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Homosexuality was rated as the most difficult topic to teach about in human sexuality courses, according to a group of university students in family life education (Wells, 1986). Yet, few studies have examined methods of teaching about same-sex sexual and affectional behavior using explicit films to reduce homophobia--"the irrational, persistent fear of homosexuals and homosexuality" (Weinberg, 1972, p. 4).

Homophobia not only results in discrimination against gays and lesbians but it adversely affects heterosexuals as well (Strond & DeVault, 1988). This adversity includes the following: a limitation of emotional abilities and freedom because it creates fear and hatred: alienation from family members, friends, neighbors, or coworkers who are gay or lesbian and a limitation of a range of behaviors and feelings, such as hugging or being emotionally intimate with same sex friends, for fear that such expression may be labeled as homosexual, thus leading to exaggerated displays of masculinity or femininity. Even heterosexual lovemaking can be influenced by homophobia (Byer, Shainberg, & Jones, 1988). A man may not allow himself to take a passive role and a woman may deny herself a more assertive role because they associate these roles with homosexuality.

Teaching about homosexuality to reduce homophobia was first undertaken by Morin (1974) in a pre- and post-test survey. Affirming gay literature and gay and lesbian speakers were identified so that graduate students could develop greater acceptance of homosexuality oriented individuals. Explicit films showing same-sex sexual and affectional behavior, however, were not included.

Morin found that students with more positive attitudes toward homosexuals had significantly higher self-concepts than did students with less positive attitudes. This finding was based upon Weinberg's (1972) theory of homophobia which states that, when individuals overcome their fear of homosexuality, they are healthier and more likely to feel good about themselves. Weinberg (1972) has postulated that fears about homosexuality stem from deep-seated personal concerns over same-sex sexual fantasies. According to Masters and Johnson (1979) same-sex sexual fantasies are common for individuals describing themselves as heterosexual. Individuals who think that same-sex fantasies are an acceptable part of their sexuality have a more positive self-concept than those who label these same-sex fantasies as "abnormal" (Masters & Johnson, 1979).

Regardless of how people define their sexual orientation, from heterosexual to homosexual, American culture provides only rare glimpses of same-sex public displays of affection (Mahoney, 1979). Hence, a lack of exposure to same-sex public displays of affection adds to the unfamiliarity of the heterosexual population. Same-sex affectional role models who hold hands, hug, and kiss in public are not sanctioned in the same way as are other-sex affectional behaviors when in public view (Mahoney, 1983). This affectional unfamiliarity coupled with homophobia frequently leads to curiosity and questions about what gay men and lesbians do sexually, which is one of the least discussed aspects of homosexuality (Byer, et al., 1988). College-level human

sexuality texts also fail to show explicit pictures or drawings of sexual behavior between gay men and lesbians when compared with explicit pictures or drawings of heterosexuals (Pollis, 1986).

Goldberg (1982) investigated the effects of various films on student attitudes toward homosexuality and homosexuals by showing different student groups explicit and nonexplicit films that were accompanied by an hour lecture on homosexuality. The lecture included history, current attitudes, sex-role acquisition, etiology, and problems associated with homosexuality. One of Goldberg's four student groups saw a nonexplicit film dealing with prejudice; another group viewed a nonexplicit film on gay issues; a third group saw two sexually explicit films showing same-sex lovemaking; and a fourth group that served as a control was shown no visual material but received the hour lecture on homosexuality.

Both before and after the hour lecture and subsequent films, McDonald and Games' (1974) Attitude Toward Homosexuality Scale (ATHS) was administered to undergraduate students with the following results: the two groups that viewed the nonexplicit materials and the control group were more positive about homosexuality on the posttest than was the group that viewed the explicit films; and no significant difference was found between the two groups that saw the nonexplicit films and the control group. Therefore, according to Goldberg's findings, students viewing sexually explicit films dealing with same-sex lovemaking seem to be influenced negatively toward homosexuality.

Serdahely and Ziemba (1984) reported that a unit on homosexuality in which small groups discussed common myths about homosexuality and participated in paired role-playing with each person "coming out" to a heterosexual best friend or parent resulted in more positive post-test scores on Hudson and Rickett's (1980) Index of Attitudes Toward Homosexuals (IATH) for students who had scored above the class median on the post-test. Students with scores below the median did not change significantly. No explicit films were used in this investigation. In fact, Serdahely and Ziemba stated that having gay speakers provided by the campus gay organization seemed to increase, rather than decrease, homophobia--an observation corroborated by Warren (1980). Sex differences are not reported, although Serdahely and Ziemba reported that male students seemed to be more homophobic than female students.

