

Sexuality & Cycles of Oppression

What defines your sexuality?

- capacity for sexual feelings: *she began to understand the power of her sexuality*
- [count noun] a person's sexual orientation or preference: *people with proscribed sexualities*
- sexual activity: *sexuality within holy matrimony was only justified as a necessary part of reproduction*

<http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/sexuality>

What defines your sexuality?

Sexual Selfhood

- Sexuality involves our relationships with ourselves, those around us and the society in which we live- whether we identify as gay, heterosexual, lesbian, bisexual or celibate

What informs your sexuality?

- Sexual Preference/Activity
- Social Relationships
- Sensuality
- Emotions
- Spirituality
- Political Identity
- Body Image

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Sexuality and Oppression

- The concept of heterosexism – that to be heterosexual is superior to being gay or bisexual
- Manifests in four ways:
 - In the “real” world
 - Internalisation
 - Behaviours
 - Evidence

In the “real” world

- Homosexuality
- Media
- Ridicule
- Institutional
- Fashion
- Religion
- Assumption of heterosexuality
- Rurality
- Age of Consent/Schools
- Adam & Eve

Internalisation

- “Cure”
- Self Esteem
- Stereotypical behaviour
- Intimacy
- Mental health
- Dominant cultural values
- Hypercritical

Behaviour

- In the closet
- In your face
- Effeminacy/Butchness
- Public Sex
- Promiscuity
- Chaotic Lifestyle

Evidence

- Suicide rates
- Eating disorders
- HIV
- Smoking
- “Unnatural” parenting

Levels of Homophobia

- There are four main levels
 - Personal
 - Interpersonal
 - Institutional
 - Cultural