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Critical review of studies analyzing health problems in bisexuals, lesbians, and homosexuals

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Ortiz L. *Revisión crítica de los estudios que han analizado los problemas de salud de bisexuales, lesbianas y homosexuales.* [Critical review of studies analyzing health problems in bisexuals, lesbians, and homosexuals.] *Salud Problema*, (Mexico City) 2004 January-June; 9(16): 19-39.

Objectives: To identify frequently-occurring health problems in bisexuals, lesbians, and homosexuals, and to describe the theoretical, methodological and empirical approaches used to study health problems and illness in this population.

Methodology: Bibliographic and print media review in two databases: Medline and *Periódica*.

Results: Health problems that occur frequently in bisexuals, lesbians, and homosexuals are increased alcohol and drug use, and increased suicidal thoughts. The author found two types of beliefs about the relationship between homosexuality and illness. One group of studies echoes societal prejudices towards homosexuality, while the other considers that a large part of bisexuals', homosexuals' and lesbians' problems are due to the oppression they experience as a result of a society's heterosexist orientation.

Conclusions: The author notes that much of the scientific research on health/illness in bisexuals, lesbians, and homosexuals in Latin America centers on HIV/AIDS. The author believes that there are two areas in particular that require further study: health problems in bisexual and lesbian women, as the majority of current studies deal with men; and studies based on the position of this population in the social structure and the effects on their mental health.