

Victimization Issues within the Native LGBTQ2S Community

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Southwest Indigenous Women's Coalition

Vision Statement

The Southwest Indigenous Women's Coalition works to end violence against women and children by strengthening the leadership, community response, justice, and safety of indigenous women while restoring the essence of sisterhood and sacredness of being through education, training, technical assistance, and culturally sensitive supportive services.



SWIWC LGBTQ Advisory Council

Mission Statement

To educate, support, and empower Native communities for increased safety, understanding, healing, justice, and resources for the LGBTQ community.



What does Native culture teach us
about gender & sexuality?



“Berdache”

- Persian in origin
- Has been translated to “kept boy”, male prostitute, and “a boy kept for unnatural purposes”
- “Berdache” is the French interpretation that was mainly applied to supposedly “passive homosexuals”, Native American males who were transvestites and who fulfilled the culturally defined roles of women



Tribal Language & Terminology

| TRIBE | TERM | GENDER |
|--------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Crow | Boté | Male |
| Navajo | Nádleehí | Male & Female |
| Lakota | Winkte | Male |
| Zuni | Ihamana | Male |
| Tongva | Wehee'ahiiken Kuuyat | Male & Female transgender (MTF) |



We'wha (Zuni)

1849-1896



Spiritual leader and
performed sacred roles
in ceremonial dances

Hastiin Klah (Diné)

1867-1937



Celebrated weaver,
sandpainter, and
traditional healer

Pine Leaf (Crow)

1806-1858

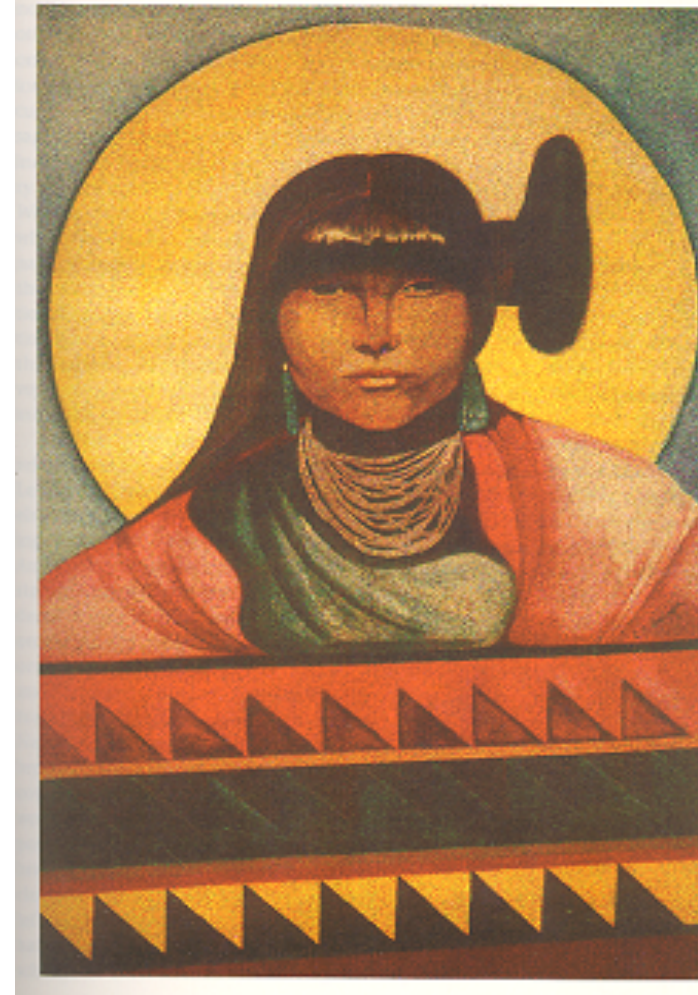


Crow chief, warrior, and
celebrated horseman



Two Spirit

- ▶ Contemporary term
- ▶ Coined in early 1990s at 3rd International Native Gay & Lesbian Gathering in Winnipeg, Canada
- ▶ Anishnabe Language
- ▶ Both male and female spirits within one person
- ▶ Not meant to be translated into specific tribal languages



LGBTQ2S Definitions

- ▶ Lesbian – a woman whose enduring physical, romantic, emotional and/or spiritual attraction is to other women
- ▶ Gay – a man whose enduring physical, romantic, emotional and/or spiritual attraction is to other men
- ▶ Bisexual – an individual who is physically, romantically, emotionally and/or spiritually attracted to men and women



LGBTQ2S Definitions

- ▶ Transgender – a term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the sex they were assigned at birth
- ▶ Two Spirit – a contemporary term used to identify Native American lesbian, gay, bisexual, and some transgender individuals with traditional and cultural understandings of gender roles and identity