Sex differences for tolerance or intolerance of homosexuality were not found on the pre-test or either post-test in Goldberg's study. Summarizing studies that have been conducted comparing male and female attitudes toward homosexuality, however Kite (1984) found slight differences favoring female tolerance. College men more often label gays and lesbians derogatorily as "sex-role incongruent" according to Laner and Laner (1980). Laner and Laner found that greater tolerance exists for gays and lesbians when they were perceived as acting and dressing more conventionally and did not display affection, such as hand-holding, and kissing in public. Herek (1983) reported that heterosexuals tend to have more negative attitudes toward those of the same sex. Morin and Garfinkle (1978) suggested that when a question about homosexuality is personally threatening, as opposed to questions that ask for general beliefs about homosexuals, sex differences occur, with men holding more negative attitudes.

Explicit films were used in Cerney and Polyson's (1984) study of Midwestern college students

toward homosexual where sex differences were reported favoring female acceptance on a pre- and post-test of Larsen, Reed, and Hoffman's (1980) Heterosexual Attitudes Toward Homosexuals (HATH). In this investigation, three 75 minute classes on homosexuality consisted of large lecture classes, small group discussion groups, role playing, as well as the explicit films *Vir Amat* and *Holding* (Sutton, 1971, 1978). No specific outline giving material covered is cited in the study, and there is no mention of AIDS as a topic in either lecture or small groups discussion. The fear of AIDS has contributed to increased homophobia and needs to be addressed in any presentation dealing with sexual behavior (Byer, et al., 1988).

Dearth and Cassell (1976) stated that discussing homosexuality with college students helps students develop more positive attitudes, yet a structure for discussion is not provided. Human sexuality courses have been reported by Bernard and Schwartz (1977), Greenberg (1975), MacLaury (1982), and Watter (1987) to have a positive effect on attitudes toward homosexuality, but the teaching strategies used were not made available, explicit films were not used, and information about AIDS was not included.

METHODOLOGY

The sample comprised members of two university undergraduate, human sexuality classes that were co-taught by the author and a female graduate student at the University of Northern Iowa. A pre-test was given to the respondents that included 120 women and 78 men. All students who were present during the class meeting before material about homosexuality was presented were willing to participate in the study. The age range for pre-test students was 19 to 43 years, with the mean age of 21.8 years.

Respondents were asked to complete three pre-test assessments: a questionnaire focusing on their attitudes toward working or associating with homosexuals; the Index of Homophobia, renamed the Index of Attitudes Toward Homosexuals (IATH) to reduce the potential of undue influence (Hudson & Ricketts, 1980); a homosexual behaviors inventory, the HBI (Wells, 1986a); and a measure of self-esteem, the Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965). The IATH is a measure of homophobic reactions to homosexuals and homosexuality and has high reliability with a coefficient alpha of .90 as well as good content and factorial validity.

The HBI included nine questions about attitudes toward same-sex affectional behavior and sexual activity and one question about heterosexual affection in a public place. Each of the 25 statements on the IATH and the 10 statements on the HBI require a response on a 5-point scale that ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree, with a 3 indicating a neutral answer. A test-retest reliability over a 7-day period using the Pearson product-moment correlation revealed a coefficient alpha of .79 ($p < .01$, $n = 43$) on the HBI. The Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) consists of 10 items that are answered on a 4-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. A Guttman scale reproducibility coefficient of .92 was obtained.

Each of the three measures was administered twice: early in the course before materials on homosexuality were presented and a second time following four, 75-minute class sessions on same-sex affectional-sexual orientation. Of 30 class meetings, the 24th and 27th classes were devoted to issues regarding homosexuality, which included lectures, followed by questions and discussion. The instructors, however, told students at the beginning of the introductory course in

human sexuality that the class dealt with general issues of sexual orientation, and was limited to either homosexuality or heterosexuality alone. The instructors verbalized acceptance of all sexual orientations and emphasized understanding and acceptance. The post-test was administered 19 days after the pre-test. Student identification numbers were used to pair pre- and post-test measures. Those students who completed only the pre-test or post-test were dropped from the study.

RESULTS

A two-tailed t test revealed that students' pre-and post-test responses on the IATH were found to be significantly more positive on the post-test than they were on the pre-test ($t = 11.16$, $DF = 1/164$, $p < .0001$). Of the 25 statements on the IATH, all but one ("it would not bother me to walk through a predominantly gay section of town") showed a significant positive change from the pre- to post-test.

A t test separate variance estimate indicated significant pre-test differences between men and women on self-esteem, with men reporting a higher self-esteem than women ($t = 2.04$), $DF = 1/94.02$, $p < .05$). On the post-test, however, sex difference results for men were not significant ($t = .36$, $D/F = 1/278.67$, $p < .05$).

Results on the Homosexual Behaviors Inventory (HBI) from a two-tailed t-test analysis revealed a positive change from pre-test to post-test on the total instrument ($t = 9.28$, $DF = 1/159$, $p < .0001$). Negative responses about same-sex sexuality changed to significantly more positive responses on all nine items that asked about same-sex affectional behavior. Of interest on the HBI was the pre- to post-test response to the only item that assessed students' attitudes toward same-sex affection, embracing, and kissing in public. The results on this item significantly changed from a more positive to a more negative response ($t = 2.00$, $DF = 1/163$, $p < .05$).

