



# What's the Difference? Sexual Risk Behaviors of HIV+ Gay Men vs. HIV+ Bisexual Men

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The LA Research & Community Colloquia

Thanks to Lee Klosinski, Ph.D., Jeff Bailey,  
and Nancy Wongvipat, M.P.H.

# 1999 Client Survey

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- Mailed to 4,666 clients
- Study population represents 60% of all APLA clients
- 1,610 surveys returned (N =1,610)
- Respondents represent 21% of all APLA clients
- 34.5% response rate
- Highest response rate



# Major New Areas of Investigation, 1999

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- Medical Status (T-Cell & Viral Load)
- New Quality of Life Measure
- Recreational Drug Use
- Alcohol Use
- Tobacco Use
- Sexual and Injection Risk Behaviors



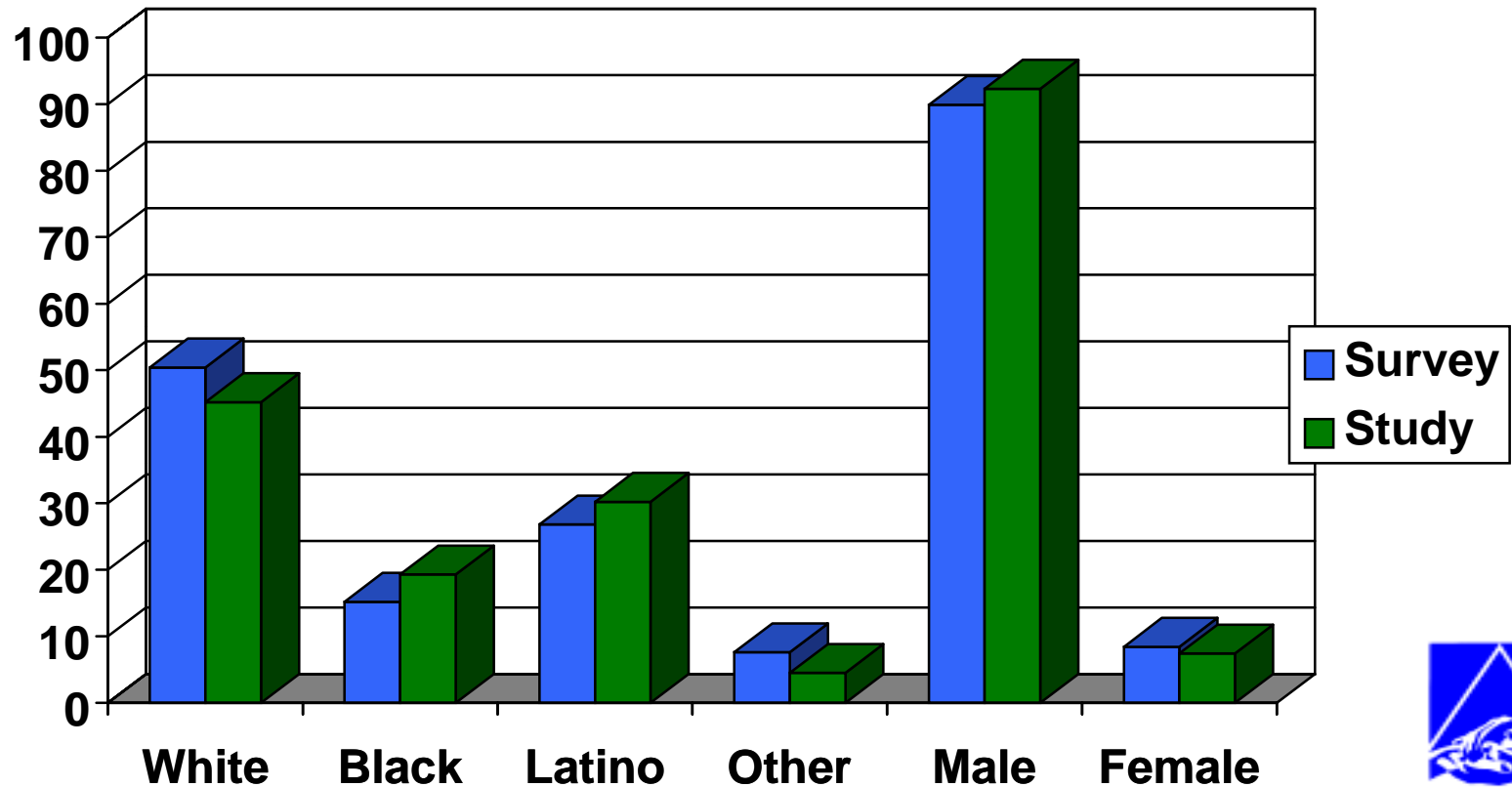
# Survey Limitations

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- Based on self-reported data
- Over-representation of Caucasians
- Males NOT over-represented this time
- Homeless clients not under-represented
- The findings may not be generalizable to the total APLA population



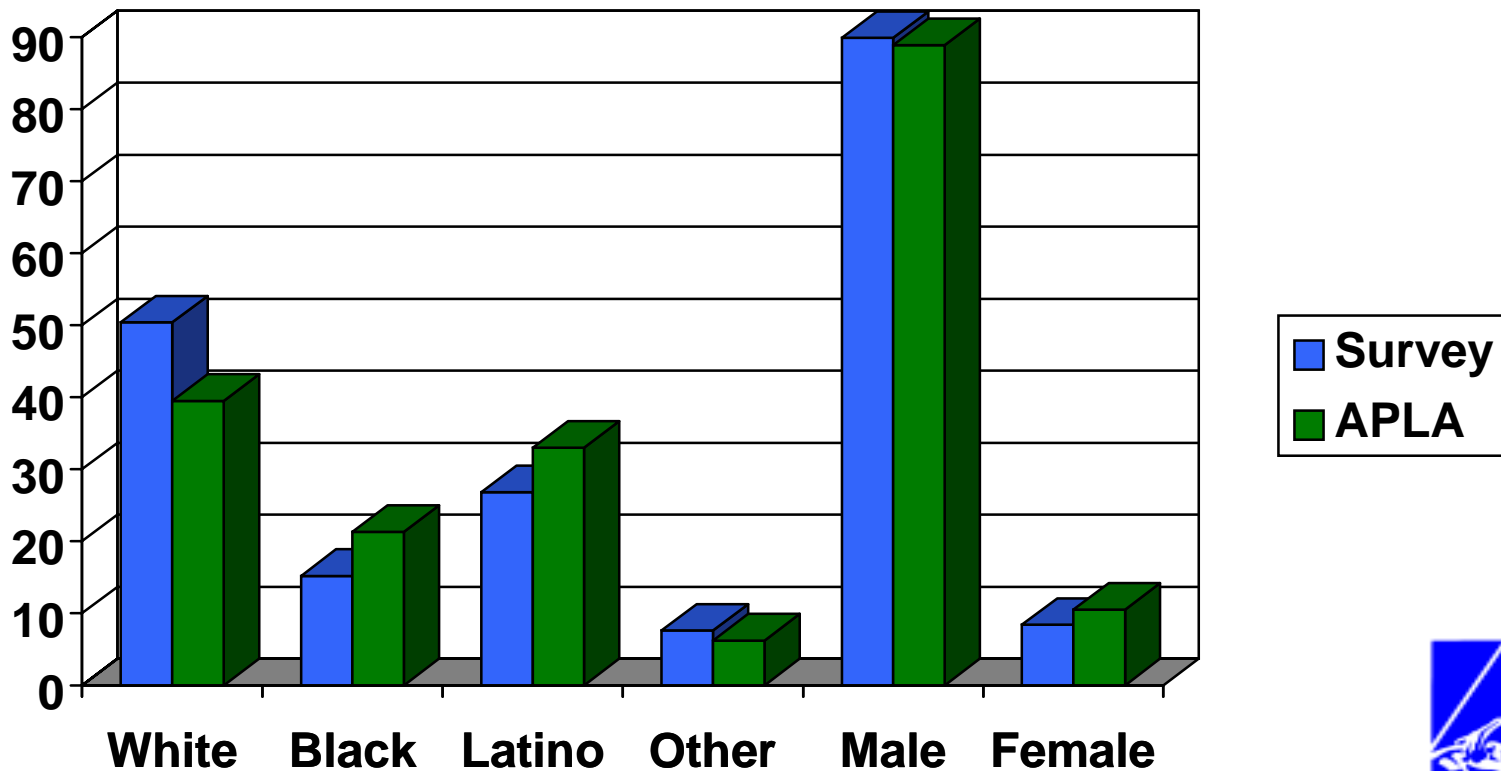
# Survey Respondents/Study Pop: Race/Ethnicity & Sex



