

Heteronormativity and Silenced Sexualities at Work

JOLANTA REINGARDĖ

Vytautas Magnus University

ABSTRACT. *The paper focuses on workplace as a space in which the normative versions of heterosexuality are produced. Facing the everyday reality of the closet, the majority of homosexual employees constructs and negotiates their silenced sexualities at work. The study is based on 30 in-depth interviews with Lithuanian gays and lesbians carried out within the framework of the EQUAL project “Open and Safe at Work.” The paper discusses how homosexuals confront heteronormativity at work and how it shapes their sexual identity. How is heteronormativity reflected in their choices to stay in the closet or to come out? What are their coping strategies at work? The fear of open discrimination and violence leads to the invisibility of minority sexual orientation at work and the denial of sexuality as irrelevant to the social life. The internal division between sexual (private) and social (public) is evident in a number of ways. The suppression of the sexual is the most prevalent coping strategy in the heteronormative order.*

KEYWORDS: *sexuality, sexual identity, homosexuality, heterosexuality, heteronormativity, workplace.*

RAKTAŽODŽIAI: *seksualumas, seksualinis tapatumas, homoseksualumas, heteroseksualumas, heteronormatyvumas, darbo aplinka.*

Introduction

The concept of heteronormativity focuses on heterosexuality as a normative notion that repeatedly asserts heterosexual life as the right life to live. Heterosexuality as a norm is constructed and reproduced in politics, media, popular culture, arts, working life, families and so on. Those who cannot or do not want to adhere to the heterosexual norm are suppressed and take risks to be socially excluded.

Minority sexual orientation is rather an under-researched topic by organizational researchers. It struggles to be a recognized element in the diversity agenda of organizations. Unequal opportunities at work are mostly discussed

as a gendered, ethnic or ageist issue, while the research on how working life produces and reproduces normative heterosexuality has been rather limited. The everyday experience of homosexuals at work is a relatively invisible theme in the Lithuanian academic and political discourse on sexual minorities as well. Our knowledge about the experiences of silence and/or coming out of homosexuals at work and the influence of these experiences on their identity and relationship with others is very limited. One of the reasons for this is that it has been usually argued that sexual minorities were not present in the labor market. As Martin (1992) noticed, just as men work with men and come to believe that they work in a gender-neutral world rather than one where men dominate, heterosexuals also, by working with other heterosexuals, come to believe that they are working in a sexually neutral world, rather than one in which heterosexuals dominate. Because of this, sexual orientation is perceived to be irrelevant, as if gay people have a sexual orientation, but straight people do not. The norm that puts forward the heterosexuality as the only valid and recognizable form of intimate relations makes homosexuality questionable, strange and invisible.

The study is based on 30 in-depth interviews of gays and lesbians in Lithuania (20 men and 10 women), carried out within the framework of the project “Open and Safe at Work” in 2006 under the support of the EU Initiative EQUAL. The paper discusses how homosexuals confront heteronormativity at work and how it shapes their sexual identity. How do they manage their minority sexual identity at work? How is it reflected in their choices to stay in the closet or to come out? What are their coping strategies?

The major difficulty in carrying out research on sexual minorities at work is related to collect informants’ narratives when silence and fear surrounds them. We attempted to include the experiences of open and closeted homosexuals and of both gays and lesbians from different geographical locations in Lithuania. In only 5 cases the informants were totally open about their sexuality at work, in 10 cases they were open to selected individuals at work, in the rest 15 cases homosexuality was kept hidden.

Sexuality and Institutions

The focus of much discussion about the ontology of sexual identity lies in the dialectic of the essentialist versus constructivist debate. The essentialist views seeking to establish “natural” or “biological” explanations of sexual practices, relationships and identities contain the assumption that sexuality is fundamentally pre-social (Richardson and Seidman 2002). Sexuality, in the essentialist model, is regarded as a product of human biological make-up, which is outside and even opposed to “the social” and which needs to be controlled in order to maintain the social order. The traditional assumptions about sexual repression

indicate that social institutions, like education, media, organized religion, law or labor market, play a central role in controlling people's sexual lives and that they even depend on sexual repression for their continued existence. These views have raised important questions about the relation of sexuality to social institutions. How and in what ways are sexual lives and identities regulated and controlled? What are the social institutions that play a key role in the social regulation of sexualities in contemporary societies? Nevertheless, the essentialist views do not adequately deal with the issue of power, nor do they explain how sexualities are regulated or produced within institutions, or how our notions of sexuality constitute social institutions.

