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Same-Sex Sexuality and the Risk of Divorce: Findings from Two National Studies

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ABSTRACT

Despite symbolic linkages between heterosexuality and marriage, and a pervasive heteronormative ideology of romantic love, little population-representative research examines whether same-sex sexuality – desire/attraction, behavior, and gay, lesbian, or bisexual identity – increases the likelihood of divorce from an different-sex spouse. We examine this association using data from the 1992 National Health and Social Life Survey and the 2011–2013 National Survey of Family Growth. In both sub-studies, multivariate logistic regression analyses indicate that same-sex sexuality reduces the odds of ever marrying. However, among the once-married, same-sex desire/attraction, sexual behavior, and gay, lesbian, or bisexual identity respectively increase the odds of different-sex divorce net of demographic and early-life factors. Same-sex sexuality puts a brake on divorce by preventing some different-sex marriages that would ultimately end in divorce, but is associated with an increase risk of different-sex divorce among once-married individuals.

KEYWORDS

Divorce; marriage; homosexuality; same-sex sexuality; lesbian; gay; bisexual (LGB); heteronormativity; romantic love; sociology

Introduction

In the premier episode of the Netflix series, *Grace and Frankie*, two longtime law partners, played by Martin Sheen and Sam Waterson, break the news to their unsuspecting wives, played respectively by Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin, that several decades earlier they had begun a secret love affair and that, with the legalization of same-sex marriage, they plan to get married. Thus, in a single scene, they disclose two things: they are both gay, despite being married to women and publicly identifying as heterosexual, and they are both filing for divorce. Using the plots and ploys of television and popular culture, *Grace and Frankie* partially dramatizes the entanglements of same-sex sexuality, different-sex marriage, and divorce by showing one of several possible ways that same-sex sexuality can destabilize a different-sex marriage and contribute to its dissolution.

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Although such stories have been told in popular culture, an association between same-sex sexuality and divorce from a different-sex spouse is not well-established in the literature. Scholars have established that many socio-demographic factors predict divorce, including parental divorce (Amato & Cheadle, 2005; Wolfinger, 2005), premarital cohabitation (Booth & Johnson, 1988; Bumpass, Sweet, & Cherlin, 1991a), early entry into marriage (Bumpass, Martin, & Sweet, 1991b; Raley & Bumpass, 2003), extra-marital sex (London, Allen, & Wilmoth, 2013), being African American (Cherlin, 2009; Raley & Bumpass, 2003), and having a lower socioeconomic status (Cherlin, 2009; Martin, 2006; Raley & Bumpass, 2003). However, partly due to data limitations, surprisingly little population-representative research has examined whether same-sex sexuality—desire/attraction, behavior, or identity— influences the risk of divorce from a different-sex spouse. Beyond data limitations, this lack of research may also be due to an under-theorized assumption that same-sex sexuality does not exist to an appreciable degree among the heterosexually identified or within different-sex marriages, which the story of *Grace and Frankie* and various bodies of social science research suggest is incorrect (Hoy & London, 2018; Laumann, Gagnon, Michael, & Michaels, 1994).

Although lesbian, gay, and bisexual people now enjoy more acceptance and legal rights than in the past, heterosexuality remains taken-for-granted and privileged (Martin, 2009; Powell, Bolzendahl, Geist, & Steelman, 2010). At the same time, those who identify as heterosexual are expected to marry, as most continue to assume that the nuclear family is natural and normal (Ingraham, 1999; Kitzinger, 2005; Powell et al., 2010). In addition, many people view marriage through an ideology of romantic love, which assumes that spouses are exclusively attracted to one another and will remain sexually and emotionally faithful (Swidler, 2001). By penalizing those who deviate from heteronormative expectations and rewarding those who meet them, heteronormativity and the ideology of romantic love work in tandem to compel many people to marry a different-sex spouse, including many who experience same-sex desires or attractions, engage in same-sex sexual behaviors, and/or identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual (Hernandez, Schwenke, & Wilson, 2011; Schwartz, 2012). However, these same forces may also destabilize different-sex marriages by fostering negative attitudes toward same-sex sexuality when it becomes visible within a different-sex marriage and by making it a violation of marital norms and customs. Therefore, different-sex marriages that include at least one person who experiences one or more of the components of same-sex sexuality may be at an increased risk of divorce (Buxton, 2001; Tornello & Patterson, 2012; Wolkomir, 2009).

In this paper, we use data from the 1992 National Health and Social Life Survey (NHSL) and the 2011–2013 National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG) to examine the likelihood of divorce among the once-married.

Specifically, among those who are or were married once and only once to a person of a different sex, we ask whether the components of same-sex sexuality—desire/attraction, behavior, and identity—are associated with an increased risk of divorce, net of demographic and early-life controls.

Literature review

The components of same-sex sexuality: desire, behavior, and identity

According to Laumann et al. (1994), most people assume that anyone who identifies as gay or lesbian (or heterosexual) is exclusively attracted to and only has sex with people of the same (or different) sex. However, desire, behavior, and identity are distinct aspects of sexuality that may or may not co-exist for individuals over the life course.

In their pioneering study of the social organization of sexual behavior in the U.S., Laumann et al. (1994) found that 2.8% of men identify as gay or bisexual and 1.4% of women identify as lesbian or bisexual. Findings from more recent surveys are similar. For instance, the 2011–2013 NSFG found that 1.9% of men and 1.3% of women identify as “homosexual, gay, or lesbian” (Copen, Chandra, & Febo-Vazquez, 2016). Unsurprisingly, those with non-heterosexual identities almost always report having same-sex desires (Laumann et al., 1994). For most people, the emergence and recognition of these desires is what makes identifying as gay, lesbian, or bisexual possible; stage models of sexual identity development, although highly variable and debated, almost universally begin with an individual’s awareness of his or her same-sex desires (Cohen & Savin-Williams, 1996; McConnell, 1994).

In addition, those with non-heterosexual identities often report having engaged in same-sex behavior (Laumann et al., 1994). Such behavior, and the experience of finding it pleasurable, are sometimes the reasons people adopt non-heterosexual identities. However, for others, behavior is an outgrowth of identity. The literature on sexual identity development trajectories shows that, for men in particular, same-sex behavior usually precedes identification as gay or bisexual (Savin-Williams & Diamond, 2000). By contrast, women are more likely to identify as lesbian or bisexual before pursuing a same-sex sexual encounter (Savin-Williams & Diamond, 2000).