Caucasians over-represented in survey:  $P < .05$



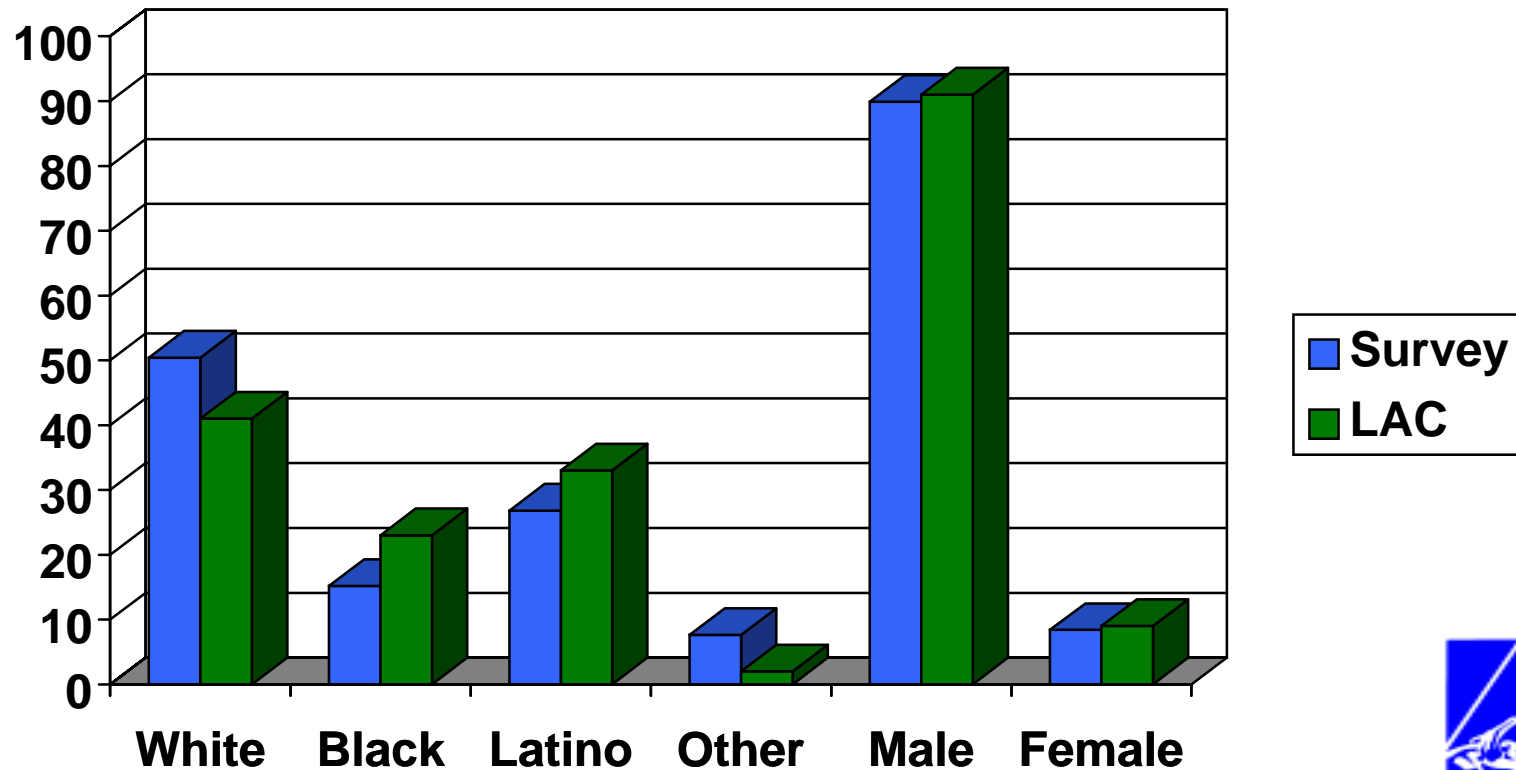
# Survey Respondents/APLA Pop: Race/Ethnicity & Sex



Caucasians over-represented in survey:  $P < .05$



# Survey Respondents/LAC PLWA: Race/Ethnicity & Sex



Caucasians over-represented in survey:  $P < .05$



# Significance: HIV+ Gay and Bisexual Men

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- HIV transmission involves at least one person who is HIV+; disclosure of HIV status to sexual partners is low (DeRosa and Marks, 1998)
- Superinfection is possible and may lead to disease progression (Angel et al., 2000)
- Secondary infections are possible (i.e., syphilis) and lead to disease progression



# Significance: HIV+ Gay and Bisexual Men (Cont.)

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- Increased incidence of sexual risk behaviors among MSM & MSMW
- Risk of transmission may be higher for bisexual men who are uncomfortable disclosing homosexual behavior
- Increased prevalence of AIDS in African American & Latino communities; African Americans and Latinos are more likely to identify as bisexuals



# Two Themes

## in Literature on Bisexual Men

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- Bisexual men as vectors of transmission to heterosexual women
- African American and Latino men more likely to identify as bisexuals



# Theme #1:

## Bisexual Men as Vectors

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- 27% of bisexual men who reported having primary female partners reported UAI (unprotected anal intercourse) with men (Kalichman et al., 1998)
- 75% did not disclose their bisexuality to their female partners (Kalichman et al., 1998)
- 74% did not disclose their HIV status to their female partners (Wold et al., 1998)
- Prevalence of HIV transmitted from bisexual men was 3 to 5 times higher among Latino and African American women than Caucasian Women (Chu, 1992)



# Theme #1:

## Bisexual Men as Vectors (Cont.)

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- Bisexual men with primary female partners reported less UAI with men compared to those without primary partners (Kalichman et al., 1998)
- But bisexual men with primary female partners reported more unprotected vaginal intercourse (UVI) and UAI with females compared to non-partnered bisexual men (Kalichman, 1998)
- Bisexual men who had disclosed their bisexuality were more open about their sexuality in general (Kalichman, 1998)



# Theme #2: Minority Bisexuality

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- African American men reported more bisexuality than Latino men and Caucasian Men (Chu, 1992):
- 41% of African American men
- 31% of Latino men
- 21% of Caucasian men reported bisexuality



# Sexual Risk Behaviors Among Gay and Bisexual Men in Literature

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- 30-40% prevalence of UAI with men found among gay and bisexual men (Kalichman et al., 1997) and HIV+ men who have sex with men (Simon et al., 1999)
- No difference on rate of UAI found between gay men and bisexual men (Kalichman, et al., 1998)
- Bisexual men report higher (40-50%) prevalence of unprotected vaginal or anal sex with a female partner (Simon et al., 1999; Wold et al., 1998)



