

## Sociocultural Context and Sexual Health Information among Adolescents and Young Adults

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Division of STD Prevention



### Background

- **Research has examined differences in youth STD/HIV information seeking by**
  - Type of information source
    - Informal vs. formal<sup>1</sup>
  - Subgroup of youth
    - Comparing youth reasons for using online sources by sexual orientation<sup>2</sup>
- **Additionally, it is possible that information sources may also vary by sociocultural context**
  - What could be used as a proxy for this context?

<sup>1</sup>Whitfield et al, J Clinical Nursing, 2013    <sup>2</sup>Mitchell et al, Health Education Research, 2014.

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### Background (cont'd)

- **In the U.S., state-level policies often differ by sociocultural context**
- **For instance, U.S. marriage laws changed dramatically in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**
  - 27 states banned same-sex marriage in referendums voted for by citizens
  - 6 states passed laws to allow same-sex marriage
- **We hypothesized that U.S. state-level same-sex marriage laws may be a proxy measure for sociocultural context**
- **Purpose: examine differences in information sources by sociocultural context (same-sex marriage as a proxy)**

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### Methods: Data

- **Legal data**
  - U.S. state-level marriage laws (including Washington DC)
  - Laws collected via Westlaw and coded as of June 25, 2013<sup>1</sup>
    - Primary interest: sociocultural context
      - Excluded judicial opinions (focus on voters and policymakers)
- **GYT (Get Yourself Tested) Data**
  - National survey of 15-25 year olds<sup>2</sup> in U.S. (n=4107)
    - Online panel survey members selected to represent 15-25 year olds in U.S.
    - Households lacking computer and internet were provided necessary equipment
    - Survey was designed to assess campaign awareness in relation several topics including STD/HIV information seeking

<sup>1</sup>Before US Supreme Court ruled Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) unconstitutional    <sup>2</sup>referred to as adolescents

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### Methods: Measures

- **Legal data**
  - State laws were coded with respect to same-sex marriage
    - Prohibited – explicitly bans same-sex marriage
    - Not addressed – does not define marriage or mention gender
    - Recognized – explicitly allows same-sex marriage
- **GYT data**
  - Sources of STD/HIV information seeking: various topics
  - Respondents could select > 1 source per topic
  - **Traditional:** parent, other family, other trusted adult, friends, partner, doctor/healthcare provider, religious institutions
  - **Technological:** online expert, internet, social media, TV/radio, magazine/print

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### Methods: Analyses

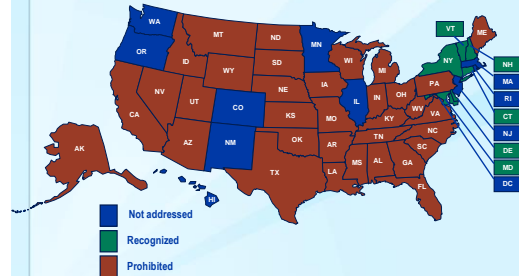
- **Bivariate analyses were conducted in SAS 9.3 and were weighted for non-response**
  - Frequency of same-sex marriage laws
  - Examined sociocultural context (marriage law) as it relates to information seeking for 4 topics
    - 1) Whether or when to have sex, 2) HIV, 3) STD, 4) preventing STD/HIV
    - Traditional and non-traditional sources of information seeking
      - Key specific sources of information
      - Responses of 'no information source' were excluded from analyses
        - Reported by less than 10% of respondents for each STD/HIV topic

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# RESULTS

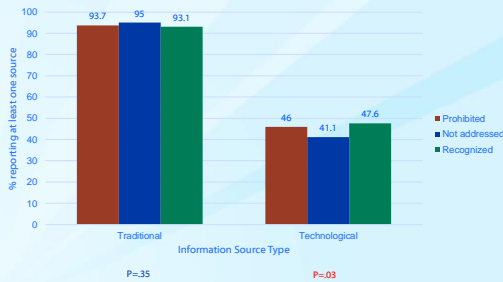
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## Same-sex Marriage in the United States, 2013



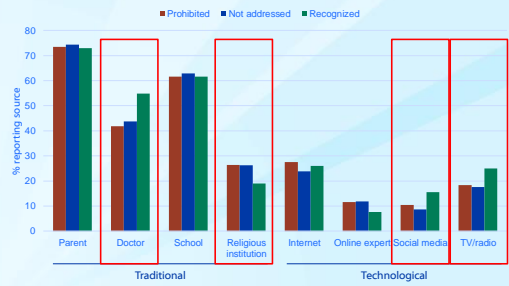
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### Traditional vs. Technological Information Sources: Whether or When to Have Sex by Same-sex Marriage Law



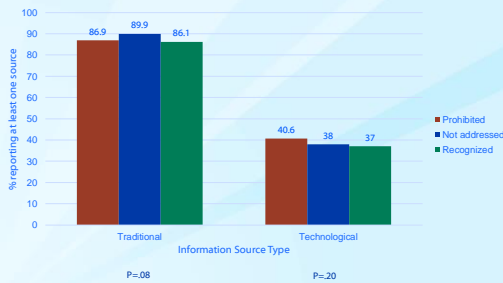
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### Information Sources: Whether or When to Have Sex by Same-sex Marriage Law