Same-sex desire and behavior are common among those who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual. However, they are surprisingly common among individuals who identify as heterosexual, as well (Hoy & London, 2018; Laumann et al., 1994). In fact, Black, Gates, Sanders, and Taylor (2000) reviewed multiple sources of demographic data and found that the proportion of people who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual is considerably smaller than the proportion of those who engage in same-sex behavior, sometimes by as much as one-half. According to Laumann et al. (1994), 7% of the adult

population has had at least one same-sex sexual encounter since puberty. Among adolescents and young adults, 10.5% of women and 3.7% of men report having had such an encounter, including 5% of women and 1.7% of men who identify as heterosexual (McCabe, Brewster, & Tillman, 2011).

Taken together, the existing demographic research on same-sex (and different-sex) sexuality makes clear that its components do not necessarily co-exist for individuals at any given point in the life course. As such, many who identify and present themselves socially as heterosexual have same-sex desires and/or engage in same-sex behavior (Hoy & London, 2018). For those who enter into different-sex marriages, pre-existing or emergent aspects of same-sexuality may have a destabilizing effect on the relationship. Such destabilization may occur because: same-sex sexuality is more tenable, and may become preferable, as the context liberalizes; emergent desires, behaviors, and identities change the relationship with the different-sex spouse; and/or knowledge of same-sex sexuality within a different-sex marriage leads one's spouse to seek a divorce.

Same-sex sexuality, different-sex marriage, and divorce

Very few people identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual before entering into a different-sex marriage (Bozett, 1982; Wyers, 1987). Still, like Sheen and Waterson's characters in *Grace and Frankie*, some develop such an identity while in a different-sex marriage. Based almost exclusively on small, convenience samples, the literature on "mixed-orientation marriages" suggests that such relationships are highly prone to divorce. Mixed-orientation marriages are those in which one spouse identifies as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, while the other identifies as heterosexual (Buxton, 1994). Buxton (1994, 2001) estimates that over two million non-heterosexual people are currently in mixed-orientation marriages.

Although researchers have not yet used population-representative data to estimate the extent to which mixed-orientation marriages end in divorce, the available qualitative research suggests that marriages in which at least one partner identifies as lesbian, gay, or bisexual are at a substantially increased risk of dissolution. According to Buxton (2001, p. 157), "divorce results in the majority" of mixed-orientation marriages, although precise numbers are difficult to determine. In Wolkomir's (2009) research, over half of the 45 individuals she interviewed eventually divorced. In Tornello and Patterson's (2012) research, 153 of the 167 people sampled, or over 90%, eventually divorced. To be sure, not all mixed-orientation couples divorce, immediately or at all (see Buxton, 2001, 2004a, 2004b; Schwartz, 2012; Yarhouse, Gow, & Davis, 2009). However, after a spouse's non-heterosexual identity is either disclosed or discovered, couples tend to initiate a process of negotiation in which they decide whether to end the relationship (Wolkomir, 2009). The

existing research, despite its limitations, suggests that many if not most couples eventually decide to divorce.

Importantly, research on mixed-orientation marriages has thus far assumed that spouses have discordant *identities* and that this discordance renders the relationship untenable. It remains unclear whether having same-sex desires or engaging in same-sex behavior, regardless of one's identity, also has a destabilizing effect on marriage. In terms of desire, few are fully aware of their same-sex desires before entering a different-sex marriage (Bozett, 1982; Pearcey, 2005; Wyers, 1987). For example, 17 of the 20 gay men interviewed by Pearcey (2005) had a sense that they were attracted to other men before they married, but they each married a woman because they rationalized their same-sex attractions as rooted in friendship or dismissed these feelings as fleeting. In terms of behavior, many people with different-sex spouses engaged in same-sex behavior prior to getting married, with some continuing such behavior after the marriage is contracted (Higgins, 2002). In his research on "tearooms," Humphreys (1970) found that 54% of the men who sought anonymous public sex with other men were in different-sex marriages.

Why do those who experience at least one component of same-sex sexuality prior to marriage go through with marrying someone of a different sex? Many claim that pressures from a heteronormative society and from their families, as well as their own anxieties about being "normal," compelled them to marry (Pearcey, 2005). Others choose to marry because marriage feels natural and because it remains the most obvious, culturally normative, and legitimate way to have children (Higgins, 2002).

Heteronormativity, romantic love, and marital instability

In theorizing the association between same-sex sexuality and divorce from a different-sex spouse, it is important to consider heteronormativity – the assumption embedded in social institutions and culture that heterosexuality and the nuclear family are both natural and normal (Kitzinger, 2005; Martin, 2009). With heteronormativity, men and women are assumed to be sexually complementary by nature (Schilt & Westbrook, 2009), and as a result, they are expected to form intimate relationships and to formalize their relationships through marriage (VanEvery, 1996). In recent years, attitudes toward gay, lesbian, and bisexual people have liberalized (Loftus, 2001), and same-sex marriage is now legal across the U.S. Nevertheless, heterosexuality is still taken-for-granted and privileged. In everyday life, individuals are assumed to be heterosexual and families are assumed to be nuclear families headed by a heterosexual couple (Kitzinger, 2005; Martin, 2009; Powell et al., 2010). Those who violate these assumptions by coming out as lesbian, gay, or bisexual often face violence (Meyer, 2015) and discrimination (Tilcsik, 2011). Thus, people whose desires, behaviors, and/or identities deviate from heteronormative expectations sometimes marry a different-sex spouse to

meet heteronormative cultural expectations and to avoid the stigma and other negative social consequences that are associated with same-sex sexuality (Higgins, 2002; Pearcey, 2005).

Heteronormativity is upheld by the ideology of romantic love. Romantic love frames different-sex marriage as exclusive and enduring (Ingraham, 1999; Martin & Kazyak, 2009; Swidler, 2001; Wolkomir, 2009). Although many people claim to reject this view and prefer one that is more realistic or “prosaic,” they tend to fall back on culturally prevalent assumptions rooted in romantic love – namely, that spouses are meant for one another, that their relationships should be characterized by a unique, even magical passion for one another, and that relationships should be permanent (Swidler, 2001). Like heteronormativity, the ideology of romantic love stresses that relationships should be formalized through marriage. Although marriage is currently undergoing a process of de-institutionalization whereby its norms are weakening and the pressure to marry is decreasing, marriage remains an important milestone for most adults and the most esteemed relationship form (Cherlin, 2004, 2009). Thus, some who experience components of same-sex sexuality marry a different-sex spouse because the ideology of romantic love celebrates lifelong relationships, especially those that are heterosexual and recognized by religion and law (Higgins, 2002). Even though the social context is changing with the legalization of same-sex marriage, heteronormativity and the ideology of romantic love are likely to continue pushing some individuals into different-sex marriages, despite the possibility of pursuing a marital relationship with someone of the same sex.