# Differences Between Gay and Bisexual Men

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- Gay men view safer sex as more normative (Kalichman et al., 1998)
- Bisexual men are less likely to identify with the gay community (Wold et al., 1998); less likely to get tested for HIV and less likely to disclose sex with men to others (Kalichman et al.; 1998)



# Differences Between Gay and Bisexual Men (Cont.)

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- Bisexual men report fewer male partners compared to gay men (Chu et al., 1992; Wold et al., 1998) more female sexual partners and more unprotected sex with their female partners compared to their male partners (Wold et al., 1998)
- No sociodemographic differences between gay and bisexual men (Wold et al., 1998)
- Bisexual men tend to be older; African Americans and Latinos more likely to be bisexual (Chu et al., 1992)



# Some of the Limitations to Previous Studies

- Erkstand, 1989: Sample included HIV+ & HIV- bisexuals men; older data
- Kalichman et al., 1997, 1998: Sample drawn from individuals in a prevention program
- Erkstand, 1989; Kalichman et al., 1997, 1998: Sample predominantly Caucasian
- Kalichman et al., 1997: Gay and bisexual men lumped together in analyses



# Some Limitations (Cont.)

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- Wold et al., 1998: Convenience sample of bisexual men
- Wight, 1998: Study of a computer survey method; problems with study design (skewed toward lower SES)
- Simon et al., 1999: No data about serostatus of sex partners or frequency of sexual activities; study limited to those with AIDS diagnosis (not HIV only)



# APLA 1999 Client Survey Contributions

- Study of a large population of people living with HIV/AIDS in Los Angeles County (APLA Clients=8,000+)
- Study of gay and bisexual men with HIV and AIDS; bisexual men not primarily Caucasian
- Data collected on sexual risk behaviors; co-factors (drug and alcohol use); disclosure; and serostatus, number, and sex of sexual partners



# Guiding Questions

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- Who are the HIV+ Bisexual Men?
- Who are the HIV+ Gay Men?
- How, if at all, are they demographically different?
- What are the risk behaviors of HIV+ Bisexual Men and HIV+ Gay Men? How are they similar and different?
- What are the implications for Prevention 4 Positives (P4P) Programs?

