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Victimization Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Individuals: A Meta-Analysis

Sabra L. Katz-Wise and Janet S. Hyde
Department of Psychology, University of Wisconsin–Madison

This meta-analysis quantitatively compiled the results of studies from 1992 to 2009 to determine the prevalence and types of victimization experienced by lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals. Based on the results of three searches, 386 studies were retrieved and coded. Comparisons were made across all LGB individuals (138 studies), between LGB and heterosexual individuals (65 studies), and between LGB females and males (53 studies), with over 500,000 participants. Multiple types of victimization were coded, including discrimination, physical assault, and school victimization. Findings revealed that for LGB individuals, reports of victimization experiences were substantial (e.g., 55% experienced verbal harassment, and 41% experienced discrimination) and some types have increased since a 1992 review, while others have decreased. LGB individuals experienced greater rates of victimization than heterosexual individuals (range: d = .04–.58). LGB males experienced some types of victimization more than LGB females (e.g., weapon assault and being robbed) but, overall, the gender differences were small. It can be concluded that LGB individuals still experience a substantial amount of victimization. Implications for research methods are discussed, including recommendations for sampling and measurement of victimization.

[Supplementary materials are available for this article. Go to the publisher's online edition of Journal of Sex Research *for the following free supplemental resource(s): Supplementary Tables. These tables are referred to in the text of this article as "Table S1," "Table S2," etc.]*

On October 28, 2009, U.S. President Barack Obama signed the hate crimes bill into law, making it a federal crime to assault an individual based on sexual orientation or gender identity. According to the General Social Survey, in the past few decades, attitudes toward sexual minorities have improved, and there has been an increase in support for legal rights (Davis, Smith, & Marsden, 2010; Loftus, 2001). Nonetheless, hate crimes based on sexual orientation—such as threats of violence, verbal harassment, and physical and sexual assault—are widespread. Collection of hate crime statistics, as well as research on other types of victimization, has increased over time, following the passage of the *Hate Crime Statistics Act* on April 23, 1990 (United States Congress, 1990). In 2008, law enforcement agencies in the United States reported that there were 9,691 victims of hate crimes, 17.6% of whom were targeted because of a bias against a particular sexual orientation (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2009). Of course, these statistics represent only the tip of the iceberg because they count only the incidents reported to law enforcement. Being victimized based on sexual orientation not only results in poor physical health if the individual is injured, but is also linked to other negative outcomes for the victim, such as poor mental health (Meyer, 2003). This meta-analysis quantitatively compiled the results of relevant studies to examine the prevalence and types of victimization experienced by lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals.

Definitions and Theories of Sexual Orientation-Based Victimization

The *Hate Crime Statistics Act* of 1990 requires the U.S. Attorney General to collect data "about crimes that manifest evidence of prejudice based on race, religion, sexual orientation, or ethnicity" (U.S. Department of Justice, 1999, p. 1). A *hate crime* has additionally been defined as "an illegal act involving intentional

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Correspondence should be addressed to Sabra L. Katz-Wise, Department of Psychology, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1202 W. Johnson St., Madison, WI 53706. E-mail: katzwise@wisc.edu

selection of a victim based on a perpetrator's bias or prejudice against the actual or perceived status of the victim,'' and has both symbolic and instrumental functions (Craig, 2002, p. 2). To the perpetrator, the victim symbolizes the despised social group, such that victimization represents the perpetrator's bias against that group. The victim's symbolization of a particular group is not related to identification with the group but, rather, to whether the perpetrator views the victim as being representative of the group. Instrumentally, hate crimes against an individual may change the behavior of the social group in reaction to the victimization (e.g., moving away from a specific neighborhood), thus rewarding the perpetrator's actions. Some studies distinguish between victimization based on the perpetrators' perceptions of sexual orientation and victimization based on the perpetrators' knowledge of actual sexual orientation; other studies do not make this distinction. This meta-analysis included all three types of studies.

Victimization has been defined as ''harms that occur to individuals because of other human actors behaving in ways that violate social norms'' (Finkelhor & Kendall-Tackett, 1997, p. 2). In most nations around the world, victimization based on sexual orientation takes place within the context of heterosexism and heteronormativity in which heterosexuality is considered the norm. *Heterosexism* has been defined as ''the ideological system that denies, denigrates, and stigmatizes any non-heterosexual form of behavior, identity, relationship or community'' (Herek, 1994, p. 91). In this context, mainstream society consists of heterosexual men and women, and anyone whose sexual orientation falls outside of these two categories is considered a sexual minority. Both institutional and interpersonal heterosexisms, which are often manifested in sexual-orientation-based discrimination, harassment, and violence, create a hostile climate for sexual minorities (Fernald, 1995). Although laws prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation protect sexual minorities in the workplace, institutional heterosexism is present in the illegality of same-sex marriages in most states in the United States, and sexual minorities often face discrimination regarding adoption (Ryan & Whitlock, 2006) and health care (Mays & Cochran, 2001).

Those with ethnic minority status (e.g., African American), or sexual minority status (e.g., gay or lesbian), have a social identity that is stigmatized and linked to an inequality of power, privilege, and prestige, as well as discrimination on both an interpersonal and institutional level (Landrine, Klonoff, Alcaraz, Scott, & Wilkins, 1995). Furthermore, those with multiple minority statuses, such as a Latina lesbian, may face even greater levels of discrimination and stigma. Sexual minorities specifically experience what has been termed *cultural victimization*, which refers to the impact of living in a heterosexist society (Neisen, 1993). This experience has been likened to the trauma of physical and sexual abuse, such that the victims may experience adverse mental health outcomes, including shame and negative self-concept, as a result. Additionally, the stigma of identifying as non-heterosexual may lead to experiences of verbal, physical, and sexual victimization, which has been demonstrated in past research (Berrill, 1992). Therefore, sexual minorities are doubly victimized, both culturally and through direct victimization.

Factors relating to the culture of heteronormativity (Warner, 1991), such as appearance and behavior, may help to explain the victimization of LGB individuals. Although many Western societies have become somewhat more flexible about feminine and masculine appearance and behavior, a set of norms and expectations are still in place regarding what is considered acceptable for men and women, especially related to sexual orientation. Although many individuals who identify as LGB follow societal expectations of acceptable appearance and behavior for their gender, some defy these norms. For example, a gay man might wear makeup, or a lesbian woman might choose to participate in a sport that is traditionally considered masculine, such as rugby. Lesbian and gay individuals are often more gender atypical than heterosexual individuals, and gender atypicality may signal non-heterosexuality to others (Rieger, Linsenmeier, Gygax, Garcia, & Bailey, 2010). These transgressions may result in experiences of victimization and harassment as others respond to this non-normative behavior. A study of childhood gender atypicality and lifetime victimization based on sexual orientation found that LGB youth who were considered gender atypical in childhood reported more victimization than LGB youth who were gender typical (D'Augelli, Grossman, & Starks, 2006). Additionally, Franklin's (2000) study of anti-gay behaviors in young adults suggested that those perpetrators who were motivated by anti-gay attitudes likely conflated homosexuality with gender-deviant behavior, which became the primary phenomenon that was targeted. Although gender atypicality is related to sexual orientation, victimization may take place based on gender atypicality alone or in combination with known or perceived sexual orientation. The majority of research on sexual orientation-based victimization does not distinguish between victimization based on known or perceived sexual orientation and victimization based on gender atypicality (for an exception, see D'Augelli et al., 2006). While the studies included in this meta-analysis primarily focused on victimization related to sexual orientation, it is difficult to know the real reasons behind the victimization; in some cases, the reason may be gender atypicality, whereas in other cases, the basis for victimization might be something else, such as race.

Who is Victimized and How?

Although hate crimes represent an extreme form of victimization, individuals who identify as non-heterosexual, or are perceived as being such, face a spectrum of types of victimization: from workplace discrimination and peer harassment in school settings, to specific types of physical violence, sexual assault, and emotional abuse. In a review of the workplace experiences of LGB people, Croteau (1996) found that across three studies, 25% to 66% of participants reported experiencing discrimination at work. Among youth who identify as LGB, many report experiencing harassment and discrimination related to their sexual orientation, such as verbal harassment and physical assault (Bontempo & D'Augelli, 2002; D'Augelli, Pilkington, & Hershberger, 2002; Kosciw & Diaz, 2006). A national study on campus climate conducted by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force found that of the participants studied, 36% of LGB and transgender undergraduate students experienced harassment within the past year (Rankin, 2003). Regarding more specific types of physical and emotional abuse, Berrill's (1992) quantitative review of anti-gay violence and victimization found that across 24 studies, 9% of participants experienced assault with a weapon, 17% experienced simple physical assault, 19% experienced vandalism and property crimes, 44% had been threatened with violence, 33% had been chased or followed, 25% had objects thrown at them, 13% had been spat on, and 80% had been verbally harassed. While these studies begin to document the prevalence of victimization of LGB individuals, a more comprehensive and up-to-date review is needed. This meta-analysis aimed to fill this gap, using a comprehensive definition of victimization that included studies measuring all types of discrimination, harassment, and violence. Although many of the studies reviewed, including Berrill (1992), are limited to U.S. samples, sexual orientation-based victimization is a global concern. Internationally, individuals who identify as sexual minorities or who display same-sex attraction or behavior are targets of violence and harassment (Dworkin & Yi, 2003). This meta-analysis included studies worldwide.

Some sexual orientation groups may be victimized more than others. Previous research has demonstrated that individuals with a bisexual identity may be especially vulnerable to victimization experiences (Russell & Seif, 2002; Udry & Chantala, 2002). Bisexuality has been associated with a number of negative stereotypes, such as promiscuity, that may lead to greater levels of victimization than other sexual orientation groups, such as lesbian or gay. This may be related, in part, to the fact that bisexuality is a relatively new sexual orientation category. As with other sexual orientation identities, such as gay, it may be the case that as it becomes more acceptable to be bisexual, individuals who identify as such will experience less victimization or have rates that are more similar to gay and lesbian individuals. The relationship between societal acceptability and rate of victimization was not directly addressed by this meta-analysis. However, this meta-analysis sought to answer the question of whether rates of victimization have changed since 1992, and this potential change may coincide with greater societal acceptability of non-heterosexual orientations.

Implications of Victimization

The minority stress hypothesis proposes that experiencing discrimination and prejudice may lead to negative health outcomes (Mays & Cochran, 2001). In a review of mental health in LGB populations, the higher prevalence of mental disorders in this population was explained within the conceptual framework of minority stress in which stigma, prejudice, and discrimination create a hostile or stressful social environment that causes subsequent mental health problems (Meyer, 2003). A review of verbal and physical abuse as stressors for LGB youth used a minority stress approach to demonstrate that verbal and physical harassment was associated with problematic outcomes, such as school-related problems, running away from home, conflict with the law, substance abuse, prostitution, and suicide (Savin-Williams, 1994). It should be noted that the links between victimization and negative mental health outcomes are correlational, and more research is needed to examine whether victimization causes adverse mental health outcomes.

Bias crimes, such as sexual orientation-based hate crimes, may be associated with more negative mental health outcomes than non-bias crimes (McDevitt, Balboni, Garcia, & Gu, 2001). Sexual orientation-based hate crimes are an extreme type of victimization that may be more psychologically distressing than other crimes, in part, because victims also experience an attack on their sexual identity (Garnets, Herek, & Levy, 1990). As previously mentioned, a number of studies have demonstrated that sexual orientation-based victimization is linked to mental health problems, including depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, and anxiety, both among gay youth (Hershberger & D'Augelli, 1995) and LGB adults (Cogan, 1996).

