



A systematic review on LGBTIQ Intimate Partner Violence from a Western perspective

Alex Workman* and Tinashe Dune*

ABSTRACT

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) as experienced by minority populations is poorly understood. Within the Western world, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, and Queer or Questioning LGBTIQ population is one such group which suffers from misrepresentations and misunderstandings. In Western nations, IPV is primarily constructed as perpetrated by men and experienced by women. However, for the LGBTIQ population, this dichotomous view of IPV is inaccurate and invalidating. A systematic review was conducted to investigate the level of LGBTIQ inclusivity within IPV discourses in the Western world as discussed in peer-reviewed literature. In particular, the review sought to understand how media, advocacy, policy, and legislation shape LGBTIQ IPV experiences and resulting discourses. The literature search was conducted between June 2018 and January 2019. The search included five electronic databases in psychology, health, and social sciences. Of the 206 articles identified by the search, 21 were reviewed. The review analyzed literature using a thematic approach. Eight key themes emerged, indicating media, legislation, policy, and advocacy are not entirely inclusive concerning LGBTIQ IPV. The review found that pervasive attitudes like heterosexism, cissexism, homophobia, transphobia, and biphobia reinforce institutional barriers and limited LGBTIQ IPV reporting. In addition, the review found low service and provider competency levels, and more broadly, the research was limited. It is likely that heteronormative frameworks and discourses mean many aspects of LGBTIQ IPV are still under-researched. Without a more robust inclusion of diversity in discourses on IPV, services and supports for LGBTIQ people will continue to be limited and based on heteronormative frameworks of victimhood.

Key Words: Intimate partner violence; criminal justice; LGBTIQ; inclusion; media; policy; legislation; advocacy.

Journal of CSWB. 2019 August;4(2):22-31

www.journalcswb.ca

INTRODUCTION

Violence is a far too common experience across all demographic groups (Horsley, Moussa, Fisher, & Rees, 2016). However, some groups are subjected to more frequent instances of violence due to negative constructions about their identity (Barner & Carney, 2011). Without the benefit of “fitting in” within the norms of society (Bell & Naugle, 2008), those who do not “fit” are more likely to suffer from subjugation, marginalization, and repeat victimization throughout their lives (Carvalho et al., 2011; Caman, Kristiansson, Granath, & Sturup, 2017). For instance, Horsley et al. (2016) indicate that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer or questioning (LGBTIQ) people account for eleven percent of the population, and they are more likely to experience a lack of acknowledgement of LGBTIQ violence, including both domestic violence (DV) and intimate partner violence (IPV), due to the smaller amounts of police reporting, data collection, inclusive legislation/advocacy, and public attitudes relative to their population size.

Moreover, the statistics surrounding LGBTIQ IPV do not reflect the true prevalence of IPV due to underreporting and limited forms of data collection by legal and social organizations (Campo & Tayton, 2015). This lack of information makes it hard to investigate and address the needs of LGBTIQ people with regard to IPV (Campo & Tayton, 2015). Ball (2013) explains that IPV within LGBTIQ relationships is gaining greater social recognition in areas with a high concentration of LGBTIQ individuals, for example in Sydney’s Inner West (in Australia), which is known to be very LGBTIQ-friendly. However, there is still extraordinarily little known about the experiences of IPV in general amongst LGBTIQ people. Whilst knowledge is growing in some areas, there is limited understanding of LGBTIQ IPV, in Australia more generally and among all Western nation-states (Duffy, 2011; Messinger, 2017). Therefore, this review seeks to investigate the level of LGBTIQ inclusivity within IPV discourses in the Western world. The review aims to explore how LGBTIQ people experience IPV as discussed in peer-reviewed literature. This exploration hopes to inform future research, with a view to

Correspondence to: Alexander Workman & Tinashe Dune (all e-mail correspondence to go to both authors)
E-mail: a.workman@westernsydney.edu.au & t.dune@westernsydney.edu.au ■ DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.35502/jcswb.96>

elevating the profile of LGBTIQ victims within IPV advocacy, policy, and legislation.

Background

LGBTIQ-identifying people include gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and intersex people, and those who feel no need to identify with a socially constructed gender or sexuality (Ali, Dhingra, & McGarry, 2016). LGBTIQ-identifying people are often colloquially and collectively referred to as “queer,” a term which has historically held negative connotations, but which has recently become a term of empowerment (Ball, 2016). Queer people all over the world, and indeed in Australia, continue to be defined by many as deviants and thus experience prejudice and discrimination (Ball 2016). The social construction of LGBTIQ people results in this group experiencing all types of violence, exclusion, and lack of acknowledgment across all areas of life (Ball, 2016; Messinger, 2017). Unsurprisingly, then, the experiences and needs of LGBTIQ people who are victims, and perpetrators, of IPV are often ignored and undermined, and crime is underreported (Lawson, 2012). It is therefore pertinent to wonder whether IPV discourses as presented by media, policy, legislation, and advocacy are LGBTIQ inclusive.

A Systematic Review

To address this gap in information, a systematic review was conducted to identify peer-reviewed research that investigated IPV amongst LGBTIQ populations internationally and domestically (see Table I). In particular, the review explored the role of media, advocacy, policy, and legislation in shaping LGBTIQ IPV experiences and the resulting discourses.

Search Strategy

The literature search included five electronic databases in psychology, health, and social sciences: PsycINFO, ProQuest Central, CINAHL, SocIndex, and Infomit. Between June 2018 and January 2019, a search for published peer-reviewed literature was undertaken by the primary researchers to narrow down the search terms and inclusion criteria for this systematic review. The preliminary search used ProQuest Central to identify the key words contained in study titles and abstracts and to ascertain index terms used to describe articles. Following Dune, Caputi, and Walker (2018), a step-by-step search strategy was employed (see Figure 1). Pertinent key words were discussed, expanded upon, and refined by the primary researchers. A second search, using all identified key words, was conducted across the five databases indicated. Finally, the reference lists of all included studies were examined for additional literature. Details of the search strategy, including the search terms and combinations, are summarized in Table II.