In the end, the same heteronormative forces that push people with at least one component of same-sex sexuality into different-sex marriages may make those marriages difficult to sustain over time. Given the persistence of heteronormativity and the ideology of romantic love, there are numerous ways in which same-sex sexuality could destabilize a different-sex marriage. For instance, individuals who hold negative attitudes toward same-sex sexuality may be inclined to abandon their marriage upon discovering that their spouse has same-sex desires, has engaged in same-sex behaviors, and/or identifies as lesbian, gay, or bisexual. They may feel less secure in the marriage and opt to leave, perhaps because they view same-sex sexuality with suspicion. Those who hold essentialist beliefs may assume that their spouse’s desires cannot be muted, making them untrustworthy and a risk for infidelity or disease. Others may find their spouse less attractive and thus decrease their commitment to the marriage, eventually leading to divorce. In addition, same-sex sexuality and marriage remain symbolically incompatible for some. Married same-sex couples often encounter backlash because others continue to believe that marriage is and should be exclusively heterosexual (Bernstein, 2015; Ocobock, 2013). Thus, some different-sex couples may divorce upon learning of a spouse’s same-sex sexuality because they feel

that marriage requires heterosexuality. Finally, as Wolkomir's (2009, p. 504) research shows, the ideology of romantic love makes the presence of same-sex sexuality within a different-sex marriage an "ideological impossibility." When one spouse's same-sex sexuality is either disclosed or discovered, many couples divorce because their marriage no longer meets the requirements for an ideal marriage according to the ideology of romantic love. Because the marriage is no longer based on a special, exclusive bond, divorce is justified.

The current investigation

We know of no population-representative study that has examined the associations between the components of same-sex sexuality and divorce. Theoretical and limited evidence primarily from qualitative studies lead us to expect that the experience of any component prior to and/or during a different-sex marriage may make that marriage more likely to end in divorce. Of course, changes in the broader social context related to same-sex sexuality and marriage suggest that associations between same-sex sexuality, different-sex marriage, and divorce may have changed over the past few decades. Throughout much of the 20th century, coming out as lesbian, gay, or bisexual all but ensured that one would be cast out of one's family of origin and ostracized from one's community (Seidman, 2002). During this same period, marriage was normatively expected for all, and those who did not marry were viewed with suspicion and mistrust (Cherlin, 1992, 2004, 2009). These dual forces pushed many people with even a vague awareness of their same-sex sexuality, and even some with non-heterosexual identities, into the cover of respectability offered by marriage to a different-sex spouse (Humphreys, 1970; Seidman, 2002).

More recently, though, same-sex sexuality has become more accepted (Hicks & Lee, 2006; Keleher & Smith, 2012), and marriage is no longer compulsory (Cherlin, 2004). For these reasons, it may be the case that same-sex sexuality no longer increases the risk of divorce from a different-sex spouse to the same extent that it did in the past because individuals are less likely to enter into a different-sex marriage in the first place. However, heteronormativity and the ideology of romantic love remain in effect despite these changes, and for this reason, we still expect that same-sex sexuality will be associated with an increased risk of divorce from a different-sex spouse.

In this paper, we use two nationally representative datasets to examine the associations between the components of same-sex sexuality—desire/attraction, behavior, and gay, lesbian, or bisexual identity—and divorce among the once-married. The NHSLS data were collected approximately two decades before the NSFG data. Therefore, respondents to the two surveys encountered different social contexts: the NHSLS respondents encountered a more restrictive and punitive social context with respect to sexuality and the family, whereas the NSFG respondents had seen some growth in tolerance

for sexual and family diversity (Cherlin, 2004; Seidman, 2002). Given these transformations in the broader social context, it is possible that results will differ across the two sub-studies.

Importantly, the data we have available are cross-sectional. Thus, we cannot know when respondents' same-sex feelings, behavior, and identity emerged in relation to their first marriage and, for some, their divorce. This is an acknowledged limitation of this study. However, we assume that for some once-married adults, some components of same-sex sexuality were present or nascent in ways that could increase the odds of divorce. We have organized the presentation of the data and methods, as well as the results, in relation to the two distinct but complementary sub-studies: Sub-Study 1 focuses on the NHLS; Sub-Study 2 focuses on the NSFG.

Data and methods

Sub-study 1: National Health and Social Life Survey (NHLS)

Data

The NHLS is a cross-sectional probability sample of 3,432 18–59-year-old, non-institutionalized adults, who were residing in the U.S. in 1992 and able to complete an English-language interview (Laumann et al., 1994). The main multi-stage area probability sample ($N = 3,159$) was designed to give each household in the U.S. an equal probability of being selected. One age-eligible adult within each household participated in the study; the respondent was randomly selected if there was more than one age-eligible person in the household. In addition, the NHLS included an oversample of Blacks and Hispanics ($N = 273$). The overall response rate was 78.6%.

The NHLS included a sexual partner history in the main interview. For up to 28 different cohabitational and sexual partners, respondents were asked a series of questions that made it possible to ascertain: whether the partnership was marital; when the marriage began; and if, when, and how the marriage ended (i.e., as a result of divorce, separation, or widowhood). We used these data to identify persons who married once and only once ($N = 1,873$) and constrained the sample to the once-married. We excluded those who had never married because they were not at risk of divorce. We also excluded those who married more than once on the assumption that the theorized influence of same-sex sexuality on divorce was best theorized in relation to first marriages (i.e., among those who never remarried someone of a different sex).

Measures

The dichotomous dependent variable measures divorced (=1) versus not divorced (i.e., still married, separated, or widowed) (=0) among the once-married. For conceptual reasons, we did not include the separated in the

same category as the divorced. As the literature on mixed-orientation marriages makes clear, such marriages do not automatically end in divorce, including those that go through a period of separation during which couples negotiate how to maintain the marriage (Buxton, 2001, 2004b; Wolkomir, 2009). We are specifically interested in identifying those who end a legally contracted different-sex marriage through divorce; the separated, while possibly living apart, are still legally married.