Negative implications of victimization are found not only with more extreme forms of victimization such as physical assault, but also with more subtle forms of victimization. In work on race-based victimization, *racial microaggressions* are defined as "brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color" (Sue et al., 2007, p. 271); this concept has also been expanded to

sexual orientation (Sue, 2010). Microaggressions are associated with similar mental health implications compared to more extreme or overt types of victimization. The mental health implications that may be linked to being victimized based on sexual orientation necessitate identifying the scope of the problem, which this meta-analysis attempted to do through determining prevalence of victimization in LGB individuals.

Change Over Time

As previously mentioned, the gay liberation movement has made significant progress, and compared with the past, attitudes toward sexual minorities have improved, and there has been an increase in support for legal rights (Davis et al., 2010; Loftus, 2001). However, this progress may also result in an increase in victimization as sexual minorities become more visible and prominent in the population. On the other hand, some researchers have suggested that adolescents today may not be as homophobic as adolescents in the past. Savin-Williams (2005) proposed that the visibility and normativity of being gay in the United States has simultaneously resulted in sexual identity becoming less important to today's teenagers. Likewise, a qualitative study of homophobia in English schools revealed that cultural homophobia may be less significant to male students today, demonstrated, in part, through the use of "gay discourse" rather than "homophobic discourse" (McCormack, 2011). One question that this meta-analysis sought to answer is whether the rate of victimization experienced by LGB individuals has changed over time since Berrill's (1992) review.

Age-Related Differences

This meta-analysis also aimed to answer the question of whether LGB individuals of different ages experience different rates of victimization. As the range of studies previously mentioned illustrates, sexual orientation-based victimization affects individuals of all ages. Are LGB adolescents more likely to experience victimization than adults? Rates of bullying in schools suggest that adolescents may experience more direct forms of victimization than adults (Bontempo & D'Augelli, 2002), who may experience more indirect forms, such as workplace discrimination (Croteau, 1996). However, many studies of LGB adults have also documented substantial rates of direct victimization, such as verbal harassment and physical violence, and one of the few studies of victimization of older LGB adults found rates of victimization to be considerable (D'Augelli & Grossman, 2001). This meta-analysis included studies with samples representing all age groups.

Within-Group Versus Between-Group Differences

Although methodological concerns have been raised about much of the research with LGB youth not including a comparison sample of heterosexual youth (Anhalt & Morris, 1998), many previous studies have compared LGB individuals with heterosexual individuals. This research paradigm assumes that sexual minorities are similar to each other, but dissimilar to heterosexuals (Savin-Williams, 2001). However, it has been argued that within-group differences in sexual minority youth are greater than differences between sexual minority youth and heterosexual youth, and that a differential developmental trajectories perspective should be used in studying the development of LGB youth (Savin-Williams, 2001; Savin-Williams & Diamond, 1999). This perspective suggests that sexual minority youth have a variety of developmental pathways, some of which may be different than heterosexual youth, but some of which may be similar. The previous discussion regarding potentially increased victimization of bisexual individuals speaks to the importance of addressing within-group differences. This argument calls for comparison not only between LGB and heterosexual individuals, but also among lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals. This meta-analysis sought to achieve both types of comparisons.

In Berrill's (1992) review of anti-gay violence and victimization, he demonstrated that victimization varied both by gender and by racial/ethnic background. For example, gay males experienced more verbal harassment by nonfamily members, and more physical violence, whereas lesbians experienced more verbal harassment by family members, and reported more fear of anti-gay violence. Studies reviewed by Berrill that examined racial and ethnic differences in rates of victimization found that lesbians and gay men of color were at an increased risk of violence based on sexual orientation. Although the research design of many studies on LGB individuals does not distinguish between ethnic groups or includes only one ethnic subgroup in the study, this meta-analysis compared prevalence of victimization between and within groups when possible.

This Study

Previously, Berrill (1992) conducted a quantitative literature review on anti-gay violence and victimization in the United States. That review demonstrated the pervasiveness of anti-gay violence, but meta-analysis was not used to systematically review the literature or to compute overall effects. Moreover, numerous studies of victimization have been conducted since 1992. The goal of this study was to synthesize research since 1992 on LGB victimization using modern meta-analytic methods. It is important to note that this meta-analysis

measured self-reports of victimization, rather than observational data of actual victimization experiences. However, for linguistic ease, *victimization* and *experiences of victimization* will be used throughout this article.

This study attempted to answer the following questions: What is the prevalence of victimization experienced by LGB individuals? Has prevalence of victimization changed since 1992? What types of victimization are experienced? Are differences in prevalence of specific types of victimization related to age or ethnicity of the sample?

This study improved on previous reviews by using meta-analysis to systematically search the literature and compute overall effects, and by including both published and unpublished research. In systematically reviewing literature on the topic of victimization and sexual orientation, this meta-analysis also aimed to provide an overview of methodological issues, such as definitions of sexual orientation, sampling methods, victimization measures, and other considerations, with the goal of providing recommendations for future research in this area. Analyses were conducted to determine rates of victimization across all LGB individuals, in LGB versus heterosexual individuals, and in LGB females versus LGB males. All analyses were conducted across all samples and separately with U.S. samples only, given the need for data to inform public policy in the U.S. Another goal of this meta-analysis was to compare findings regarding prevalence of victimization with Berrill's (1992) study, which included only U.S. samples.

Method

Sample of Studies

To identify relevant studies, three search methods were utilized. First, studies were obtained by including references from existing review articles published between 1992 and 2009 on this topic (Balsam & D'Augelli, 2006; Burke & White, 2001; Craig, 2002; Croteau, 1996; D'Augelli, 1993; Dworkin & Yi, 2003; Fernald, 1995; Harper & Schneider, 2003; Horn & Nucci, 2006; Meyer, 2003; Peplau & Fingerhut, 2007; Rivers & D'Augelli, 2001; Ryan & Rivers, 2003; Savin-Williams, 1994). Second, a search of the PsycINFO database was conducted to identify potential articles. A literature search was performed for published studies and unpublished dissertations, and was limited to articles published in English with human samples between January 1992 and December 2009. PsycINFO uses subject indexes to categorize studies included in the database. To find articles measuring prevalence of victimization, the subject indexes of *victimization, violence, discrimination, harassment, hate crimes*, and *school climate* were used in conjunction with *sexual orientation, homosexual, lesbian, bisexual, gay, queer, sexual minority*, and variations of sexual orientation categories such as *homosexuality*. Third, a search was conducted within the *Journal of Homosexuality* between 1992 and 2009 to identify any relevant articles that may have been missed in the search using PsycINFO. All results from the searches were uploaded into RefWorks, an online reference manager, and duplicate references were deleted. The results from these three searches, after duplicate references were deleted, were 2,501 studies.

Each abstract in RefWorks was examined for relevance to victimization in LGB populations. Abstracts were excluded on the basis of any of the following criteria: if (a) the reference was a case report, letter, commentary, or review article; (b) the research was qualitative; (c) the study did not measure sexual orientation; or (d) the study did not mention variables relevant to the topic of this meta-analysis. Qualitative research was excluded because the statistics needed for meta-analysis were rarely reported, and the samples were frequently small and selective. All other abstracts were retained in the sample.

After all abstracts were screened, the remaining 386 studies were retrieved and coded. Each article or dissertation was obtained through online sources, ordered through interlibrary loan, or through the authors. Once the articles were obtained, they were coded for the variables outlined below. If the study met the criteria for inclusion, but did not include the necessary statistics (e.g., did not include statistics for a particular type of victimization), the first author of the study was contacted. Ten of the 34 authors that were contacted responded with the relevant data. The other 24 authors either responded that the data were no longer available or did not respond; these studies were excluded from the meta-analysis. Studies with results for more than one sample, such as from different populations (e.g., school vs. community), were coded for each individual sample. The result was 164 useable studies with 228 samples, representing data from 503,826 individuals.[1]

Measures

This meta-analysis reviewed studies that measured prevalence of victimization in LGB individuals. Types of victimization were based on categories defined by Berrill (1992), and expanded to include other categories that appeared during the initial search of the literature. The following types of victimization were not included in Berrill's study, but were added for this study: discrimination of any type, being robbed, sexual abuse from family, Internet-based victimization, threats of being "outed," workplace victimization, relational

[1] A table of descriptives for each study is available from the authors. See Appendix for full list of references used for the studies included in the meta-analysis.

victimization, and general victimization. All measures were self-report since the victim is the most reliable source of information related to personal experiences of victimization, and self-report is the standard method of measurement in this area. Although self-reports of some types of victimization might be considered more objective (e.g., property violence), self-report of all types of victimization is relevant to determining prevalence. The list of categories included the following:

1. Discrimination: General discrimination. Health care-based discrimination, housing discrimination, and discrimination in the workplace were coded separately from general discrimination.
2. Threats of violence: Any threat of violence.
3. Verbal or emotional abuse: Any type of verbal or emotional victimization not from family.
4. Property violence or vandalism: Any type of property violence, such as breaking a window or scratching a vehicle.
5. Targets of being pelted by objects: Being the target of any type of object, including stones, rotten food, and so forth.
6. Followed or chased: Any incidence of being followed, chased, or stalked.
7. Spat on: Being spat on.
8. Physical attack or abuse: All types of physical assault, including being punched, hit, and kicked, and so on.
9. Weapon assault: Threats of weapon assault and direct assault using a weapon.
10. Robbed: Being robbed, mugged, or having a possession stolen.
11. Police victimization: Any type of victimization from the police, including harassment, verbal abuse, physical abuse, and so forth.
12. Sexual assault: All levels of sexual assault, from unwanted touching to rape. Sexual assault was coded separately from familial sexual abuse and sexual harassment, and did not include intimate partner violence. Age of sexual assault was coded if available.
13. Abuse from family. Verbal/emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and any other type of abuse not specified earlier. Verbal/emotional, physical, and sexual abuse were coded separately. Age of abuse was coded if available.
14. Internet-based victimization: Stalking online or via e-mail.
15. Knowledge of others who have been victimized: Knowledge of others who have been victimized on the basis of sexual orientation.
16. Threats of being outed: Threats of sexual identity disclosure to others.
17. School victimization: Bullying and any victimization that took place at school and was not specified as another type of victimization (e.g., verbal abuse or physical assault).
18. Sexual harassment: Anything specified as sexual harassment in the study, including unwanted physical and verbal attention of a sexual nature.
19. Workplace victimization: Discrimination in the workplace and incidents representing discrimination, such as being fired due to sexual orientation.
20. Relational victimization: Being deliberately excluded from social groups.
21. General victimization: General harassment, combined measures of multiple types of victimization, and any type of victimization not specified in the other categories.

Coding the Studies

Each study was coded for the necessary information to compute effect sizes and moderating variables. Seventeen articles yielding 22 samples were coded by two raters to compute interrater reliability. After establishing interrater reliability, each rater coded the remaining studies individually, but came together for consensus when coding of a particular variable was unclear. The studies were coded for the following study characteristics.

Sample characteristics. Each study was coded for the number of non-heterosexual (total sexual minority, total bisexual, total questioning, sexual minority female, and sexual minority male) and heterosexual participants in the study. Interrater reliability was $r = 1.00$ for the total number of sexual minority, bisexual, sexual minority female, and sexual minority male participants; and $r = 0.98$ for the number of heterosexual participants.