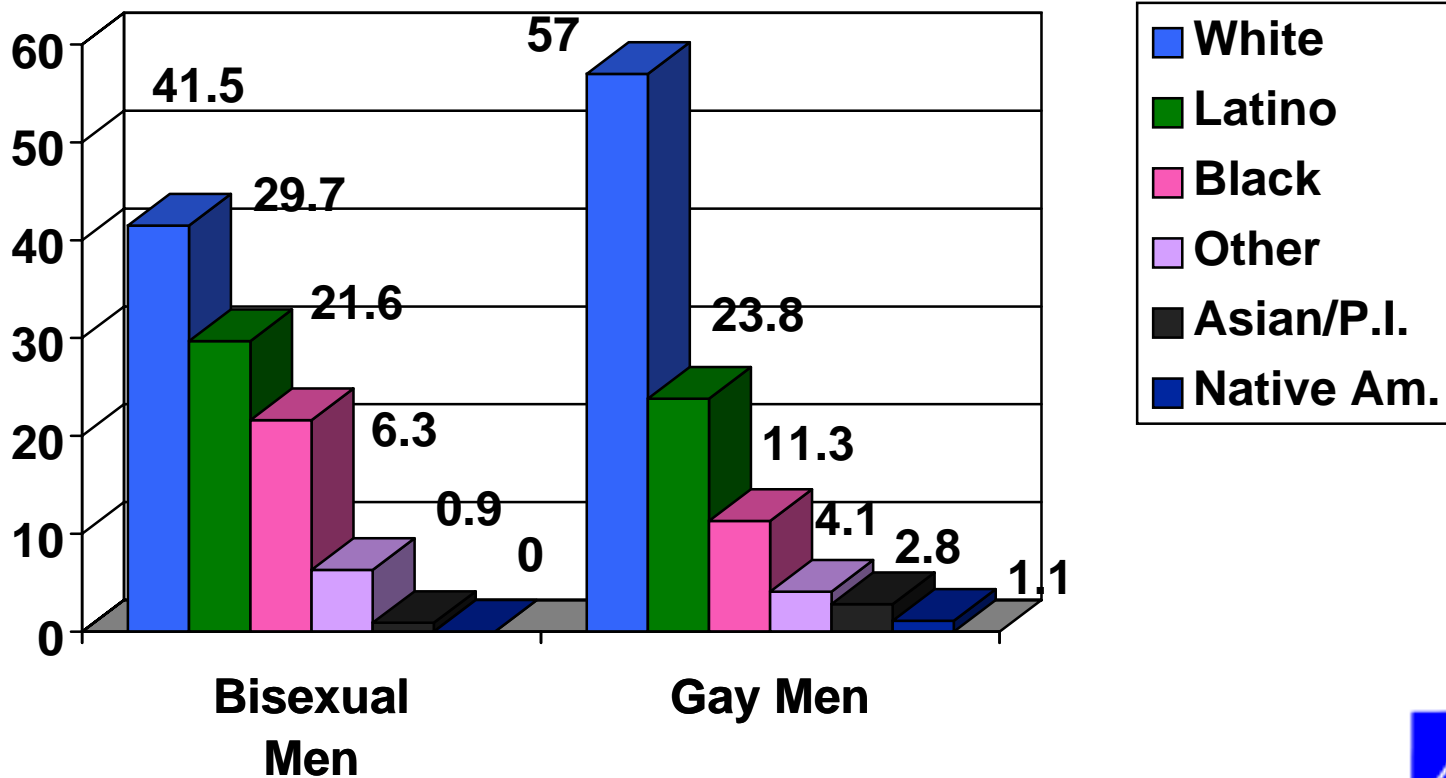


# Who are the HIV+ Bisexual and HIV+ Gay Men?

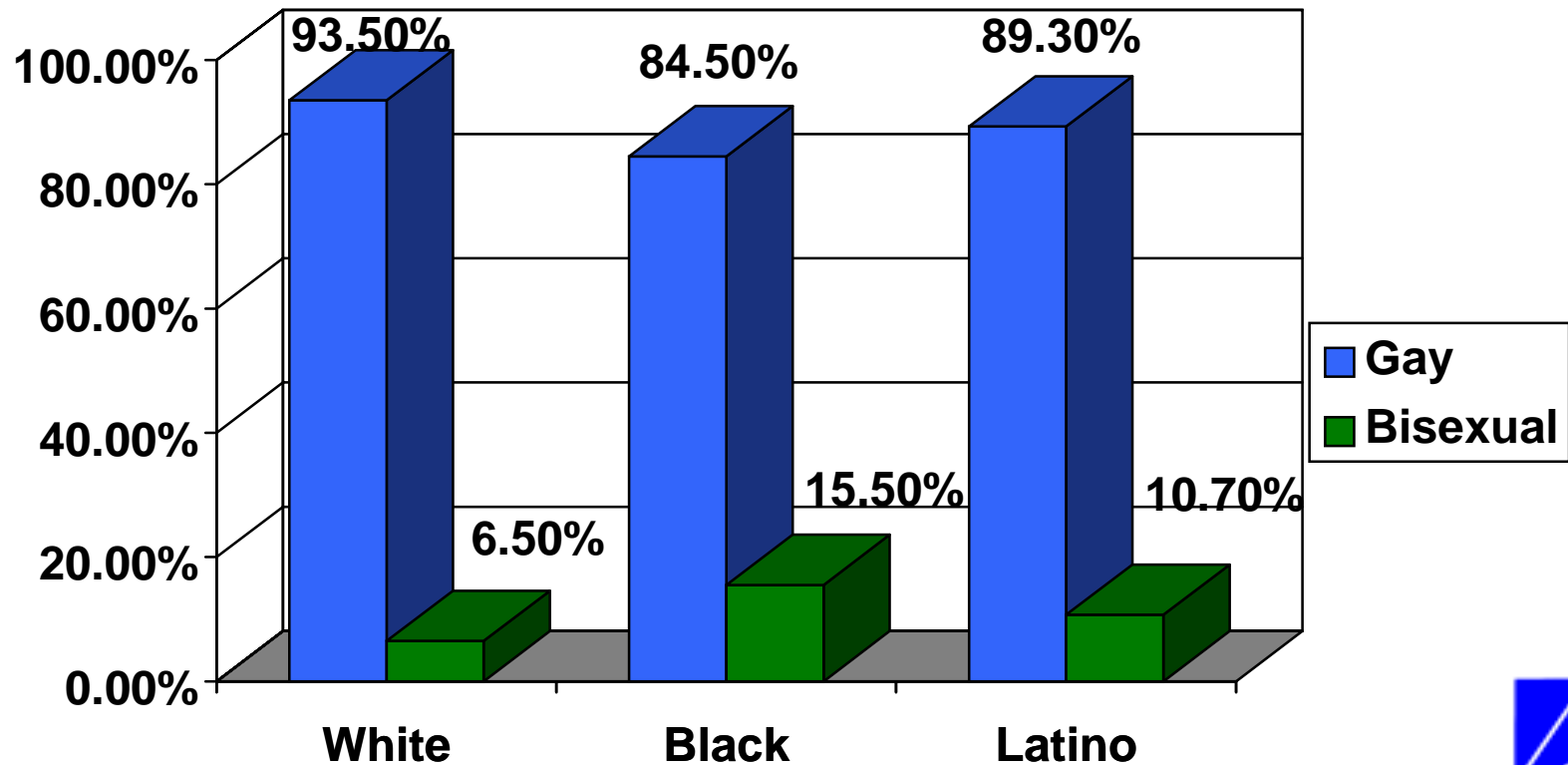
- Bisexual Men (N=113)
  - 7% of respondents
  - Average age: 44
  - Majority at or below the poverty level
  - 40% reported undetectable viral load
  - 48% reported having an AIDS diagnosis
- Gay Men (N=1174)
  - 72% of respondents
  - Average age: 42
  - Majority NOT at or below the poverty level
  - 50% reported undetectable viral load
  - 60% reported having an AIDS diagnosis



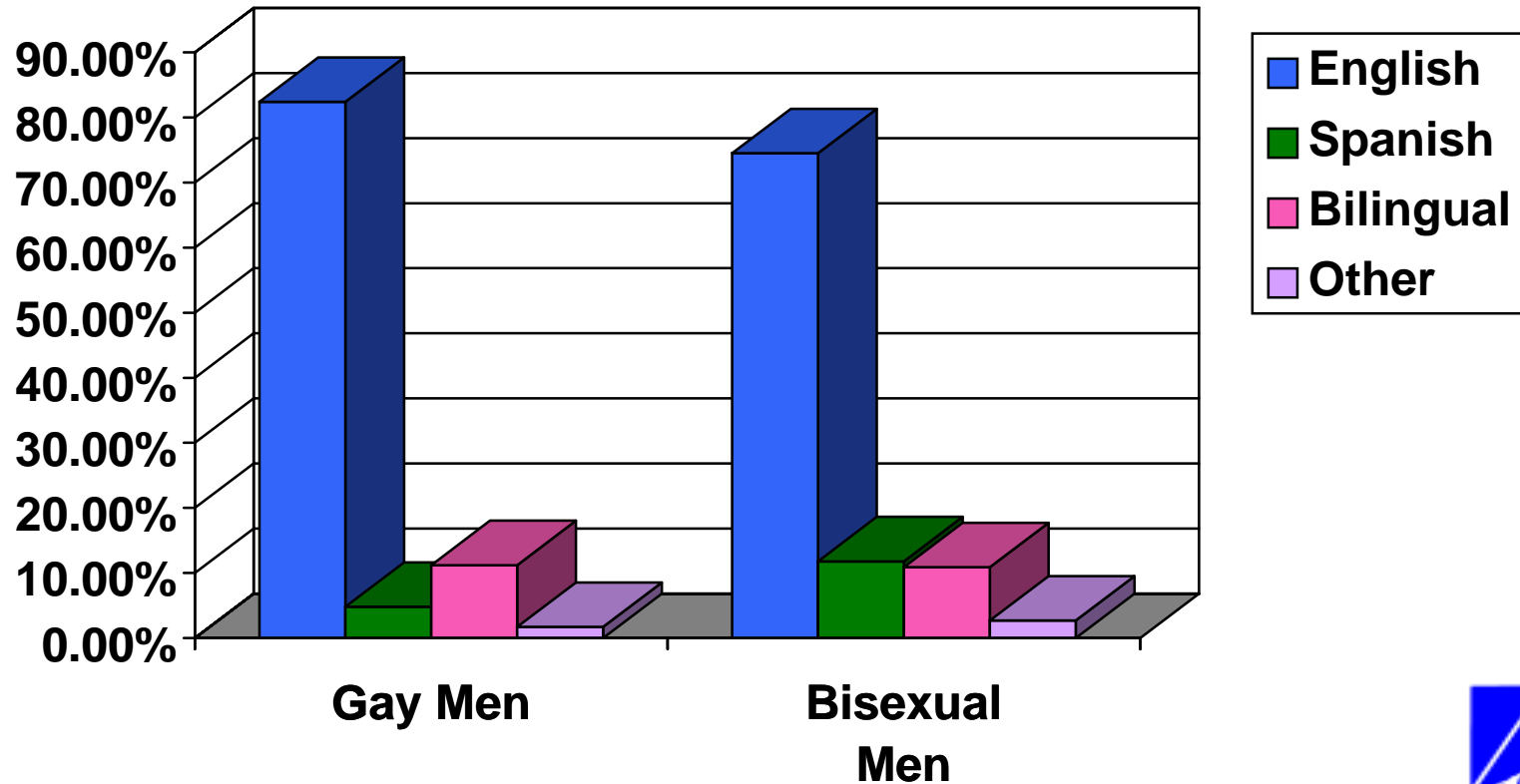
# Racial/Ethnic Differences: HIV+ Gay and Bisexual Men (P<.01)