The significant development in this area was Michel Foucault's radical challenge to our understanding of sexuality and his assumptions about changing nature of state and institutional control. According to Foucault (1999 [1976]), sexuality is regulated not through repression but is socially produced through definition and categorization. Homosexuality should be viewed as a category of knowledge rather than a discovered or discrete identity constructed through discourse. It was this view that led to poststructuralist approaches that conceptualized individual sexual identity as multiple, fragmented and fluid, constructed and reconstructed through different discursive processes in organizations.

The dominant discourse of heterosexuality in organizations puts the dominated discourse of homosexuality under pressure to be silenced, suppressed and eliminated crediting it only with a certain limited legitimacy and protection. Heterosexuality is thought of as being the only "normal" and "natural" form of sexuality. This assumption shapes critically identities and unequal power relationships between the homosexual minority and heterosexual majority. The critical approach to the organizational discourse asserts that it is the hegemonic discourse of normative heterosexuality, which determines and constitutes the subject's sexual identity with the subject being trapped in discursive structures. The heteronormative discourse acts as a mechanism of power and control that limits the ability of gay and lesbian people to talk and construct their own identities at work.

One of the very prevalent manifestations of heteronormative discursive structures is the lack of congruence between the subjectivity (private notions of the self that may be left publicly undisclosed) and a public subject position that is available for the individual to take up at work. The splitting or separation between the self-identity ("who am I") and the social identity (how I am perceived by the others) maintained through silence is particularly pertinent to the study of sexual identity in organizations. The silencing of minority sexual identity is the major factor in the lives of homosexuals. Foucault suggested that silenced sexual identity is an agent of power in its own right (Foucault 1999 [1976]). The hegemonic heterosexual discourse precludes open discussions of the experiences of sexual minorities at work. It means that the knowledge of

this taboo is present in the discourse even if it is not discussed openly. According to Foucault, “the make up of discourse has to be pieced together, with things both said and unsaid, with required and forbidden speech” (Foucault 1999 [1976], 133). Things that remain unsaid are equally important and can therefore be illustrative of power being articulated or as a means of coping and resistance.

The analysis of homosexuals’ everyday experiences at work reveals the prevalence of the traditional tendency to assume “sexual” and “social” as separate spheres. Law, economy or social policy – these are constituted as belonging to the public sphere whereas sexuality is traditionally associated with the private domain and considered irrelevant for the public life. The public and the private continue to be thought of as dichotomous.

The new ways of thinking about sexuality and its interrelation with social institutions and practices are imperative. The so-called private spheres are highly political spaces. The analysis of heteronormativity and the way it is produced by social institutions and produces them cannot be limited to either “public” or “private.” Heteronorms are produced everywhere, therefore, to relegate the sexual to the private arena is in itself an expression of hegemonic heteronormativity.

Silenced Sexualities in the Workplace

The research offers an important look at some of the ways in which heterosexuality is normalized at work in a variety of formal and informal contexts. The process of normative heterosexuality is a critical shaper of identities. Along with gender, nationality, class or disability, compulsory heterosexuality greatly impacts the lives of people in private and public domains.

During the research process, some themes recurred and became prominent. One of them was the silence about non-disclosure at work. Twenty five out of thirty people we interviewed were still “in the closet” and only open to a few “right” people at work. The interview materials show that living a double life can have a tremendously negative impact on individuals’ self-worth and esteem.

In general, it’s very hard to conceal your [sexual] orientation, especially when you reconcile it with yourself and accept it as a concurrent part of your identity. I feel, perhaps, like the dissidents during the Soviet era who used to live a double life – a *public one*, more or less complying with the requirements of the regime, and the *private one*, the underground one that is ruled by your own conviction [emphasis is mine – J. R.]. You’re constantly aware that when the truth about your real identity comes out, you can always be repressed. Often, you can’t even participate in public life, or be active in certain social movements. I left one organization just because I heard jokes about homosexual people. I realized that I can’t

strive for the same aims, or have something in common with those people because they don't accept people like me (Dalia, 40).