Data Synthesis

The review analyzed literature using a thematic approach developed by Thomas and Harden (2008) to extract, synthesize, analyze, and interpret the findings of the included literature. Three steps were followed: 1) line by line coding of the results, discussion, and conclusion sections of the primary studies; 2) development of descriptive themes; and 3) generation of analytical themes towards a synthesized presentation of results. The first author completed a preliminary synthesis of primary

data followed by a review and disagreement resolution with the primary supervisor.

Results

From the 206 potentially relevant articles identified, 21 articles were included in the systematic review (see Figure 1).

Sample ($n = 21$)

The characteristics of each study are summarized in Table I. The studies each offered different perspectives and methodological approaches to the general study of IPV. Just over half of the studies ($n=12$, 57%) did not focus on a specific LGBTIQ group nor did they collect primary data from LGBTIQ people. Of these studies, two were literature reviews, two were book reviews, one was a government report, one was a commentary, one was a case study, and five did not specify their article type. LGBTIQ groups were participants in the remaining 43% ($n=9$) of the studies. This included seven (31%) studies that explored the experiences of lesbians, four on gay men (18%), three on bisexual people (13%) and one on transgender people (4.5%). Of these studies, one was a comparative study between heterosexual and lesbian, gay and bisexual experiences of IPV. One paper focused on counsellors' experiences of service delivery to lesbian women. The vast majority of research was conducted in the United States (86.4%), with the remainder being from Australia (13.6%).

Research Foci and Theoretical Approach

The studies primarily focused on critiquing existing literature (3), industry professionals' experiences (1), comparing experiences of heterosexual and LGB experiences (1), LGBTIQ experiences (1), and the experiences of lesbian and bisexual mothers (1) (33%). The remaining 14 studies (77%) did not have a particular focus on a specific LGBTIQ group. All studies implicitly or explicitly aimed to make recommendations about the experiences of LGBTIQ-identifying people as victims of IPV. Only seven studies (33%) explicitly indicated the use of a theoretical approach to guide the research. The theories used in those instances were: Health Belief Model, Emancipatory Theory, Post-Structural Feminist Theory, Queer Theory and Sociology of Gender Theory together with Intersectionality Theory, Stress Process Theory, IPV Theory, and Domestic Violence (DV) Theory. The remaining 14 articles (77%) did not explicitly state the use of any theory.

Research Design and Methodology

Only seven studies indicated the use of a methodological framework, where the authors advised that the use of a methodology informed their data collection process within their article. Seven studies (33%) used quantitative methodology, with the use of surveys cited as the most common data collection strategy. Three studies (14%) used qualitative approaches, with interviews being the most common method. Given the emphasis on quantitative methods, a variety of statistical analyses were applied to this review, including bivariate analysis, constant comparative method, thematic analysis, structural equation modelling, content analysis, and multilevel modelling. Qualitative studies used thematic or content analyses. Thirteen (61%) studies did not specify the analytical approach used (see Table I).

TABLE I Characteristics of included studies

No.	Authors/Year	Country of Study	Sample/Size	Media, Legislation, Advocacy and Policy	Type of Violence	Study Design/Data Collection Method	Data Analysis	Theoretical Approach
1	Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016	USA	No participants	Legislation Policy	Physical Psychological	Literature review	Does not specify	Does not specify
2	Campo & Tayton 2015	Australia	No participants	Media Legislation Advocacy Policy	Physical Psychological	Government report	Does not specify	Health Belief Model
3	Cannon & Buttell 2015	USA	No participants	Media Legislation Advocacy Policy	Physical	Does not specify	Does not specify	Emancipatory Theory
4	Cannon, Louve-Moon, & Buttell (2015)	USA	No participants	Media Legislation Advocacy Policy	Physical Psychological	Does not specify	Does not specify	Post-Structural Feminism, Queer Theory, and the Sociology of Gender
5	Carcirieri 2017	USA	No participants	Policy	Does not specify	Book review	Does not specify	Does not specify
6	Grumrine, 2019	USA	No participants	Does not specify	Does not specify	Commentary	Does not specify	Does not specify
7	Fileborn & Horsley, 2015	USA	No participants	Policy	Physical	Does not specify	Does not specify	Does not specify
8	Frankland & Brown, 2014	Australia	184 participants: 105 lesbian women; 79 gay men	Policy	Physical Psychological	Survey/Quantitative	Hierarchical Cluster Analysis using Wards Linkage method	Does not specify
9	Hill, Woodson, Ferguson, & Parks, 2012	USA	No participants	Policy	Physical Psychological	Systematic Literature Review	Does not specify	Intersectionality Theory
10	Ijoma, 2018	USA	No participants	Legislation Policy Advocacy	Physical Psychological	Case Study	Does not specify	Does not specify
11	Leonard-Mitchell, Pitts, & Patel, 2008	Australia	390 LGBT participants	Legislation Advocacy Policy	Physical Psychological Economical	Survey/Quantitative	Thematic analysis	Does not specify
12	Mason, Lewis, Gargurevich, & Kelley, 2016	USA	342 lesbian women	Advocacy	Physical Psychological	Quantitative	Structural equation modelling	Does not specify
13	Miller & Irvin, 2017	USA	4 674 heterosexual participants & 95 LGB participants	Policy	Physical Psychological	Quantitative	Chi-squared tests and <i>t</i> tests against bivariate analysis	Stress Process Theory
14	Marin, 2014	USA	No participants	Legislation Advocacy Policy	Physical Psychological Economical	Does not specify	Does not specify	Does not specify
15	Morrow & Hawhurst, 1989	USA	No participants	Advocacy Policy	Physical Psychological Economical	Does not specify	Does not specify	Does not specify
16	Oswald, Fonseca, & Hardesty, 2010	USA	22 lesbian mothers & 2 bisexual mothers	Advocacy Policy	Physical Economical	Qualitative in-depth interviews 20–120 min	Descriptive Thematic Analysis	Does not specify

