took to complete. The opinion of the youths was especially pertinent for the school climate questions, many of which have never been used in previously published works. Therefore, the author asked them about the relevancy of items in the questionnaire and if additional items should be included. Feedback provided by the youths and the facilitator led to modifications of the survey.

Demographics questionnaire.

This eight-item questionnaire asked participants about their sexual orientation, perceived sexual orientation in high school, gender identity, gender conformity in high school, race/ethnicity, age, level of education, and location of their high school.

School Environment Scale.

The author compiled the 13-items for this scale based on an article by Chesir-Teran (2003), which focused on heterosexist school climate elements that largely remain unaddressed in the school climate literature. Twelve of the items were scored on a 3-point Likert scale (0= "None/Never," 1= "Some/Sometimes," 2="A lot/Often"). The remaining item was a yes/no question. The scale covers four major domains of school climate: physical-architectural (e.g. "How much anti-gay graffiti was there at your school?"), policy-program (e.g. "How much protection existed for LGBTQIQ students from harassment at your school?"), supra-personal (e.g. "How many LGBTQIQ students were 'out' at your school?"), and social (e.g. "How often were LGBTQIQ students socially pressured not to demonstrate their sexuality in school?"). A reliability test of the scale produced a Cronbach's Alpha of .70

The author elected not to use the popular School Climate Scale designed by the Gay and Lesbian Straight Education Network because the measure largely operationalizes school climate as student victimization and teacher/staff response to student victimization. The School Environment Scale created for the purpose of the current study examines broader, more system-level elements of climate, allowing for personal victimization information to be gathered as a separate construct.

Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT; Saunders, Aasland, Babor, de la Fuente, & Grant, 1993).

This ten-item scale created by the World Health Organization is a widely used alcohol-use screening measure. It has been validated in populations around the world (Babor, Higgins-Biddle, Saunders, & Monteiro, 2001), as well as on gay men (Suprina,

2007). Each of the ten items was scored on a five point Likert scale (0-4). Guidelines exist that establish a cutoff for problematic drinking and unproblematic drinking, however it is also recommended that this scale be used as a continuous measure, with higher scores suggesting greater drinking problems (Babor et al., 2001). The test for scale reliability produced a Cronbach's alpha of .81.

Sexual Orientation Violence in School Scale (Pilkington & D'Augelli, 1995).

This nine-item scale examined the type and frequency of sexual orientation violence experienced in school. The scale was scored on a 4-point Likert scale (0 = "None/Never," 1= "Once," 2= "Twice," 3 = "More than twice"). The type of violence measured by the scale included verbal abuse (insults and threats of violence), minimal physical attack (damaged personal property; being chased, followed, or spat upon; having objects thrown at one's body), and physical assault (punched, hit, kicked, or beaten, sexual assault, or assault with a weapon). The creators of the scale utilized a Total Victimization score, which averaged all items. A reliability test conducted for this study produced a Cronbach's Alpha of .89.

Sexual Minority Intimate Partner Violence Scale- Victim and Perpetrator Versions.

The Victim and Perpetrator versions of the SMIPV scale come from an instrument used in several studies with Latino/a immigrant populations in Atlanta and San Francisco. To better capture several different types of violence, 35-items were taken from three different instruments that have been widely used with mainstream populations: (a) the Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus, 1979); (b) the Psychological Maltreatment of Women

Inventory (Tolman, 1988); and (c) the Index of Spouse Abuse (Hudson & McIntosh, 1981).

Seventeen items from the IPV scale were removed to decrease survey length. Principal component analyses were conducted on data from one of the studies on Latino/a immigrant populations in Atlanta to determine the items to be removed by examining what items explained the least variance, and those items were deleted from the survey. Five items that reflect abuse specific to sexual minority relationships were added to this scale. The items were: "My partner threatened to out me to my friends, family, employer, and/or religious community," "My partner insulted me on the basis of my sexual orientation," "My partner questioned my 'true' sexual orientation," "My partner claimed his/her violent behavior was typical for sexual minority relationships," and "My partner threatened to isolate me socially if we broke up." These items were based on qualitative accounts of violence found in the SMIPV literature. Additionally, four items from the Severity of Violence Against Women Scale (Marshall, 1992) were added to capture sexual abuse (e.g. "My partner demanded sex whether I wanted it or not," "My partner made me have oral sex against my will"). With all items combined, each version of the SMIPV Scale consisted of 27 items.

All items were scored on a 3-point Likert scale (0="Never," 1="Sometimes," 2="Frequently") with the addition of a fourth column to allow participants to circle yes or no if the specific form of abuse happened in more than one relationship. Both perpetrator and victim versions were administered to each participant. The perpetrator version of the scale produced a Cronbach's alpha of .90 whereas the victim version produced a Cronbach's alpha of .92.

Four questions preceded the SMIPV scales to better capture the context of the relationship being described. The questions included whether this was the participant's first sexual minority relationship, if the participant was still in the relationship, if the relationship began after high school, and the gender of the participant's partner.

RESULTS

Levels of Violence.

All scales were scored as the mean of the scale items answered. Overall reported levels of violence were relatively low. Table 2 presents the means, standard deviations, and skew statistics for each scale. The skew statistics illustrate significant positive skew of several scales, particularly Experiencing and Perpetrating SMIPV and Sexual Orientation Violence in School (SOVS), the three dependent variables. Attempts to transform these variables using log and inverse transformations resulted in severely non-normative distributions. A binary transformation, which placed participants who never experienced or perpetrated violence in one category and participants who experienced or perpetrated any violence in another category, produced the most logical distribution for this sample. The binary transformation used on the scale scores resulted in the following distribution for the three scales: 44.1% of the sample reported experiencing no school violence, 29.8% reported no experiences of SMIPV, and 37.7% reported never perpetrating SMIPV.

Differences in level of violence were predicted on the basis of sexual orientation, gender, race/ethnicity, and education. Tables 3 and 4 show the mean scores for different groups across the five scales. Table 3 presents the scores for the continuous scales and Table 4 provides the scores for the dichotomous scales. The tables illustrate men's greater

reports of violence overall; men reported perpetrating and experiencing SMIPV as well as experiencing school violence more than women. Gays and lesbians and individuals with less than a college education also reported greater victimization in school. Bisexuals reported not only more alcohol problems, but also more perpetration of SMIPV. Finally, white participants and those with a college education or greater reported more negative high school environments than their counterparts.

Table 2

Mean, Standard Deviation, Percentage of Zero Scores, and Skew of Scale Scores (N = 796)

Scale	*M*	*SD*	*% 0*	*Standardized Skew*
Negative School Environment	1.43	0.28	0	-4.25
Alcohol	0.55	0.49	5	21.03
SOVS	0.42	0.62	44	21.61
Experiencing SMIPV	0.18	0.29	30	33.33
Perpetrating SMIPV	0.11	0.21	38	54.02

Table 3

Mean Scale Scores Across Demographic Groups for the

Continuous Scales of School Environment and Alcohol Problems

Scale	*M (SD)*	*M (SD)*	η^2	*p*
	Gay / Lesbian (N = 704)	Bisexuals (N = 92)		
Negative School Environment	1.44 (0.28)	1.39 (0.28)	.002	.16
Alcohol Problems	0.53 (0.48)	0.70 (0.51)	.013	.001
	Men (N = 372)	Women (N = 424)		
Negative School Environment	1.44 (0.30)	1.42 (0.26)	.002	.27
Alcohol Problems	0.57 (0.50)	0.53 (0.47)	.002	.20
	White (N = 609)	People of Color (N = 184)		
Negative School Environment	1.47 (0.27)	1.30 (0.29)	.06	<.001
Alcohol Problems	0.54 (0.47)	0.56 (0.55)	.000	.72
	< College (N = 394)	College and > (N = 402)		
Negative School Environment	1.38 (0.29)	1.49 (0.26)	.04	<.001
Alcohol Problems	0.55 (0.51)	0.54 (0.46)	.000	.64

Note: All ANOVAs were run with one degree of freedom.

