



OCCASIONAL PAPER 6

A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE *ALL OF US* PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this brief report is to provide a critical review of the *All of Us* resources that were designed to be used in support of the Australian Curriculum for Health and Physical Education.

The empirical support for the reasons why *All of Us* was created is challenged. This applies particularly in relation to the statistics cited as a need for the program.

Bullying is not the key target for the *All of Us* program.

The direct link between poor mental health and homophobia is questioned. It is shown that there are multiple causes for suicide.

The conceptual basis for the gender theory underlying the program is criticised. The idea of a spectrum is shown to be vague and ill-defined.

The components of homosexuality that are presented to students are masked.

The content matter is cognitively complex. The materials are beyond the capacity of junior high school students with a reading level marginally above Year 8. There are some 23 concepts in one lesson alone.

It was concluded that *All of Us* advances a gender ideology and

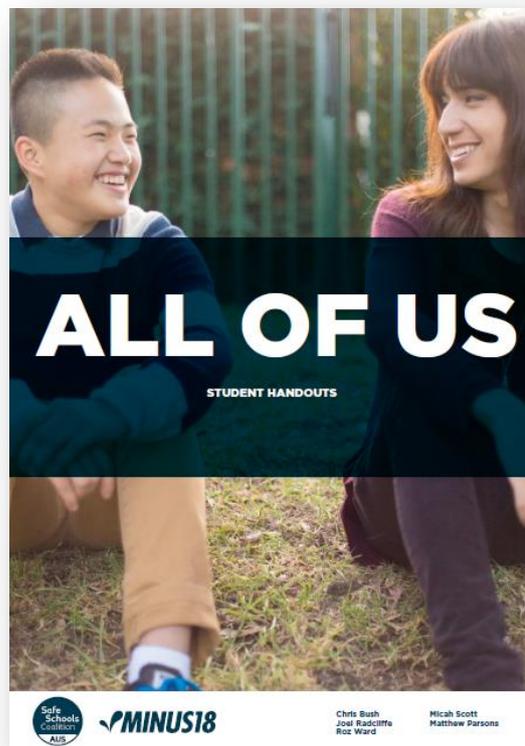
- advances individual versus collective values;
- has the capacity to cause psychological harm in adolescents;
- does not promote normal psychosexual development;
- has the potential to cause long-term damage to the social structure;
- discriminates against students who are not homosexual, bisexual, trans-sexual, queer or inter-sex.

All of Us was never evaluated appropriately prior to its introduction and its introduction may create more problems than it solves.

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A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE *ALL OF US* PROGRAM



The *All of Us* educational resource was released in November 2015 and is designed to be used in support of the Australian Curriculum for Health and Physical Education.¹ It has been considered contentious for a variety of reasons and a formal review was ordered by the Federal Minister for Education and Training in 2016.² The purpose of this brief report is to critically review the foundations of the program.

The first stated aim of the February 2016 version of the *All of Us* program is “to assist students in understanding gender diversity, sexual diversity and intersex topics”.³

¹ <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/health-and-physical-education/curriculum/f-10?layout=1#level3-4>, Retrieved June 2016

² Loudon, W. (2016). *Review of appropriateness and efficacy of the Safe Schools Coalition Australia program resources*.

³ *All of Us Health and Physical Education Resource. Understanding Gender Diversity, Sexual Diversity and Intersex Topics for Years 7 and 8*, no page number - possibly p. 3. All references are to the February 2016 version. This was replaced in May 2016.

A second set of purposes is also mentioned. They are: "...a sustainable, whole of school approach to challenging homophobia and transphobia, and better supporting sexual diversity, gender diversity, and people who are intersex in the school community."⁴

In this report, concerns are raised about the rationale underlying *All of Us*. Comments are made about the psychological and educational limitations of the program. I commence by providing the reader with a brief background to *All of Us*.

CONTENT OF THE PROGRAM

The centrepiece of the program is a series of seven case studies presented as video clips.

Video clips

The video clips show interviews with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people (see Table 1 for a listing).