TABLE I Continued

No.	Authors/Year	Country of Study	Sample/Size	Media, Legislation, Advocacy and Policy	Type of Violence	Study Design/Data Collection Method	Data Analysis	Theoretical Approach
17	Rose, 2003	USA	229 lesbian women & 242 gay men	Media Legislation Advocacy Policy	Physical Psychological	Survey/Quantitative	Does not specify	Does not specify
18	Russell & Sturgeon, 2018	USA	273 police officers	Policy	Physical	Online surveys with case studies	Content analysis	Does not specify
19	Simpson & Helfrich, 2005	USA	6 women – Professional industry experience	Media Legislation Advocacy Policy	Physical	In-depth interviews 60–90 min	Constant Comparative Method	Intimate Partner Violence Theory
20	Simpson & Helfrich, 2014	USA	20 Black lesbian women	Legislation Advocacy Policy	Physical Psychological	Narrative interviews	Constant Comparative Method	Domestic Violence Theory
21	Wurtzburg 2013	USA	No participants	Policy	Does not specify	Book review	Does not specify	Does not specify

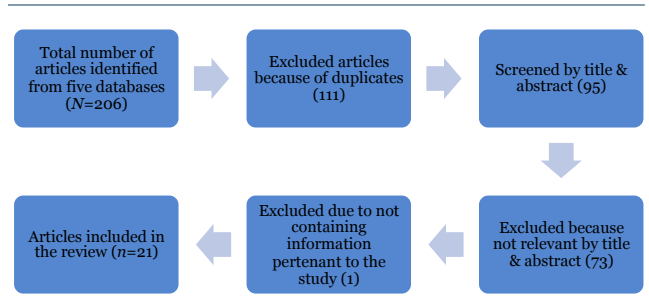


FIGURE I Article selection process

Systematic Literature Review: Results & Discussion

Following line-by-line coding of the extracted results and discussion sections from each individual study, eight themes emerged: *Characteristics of LGBTIQ IPV Victims and Perpetrators*; *Societal Attitudes and Current Approaches Towards LGBTIQ IPV*; *Institutional Barriers and Facilitators*; *Criminal Justice Approach to Reporting and Responding to LGBTIQ IPV*; *Supports Provided for LGBTIQ IPV*; *LGBTIQ Cultural Competence*; *Public Discourse of LGBTIQ IPV in Legislation, Policy, Advocacy, and Media*; and *Future Directions for LGBTIQ IPV Research*. These themes, which are extensive, not only capture a broader picture of the diverse ways the LGBTIQ community experience IPV, but also highlight the different approaches to addressing their experience. In the interest of brevity and readability, the major findings are accompanied by only a few example citations.

Characteristics of LGBTIQ IPV Victims and Perpetrators

Few studies presented robust data about the proportion of LGBTIQ victims across a range of demographic characteristics (Morin, 2014; Ijoma, 2018; Simpson & Helfrich, 2014; Frankland & Brown, 2014). Further, little was said about the perpetrators of violence in any robust and specific way with regard to their demographic characteristics. Within the literature, those experiencing IPV from minority groups remain hidden, even within the LGBTIQ community (Ijoma, 2018; Simpson & Helfrich, 2014). In addition to the general invisibility they experience from the mainstream, these individuals face barriers due to their age, race and ethnicity, geographical location, and education levels (Ijoma, 2018; Simpson & Helfrich, 2014). For example, Black lesbians discussed limited levels of education within their communities that promoted homophobic attitudes (Simpson & Helfrich, 2014). These women also explained that because of the intersection of race, sexuality, socioeconomic status, and education level within their communities, the disclosure of their identity might also invite danger from the broader community (see Miller & Irvin, 2017; Simpson & Helfrich, 2014). As such, many lesbians did not disclose their sexuality for fear of being ostracized from their social supports (Miller & Irvin, 2017).

In terms of age, Morin (2014) found that LGBTIQ people between the ages of 15 and 29 were at particular risk of IPV, as they are at an increased risk of bullying, family difficulties, and financial instability, making them not only extremely vulnerable but also hidden. Morin (2014) also discussed a unique lesbian experience where both victim and perpetrator can access the same shelter—this effect is more limited for

TABLE II Summary of inclusion/exclusion criteria and key words

Parameters	Inclusion	Exclusion	Key Words
Location	International	None	N/A
Language	Written in English	Other languages	Select for English only
Time	Any	None	N/A
Population	Literature which discusses LGBTIQ people	Literature which does not discuss LGBTIQ people	(Abstract) lesbian OR gay OR bisexual OR trans OR intersex OR queer OR LGBT OR homosexual
Phenomena/Target	Studies concerned with IPV and the role of media, advocacy, legislation, and policy	Not concerned with IPV and the role of media, advocacy, legislation, and policy	AND (Title) Intimate partner violence OR partner violence OR partner abuse OR psychological abuse OR financial abuse OR physical violence AND (Abstract) media OR policy OR legislation OR advocacy
Study/literature type	Published primary research including qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method designs	Published literature which does not include qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods of data collection and analysis	N/A

male victims, as there are fewer male shelters for DV/IPV (Morin, 2014). Gay men, according to Campo and Tayton (2015), have difficulty understanding the violence they experience as IPV. This may be reflective of the broader society's inability to acknowledge the prevalence and impact of IPV on men (Morin, 2014).

Transgender IPV is the most violent, according to Campo and Tayton (2015), due to the severity of violence and is further exacerbated by systematic discrimination. Campo and Tayton (2015) found that transgender people may experience discrimination within the health and medical fields at higher rates than other populations. Several studies concurred that LGBTIQ IPV research is growing within the field of academia; however, transferable knowledge to the broader public still meets with resistance (see Campo & Tayton, 2015; Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016). A robust study of the experiences of bisexual people was missing in any of the included literature on the characteristics of IPV, suggesting bisexual people still occupy a precarious position under the LGBTIQ umbrella. Intersex and gender non-conforming identities were also absent from peer-reviewed discourses. Future research should focus on these populations and their experiences of IPV.

Societal Attitudes and Current Approaches to LGBTIQ IPV

There are many negative societal attitudes towards LGBTIQ people as reported in the included literature, including transphobia, homophobia, biphobia, sexism, heterosexism, cissexism, and detrimental attitudes to LGBTIQ masculinity and femininity. In several studies, the role of these attitudes on current understandings of LGBTIQ IPV impeded societal recognition of the diverse experiences of LGBTIQ people (Rose, 2003; Hill, Woodson, Ferguson, & Parks, 2012; Frankland & Brown, 2014; Calton et al., 2016). Importantly, the noted societal attitudes create a gender and sexuality hierarchy which promotes heteronormativity within IPV public discourse.