The following demographic variables of the sample were coded: gender, age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status (income and education). Regarding age, mean, standard deviation, and range were not consistently reporting across studies, so a categorical variable was created to reflect different age groups. The age range was primarily used to classify a study into an age category because range was reported more consistently than the mean and standard deviation; when the range was not reported, the mean was used. Among the studies, 9% reported an adolescent sample (age 18 or under), 54% reported an adult sample (age 18 or over), 30% reported extremely broad age ranges (e.g., ages 16–65), and 7% did not report age. The necessity of categorization to enable analyses of age-related differences, combined with inconsistency in reporting age ranges, led to categories that were somewhat overlapping. In the end, we were forced to conclude that most researchers had paid little attention to developmental issues and had used such broad age ranges that moderator analyses for age effects were impossible. Therefore, age is not considered further in the analyses, except for descriptive purposes.

Ethnicity was coded for the following categories: "White/Caucasian," "Black/African American," "Asian American," and "Latino/Hispanic." A sample was coded into one of the categories if 85% or more of the participants were in the category. If less than 85% were in any category, ethnicity was coded as "mixed." Different countries classify ethnicity differently, so samples outside of the United States were not coded for ethnicity. The "mixed" category was coded for 51% of the U.S. studies, and 11% of all studies did not report ethnicity. Interrater reliability for ethnicity was $\kappa = 0.87$.

Socioeconomic status was measured by coding both income and education. Average income was coded into the following categories: <$20,000; $20,000 to 50,000; $50,000 to 80,000; and >$80,000. Average education was coded into the following categories: "some high school," "high school degree," "some college," "college degree," and "graduate/professional school." As with ethnicity, a sample was coded into one of the categories if 85% or more of the participants were in the category. If less than 85% were in any category, income and education were coded as "mixed." The "mixed" income category was coded for 32% of the studies, and the "mixed" education category was coded for 45% of the studies. Across all studies, 66% did not report income, and 48% did not report education. These variables were not used in the analyses due to the incidence of missing data across studies and low interrater reliability due to lack of clarity of reporting in many studies ($\kappa = 0.52$ for income and $\kappa = 0.46$ for education).

The study was coded for nationality as U.S. or non-U.S. Nationality was not used in the analyses aside from examining U.S. samples separately because there were not enough studies for each country, and combining all non-U.S. countries would obscure variations in rates of victimization across nations (e.g., South Africa, England, and the Netherlands). Interrater reliability for nationality was $\kappa = 1.00$.

Definition of sexual orientation. The definition of sexual orientation used to classify the participants as non-heterosexual was coded using the following categories: same-sex attraction (2% of studies), same-sex behavior (11%), self-identification as lesbian/gay/bisexual (66%), score above zero on the Kinsey scale (2%; Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948), other (1%), or a combination of measures (16%). Interrater reliability for sexual orientation definition was somewhat low ($\kappa = 0.60$) and, therefore, this variable was not used for statistical analyses. Reasons for the low reliability are revealing about methodological issues and are considered in the Discussion section.

Type of sample. The study was coded for the following types of samples: community (57% of studies), school (22%), HIV (3%), or other (e.g., mixed community and school or a specific group, such as physicians; 18%). The design was coded as longitudinal (10%) or cross-sectional (90%). Many studies used more than one sampling method; the sampling method was coded as probability (21%), online (14%), snowball (38%), convenience (71%), or other (18%). Additionally, the response rate was coded ($M = 66\%$), if available. Of the studies, 41% did not report a response rate. These codes were used to assess methodological issues, but not for statistical analyses. Interrater reliability for sample type, longitudinal design, and sampling method ranged from $\kappa = 0.65$ to 1.00. Interrater reliability for response rate was $r = 0.99$.

Publication characteristics. The study was coded for the publication year; the year the data were collected, if reported; and whether the study was published (93%) or an unpublished dissertation (7%). Year of data collection was used in the analyses, rather than publication year, because it was thought to more accurately represent change in rates of victimization experienced over time. For studies that did not report year of data collection, the mean number of years between publication year and year of data collection (six years) reported for all other studies was subtracted from the publication year. Publication year was not double-coded, and none of the double-coded studies was a dissertation. Therefore, interrater reliability for publication type was $\kappa = 1.00$.

Statistics on prevalence of types of victimization. Studies were coded for any statistics reported for measures of victimization of any type experienced by non-heterosexual participants and heterosexual participants, if this group was included. Examples of relevant statistics included proportions, means and standard deviations, *t* tests, and chi-square statistics. Interrater reliability ranged from $r = 0.97$ to 1.00 across all types of victimization.

Statistical Analysis

Data cleaning. All effect sizes across each type of victimization were examined for outliers. Effect sizes that were greater than 2 *SD*s from the mean effect size for that type of victimization were recoded to the value equaling 2 *SD*s from the mean, in a process referred to as Windsorizing (Lipsey & Wilson, 2001). Across all effect sizes, three outliers were found, one in each of the following types of victimization: discrimination, police victimization, and housing discrimination. The outliers in discrimination and police victimization were recoded. The outlier in housing discrimination was not recoded because this type of victimization had only six effect sizes across all groups, and the mean effect size

for housing discrimination ($d = .09$) was not thought to accurately reflect the data, given that the outlier was within range of many of the means for other types of victimization.

Analysis I. The first analysis examined rates of victimization aggregating across all LGB samples. The following types of victimization were not included because they had two or fewer studies: any abuse from family not specified as verbal/physical/sexual and Internet-based victimization. The proportion of people reporting victimization was used as the measure of effect size, ES_p (Lipsey & Wilson, 2001). A weighted average of the proportions was computed for each type of victimization (Lipsey & Wilson, 2001). Only studies that reported proportions were included in Analysis I because other statistics (e.g., means and standard deviations) typically reflected a scale score that was not equivalent across studies, and the goal of Analysis I was to estimate the incidence of victimization.

Mixed-model formulas from Lipsey and Wilson (2001; see also Borenstein, Hedges, Higgins, & Rothstein, 2009) were used to conduct homogeneity analyses across effect sizes to account for sources of variability. Significant homogeneity statistics (Q_T) can be interpreted as significant variability among the studies. The mixed-effects model was used to account for variability among effect sizes when significant heterogeneity was found in Analysis I. This model allows both moderators and random error to account for the variability between studies (Lipsey & Wilson, 2001). After moderators were taken into account in the analyses, a random variance component (v) was estimated from the residual variance. The random variance was added to the standard errors, and inverse variance weights were recalculated, using the new standard errors (Lipsey & Wilson, 2001).

To test the moderator variables, an analog to the analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to examine the differences in effect sizes due to gender (female vs. male). Separate analyses were conducted for U.S. samples using gender and ethnicity as moderators. A weighted mixed-effects model regression tested year of data collection as a moderator for all studies and U.S. samples only. Moderators were separately added as predictors of rates of victimization in LGB individuals, for each type of victimization with significant heterogeneity and 10 or more studies. Types of victimization with fewer than 10 studies were not included in the moderator analyses because the small number of effect sizes in each level of the moderators would not produce meaningful results. The mixed-effects models were computed using macros provided by Lipsey and Wilson (2001).

Analysis II. The second analysis compared rates of victimization of LGB participants with heterosexual participants. The following types of victimization were not included because they had two or fewer studies: being the target of objects, any abuse from family not specified as verbal/physical/sexual, Internet-based victimization, knowledge of others who had been victimized based on sexual orientation, and relational victimization. The effect size d was used as a measure of the magnitude of difference in experiences of victimization between LGB and heterosexual groups. The effect size was calculated as the mean score for LGB participants minus the mean score for heterosexual participants, divided by the pooled within-group standard deviation. If means and standard deviations were not available, relevant formulas were used from Lipsey and Wilson (2001) for other types of statistics reported (e.g., proportions, t tests, etc.). The mixed-effects model was used to weight effect sizes by the inverse of the variance for individual samples (Lipsey & Wilson, 2001). Then, effect sizes were averaged across all studies for each type of victimization.

Positive effect sizes indicated that LGB participants experienced more victimization, while negative effect sizes indicated that heterosexual participants experienced more victimization. Cohen's (1977) guidelines for interpreting effect sizes are used throughout the study for interpretation of results: $d = .20$ is a small effect, $d = .50$ is a moderate effect, and $d = .80$ is a large effect. An effect size of $d < .10$ is considered very small or negligible (Hyde, 2005). It should be noted that effect sizes represent the difference in rates of victimization between LGB and heterosexual groups, and not the prevalence of victimization in each group. The same set of homogeneity and moderator analyses that were conducted in Analysis I using the mixed-effects model provided by Lipsey and Wilson (2001) were conducted in Analysis II. Moderators were each separately analyzed as predictors of differences in rate of victimization among LGB versus heterosexual individuals for types of victimization with significant heterogeneity and 10 or more studies.

Analysis III. The third analysis compared rates of victimization of LGB female participants with LGB male participants. This analysis also compared lesbian/gay with bisexual and lesbian/gay with questioning when these categories were used in the study. The following types of victimization were not included in the comparison of LGB females and LGB males because they had two or fewer studies: being spat on, any abuse from family not specified as verbal/physical/sexual, Internet-based victimization, knowledge of others who had been victimized based on sexual orientation, housing-based discrimination, and health care-based discrimination. The effect size d was used as a measure of the magnitude of difference in experiences of victimization between LGB female and LGB

male individuals, between lesbian/gay and bisexual individuals, or between lesbian/gay and questioning individuals. The effect sizes were calculated as specified for Analysis II. Positive effect sizes indicated that LGB females experienced more victimization, while negative effect sizes indicated that LGB males experienced more victimization. For effect sizes comparing lesbian/gay individuals with bisexual and questioning individuals, positive effect sizes indicated that lesbian/gay individuals experienced more victimization, while negative effect sizes indicated that bisexual and questioning individuals experienced more victimization. The same set of analyses using the mixed-effects model provided by Lipsey and Wilson (2001) were conducted in Analysis III.

Publication bias. A salient concern in meta-analyses is publication bias, also known as the "file drawer effect" (Rosenthal, 1979). This concern is based on the tendency for significant results to be published and non-significant results to remain unpublished and filed away. This leads to a bias in the results of the meta-analysis if only published results are included. This meta-analysis addressed the problem of publication bias by including unpublished dissertations in all analyses. Across all studies included in the meta-analysis, 92.8% were published and 7.2% were unpublished dissertations.

Results

Analysis I: What is the Prevalence of Victimization in Sexual Minorities?

The purpose of Analysis I was to determine the prevalence of victimization in LGB individuals for all types of victimization measured. The final count of usable studies in Analysis I was 138, yielding 186 independent samples and 766 effect sizes, with a total of 60,203 participants. The study samples included 27% adolescents/young adults, 56.7% adults, and 16.3% mixed ages. Samples represented 18 countries across six continents. Within the U.S., samples represented the following ethnic backgrounds: European Americans, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, "other" (e.g., Native Americans), and mixed groups.