Table 1. Participants in the *All of Us* video clips

1. Jaimee aged 17 is a lesbian
2. Nevo aged 17 is transgender and gender diverse.
3. Vivian is aged 17 and is bisexual
4. Phoebe is a filmmaker who is intersex
5. Jordan aged 19 is a university student and is bisexual
6. Michael aged 19 is a university student who is gay
7. Margot aged 20 is transgender.

The lessons

The lesson comprises a video clip of some 6:40 to 10:30 minutes and the student handout introduces the young person portrayed in the film.

It may be helpful to examine the content of the first scenario (i.e., Lesson 2). This is summarised in Table 2.

⁴ Op. cit.

All of Us starts with the scenario of a female homosexual (i.e., lesbian student). Lesbian is defined in *All of Us* as “a girl attracted to a girl”.⁵

Table 2. Content of Lesson 2 - Jaimee



Scenario (7.45 minutes)

Jaimee loves playing soccer, is passionate about helping those in need and wants to become a doctor. She has a Uruguayan background and in this video, explores the importance of having a supportive network at home and school. Her initial experience when she came out at school as a lesbian wasn't a positive one, but after shifting to an alternative high school, she discovered a supportive group of friends. Jaimee discusses simple changes that teachers and students can make to ensure their classrooms and schools are supportive and safe places.

Discussion Questions

1. What might be some fears for gay and lesbian people about coming out?
2. What do we mean by stereotype? What are some examples?
3. What are some of the common stereotypes about gay and lesbian people? What stereotypes did Jaimee talk about?
4. How did Jaimee feel when she first realised she was attracted to other girls? Why might she have felt this way?
5. What things did Jaimee's teachers do to make her feel welcome at school?
6. What does our school do to create a supportive and safe environment for students like Jaimee?

⁵ All of Us student handouts, p. 24.

7. What could our school do better to help young people like Jaimee feel more welcome?

Learning Activities

There is a learning activity which accompanies Jaimee's video. Students cut out some cards and order them from what the student thinks is the least difficult scenario to the most difficult scenario for someone who is lesbian, gay or bisexual. Here are the scenarios:

- Coming out to your teacher
- Coming out to your best friend
- Posting a status on Facebook telling all your school friends you are gay or lesbian
- Telling a friend online that you are gay or lesbian
- Going to a stand out group or queer straight alliance meeting at school
- Holding hands in the school corridor with someone of the same sex

Building blocks of Identity

The third part of the lesson has to do with the building blocks of identity-sexuality. It defines:

- Gender identity - how you feel
- Sex - the parts of your body
- Sexual identity - who you love, like and hook up with

Ally and pledge

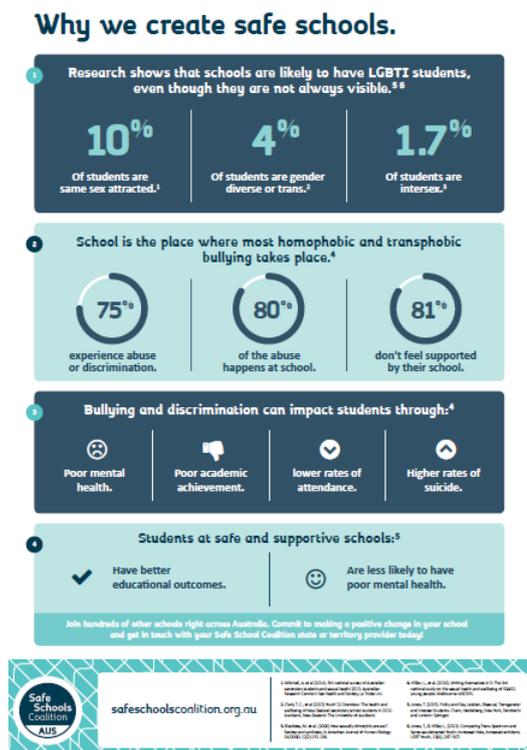
As the *All of Us* program proceeds, it seeks a pledge to be an ally or supporter. This means to make lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people feel safe and included. The pledge is signed by the student.

