No Proof of Harm

79 Key Studies Provide No Scientific Proof That Sexual Orientation Change Efforts (SOCE) Are Usually Harmful

by Peter Sprigg

Appendix A:

“Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles and Academic Books on ‘Conversion Therapy’ Outcomes That Include Measures of Harm”

As noted in the text, this list was received by Christopher Doyle from A. Lee Beckstead, and reprinted as an appendix in Doyle’s book. (Christopher Doyle, The War on Psychotherapy: When Sexual Politics, Gender Ideology, and Mental Health Collide; Manassas, VA: Institute for Healthy Families, 2019, Appendix C, pp. 365–74.) It is unclear whether it was Beckstead who originally compiled the list. The list here has been modified only slightly from how it was received by Doyle. Web links to full text versions of the articles cited have been added where possible; if a full-text version of the article is not available for free online, but an abstract is, then the link to the abstract is provided. (Often, a full-text version is available for purchase.) However, all research in this paper was based on examination of full-text versions, not merely abstracts.

Articles or other sources marked with an asterisk (*) were analyzed using key word searches only (see Appendix B). All other articles or sources were read in full.


*Beckstead, A. Lee. (2012). Can we change sexual orientation? [Special issue on “What is sexual orientation?”]. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 41*, 121-134,  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/221847417_Can_We_Change_Sexual_Orientation](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/221847417_Can_We_Change_Sexual_Orientation).


[https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/19359700802111072](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/19359700802111072).

*Bradshaw, Kate, Dehlin, John P., Crowell, Katherine A., Galliher, Renee V., & Bradshaw, William S. (2015). Sexual orientation change efforts through psychotherapy for LGBTQ individuals affiliated with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy, 41*(4), 391-412,  


Drescher, Jack. (2003). The Spitzer study and the culture wars. (Peer commentary.) *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 32*, 431-432. Request at:  
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/264672566_The_Spitzer_study_and_the_culture_wars.


Appendix B:

Key Words Searched in 24 of the “Measures of Harm” Studies

In the studies which the author of this paper did not read in full, key words related to possible harms of SOCE were searched. These terms included negative ones (e.g., danger, harm, risk); neutral ones (consequence, outcome, result); and positive ones which might be contrasted with the negative (benefit, help, safe). All forms of a word were included (noun, adjective, singular, plural, etc.). Each time a relevant word was identified in the text of the study or article, the context was examined to determine if it was actually a reference to harmful outcomes attributable to SOCE. Not all of these words were searched in every article; instead, this list was continually expanded as new possible key words were identified. Nevertheless, I feel confident that this search was thorough enough to identify any references to harms of SOCE in the articles not read in full.

abuse  depression  hindrance
adverse  destructive  homophobia
anxiety  deteriorate  hurt
aversion  detriment  impact
benefit  difficult  maladaptive
breakdown  discomfort  negative
complication  distress  outcome
consequence  effect  problem
concern  exacerbate  psychotic
damage  exploitation  reaction
danger  guilt  recondition
death  harm  result
decrement  help  risk
safe
self-destructive
sensitization
sequelae
severe
shame
suicide
symptom
torture	troubled
violate
well-being
worse
wound