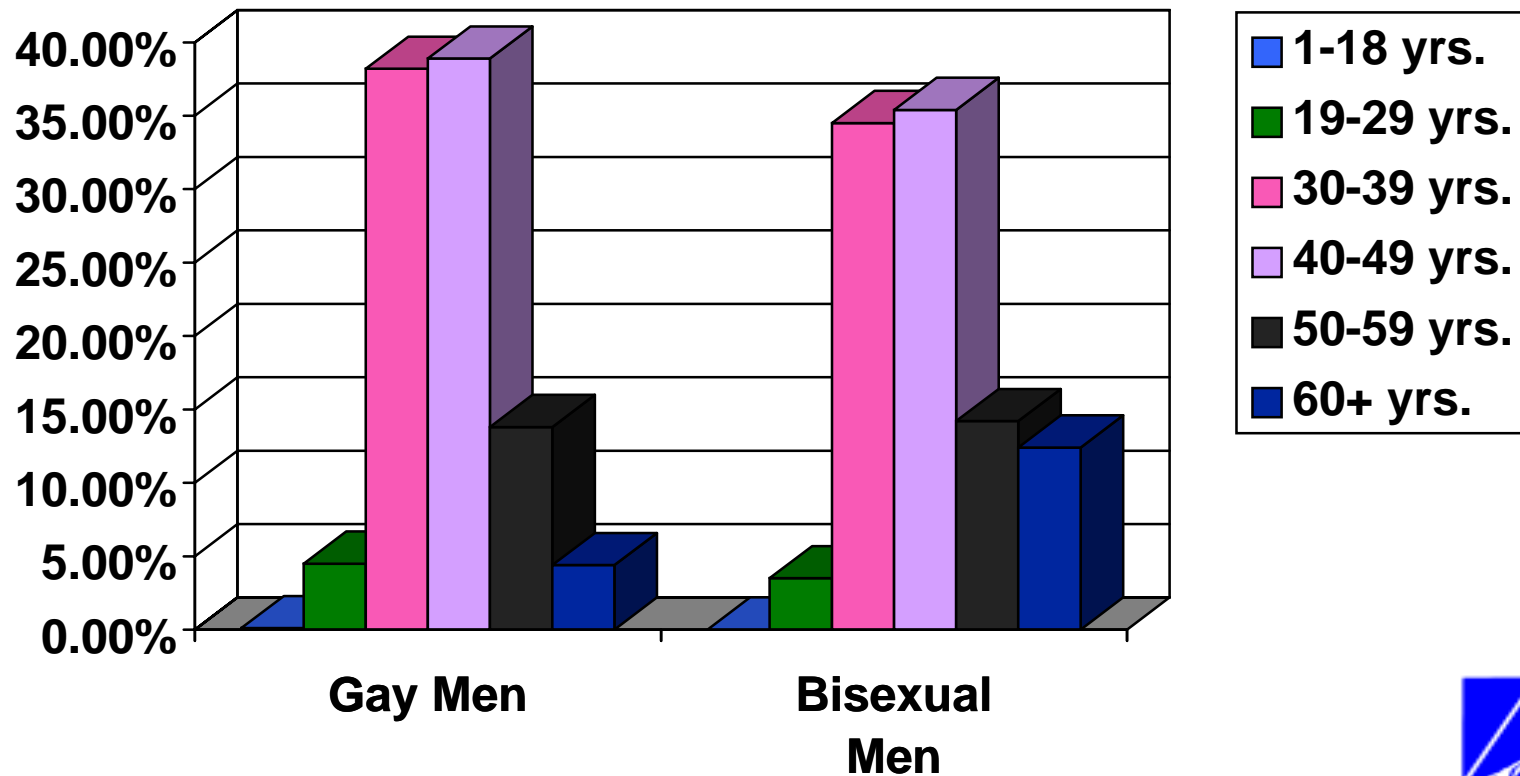
# Bisexuality and Homosexuality by Race/Ethnicity (P<.05)



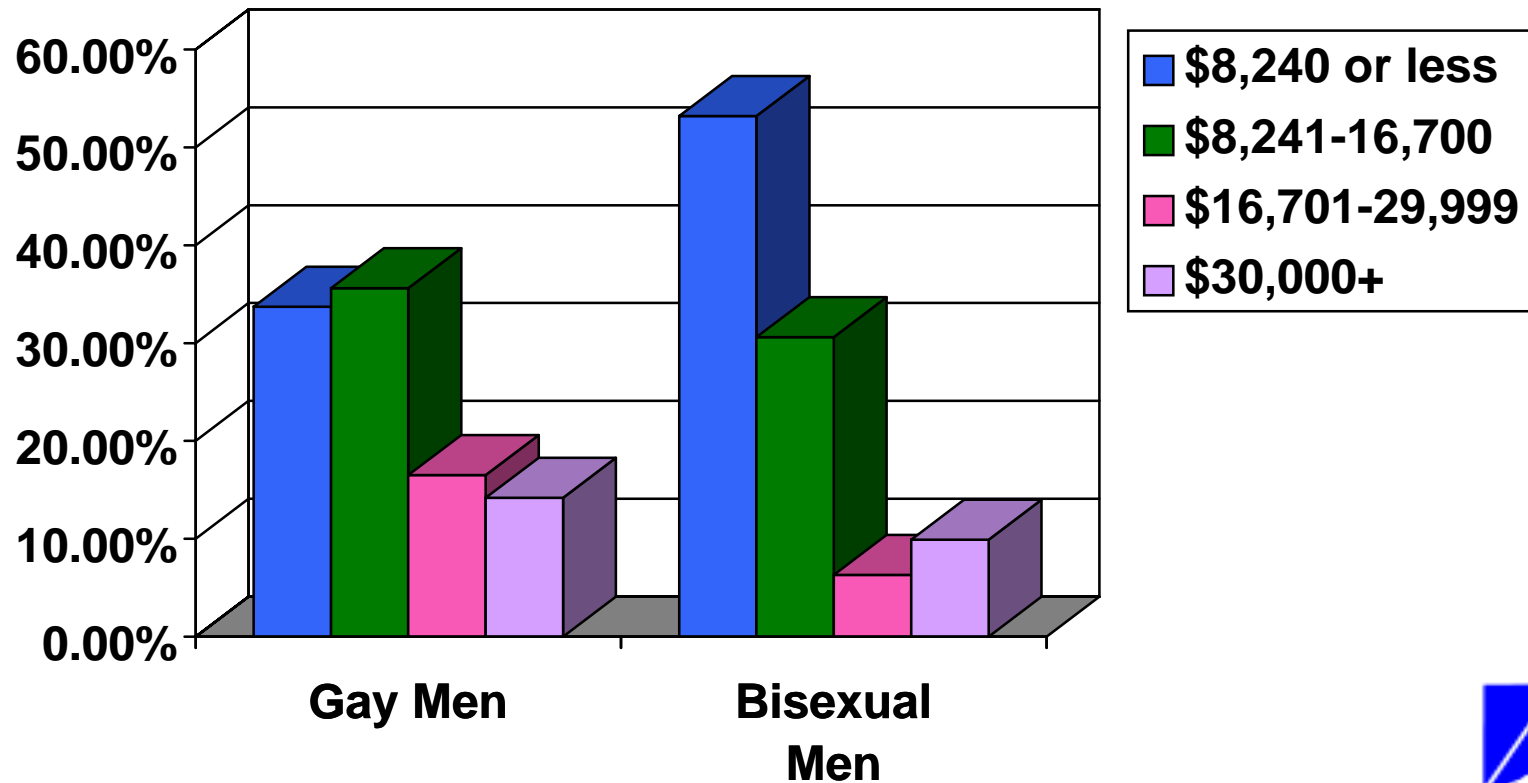
# Language Differences between HIV+ Gay and Bisexual Men (P<.05)