This is taken further with a mission that requires doing something to be an ally. It is extended in the final Lesson 8, where strategies to make a safer school are outlined:

- Facebook/Twitter pledge
- Signing up to join Safe Schools Coalition Australia
- Starting a Stand-out group or a Queer-Straight Alliance; Supporting IDAHOT (International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia)
- Updating school policies
- Curriculum changes;

- Poster;
- Stickers; Rainbow crossing (i.e., colourful entrance)
- Same-sex formal dates
- School web-site banners
- Entrance hall message; LGBTI representative
- LGBTI representative library books

The following section examines the aspects of *All of Us* that are of concern. It refers to an issue or cites excerpts from the materials before providing a comment.



THE BASIS FOR THE ALL OF US PROGRAM

The first set of concerns relate to the basis for the Safe School program.

“Schools are likely to have LGBTI students (even though they are not visible)”⁶

This is one of the three main reasons given to create safe schools. As a reason it is neither necessary nor sufficient.

⁶ Safe schools do better, p. 6

The justification is that schools contain a large proportion of “LGBTI students”. It is claimed that 10% of people are same-sex attracted. This is far from correct.

If we take males as an example, the proportion is closer to 1-2% and less for women (see Figure 1).

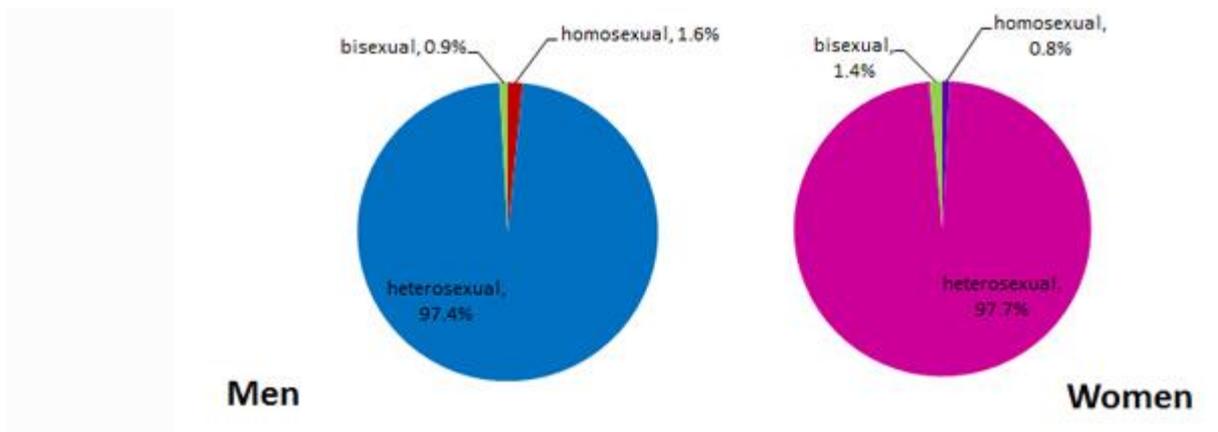


Figure 1. Estimates of heterosexual, homosexual and bisexual adults in Australia⁷

This error is particularly egregious because it makes no reference to the research published by the very department of La Trobe University that is associated with Safe Schools Coalition.

“School is the place where most homophobic and transphobic bullying takes place”⁸

It is claimed that 80 per cent of the abuse towards same-sex attracted or gender diverse students occurs at school. This is not correct.

This statistic has been misinterpreted.⁹ The available evidence is that of those students who did experience abuse only around 0.36 of the instances of all abuse (i.e., school, street, home, social occasion, sport, other and work) were at school.

⁷ Smith, A.M.A., Rissel, C.E., Richters, J., Grulich, A.E., & de Visser, R.O. (2003). Sex in Australia: Sexual identity, sexual attraction and sexual experience among a representative sample of adults, *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, 27(2), 138-145.

⁸ Safe schools do better, p. 6

⁹ Hillier, L., Jones, T., Monagle, M., Overton, N., Gahan, L., Blackman, J., & Mitchell, A. (2010). *Writing Themselves in 3. The third national study of sexual health and well-being of same sex attracted and gender questioning young people*. Melbourne: La Trobe University. Based on interpolating from Figure 11 on page 45.

The level of abuse is actually less than one might imagine given the time young people spent in school. Furthermore it is based on a highly selected sample of students (including post-school students) from the *Writing Themselves In 3* study. It may well overstate the case.