Heteronormativity also exists in the models used to address IPV. Several studies indicated that while the experiences of IPV vary greatly between heterosexual and LGBTIQ groups, a one-size-fits-all approach to all victims of DV known as the Duluth treatment model is most famous (see Cannon & Buttell, 2015; Cannon, Lauve-Moon, & Buttell, 2015). Cannon et al. (2015) noted that this approach has been under consistent criticism for its failure to meet the needs of LGBT people (their study focused primarily on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender populations), as the Duluth model reinforces pervasive heteronormative bias and subsequent oppression of LGBT people. The Duluth model fails because it assumes that heterosexual men are always the aggressor and heterosexual women are always the victims. Cannon and Buttell (2015) also emphasize the limits of this approach, which does not consider other victim/offender dynamics.

The apparent heterosexism/cissexism within the Duluth model is exemplified in discrepancies between arrest patterns by police officers (e.g., Leonard, Mitchell, Pitts, & Patel, 2008; Russell & Sturgeon, 2018). Notably, Russell and Sturgeon (2018) found that some police officers were more lenient in punishing heterosexual women offenders. Furthermore, the study indicated that some lesbian victims and offenders, as well as gay victims and offenders, had their experience treated as mutually consensual abuse. Conversely, these same police officers were more punitive towards offenders who were heterosexual men, suggesting that heterosexual IPV and male offenders are more serious than the other offences and offenders presented in the study. Russell and Sturgeon's (2018) research into how police respond to IPV indicates that police officers may be taking IPV perpetration by gay men and heterosexual women as a less pressing issue. It could also be that heteronormativity frames men as superior and aggressive, while women are submissive and gentle. Underpinning this ideology is the idea that a current feminine construct is applicable to anyone who is not a heterosexual male or who

fails to act like a man. As a result, the remainder are considered feminine and should thus receive delicate treatment.

Another standard model for DV/IPV management is through feminist theory (Cannon & Buttell, 2015). While feminist theory is focused on empowering women's voices and experiences, LGBTIQ IPV researchers criticize its use (Cannon & Buttell, 2015). Some authors feel that feminist theory is not able to holistically explain the victim experiences of lesbians nor their offending behaviours. With this contradiction, those like Cannon and Buttell (2015) indicated that feminist theory cannot adequately explain LGBTIQ IPV.

Current approaches to understanding IPV that use the Duluth model are heavily influenced by feminist theory. According to Cannon and Buttell (2015), this approach impedes the recognition of other victims, such as the LGBTIQ population. Furthermore, LGBTIQ IPV inclusivity is no small task, and no straightforward option was put forth by the authors in these studies to operationalize the inclusivity of the LGBTIQ population (e.g., Leonard et al., 2008; Cannon & Buttell, 2015; Cannon, et al, 2015; Russell & Sturgeon, 2018). However, there was a consensus among these authors that there should not be any privileging of sexuality as a factor which influences current approaches to IPV.

Institutional Barriers and Facilitators

Institutional barriers were the most significant theme to emerge from this systematic review. A majority of articles specify the significant barriers LGBTIQ people face, including compounded discrimination for individuals of colour, lack of community engagement, lack of LGBTIQ inclusive services, reinforcement of heterosexist attitudes that promote heterosexual women's experiences only (see Morin, 2014; Miller & Irvin, 2017; Oswald, Fonseca, & Hardesty, 2010; Simpson & Helfrich, 2005; Simpson & Helfrich, 2014; Calton et al., 2016; Campo & Tayton, 2015, and Fileborn & Horsley, 2015). The literature suggests that this discrimination is extended to trans and intersex people, who are consequently made invisible (Calton et al., 2016). However, the most significant problem, according to Campo and Tayton (2015), is society's inability to view IPV outside of a heterosexual framework. Poor recognition of LGBTIQ family and sexual violence means those people face barriers to accessing the justice system and support services, such as the police or emergency accommodation (Fileborn & Horsley, 2015). These services are often geared solely towards the needs of heterosexual women (Fileborn & Horsley, 2015).

Socioeconomic status is another significant barrier, especially for people not living in LGBTIQ-"friendly" communities. Simpson and Helfrich (2014) note the overall lack of outreach to both lesbians and women living in under-served communities. They found that, in addition to concrete barriers, there are also societal barriers which hinder LGBTIQ agency. These barriers are the result of multiple layers of oppression within society, such as cultural and political attitudes, religious beliefs, and social systems, which all reinforce heterosexism/cissexism. They further note the impact of sexism and racism as well as an individual's socioeconomic status and disability status (see also Ijoma, 2018). Breaking down these institutional and societal barriers is not a small task and is one that requires greater investigation beyond the scope of this study. However, understanding the experiences

of people who fall outside of the heteronormative frameworks of Western society is vital to becoming more inclusive of LGBTIQ people and their access to services (Simpson & Helfrich, 2014; Ijoma, 2018).

Leonard et al. (2008) suggest that an impactful institutional facilitator is developing, implementing, and evaluating current government funding campaigns and, further, ensuring these campaigns advocate on behalf of LGBTIQ people, while also challenging heterosexist and homophobic attitudes. Moreover, education is a pivotal facilitator in debunking myths such as violence amongst LGBTIQ people being mutual or consensual or misrepresented as a simple fight between friends (Morrow & Hawxhurst, 1989). Several studies also reinforced the importance of promoting inclusive institutional access as a means of improving LGBTIQ IPV services equally within contemporary Western society (Morrow & Hawxhurst, 1989; Leonard et al. 2008; Morin, 2014; Oswald, Fonseca, & Hardesty, 2010; Simpson & Helfrich, 2005).