. . . this is a constant lie, an eternal one Sometimes I even get confused in my nonsense stories: where I was, what I was or wasn't doing. I'm a very lively person by nature, but when I get to work I immediately become rather like a dead person. I can't discuss anything, I can't tell my stories to anybody, and I feel as if I'm somehow vanishing from the inside. This heteronormativity destroys me from the inside, do you understand? I have to destroy myself from the inside in order to please them. How can you live like this? And our lives are too short, do you understand? (Rima, 36)

You can't be yourself, you must constantly play a role in the family and at work (Egidijus, 24).

The reasons not to disclose the sexual orientation at work can be different, but they are nevertheless influenced by the prevailing homophobic climate in the country. Fear of discrimination, violence and humiliation encourages many sexual minorities to keep their minority sexual orientation hidden. According to one representative study, 18% of the population would cease to communicate with a colleague at work if he or she came out as homosexual (Zdanevicius et al. 2007). The language used by the colleagues at work, derogatory comments and jokes about minority sexual orientation create a negative and unsafe space for coming out.

It is a pity that I can't show everything what and who I am in reality without being afraid of scorn and derision. But if I can't do it, I can't. I got used to it (Viktoras, 33).

You know, this openness if only you could come out of the closet that easily, open the doors and get out. First, it won't happen, this coming out. I have to be sure that at least sixty or seventy percent of my co-workers accept me. And yet I'm not sure. And that's why I don't want to come out (Edigijus, 24).

Essentially, I don't want to reveal what I am I mean it is easier for me than to other gays because I'm not campy or mannered. I'm just a guy And I live how I want to live. But I don't publicize [my orientation] because I don't need unnecessary problems It is so good to live quietly . . . (Paulius, 25).

What is prevalent among the researched sexual minorities is their tendency to suppress the talk of sexual orientation at work and to think of coming out as irrelevant, even abnormal, as something that, according to several, heterosexuals rarely do. Several respondents noted that they had the right to exist in the working environment but that they did not want to "flaunt" their sexuality at work (this was also associated with a claim for the exceptional position). The respondents said that their sexuality was a private affair, thus, it had no interest to other people at work.

Private life is private . . . what I mean is that [sexual] orientation is not problematic. But the most important thing is not to show it publicly . . . (Albertas, 24).

I would like to say that there is no need to publicize everything because even without it we have difficult lives . . . (Giedrius, 30).

The interviews reveal several important assumptions about minority sexual identity and show how marginalization is enacted. If we think that heterosexual sexuality is constantly evident, repetitive and even ritualistic in the work environment (wedding rings, talks about husbands and wives, pictures of children, heterosexual couplings at parties and other gatherings) than we must admit that it is homosexual sexuality that is of no interest to other people rather than sexuality in general. According Judith Butler (1997), heteronormativity is constituted and naturalized through performance. Performativity of heteronormativity is a repetition and a ritual that achieves its effects through its naturalization in the context of a body and culturally accepted norms (Butler 1997).

The respondents also emphasize the traditional split between the “private” and “public” and consider the “sexual” as a non-issue of the public life. According to Fairclough (1995), power can control and put limits on alternative discourses, and thus “not being an issue” is not without its conditions. Having gay people around is acceptable as long as they do not remind others about their minority sexuality. This eventually leads to self-marginalization enacted through the suppression of homosexuality. Eventually, according to Kirsch (2000), suppression and silencing of discourse renders minorities invisible and makes it harder for them to develop confidence and power through the shared identity.

The organizational context surfaced as a very important factor that encouraged being silent or breaking the silence. Many studies have revealed the significant relation between the situational constraints embedded in organizations and occupations, on the one hand, and the coming out decisions made by individual employees, on the other (Lehtonen and Mustola 2004; Ward and Winstanley 2003). Most respondents carefully assessed the prevailing organizational climate. The research demonstrated that in smaller organizations with more interpersonal contact it was harder for people to recognize their minority identities. James Ward and Diana Winstanley (2003) in their research at the Police and Fire service in UK have also noticed that the close personal relationship also meant that the costs of coming out were higher because of potential negative reactions. In bigger organizations with less interpersonal contacts, it was easier to be in the closet, and the risks associated with coming out were reduced. The nationally located international company was found as a relatively safe place to disclose sexual orientation.