“Bullying and discrimination impact students through poor mental health, poor academic achievement, lower rates of attendance, and higher rates of suicide”¹⁰

This is a generalised statement. At face value it appears to have some *a priori* validity. It is based on the view that bullying and discrimination cannot be good for anyone.

In essence it means that were it not for bullying and discrimination (a) there would not be mental health problems and (b) educational performance would be higher. It is easy to state but very difficult to prove.

It does not mean that everyone who has lower than average educational performance has been bullied or discriminated.

Nor does it mean that everyone who has been bullied or discriminated has lower than average educational achievement.

At the very least, in order to establish validity it is necessary to review the educational achievement of a student throughout his/her schooling and to determine performance prior to and following bullying and harassment. Then it is also necessary to plot the intervention of personal, social, familial events on performance. This is a daunting task and even then one might not be assured of having controlled for all relevant factors.

Finally, it is a generalisation that may not apply to an individual. On the whole, this conclusion is based on a weak inference.

The reader must excuse this prolonged discussion but it is a core issue. Given that the previous two criteria were not satisfied then the only

¹⁰ Safe schools do better, p. 6

rationale that remains is this third point. If it is found wanting, then the basis for the *All of Us* program is weakened considerably.

Let me return to the reference to poor mental health and suicide as a result of bullying.

POOR MENTAL HEALTH

It is not always recognised that psychological health amongst homosexuals and bisexuals overall is far worse than for the general population.^{11 12}

There is no reason to suspect that this is any different for adolescents.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics *National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing* is consistent with this view.¹³ Homosexuals/bisexuals have markedly higher levels of anxiety disorders (31.5 per cent vs. 14.1 per cent), affective disorders (19.2 per cent vs. 6 per cent) and substance use disorders 8.6 per cent vs. 5.0 per cent).¹⁴

Some people might say that the poor mental health is a result of homophobia. This does not stand up to scrutiny.

There is a very distinct possibility that poor mental or poor social adjustment preceded or at least accompanied problems of gender identity or same-sex attraction.

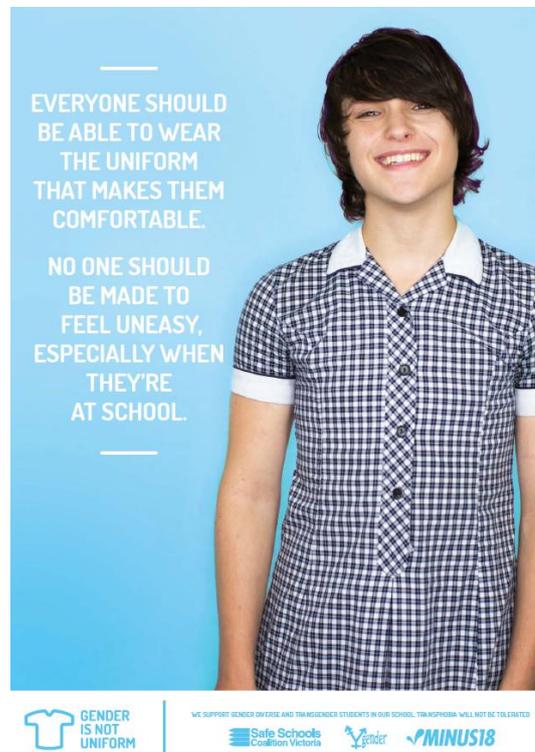
¹¹ King, M., Mckeown, E., Warner, J., Ramsay, J., Johnson, K., Cort, C., Wright, L., Blizard, R., Johnson, K., & Davidson, O. (2003). Mental health and quality of life of gay men and lesbians in England and Wales. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 183, 552-558.

¹² King, M., Semlyen, J., See Tai, S., Killaspy, H., Osborn, H., Popelyuk, D., & Nazareth, I. (2008). A systematic review of mental disorder, suicide, and deliberate self harm in lesbian, gay and bisexual people. *BMC Psychiatry*, 8:70.

¹³ Australian Bureau of Statistics. *National survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing: Summary of Results*. Catalogue No. 4326.0, 2007: 26.