Fluidity

- ▶ Being transgender does not mean
 - ▶ You are assigned a label or category
 - ▶ You wish to conform to a gender binary
- ▶ Many people, especially younger urban transgender people, are embracing various gender terms
 - ▶ Gender fluid
 - ▶ Androgynous
 - ▶ Bi-gender
 - ▶ Gender queer



Inappropriate Terms

- ▶ Fag
- ▶ Queer (for those who do not use the term)
- ▶ Tranny
- ▶ He-She
- ▶ She-male
- ▶ Hermaphrodite
- ▶ It
- ▶ *Do not use*
- ▶ *When self-identified*
- ▶ *Transgender*
- ▶ *Do not use*
- ▶ *Do not use*
- ▶ *Intersex*
- ▶ *Do not use*



LGBTQ2S Victimization Myths

- ▶ **MYTH #1:** Abusers are usually bigger, stronger or more “butch” than their partners
- ▶ **MYTH #2:** LGBTQ2S victims can easily leave abusive partners because they have no legal ties to them
- ▶ **MYTH #3:** Transgender people wouldn’t get hurt if they didn’t dress or try to act like something they’re not (ex: *If “he” didn’t dress and act like a woman, “he” wouldn’t get hurt*)



Transgender Statistics

- Transgender people experience poverty twice the national rate, while transgender people of color experience 4 times the national poverty rate
- Transgender people of color are 2.59 times likely to experience police violence compared to non-people of color
- Transgender people of color are 2.37 times likely to experience discrimination compared to non-people of color

Report from the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, 2013 Release Edition



Transgender Women

- 2.9 times likely to experience police violence as compared to non-transgender survivors and victims
- 2.71 times likely to experience physical violence by the police compared to non-transgender survivors and victims
- 2.14 times likely to experience discrimination compared to non-transgender survivors and victims

Report from the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, 2013 Release Edition



LGBT People of Color

- 1.82 times as likely to experience violence as compared to white LGBT survivors and victims
- 1.7 times as likely to experience discrimination as compared to white LGBT survivors and victims

Report from the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, 2013 Release Edition



Gay Men

- 3.04 times as likely to report incidents of hate violence to the police as compared to non-gay male survivors and victims
- 1.56 times as likely to require medical attention as compared to non-gay male survivors and victims

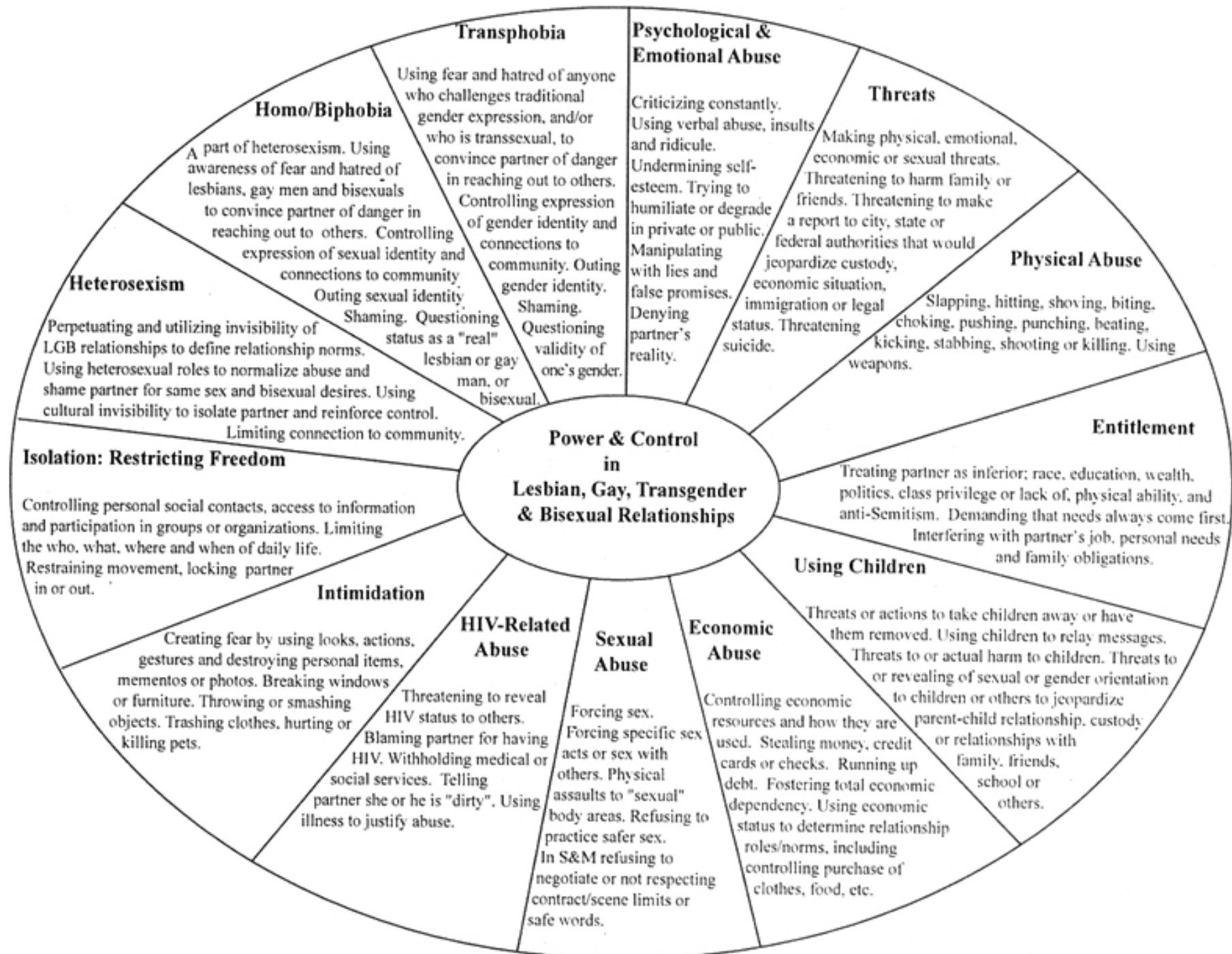
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Abusive Behaviors Particular to LGBTQ2S Violent Relationships