Table 1 provides the mean proportions for each type of victimization for LGB participants in all samples, and Table 2 provides the mean proportions for U.S. samples only. In this analysis, the proportion was used as a measure of effect size, ES_p. Thus, effect sizes in Analysis I can be directly interpreted as proportions (e.g., $ES_p = .41$, which is 41%). The rates of specific types of victimization ranged from 5% (being spat on) to 55% (verbal harassment) for all samples, and 9% (spat on and housing discrimination) to 56% (verbal harassment)

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics for Rates of Victimization Experienced by Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Individuals (Analysis I)*

Measure	k[a]	ES_p[b]	95% CI	Q_T[c]	v[d]
Discrimination	58	.41	.34, .48	20,343.38*	.07
Threats	35	.37	.30, .44	1,769.79*	.04
Verbal harassment	81	.55	.47, .64	66,771.36*	.15
Property violence	41	.24	.20, .28	1,708.73*	.02
Target of objects	15	.14	.10, .18	208.44*	.01
Followed	16	.40	.27, .53	1,052.50*	.07
Spat on	6	.05	.02, .10	64.37*	.00
Physical assault	102	.28	.25, .31	15,602.22*	.02
Weapon assault	28	.14	.12, .16	1,720.47*	.00
Robbed	21	.19	.18, .21	2,670.32*	.00
Police victimization	11	.19	.12, .26	368.82*	.01
Sexual assault	113	.27	.24, .30	12,525.21*	.02
Verbal from family	25	.40	.36, .43	117.72*	.01
Physical from family	38	.33	.28, .38	1,049.48*	.03
Sexual from family	32	.28	.22, .33	571.96*	.02
Know others victimized	6	.41	.14, .68	547.04*	.11
Threat of being "outed"	9	.24	.09, .40	1,039.65*	.05
School victimization	31	.33	.26, .39	8,032.41*	.03
Sexual harassment	14	.45	.30, .61	3,222.70*	.09
Workplace victimization	30	.25	.20, .29	714.59*	.01
Housing discrimination	6	.08	.05, .12	40.91*	.00
Health care discrimination	6	.21	.04, .37	228.49*	.04
Relational victimization	14	.44	.40, .49	395.56*	.01
General victimization	22	.43	.34, .52	1,658.27*	.04

Note. CI = confidence interval.
[a]Number of studies used to compute each mean effect size; measures with two or fewer studies are not included.
[b]Effect sizes can be interpreted as the rate of victimization, e.g., $ES_p = .41$, which is 41%.
[c]Significant values indicate that there is significant heterogeneity among the individual effect sizes for each measure.
[d]Random-effects variance component.
*$p < .01$.

Table 2. *Descriptive Statistics for Rates of Victimization Experienced by Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Individuals in U.S. Samples (Analysis I)*

Measure	k[a]	ES_p[b]	95% CI	Q_T[c]	v[d]
Discrimination	34	.44	.33, .54	6,976.36*	.09
Threats	29	.39	.30, .48	1,627.88*	.06
Verbal harassment	52	.56	.43, .68	64,652.12*	.22
Property violence	31	.23	.18, .28	1,378.56*	.02
Target of objects	11	.14	.09, .20	186.10*	.01
Followed	14	.43	.28, .58	968.95*	.08
Spat on	4	.09	.00, .17	46.21*	.00
Physical assault	68	.28	.25, .32	9,143.22*	.02
Weapon assault	24	.17	.15, .18	1,660.35*	.00
Robbed	16	.19	.17, .21	2,343.92*	.00
Police victimization	8	.13	.06, .20	215.28*	.01
Sexual assault	75	.29	.24, .33	7,786.40*	.03
Verbal from family	24	.39	.35, .43	111.20*	.01
Physical from family	35	.34	.29, .40	921.51*	.03
Sexual from family	32	.28	.22, .33	571.96*	.02
Know others victimized	6	.41	.14, .68	547.04*	.11
Threat of being "outed"	6	.17	.07, .27	104.90*	.01
School victimization	12	.32	.20, .43	1,102.03*	.04
Sexual harassment	9	.50	.25, .74	447.90*	.13
Workplace victimization	27	.24	.19, .29	652.06*	.01
Housing discrimination	5	.09	.04, .13	40.82*	.00
Health care discrimination	5	.20	.00, .39	225.80*	.05
Relational victimization	4	.17	.04, .30	5.42	.01
General victimization	14	.38	.29, .48	831.10*	.03

Note. CI = confidence interval.
[a]Number of studies used to compute each mean effect size; measures with two or fewer studies are not included.
[b]Effect sizes can be interpreted as the rate of victimization, e.g., $ES_p = .44$, which is 44%.
[c]Significant values indicate that there is significant heterogeneity among the individual effect sizes for each measure.
[d]Random-effects variance component.
*$p < .01$.

for U.S. samples. For all samples, the two types of victimization with the greatest number of studies were physical assault (all samples: $k = 102$; U.S. samples: $k = 68$) and sexual assault (all samples: $k = 113$; U.S. samples: $k = 75$), with rates of victimization of 28% and 27% (29% in U.S. samples), respectively.

Homogeneity analysis. The mixed-effects model revealed significant heterogeneity across effect sizes for all types of victimization for all samples and for U.S. samples only, and moderator analyses were conducted with those types of victimization with 10 or more studies. An analog to the ANOVA was conducted with gender as the moderator. Separate moderator analyses were conducted with U.S. samples for gender and ethnicity. A weighted mixed-effects model regression was conducted, with year of data collection predicting differences in rate of victimization for LGB individuals both in all samples and in U.S. samples only.

Gender. Moderation analyses in Analysis I examined two gender groups—female and male—in all samples (see Table 3) and in U.S. samples only (see Table 4). Across all samples, gender significantly moderated the rate of victimization in LGB individuals for property violence, being followed, and verbal harassment from family. For all three types of victimization, higher rates of victimization were found for male-only than female-only samples. The same pattern of gender differences was found for U.S. samples only, but with the following types of victimization: being followed, verbal harassment from family, and school victimization. It appears that property violence showed a gender difference worldwide, but school victimization demonstrated a gender difference only in U.S. samples.

Year of data collection. To examine change over time in rates of victimization experienced by LGB individuals, year of data collection was included as a moderator in a weighted mixed-effects model regression in all samples (see Table S1) and in U.S. samples only (see Table S2). Across all samples, year of data collection significantly moderated the rates of victimization for sexual assault from family, school victimization, and relational victimization. In U.S. samples, year of data collection significantly moderated the rates of victimization for sexual assault, physical assault from family, and sexual assault from family. All significant betas were positive, indicating that the rates of these types

Table 3. *Gender as a Moderator Predicting Rates of Victimization Experienced by Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Individuals (Analysis I)*

		Female			Male		
Measure	Q_B	*k*	ES_p	Q_W	*k*	ES_p	Q_W
Discrimination	0.44	8	.40	8.49	11	.35	11.05
Threats	0.74	5	.32	1.65	4	.45	7.43
Verbal harassment	0.54	14	.50	11.00	19	.56	22.72
Property violence	3.93*	4	.19	5.50	4	.40	2.48
Followed	4.54*	3	.40	4.02	2	.81	0.55
Physical assault	1.22	15	.23	11.76	17	.31	20.12
Weapon assault	0.18	2	.23	1.77	3	.33	3.01
Police victimization	1.62	1	.05	0.00	5	.28	6.30
Sexual assault	0.41	21	.36	20.12	28	.32	26.63
Verbal from family	6.26*	7	.30	9.71	9	.43	5.80
Physical from family	1.58	13	.32	12.17	10	.42	10.94
Sexual from family	0.77	17	.32	19.87	8	.25	6.27
School victimization	1.08	3	.20	0.40	5	.37	7.56
Sexual harassment	0.01	4	.49	4.90	1	.52	0.00
Workplace victimization	2.19	6	.44	7.69	8	.25	6.38
General victimization	0.05	3	.47	2.72	2	.53	2.26

Note. Q_B = between-groups heterogeneity; *k* = number of studies (measures with fewer than two studies in both levels of the moderator are not included); Q_W = within-group heterogeneity. See text for full description of moderator variable.
*$p < .05$.

of victimization have increased over time. No types of victimization appear to have significantly decreased over time; several negative betas were substantial, but not significant due to the small number of studies.

Ethnicity. Using U.S. samples only, analyses tested ethnicity as a moderator (see Table S3). Ethnicity significantly moderated the rate of victimization in LGB individuals for the following specific types of victimization: property violence, physical assault, weapon assault, physical assault from family, and workplace victimization. For all types, White/Caucasian samples experienced greater rates of victimization than samples with mixed groups, except for physical assault from family, which showed the opposite pattern. For all of these types of victimization, Black/African American and Latino/Hispanic samples did not have enough studies, making it difficult to interpret the findings.

Analysis II: Are Sexual Minorities Victimized More Than Heterosexuals?

The purpose of Analysis II was to examine differences in prevalence of victimization in LGB versus

Table 4. *Gender as a Moderator Predicting Rates of Victimization Experienced by Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Individuals in U.S. Samples (Analysis I)*

		Female			Male		
Measure	Q_B	*k*	ES_p	Q_W	*k*	ES_p	Q_W
Discrimination	3.53	4	.45	7.14	6	.24	3.38
Threats	1.43	3	.30	1.18	3	.54	4.83
Verbal harassment	0.73	10	.07	6.70	12	.07	15.42
Property violence	2.75	4	.19	4.49	2	.43	1.53
Followed	4.54*	3	.40	4.02	2	.71	0.81
Physical assault	1.28	11	.22	9.61	12	.33	13.15
Weapon assault	2.10	2	.23	3.07	2	.50	0.73
Sexual assault	0.05	17	.35	16.47	18	.34	17.18
Verbal from family	5.08*	7	.30	9.49	8	.42	5.05
Physical from family	1.99	13	.32	11.95	9	.44	10.08
Sexual from family	0.77	17	.32	19.87	8	.25	6.27
School victimization	10.51**	1	.10	0.00	2	.21	1.50
Workplace victimization	1.34	1	.19	0.00	26	.04	26.79
General victimization	0.81	3	.47	4.01	1	.20	0.00

Note. Q_B = between-groups heterogeneity; *k* = number of studies (measures with fewer than two studies in both levels of the moderator are not included); Q_W = within-group heterogeneity. See text for full description of moderator variable.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

heterosexual individuals. The final count of usable studies in Analysis II was 65, yielding 85 independent samples and 205 effect sizes, with a total of 398,403 participants (13,553 LGB; 384,850 heterosexual). The study samples included 33.7% adolescents/young adults, 51.2% adults, and 15.1% mixed ages. Samples represented eight countries across four continents. Within the United States, samples represented the following ethnic backgrounds: European Americans, "other" (e.g., Native Americans), and mixed groups.

Table 5 provides the weighted mean effect sizes comparing LGB participants with heterosexual participants across all samples, and Table S4 provides the weighted mean effect sizes for U.S. samples only. For all effect sizes for which there was a meaningful difference between the two groups ($d > |.10|$), LGB individuals reported greater rates of victimization than heterosexual individuals across all samples and for U.S. samples only. Across all samples, and within U.S. samples, police victimization and health care discrimination did not reveal a meaningful difference between LGB and heterosexual individuals, although it should be noted that the mean effect sizes for these two types of victimization were based on only three and four studies, respectively. Most of the effect sizes were in the small range, according to Cohen's (1977) criteria. Across all samples and for U.S. samples, the largest effect sizes were seen for discrimination (all samples: $d = .37$; U.S. samples: $d = .53$), being followed (all samples and U.S. samples: $d = .43$), and general victimization (all samples: $d = .58$; U.S. samples: $d = .76$).

Homogeneity analysis. The mixed-effects model revealed significant heterogeneity across effect sizes for all types of victimization, with the exception of police victimization, physical and sexual victimization from family, and health care discrimination for all samples (see Table 5) and U.S. samples (see Table S4). Moderator analyses were conducted with those types of victimization with significant heterogeneity and 10 or more studies. Results are reported for gender, year of data collection, and ethnicity.