Table 4

Percent Reporting Yes Across Demographic Groups for the Dichotomous Scales of School Violence and Experience and Perpetration of SMIPV

Scale	*% Reporting Yes*	*% Reporting Yes*	*Odds Ratio*	*p*
	Gay / Lesbian (N = 704)	Bisexuals (N = 92)		
School Violence	58	41	1.99	.003
Experiencing SMIPV	70	76	0.70	.19
Perpetrating SMIPV	61	73	0.61	.03
	Men (N = 372)	Women (N = 424)		
School Violence	70	43	3.09	<.001
Experiencing SMIPV	77	64	1.88	<.001
Perpetrating SMIPV	67	58	1.47	.01
	White (N = 609)	People of Color (N = 184)		
School Violence	57	53	1.18	.33
Experiencing SMIPV	70	72	0.91	.52
Perpetrating SMIPV	62	63	0.96	.84
	< College (N = 394)	College and > (N = 402)		
School Violence	59	53	1.33	.05
Experiencing SMIPV	72	68	1.21	.26
Perpetrating SMIPV	63	61	1.09	.61

Note: All chi-square tests were run with one degree of freedom.

Table 5 provides the bivariate correlations of all scales. As the table illustrates, experiencing SMIPV and perpetrating SMIPV are the most strongly correlated of all the scales. The next strongest is the relation between school environment and school

violence. Finally, alcohol use is moderately correlated with both experiencing and perpetrating SMIPV.

Table 5

Bivariate Correlations of All Scales (N = 796)

Scales	1	2	3	4	5
1. Negative School Environment	—				
2. Alcohol	-.01	—			
3. SOVS	.25**	.03	—		
4. Experiencing SMIPV	-.02	.09*	.06	—	
5. Perpetrating SMIPV	.02	.11**	.10**	.49**	—

*p<.05. **p<.01
Note. The school violence scale used was the continuous scale.

Logistic Regressions

Before analyses, the predictor variables (school violence and school environment) were mean-centered to address the threat of multicollinearity in moderational analyses. Bivariate correlations were conducted on all predictor and moderator variables to further assess the threat of multicollinearity. The lack of strongly correlated variables, presented in Table 6, provides additional assurance against this threat. Interaction variables were created by multiplying the mean-centered independent variables with the moderating variables (sexual orientation, gender, race/ethnicity, and education). Logistic regressions were conducted in SPSS, with main effects entered in the first two steps and moderation effects in the third. The main effect of the predictor variable was entered in step one and the main effects of the moderator variables were entered in step two.

Table 6

Bivariate Correlations of Independent Variables (N = 796)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Sexuality	—						
2. Gender	.14**	—					
3. Education	-.00	-.06	—				
4. Race/Ethnicity	.07*	-.04	-.17**	—			
5. School Environment	-.05	-.04	.20**	-.25**	—		
6. Alcohol	.12**	-.05	-.02	.01	-.01	—	
7. SOVS	-.12	-.26**	-.11**	-.10**	.25**	.03	—

*p<.05. **p<.01
Note. The N for correlations including the race/ethnicity variable = 793.

Determining the significance of the moderation effects involved analysis of both the p-value and *Nagelkerke's* R^2. *Nagelkerke's* R^2, an estimate of *pseudo-*R^2, is proposed as an analogue to the linear regression *Multiple* R^2 (Garson, n.d.; Menard, 1995). The author required that in addition to a significant p-value, moderation effects deemed significant in this study must also demonstrate an increase in *Nagelkerke's* R^2 for the final step of the logistic regression model. Requiring this increase addressed the impact of the large sample size of this study on increasing the likelihood of finding statistical significance as determined by the p-value.

Finally, it is important to note that school violence served as both an independent and dependent variable, depending on the hypothesis. As an independent variable (Hypothesis 1), school violence was continuous; as a dependent variable (Hypothesis 2), it was transformed to a dichotomous variable. As a dependent variable, the positive skew of the scale would violate assumptions of normality if run as a continuous variable

(Tabachnik & Fidell, 2006). However, the skew of independent variables in logistic regressions does not impact the accuracy of this nonparametric test (Garson, n.d.); therefore, school violence could remain as a continuous variable.

Hypothesis 1a.

The analysis of the relationship between sexual orientation violence (SOVS) in schools and experiencing sexual minority intimate partner violence (SMIPV) revealed one significant main effect but no significant moderation effects. As Table 7 illustrates, the first step of the model studying the main effect of SOVS on experiencing SMIPV did not reach statistical significance, *Wald* = 3.03, $p = .08$. The second step added the main effects of the moderating variables through four separate logistic regressions, and only the main effect of gender was significant, *Wald* = 12.21. $p < .001$. The third step, which added the moderating variables, did not produce significant findings for any of the variables. None of the moderating variables significantly moderated the relation between SOVS and experiencing SMIPV.

Hypothesis 1b.

The analysis of the relationship between SOVS and perpetrating SMIPV revealed significant main effects but no significant moderation effects (see Table 8). The first step revealed a significant main effect of SOVS on perpetrating SMIPV, *Wald* = 8.17, $p <.01$. The odds ratio of 1.45 suggests that each unit increase in victimization in high school is associated with a 45% greater likelihood of perpetrating SMIPV. The second step revealed a significant main effect of sexuality, *Wald* = 6.49, $p = .01$. The odds ratio of 0.53 suggests that identifying as bisexual is associated with a 47% decrease in the likelihood of perpetrating SMIPV. However, the third step did not produce any

significant moderation effects, suggesting that none of the variables significantly moderate the relationship between SOVS and perpetrating SMIPV.

Table 7

Hierarchical Logistic Regression Results for the Relation Between SOVS and Experiencing SMIPV

		95% CI			
Predictor	*Odds Ratio*	Lower	Upper	*p*	Δ *Nagelkerke's* R^2
Block 1					
SOVS	1.26	0.97	1.65	0.08	.01
Block 2					
Sexuality	0.68	0.41	1.12	0.13	.00
Gender	1.78	1.29	2.45	<0.01	.02
Education	1.16	0.85	1.58	0.34	.00
Race	0.85	0.59	1.23	0.40	.00
Block 3					
Sexuality X SOVS	1.02	0.30	3.51	0.98	.00
Gender X SOVS	1.00	0.58	1.71	0.99	.00
Education X SOVS	1.21	0.70	2.07	0.50	.00
Race x SOVS	1.46	0.61	3.52	0.40	.00

Note. SOVS = score on sexual orientation violence in school scale; Sexuality scored so that Gay/Lesbian = 0 and Bisexual = 1; Gender scored so that Men = 0 and Women = 1; Education scored so that <College education = 0, College education and > = 1; Race scored so that White = 0, People of color = 1.