The NHSLS measured four dimensions of same-sex sexuality in the self-administered questionnaire: desire, attraction, behavior, and identity. We use each of these as independent variables. Same-sex sexual desire was measured by a question that asked: "On a scale of 1 to 4, where 1 is very appealing and 4 is not at all appealing, how would you rate each of these activities: ... b) having sex with someone of the same sex." We recoded desire to be a dichotomous variable by combining answers 1, 2, and 3 (=1) versus 4 (=0). Attraction was measured distinctly by a question that asked: "In general, you are sexually attracted to: (1) only men; (2) mostly men; (3) both men and women; (4) mostly women; (5) only women." We recoded this information into a dichotomous variable such that men who reported answers 1, 2, or 3 and women who reported answers 3, 4, or 5 were coded as reporting same-sex attraction (=1) and the rest were coded as not reporting same-sex attraction (=0). Same-sex behavior was measured with items that asked: "Now thinking about the time since your 18th birthday (including the recent past you've already told us about) how many [female/male] partners have you had sex with?" Conditional on the sex of the respondent, we recoded those who reported at least one same-sex sexual partner as having engaged in same-sex behavior (=1) and those who reported zero same-sex sexual partners as not having engaged in same-sex behavior (=0). Identity was measured with a question that asked: "Do you think of yourself as: (1) heterosexual; (2) homosexual; (3) bisexual; (4) or something else? (specify); (5) normal/straight; (6) don't know." We recoded this variable as a dichotomy, with answers 2 and 3 combined to signify gay, lesbian, or bisexual identity (=1) and answers 1 and 5 combined to signify not identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual (=0).

The NHSLS included demographic and early-life variables that we include as controls in the multivariate analyses. The demographic variables are: sex/gender (female = 1); age, recoded categorically as 18–29, 30–39, 40–49, and 50–59 years; race/ethnicity, recoded categorically as White, Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Native American; foreign-born, recoded dichotomously (yes = 1); and paternal and maternal education, respectively, recoded as less than high school, high school graduate, more than high school, and missing. Additionally, respondents retrospectively reported on a range of life circumstances at age 14 years. These "age-14" control variables are: whether the respondent's mother worked, recoded categorically as yes, no, and missing; with whom the respondent lived, recoded categorically as with both parents, only one parent, a parent and step-parent, and neither

parent; and religious affiliation, recoded categorically as: Protestant, Type I; Protestant, Type II; other Protestant; Catholic; Jewish; some other religious affiliation; and no religious affiliation. This categorization scheme for the Protestant denominations was developed by Laumann et al. (1994). Additionally, respondents reported the type of place where they lived, recoded categorically as on a farm, in a small town, in a medium-sized place (50,000–250,000 people), in a suburb of a large city, or in a large city (250,000 or more), as well as the region in which they lived, recoded categorically as Northeast, Midwest, South, West, and missing.

Analytic sample sizes

Once we constrained the NHLS sample to those who had been married once, dropped those missing on the dependent variable, and dropped a small number of individuals with missing data on the control variables, the largest analytic sample included 1,852 individuals. Because there was a small and variable number of individuals with missing data on the four primary independent variables, the analytic samples we use in the analyses that follow vary slightly in size. The analytic sample size for analyses involving the measure of desire is 1,844, while it is 1,841 for attraction, 1,852 for behavior, and 1,831 for identity. We use the largest analytic sample to describe the sample.

Preliminary analyses

In preliminary analyses (not shown), we examined the associations between each of the four distinct measures of same-sex sexuality and a dichotomous indicator of never married using the samples with no missing data on the dependent and control variables, as well as the specific measure of same-sex sexuality used in the analysis. The analytic sample sizes for these preliminary analyses ranged from 3,380 to 3,396. We conducted these preliminary logistic regression analyses in order to examine the extent to which same-sex desire, attraction, behavior, and/or identity were associated with an increase in the odds of never marrying, since only those who marry are at risk of divorce.

The results indicate that those who reported same-sex desire, attraction, behavior, and identity were significantly more likely than those who did not to have never married. The adjusted odds ratios (AORs) from multivariate logistic regression models in which we controlled for the demographic and age-14 variables were: 3.55 ($p < .001$) comparing those who reported desire to those who did not; 7.41 ($p < .001$) comparing those who reported attraction to those who did not; 1.89 ($p < .001$) comparing those who reported same-sex sexual behavior to those who did not; and 10.58 ($p < .001$) comparing those who reported gay/bisexual identity to those who did not. Thus, these findings are consistent with the proposition that same-sex desires, attractions, behaviors, and identities select some people out of different-sex marriages because they emerge early in the life course and influence decisions about entry into

a first different-sex marriage. They are also consistent with the proposition that they may already be present or nascent for some who did contract a different-sex marriage, and thus may exert an influence on the likelihood of divorce among the once-married.

Sub-study 2: National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG)

Data

The 2011–2013 NSFG is a cross-sectional probability sample of 10,416 15–44-year-old women and men in the household (i.e., non-institutionalized) population of the United States. The NSFG is designed and funded by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s National Center for Health Statistics and several other programs within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Copen et al., 2016). Data were collected by means of in-person interviews. Separate questionnaires were used for women and men, although there is considerable overlap in core content.

Most data were collected via computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI), which involves having the questionnaire loaded onto a laptop and having an interviewer ask the survey questions and record the respondent’s answers. Some data, including the data on same-sex sexual attraction and behavior, and sexual identity, were collected via audio computer-assisted self-interviewing (ACASI). With ACASI, respondents listen to the interviewer on headphones, read them on a screen, or both, and enter their response directly into the computer. By removing the interviewer from the process of collecting sensitive data, social desirability bias is reduced. The overall response rate was 72.8%.

The NSFG collects a complete marital and divorce history for each respondent. Using data on the participant’s age and a NSFG-derived variable that measures the number of times the respondent has been married (FMARNO), which is provided in the public-use dataset, we were able to constrain the analytic sample to the once-married who were 18 years old or older ($N = 3,564$). We excluded those who had never married and those who married more than once for the same reasons that we noted above with respect to the NHSLs.

Measures

The dichotomous dependent variable measures divorced (=1) versus not divorced (i.e., still married, separated, or widowed) (=0) among the once-married. As noted above in the discussion of the dependent variable for the NHSLs analysis, we did not include the separated with the divorced for conceptual reasons.