Gender. As in Analysis I, moderator analyses in Analysis II examined two gender groups: female and male (see Table S5). Across all samples, gender significantly predicted the difference in rate of sexual assault between LGB and heterosexual participants (see Q_B in Table S5). In both types of gender samples, LGB individuals experienced more victimization than heterosexual individuals, but the difference was larger in male samples than in female samples. In U.S. samples, gender significantly predicted the difference in rates of physical and sexual assault between LGB and heterosexual participants. As in the analysis across all samples, for both males and females, LGB individuals experienced more sexual assault and physical assault than heterosexual

Table 5. *Descriptive Statistics for Differences Between Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual and Heterosexual Individuals in Rates of Victimization (Analysis II)*

Measure	k^a	d^b	95% CI	$Q_T{}^c$	v^d
Discrimination	14	.37	.28, .47	705.77**	.02
Threats	5	.32	.10, .55	163.68**	.06
Verbal harassment	21	.33	.23, .42	469.16**	.04
Property violence	7	.16	.00, .31	155.09**	.04
Followed	3	.43	.09, .78	72.55**	.09
Physical assault	22	.20	.13, .28	217.21**	.03
Weapon assault	7	.26	.14, .38	126.96**	.02
Robbed	3	.25	.01, .49	81.18**	.04
Police victimization	3	.07	−.02, .15	4.46	.00
Sexual assault	36	.18	.13, .23	639.10**	.02
Verbal from family	7	.20	.14, .27	12.96*	.00
Physical from family	10	.11	.08, .13	9.82	.00
Sexual from family	11	.12	.09, .16	14.41	.00
School victimization	14	.16	.10, .23	310.10**	.01
Sexual harassment	13	.25	.17, .34	44.45**	.02
Workplace victimization	11	.36	.21, .51	117.98**	.05
Health care discrimination	4	.04	−.02, .09	5.41	.00
General victimization	5	.58	.22, .94	24.36**	.13

Note. CI = confidence interval.
[a]Number of studies used to compute each mean effect size; measures with two or fewer studies are not included.
[b]Negative values indicate that heterosexual participants experienced more victimization than lesbian, gay, and bisexual participants; effect sizes were not computed for measures with two or fewer studies.
[c]Significant values indicate that there is significant heterogeneity among the individual effect sizes for each measure.
[d]Random-effects variance component.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

individuals, but the difference was larger in male samples than in female samples. It seems that LGB and heterosexual females experienced similar rates of physical and sexual assault, whereas LGB males experienced greater rates of both types of victimization than heterosexual males.

Year of data collection. To examine change over time in the difference in rates of victimization experienced between LGB and heterosexual individuals, year of data collection was included as a moderator in a weighted mixed-effects model regression for all samples and U.S. samples only (see Table S6). Across all samples, year of data collection did not significantly moderate the difference between the groups in rates of victimization for any specific type of victimization. However, in U.S. samples, year of data collection positively moderated the difference in rates of victimization for sexual harassment and workplace victimization. Thus, there were smaller differences between LGB and heterosexual individuals in rates of sexual harassment and workplace victimization in earlier years, but larger differences in more recent years. This suggests that the gap between LGB and heterosexual individuals is widening over time for some types of victimization.

Ethnicity. A separate moderator analysis was conducted for samples within the U.S. to determine whether ethnicity moderates the difference in rates of victimization experienced by LGB versus heterosexual individuals (see Table S7). The only type of victimization moderated by ethnicity was sexual assault. White/Caucasian samples demonstrated a larger difference in rate of victimization between LGB and heterosexual individuals than mixed groups. However, the effect size of White/Caucasian samples is based on only three samples.

Analysis III: Are There Variations among Subgroups of Sexual Minorities in Rates of Victimization?

Analysis IIIa: LGB female versus LGB male. In Analysis I, gender was included as a moderator to test whether the amount of victimization experienced differed in female-only versus male-only LGB samples for studies reporting proportion of victimization experienced. In Analysis II, gender was included as a moderator to determine whether the differences between heterosexual and LGB participants in the rates of victimization experienced were different for female-only samples and male-only samples. Analysis IIIa included studies of LGB participants in which statistics were separately reported for LGB females and LGB males. While some of the studies in Analysis IIIa overlap with studies in Analyses I and II, this analysis sought to answer the question of whether rates of victimization differed between LGB females and LGB males, whereas Analysis II was conducted to examine differences between heterosexual and LGB participants. Additionally, Analysis I only included studies reporting proportion of victimization experienced, whereas Analysis IIIa included all types of base statistics, including proportions and mean differences.

The final count of usable studies in Analysis IIIa was 53, yielding 67 independent samples and 239 effect sizes, with a total of 56,405 participants (33,185 female; 23,220 male). The studies included 27.2% adolescents/young adults, 55.2% adults, and 17.6% mixed ages. Samples represented 11 countries across four continents. Within the U.S., samples represented the following ethnic backgrounds: European Americans and mixed groups.

Table 6 provides the weighted mean effect sizes comparing LGB females with LGB males, across all samples and in U.S. samples only (see Table S8). Although four of the effect sizes for specific types of victimization were in the small range ($|.10| < d < |.19|$), the rest did not show a meaningful difference. LGB males reported somewhat greater rates of being followed ($d = -.19$), weapon assault ($d = -.11$), being robbed ($d = -.12$), and sexual harassment ($d = -.10$). In U.S. samples, LGB males reported somewhat greater rates of threats ($d = -.11$), physical assault ($d = -.16$), weapon assault ($d = -.15$), being robbed ($d = -.14$), and school victimization ($d = -.12$). None of the effect sizes comparing LGB females with LGB males were moderate or large, either across all samples or in U.S. samples only.

Homogeneity analysis. The mixed-effects model for LGB females versus LGB males across samples revealed significant heterogeneity across effect sizes for all types of victimization, with the exception of being the target of objects, verbal/physical/sexual victimization from family, the threat of being outed as a sexual minority, and sexual harassment (see Table 6). The same types of victimization were heterogeneous for U.S. samples, except sexual harassment (see Table S8). Moderator analyses were conducted with those remaining types of victimization with significant heterogeneity and 10 or more studies. Results are reported for year of data collection and ethnicity.

Year of data collection. To examine change over time in the difference in rates of victimization experienced between LGB females and LGB males, date of data collection was included as a moderator in a weighted mixed-effects model regression across samples and for U.S. samples only (see Table S9). Year of data collection negatively moderated the difference in rates of victimization experienced between the groups for school victimization. Thus, there were larger differences between LGB females and males in earlier years and smaller differences in later years, suggesting that LGB

Table 6. *Descriptive Statistics for Differences Between Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Females and Males in Rates of Victimization (Analysis IIIa)*

Measure	k^a	d^b	95% CI	$Q_T{}^c$	v^d
Discrimination	18	−.02	−.06, .02	112.72*	.00
Threats	12	−.09	−.15, −.03	46.97*	.01
Verbal harassment	25	−.05	−.11, .00	385.15*	.02
Property violence	13	−.06	−.09, −.03	36.72*	.00
Target of objects	6	−.05	−.08, −.02	6.65	.00
Followed	3	−.19	−.35, −.02	17.51*	.02
Physical assault	29	−.09	−.13, −.04	514.56*	.01
Weapon assault	7	−.11	−.19, −.03	95.52*	.01
Robbed	8	−.12	−.19, −.05	121.48*	.01
Sexual assault	27	−.01	−.07, .05	1144.30*	.02
Verbal from family	8	.04	−.01, .10	5.71	.00
Physical from family	9	.01	−.03, .06	12.96	.00
Sexual from family	5	.09	.01, .17	6.32	.00
Threat of being "outed"	5	−.05	−.09, −.01	3.32	.00
School victimization	12	−.09	−.15, −.03	219.57*	.01
Sexual harassment	3	−.10	−.17, −.03	1.33	.00
Workplace victimization	12	.03	−.10, .16	60.26*	.04
Relational victimization	5	.05	−.04, .13	50.51*	.01
General victimization	9	−.06	−.13, .01	45.14*	.01

Note. CI = confidence interval.
[a]Number of studies used to compute each mean effect size; measures with two or fewer studies are not included.
[b]Negative values indicate that lesbian, gay, and bisexual males experienced more victimization than lesbian, gay, and bisexual females.
[c]Significant values indicate that there is significant heterogeneity among the individual effect sizes for each measure.
[d]Random-effects variance component.
*$p < .01$.

females and males experienced more similar rates of school victimization recently than they did two decades ago. For U.S. samples, year of data collection did not moderate the gender difference in rates of victimization experienced for any type of victimization.

Ethnicity. A separate analysis was conducted for samples within the U.S. to test ethnicity as a moderator (see Table S10). Ethnicity significantly moderated the difference in rates of victimization between LGB females and males for physical assault. In White/Caucasian groups, the difference between LGB females and LGB males, with males experiencing more victimization, was greater than in mixed groups.

Analysis IIIb: Lesbian/gay versus bisexual. Additional analyses were conducted to compare lesbian and gay individuals with bisexual individuals, for cases in which bisexual data were reported separately. The final count of usable studies in Analysis IIIb was 15, yielding 16 independent samples and 37 effect sizes, with a total of 4,678 participants (3,332 lesbian/gay; 1,346 bisexual). Mean effect sizes could be computed for only nine types of victimization because the other types did not have two or more studies. The following specific types of victimization did not reveal a meaningful effect size ($d < .10$): verbal harassment, sexual victimization, verbal harassment from family, physical victimization from family, and sexual victimization from family. Lesbian/gay participants experienced more discrimination than bisexual participants ($d = .17$). Bisexual participants experienced more threats, physical assault, and weapon assault than lesbian/gay participants, but all effect sizes were small ($d < |.20|$). None of the effect sizes comparing lesbian/gay with bisexual individuals were moderate or large. Lesbian/gay versus bisexual participants did not have any types of victimization with greater than 10 studies, so moderator analyses were not conducted.

Analysis IIIc: Lesbian/gay versus questioning. Additional analyses were conducted to compare lesbian and gay individuals with individuals who reported their sexual orientation as unsure or questioning. The final count of usable studies in Analysis IIIc was three, yielding three independent samples and eight effect sizes, with a total of 2,144 participants (1,122 lesbian/gay; 1,022 questioning). Only three types of victimization had enough studies to compute effect sizes: Questioning individuals experienced more verbal harassment than lesbian/gay individuals ($d = -.21$), but the effect sizes for physical assault and sexual harassment were not large enough to interpret. None of the effect sizes comparing lesbian/gay individuals with questioning individuals were moderate or large. Lesbian/gay versus questioning participants did not have any types of victimization with greater than 10 studies, so moderator analyses were not conducted.

Table 7. *Comparison between Rates of Victimization (Percentages) Experienced by Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Individuals in U.S. Samples and Results from Berrill's (1992) Study*

Measure	Berrill's Study	This Study
Threats	44	39
Verbal harassment	80	56
Property violence	19	23
Target of objects	25	14
Followed	33	43
Spat on	13	09
Physical assault	17	28
Weapon assault	9	17

Comparison between this Study and a Previous Review

One aim of this meta-analysis was to compare findings from this study with Berrill's (1992) review of anti-gay victimization (see Table 7). In this meta-analysis, 17% of participants experienced weapon assault, 28% experienced physical assault, 23% experienced property violence, 39% had been threatened, 43% had been followed, 14% were the target of objects, 9% had been spat on, and 56% had verbally harassed. No clear pattern emerged; that is, the incidence of some types of victimization was greater in this study, and less for other types.

Discussion

What is the prevalence of victimization of LGB individuals? One answer to this question involves direct estimates of proportions of sexual minority persons who have reported experiencing various kinds of victimization; yet heterosexuals, too, experience victimization, such as being mugged on the street. Therefore, another answer to the question involves assessing the magnitude of the difference in victimization between heterosexuals and sexual minorities. We pursued the first question in Analysis I and the second in Analysis II. In the examination of rates of victimization experienced across all LGB individuals in all samples, rates of victimization ranged from 5% to 55%, with the highest rates being for the following types of victimization: verbal harassment (55%), sexual harassment (45%), relational victimization (44%), and general victimization (43%). In U.S. samples, rates of victimization across all LGB individuals ranged from 9% to 56%, with the highest rates being for discrimination (44%), verbal harassment (56%), being followed (43%), and sexual harassment (50%). These findings demonstrate that rates of victimization in LGB individuals are substantial, with close to one-half of individuals experiencing various types of victimization.