Table 8

Hierarchical Logistic Regression Results for the Relation Between SOVS and Perpetrating SMIPV

		95% CI			
Predictor	*Odds Ratio*	Lower	Upper	*p*	Δ *Nagelkerke's R²*
Block 1					
SOVS	1.45	1.12	1.87	<0.01	.02
Block 2					
Sexuality	0.53	0.33	0.86	0.01	.01
Gender	1.32	0.98	1.79	0.07	.00
Education	1.03	0.77	1.38	0.84	.00
Race	0.92	1.16	1.94	0.62	.00
Block 3					
Sexuality X SOVS	1.54	0.32	7.33	0.59	.00
Gender X SOVS	0.74	0.44	1.24	0.25	.00
Education X SOVS	1.64	0.96	2.81	0.07	.00
Race x SOVS	1.31	0.59	2.90	0.50	.00

Note. SOVS = score on sexual orientation violence in school scale; Sexuality scored so that Gay/Lesbian = 0 and Bisexual = 1; Gender scored so that Men = 0 and Women = 1; Education scored so that <College education = 0, College education and > = 1; Race scored so that White = 0, People of color = 1.

Hypothesis 2:

The analysis of the relationship between negative school environment and SOVS revealed significant main and moderation effects (see Table 9). The first step produced a significant main effect of negative school environment on SOVS, *Wald* = 33.40, *p*<.001. The odds ratio of 4.76 suggests that each unit increase in negative school environment is associated with a 376% increased likelihood of experiencing SOVS. The second step revealed significant main effects of sexuality, *Wald* = 7.07, *p*<.01, gender, *Wald* = 56.94,

$p<.001$, and education, *Wald* = 10.80, $p<.001$. The third step showed only a significant moderation effect of race/ethnicity, *Wald* = 4.92, $p = .03$.

As seen in Figure 1, negative school environment increased the experience of school violence for both white participants and participants of color, however school environment exercised greater effect for white participants. White participants experienced much less school violence in less negative school environments and more violence in more negative school environments than their counterparts. For example, 16% of white participants and 40% of participants of color reported experiencing violence with a school environment score of 0.5; however at a score of 2.0, the percentage of white participants jumps to 78% while for participants of color it increases to 63%.

Table 9

Hierarchical Logistic Regression Results for the Relation Between School Environment and SOVS

		95% CI			
Predictor	*Odds Ratio*	Lower	Upper	*p*	Δ *Nagelkerke's* R^2
Block 1					
SE	4.76	2.80	8.08	<0.01	.06
Block 2					
Sexuality	0.53	0.34	0.84	0.01	.01
Gender	0.31	0.23	0.42	<0.01	.09
Education	1.65	1.22	2.22	<0.01	.02
Race	1.09	0.77	1.56	0.61	.00
Block 3					
Sexuality X SE	0.36	0.07	1.79	0.21	.00
Gender X SE	1.04	0.35	3.08	0.95	.00
Education X SE	2.85	0.93	8.74	0.07	.00
Race x SE	0.26	0.08	0.85	0.03	.01

Note. SE = score on school environment scale; Sexuality scored so that Gay/Lesbian = 0 and Bisexual = 1; Gender scored so that Men = 0 and Women = 1; Education scored so that <College education = 0, College education and > = 1; Race scored so that White = 0, People of color = 1.

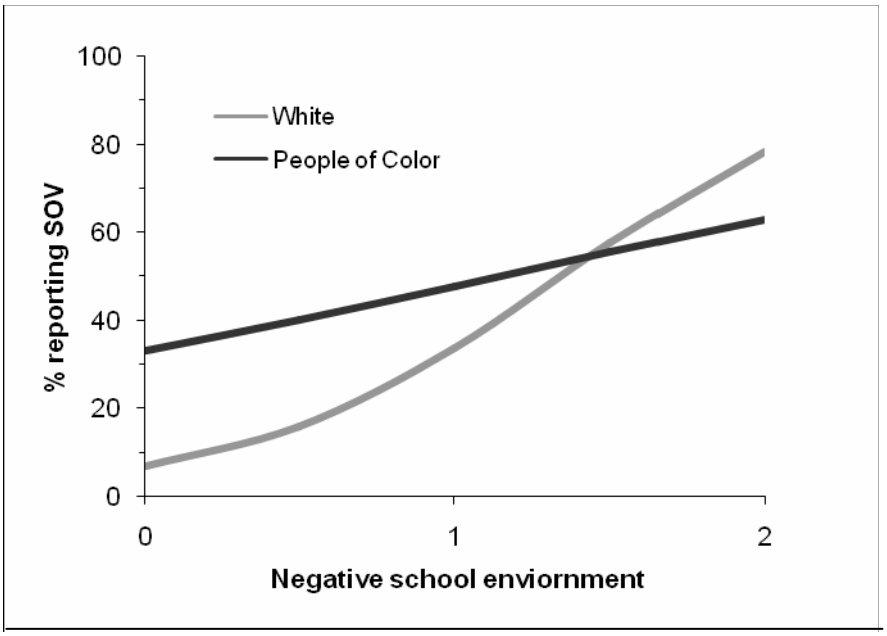

Figure 1. Moderating Effect of Race/Ethnicity on the Relation Between School Environment and School Violence

Hypothesis 3a.

The analysis of the relationship between school environment and experiencing SMIPV revealed a significant moderation effect of gender (see Table 10). The first step did not reach statistical significance, *Wald* = 0.45, $p = .50$. The second step showed a significant main effect of gender, *Wald* = 14.86, $p < .01$. Finally, the third step showed a significant moderation effect of gender, *Wald* = 9.98, $p < .01$.

As Figure 2 illustrates, school environment exercised contrasting effects for men and women. Men reported a positive relationship between negative school environment and experiencing SMIPV: the more negative school environment, the greater the percentage of men reporting SMIPV. For women, the opposite held true. For example, 84% of women and 63% of men reported experiencing SMIPV when the school

environment score was 0.5; however, when the score was 2.0, the numbers nearly reversed and 50% of women and 83% of men reported experiencing SMIPV.

Table 10

Hierarchical Logistic Regression Results for the Relation Between School Environment and Experiencing SMIPV

		95% CI			
Predictor	*Odds Ratio*	Lower	Upper	*p*	Δ *Nagelkerke's* R^2
Block 1					
SE	0.83	0.48	1.43	0.50	.00
Block 2					
Sexuality	1.39	0.84	2.30	0.20	.00
Gender	0.54	0.40	0.74	<0.01	.03
Education	1.18	0.86	1.60	0.31	.00
Race	1.11	0.76	1.61	0.60	.00
Block 3					
Sexuality X SE	0.55	0.09	3.43	0.52	.01
Gender X SE	0.17	0.06	0.51	<0.01	.02
Education X SE	0.85	0.28	2.60	0.77	.00
Race x SE	0.48	0.13	1.74	0.26	.00

Note. SE = score on school environment scale; Sexuality scored so that Gay/Lesbian = 0 and Bisexual = 1; Gender scored so that Men = 0 and Women = 1; Education scored so that <College education = 0, College education and > = 1; Race scored so that White = 0, People of color = 1.