. . . sometimes I think if someone [from work] didn't like my sexual orientation and if someone tried to fire me from the company, there would be easy ways to act against that. I could write letters to the foreign partners of the company, and I don't think they would tolerate such discrimination <. . . > in a Lithuanian company, things would be different. The previous companies in which I worked were small. Everybody knew everything about everybody. Everything was decided by the coffee table and so on. [In small companies], I think, there would be no chance to make claims or complaints. Nobody would protect you (Ausra, 27).

The interviews also show that commitment to organization, job satisfaction and perceived permanency or temporality of a job may determine the construction of minority sexual identity at work.

If this job was going to last forever or if I knew that I'd be working there for the rest of my life, maybe it would be different. I don't know how it would be. But I know that I'm leaving soon and I always live with this idea that I'm going to quit this job. This feeling of how temporary it all is, I think, made me avoid committing myself to being too open and to having friends (Gruodis, 36).

This respondent was not committed to his workplace and did not think of it as a significant place to leave silence behind. Day and Schoenrade's research (2000) has also shown that the people who were out at work were more committed and had greater loyalty to their organization than those who remained in the closet.

The gender makeup of an organization also mattered. Gender was one of the most significant, if not the most significant, structuring factor when it came to the conditions in which homosexuals worked. The female dominated environments were thought of as more friendly to gays than career-oriented masculine organizations. The male respondents of so-called "feminized" professions such as stylists, designers, hairstylists and shop assistants were most willing to disclose their orientation. More gay men were closeted and described anticipated discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in typically male-dominated organizations that promoted traditional masculinity.

The colleagues who know about me accept [my sexual orientation] quite well. My boss who is a woman has no problem with it and accepts it as normal. She even knows my boyfriend. I don't think hairdressers should have problems with that. Everybody understands that a hairdresser is somehow allowed to do that [to be gay]. . . . There are many gay people working in the beauty industry. In other companies with all kinds of managers, it's more difficult. I think managers are sitting [in the closet] with their mouths shut, living double lives (Raigardas, 26).

James Ward and Diana Winstanley (2003), in their study on the absent presence of sexual minorities at work, state that colleagues create a social reality

for gay people in the workplace through the absence of what might be said and what is left unsaid. It could also be constitutive of their social identity and the way in which gay people are seen by their workmates (Hardy et al. 2000). Rima told the story about her bringing her girlfriend to the informal party of the company and telling everybody about her partnership. Her revelation was met with silence and blank response (“It looked like nobody understood it”). The colleagues’ ignorance made her feel disappointed and excluded. Her colleagues, whether consciously or not, used silence as a tool of hostility. By ignoring alternative sexualities, the organization made it more difficult for sexual minorities to construct an “out” social identity. In this case, silence could be seen as a manifestation of the refusal by the majority to acknowledge the alternative sexualities.

In summary, there is a number of ways in which the issues of silenced sexualities at work are central to the experience and identities of sexual minorities. Silencing can mean suffering as well as self-protection and perfect social interactions at work but denied subjectivity. It depends on the organizational contexts and situational factors. The silenced sexualities also show a deeper incoherence in our cultural discourses. These can be disentangled with a reference to the distinctions between the private/public and private/secret respectively that are superimposed upon the hierarchy between homosexuality and heterosexuality. Goffman (1963), in his famous book “Stigma: Notes on the Management of a Spoiled Identity,” states, that, on the one hand, sexual activities and fantasies tend to unfold in the private domain while sexual identities and orientations are a part and parcel of our public persona that will be routinely deciphered from appearances, artifacts and interactions. The sexual inequality means that it is only lesbians and gay men who are lambasted for flaunting their sexuality when their sexual orientation surfaces in public places.

Coping Strategies within the Negative Spaces¹

When a gay man or woman feels unable to come out, they usually develop various coping strategies to manage their minority sexual identity. These strategies range from not revealing any details about their private lives to referring to friends in a gender-neutral way or even inventing a heterosexual lifestyle. The issue of coping strategies at the heteronormative work environment is well elaborated in the recent studies by Lehtonen and Mustola (2004), Chamberland (2007) and Reimers (2007). Griffin summarized four main ways in which lesbians and gay men managed their identity at workplace (Griffin 1992 in Ward and Winstanley 2005):

¹ The more thorough analysis of coping strategies at work is presented in a book *Norms at Work: Challenging Homophobia and Heteronormativity* (eds. L.Martinsson, E.Reimers, J.Reingarde, A.S. Lundgren).