¹⁴ Corboz, J, Dowsett, G, Mitchell, A, Couch, M, Agius, P and Pitts, M. *Feeling Queer and Blue: A Review of the Literature on Depression and Related Issues among Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Other Homosexually Active People*, A Report from the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University, prepared for *beyondblue: the national depression initiative*. Melbourne: La Trobe University, Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, 2008.

Furthermore, it is not publicised that *gender dysphoria* is a classifiable psychiatric condition (DSM-5).¹⁵ It is the clinical distress associated with the condition of feeling one's emotional and psychological identity as male or female to be opposite to one's biological sex.



SUICIDE

Some issues of higher rates of suicide were dealt with in Occasional Paper 1 and the details are repeated below.

The claim that homophobia and suicide are inextricably related is far too simplistic.

Suicide attempts amongst students occur even in the absence of abuse. While homophobia may be a catalyst it is clearly not the only factor.

Suicide in developed nations has risen independently of same-sex attraction and homophobia.

¹⁵ American Psychiatric Association (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders 5th edn* (DSM-5). Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Association.

For a start it is both age and gender related. Among young males aged 15-19 the rate is around 9 suicides per 100,000 and 3 per 100,000 for women aged 15-19.

Contrary to the perceptions of many laypersons, it is not youth that suicide at the highest rate but men aged 40-44 years with some 26 deaths per 100,000 and also men aged 85 years and over (Australian Bureau of Statistics).¹⁶ It is drawing a long bow to attribute suicide to a single cause.

Instead Eckersley and Dear¹⁷ have related male youth suicide rates to factors such as health, optimism and individualism. They portrayed suicide as “the tip of an iceberg of suffering” and sheeted home the blame to developed nations that did not promote social identity and attachment. They singled out naive expectations about personal liberty and independence. There is not a single mention or reference to homosexuality, same-sex attraction or homophobia in their analysis.

BULLYING

The rationale for the *All of Us* is derived from the National Safe Schools Framework. This features the prevention of bullying.

Bullying¹⁸ is not a new feature of schooling. It has been described as a universal phenomenon¹⁹ and one that has been well documented in Australian studies since the early 1990s. Up to one in five students reported being bullied in the first major Australian study of 25,500 primary

¹⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2010). *Measures of Australia's progress, 2010*. Catalogue No. 1370.0. Canberra: Author.

¹⁷ Eckersley, R. E., & Dear, K. (2002). Cultural correlates of youth suicide. *Social Science & Medicine*, 55(11), 1891-1904.

¹⁸ This material is taken from the Occasional Paper 4.1 in this series.

¹⁹ Op. cit., p. xv.

and secondary students.²⁰ Furthermore, the 2009 *Australian Covert Bullying Prevalence Study*²¹ reported:

Being bullied every few weeks or more often (considered to be frequent) overtly and/or covertly during the last term at school is a fairly common experience, affecting approximately one in four Year 4 to Year 9 Australian students (27%). Frequent school bullying was highest among Year 5 (32%) and Year 8 (29%) students. (p. xxi)

No claim is made that bullying does not have adverse educational consequences. It has been reported to affect avoidance of school (i.e., attendance)²² and achievements in areas such as mathematics or reading.²³ The incidence, prevalence, duration and size of this effect, however, are very difficult to quantify.

Bullying already occurs on the basis of many personal and social characteristics, such as socioeconomic status, Aboriginality or immigrant status. It is not only restricted to same-sex attracted or gender diverse students.

Sadly, bullying is a feature of modern schooling and life in general. It is not an isolated phenomenon but it is to be avoided if we are to produce a civil society. From the perspective of being an explanation of educational outcomes, same-sex attracted or gender diverse students, it can be said to be insufficient.

There are also some conceptual concerns about the program *All of Us*.

²⁰ Rigby, K., & Slee, P. T. (1999). Australia. In P.K. Smith, Y.Morita, J. Junger-Tas, D. Olweus, R. Catalano, & P. T. Slee (eds.), *The nature of school bullying. A cross-national perspective* (pp. 324-44-). London: Routledge.