In the comparison of rates of victimization experienced by LGB versus heterosexual individuals, most of the effect sizes were small to moderate, and all were in the direction of LGB individuals experiencing more victimization than heterosexual individuals. As previously discussed, both institutional and interpersonal heterosexisms create a hostile climate for sexual minorities, which is often manifested in sexual orientation-based discrimination, harassment, and violence (Fernald, 1995). The findings from this meta-analysis are consistent with the idea that within a culture of heteronormativity, LGB individuals may experience more victimization than heterosexual individuals. However, most of the effect sizes were small to moderate, and none were large. It is possible that since sexual minorities have become more accepted in the U.S. and other Western nations, the culture is moving away from complete heteronormativity, resulting in a smaller difference in rates of victimization between LGB and heterosexual individuals. This is consistent with the finding that cultural homophobia has decreased in English schools (McCormack, 2011). It is also true that sexual orientation is often a hidden status, resulting in less victimization for those who are not visibly a sexual minority.

Gender Differences

In Analysis III, gender differences in rates of victimization experienced by LGB individuals were examined. While for most victimization types there was not a meaningful difference between females and males, there were small effects for being followed, weapon assault, being robbed, and sexual harassment. The findings differed slightly for U.S. samples, such that there were also small effects for threats and school victimization, but not for sexual harassment. For all of these types of victimization, LGB males experienced greater rates of victimization than LGB females.

These findings must be considered both in the context of gender differences, and in the context of sexual minority status. Based on the relationship between gender atypicality and rates of victimization (e.g., D'Augelli et al., 2006), perhaps LGB males are more likely to display gender-atypical appearance or behavior than LGB females, thus resulting in greater rates of victimization. In other words, it is possible that LGB males may "pass" less often as heterosexual than LGB females, making them more of a target to perpetrators. It is also the case that male gender roles are less flexible than female gender roles, which might allow for gender atypicality to go unnoticed—or even welcomed—in females (Kane, 2006). This might also account for the gender differences in victimization. Another interpretation for findings that LGB females experienced less victimization than LGB males, may relate to the use of female-female sexuality in pornography to the extent that it has become "standard fare" (Paul, 2009). Perhaps LGB females are less likely to be victimized because they

represent a source of titillation for heterosexual men, which normalizes their sexual minority status.

In Analysis I, gender was investigated as a moderator of rates of victimization. Consistent with the findings from Analysis III regarding gender differences in rates of victimization experienced by LGB females and LGB males, across all LGB individuals, males experienced greater rates of property violence, being followed, and verbal harassment from family. In U.S. samples, males experienced greater rates of being followed, verbal harassment from family, and school victimization, but not property violence. Gender differences in rates of verbal harassment from family may be related to the phenomenon of gender atypicality, such that LGB males may have greater incidence of gender atypicality than LGB females, leading to more verbal harassment from family. Indeed, in a study of gender atypicality and LGB youth, compared with females, males perceived more negative responses to their gender atypicality from parents (D'Augelli et al., 2006). The differences in rates of school victimization are consistent with previous findings that boys experience more direct forms of bullying (e.g., physical violence), whereas girls experience more indirect forms of bullying (e.g., teasing; Carbone-Lopez, Esbensen, & Brick, 2010). Perhaps the majority of measures of school victimization tap direct, rather than indirect, school victimization. It is interesting that this finding was significant only when U.S. samples were examined separately. It is possible that this is due to methodological reasons; perhaps school victimization is studied more frequently in the U.S. than in other countries.

In comparing LGB and heterosexual individuals while taking gender into account (Analysis II), the difference between LGB and heterosexual individuals on rates of sexual assault was bigger for males, both across all samples and in U.S. samples only. Additionally, the difference between LGB and heterosexual individuals in rates of physical assault was bigger for males in U.S. samples. In other words, more LGB males experienced sexual assault and physical assault than heterosexual males, but the difference was smaller for LGB females compared with heterosexual females. The findings regarding sexual assault are consistent with studies demonstrating that, in the general population (i.e., across sexual orientation groups), females are considerably more likely to experience sexual assault than males, regardless of sexual orientation (Elliott, Mok, & Briere, 2005). Regarding physical assault, LGB and heterosexual females experienced similar rates of physical assault, but LGB males experienced more physical assault than heterosexual males. Perhaps this finding is also related to gender atypicality, wherein LGB males are more likely to be gender atypical than LGB females, which results in greater rates of victimization. These findings may also be due to higher rates of victimization of heterosexual males than heterosexual females. This interpretation is consistent with Analysis IIIa, which found quite similar rates of victimization for LGB females and males.

Change over Time

Regarding change over time, across LGB individuals, three types of victimization increased over time: sexual assault from family, school victimization, and relational victimization. U.S. samples provided slightly different results; sexual assault not from family, physical assault from family, and sexual assault from family all increased over time. When considered in conjunction with the comparison between these findings and Berrill's (1992) findings, it appears that LGB individuals have experienced increased rates of victimization over time, at least for some types of victimization.

In the comparison between LGB and heterosexual individuals across all studies, there was no trend over time in the magnitude of the difference in rates of victimization, but there was a trend over time in U.S. samples for sexual harassment and workplace victimization. For both types of victimization, larger differences in rates of victimization were seen more recently than in earlier years. These findings coincide with the findings regarding increased victimization for LGB individuals over time.

In considering explanations for increased in victimization of LGB individuals over time, one issue is with methods of data collection. It is possible that measurement of victimization has improved since Berrill's (1992) review. Certainly more recent studies appear to ask respondents about a larger number of types of victimization than earlier studies. Additionally, LGB individuals may be easier to access for research participation because of their increased visibility. Another possible explanation for the findings is that greater self-acceptance of LGB orientations accounts for increased reports of victimization. In other words, perhaps LGB individuals are more comfortable with their sexual minority status and, thus, are also more comfortable reporting victimization related to that status.

Strengths and Limitations

By including 138 (LGB only), 65 (LGB vs. heterosexual), and 53 (LGB female vs. LGB male) studies with over 500,000 participants, this meta-analysis provides a comprehensive and up-to-date quantitative review of the prevalence of victimization in LGB individuals. Additionally, the studies included in the meta-analysis represented international populations, including both U.S. and non-U.S. samples. This meta-analysis also included both published and unpublished research, reducing bias due to the file drawer effect.

Despite the strengths of this study, a number of limitations should be mentioned. Many of the methods

used were inconsistent across studies. These methods included measures of sexual orientation and victimization, the age range studied, and sampling. An additional issue was inconsistent reporting of sample characteristics, limiting the ability to consider many important variables that could moderate rates of victimization. These issues are explored further in the following section.

Methodological Implications and Recommendations

In addition to determining prevalence of victimization in LGB individuals, this meta-analysis also aimed to provide an overview of methodological issues, such as definitions of sexual orientation, victimization measures, sampling methods, and other considerations, with the goal of providing recommendations for future research in this area. It is clear from the large number of studies identified for the meta-analysis that this area of research is past the early, exploratory stage, and can move to more careful and advanced consideration of methodological issues.

Recommendation 1: Definition and measurement of sexual minority status. *Measure multiple aspects of sexual orientation (behavior, identity, and attraction), and analyze victimization rates separately for each aspect*. One of the most crucial methodological issues related to conducting research in sexual orientation is the measure used to classify sexual orientation, the definition that this measure is based on, and how the measure is used. In this meta-analysis, 66% of studies used self-identification as LGB to classify sexual orientation, 11% used same-sex behavior, 3% used same-sex attraction, 2% used the Kinsey scale (which is a continuous measure and focuses on behavior), and 17% used combined measures. Many of these measures are based on different definitions of sexual orientation (e.g., identity, attraction, and behavior). When trying to determine reasons why sexual minorities might experience different rates of victimization, it is important to consider the definition of sexual orientation used for classification as a sexual minority. Are sexual minorities victimized more because they identify as a sexual minority, because they have same-gender sexual partners, or because they are attracted to members of the same gender? This is difficult to determine, and would be a fruitful area for future research (e.g., comparing rates of victimization based on different classifications of sexual minority status) to better understand the reasons behind victimization of sexual minorities. Clearly, this recommendation has implications beyond victimization, and extends toward many areas of research on sexual orientation.

In addition, some studies included bisexual, unsure/questioning, and transgender participants in the same group as lesbian and gay participants, whereas other studies separated them out or failed to include them at all. Some studies collected data from these participants, but then did not include them in the analyses. Although including bisexual, questioning, and transgender participants in larger groups of sexual minorities may be problematic in drawing conclusions about specific subgroups of sexual minorities, excluding them altogether presents an even less clear picture of the scope of the phenomenon. Future studies should attempt to recruit a wide variety of sexual minorities in larger numbers to enable comparisons within groups of sexual minorities.

Recommendation 2: Measurement of victimization. *Standard measures of victimization should be adopted to permit better generalization across studies*. Another methodological issue concerns the measures used to determine rates of victimization. Victimization types and measures were not always clearly defined, and when they were, they were not consistent across studies for a particular type of victimization. In fact, the measures used across studies for different types of victimization varied to such a degree that, in some cases, they could not be easily categorized for descriptive purposes. Different measures were used for different types of victimization, and many studies included measures of victimization that were specifically created for the study. Despite these inconsistencies, a number of victimization measures were used more frequently than others.

Across victimization types, the most common measures used were items that span a wide range of specific victimization types (e.g., D'Augelli, 1992: Yale Sexual Orientation Survey developed by Herek, 1986; Herek & Berrill, 1990: Sample Survey of Anti-Gay Violence and Victimization). Other studies cited articles that used author-designed questionnaires to measure victimization (e.g., D'Augelli, 2002; Herek, Gillis, & Cogan, 1999), or cited Herek's (1992) article of recommendations for research and policy, including a discussion of methodological issues in measuring victimization of sexual minorities. Other measures used were the Schedule of Racist Events (Landrine & Klonoff, 1996) adapted for sexual orientation, the Trauma History Questionnaire (Hooper, Stockton, Krupnick, & Green, 2011), the Measure of Gay-Related Stressors (Lewis, Derlega, Berndt, Morris, & Rose, 2001), the Conflict Tactics Scale for physical assault and physical abuse from family (Straus, Hamby, Finkelhor, Moore, & Runyan, 1998), the Sexual Experiences Survey for sexual assault and sexual harassment (Koss & Oros, 1982), the American Association of University Women (2001) scale for sexual harassment, and the Childhood Maltreatment Interview Schedule for multiple types of abuse from family (Briere, 1992). To measure school victimization, the most common measure was the University of Illinois Victimization Scale (Espelage & Holt, 2001). Many of these measures were modified for use with sexual minority populations. Although a number of measures exist to address

victimization related to heterosexism, such as the Heterosexist Harassment, Rejection, and Discrimination Scale (Szymanski, 2006), the Schedule of Heterosexist Events (Selvidge, 2000), and the Workplace Heterosexist Experiences Questionnaire (Waldo, 1999), these scales were used infrequently in the studies examined in this meta-analysis.

Another recommendation for future research is to use measures that tap multiple, specific types of victimization. Not all types of victimization are created equal; different types of victimization may have very different mental and physical health implications. Measuring a number of types of victimization (e.g., verbal harassment, physical assault, and discrimination), rather than an overall measure of victimization combining different types, is a more fine-grained approach that can yield results that will be more useful to determining how the problem of victimization can be addressed or prevented. Some examples of measures that address more than one type of victimization and were used more frequently than others in studies examined in this meta-analysis are items developed by D'Augelli (1992, 2002), Herek (1992), Herek and Berrill (1990), and Herek et al. (1999).