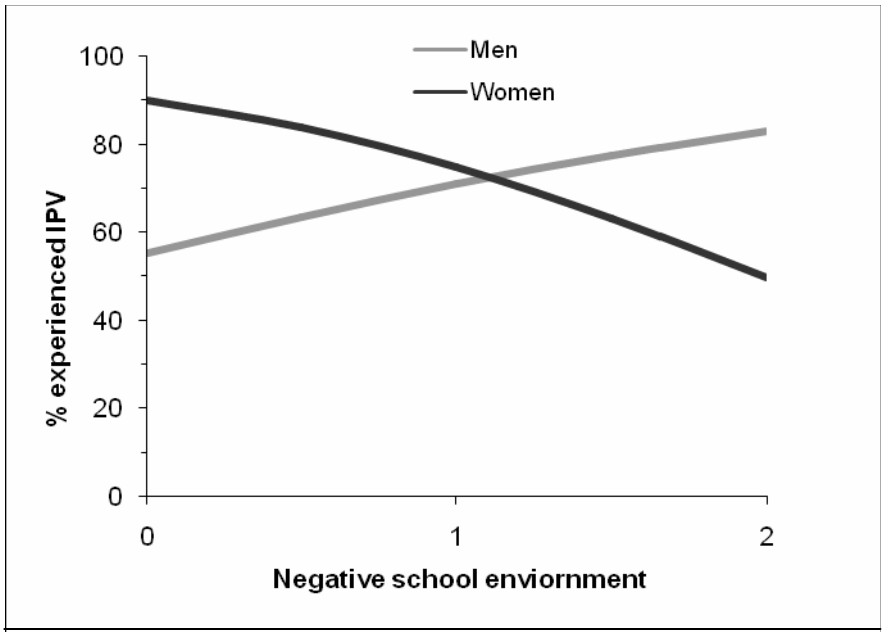

Figure 2. Moderating Effect of Gender on the Relationship Between School Environment and Experiencing SMIPV

Hypothesis 3b:

The analysis of the relationship between school environment and perpetrating SMIPV revealed significant main effects and a significant moderation effect of race/ethnicity (see Table 11). The first step did not reach statistical significance, *Wald* = 0.20, $p = .65$. The next step revealed two significant main effects of sexuality, *Wald* = 4.91, $p<.03$, and gender, *Wald* = 6.26, $p = .01$. The final step showed a significant moderation effect of race/ethnicity, *Wald* = 5.09, $p = .02$.

Figure 3 illustrates the contrasting effects of school environment on the perpetration of SMIPV for white participants and participants of color. The former group showed a positive relationship between the constructs: more negative school environments were associated with greater perpetration of SMIPV. Participants of color,

however, showed a negative relationship between the constructs, where more negative school environments were associated with less reported perpetration of SMIPV. For example, 49% of white participants and 78% of participants of color reported perpetrating SMIPV when the school environment score was 0.5; however, when the school environment score was 2.0, the numbers nearly reversed such that 68% of white participants and 49% of participants of color reported experiencing SMIPV.

Table 11

Hierarchical Logistic Regression Results for the Relation Between School Environment and Perpetrating SMIPV

		95% CI			
Predictor	*Odds Ratio*	Lower	Upper	*p*	Δ *Nagelkerke's* R^2
Block 1					
SE	1.13	0.68	1.87	0.65	.00
Block 2					
Sexuality	1.73	1.07	2.81	0.03	.01
Gender	0.69	0.52	0.92	0.01	.01
Education	1.10	0.82	1.47	0.54	.00
Race	1.63	0.75	1.51	0.73	.00
Block 3					
Sexuality X SE	0.21	0.03	1.26	0.09	.00
Gender X SE	0.43	0.15	1.20	0.11	.02
Education X SE	1.27	0.44	3.62	0.66	.00
Race x SE	0.25	0.07	0.83	0.02	.10

Note. SE = score on school environment scale; Sexuality scored so that Gay/Lesbian = 0 and Bisexual = 1; Gender scored so that Men = 0 and Women = 1; Education scored so that <College education = 0, College education and > = 1; Race scored so that White = 0, People of color = 1.

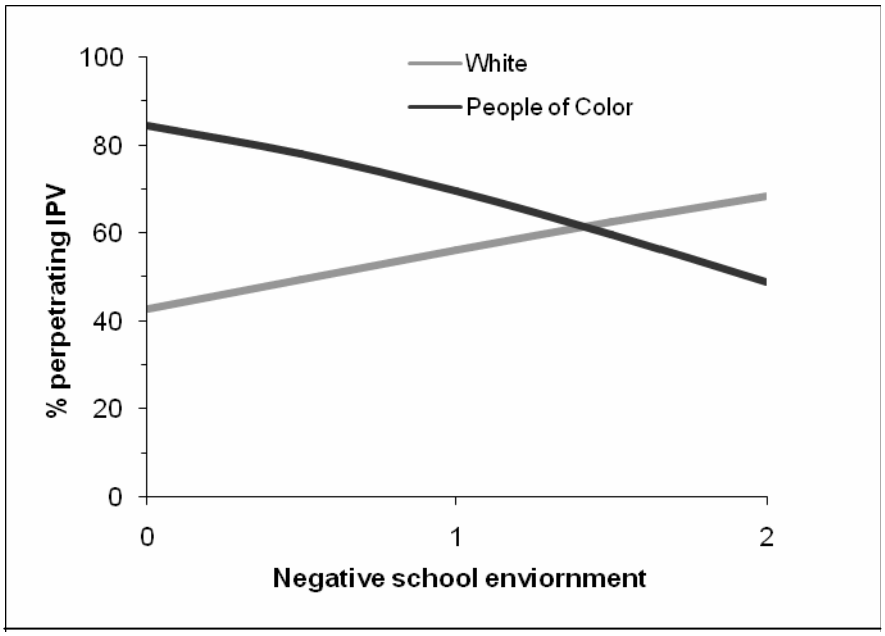

Figure 3. Moderating Effect of Race/Ethnicity on the Relationship Between School Environment and Perpetrating SMIPV

Hypothesis 4a:

The analysis of the relationship between alcohol and experiencing SMIPV revealed significant main effects (see Table 12). The main effect of alcohol on experiencing SMIPV reached statistical significance, *Wald* = 6.14, $p = .01$. The second step revealed a significant main effect of gender, *Wald* = 13.89, $p < .001$. The odds ratio of 1.82 suggests that identifying as a woman is associated with an 82% greater likelihood of experiencing SMIPV. Finally, the third step revealed no significant moderation effects for any of the moderating variables.

Table 12

Hierarchical Logistic Regression Results for the Relation Between Alcohol and Experiencing SMIPV

		95% CI			
Predictor	*Odds Ratio*	Lower	Upper	*p*	Δ *Nagelkerke's R²*
Block 1					
AL	1.55	1.10	2.19	0.01	.01
Block 2					
Sexuality	1.31	0.78	2.17	0.31	.00
Gender	1.82	1.33	2.48	<0.01	.03
Education	1.19	0.88	1.61	0.27	.00
Race	1.13	0.78	1.63	0.52	.00
Block 3					
Sexuality X AL	3.73	0.94	14.75	0.06	.01
Gender X AL	1.68	0.84	3.36	0.14	.00
Education X AL	1.39	0.69	2.79	0.36	.01
Race x AL	0.68	0.32	1.44	0.31	.01

Note. AL = score on AUDIT; Sexuality scored so that Gay/Lesbian = 0 and Bisexual = 1; Gender scored so that Men = 0 and Women = 1; Education scored so that <College education = 0, College education and > = 1; Race scored so that White = 0, People of color = 1.

Hypothesis 4b:

The analysis of the relationship between alcohol and perpetrating SMIPV revealed significant main effects and a significant moderation effect (see Table 13). The main effect of alcohol on perpetrating SMIPV reached statistical significance, *Wald* = 9.35, $p < .001$. The second step showed a significant main effect of gender, *Wald* = 5.71,

p = .02. The third step revealed no significant moderation effects for any of the moderating variables.