The NSFG measured three dimensions of same-sex sexuality: attraction, behavior, and identity. We use each of these as an independent variable. Same-sex sexual attraction was measured by a question that asked: “People differ in their sexual attraction to other people. Which describes your

feelings? Are you: (1) only attracted to females; (2) mostly attracted to females; (3) equally attracted for females and males; (4) mostly attracted to males; (5) only attracted to males; (6) not sure.” We recoded this information into a dichotomous variable such that men and women who reported some same-sex sexual attraction were combined into one category (=1), and men who reported only being attracted to women and women who reported only being attracted to men were recoded as not having same-sex sexual attraction (=0). Same-sex behavior was measured using a dichotomous NSFG-derived variable that indicates whether the respondent had ever engaged in same-sex behavior (SAMESEXANY). Sexual identity was measured with a question that asked: “Do you think of yourself as: (1) heterosexual or straight; (2) homosexual or gay; (3) bisexual.” We recoded this variable as a dichotomy, with answers 2 and 3 combined to signify gay, lesbian, or bisexual identity (=1). For each of these variables, the relatively small number of refused, not ascertained, and “don’t know” responses were recoded as missing.

The NSFG included demographic, marital, and background variables that we include as controls in the multivariate analyses. The demographic variables include: sex/gender (female = 1); age, recoded categorically as 18–24, 25–29, 30–34, 35–39, and 40–44 years; race/ethnicity, recoded categorically as non-Hispanic White, non-Hispanic African American, Hispanic, and non-Hispanic other races/ethnicities; foreign-born, recoded dichotomously (yes = 1); and maternal education, recoded as less than high school, high school graduate, some college, and college graduate or more. We include two marital control variables because of their well-theorized and documented associations with different-sex divorce: premarital cohabitation with current spouse (yes = 1) and age at marriage (measured categorically as <20, 20–24, 25–29, and 30+ years). Additionally, participants retrospectively reported on a range of background characteristics related to their childhood and adolescence. Respondents indicated whether their mother worked when the respondent was 5–15 years old, recoded categorically as did not work for pay, full-time, part-time, and equal amounts full- and part-time. Respondents also indicated with whom they lived at age 14, recoded categorically as with both parents, only one parent, a parent and step-parent, and neither parent/other. Finally, respondents indicated the religion in which they were raised, recoded categorically as: no religion; Catholic; Protestant, Type I; Protestant, Type II; other Protestant; and some other religious affiliation. The differentiation of the Protestant categories was informed by Laumann et al. (1994), but conditional on the categories provided by the NSFG. Protestant Type I includes the NSFG category that includes Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Episcopalian denominations. Protestant Type II combines two NSFG categories: Baptist/Southern Baptist and Fundamentalist Protestant. Other Protestant combines two NSFG categories: Other Protestant Denomination and Protestant, No Denomination. A variable measuring the year in which the survey was conducted is also included as a control variable.

Analytic sample sizes

Once we constrained the NSFG sample to those who had been married once, dropped those missing on the dependent variable, and dropped a small number of individuals with missing data on the control variables, the largest analytic sample included 3,424 individuals. Because there was a small and variable number of individuals with missing data on the three primary independent variables, the analytic samples we use in the analyses that follow vary slightly in size. The analytic sample size for analyses involving the measure of same-sex sexual attraction is 3,373, while it is 3,403 for behavior, and 3,384 for gay, lesbian, or bisexual identity. We use the largest analytic sample to describe the sample.

Preliminary analyses

In preliminary analyses (not shown), we examined the associations between each of the three distinct measures of same-sex sexuality that were included in the NSFG and a dichotomous indicator of never married using the samples with no missing data on the dependent and background (but not the marital) control variables, and the specific measure of same-sex sexuality used in the analysis. The analytic sample sizes for these preliminary analyses ranged from 8,892 to 8,989.

The results indicated that those who reported same-sex attraction, behavior, and identity were significantly more likely than those who did not to have never married. The AORs from the multivariate logistic regression models in which we controlled for the demographic and background variables are very similar to those estimated in a model that only controls for year, and are as follows: 1.67 ($p < .001$) comparing those who reported same-sex attraction to those who did not; 1.68 ($p < .001$) for those who reported same-sex behavior versus those who did not; and 2.36 ($p < .001$) for those who reported gay or bisexual identity versus those who did not. Thus, findings from the NSFG are consistent with the results and conceptual propositions noted above for the NHSLs, although the magnitude of the associations vary across the sub-studies.

Analytic approach

Our primary analyses focus on the once-married. Based on the results reported above, we assume that same-sex desire, attraction, behavior, and identity reduce but do not eliminate different-sex marriage, and hypothesize that these dimensions of same-sex sexuality may increase the likelihood of divorce among the once-married. Although we cannot determine with available data when such desire, attraction, behavior, and identification occurred in relation to the marriage or divorce (i.e., before, during, or after), we can

nevertheless examine whether such variables are associated with the likelihood that a first different-sex marriage ended in divorce.

The approach we use to analyze the data from both national studies is the same, although we present them separately as sub-studies. We begin by describing the sample. Then, we describe the bivariate association between the available measures of same-sex sexuality and divorce. Finally, we present the results from multivariate logistic regression analyses of the association between each measure of same-sex sexuality and the odds of divorce. We conducted all analyses using the SVY commands in STATA 14.0 (StataCorp, 2015). All analyses are weighted and the standard errors are corrected to take each study's complex sampling design into account.

Results

Sub-study 1: NHLS

Population description

Table 1 presents the characteristics of the population represented by the analytic sample. Among the once-married, 3.1% reported current same-sex sexual desire and 1.3% reported current same-sex sexual attraction. However, 10.8% reported ever engaging in same-sex behavior. Less than 1% identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual.

Bivariate analysis

Overall, 12.6% of the once-married had divorced. As seen in Table 1, two of the measures of same-sex sexuality and three control variables had statistically significant bivariate associations with divorce among the once-married; the two other measures of same-sex sexuality and one additional control variable had marginally significant associations with divorce ($p < .10$). Among the once-married, persons who reported same-sex desire were significantly more likely to divorce than those who did not (25.8% versus 12.3%) and persons who reported a gay, lesbian, or bisexual identity were significantly more likely to divorce than those who did not report such an identity (42.1% versus 12.3%). Higher rates of divorce were also observed among those who reported same-sex sexual attraction and behavior, respectively, than those who did not; however, these differences were only marginally significant.

