Oral Defense Announcement
University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology with an emphasis in Clinical Psychology

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M.A. in Psychology, May 2015, University of Missouri-St. Louis
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Same-Sex Sexual Coercion Among Women: The Impact of Minority Stress on Perpetration and Victimization Experiences of Women of Diverse Sexual Identities

Date: July 23, 2019
Time: 10:00am to 11:30am
Place: Benton 230

Abstract
The purpose of the current study was to investigate women’s experiences with same-sex sexual coercion perpetration and victimization. Specifically, we sought to explore the role that the stress of living as a sexual minority plays in these experiences as well as to determine whether the psychological variables of perceived powerlessness, psychological distress, social support, and alcohol use mediate the relationship between minority stress and perpetration and victimization experiences. Data were collected online from self-identified women and individuals assigned female at birth who reported experiencing genital sexual contact with another woman (N=339). Of the cisgender women in our sample, 31.6% reported same-sex sexual coercion victimization and 19.2% reported same-sex sexual coercion perpetration. Among cisgender sexual minority participants, experiencing heterosexist discrimination was related to same-sex sexual coercion victimization but not perpetration. Internalized heterosexism was not related to either perpetration or victimization. For cisgender sexual minority participants, feelings of powerlessness and psychological distress did not mediate the relationship between minority stress and perpetration. Similarly, social support and alcohol use did not mediate the relationship between minority stress and victimization. Results indicate that, although same-sex sexual coercion does indeed occur in women’s sexual encounters, the pathways through which minority stress may predict these experiences remain relatively unclear.

Defense of Dissertation Committee
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