Criminal Justice Approach to Reporting and Responding to LGBTIQ IPV

Police reporting as considered within this systematic review highlighted that the LGBTIQ community faces barriers to reporting IPV to police. While it is acknowledged there has been progress made in reporting, there is still deep mistrust between the LGBTIQ population and police. Notably, LGBTIQ treatment within Australia and abroad is a critical barrier to reporting, as victims do not believe their IPV incident will be treated in the same way it would for their heterosexual and cisgender counterparts (Campo & Tayton, 2015; Leonard et al., 2008; Simpson & Helfrich, 2014). For example, Morin (2014) found that the history of criminalized LGBTQ lives is still felt among these communities today, particularly for LGBTQ people of colour, transgender people, youth populations, and immigrant communities. Prevailing attitudes within the LGBTIQ population exacerbate the underreporting of IPV incidents, further impacting statistical data collection, thus restricting the legal system's acknowledgment of and ability to support victims (Morin, 2014). Particular groups within the LGBTIQ paradigm, including transgender and gender non-conforming individuals, note they experience detrimental treatment from police officers (Morin, 2014; Ijoma, 2018). The included research also noted that there is still a proclivity to associate LGBTIQ people with sexual deviance and criminal activity (e.g., Simpson & Helfrich, 2014; Leonard et al., 2008; Morin, 2014), thus restricting acceptance of the validity of their experiences of violence and appropriate police responses to it (Morin, 2014).

Morin (2014) suggests that "police officers are generally more likely to view violence between LGBTIQ individuals, especially partners of the same gender, as mutual or consensual abuse" (p. 484). This attitude, Morin explains, demeans progressive understandings of partner violence, and reinforces the heteronormative beliefs held within many Western nations (Leonard et al., 2008; Campo & Tayton, 2015; Simpson & Helfrich, 2014). While this attitude may not be reflective of the entire police force, it may indicate a deep-seated stance reflective of the current societal attitude towards LGBTIQ people generally (Leonard et al., 2008). Morin (2014) also found that "many police officers continue to express homophobia" (p. 484), holding these attitudes as a personal belief. In roles

where bias is not meant to be a mitigating factor, such personal biases and attitudes can continue to influence police and the way they engage with addressing and protecting victims of LGBTIQ IPV (Russell & Sturgeon, 2018).

Within the LGBTIQ population, both in Australia and abroad, detrimental treatment has problematized the relationships between this community and the police. In an attempt to rectify historical policing approaches to sexuality, police forces in Australia have taken steps in the right direction, such as the hiring of LGBTIQ Liaison officers (Campo & Tayton, 2015). However, there is still fear and mistrust of the police (Fileborn, 2012; Parry & O'Neal, 2015). Several articles note, with varying emphasis, the issues with current policing responses as persistently problematic (Campo & Tayton, 2015; Leonard et al., 2008; Russell & Sturgeon, 2018; Rose, 2003; Simpson & Helfrich, 2014; Crumrine, 2019). Campo and Tayton (2015) note that Australia has, in some states and territories, made attempts to bridge the gap between police bodies and the LGBTIQ population with LGBTIQ liaison officers as well as support events such as pride marches and the Sydney Mardi Gras.

Overall, research suggests that LGBTIQ populations still face significant discrimination and homophobic attitudes by police officers (Campo & Tayton, 2015, p. 6; Dwyer & Hotten, 2009; Kay & Jefferies, 2010; Fileborn, 2012; Parry & O'Neal, 2015). The sample of literature used in this study suggests that, while some aspects of police and LGBTIQ-community relations are improving, several areas still require attention. This slow progression towards LGBTIQ inclusivity is reflective of broader societal attitudes towards IPV victim representation and requires a broader public redress, beyond the scope of one social institution.

Supports Provided for LGBTIQ IPV Victims

Support services for the LGBTIQ community are centred around LGBTIQ enclaves (Calton et al., 2016; Oswald, Fonseca, & Hardesty, 2010). This is problematic for LGBTIQ people who do not, or cannot afford to, reside within or near these areas. One way to increase support accessibility is by having LGBTIQ competence embedded into existing general services (Oswald, Fonseca, & Hardesty, 2010) and/or increasing individual service provider competency (Calton et al., 2016). Calton et al. (2016) note that government officials have the power to regulate the quality of existing services within DV organisations—especially ones which receive state and federal funding.

In addition, this would ensure that services are under consistent review to also meet LGBTIQ service delivery standards. Calton et al. (2016) further stress that to receive ongoing funding and governmental support, DV organisations require evaluation—and this includes the training they provide their support workers. Simpson and Helfrich (2005) also noted that agencies need to take responsibility for training all staff members on working with LGBTIQ people. Once this occurs, existing support structures, no matter their location, can help LGBTIQ people even if they do not reside within LGBTIQ enclaves.

LGBTIQ Cultural Competence

There are many intersecting ways oppression manifests, both within DV agencies generally and across the broader cultural

and political landscape. However, acknowledging the existence of these oppressive barriers is not enough. All of the included literature highlighted the importance of cultural competence as vital for all victims, not only LGBTIQ people, but also Aboriginal people and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) people (Oswald, Fonseca, & Hardesty, 2010; Fileborn & Horsley, 2015; Cannon & Buttell, 2015; Simpson & Helfrich, 2014; Calton et al., 2016). Cultural competence is the ability for an individual to interact effectively with people whose culture may not be the same as their own. Cultural competence ensures that the needs of an entire and diverse community are met. Russell and Sturgeon (2018) found that police lack cultural competence when they respond to lesbian and gay IPV as mutually consensual or as a simple fight between friends. Attitudes which dismiss the experiences of LGBTIQ IPV victims require attention, just as culturally responsive, constructive, and beneficial engagement with LGBTIQ people across all facets of society requires improvement. A way to address this need is for support services and providers to become more culturally competent. Cultural competence also has a role in research, as it ensures that samples are diverse and representative of a broad range of genders, sexualities, and identities.

Public Discourse of LGBTIQ IPV in Legislation, Policy, Advocacy, and Media

LGBTIQ inclusion within legislation discourse is problematic within Australia and abroad. Currently, there appear to be areas where inclusive language is lacking, and in turn, where non-inclusive language creates and/or maintains ambiguous legislation. For example, there is a significant issue with the framing of DV/IPV as perpetrated by men and as experienced by women within a heterosexual relationship (Leonard et al., 2008; Cannon & Buttell, 2015; Morin, 2014).