²¹ Cross, D., Shaw, T., Hearn, L., Epstein, M., Monks, H., Lester, L., & Thomas, L. (2009). *Australian Covert Bullying Prevalence Study* (ACBPS). Child Health Promotion Research Centre, Edith Cowan University, Perth. (see also Occasional Paper No. 1, p. 14).

²² Kochenderfer, B.J., & Ladd, G.W. (1996). Peer victimization: Cause or consequence of school maladjustment? *Child Development*, 67, 1305-1317; Olweus, D. (1992). Bullying among schoolchildren: Intervention and prevention. In R.D. Meters, R.J. McMahon, & V.L. Quinsey (Eds.), *Aggression and violence throughout the life span* (pp. 100-125). London: Sage.

²³ Glew, G.M., Fan, M., Katon, W., Rivara, F.P., & Kernic, M.A. (2005). Bullying, psychosocial adjustment, and academic performance in elementary school. *Archives of Pediatric Adolescent Medicine*, 159, 1026-1031.

CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS

Defining the building blocks of identity

There are some serious concerns with the way in which terms are defined and presented.

All of Us separates the concepts of sex, gender and identity. It does not seek to harmonise them.

Then *All of Us* argues that sex, gender and identity “exist on a spectrum rather than as absolute binaries”.²⁴ This is stated as a truism.

At best, it is a contentious statement of philosophy.

Sex as a binary

The aim is to denigrate the idea of sex as a “binary” because once this is done it allows the introduction of a rainbow “spectrum”.

For the majority of the population, however, sex is a very useful biological dichotomy. It is a foundation on which our social life is built.

If *All of Us* can destroy the concept of a sex then traditional ideas of gender and identity come crashing down.

To refer to something as a binary implies no overlap. It is incorrect, however, to consider that each category in a dichotomy needs to be uniform in every characteristic.

To say that there are males as one part of a dichotomy does not imply that all males are the same. Their “maleness” can vary.

²⁴ *All of Us* Health and Physical Education Resource, p. 10.



Since it is asserted that there is a “spectrum”, then one could ask: what are the endpoints of that spectrum? My guess is that they are the categories of male and female.

If there are no end point categories then what is the unidimensional feature on which the spectrum is based? Typically a spectrum has units but these are not indicated in *All of Us*. Conceptually a real spectrum, might start at zero (non-sex) and increase to some type of “infinite” sex. If instead it is multiple categories (e.g., male, female, bisexual) then it is still not a spectrum.

The complexities of such positions are overlooked. The empirical support for such assertions in *All of Us* is wanting. The utility of such ideas for education is not evaluated.

Identity

Sexual identity is defined as “who you love, like and hookup with”.²⁵ Presumably all three criteria need to be satisfied for sexual identity.

The first two verbs do not define identity.

The third term “hookup” is a less usual way of referring to identity. As a colloquial term, “hookup” can refer to a casual sexual encounter (see

²⁵ *All of Us* student handouts, p. 24.

Webster-Merriam Dictionary)²⁶ or more generally to begin a romantic or sexual relationship with someone (Cambridge Dictionary).²⁷

The noun “sexual identity” was defined in terms of “who...” and not “what...”. It is outlined as a verb (e.g., hookup is a phrasal verb).

In short, the language is non-specific. It is imprecise.

Definitions are vague

Naturally, the terms lesbian, gay, bisexual, straight, queer, and pansexual are used throughout the program.

Their definitions do not appear to be specific or accurate. A classical error is in the definition of homophobia.

In *All of Us*, “homophobia” is defined on page 54 of the Unit Guide as: “The fear or intolerance of people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or same sex attracted, usually linked with hostility, verbal and physical abuse, or discrimination.”

The formal definition in our national dictionary makes no reference to intolerance or discrimination. It refers only to “fear of homosexuals usually with hostility towards them”.²⁸

One can fear something but still be tolerant. Discrimination is not a sine qua non of fear. One can fear something but not engage in verbal abuse or hostility. This is an example of the extension of a meaning in a desired direction.

Furthermore, in the student handout the definitions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, straight, queer, and pansexual refer mainly or exclusively to attraction: “a girl attracted to a girl”; “a guy attracted to a guy”; “attracted

²⁶ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hookup>, Retrieved June 2016.

