


2-27-1998

Policy Guidelines on Sex for Security Bureaucracies

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.erau.edu/ibpp>

 Part of the [Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Commons](#), [Gender and Sexuality Commons](#), [Human Resources Management Commons](#), and the [Other Political Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

(1998) "Policy Guidelines on Sex for Security Bureaucracies," *International Bulletin of Political Psychology*: Vol. 4 : Iss. 8 , Article 1.
Available at: <https://commons.erau.edu/ibpp/vol4/iss8/1>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in International Bulletin of Political Psychology by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact commons@erau.edu.

International Bulletin of Political Psychology

Title: Policy Guidelines on Sex for Security Bureaucracies

Author: Editor

Volume: 4

Issue: 8

Date: 1998-02-27

Keywords: Gender, Sex, Sexual Orientation

Abstract. This article provides policy guidelines for personnel managers within security bureaucracies on sexual dispositions.

Contentions usually arise as to the import and impact of sexual dispositions on the structure, function, and process--hereafter termed mission(s)--of security bureaucracies. These contentions often are dependent on various conceptions of sexual dispositions, values ascribed to these dispositions, and nomological nets linking dispositions, values, and consequences to bureaucracies' missions. What follows are guidelines for developing policy on sexual dispositions.

1. The term sexual disposition comprises many denotatively independent characteristics. (a) Gender identity refers to whether one is physically male, female, or something else. This identity is largely based on indicators such as external sexual organs and the structure of chromosomes. It also depends on social constructions by authorities and arbiters of opinion--often culturally distinct--that stem from social perceptions of physical characteristics judged to be somehow sexually identifying or differentiating. A strong case can be made that there may be a continuum of maleness and femaleness, two oblique or orthogonal continua respectively of maleness and femaleness, or even one continuum or multiple continua of sexuality that may yield only one or multiple sexual labels--including the label of "nothing." Assessing gender identity may yield different results at different times. (The last two sentences apply equally to characteristics (b) through (d) below. (b) Sexual identity refers to the sexual sense of self that one attributes to oneself. This identity is based on a contiguous calculus of biopsychosocial features. Often there appears to be a congruence between gender identity and sexual identity, but certainly not always. One may believe oneself to be male in a female body, female in a male body, both male and female, neither of the two, something else, or nothing at all. (c) Sex role refers to normative expectations and stereotypes for social motivations, emotions, cognitions, and behaviors largely dependent on gender identity. In the last thirty years within the United States, sexual disposition-related legislation has most often related to modifications of sex role and next often to management of the characteristic described in (d) below. (d) Sexual orientation refers to how one prefers to seek sexual gratification depending on biopsychosocial situations. This orientation includes, but is not limited to, preferred objects of gratification--e.g., same-sex humans, opposite-sex humans, humans with specific features of size, shape, color, and inanimate objects--accompanying fantasies, frequency of gratification, impulsivity and compulsivity of gratification, and specific gratification techniques--manual, oral, vaginal, anal, degrees of friction and motion, and degrees of activity.

Values ascribed to the above characteristics are usually based on religious beliefs; political ideology; legal, ethical, moral, social, and cultural prescriptions and proscriptions; and congruence with one's own sexual dispositions. These varying bases have their own metaphysical foundations--some combination of the intrinsic goodness or badness of various sexual dispositions and their consequential goodness or badness.

Policy guidelines concerning characteristics of sexual dispositions should be based on nomological networks linking them and associated values to mission consequences. These networks should be

International Bulletin of Political Psychology

developed through combinations of conceptual and empirical analysis. Rarely should these networks be mindlessly applied through generalization. Instead, generalizations and exceptions to generalizations should form guidelines to inform judgment in individual cases.

Example 1. A sexual disposition is illegal. The security mission will be significantly compromised if an employee engages in illegal behavior. This compromise may be dependent on the illegal behavior's detection, identification, and adjudication or the very nature of the illegality somehow hurts the bureaucracy. Note that the Issue here is behavior, not predilection or tendencies. (After all, in matters of the immortal soul, heterosexuals, homosexuals, bisexuals, and others are allowed to become priests dependent on whether or not they promise to act on their proclivities and abide by the promise without detection. And there may well be "white-knuckled" sexualists like there are "white-knuckled" alcoholics.)

Example 2. A sexual disposition is associated with a degree of mental preoccupation or behavioral perseverance that precludes satisfactory discharge of mission responsibilities.

Example 3. A sexual disposition involves an unacceptable tendency to divulge sensitive information or engage in mission-endangering behaviors--e.g., allowing oneself to be doubled by an agent of a hostile intelligence service to enhance sexual gratification.

Example 4. A sexual disposition involves a shame factor so that detection of the disposition creates significant blackmail opportunity.

Example 5. A sexual disposition is associated with other psychological characteristics, e.g., psychopathy or psychosis, that significantly impede adequate mission performance.

Example 6. A sexual disposition is judged to be immoral by authorities on whom the security bureaucracy politically depends. In the security world of hardball politics, even the bogus quality of the authorities' moral judgment becomes moot.

These examples are not comprehensive but merely illustrate a reasonable procedure--conceptually and empirically--as an alternative to knee-jerk platitudes concerning morals, integrity, and character. The latter, of course, become significant when nomological networks are developed as suggested above.

Finally, the possibility that sexual dispositions can be strengths as well as irrelevant or weaknesses should be conceptually and empirically entertained. This might even involve the sexual element of so-called military fraternization proscriptions. Is it inevitable that this element is either prejudicial to good order and discipline and/or characterized by unacceptable dyadic power imbalances permeated with sexual discrimination and harassment? Is "in-house" sexual affiliation more of a security risk than affiliation elsewhere? In individual cases, conceptual and empirical analysis might forge interesting and even surprising answers. (See Alpert, G.P., & Crouch, B.M. (1991). Cross-gender supervision, personal privacy, and institutional security: Perceptions of jail inmates and staff. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 18, 304-317; Baumrind, D. (1995). Commentary on sexual orientation: Research and social policy implications. *Developmental Psychology*, 31, 130-136; Hertz, R. (1996). Guarding against women? Responses of military men and their wives to gender integration. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 25, 251-284; Kane, E.W., & Schippers, M. (1996). Men's and women's beliefs about gender and sexuality. *Gender and Society*, 10, 650-665; Kurian, G., & Kukreja, S. (1995). 16 PF correlates of masculine gender identity: A preliminary report. *Psychological Studies*, 40, 175-178; Skoe, E.E. (1995). Sex role orientation

International Bulletin of Political Psychology

and its relationship to the development of identity and moral thought. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 36, 235-245.) (Keywords: Gender, Sex, Sexual Orientation.)