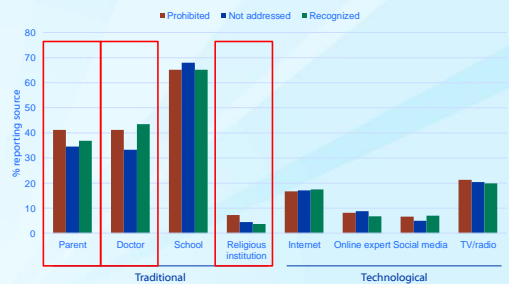
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### Traditional vs. Technological Information Sources: HIV by Same-sex Marriage Law

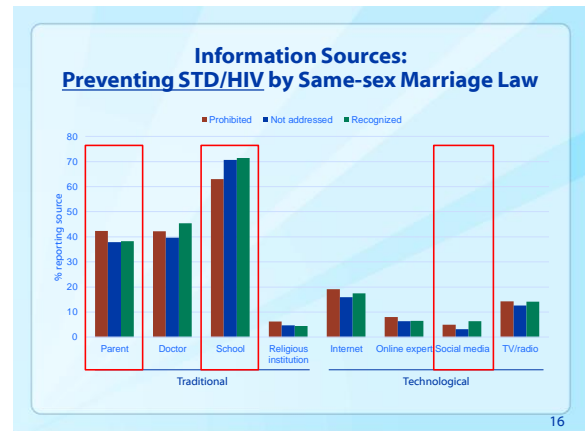
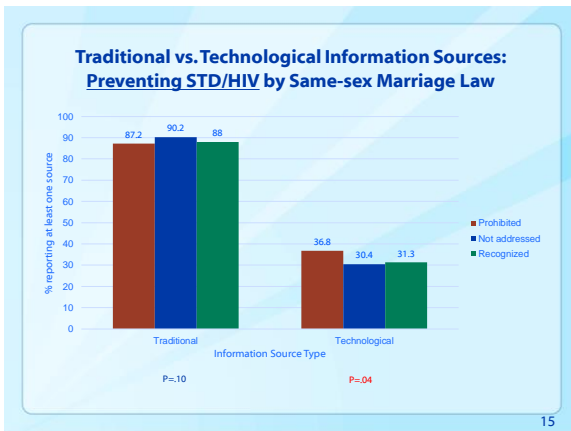
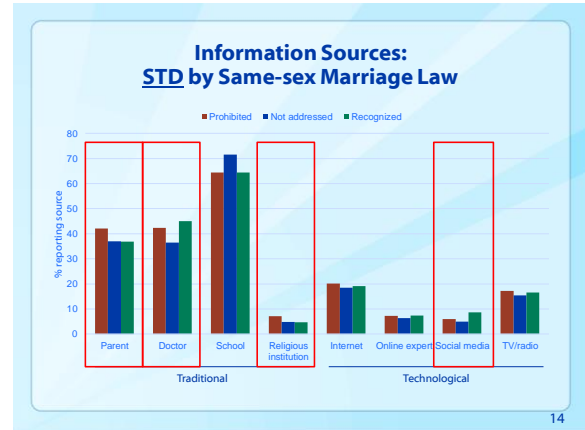
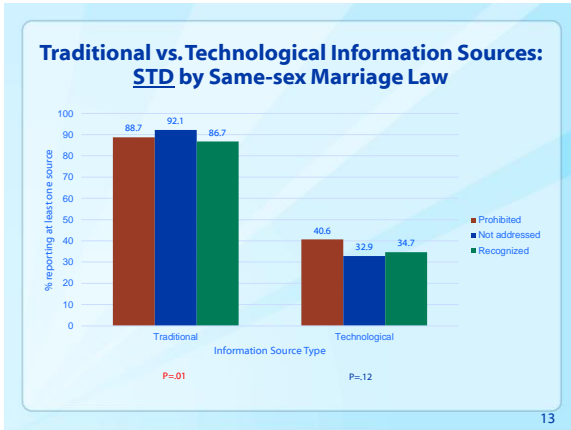


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### Information Sources: HIV by Same-sex Marriage Law



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### Summary

- Traditional sources were reported more than technological sources across the 4 STD/HIV topics
- Consistent patterns for information sources by sociocultural context were identified across the 4 STD/HIV topics

Recognize	Not Addressed	Prohibited
Doctor	Religion	Religion

- Patterns in sources by sociocultural context also identified across 3 STD/HIV topics

Recognize	Not Addressed	Prohibited
Social media		Parents

### Limitations

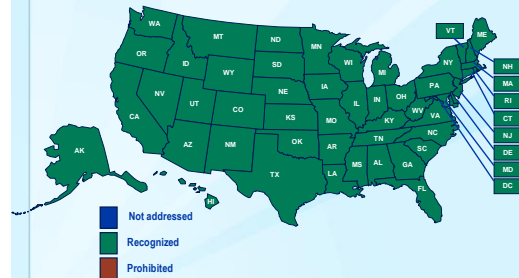
- Legal variable excludes judicial opinions
  - Does not represent actual legal status at that time
  - However, we sought a proxy for sociocultural context rather than a strict legal measure
- GYT survey did not include respondents from all states
- Sample of sexual minority adolescents was small and did not allow comparisons across the legal categories
- Exploratory ecological analyses only

### Conclusions

- ❑ Adolescents living in areas with less progressive views of sexual health issues do not appear to rely on specific technological sources of information more than other adolescents
- ❑ Proxy measures of multi-faceted issues such as sociocultural context may be useful for targeting STD/HIV prevention efforts
- ❑ Additional research is needed to validate our approach

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### Same-sex Marriage in the United States, 2015



Effective June 26, 2015. U. S. Supreme Court ruled in Obergefell v. Hodges that state-level bans on same-sex marriage are unconstitutional

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The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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