- *passing*: the way that sexual minorities maintain silence through a deliberate action on their part to act as heterosexuals, sometimes inventing opposite sex partners;
- *covering*: not disclosing information;
- *being implicitly out*: using explicit language and artifacts to indicate sexual orientation;
- *affirming identity*: encouraging others to view him or her as gay.

The coping strategy depends on a range of factors within organizations and outside including the level of homophobia in an organization and society, colleagues' attitudes towards homosexuals and their treatment of them. There exist personal considerations as well such as the individual's readiness and confidence to challenge homophobia or the way they plan to respond to colleagues once they come out (Woods and Lucas 1993). Many interviewees thought of their workplaces as unsafe places to come out and used passing strategy to manage their identity at workplace.

The lack of openness causes discomfort. You can't even tell jokes about your lifestyle. Even if you are in a company [at work] you can't look around. You have to pretend that you're looking at girls. You constantly have to pretend about your family. It's a rule that you have to pretend at work. When you meet with your mates from the college, you have to manipulate things somehow because you're not interested in telling the truth. Not in Lithuania. Sometimes it seems that even if I leave for a foreign country, the same insecurity will stay with me (Egidijus, 24).

An interesting finding of my research is that in certain occupations, mostly male-dominated and career-oriented professions, *passing* and *covering* are identity management strategies followed at work and outside it. The story of an employer Mykolas showed that he developed one identity – professional identity – at work (where there was no space for a minority sexual identity) and another – in off-duty life in which his identity was gay but his occupation was a closely guarded issue. When asked about his sexual identity at work, Mykolas was quite strict.

I: I am basically interested in how you feel at work as a gay.

M: I wouldn't want to talk about such a topic. The more you're connected to people, the more you are afraid of it. If someone employs you, you're not responsible for other employees. But when you're an employer you care about your clients, the common image and about everything. When the clients have to sign contracts, would they want to give work to a faggot? Why should I create the unpleasant situation for them for doing business with somebody who is not like everybody else? I separate my personal life from my work. This [being gay] is my private life and it should not be confused with my work. I am "normal" in the public life. I am neither fighting with myself nor with society in general. . . . when I

am in a night bar, gay club or with my close friends, my occupation is not an issue at all” (Mykolas, 35).

The respondents’ commitment to both identities – professional and gay – and their contradictory manifestations were observed in several narratives during the research. It can be argued that the male-dominated workplaces were particularly heteronormative in which the professional identity suppressed homosexual identities. In the extreme cases, heteronormativity was manifested in the internalized homophobia towards feminine gays, mannerisms and the overt demonstration of homosexuality.

. . . if you want to be idiosyncratic and to be an exception that breaks the rules, then you start to complain that you’re being discriminated against. Simply put, maybe sometimes you yourself break those rules. I don’t get any remarks because I never give any grounds for it. I don’t act; I don’t need to act with manners, words and eye winking. I wouldn’t tolerate it myself, if, say, I had those gays [with effeminate manners] working for me. . . . In my opinion, [homophobia] is very often provoked by these people themselves. Very often these people are just bad mannered, they’re trying to be very visible, like “I don’t care and everybody should get out of my way.” This sort of public [sexuality] is not acceptable to me (Mykolas, 35).

Another interesting finding of the research was that *covering* or not disclosing one’s sexual orientation was not always in her/his control. The naming of someone as lesbian or guy described by Butler (1997) as “the divine power of naming” did not have to happen with the subject’s knowledge. Many informants felt that their colleagues knew about their sexual orientation and that they were “outed” although they have never made any effort to do it and sometimes even tried to carefully protect themselves from disclosure.

. . . I was working at McDonald’s in 1996 and somehow they found out about me and they started this “[whispering]”. . . . Once a girl came to me and asked me if I wanted to have a cup of coffee with her after work. Ok, I said, let’s go. We went for coffee and she started [interrogating me] – how, when, with whom and how many times? And I said, please tell me why you’re asking me all this. She wanted to know about it because of her feminine curiosity. And I said: “Yes, I am lesbian.” And our friendship ended after this. We talked and I found out that everybody knew about me. . . . And I started to feel that when my teammates were communicating I didn’t exist for them anymore (Rima, 36).