In addition, foreign birth, religion at age 14, and place of residence at age 14 were associated significantly with divorce. The foreign-born were significantly less likely than the native-born to divorce (7.1% versus 13.2%). The percentage divorced was highest among those with no religious affiliation at age 14 (24.3%) and lowest among those with a religious affiliation other than one of the Judeo-Christian faiths (8.4%). By region of residence at age 14, the percent divorced was highest among those living in the West (13.3%) and

Table 1. Sample description and rates of divorce, once-married persons, 1992 NHLS.

	Weighted %	Weighted % Divorced	p-value
TOTAL SAMPLE ^a	100	12.6	--
VARIABLE			
Same-Sex Desire			
Yes	3.1	25.8	**
No	96.9	12.3	
Same-Sex Attraction			
Yes	1.3	25.4	#
No	98.7	12.4	
Same-Sex Sexual Behavior			
Yes	10.8	16.8	#
No	89.2	12.1	
Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Identity			
Yes	0.7	42.1	**
No	99.3	12.3	
Gender			
Female	53.5	13.1	
Male	46.5	12.1	
Age			
18–29 Years	19.5	10.2	
30–39 Years	31.9	13.0	
40–49 Years	29.7	15.0	
50–60 Years	18.9	10.8	
Race/Ethnicity			
White	76.5	12.1	
African American	10.4	17.1	
Hispanic	9.0	13.3	
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.0	9.6	
Native American	1.2	8.3	
Foreign-Born			
Yes	9.8	7.1	*
No	90.2	13.2	
Paternal Education			
< High School	39.7	12.4	#
High School Graduate	23.0	16.0	
> High School	23.7	10.2	
Missing	13.6	11.8	
Maternal Education			
< High School	37.2	13.0	
High School Graduate	36.8	12.0	
> High School	20.9	12.9	
Missing	5.0	13.1	
Mother Worked at Age 14			
Yes	46.1	13.7	
No	51.3	11.9	
Missing	2.7	7.6	
Living Arrangements at Age 14			
Both Parents	78.9	12.5	
One Parent Only	10.8	13.6	
Parent and Step-Parent	6.9	13.7	
Neither Parent	3.3	11.3	
Religion at Age 14			
No Religion	3.2	24.3	
Protestant, Type I	27.3	14.0	
Protestant, Type II	31.3	11.9	
Other Protestant	1.7	13.0	

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued).

	Weighted %	Weighted % Divorced	<i>p</i> -value
TOTAL SAMPLE ^a	100	12.6	--
Catholic	32.3	11.5	
Jewish	1.8	10.7	
Other Religion	2.4	8.4	
Location of Residence at Age 14			
Farm	23.2	11.2	
Small	34.2	12.3	
Medium	15.0	14.3	
Large Suburb	11.1	15.2	
Large	16.6	12.1	
Region of Residence at Age 14			
Northeast	21.7	9.9	**
Midwest	26.5	13.3	
South	29.0	12.7	
West	14.1	18.6	
Missing	8.6	7.4	

Significance Levels: # = $p < .10$; * = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .01$; *** = $p < .001$.

^aAs described in detail in the Methods section, the size of the analytic sample for all NHLS analyses involving the demographic and age-14 variables only – including the descriptive results presented in this table – is 1,852 individuals with no missing data on those variables or the dependent variable (divorce). The analytic sample sizes for analyses involving the measures of same-sex sexuality are slightly smaller because of missing data on those measures. The analytic sample sizes for analyses involving those variables are as follows: desire ($N = 1,844$); attraction ($N = 1,841$); behavior ($N = 1,852$); and identity ($N = 1,831$).

lowest among those living and Northeast (9.9%) and missing (7.4%). The association between father's educational attainment and divorce was marginally significant.

Multivariate analysis

We estimated a multivariate logistic regression equation for each of the four measures of same-sex sexuality. Each model included the demographic and age-14 control variables. As noted above, the analytic sample sizes varied slightly due to differences in missing data on the measures of same-sex sexuality.

As seen in [Table 2](#), net of the control variables, the odds of divorcing were significantly higher in three of the four equations, and were marginally higher in the fourth. Relative to those who reported no same-sex desire, the odds of divorcing were 2.18 times higher among those who did report same-sex desire. The odds of divorce were 2.39 times higher among those who reported same-sex attraction than among those who did not; however, this difference was only marginally significant. Relative to those who had not engaged in same-sex behavior since age 18, the odds of divorcing were 1.56 times higher among those who had engaged in same-sex behavior. The largest difference was observed between those who did and did not report a gay, lesbian, or bisexual identity; the AOR was 5.60.

Table 2. The associations between same-sex desire, attraction, and behavior, and gay/lesbian/bisexual identity and divorce, once-married persons, 1992 NHSLs.

VARIABLE	DIVORCE ^b		
	b (se)	AOR	p-value
Same-Sex Desire ^a	0.778 (0.316)	2.18	*
Same-Sex Attraction ^a	0.870 (0.497)	2.39	#
Same-Sex Sexual Behavior ^a	0.444 (0.208)	1.56	*
Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Identity ^a	1.723 (0.583)	5.60	**

Significance Levels: # = $p < .10$; * = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .01$; *** = $p < .001$.

^aThe analytic sample sizes for these NHSLs analyses are as follows: desire (N = 1,844); attraction (N = 1,841); behavior (N = 1,852); and identity (N = 1,831). Differences in the number of respondents with missing data on the same-sex sexuality measures accounts for differences in the analytic sample sizes.

^bModels include controls for demographic and age-14 variables. The demographic variables are: gender; age; race/ethnicity; place of birth; mother's and father's education. The age-14 variables are: maternal employment status; living arrangements; religion; location of residence; and region of residence.

Sub-study 2: NSFG

Population description

Table 3 presents the characteristics of the population represented by the analytic sample. As seen in the first column of Table 3, 9.1% of once-married individuals reported same-sex sexual attraction, and 9.0% reported ever engaging in same-sex behavior. However, only 3% identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual.

Bivariate analysis

Overall, 13.8% of the once-married had divorced. As seen in Table 3, all three of the measures of same-sex sexuality and six control variables had statistically significant bivariate associations with divorce among the once-married. Two other control variables had marginally significant associations. Respondents who reported same-sex attraction were significantly more likely to divorce than those who did not (23.2% versus 12.8%). Similarly, those who reported same-sex behavior were significantly more likely to divorce than those who did not (29.2% versus 12.3%). As was the case in the NHSLs analysis, the highest rate of divorce was observed among those who reported a gay, lesbian, or bisexual identity. Those who reported such an identity were significantly more likely to divorce than those who did not (30.9% versus 13.4%).