Many studies have found that removing heteronormative biases from current legislation eliminates the precarious position of LGBTIQ IPV victims in current DV/IPV discourse (Leonard et al., 2008; Ijoma, 2018; Morin, 2014; Cannon & Buttell, 2015; Calton et al., 2016). Challenging heteronormative understandings eliminates what some authors call the “illusion of inclusion” (Cannon & Buttell, 2015)—language within legislation which is vague and often left open to interpretation. Ambiguous discourse within some legislation invites exclusion for not only LGBTIQ people but other marginalized populations as well (Leonard et al., 2008; Ijoma, 2018; Morin, 2014). Additionally, the inclusion of LGBTIQ persons of colour, according to Ijoma (2018), is sorely lacking. In particular, Ijoma cites the exclusion of Black lesbians and Black trans women, causing them to be hidden victims. The literature stressed the impact of multiple minority identities on representation within legislation—a scenario which overlooks the experiences and voices as survivors of LGBTIQ IPV (Calton et al., 2016; Ijoma, 2018). Morin (2018) stated that to achieve legislative inclusivity, states like Vermont and Massachusetts, in the United States, have removed referencing the gender or sexuality of the partners in IPV legislation. Legislation there now takes a gender-neutral stance to be wholly inclusive and, by extension, apply to all equally. However, given that heteronormativity is the lens through which most societies understand IPV, the lack of specifiers may serve as an erasure of LGBTIQ people from common understandings and applications of legislation.

Policy documents can offer guidance not only on who is affected by a particular issue but also how that issue should be addressed. Currently, policy is typically lacking in LGBTIQ-inclusive elements. For example, inclusive policy documentation should inform stakeholders, legislators, and government officials on any societal issue, while also advocating or setting down rules and guidelines for businesses. Additionally, many policy documents use problematic language and terminology that is not inclusive of LGBTIQ IPV victims (Campo & Tayton, 2015; Simpson & Helfrich, 2014; Calton et al., 2016). This systematic review found common themes across publications, indicating that ambiguous policies have created confusion, under-acknowledgment, and misunderstandings in policy, practice, and judicial response (Campo & Tayton, 2015; Simpson & Helfrich, 2014; Calton et al., 2016).

To operationalize inclusive policies, Calton et al. (2016) suggest using human rights organizations to advocate on behalf of LGBTIQ victims of IPV. In the United States, a recent study found that human rights organizations that lobbied for more inclusive language for LGBTIQ people were successful in supporting this population (Calton et al., 2016). Requiring inclusive language allows organizations to audit services on their LGBTIQ inclusivity. For example, Simpson and Helfrich (2014) note that organizations should receive financial assistance to expand the capacity of their service. This would reinforce the social and moral responsibility of services and policy in making services inclusive of and accessible to everyone. Changing policy language to be more inclusive is exceptionally beneficial in LGBTIQ IPV advocacy and as a means of challenging heteronormative, cisnormative, and biased policies (Campo & Tayton, 2015; Simpson & Helfrich, 2014; Calton et al., 2016).

Within the systematic review results, advocacy did not feature in any of the included studies as a major theme, with only one study (Morin, 2014) alluding to the importance of advocacy. Despite this limitation, this study reinforces overall that advocacy, especially within Australia, is a major contributing factor to understanding victim representation. Further, the benefits of advocacy are numerous and require a more robust investigation, especially in terms of inclusive discourse and service delivery for LGBTIQ people and other marginalized populations.

Media, as an institution, can inform, construct, and dictate social scripts and expectations. Within the included literature, there was little discussion on the role or impact of media on LGBTIQ IPV. However, Cannon et al. (2015) mention that powerful institutions like media outlets serve to construct our current ideology of masculinity and femininity. They note that where the idea of hegemonic notions of sexuality form the basis of what is healthy (heterosexual) and unhealthy (homosexual), others can use these as a form of social control. Furthermore, they suggest the media as an institution dictates what is right, healthy, natural, and normal, and in this instance, heterosexual relationships are healthy and LGBTIQ relationships are unhealthy. For this discourse, with regard to the ability for notions of gender and sexuality to change, the normalization of “alternative” identities needs to be at the forefront of the discussion. Due to the lack of commentary from current research, the media is another institution which requires more significant investigation in terms of LGBTIQ IPV messaging, representation, awareness,

and education—as the media can be a powerful institution of social control (Cannon et al., 2015).

Future Directions for LGBTIQ IPV Research

LGBTIQ IPV research remains underfunded and limited by many factors, such as the inability to recruit diverse sample sizes and capture as many experiences as possible (Frankland & Brown, 2014; Leonard et al., 2008; Simpson & Helfrich, 2005; Simpson & Helfrich, 2014). Ijoma (2018) found that most LGBTIQ IPV research focuses more on lesbian IPV, while bisexual and trans men are missing in male IPV research, suggesting that binegativity, transphobia, and transmisogyny may create unique barriers to help-seeking (Campo & Tayton, 2015). For qualitative research, researchers must work on capturing as many experiences as possible (Campo & Tayton, 2015). Within Australia, statistical institutions must incorporate sexuality in their statistical collection; otherwise, people will generally assume the victim is heterosexual (Campo & Tayton, 2015).

Qualitative research generally has smaller sample sizes, but such studies have the capacity to document the complexity of LGBTIQ experiences through the provision of rich phenomenological perspectives. However, qualitative data may be overgeneralized and misrepresented under the assumption that all LGBTIQ people experience the same forms of IPV as one another (Simpson & Helfrich, 2005; Calton et al., 2016; Cannon & Buttell, 2015; Mason, Lewis, Gargurevich, & Kelley, 2016).

Cannon et al. (2015) stress the importance of using theory to guide research, which in turn strengthens the research design and allows for critique of the applicability of the theory to explain a particular phenomenon. For example, Cannon et al. (2015) explored three theoretical approaches to explain IPV and provided guidance for how each theory could guide future research. The use of theory is vital for research, as it can help to explain or critique the experiences of diverse and unique experiences of a particular group.

The literature also suggests that limited funding is a barrier to gaining valuable and necessary insights into the issue of LGBTIQ IPV (Calton et al., 2016; Russell & Sturgeon, 2018). Calton et al. (2016) propose that if adequate funding were a reality, all aspects of violence, as well as the impact of the sexual and gender identity of both perpetrator and survivor, should be the subject of further research. Furthermore, this would also help to address the systemic inequalities and stigma that LGBTIQ individuals too often face as victims of IPV (Cannon et al., 2015).