- ▶ “Outing” or threatening to out a partner to friends, family, employers, police or others
- ▶ Reinforcing fears that no one will help a partner because s/he is LGBTQ2S, or that for this reason, the partner “deserves” the abuse
- ▶ A “power differential” cannot be expressed because, in theory, people who share the same gender have the same amount of power





Threats Related to HIV/AIDS

- ▶ If the abused partner has HIV/AIDS, the abuser may threaten to tell others
- ▶ An HIV-positive abuser may suggest that s/he will sicken and die if the abused partner ends the relationship
- ▶ The abuser may withhold, throw away, or hide a partner's HIV medication, cancel medical appointments, or prevent the HIV-positive partner from receiving needed medical care
- ▶ An HIV-positive abuser may threaten to infect a partner



Barriers to Addressing LGBTQ2S DV

- ▶ Poor or inconsistent law enforcement response
- ▶ No access to family courts
- ▶ Lack of accessible and sensitive services
- ▶ Victims' hopelessness or fear of reprisals



Barriers to Addressing LGBTQ2S DV

- ▶ Victims' fear of being "outed" (publicly declaring or revealing another person's sexual identity without her/his consent)
- ▶ Victims may not be aware that services dedicated to LGBTQ2S victims



How Can We "Mend the Rainbow"

- ▶ Create supportive systems
- ▶ Build trust
- ▶ Honor tradition and culture
- ▶ Eliminate Homophobia/Transphobia
- ▶ Educate services and law enforcement of social issues (i.e., same partner domestic violence)
- ▶ Identify appropriate resources
- ▶ Reassess protective protocols (i.e., shelters, jails, hospitals, etc.)



How Can We "Mend the Rainbow"

- ▶ Become knowledgeable in LGBTQ2S State, Federal, and Tribal Laws
- ▶ Create tribal ordinances and/or policies to protect Native LGBTQ2S individuals/community
- ▶ Address social determinants of health (i.e., homelessness, substance use/abuse, discrimination, hate, HIV/AIDS, STIs, employment, etc.)
- ▶ Advocate for change/inclusion for Native LGBTQ2S



Thank You!

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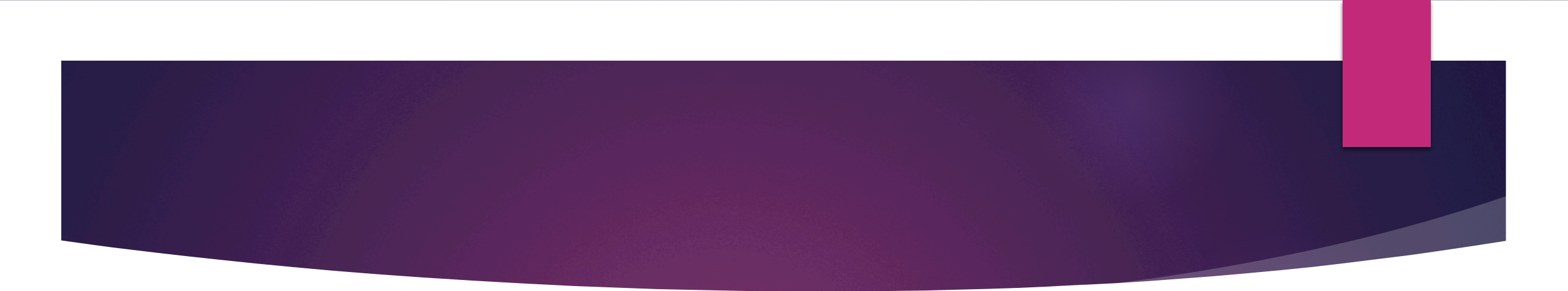
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