In addition to these measures of same-sex sexuality, age, race/ethnicity, foreign birth, age at marriage, living arrangements at age 14, and the religion

Table 3. Sample description and rates of divorce, once-married persons, 2011–2013 NSFG.

	Weighted %	Weighted % Divorced	p-value
TOTAL SAMPLE ^a	100	13.8	--
VARIABLE			
Same-Sex Attraction			
Yes	9.1	23.2	***
No	90.9	12.8	
Same-Sex Sexual Behavior			
Yes	9.0	29.2	***
No	91.0	12.3	
Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Identity			
Yes	3.0	30.9	***
No	97.0	13.4	
Gender			
Female	53.4	15.0	#
Male	46.7	12.4	
Age			
18–24 Years	5.5	4.8	***
25–29 Years	17.9	10.5	
30–34	23.7	13.1	
35–39 Years	24.9	14.0	
40–44 Years	28.0	18.1	
Race/Ethnicity			
White, Non-Hispanic	63.7	14.5	**
African American, Non-Hispanic	10.0	18.4	
Hispanic	20.0	9.9	
Other, Non-Hispanic	6.4	11.6	
Foreign-Born			
Yes	18.7	8.4	***
No	81.3	15.0	
Premarital Cohabitation			
Yes	61.6	14.2	
No	38.4	13.1	
Age at Marriage			
<20 Years	10.5	26.0	***
20–24 Years	38.5	15.6	
25–29 Years	33.8	10.8	
30+ Years	17.1	8.2	
Maternal Education			
<High School	23.5	11.1	#
High School Graduate	33.3	16.3	
Some College	21.7	14.5	
College Graduate or More	21.5	12.1	
Mother Worked at Ages 5–15			
Not for Pay	29.2	11.0	
Full-Time	16.9	15.1	
Part-Time	50.8	14.9	
Equally Full- and Part-Time	3.1	13.9	
Living Arrangements at Age 14			
Both Parents	70.7	11.7	***
One Parent Only	12.2	19.3	
Parent and Step-Parent	13.1	19.1	
Neither Parent/Other	4.0	15.7	
Religion Raised In ^b			
No Religion	8.2	22.4	***
Catholic	36.5	13.0	
Protestant, Type I	12.5	8.3	

(Continued)

Table 3. (Continued).

	Weighted %	Weighted % Divorced	p-value
Protestant, Type II	21.9	17.6	
Other Protestant	10.5	15.2	
Other Religion	10.3	7.0	
Survey Year			
2011	13.9	14.6	
2012	50.1	13.7	
2013	36.0	13.7	

Significance Levels: # = $p < .10$; * = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .01$; *** = $p < .001$.

^aAs described in detail in the Data and Methods section, the size of the analytic sample for all NSFG analyses involving the demographic and background variables only – including the descriptive results presented in this table – is 3,517 individuals with no missing data on those variables or the dependent variable (divorce). The analytic sample sizes for analyses involving the measures of same-sex sexuality are slightly smaller because of missing data on those measures. The analytic sample sizes for analyses involving those variables are as follows: attraction (N = 3,463); behavior (N = 3,494); and identity (N = 3,474).

^bCoding informed by Laumann et al. (1994; see Appendix 3.1A: Construction of the Religion Variable for Protestant Respondents, p. 146), but conditional on the categories provided by the NSFG. Protestant Type I includes the NSFG category that includes Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Episcopalian denominations. Protestant Type II combines two NSFG categories: Baptist/Southern Baptist and Fundamentalist Protestant. Other Protestant combines two NSFG categories: Other Protestant Denomination and Protestant, No Denomination.

in which the respondent was raised were associated significantly with divorce. Older age was associated significantly with the likelihood of divorce, ranging from 4.8% among those aged 18–24 to 18.1% among those aged 40–44 years. Non-Hispanic African Americans had the highest percentage divorced (18.4%), while Hispanics had the lowest (9.9%). The foreign-born were significantly less likely than the native-born to divorce (8.4% versus 15.0%). Age at marriage was strongly, inversely associated with divorce; the percent divorced among those who married younger before age 20 was 26%, while it was 8.2% among those who married at age 30 or more. The percentage divorced was lowest among those living with both parents at age 14 (11.7%) and highest among those living with one parent (19.3%) or a parent and step-parent (19.1%). The percentage divorced was highest among those with no religious affiliation at age 14 (22.4%), lower among those raised Catholic, Protestant, Type II, or categorized as Other Protestant (ranging from 13.0%-17.6%), and lowest among those raised in Protestant, Type I denominations and religions other than Catholic and Protestant denominations (8.3% and 7.0%, respectively).

Multivariate analysis

We estimated a multivariate logistic regression equation for each of the three measures of same-sex sexuality. Each model included all of the demographic and background control variables. As noted above, the sample sizes for each analysis varied slightly due to differences in missing data on the measure of same-sex sexuality.

As seen in Table 4, net of the control variables, the odds of divorcing were significantly higher in all three of the equations. Relative to the first-married who reported no same-sex attraction, the odds of divorcing were 2.23 times higher among the first-married who did report same-sex attraction. The odds of divorce were 2.94 times higher among those who reported same-sex behavior than among those who did not, while they were 2.72 times higher among those who reported a gay, lesbian, or bisexual identity than among those who did not.

Discussion

Sociologists and other family scholars have shown that an array of factors predict divorce, but few studies have investigated whether any of the components of same-sex sexuality—desire/attraction, behavior, and gay, lesbian, or bisexual identity—also predict divorce from a different-sex spouse. This is despite ample theoretical work documenting the persistence of heteronormativity (e.g., Kitzinger, 2005; Martin, 2009) and showing how an ideal marriage is widely thought to be unique and exclusive (e.g., Swidler, 2001). Such work suggests that the components of same-sex sexuality are incompatible with a different-sex marriage and might therefore lead to an increased risk of divorce. To test this, we analyzed two nationally-representative datasets: the 1992 NHSLS and the 2011–2013 NSFG. In preliminary analyses, we found that the components of same-sex sexuality increase the likelihood of never marrying. Thus, having same-sex desires/attractions, engaging in same-

Table 4. The associations between same-sex attraction, behavior, and gay/lesbian/bisexual identity and divorce, once-married persons, 2011–2013 NSFG.