The victimization items to measure "enacted stigma" developed by Herek (2009) are particularly useful because they include a wide range of types of victimization, which fall into three general categories: criminal victimization, harassment and threats, and discrimination. Additionally, this measure asks respondents to answer the items based on whether the perpetrator perceived them to be lesbian or bisexual (female respondents) or gay or bisexual (male respondents). If this measure is used in future research, we would recommend expanding the timeframe to ask participants whether each type of victimization was experienced before age 18, after age 18, or at both times. Currently, the items measure victimization only since age 18. Another starting point to create a new measure of victimization is the list of types of victimization that we developed to categorize the measures used in the studies in this meta-analysis (see Table 1).

Another issue related to measurement was that most studies did not distinguish between gender atypicality and sexual orientation as the basis for victimization. As previously discussed, much of sexual orientation-based victimization could be a result of gender-atypical appearance and behavior, rather than known sexual orientation. Future research could attempt to differentiate between these two possible motives for perpetration of victimization.

Additionally, the studies included in this meta-analysis used self-report of victimization, rather than observations. Future research could measure victimization using observational methods and compare it to self-report. An example of a study that successfully used observational methods in such a way as might be applied to victimization is a study of formal and interpersonal discrimination against homosexual job applicants, in which the researchers found that confederates who were portrayed as gay or lesbian experienced more interpersonal discrimination compared to confederates who were not portrayed as gay (Hebl, Foster, Mannix, & Dovidio, 2002). This study also had the strength of using an experimental design, so that it is possible to infer that sexual orientation caused the discriminatory behavior.

Recommendation 3: Timeframe of the report. *Researchers should adopt standard timeframes in assessing reports of victimization. We recommend that lifetime reports and past year reports always be included.* Future researchers should be sure to specify whether victimization was measured for the past year, lifetime, after coming out, or another time period. Although this information was reported for many of the studies included in this meta-analysis, it was not reported for all studies, and those studies that did report it varied widely in the timeframe that was used. This measurement issue is especially crucial for determining age-related trends in rates of victimization, as discussed later in Recommendation 5.

Recommendaton 4: Reason for victimization. *When measuring victimization, researchers should ask, for each incident, what the reason was (i.e., whether the victim believes that it was due to sexual orientation or something else). Alternatively, ask respondents to report only those incidents they believe were based on sexual orientation.* Another important aspect of the measurement of victimization is specificity related to sexual orientation. It is difficult to determine reasons behind victimization of sexual minorities when it is not clear why they are being victimized. While some studies (46%) were careful to measure "victimization based on sexual orientation," others were not, or did not report this level of detail in the articles (52%). Many different variables may be related to rates of victimization in sexual minorities. The basis for victimization or what the victim perceives the reason to be is simple to control for, and can avoid situations in which victimization may be based on something unrelated to sexual minority status, such as ethnic minority or HIV status, or random violence. Future studies could explore the reason for victimization through specifically asking LGB victims what they may have heard or experienced that suggests that the victimization was due to their sexual orientation or gender atypicality (e.g., verbal harassment included LGB slurs, or property damage had an anti-LGB message).

A related issue is specification of whether the perpetrator *perceived* or *knew* the victim's sexual minority status. This is also important for determining the reasoning behind victimization of sexual minorities. It would be an interesting area of future research to

examine whether victimization of sexual minorities occurs more if the perpetrator knows that the victim is a sexual minority, rather than suspecting their status based on appearance or behavior. A study that examines perpetrators of sexual orientation-based crimes might shed light on the role that gender atypicality might play in increased rates of victimization in sexual minorities. Although it would be difficult to gather this information from the perspective of the perpetrator, researchers could ask the victims how they interpret the victimization that they experienced in terms of the perpetrator's perceptions or intentions.

Recommendation 5: Age trends in victimization. *Researchers should use well-defined and narrow age groups in research to permit developmental analysis. Alternatively, if a large age range is studied, a sufficiently large sample should be recruited to permit reporting of victimization for specific age groups. If lifetime victimization is reported, the age at which each incident occurred should be measured.* One of the goals of this meta-analysis was to assess developmental trends in victimization, both temporally and related to age. Age trends proved to be difficult to examine for a number of reasons. First, as discussed earlier, measures of victimization were not consistent in measuring the timeframe of victimization. This inconsistency made it difficult to explain whether significant findings related to age were actually age differences or confounded by the timeframe of measurement. Second, another issue with the victimization measures was measuring the age when the victimization occurred. Although some studies specified whether the victimization occurred during childhood or adulthood (especially for sexual assault or abuse from family), the majority of studies did not report or measure the age at which the victimization occurred. Future research could benefit from longitudinal designs that measure developmental changes in victimization as individuals move from adolescence into adulthood.

Third, age trends in victimization could not be clearly examined due to inconsistent reporting of descriptive statistics for age. Although some studies reported both the mean/standard deviation and the range for age, other studies reported only one or the other or neither. This inconsistency made it impossible to use age as a continuous variable for studying age trends.

Fourth, many studies included such a wide range of ages that any developmental analysis was impossible; for example, some included both adolescents and adults (e.g., aged 16–60) or both young adults and older adults (e.g., aged 18–75). It is unlikely that adolescents, young adults, and older adults experience victimization at the same rates or for the same reasons, but this question could not be investigated in this meta-analysis due to these methodological and reporting issues. In terms of policy and prevention efforts, it is crucial that we learn the ages at which LGB individuals are most vulnerable to victimization.

Recommendation 6: Ethnicity. *U.S. researchers should study LGB victimization among ethnic minorities.* In conducting this meta-analysis, a number of variables, such as ethnicity, were coded in the hopes of using these variables in the moderator analyses. Of the studies included in this meta-analysis, 9% did not report ethnicity. Of the studies that did report ethnicity, the majority of studies fell into the mixed-groups category (38%), White/Caucasian (24%), and non-U.S. samples (25%), making it impossible to determine whether victimization rates are higher or lower in specific ethnic minority groups. Future researchers should report rates of victimization separately for different ethnic groups or recruit specific samples of ethnic minorities. In prevention efforts, it is crucial to know whether certain groups have especially high rates of victimization. Although it is widely believed that there is less tolerance of homosexuality among Black Americans (Haslam & Levy, 2006), we were unable to determine whether this intolerance is reflected in higher rates of victimization because of inattention to ethnicity in the existing research.

Other Considerations

Almost all studies in this meta-analysis that measured two groups, whether it was LGB versus heterosexual individuals or LGB females versus LGB males, reported some difference in rates of victimization. It is important to consider whether these are true differences or whether they are a reflection of the tendency not to publish null results. This can be thought of as an extension of the Gender Similarities Hypothesis (Hyde, 2005), which states that within-group differences in females and males are greater than differences between the groups. This speaks not only to the importance of examining subgroups of sexual minorities for differences and similarities in rates of victimization, but also to the responsibility of researchers to publish both differences and similarities regarding rates of victimization to represent prevalence more accurately.

Conclusion

This meta-analysis aimed to determine the rate and types of victimization experienced by LGB individuals. Additionally, this study sought to examine whether rates of victimization have changed over time since 1992, and whether there are differences based on gender and ethnicity. Findings revealed that across LGB individuals, experiences of victimization were substantial and in comparison to Berrill's (1992) review, some types have increased, while others have decreased. In this

meta-analysis, a number of types of victimization increased from 1992 to 2009, whereas the rates of other types of victimization remained the same. No types of victimization decreased over time from 1992 to 2009. LGB individuals experienced greater rates of victimization than heterosexual individuals, although the differences were small to moderate. LGB males experienced some types of victimization more than LGB females but, overall, the gender differences were small. Overall, it can be concluded that LGB individuals still experience a substantial amount of victimization. This meta-analysis provides a comprehensive assessment of the prevalence of and factors related to the victimization of LGB individuals in the hopes of informing future research, policy, and prevention efforts, and bringing to light a still prevalent problem in our society.

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Appendix: Studies Included in the Meta-Analyses

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Table S1.

Year of Data Collection (1988 – 2006) as a Moderator Predicting Rate of Victimization Experienced by LGB Individuals (Analysis I)

Measure	*k*	Q_{model}[a]	$Q_{residual}$[b]	β[c]	R^{2d}
Discrimination	58	1.74	57.33	-.17	.03
Threats	35	1.00	35.51	-.17	.03
Verbal Harassment	81	.02	82.28	-.01	.00
Property Violence	41	.64	41.15	-.12	.02
Target of Objects	15	3.76	15.57	-.44	.19
Followed	16	.00	15.70	-.01	.00
Physical Assault	102	.78	102.21	-.09	.01
Weapon Assault	28	.00	28.08	-.01	.00
Robbed	21	.83	21.10	-.19	.04
Police Victimization	11	2.28	11.33	.41	.19
Sexual Assault	113	2.07	111.64	.14	.02
Verbal from Family	25	.28	25.96	.10	.01
Physical from Family	38	1.97	38.32	.22	.05
Sexual from Family	32	8.44**	33.36	.45**	.20
School Victimization	31	4.02*	31.27	.34*	.11
Sexual Harassment	14	.16	13.46	.11	.01
Workplace Victimization	30	.94	28.86	-.17	.03
Relational Victimization	14	12.96**	14.27	.69**	.48
General Victimization	22	.81	22.05	.19	.04

Note. k = number of studies.
[a] Significant values indicate that there is significant variability accounted for by date of data collection. [b] Significant values indicate that studies are still heterogeneous after accounting for date of data collection. [c] Negative values indicate that there are larger rates of victimization at earlier dates and smaller rates at later dates. [d] Proportion of variance accounted for by date of data collection.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table S2.

Year of Data Collection (1988 – 2006) as a Moderator Predicting Rate of Victimization Experienced by LGB Individuals in U.S. Samples (Analysis I)

Measure	*k*	Q_{model}[a]	$Q_{residual}$[b]	β[c]	R^{2d}
Discrimination	34	3.30	33.19	-.30	.09
Threats	29	.44	29.36	-.12	.01
Verbal Harassment	52	.15	52.14	.05	.00
Property Violence	31	.73	31.10	-.15	.02
Target of Objects	11	3.32	11.37	-.48	.23
Followed	14	.52	13.58	.19	.04
Physical Assault	68	.25	67.72	-.06	.00
Weapon Assault	24	.53	23.84	.15	.02
Robbed	16	.35	16.06	-.15	.02
Sexual Assault	75	5.87*	73.31	.27*	.07
Verbal from Family	24	.27	24.92	.10	.01
Physical from Family	35	4.58*	35.46	.34*	.11
Sexual from Family	32	8.44**	33.36	.45**	.20
School Victimization	12	2.10	12.26	.38	.15
Workplace Victimization	27	1.46	26.79	-.23	.05
General Victimization	14	.09	14.14	-.07	.01

Note. k = number of studies.
[a] Significant values indicate that there is significant variability accounted for by date of data collection. [b] Significant values indicate that studies are still heterogeneous after accounting for date of data collection. [c] Negative values indicate that there are larger rates of victimization at earlier dates and smaller rates at later dates. [d] Proportion of variance accounted for by date of data collection.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table S3.