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Throughout this systematic review, the representation, recognition, and understanding of LGBTIQ IPV victim and offender dynamics were discussed. Many intersections of individuals' identities, for example religious status or whether someone is “in the closet” or not, would severely influence their victimization experiences. Therefore, intersectionality remains vital for understanding the experiences of LGBTIQ-identifying individuals. As Simpson and Helfrich (2014) noted, this is especially so for those who have more marginalized identities, such as Black lesbians, who may remain more invisible due to lower levels of education, socioeconomic status, and

geographical location, leading to possible exclusion from their communities and social supports. Age was another critical factor that often remains hidden, a significant problem as younger individuals are also participating in and experiencing IPV.

Current approaches to IPV are hindered by the inherent flaws of treatment models, such as the Duluth model. Underpinning this is severe heterosexism/cissexism, which influences how police respond to and treat offenders of IPV, such as viewing heterosexual male victims as less serious, and viewing gay and lesbian victims and perpetrators as mutual consenters to the abuse. Further, feminist theory cannot accurately address the nuances of LGBTIQ IPV, which may exacerbate current reporting, especially in terms of the Criminal Justice System.

The importance of having inclusive legislation, policy, advocacy, and media was highlighted above as a significant contributor to changing the current landscape of victim representation. Inclusive policy would ensure that victim services can understand and identify the experiences of LGBTIQ victims. Inclusive legislation can remove gendered hierarchy and allow for all victims of partner violence to gain social justice. These approaches would then underpin inclusive advocacy, the importance of which was alluded to in this review. Lastly, media as a social agent of change can help dispel the myths which surround who may or may not be a victim and/or perpetrator of IPV. Driving these changes would be inclusive education, with guidance from research, which in turn has more significant and more diverse sample sizes, ensuring cultural competence receives precedence in all future IPV narratives. Intimate partner violence is not a model of control exclusive to white heterosexual women as the only victims, and this review underscores the importance of ensuring that such assumptions do not damage the ability for other victims to gain equitable recognition.

CONCLUSION

The synthesis of existing evidence within this review across media, legislation, policy, and advocacy highlights that public discourses lack equal and diverse representations of LGBTIQ IPV and other minorities. The review reiterates that LGBTIQ IPV research has increased exponentially within an international context, especially within the last two decades. However, the review has found that the current climate continues to be influenced by societal attitudes, such as heterosexism, cissexism, homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia, as well as heteronormativity. These same attitudes impact personal attitudes and maintain a heteronormative/cisnormative IPV framework. It is likely that heteronormative frameworks and discourses mean that many aspects of LGBTIQ IPV are still under-researched, such as the experiences of bisexual people, trans men and women, intersex people, and non-binary conforming identities.

Within our global context, the issue of inclusivity, or lack thereof, is receiving urgent attention. However, this does not mean that an individual's identity is not essential to understanding IPV—on the contrary. The findings of this review highlight the importance of the role of intersecting identities in better understanding the experiences of IPV in the context of sexuality, sex assigned at birth, gender identity, race/ethnicity, and a vast range of other identifiers. Achieving

this level of non-dichotomous or categorical understanding of IPV may take decades to achieve, but if it is to be achieved, cultural competence must be central to the interactions that systems have with LGBTIQ people concerning IPV.

As the literature suggests, current approaches are not entirely inclusive. Importantly, diversity of experience is lacking in policy, legislation, and service delivery. This is compounded by the impact of personal biases that result in differential criminal justice responses across genders and sexual identities. Further, funding is lacking for both research and service accessibility, which are also impeded by a reliance on heteronormative or outdated models of DV and IPV management. This review also noted the lack of any consistent institutional approach, meaning that legislation and its enforcement, service providers and their services, and media agents and their messages are currently not being adequately held accountable for the roles they play, or might play, in promoting LGBTIQ inclusivity.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This publication would not have been possible without the support of the Western Sydney University Higher Degree Research funding. This fund supported the first author's attendance at the LEPH conference and therefore the networks made towards the publication of this manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

The authors have no conflicts or interests to declare.

AFFILIATIONS

* School of Science and Health, Western Sydney University, Sydney, Australia

REFERENCES

- Ali, P. A., Dhingra, K., & McGarry, J. (2016). A literature review of intimate partner violence and its classifications. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 31*, 16–25. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2016.06.008>
- Ball, M. (2013). Heteronormativity, homonormativity and violence. In K. Carrington, M. Ball, E. O'Brien & J. Tauri (Eds.), *Crime, Justice and Social Democracy International Perspectives* (pp. 186–199). United Kingdom: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Ball, M. (2016). Queer Criminology as Activism. *Critical Criminology, 24*(4), 473–487. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10612-016-9329-4>
- Barner, J. R., & Carney, M. M. (2011). Interventions for intimate partner violence: A historical review. *Journal of Family Violence, 26*(3), 235–244. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-011-9359-3>
- Bell, K. M., & Naugle, A. E. (2008). Intimate partner violence theoretical considerations: Moving towards a contextual framework. *Clinical Psychology Review, 28*(7), 1096–1107. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2008.03.003>
- Calton, J. M., Cattaneo, L. B., & Gebhard, K. T. (2016). Barriers to help seeking for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer survivors of intimate partner violence. *Trauma, Violence, and Abuse, 17*(5), 585–600. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838015585318>
- Caman, S., Kristiansson, M., Granath, S., & Sturup, J. (2017). Trends in rates and characteristics of intimate partner homicides between 1990 and 2013. *Journal of Criminal Justice, 49*, 14–21. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2017.01.002>
- Campo, M., & Tayton, S. (2015, December). Intimate partner violence in lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer communities: Key issues. *CFCA Practitioner Resource*. <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/intimate-partner-violence-lgbtqi-communities>