Table 13

Hierarchical Logistic Regression Results for the Relation Between Alcohol and Perpetrating SMIPV

		95% CI			
Predictor	*Odds Ratio*	Lower	Upper	*p*	Δ *Nagelkerke's R²*
Block 1					
AL	1.66	1.20	2.30	<0.01	.02
Block 2					
Sexuality	0.63	0.39	1.02	0.06	.00
Gender	1.43	1.07	1.91	0.02	.01
Education	1.66	1.20	2.30	<0.01	.00
Race	1.03	0.73	1.46	0.86	.00
Block 3					
Sexuality X AL	2.06	0.64	6.62	0.23	.01
Gender X AL	1.45	0.76	2.78	0.26	.00
Education X AL	0.70	0.37	1.35	0.29	.00
Race x AL	0.55	0.28	1.09	0.09	.00

Note. AL = score on AUDIT; Sexuality scored so that Gay/Lesbian = 0 and Bisexual = 1; Gender scored so that Men = 0 and Women = 1; Education scored so that <College education = 0, College education and > = 1; Race scored so that White = 0, People of color = 1.

DISCUSSION

This study investigated the intersection of two disparate fields of research on sexual minorities by exploring the overlap between negative experiences in school and violence experienced and perpetrated in intimate relationships. By gathering a large

sample of participants at a diverse community event, the study also explored group differences in sexual minorities' experiences in the contexts of school and relationships. Using retrospective, cross-sectional survey data, the author performed hierarchical logistic regressions to examine predictors and moderators of sexual minority intimate partner violence.

While rates of victimization and perpetration of violence remained relatively low, the majority of study participants reported experiencing sexual orientation violence in schools (SOVS) and sexual minority intimate partner violence (SMIPV), and the majority also reported perpetrating SMIPV. The rates of violence reported by participants in this study fall on the upper end of the spectrum found in previous prevalence studies. This could be a result of including verbal and emotional violence questions in the scales regarding SOVS and SMIPV; those forms of violence typically have the highest endorsement rate. The prevalence of violence in this study supports findings that indicate sexual minorities may be disproportionately at risk of experiencing violence throughout their lives (Ueno, 2005).

Group Differences

Several group differences were observed in participants' reported experiences in schools and intimate relationships. Bisexual participants reported significantly less sexual orientation violence in schools (SOV), significantly more alcohol problems, and significantly more perpetration of sexual minority intimate partner violence (SMIPV) than their gay and lesbian counterparts. The first finding contradicts literature that shows that bisexuals experience more violence in school than gays and lesbians (Rhee, 2004; Russell, Seif et al., 2001). One explanation could be differences in the visibility of the

two groups. Participants in this study who identified as gay and lesbian were more visible sexual minorities in high school: less than half (47%) of the gays and lesbians were perceived as straight in high school while almost two-thirds of the bisexuals (66%) were perceived as straight. This would make the gay and lesbian participants easier targets for violence, which could explain their greater experience of violence. Visibility goes back to the question of the source of violence against sexual minorities because of the strong relationship between sexual minority visibility and gender role nonconformity. Researchers postulate that anti-gay violence may in fact be more related to gender transgressions than sexual orientation (Savin-Williams, 1994). This study highlights the need to assess the link between sexual identity, gender role nonconformity, and violence in school for sexual minorities.

Because so little literature exists on the experiences of bisexuals, the finding in this study that bisexual participants experienced increased rates of alcohol abuse and perpetration of SMIPV cannot be compared to previous findings in the literature. One potential explanation for the finding about alcohol use emerges in the literature that describes the isolation of many bisexuals from both heterosexual and homosexual communities (Donaldson, 1995). Not fitting into and sometimes being explicitly excluded from both communities increases bisexuals' risk for isolation and rejection. Researchers describe how social isolation and impoverished social networks can be associated with increased risk of substance abuse (Boyle & Davis, 2006; James, Johnson, & Raghavan, 2004). This may help to explain the increased rate of alcohol problems for bisexuals.

Although there exists a well-reported link between alcohol and perpetration of violence (Klostermann & Fals-Stewart, 2006), and although alcohol significantly

predicted the perpetration and experience of SMIPV for the current sample, sexuality did not moderate the relationship between alcohol and perpetration of SMIPV, reducing the opportunity to use this as a potential explanation for the greater perpetration of SMIPV by bisexuals.

It is possible that the rejection of bisexuals from homosexual and heterosexual communities that potentially leads to their increased alcohol abuse might also play a role in their increased perpetration of violence. Future research must delve into the experiences of bisexuals in much greater depth so that researchers can make more nuanced understandings of such findings.

Interesting differences emerged in the assessment of school environment and the experience of sexual orientation violence in schools (SOVS) between education groups. Participants with a college degree or more reported a more negative school environment; however, participants with less than a college education reported experiencing more SOVS. Several explanations could account for this counterintuitive finding. One is that participants with a college degree or more had the opportunity to attend another learning environment beyond high school, thus acquiring a different vantage point from which to assess their high school environment. This different vantage point could be responsible for the increased negativity in the assessment of high school environment for this group. Another explanation stems from the literature on the outcomes of school violence. Studies reveal the negative effects on academic performance and mental health caused by the experience of SOVS (Human Rights Watch, 2001; Savin-Williams, 1994). This suggests that the experience of more SOVS may play a role in the academic achievement of sexual minorities, potentially impacting their ability to attend higher education

institutions. This may explain why participants who received more SOVS were more likely to be those with less than a college education. Given the cross-sectional nature of the current study, claims of causality cannot be made; however, future research utilizing a longitudinal methodology could begin to investigate causal relationship between these constructs.

Finally, several group differences also arose on the basis of gender. Men reported greater experience of SOVS and SMIPV as well as greater perpetration of SMIPV. The increased likelihood for men to experience and engage in violence challenges some common conceptions of SMIPV. Many SMIPV theorists critique traditional gender-based models of IPV that root IPV in gender inequality and patriarchy, citing how such models do not neatly apply to relationships with individuals of the same gender (Elliott, 1996; G. S. Merrill, 1996). Theorists argue that, in the absence of couple dynamics based on gender, power imbalances and violent dynamics within sexual minority relationships will be more clearly affected by other identity markers (Perilla et al., 2003). This challenges the centrality of gender on determining the dynamics of a couple as outlined by gender-based models of IPV. Other theorists extend this logic to mean that IPV is gender neutral, that the prevalence, expression, and dynamics of IPV are unaffected and unrelated to gender (Island & Letellier, 1991; Ristock, 2002). The current study's finding of gender differences in the experience and perpetration of violence contradicts this extension of logic. While gender may not exert much of a role in the dynamics of violence within sexual minority relationships, gender appears to exert a macro-level influence across sexual minority relationships. The presence of more violence in the lives of men in this sample supports the vast literature that proposes links between cultural norms around

gender with men's increased use of violence (Gondolf, 1985; Martin, 1981; G. S. Merrill, 1996). The prevailing patriarchy within American culture makes escaping social messages about male dominance and aggression nearly impossible (Hatty, 2000). That more men perpetrate violence (and thus the men they date experience more violence) should be an expected outcome of the constant and pervasive messages and prescriptions about gender provided by American society.

The strong correlation between experiencing SMIPV and perpetrating can be explained in multiple ways. On one hand, this finding potentially supports the literature that describes greater mutability of power in sexual minority relationships. Several authors describe the increased ability for power to transfer from the abuser to victim both across and within sexual minority relationships. This is because the power in sexual minority relationships is often rooted in more fluid identity markers than those found in heterosexual relationships (Elliott, 1996; Renzetti, 1992). With this context in mind, the strong correlation between the two scales could be illustrating the increased likelihood for sexual minorities to serve as both victim and perpetrator in and across relationships.