Ethnicity as a Moderator Predicting Rate of Victimization Experienced by LGB Individuals in U.S. Samples (Analysis I)

		Mixed Groups			White/Caucasian			Black/African American			Latino/Hispanic		
Measure	Q_B	*k*	ES_p	Q_W	*k*	ES_p	Q_W	*k*	ES_p	Q_W	*k*	ES_p	Q_W
Discrim	2.99	18	.37	22.36	12	.51	8.69	2	.30	.29	-	-	-
Threats	5.32	13	.30	15.05	14	.47	13.43	1	NA	NA	-	-	-
Verbal Harass	4.83	24	.58	17.16	19	.48	27.81	2	.32	.82	2	.67	1.18
Property Violence	8.43**	20	.17	18.23	11	.34	13.19	-	-	-	-	-	-
Target of Objects	.15	8	.14	10.20	2	.11	.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
Followed	.75	6	.36	5.28	7	.47	7.65	-	-	-	-	-	-
Physical Assault	7.96*	40	.22	36.58	17	.38	23.70	1	NA	NA	2	.18	.31
Weapon Assault	7.24**	15	.14	6.98	8	.35	15.93	-	-	-	-	-	-
Robbed	.70	8	.35	11.44	8	.23	4.56	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sexual Assault	4.06	47	.26	35.67	14	.37	25.98	-	-	-	1	NA	NA
Verbal Family	4.38	9	.41	6.26	12	.38	19.21	1	NA	NA	2	.47	.06
Physical Family	8.03*	18	.40	29.05	14	.24	4.47	-	-	-	2	.41	.01
Sexual Family	3.64	12	.31	21.10*	17	.24	13.22	-	-	-	2	.14	.00
School Victimiz	1.78	8	.26	3.81	4	.42	8.30	-	-	-	-	-	-
Workplace Victimiz	14.03**	5	.06	.46	11	.20	16.73	1	NA	NA	2	.20	1.11
General Victimiz	2.35	7	.28	8.67	6	.45	4.68	-	-	-	-	-	-

Note. NA = not enough effect sizes to calculate.
Q_B = between-groups heterogeneity. *k* = number of studies. Q_W = within-group heterogeneity. See text for full description of moderator variable.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table S4.

Descriptive Statistics for Differences between LGB and Heterosexual Individuals in Rates of Victimization in U.S. Samples (Analysis II)

Measure	k[a]	d[b]	95% CI	Q_T[c]	v[d]
Discrimination	7	.53	[.26, .79]	165.50**	.11
Threats	5	.32	[.10, .55]	163.68**	.06
Verbal Harassment	12	.40	[.24, .56]	265.73**	.07
Property Violence	5	.26	[.17, .35]	16.78**	.01
Followed	3	.43	[.09, .78]	72.55**	.09
Physical Assault	13	.24	[.13, .35]	156.33**	.04
Weapon Assault	7	.26	[.14, .38]	126.96**	.02
Robbed	3	.25	[.01, .49]	81.18**	.04
Police Victimization	3	.07	[-.02, .15]	4.46	.00
Sexual Assault	28	.18	[.11, .25]	339.62**	.03
Verbal from Family	7	.20	[.14, .27]	12.96*	.00
Physical from Family	10	.11	[.08, .13]	9.82	.00
Sexual from Family	11	.12	[.09, .16]	14.41	.00
School Victimization	8	.19	[.12, .25]	66.43**	.01
Sexual Harassment	10	.24	[.13, .35]	37.51**	.02
Workplace Victimization	10	.38	[.20, .55]	117.87**	.07
Health Care Discrimination	4	.04	[-.02, .09]	5.41	.00
General Victimization	3	.76	[.02, 1.51]	24.34**	.38

Note. CI = confidence interval.
[a] Number of studies used to compute each mean effect size; measures with two or fewer studies are not included. [b] Negative values indicate that heterosexual participants experienced more victimization than LGB participants; effect sizes were not computed for measures with two or fewer studies. [c] Significant values indicate that there is significant heterogeneity among the individual effect sizes for each measure. [d] Random-effects variance component.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table S5.

Gender as a Moderator Predicting Differences between LGB and Heterosexual Individuals in Rates of Victimization (Analysis II)

	All Samples						
		Female			Male		
Measure	Q_B	*k*	*d*	Q_W	*k*	*d*	Q_W
Discrimination	.11	4	.30	2.59	6	.30	5.96
Verbal Harassment	.07	10	.29	12.78	7	.33	5.25
Physical Assault	1.31	8	.16	2.44	6	.27	10.84
Sexual Assault	8.53**	16	.10	9.50	12	.30	18.11
School Victimization	1.76	5	.15	3.47	4	.07	5.69
Sexual Harassment	.98	7	.19	6.60	2	.30	2.00
Workplace Victimization	.09	6	.39	5.68	4	.32	4.61
	U.S. Only						
		Female			Male		
Measure	Q_B	*k*	*d*	Q_W	*k*	*d*	Q_W
Verbal Harassment	.76	6	.32	6.92	3	.53	2.69
Physical Assault	5.97*	4	.18	.44	3	.46	6.89
Sexual Assault	6.30*	13	.09	7.72	8	.32	12.99
Sexual Harassment	.74	6	.20	5.46	2	.31	1.74
Workplace Victimization	.02	6	.39	5.10	3	.36	4.06

Note. Q_B = between-groups heterogeneity. *k* = number of studies; measures with fewer than two studies in both levels of the moderator are not included. Q_W = within-group heterogeneity. A positive *d* means that LGB individuals experienced more victimization than heterosexual individuals. See text for full description of moderator variable.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table S6.

Year of Data Collection (1988 – 2006) as a Moderator Predicting Differences between LGB and Heterosexual Individuals in Rates of Victimization (Analysis II)

		All Samples			
Measure	*k*	Q_{model}[a]	$Q_{residual}$[b]	β[c]	R^{2d}
Discrimination	14	.81	16.39	-.22	.05
Verbal Harassment	21	.04	22.24	-.04	.00
Physical Assault	22	1.49	20.69	-.26	.07
Sexual Assault	36	1.56	38.12	-.20	.04
School Victimization	14	.41	17.35	.15	.02
Sexual Harassment	13	3.28	12.16	.46	.21
Workplace Victimization	11	3.64	11.22	.49	.24
		U.S. Only			
Measure	*k*	Q_{model}[a]	$Q_{residual}$[b]	β[c]	R^{2d}
Verbal Harassment	12	.00	13.05	.01	.00
Physical Assault	13	.30	12.61	-.15	.02
Sexual Assault	28	1.35	29.63	-.21	.04
Sexual Harassment	10	4.95*	9.23	.59*	.35
Workplace Victimization	10	8.33**	10.73	.66**	.44

Note. k = number of studies.
[a] Significant values indicate that there is significant variability accounted for by date of data collection. [b] Significant values indicate that studies are still heterogeneous after accounting for date of data collection. [c] Negative values indicate that there are larger differences between LGB and heterosexual individuals at earlier dates and smaller differences at later dates. [d] Proportion of variance accounted for by date of data collection.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table S7.

Ethnicity as a Moderator Predicting Differences between LGB and Heterosexual Individuals on Rates of Victimization in U.S. Samples (Analysis II)

		Mixed Groups			White/Caucasian		
Measure	Q_B	*k*	*d*	Q_W	*k*	*d*	Q_W
Verbal Harassment	.04	4	.35	.74	7	.39	11.28
Physical Assault	.83	8	.22	2.34	3	.33	7.88
Sexual Assault	3.94*	18	.14	13.29	3	.41	8.91*
Sexual Harassment	3.03	2	.26	.95	4	.41	2.10

Note. Q_B = between-groups heterogeneity. *k* = number of studies; measures with fewer than two studies in both levels of the moderator are not included. Q_W = within-group heterogeneity. A positive *d* means that LGB individuals experienced more victimization than heterosexual individuals. See text for full description of moderator variable.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table S8.

Descriptive Statistics for Differences between LGB Females and LGB Males in Rates of Victimization in U.S. Samples (Analysis IIIa)

Measure	k[a]	d[b]	95% CI	Q_T[c]	v[d]
Discrimination	10	-.01	[-.13, .11]	57.40**	.03
Threats	10	-.11	[-.17, -.05]	37.62**	.01
Verbal Harassment	13	-.09	[-.16, -.03]	48.48**	.01
Property Violence	9	-.07	[-.12, -.03]	32.68**	.00
Target of Objects	4	-.04	[-.08, .01]	4.72	.00
Physical Assault	14	-.16	[-.22, -.09]	161.26**	.01
Weapon Assault	5	-.15	[-.30, -.00]	86.48**	.03
Robbed	5	-.14	[-.24, -.04]	120.02**	.01
Sexual Assault	16	-.09	[-.17, -.01]	341.66**	.02
Verbal from Family	8	.04	[-.01, .10]	5.71	.00
Physical from Family	8	.03	[-.02, .08]	8.42	.00
Sexual from Family	5	.09	[.01, .17]	6.32	.00
Threat of Being Outed	4	-.05	[-.10, -.00]	3.30	.00
School Victimization	4	-.12	[-.26, .01]	15.82**	.01
Workplace Victimization	11	.05	[-.09, .19]	58.13**	.04
General Victimization	5	-.04	[-.14, .05]	29.59**	.01

Note. CI = confidence interval.
[a] Number of studies used to compute each mean effect size; measures with two or fewer studies are not included. [b] Negative values indicate that LGB males experienced more victimization than LGB females. [c] Significant values indicate that there is significant heterogeneity among the individual effect sizes for each measure. [d] Random-effects variance component.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table S9.

Year of Data Collection (1988 – 2006) as a Moderator Predicting Differences between LGB Females and LGB Males in Rates of Victimization (Analysis IIIa)

		All Samples			
Measure	*k*	Q_{model}[a]	$Q_{residual}$[b]	β[c]	R^{2d}
Discrimination	18	3.12	19.79	-.37	.14
Threats	12	.49	11.83	-.20	.04
Verbal Harassment	25	.02	25.81	-.03	.00
Property Violence	13	.42	12.48	.18	.03
Physical Assault	29	.64	29.15	.15	.02
Sexual Assault	27	.01	26.67	-.02	.00
School Victimization	12	5.63*	10.95	-.58*	.34
Workplace Victimization	12	.50	11.41	-.20	.04
		U.S. Only			
Measure	*k*	Q_{model}[a]	$Q_{residual}$[b]	β[c]	R^{2d}
Discrimination	10	3.27	10.38	-.49	.24
Threats	10	1.14	9.94	-.32	.10
Verbal Harassment	13	.35	14.64	-.15	.02
Physical Assault	14	.07	14.32	-.07	.01
Sexual Assault	16	1.15	16.01	-.26	.07
Workplace Victimization	11	.22	10.54	-.14	.02

Note. k = number of studies.
[a] Significant values indicate that there is significant variability accounted for by date of data collection. [b] Significant values indicate that studies are still heterogeneous after accounting for date of data collection. [c] Negative values indicate that there are larger differences between LGB female and LGB male individuals at earlier dates and smaller differences at later dates. [d] Proportion of variance accounted for by date of data collection.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table S10.

Ethnicity as a Moderator Predicting Differences between LGB Females and LGB Males in Rates of Victimization Experienced in U.S. Samples (Analysis IIIa)

		Mixed Groups			White/Caucasian		
Measure	Q_B	*k*	*d*	Q_W	*k*	*d*	Q_W
Discrimination	.41	4	-.08	.88	5	.02	8.22
Threats	1.17	4	-.07	4.62	6	-.14	5.63
Verbal Harassment	.69	4	-.13	.95	8	-.08	13.38
Physical Assault	9.44**	9	-.09	5.01	5	-.29	9.82*

Note. Q_B = between-groups heterogeneity. *k* = number of studies; measures with fewer than two studies in both levels of the moderator are not included. Q_W = within-group heterogeneity. A positive *d* means that LGB females experienced more victimization than LGB males. See text for full description of moderator variable.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.