The decision to come out (to be implicitly or explicitly out or to affirm the sexual identity to others) cannot be taken lightly. There is a range of concerns to be considered. Moreover, it is never a momentary thing. James Ward and Diana Winstanley as well as Judith Butler talk about coming out as a performative act: “Being gay or lesbian is not a truth that is discovered, it is a

performance, which is enacted” (Ward and Winstanley 2005, 452). Because of the constant presumption of heterosexuality, coming out is something one has to do in any new everyday or work situation.

There exists a number of reasons why people decide to come out. Humphrey (1999, 138) suggests three main ones. First, there is an issue of honesty and integrity at the personal level; second, there are significant benefits in building an open relationship at the professional level; finally, some people think that it is important to educate various audiences about the lesbian and gay existence and to empower lesbian and gay people in the process. The several interviewees totally or partially open at work thought of coming out as significant at personal and professional levels. The third, political aspect, mentioned by Humphrey was not overtly articulated in the narratives. However, it is very important to contextualize the actual freedom of an individual choice and to understand that from the gays and lesbians’ perspective coming out might be more of a survival strategy than an optional luxury.

To sum up, the prevalence of *passing* and *covering* strategies at work can be constructed as an effect of wider heterosexism. The silencing of minority sexual identities is predicated upon cultural discourses, organizational contexts and practices that deprive lesbian and gay people from human dignity and integrity. Jill Humphrey (1999, 137) talks of the archetypes of the depraved and diseased homosexuality that are a part of the collective heritage, thus, even when they do not surface so dramatically they are lurking in the shadows of the subconscious. Therefore, a cloud of vulnerability hands over all homosexuals, even those who are out and proud in the workplace. The perpetual angst generates a form of constant self-surveillance.

Conclusions

The article has explored the construction of minority sexual identity in organizations through the discourse of silent and silenced sexualities. The material gathered during the research project demonstrates that the fear of open discrimination, ridicule and violence leads to silenced minority sexual identities at work. Most interviewed gays and lesbians prefer to stay in the closet and rather a big number of them undermine the importance of sexuality at work and think of coming out as a very private affair irrelevant to the public life. The denial of sexuality at work shows that heterosexual sexuality is taken for granted and often completely overlooked in everyday interactions at home or in the workplaces. It is not heterosexual sexuality in general but homosexual sexuality that is problematic at work.

The internal divisions between the sexual (private) and social (public) construct minority sexual identities. Sexuality is regarded as separate from society and “the social.” The silence enables this splitting and incoherence of minority

sexual identities. Foucault identified silence as a discursive practice that constructs minority sexual identity at work and as a feature of power relationship between the homosexual minority and heterosexual majority (Butler 1997). The absence of talk about the minority sexual identity is as meaningful as the presence of talk about the majority identity.

The dominance of heteronormativity suppresses the performance of the minority sexual identity at work and legitimates their limited existence. Living a double life can have a tremendously negative impact on both an individual and organization because homosexual employees spend a disproportionate amount of energy in developing and maintaining coping strategies to manage their identities. The “covering” one’s sexual identity or “passing” as heterosexual in the public sphere is still a way of life and a rational survival strategy for many interviewed gays and lesbians in Lithuania. The decisions to come out at work are complex and depend on different variables ranging from self-affirmation of her/his sexual identity to the situational constraints embedded in organizations, occupations and informal contexts. Nevertheless, in most cases the closet protects homosexuals from discrimination in all spheres of life including the workplace.

The organizational context also matters. The interviewed homosexuals’ work conditions vary and depend on whether organization is career-oriented or not, female- or male-dominated and whether the interviewee is male or female. The gender make-up is probably the most significant structuring factor that influences the effects of heterosexual norm adopted in the workplace.

Sexual inequalities experienced by homosexual employees at work in Lithuania can be construed as ripple effects of homophobia and wider legalized heterosexism. The first pertains to the concrete expressions of dislike and disgust directed against people perceived to be homosexual; another is related to the absence of anti-discriminatory legislation with respect to sexuality that continues to be one of the main reasons for status inequality in the country. Both have been deeply rooted in hegemonic cultural discourses and normalized in such a way that they have become a part of the political correctness and national dignity.

References

- Butler, J. 1997. *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative*. London: Routledge.
- Chamberland, L. 2007. „Lytinės orientacijos atskleidimas darbo aplinkoje: priešastys ir strategijos“. In *Heteronormos hegemonija: homoseksualių žmonių socialinė atskirtis ir diskriminacijos patirtys*, ed. A. Zdanevičius, 81-117. Kaunas: VDU.
- Day, N. E., and P. Schoenrade. 2000. “The Relationship among Reported Disclosure of Sexual Orientation, Anti-discrimination Policies, Top Management Support and Work Attitudes of Gay and Lesbian Employees.” *Personnel Review* 29 (3): 346-363.