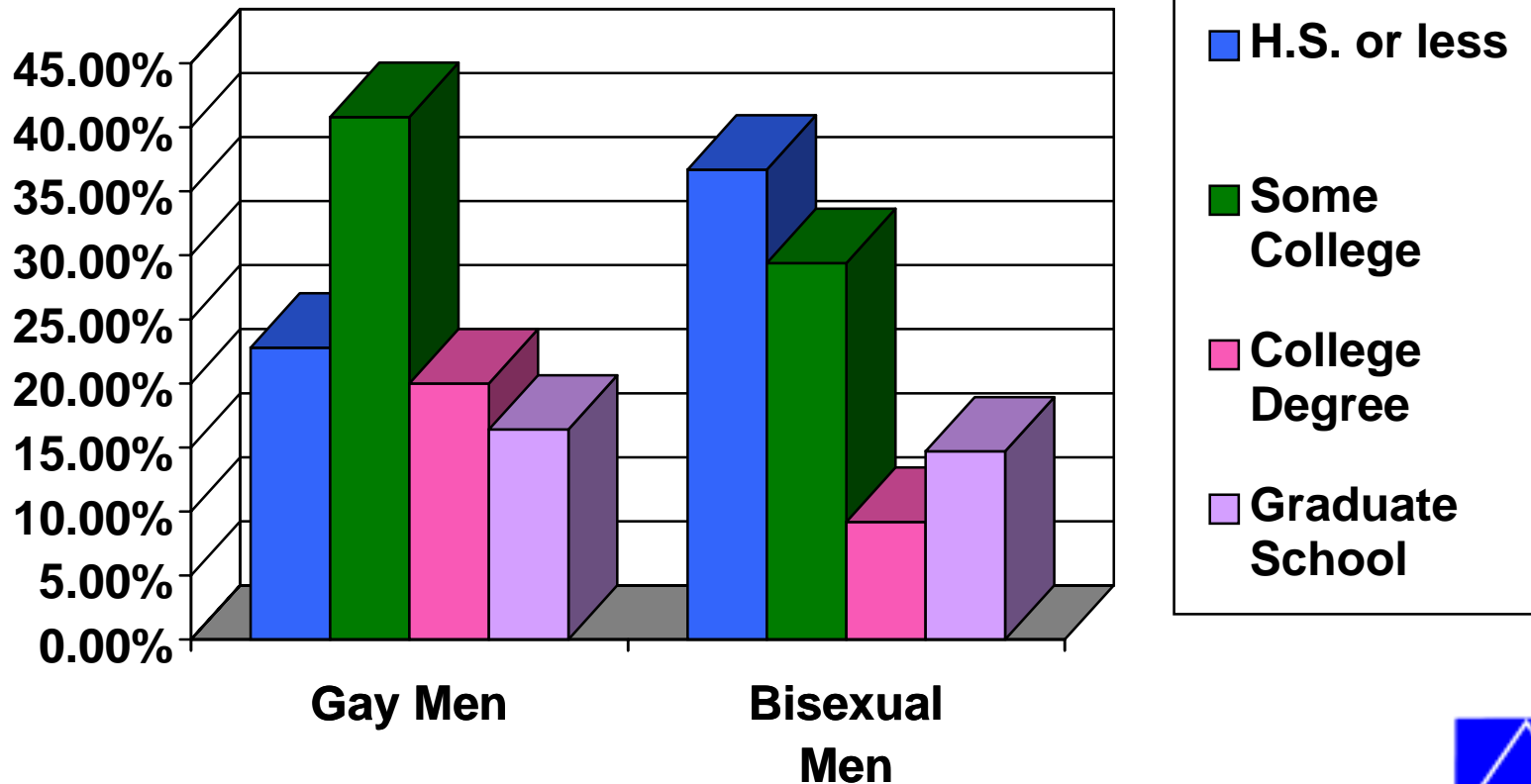
# Age Differences Between HIV+ Gay and Bisexual Men (P<.05)



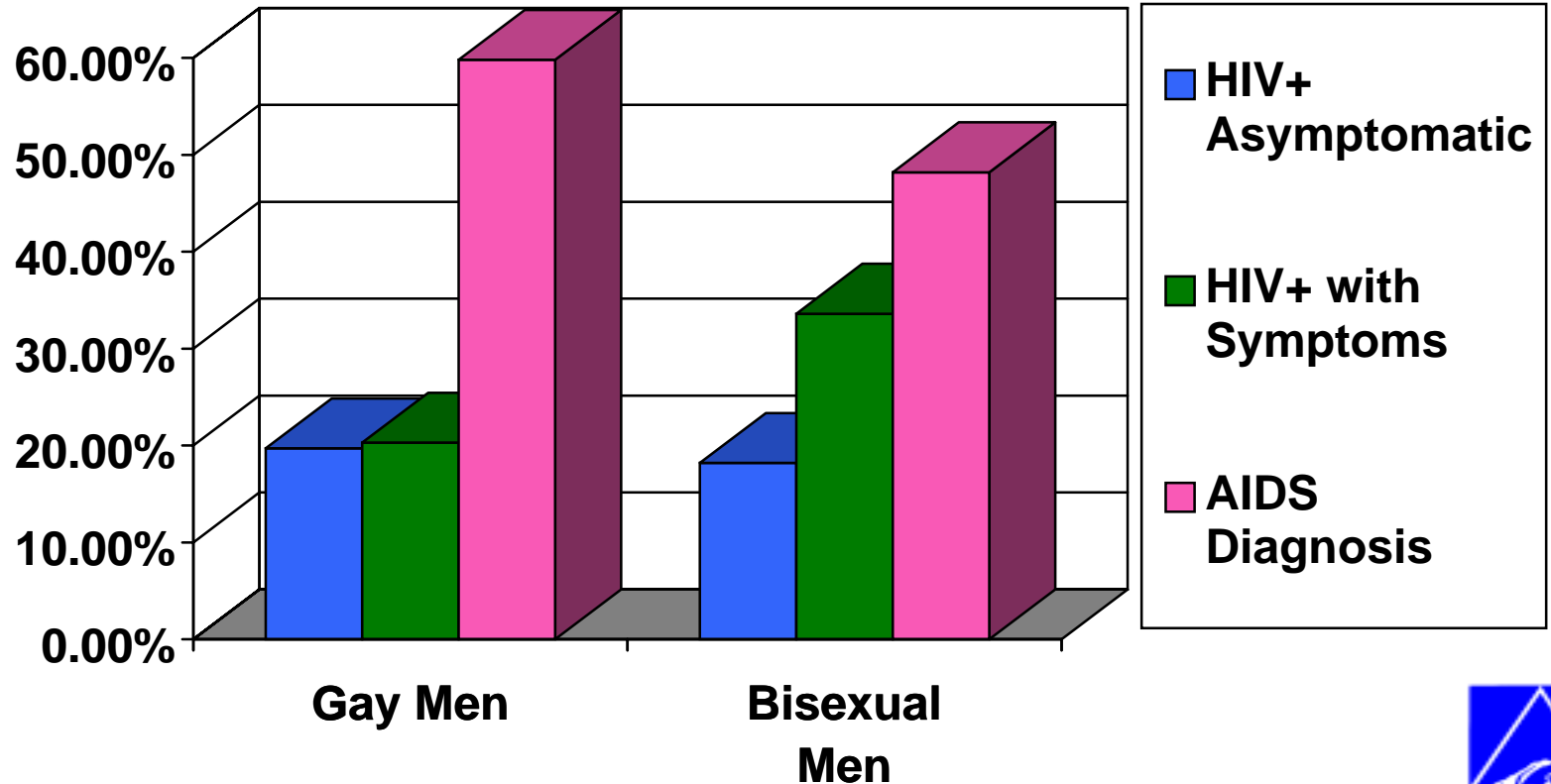
# Differences in Annual Income: HIV+ Gay and Bisexual Men (P<.001)