An alternative explanation emerges from the literature on IPV measurement issues. Many authors argue that scales based on the most common IPV prevalence scale, the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS), produce findings that make mutual perpetration of violence seem more prevalent because the scales overlook the context of the violence (Das Dasgupta, 2002; Kimmel, 2002). By having no qualitative component, CTS-based scales like the one used in the current study cannot distinguish between offensive and defensive acts. The scales record the person who punches his/her partner as equally as abusive as the person who pushes away a partner who is punching him/her. As a result, a

strong correlation between experiencing SMIPV and perpetrating SMIPV may be an artifact of a violent relationship overall. A victim in the relationship may still be considered by a CTS-based scale to report perpetrating violence simply by the way in which he/she responds to the violence. Further research must utilize SMIPV measures that can take the context of the violence into account.

Predicting School Violence

The hypothesis that school environment would predict school violence was supported, however the relationship was opposite for the two race/ethnicity groups. The experience of SOVS was much more strongly related to negative school environment for white participants than it was for participants of color. One possible explanation could be differences in the attribution of violence for the two groups. White sexual minorities, by being members of the majority culture in terms of race/ethnicity, may be more likely than their racial/ethnic counterparts to see sexuality as their most salient identity marker. For people of color, the intersection between race/ethnicity and sexuality may be more complicated. As a result, the stronger relationship between SOVS and negative school environment for white participants may reflect the greater ability for members of this group to attribute both experiences to their sexuality. This theory found support in this study: white participants reported experiencing significantly more negative school environments and significantly more SOVS. Future research should incorporate school violence and school environment measures with items pertaining to both sexuality and race/ethnicity to allow for greater analysis of the dynamics of the intersection of these identities.

Impact of High School on Sexual Minority Intimate Partner Violence (SMIPV)

Utilizing the psycho-socio-political model of intimate partner violence (IPV), the experience of sexual orientation violence in school (SOVS) for sexual minorities was hypothesized to predict the experience and perpetration of sexual minority intimate partner violence (SMIPV). The results indicated that SOVS significantly predicts only perpetration of violence. The original hypothesis that it would affect both the experience and perpetration of SMIPV was rooted in the idea that SOVS would model violence and control for youth, putting both victims and perpetrators at risk of learning the dynamics of abuse. Although not very strong, findings suggest that the learning process only pertains to perpetration of abuse. This supports previous research that illustrates the abusive history of violent partners (Farley, 1996; Renzetti, 1992); however, it contradicts the literature that suggests that an abusive history can precede the experience of victimization as well (Lie et al., 1991; Ristock, 2002). The difference in the nature of the two forms of violence may help explain this discrepancy. The experience of SOVS differs from the experience of SMIPV due to the contrasts in the cause, context, and dynamics of the two forms of violence. SMIPV occurs in the context of an intimate relationship while SOVS occurs at school and is often perpetrated by individuals who are less closely connected to the victim. Therefore, the hypothesized modeling effect could be limited since the two forms of violence remain so different. Modeling may occur for the perpetration of violence due to the potential for SOVS to model an overarching message about the power of abuse and control. Even though the type of violence is so different, the experience of SOVS still illustrates how violence can be used to dominate and control another person. This general message about the use of violence to establish

power may be easier to translate to different contexts, allowing its transfer from a school context to an intimate relationship context. This may explain the apparent modeling effects of SOVS on the perpetration of SMIPV.

The results supported the hypothesis that school environment would predict the experience and perpetration of SMIPV, however the relationship between school environment and experiencing SMIPV was opposite for men and women. For men, experiencing a more negative school environment was associated with experiencing more SMIPV; for women, it was associated with experiencing less SMIPV. The literature on social support may provide an explanation for this counter-intuitive finding. Research on adolescent friendships shows the greater emotional and personal support in female friendships than male friendships (Erwin, 1998; Jones & Costin, 1995). Researchers describe the decreased interest of adolescent males to analyze their personal experiences in the detailed and intimate way that female friends do (Dolgin & Kim, 1994). There exists additional research suggesting that the support provided by female friendship might be even greater for friendships among sexual minority women. Researchers describe how sexual minority female friendships not only include the closeness of heterosexual female friendships, but they can also incorporate the affection and intimacy found in same-sex romantic partners (Diamond, Lovaas, & Jenkins, 2007).

Therefore, how women relate socially to each other might buffer the effects of a negative school environment, leaving men who may not possess this level of support more vulnerable to developing negative reactions to stressors like negative school environments. The context of a negative school environment might even increase the intimacy and closeness of women's relationships as they bond over their negative school

experiences, providing women with potentially even more opportunity to develop interpersonal skills. This could explain why women in more negative school environments seem more capable of navigating interpersonal relationships successfully than those in less negative school environments.

Results revealed contrasting effects of the relationship between school environment and perpetrating SMIPV for white participants and for participants of color. A more negative school environment is associated with an increased likelihood of perpetrating SMIPV for white participants while it is associated with a decreased likelihood for participants of color. This contradicts previous literature that suggests racial and ethnic minorities benefit from positive school climates to a greater degree than their white counterparts (Kuperminc, Leadbeater, Emmons, & Blatt, 1997). Racial/ethnic differences in school connectedness might provide an explanation for this surprising finding. While the current study did not measure school connectedness, previous research reveals a tendency for racial/ethnic minority students to feel less connected to school peer networks (Urberg, Degirmencioglu, Tolson, & Halliday-Scher, 1995). Experiencing a more negative school climate might cause sexual minorities of color to withdraw further from school and school peer networks. The propensity to withdraw in more negative school environments could explain why participants of color were less likely to perpetrate SMIPV in more negative school environments: withdrawal and perpetration of violence are contrasting behaviors.

In both of the above relationships between negative school environment and SMIPV, participants in the non-majority culture reflected higher levels of SMIPV at low levels of negative school environment. Women and participants of color reported higher

rates of experiencing SMIPV and perpetrating SMIPV, respectively, than their male and white counterparts when the school environment was less negative in regards to sexual orientation. This suggests that women and participants of color may still be experiencing negative school environments or undergoing negative school experiences that are simply unrelated to sexual orientation. Future research should investigate school environment with greater attention paid to the discrimination faced by students on account of multiple identities, including race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, etc.

Limitations

Numerous limitations of the study must be taken into account when considering the impact of the findings. Firstly, the sampling procedure presented several methodological concerns. One concern remained the relatively uncontrolled data collection setting. Researchers were unable to exercise much control as participants completed the surveys. Keeping a careful eye on participants remained a difficult task as tens of participants were taking surveys simultaneously. Additionally, many participants completed the survey with their partner standing or sitting next to them, which poses potential threats to the honesty of responses around relationship violence. This could exacerbate inherent limitations of using self-report data in the first place. Common concerns with self-report measures like social desirability bias can potentially limit the validity of participant responses, which is a limitation of the current study.

Another complication with the data collection process was the limited racial/ethnic, educational, and even sexual diversity of the sample that was collected. The greater representation of white participants significantly strains the generalizability of data pertaining to racial and ethnic differences, and it also masks the large within group

differences that emerged among people of color. There existed great variability in the levels of violence endorsed by individuals of different racial and ethnic minority groups; unfortunately, the demographic breakdown of the sample did not afford the ability to analyze this diversity with greater sensitivity. Similar unequal distribution of demographic groups emerged for the categories of education and sexuality as well, ultimately limiting the ability to analyze representatively the experience of sexual minorities.

Limitations also existed around the scales used on the survey. For the School Environment scale, older participants described to the author during the data collection process that the scale did not accurately represent their school environment. Specifically, the scale used markers of school environment (i.e. anti-discrimination policies, safe spaces for sexual minority students) that have emerged in schools largely over the past 10-15 years. Additionally, many participants articulated that the absence of harassment is not the same as tolerance; the notion of students being “out” or even visible enough to receive harassment is another recent paradigm that may have limited applicability for older populations. Some participants described never seeing the harassment of sexual minority students at their high school, but they attributed it to the complete denial of the existence of sexual minority students. Capturing more representatively the environment of schools for sexual minorities of older generations will require the incorporation of additional and different items to the scale.