- Cannon, C., & Buttell, F. (2015). Illusion of inclusion: The failure of the gender paradigm to account for intimate partner violence in LGBT relationships. *Partner Abuse, 6*(1), 65–77. <https://doi.org/10.1891/1946-6560.6.1.65>
- Cannon, C., Lauve-Moon, K., & Buttell, F. (2015). Re-theorizing intimate partner violence through post-structural feminism, queer theory, and the sociology of gender. *Social Sciences, 4*(3), 668–687. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci4030668>
- Carcirieri, A. (2017). Book review: LGBTQ intimate partner violence: Lessons for policy, practice, and research. *Criminal Justice Review, 43*(2), 275–276. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0734016817707807>
- Carvalho, A. F., Lewis, R. J., Derlega, V. J., Winstead, B. A., & Viggiano, C. (2011). Internalized sexual minority stressors and same-sex intimate partner violence. *Journal of Family Violence, 26*(7), 501–509. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-011-9384-2>
- Crumrine, A. (2019). Providing equal justice to LGBTQ victims of intimate partner violence. Police Chief Magazine. <https://www.policemagazine.org/providing-equal-justice-to-lgbtq-victims-of-intimate-partner-violence/>
- Duffy, K. (2011). There's no pride in domestic violence: The same-sex domestic violence interagency, Sydney Australia. In J. Ristock (Ed.), *Intimate Partner Violence in LGBTQ Lives* (pp. 258–273). United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Dune, T., Caputi, P., & Walker, B. (2018). A systematic review of mental health care workers' constructions about culturally and linguistically diverse people. *PLoS One, 13*(1), 1–20. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0200662>
- Dwyer, A., & Hotten, J. (2009 December). "There is no relationship": Service provider staff on how LGBT young people experience policing. *TASA: Refereed Conference Proceedings* 1–4.
- Fileborn, B. (2012, March). Sexual violence and gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans, intersex, and queer communities. *ACSSA Resource Sheet No. 3*. <https://aifs.gov.au/publications/sexual-violence-and-gay-lesbian-bisexual-trans-intersex-and-queer-communitii>
- Fileborn, B., & Horsley, P. (2015). Beyond gender: LGBTIQ abuse shows it's time to shift the debate on partner violence. *The Conversation*. <http://theconversation.com/beyond-gender-lgbtqi-abuse-shows-its-time-to-shift-the-debate-on-partner-violence-50238>
- Frankland, A., & Brown, J. (2014). Coercive control in same-sex intimate partner violence. *Journal of Family Violence, 29*, 15–22. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-013-9558-1>
- Hill, N. A., Woodson, K. M., Ferguson, A. D., & Parks, C. W. (2012). Intimate partner abuse among African American lesbians: Prevalence, risk factors, theory, and resilience. *Journal of Family Violence, 27*(5), 401–413. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-012-9439-z>
- Horsley, P., Moussa, B., Fisher, J., & Rees, S. (2016). Intimate partner violence and LGBTIQ people: Raising awareness in general practice. *Medicine Today, 17*(11), 26–31.
- Ijoma, S. (2018). False promises of protection: Black women, trans people & the struggle for visibility as victims of intimate partner and gendered violence. *University of Maryland Law Journal of Race, Religion, Gender & Class, 18*, 257–296. Retrieved from: <http://digitalcommons.law.umaryland.edu/rrgc/vol18/iss1/24>
- Kay, M., & Jeffries, S. (2010). Homophobia, heteronormativity and hegemonic masculinity: Male same-sex intimate violence from the perspective of Brisbane service providers. *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law, 17*(3), 412–423. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13218710903566953>
- Lawson, J. (2012). Sociological theories of intimate partner violence. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 22*(5), 572–590. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2011.598748>
- Leonard, W., Mitchell, A., Pitts, M., & Patel, S. (2008). *Coming forward: The underreporting of heterosexual violence and same sex partner abuse in Victoria*. Melbourne, Australia: Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/1959.9/540856>
- Mason, T. B., Lewis, R. J., Gargurevich, M., & Kelley, M. L. (2016). Minority stress and intimate partner violence perpetration among lesbians: Negative affect, hazardous drinking, and intrusiveness as mediators. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity, 3*(2), 236–246. <https://doi.org/10.1037/sgd0000165>
- Messinger, A. (2017). *LGBTIQ intimate partner violence, lessons for policy, practice, and research*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.
- Miller, B., & Irvin, J. (2017). Invisible scars: Comparing the mental health of LGB and heterosexual intimate partner violence survivors. *Journal of Homosexuality, 64*(9), 1180–1195. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2016.1242334>
- Morin, C. (2014). Re-traumatized: How gendered laws exacerbate the harm for same-sex victims of intimate partner violence. *New England Journal on Criminal & Civil Confinement, 40*(2), 477–497.
- Morrow, S. L., & Hawxhurst, C. M. (1989). Lesbian partner abuse. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 68*(1), 58. Retrieved from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/j.1556-6676.1989.tb02494.x>
- Oswald, R. F., Fonseca, C. A., & Hardesty, J. L. (2010). Lesbian mothers' counselling experiences in the context of intimate partner violence. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 34*(3), 286–296. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-6402.2010.01575.x>
- Parry, M., & O'Neal, E. (2015). Help-seeking behavior among same-sex intimate partner violence victims: An intersectional argument. *Criminology, Criminal Justice Law & Society, 16*(1), 51–67.
- Rose, S. M. (2003). Community interventions concerning homophobic violence and partner violence against lesbians. *Journal of Lesbian Studies, 7*(4), 125. Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/235888934?accountid=36155>
- Russell, B., & Sturgeon, J. A. (Drew). (2018). Police evaluations of intimate partner violence in heterosexual and same-sex relationships: Do experience and training play a role? *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology, 34*, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11896-018-9279-8>
- Simpson, E. K., & Helfrich, C. A. (2005). Lesbian survivors of intimate partner violence: Provider perspectives on barriers to accessing services. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services, 18*(2), 39–59. https://doi.org/10.1300/J041v18n02_03
- Simpson, E. K., & Helfrich, C. A. (2014). Oppression and barriers to service for Black, lesbian survivors of intimate partner violence. *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services, 26*(4), 441–465. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538720.2014.951816>
- Thomas, J., & Harden, A. (2008). Methods for the thematic synthesis of qualitative research in systematic reviews. *BMC Medical Research Methodology, 8*, 45. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2288-8-45>
- Wurtzburg, S. J. (2013). Janice L. Ristock: Intimate partner violence in LGBTQ lives. *Journal of Family Violence, 28*(8), 849. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-013-9551-8>