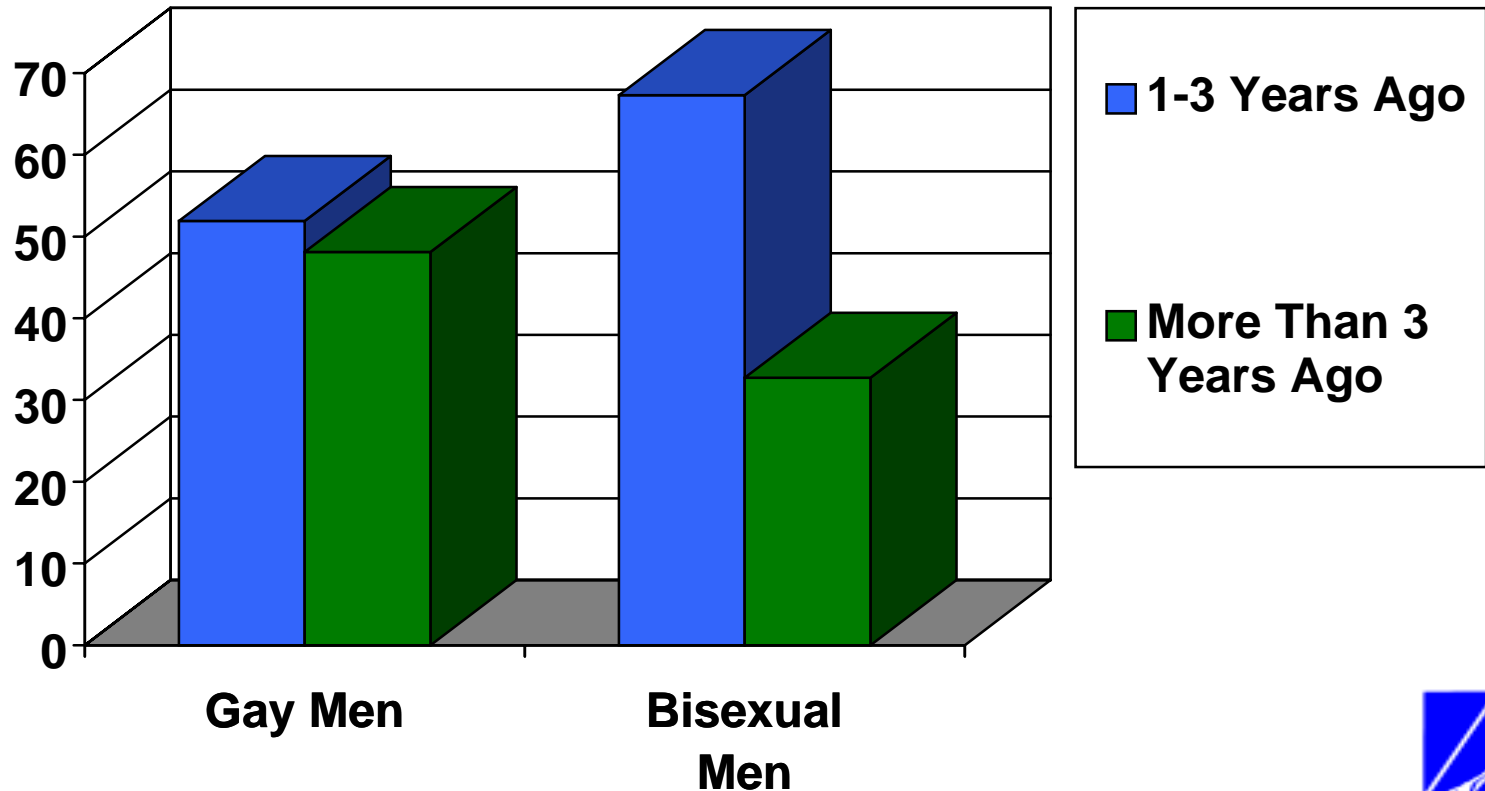
# Differences in Educational Level: HIV+ Gay and Bisexual Men (P<.01)



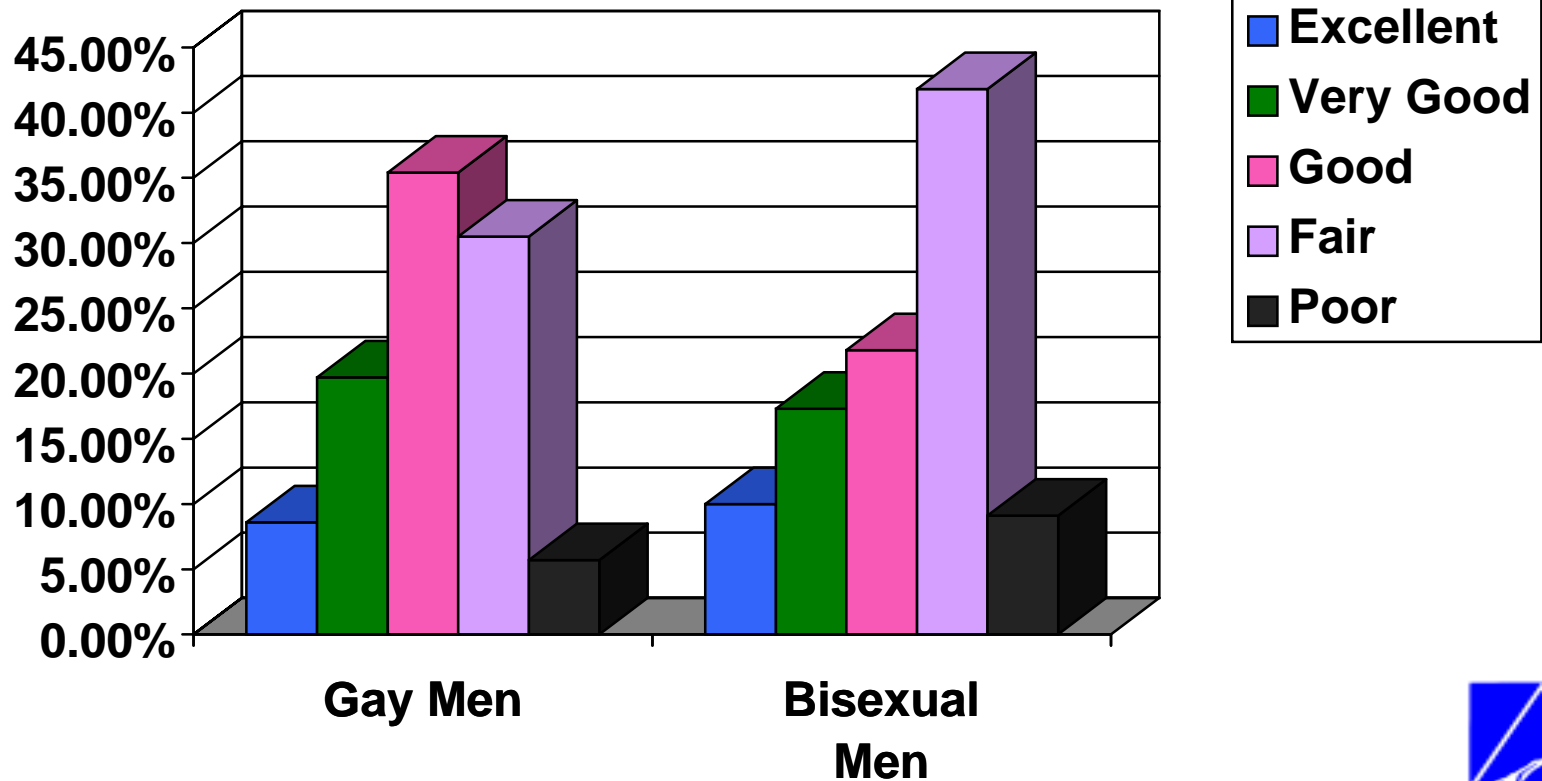
# Differences in HIV/AIDs Status: HIV+ Gay and Bisexual Men (P<.05)



# When did you find out that you were HIV+? (P<.01)



# Differences in General Health Status: HIV+ Gay and Bisexual Men (P<.05)



# Demographic Differences Between HIV+ Gay and Bisexual Men ( $P < .05$ )

- The bisexual men were older, more likely to speak Spanish, more likely to be African American/Black and Latino/Hispanic, more likely to report lower educational and income levels, less likely to report having had an AIDS diagnosis, and more likely to report fair to poor general health compared to the gay men.
- Bisexual men were more likely to have found out about being HIV+ more recently.