Students attitudes changed from more negative attitudes about homosexuality on the pre-test to significantly more positive attitudes on the post-test on the IATH and HBI. Women's attitudes changed more than men's did. Sex differences were found on specific items on both the IATH and on the HBI. No sex differences, however, occurred in the results when men's and women's scores on the IATH were grouped.

Significant sex differences were found on the HBI for post-test results. Women were significantly more accepting of homosexual behaviors than were men, although men were less condemning of homosexual behaviors on the post-test than they were on the pre-test. On only one pre-test item concerning female-female sexual behavior did female respondents react more negatively than men. Men were significantly less accepting some same-sex sexual behavior on the post-test for the total HBI measure than were women, although men made positive gains from the pre-test favoring tolerance.

DISCUSSION

Students' responses on the HBI indicate increased awareness of homophobia regarding same-sex and other-sex displays of affection and sexual behavior. The nine statements regarding same-sex

affectional and sexual behavior were more acceptable to respondents on the post-test, while the one item on the other-sex affectional behavior was found to be less acceptable on the HBI post-test. Course emphasis on the equitable treatment of individuals regardless of sexual orientation may account for the greater acceptance of same-sex sexual and affectional behavior as well as explain the greater sanctions put on heterosexual displays of affection.

Goldberg (1982) stated that viewing explicit films decreases tolerance for homosexual behavior rather than increases awareness and understanding about same-sex affectional and sexual functioning. When attempting to increase tolerance for homosexuality, Goldberg recommended limiting classroom coverage to videotapes or films that discuss only homosexuality rather than showing sexually explicit films. Human sexuality tests do little to acquaint students with same-sex sexual behavior, according to Pollis (1986). In the vast majority of texts, explicit pictures or drawings of heterosexual sexual behavior are shown but almost never are explicit pictures or drawings of homosexual sexual behaviors shown. As Laner and Laner (1980) have stated, conventionality is the norm and is perpetuated. According to Mahoney (1979) and Byer et al. (1988), however, students are unfamiliar with same-sex sexual and affectional behavior.

When teaching about homosexuality, the use of sexually explicit films is supported by the findings in this study as well as the investigation by Cerney and Polyson (1984), although no teaching procedure is given in the later article. In this study, students viewed other explicit heterosexual films before specifically studying homosexuality. These students could have been more desensitized to sexually graphic material before viewing the sexually explicit films about homosexuality. Explicit materials have been incorporated into this unit as standard procedure since the inception of the course at the University of Northern Iowa in 1974.

Sex differences were found in the current investigation. Men were more homophobic than women, yet men made significant gains in their tolerance for homosexuality and homosexual behavior. Women, however, made greater changes toward reducing homophobia and increasing self-esteem from pre- to post-test than did men. These findings support Weinberg's (1972) premise that when people overcome their personal concerns and fears about homosexuality, they are more likely to feel better about themselves.

This premise was substantiated by Morin's (1974) study of graduate students. Men, as compared with women in this study, seem to be more resistant to change on all three measures. Perhaps this is because of the greater rigidity in the idealized masculine role. To date, most other investigations that have compared sex differences for tolerance or intolerance of homosexuals and homosexuality have found women to be more tolerant than men. The link between gaining a greater sense of self-esteem and increased tolerance for homosexuality can be surmised from the results of this study.

When comparing the outcome of this investigation to Goldberg's time spent teaching about homosexuality, the current investigation supports spending more time studying homosexuality and covering a greater range and depth of material. No mention is made about the course instructor in Goldberg's study or about the instructor's attitudes toward homosexuals or homosexuality. The instructors who teach the human sexuality sections surveyed receive high student evaluations. They are perceived by students as having expertise in their teaching area as well as being personable and approachable. It seems to be important for the instructor(s) to model positive attitudes and behavior toward gays and lesbians if students are to make gains toward greater acceptance and less rejection.

Students who elect to take the course in human sexuality are a select population that is briefed about explicit course content at the beginning of the semester. A control group as well as various treatment groups was not used in this investigation. Materials presented by the instructors approach homosexuality from a viable as well as variable sexual and affectional orientation perspective. Although generalizations cannot be made to other courses in human sexuality, the instructor who teaches such a course, the materials presented, and the course outline accompanying this investigation proved to be successful in reducing homophobia and increasing tolerance for homosexuals and homosexuality from pre- to post-test. Future studies should address the impact of explicit materials, a gay/lesbian panel, and characteristics of the instructor(s) on a teaching unit; this can be done by administering questionnaires to participants after each class to determine what the effects of each class segment might be regarding attitudes toward homosexuals.