VARIABLE	DIVORCE ^b		
	b (se)	AOR	p-value
Same-Sex Attraction ^a	0.800 (0.191)	2.23	***
Same-Sex Sexual Behavior ^a	1.081 (0.175)	2.94	***
Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Identity ^a	1.030 (0.261)	2.72	***

Significance Levels: # = $p < .10$; * = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .01$; *** = $p < .001$.

^aThe analytic sample sizes for these NSFG analyses are as follows: attraction (N = 3,373); behavior (N = 3,403); and identity (N = 3,384). Differences in the number of respondents with missing data on the same-sex sexuality measures accounts for differences in the analytic sample sizes.

^bModels include controls for demographic, marital, and background variables. The demographic variables are: gender; age; race/ethnicity; place of birth; and mother's education. The marital variables are: premarital cohabitation and age at marriage. The background variables are: maternal employment status when the respondent between 5 and 15 years old; living arrangements at age 14; and religion in which the respondent was raised. Survey year is also controlled.

sex behavior, or identifying as gay, lesbian, or bisexual selects some people out of different-sex marriages. This suggests that for some, each of these components emerge early enough in the life course to inhibit them from contracting a different-sex marriage, and that same-sex sexuality may serve as a brake on divorce by preventing some different-sex marriages that might ultimately end in divorce. We caution that the data we used are cross-sectional, which limits our ability to know when the components of same-sex sexuality emerged relative to a different-sex marriage (i.e., before, during, or after). Nevertheless, these preliminary analyses, along with the theoretical and qualitative empirical work referenced above, support our assumption that, for many, some component(s) of same-sex sexuality emerged prior to or during a different-sex marriage.

In our primary analyses, we found that same-sex desire/attraction, behavior, and lesbian, gay, or bisexual identity are all associated with an increase in the odds of divorce from a different-sex spouse among the once-married, net of demographic and early-life factors. In the NHSLS, desire, behavior, and identity were statistically significant correlates of divorce, with identity having the largest effect; attraction was only marginally significant. In the NSFG, attraction, behavior, and identity were each significant correlates, and the adjusted odds ratios were large (ranging from 2.23 to 2.94). Because we cannot ascertain the timing of the emergence of same-sex sexuality in relation to the divorce, we caution against drawing causal conclusions based on these findings.

However, the consistency of the findings across these two sub-studies is interesting given the many changes that took place with respect to the social acceptance of same-sex sexuality and the de-institutionalization of marriage between the second half of the 20th century and the early years of the 21st. For several decades now, the pillars that once upheld the era of the closet have been crumbling (Seidman, 2002). The gay rights movement emphasized coming out as a political tactic, likely emboldening many to leave their mixed-orientation marriages (see D'Emilio, 1983; Stein, 1997). Today, lesbian, gay, and bisexual people are more likely to come out, and they are doing so at younger ages (Savin-Williams, 2005). Although anti-gay sentiments persist, being out is more possible than ever. At the same time, the pressure to marry has decreased, and many people are now marrying later in life or even eschewing marriage altogether (Cherlin, 2004). In addition, divorce laws have grown more permissive, and attitudes toward divorce have grown more accepting (see Cherlin, 1992; Hackstaff, 1999). Each of these is a reversal of the trends that pushed non-heterosexual people into different-sex marriages during the 20th century, and as a result, one might have expected that same-sex sexuality would have less of a destabilizing effect on different-sex marriages. However, our analysis shows that despite these changes, same-sex desire/attraction, behavior, and gay, lesbian, or bisexual identity continue to be associated with an increase in the odds of divorce for

once-married individuals in different-sex marriages. It appears that despite these recent shifts, heteronormativity and the ideology of romantic love remain strong enough to simultaneously incentivize and destabilize different-sex marital relationships among those who at some point before, during, or after marriage experience some aspect of same-sex sexuality.

This study has many strengths, including: its use of two, high-quality, nationally representative datasets; the availability of measures of several dimensions of same-sex sexuality; and our ability to control for a range of background characteristics. The independent replication of our main findings across these two datasets and time periods is theoretically and empirically important. However, this study also has some limitations. A primary limitation is that the data are cross-sectional and do not allow us to know when the components of same-sex sexuality emerged in relation to marriage and divorce; it is possible that in some cases, same-sex desires, behaviors, or identities developed only *after* the marriage had ended. Longitudinal data that track sexual development in relation to marriage and divorce are needed to more clearly establish the extent to which aspects of same-sex sexuality that developed before or during a different-sex marriage contribute to its dissolution. A second limitation of the current study is that we do not know what individuals themselves think caused their marriages to end; subjective appraisals and attributions of cause would help clarify the role, if any, that same-sex sexuality plays in divorce.

This research also raises questions that might be addressed in future research. First, although we have established that the components of same-sex sexuality increase the odds of divorce for different-sex couples, future research should examine whether these associations hold across gender, race/ethnicity, and social class. Second, future research should aim to determine the extent to which there are differences in marital outcomes for those who identify as bisexual as opposed to gay or lesbian. Finally, future research should also ask whether the legal availability of same-sex marriage makes those with same-sex sexuality more likely to leave different-sex marriages. And, if it does, how do individuals make such decisions? NSFG data were collected between 2011 and 2013, when same-sex marriage was legal in several states, but it only became legal nationwide in 2015. Thus, many have only recently been given access to same-sex marriage. Because many people with same-sex sexuality enter into different-sex marriages because they value marriage or see it as “normal” (Higgins, 2002; Pearcey, 2005), the possibility of marrying someone of the same sex may decrease the appeal of a different-sex marriage in the first place and/or incentivize divorce within already-contracted different-sex marriages.

In general, future research on marriage and divorce should strive to take same-sex sexuality into account whenever possible. To date, few researchers outside of those contributing to the literature on mixed-orientation marriages have considered same-sex sexuality, perhaps because of the under-

theorized assumption that it is only relevant to those who have come out as gay, lesbian, or bisexual, thus making it irrelevant to different-sex marriages. However, as previous research has shown (e.g., Laumann et al., 1994), same-sex desire/attraction, behavior, and identity are distinct and can be present among those who identify as heterosexual (Hoy & London, 2018) and among those in different-sex relationships. It can also shorten first different-sex marriages (Hoy & London, 2017). Thus, same-sex sexuality matters for far more people than is often assumed, and as our analysis here has shown, the components of same-sex sexuality can shape an individual's marital biography in important ways.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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