The retrospective nature of the School Environment scale and the Sexual Orientation Violence in Schools scale was another limitation of this study. While retrospective reports are a widely used methodology and have been specifically used in

the context of sexual minorities' reports of high school experiences (Rivers, 2001, 2004), the limitations of retrospective studies are obvious. The validity of individuals' reports of their high school environment and experience must depend heavily on their ability to accurately recall their experiences. Many factors could conceivably affect this ability, which affects the validity of this retrospective data.

Another limitation with the scales was the use of a Conflict-Tactic Scale-based measure of intimate partner violence (IPV). Much debate exists in the field about the appropriateness of the CTS due to its lack of concern for the context, severity, impact, or meaning of the violence that it purportedly taps (Das Dasgupta, 2002; Hamberger, 2005; Kimmel, 2002). Without acknowledging these important components of IPV, the CTS is unable to situate and qualitatively understand the type of violence it captures. Further studies using alternative measures that capture other critical dimensions of violence will be needed to understand more comprehensively the dynamics of IPV in sexual minority relationships.

Implications and Future Directions

Several findings of the current study hold interesting implications and suggest distinct directions for future research. As previously mentioned, visibility may have played a role in the differential treatment in schools of gay and lesbians and bisexuals. If antigay violence is more rooted in gender nonconformity than sexual orientation, then improving the efficacy of anti-SOVS efforts might involve changes to the current approach. Showing the connection between heterosexism and sexism highlights how future approaches to SOVS could benefit from situating anti-gay violence within the context of other forms of oppression. Addressing heterosexism simultaneously with other

forms of oppression like sexism, classism, ableism, etc would allow for the most inclusive approach to preventing violence in schools, which could prove to be the most effective.

The finding that the levels of negative school environment and SOVS in school differ for people by their level of education and that the relationship between the two constructs is moderated by race/ethnicity suggests that many factors affect the experience of and relationship between these two constructs. This is important given the frequent conflation of these two constructs in the sexual minority literature. School environment for sexual minorities is often measured by the level of violence experienced in the school by this group (Kosciw & Diaz, 2005). While clearly the current study supports a connection between the experiences of these two constructs, it also highlights their distinctiveness and their need to be considered separately as well as in concert. This suggests a need to put more effort into the development of a sensitive and valid school environment scale that addresses all of the limitations previously expounded.

The moderation effects of school environment on the experience and perpetration of SMIPV highlights the need to conceptualize school environment through a broader ecological lens. The discrimination in school experienced by sexual minorities must be understood in relation to the discrimination or support they receive in other avenues of their lives, including familial and peer support. Additionally, other characteristics of schools must receive consideration when examining school environment, including the racial and economic distribution of students at the school and the level of school connectedness for students and their parents. Urberg et al. (1995) provide a good example of how to incorporate students' experiences in schools within these other

ecological levels and considerations. Their study highlights the complexity of the relationship between school, family, and peer networks, illustrating a direction in which future research should follow.

All of the above group differences illustrate that despite the methodological limitations, this study still suggests the existence of distinct differences in the experience and impact of violence for sexual minorities of different demographic backgrounds. Future research that can collect samples of greater diversity can more comprehensively and with greater nuance explicate these group differences. The work of Paul et al. (Paul et al., 2002; Paul, Catania, Pollack, & Stall, 2001) provides hope in this arena. His large-scale telephone probability samples present one way in which the field could collect more random samples with this hard to reach population.

Future research must also continue to create and validate scales that capture contextual elements of IPV, shedding further light on the dynamics of relationship violence. One example of methodological advancement in this area is the Coercion and Conflict scale designed by Cook and Goodman (2006). This scale takes steps towards capturing more contextual elements of IPV, and it offers directions in which the field can follow. Additional directions include moving away from quantitative survey data and incorporating qualitative measures. Future research utilizing qualitative or mixed method designs hold much hope for capturing in greater detail the complexities of IPV.

One final implication of the current study revolves around the existence of gender differences in the experience and perpetration of SOVS and SMIPV. These differences highlight the unique contributions that studies on SMIPV can provide to the general field of IPV. SMIPV research can illustrate the distinction between gender differences within

and across relationships, showing how gender neutrality within a relationship does not equal gender neutrality across relationships. The current study demonstrates that although the gender of individuals may be equivalent within a relationship, gender still affects the prevalence of SMIPV on a broader level.

This information becomes especially important in light of the increasingly rancorous debate surrounding the role of gender in IPV. An increasingly vocal group of theorists and researchers in the field of IPV propose the idea of gender symmetry, that both men and women perpetrate equal levels of IPV and thus gender does not play an important role in IPV. This strongly contradicts gender asymmetry theorists and practitioners who argue that sexism creates gender effects in the perpetration of IPV. The current study supports the arguments of gender asymmetry proponents by illustrating the significant impact of gender across sexual minority relationships. This contribution is important because it illustrates the utility of SMIPV research. The unique vantage point of SMIPV research serves not only to advance the IPV field as a whole, but it will also help to ensure greater inclusion of the experience of sexual minorities within the discussions of IPV. Hopefully by doing so, the field can start taking broader steps to eradicate the experience of violence in the lives of all individuals.

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APPENDIX

1. Below is a list of terms that people often use to describe their sexuality or sexual orientation. Please check all those terms that apply to you.

☐ Gay ☐ Queer ☐ Questioning
Lesbian ☐ Bisexual ☐ Straight/ Heterosexual

If none of these terms apply to you, please tell us how you describe your sexuality or sexual orientation

_____

2. Below is a list of terms that people often use to describe their gender. Please check all those terms that apply to you.

☐ Male ☐ Transgender Male-to-Female ☐ Intersexed
☐ Female ☐ Transgender Female-to-Male

If none of these terms apply to you, please tell us how you describe your gender _____

3. What is your race or ethnicity? Please check all those terms that apply to you.

☐ White or European American ☐ Hispanic or Latino/Latina ☐ Native American
☐ African American or Black ☐ Asian or Pacific Islander
☐ Other (please tell us what is your race/ethnicity) _____

4. What is your age? _____

5. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

☐ Some high school ☐ Trade/Technical School
☐ High school diploma/GED ☐ 4-yr degree
☐ Some college/Associate's degree ☐ Advanced degree

6a. In high school, if most people thought you were a boy, how much did you dress, look, or act like a boy?

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ A lot ☐ Completely ☐ Doesn't Apply

6b. In high school, if most people thought you were a girl, how much did you dress, look, or act like a girl?