- Fairclough, N. 1995. *Critical Discourse Analysis*. Harlow: Longman.
- Foucault, M. 1999 [1976]. *Seksualumo istorija*. Vilnius: Vaga.
- Goffman, E. 1963. *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Hardy, C., I. Palmer and N. Philips. 2000. "Discourse as a Strategic Resource." *Human Relations* 53(9): 1227-1248.
- Humphrey, J. C. 1999. "Organizing Sexualities, Organized Inequalities: Lesbian and Gay Men in Public Service Occupations." *Gender, Work and Organization* 6 (3): 134-151.
- Kirsch, M. 2000. *Queer Theory and Social Change*. London: Routledge.
- Lehtonen, J., and K. Mustola, eds. 2004. "Straight People don't Tell, do They...?" *Negotiating the Boundaries of Sexuality and Gender at Work*. Helsinki: Ministry of Labour.
- Martin, J. 1992. *Cultures in Organizations: Three Perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Martinsson, L., E. Reimers, J. Reingardė and A. S. Lundgren. *Norms at Work: Challenging Homophobia and Heteronormativity*. Sweden: Norra Skane offset.
- Reimers, E. 2007. „Visada kažkur kitur: heteronormatyvumas rengiant Švedijos mokytojus“. In *Heteronormos hegemonija: Homoseksualių žmonių socialinė atskirtis ir diskriminacijos patirtys*, ed. A. Zdanevičius, 202-213. Kaunas: VDU.
- Richardson, D., and S. Seidman. 2002. *Handbook of Lesbian and Gay Studies*. Sage Publications Ltd.
- Ward, J., and D. Winstanley. 2003. "The Absent Presence: Negative Space within Discourse and the Construction of Minority Sexual Identity in the Workplace." *Human Relations* 56 (10): 1255-1280.
- _____. 2005. "Coming out at Work: Performativity and the Recognition and Renegotiation of Identity." *The Sociological Review*, 447-475.
- Woods, J. D., and J. H. Lucas. 1993. *The Corporate Closet: The Professional Lives of Gay Men in America*. New York: The Free Press.
- Zdanevičius, A. ed. 2007. *Nematomi piliečiai. Apie homoseksualių žmonių teises ir homofobiją Lietuvoje*. Kaunas: VDU.

Heteronormatyvumas ir nutildytas seksualumas darbo aplinkoje

Santrauka

Straipsnis nagrinėja heteroseksualumo normos kūrimo procesus darbo aplinkoje. Į darbuotojus žvelgiama kaip į subjektus, kurie yra ne tik veikiami, bet ir patys dalyvauja mažumos seksualinių tapatybių ir nutildyto seksualumo kūrimo procesuose. Didžioji dauguma homoseksualių žmonių Lietuvoje slepia savo seksualinę tapatybę darbe; tad nutildyto seksualumo tyrinėjimas yra itin svarbus siekiant suprasti patį diskursą. Straipsnyje analizuojamos 2006 metais vykdyto tyrimo „Atviri ir saugūs darbe“ metu surinktos 30 homoseksualių žmonių patirčių darbe istorijos (giluminiai interviu). Nagrinėjama, kaip homoseksualūs asmenys kuria savo seksualinę tapatybę ir išlikimo strategijas darbo aplinkoje. Heteronormatyvus diskursas veikia tai, kaip galios ir kontrolės mechanizmas nutildo homoseksualius žmones ir slopina jų galimybes siekti savo savasties ir

tapatybės vientisumo. Atviros diskriminacijos baimė ir nesaugumas verčia juos slėpti savo seksualinę orientaciją ir netgi kategoriškai neigti seksualinės tapatybės išviešinimo svarbą. Seksualinės (privачios) ir socialinės (viešos) tapatybių atskyrimas ir priešpriešos tarp jų kūrimas pasireiškia įvairiomis formomis. Pirmosios slopinimas reiškiasi kaip racionali homoseksualių žmonių išlikimo darbo aplinkoje strategija. Kita vertus, ši strategija užtikrina heteronormatyviosios tvarkos stabilumą ir tęstinumą.