# Sexual Risk Behaviors by Sexual Orientation

● All Clients	31%
● Gay Men	34%
● Lesbian Women	N=3
● Bisexual Men	30%
● Bisexual Women	N=7
● Heterosexual Women	15%
● Heterosexual Men	12%



# Sexual Risk Behaviors: Significant Differences: $P < .05$

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- Gay and bisexual men more likely than women and heterosexuals to report sexual risk behaviors



# Sexual Partners in the Past 6 Months: Bisexual vs. Gay Men



	<b>Gay Men</b>	<b>Bisexual Men</b>	<b>P value</b>
Mean # of Partners	5.3	3.9	NS
% Sexually Active	72.6%	66.3%	NS
% Reporting Male Partners	62.5%	51.3%	<.05
% Reporting Female Partners	0.7%	14%	<.0001

# Sexual Risk Behaviors of Sexually Active Gay & Bisexual Men who Reported Sex with Men P=NS

<b>Unprotected Insertive Anal</b>	<b>Gay Men N=755</b>	<b>Bisexual Men N=58</b>
With HIV - Partner	12.1%	11.5%
With HIV + Partner	32.7%	29.3%
With Partner of Unknown Status	19.0%	11.8%
Any Insertive Anal Risk	42.4%	40.0%



# Sexual Risk Behaviors of Sexually Active Gay & Bisexual Men who Reported Sex with Men P=NS

<b>Unprotected Receptive Anal</b>	<b>Gay Men N=755</b>	<b>Bisexual Men N=58</b>
With HIV - Partner	15.1%	16.3%
With HIV+ Partner	27.7%	27.3%
With Partners of Unknown Status	18.4%	16.7%
Any Unprotected Receptive Anal	40.2%	37.0%



# Sexual Risk Behaviors with HIV- and HIV Status Unknown Partners: P=NS

Sexually Active Men	Gay Men N=755	Bisexual Men N=58
Unprotected Anal Sex	39.5%	34.1%



# Sexually Active Bisexual Men

## Sexual Risk with Men vs. Women P=NS

	<b>Sex with Men N=58</b>	<b>Sex with Women N=16</b>
Any Anal/Vaginal Risk	62.2%	50%
Anal/Vaginal Risk with HIV- or unknown HIV	<b>41.0%</b>	<b>38.5%</b>



# An Additional Caveat

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- Small sample size for bisexual men (N=113)
- Smaller number of bisexual men who reported sex with women (N=16)



# Factors Associated with Sexual Risk Among Bisexual Men ( $P < .05$ )

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- Non-adherence to HIV Medications Any Recreational Drug Use
- Smoking tobacco
- Marijuana Use
- Feeling the effects of drugs or alcohol before or during sexual activities



# Predictors of Sexual Risk Among Bisexual Men (P<.05)

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>O.R. (C.I.)</b>	<b>P value</b>
Smoking Tobacco	4.1 (1.04-16.15)	.04



# Predictors of Sexual Risk Among Gay Men: $P < .05$

- No crack use
- Inhalant use
- Crystal use
- Any alcohol use and heavy alcohol use
- Smoking tobacco
- Multiple sex partners
- English speaking



# Predictors of Sexual Risk Among Gay Men (P<.05)

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>O.R. (C.I.)</b>	<b>P value</b>
English speaking	2.4(1.3-4.6)	.007
Crack use	.14(.04-.46)	.001
Crystal use	2.6(1.2-5.3)	.013



# Predictors of Sexual Risk Among Gay Men (Cont.; $P < .05$ )

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>O.R.(C.I.)</b>	<b>P value</b>
Inhalant use	2.9(1.8-5.0)	.000
Multiple sex partners	1.6(1.0-2.4)	.041
Tobacco use	1.6(1.0-2.4)	.042



# Predictors of Sexual Risk Among Gay Men (Cont.; $P < .05$ )

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>O.R.(C.I.)</b>	<b>P value</b>
Any alcohol use	.57(.34-.97)	.037
Heavy drinking (5+)	2.0(1.2-3.3)	.006



# Shared Factors Significantly Associated with Sexual Risk (P<.05)

- Bisexual Men
  - Smoking tobacco
  - Non-adherence to HIV medications
  - Recreational drug use (marijuana)
  - Feeling the effects of drugs or alcohol before sex
- Gay Men
  - Smoking tobacco
  - Non-adherence of HIV medications
  - Recreational drug use (inhalant & crystal use)
  - Heavy alcohol use



# Predictors of Sexual Risk Unique to Gay Men ( $P < .05$ )

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- English speaking
- Multiple Sex Partners



# Disclosure

- 56.1% of gay men reporting high risk sexual activities in the past 6 months did not always disclose their HIV status
- 50.1% of bisexual men reporting sex with male partners in the past 6 months did not always disclose their HIV status
- 46.7% of bisexual men reporting sex with women in the past 6 months did not always disclose their HIV status



# Drugs and Alcohol before Sex

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- 50.3% of gay men with male sexual partners reported feeling the effects of drugs or alcohol during sex
- 47.4% of bisexual men with male sexual partners reported feeling the effects of drugs or alcohol during sex
- 46.7% of bisexual men with female sexual partners reported feeling the effects of drugs or alcohol during sex



# Highlights: Significant Demographic and Health Status Differences ( $P < .05$ )

- Bisexual men are older
- African American men and Latino men more likely to be bisexual
- Bisexual men report lower educational and income levels
- Bisexual men are less likely to have an AIDS diagnosis, less likely to have undetectable viral loads, and more likely to report poorer general health
- Bisexual men found out about their HIV status more recently



# Highlights: Comparing Sexual Risk Behaviors (Cont.)

- No significant difference in sexual risk behaviors between gay and bisexual men OR between bisexuals who have sex with men compared to those having sex with women (Are bisexual men vectors?)
- Differences and similarities in predictors of risk (& co-factors): Alcohol, drug, and tobacco use and non-adherence to HIV medications are positively associated with sexual risk for both populations; multiple sex partners and being English speaking are significant factors only for gay men
- No significant differences in tobacco, alcohol, & drug use; no significant differences in non-adherence



# Highlights (Cont.)

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- High prevalence of non-disclosure of HIV status to sexual partners among both populations and with both males and females (for bisexual men)
- No significant differences in rates of disclosure



# Implications for Prevention for Positives Programs

- Need programs specifically targeting bisexual men, particularly African American and Latino bisexuals
- Program planners should be cognizant of the demographic profiles of each group; bisexual men are different
- Programs should address factors associated with risk such as non-adherence and drug, alcohol, and tobacco use as well as mental health issues



# Implications for Prevention for Positive Programs

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- Disclosure issues should be addressed for gay and bisexual men
- Special attention needs to be paid to triple-disclosure issues for bisexual men: bisexuality, HIV status, and non-monogamy; these disclosures may be particularly difficult in African American and Latino communities



# Questions to Consider

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- What accounts for demographic differences between bisexual men and gay men?
- Why are African American and Latino men more likely to report bisexuality? Is this biological, cultural, or socially constructed?
- Given such demographic differences, why are there no significant differences in their rates of UAI with men or with other co-factors?

# Questions to Consider (Cont.)

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- Why do bisexual men report poorer general health when they are less likely to have received an AIDS diagnosis?
- How can P4P programs best reach bisexual men, given issues of 'situated' disclosure?
- How does thinking of bisexual men as 'vectors' impact prevention programs?