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ A lot ☐ Completely ☐ Doesn't Apply

7. In high school, what did the majority of students and teachers think you were?

☐ Straight/ Heterosexual ☐ Bisexual ☐ I don't know what they thought
☐ Gay ☐ Queer
☐ Lesbian ☐ Transgender

If none of these terms apply, please tell us how you were perceived in your high school

_____

8. In what county and state was your high school? _____

Please circle your answers to the following questions about your high school experience.
LGBTQIQ is used to mean lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersexed, and questioning

	Hardly Any	Some	A lot
1. How much anti-gay graffiti was there at your school?	0	1	2
2. How many school posters or signs ignored LGBTQIQ students and their experiences? Examples include posters for dances or school events that only featured straight couples, posters that assumed opposite sex couples.	0	1	2
3. How much protection existed for LGBTQIQ students from harassment at your school?	0	1	2
4. How much was sexual orientation integrated into the curriculum of your classes, such as Health, English, or History classes?	0	1	2
5. How many LGBTQIQ students were "out" in your school?	0	1	2
6. How many LGBTQIQ teachers were "out" in your school?	0	1	2
7. How much social pressure was there at your school for students **not** to use offensive terms like "dyke," "faggot," etc?	0	1	2

	Hardly Ever	Sometimes	Often
8. How often were formal or informal physical spaces available that were safe for LGBTQIQ students? Examples include a supportive teacher's office, a guidance counselor's office, etc.	0	1	2
9. How often were students suspected of being LGBTQIQ treated worse than heterosexual students?	0	1	2
10. How often were teachers suspected of being LGBTQIQ treated worse than heterosexual teachers?	0	1	2
11. How often were LGBTQIQ students socially pressured not to demonstrate their sexuality in school? Examples include being told not to hold hands or go to dances with same-sex partners.	0	1	2

12. When was a Gay-Straight Alliance or some other LGBTQIQ support group available at your school?
☐ Never Some of the time I was there ☐ All of the time I was there ☐ Don't know

13. How often did you attend a meeting?
☐ Not Applicable ☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

Please circle the frequency with which you experienced the following in your high school because of your actual or perceived sexual orientation.

	Never	Once	Twice	More than Twice
1. Verbal insults	0	1	2	3
2. Threats of physical violence	0	1	2	3
3. Having your personal property damaged or destroyed	0	1	2	3
4. Being chased or followed	0	1	2	3
5. Being spat on	0	1	2	3
6. Having objects thrown at your body	0	1	2	3
7. Being punched, hit, kicked, or beaten	0	1	2	3
8. Sexual assault	0	1	2	3
9. Assault with a weapon	0	1	2	3

Place an X in one box that best describes your answer to each question.

	0	1	2	3	4
1. How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?	Never	Monthly or less	2 to 4 times a month	2 to 3 times a week	4 or more times a week
2. How many drinks containing alcohol do you have on a typical day when you are drinking?	1 or 2	3 or 4	5 or 6	7 to 9	10 or more
3. How often do you have 5 or more drinks on one occasion?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily
4. How often during the last year have you found that you were not able to stop drinking once you had started?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily
5. How often during the last year have you failed to do what was normally expected of you because of drinking?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily
6. How often during the last year have you needed a first drink in the morning to get yourself going after a heaving drinking session?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily
7. How often during the last year have you had a feeling of guilt or remorse after drinking?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily
8. How often during the last year have you been unable to remember what happened the night before because of your drinking?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily
9. Have you or someone else been injured because of your drinking?	No		Yes, but not in the last year		Yes, during the last year
10. Has a relative, friend, doctor, or other health care worker been concerned about your drinking or suggested you cut down?	No		Yes, but not in the last year		Yes, during the last year

Please think about your current or most recent relationship.
Is/was this your first sexual minority relationship? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Are you still in this relationship? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Did this relationship begin after high school? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Is/was this a relationship with a: ☐ man ☐ woman ☐ transgender ☐ other _____
Please answer the following questions about nonconsensual acts that may have occurred in the relationship

	Never	Sometimes	Frequently	Happened in more than 1 relationship
1. My partner was jealous or suspicious of my friends.	0	1	2	Y N
2. My partner monitored my time and made me account for where I was.	0	1	2	Y N
3. My partner threatened to out me to my friends, family, employer, and/or religious community.	0	1	2	Y N
4. My partner demanded obedience to him/her.	0	1	2	Y N
5. My partner pushed, shoved, or grabbed me.	0	1	2	Y N
6. My partner treated me like I was stupid.	0	1	2	Y N
7. My partner demanded sex whether I wanted it or not.	0	1	2	Y N
8. My partner insulted me on the basis of my sexual orientation (example: calling me “weird,” “perverse,” or a “slut” because of my sexual orientation).	0	1	2	Y N
9. My partner yelled and screamed at me.	0	1	2	Y N
10. My partner insulted me or shamed me in front of others.	0	1	2	Y N
11. My partner slapped me.	0	1	2	Y N
12. My partner treated me as an inferior.	0	1	2	Y N
13. My partner questioned my “true” sexual orientation.	0	1	2	Y N
14. My partner called me names.	0	1	2	Y N
15. My partner made me have oral sex against my will.	0	1	2	Y N
16. My partner hit or tried to hit me with something.	0	1	2	Y N
17. My partner ordered me around.	0	1	2	Y N
18. My partner did not want me to socialize with my friends.	0	1	2	Y N
19. My partner accused me of having an affair.	0	1	2	Y N
20. My partner threatened me with a knife or gun.	0	1	2	Y N
21. My partner claimed his/her violent behavior was typical for sexual minority relationships.	0	1	2	Y N
22. My partner used a knife or gun on me.	0	1	2	Y N
23. My partner blamed me for causing his/her violent behavior.	0	1	2	Y N
24. My partner made me have anal sex against my will.	0	1	2	Y N
25. My partner used an object on me in a sexual way.	0	1	2	Y N
26. My partner tried to make me feel like I was crazy.	0	1	2	Y N
27. My partner threatened to isolate me socially if we broke up (example: keeping you from bars, clubs, or community events).	0	1	2	Y N

Please answer the following questions about the same relationship.

	Never	Sometimes	Frequently	Happened in more than 1 relationship
1. I was jealous or suspicious of my partner's friends.	0	1	2	Y N
2. I monitored my partner's time and made him/her account for where he/she was.	0	1	2	Y N
3. I threatened to out my partner to friends, family, employer, and/or religious community.	0	1	2	Y N
4. I demanded obedience from my partner.	0	1	2	Y N
5. I pushed, shoved, or grabbed my partner.	0	1	2	Y N
6. I treated my partner like he/she was stupid.	0	1	2	Y N
7. I demanded sex whether my partner wanted it or not.	0	1	2	Y N
8. I insulted my partner on the basis of his/her sexual orientation (example: calling him/her "weird," "perverse," or a "slut" because of his/her sexual orientation).	0	1	2	Y N
9. I yelled and screamed at my partner.	0	1	2	Y N
10. I insulted or shamed my partner in front of others.	0	1	2	Y N
11. I slapped my partner.	0	1	2	Y N
12. I treated my partner as an inferior.	0	1	2	Y N
13. I questioned my partner's "true" sexual orientation.	0	1	2	Y N
14. I called my partner names.	0	1	2	Y N
15. I made my partner have oral sex against his/her will.	0	1	2	Y N
16. I hit or tried to hit my partner with something.	0	1	2	Y N
17. I ordered my partner around.	0	1	2	Y N
18. I did not want my partner to socialize with his/her friends.	0	1	2	Y N
19. I accused my partner of having an affair.	0	1	2	Y N
20. I threatened my partner with a knife or gun.	0	1	2	Y N
21. I claimed my violent behavior was typical for sexual minority relationships.	0	1	2	Y N
22. I used a knife or gun on my partner.	0	1	2	Y N
23. I blamed my partner for causing my violent behavior.	0	1	2	Y N
24. I made my partner have anal sex against his/her will.	0	1	2	Y N
25. I used an object on my partner in a sexual way.	0	1	2	Y N
26. I tried to make my partner feel like he/she was crazy.	0	1	2	Y N
27. I threatened to isolate my partner socially if we broke up (example: keeping him/her from bars, clubs, or community events).	0	1	2	Y N

Last question:
What is a strength of the LGBTQIQ community? _____

Thank you for your help! Your input lets us know more about the experiences of sexual minorities.