

# Asian American Sexual Minority Health: Evidence and Gaps in Knowledge

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# Descriptive Data

## Asian American Population:

- Comprise 5% of total US population
- Ethnic, linguistic diversity, cultural heterogeneity

### 6.2% sexual minorities

- 2.2% identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual
- 4.0% non-LGB identified

Mental health

Substance use

STIs

***Critical questions re: definitions of LGB  
vs. “sexual minority” and the population  
we are talking about***

- Issues related to survey procedures (e.g., language of administration)
- Measurement (e.g., dimensions of identity, behavior, desire)
- Culture-specific and relevant

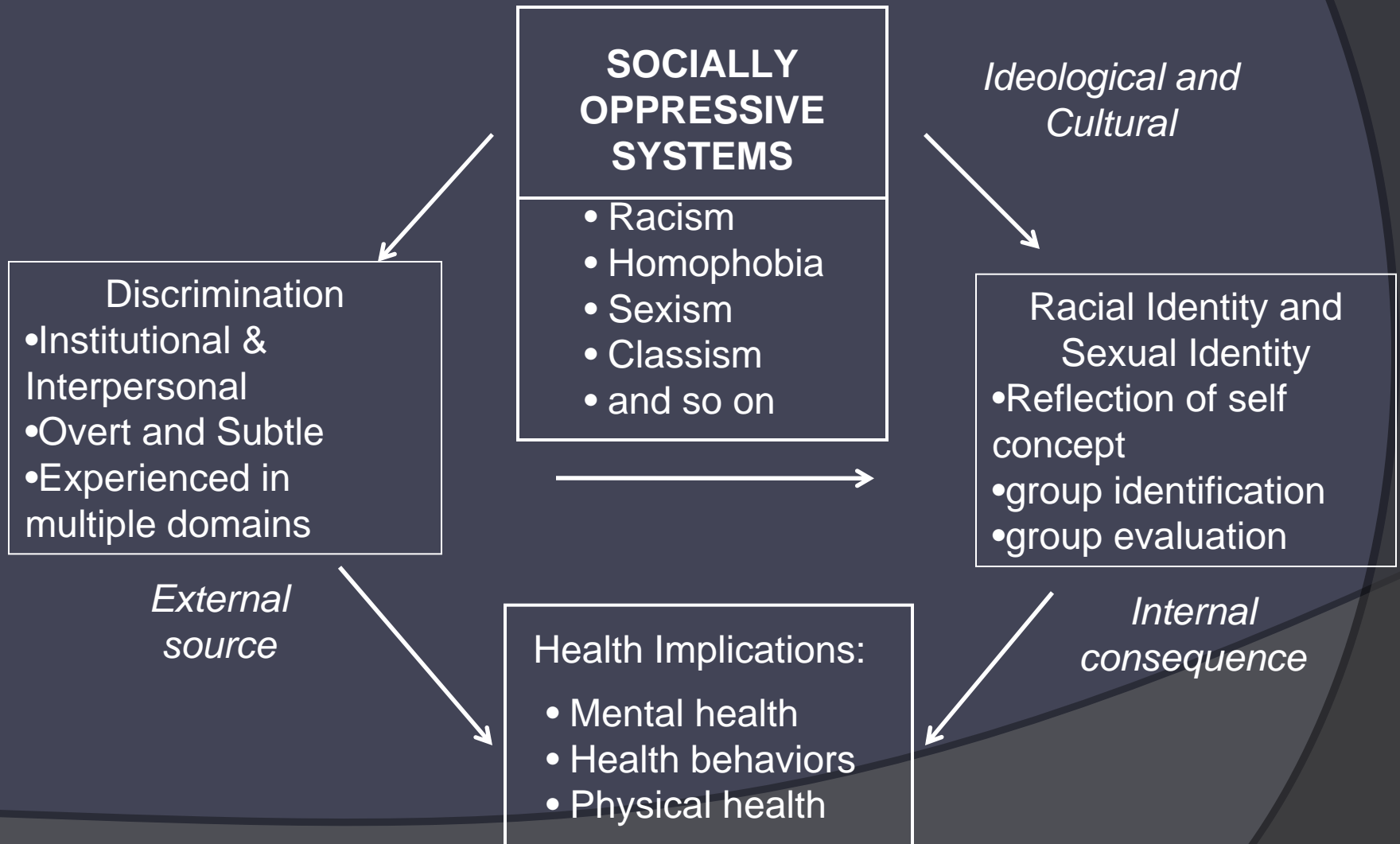
# How should we contextualize Asian American sexual minority health?

*“Disease emergence is a socially produced phenomenon.... Critical perspectives on emerging infections must ask how large scale social forces come to have their effects on unequally positioned individuals.”*

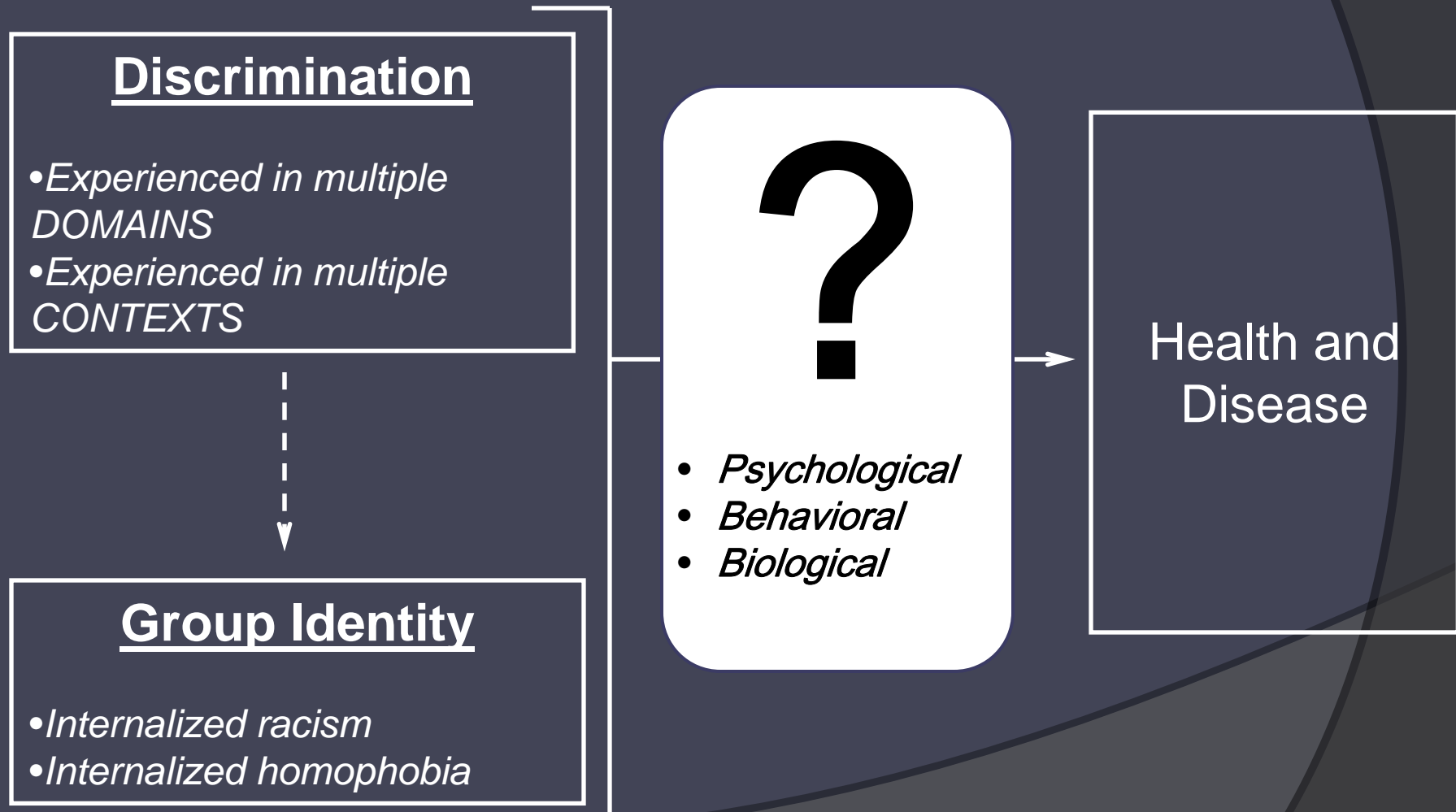
– Paul Farmer, *Infections and Inequalities*, 1999, p. 5.



# What are the *large scale* social forces that impact health?



# Discrimination, Identity, and Health



# Areas to be investigated

## Discrimination and Prejudice

- Marginalized within marginalized groups
- Intersections between race, sexuality, gender, class, etc.
- Immigration-related factors
- Acculturative stressors

# Additional Considerations

## Cultural

- filial piety, family obligation and role
- Collectivism
- taboos against discussions re: sex and sexuality

In research, pertinent to methods through which sexuality data is collected

- Provision of socially desirable responses?
- Interviewer-effects?

# Research Needs

- A need for research in general
  - Only two national studies
  - < 20 empirical articles, 14 focusing on HIV risk behavior, mostly on men, primarily regional
- Population studies – better surveillance focusing on within-group heterogeneity (e.g., by ethnic ancestry, LGB vs. non-LGB)

# Directions for research

Mechanistic studies focusing on pathways to health and disease.

- Include other outcomes that may be relevant
- Need for formative work to develop measures that tap into salient social hazards
  - *What are the salient types of experiences Asian American sexual minorities experience?*
- Incorporate biological pathways

More nuanced studies on Asian American sexual minority unique experiences focusing on how social inequalities “get under the skin”.