²⁷ <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/hook-up>, Retrieved June 2016.

²⁸ Delbridge, A., Bernard, J. R. L., Blair, D., Peters, P., & Butler, S. (1991). *The Macquarie Dictionary* (2nd ed.). Macquarie University: The Macquarie Library, p. 845

to more than one gender”; “attracted to people regardless of their gender”.

For instance, a lesbian is actually a female homosexual, not merely “a girl attracted to a girl”. There is a vast difference.

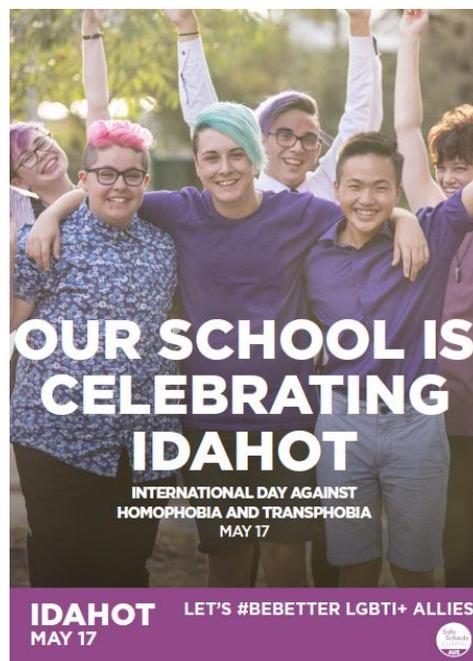
Basing the definition on attraction is a simplistic approach and misleading of the full definition.

“Attracted” in the context of understanding sexual activity is a euphemism. Attracted is a mask for sexual behaviours.

Allow me to take “gay” as the description of a male homosexual. Gay is defined merely as someone who is “a guy attracted to a guy”.

But being “gay” implies male homosexual practices and behaviours such as those listed in Occasional Paper No. 3 in this series.²⁹

Nowhere are the elements of such attraction described accurately - because it would unleash a storm of protest.



²⁹ Athanasou, J.A. (2016). *The Practices and Behaviour of Men who have Sex with Men: A Summary of “Sexual Health and Behaviour of Men in New South Wales 2013-2014”*. Occasional Paper No. 3.

PSYCHOLOGICAL HARM

The *All of Us* program may contravene some aspects of the psychosexual development of the individual child. There is no evidence that this material is age appropriate.

***All of Us* has not been tested for harmful effects**

On the contrary, in one interactive exercise students of 12-14 are asked to imagine themselves as someone aged 16 years or over and are “going out with someone they are really into”.³⁰ Half the group is assigned arbitrarily to a same-sex relationship.

It overlooks the fact that children vary in their development. They will comprehend this information differently. They will synthesise these experiences differently. As a consequence, their moral evaluation of sex, gender and identity will be compromised by their capacity to process or integrate the many details of *All of Us*.

Typically, by age three children recognise themselves clearly as a boy or a girl (i.e., gender identity). By the time they enter school, children will appreciate that they will mature into a man or a woman (i.e., gender stability). Well before primary school age, a child will know that altering the dress or appearance does not change one’s sex (i.e., gender permanence). In essence, *All of Us* seeks to overturn this pattern of development.³¹

The harmful effects on later mature psychosexual adjustment have not been considered. In some instances the conduct of these programs may constitute a form of abuse.

The psychological and moral depth of this subject matter and its intensive personal content has not been researched. Some of the *All of Us* exercises could be confronting and uncomfortable.

³⁰ All of Us, Health and Physical Education Resource, p. 20.

³¹ Martin, C. L., & Ruble, D. N. (2010). Patterns of gender development. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 61, 353-381.

For instance, the example of intersex refers to medical interventions. The thoughts of surgical removal of a normal body part could be traumatic (e.g., male to female re-assignment surgery).³²

Children will be exposed to facts and experiences that they are not equipped to handle.

Professor Louden³³ described some negative effects of one classroom exercise:

The Stepping Out procedure is to divide the class into two halves and ask both halves the same set of questions to which the answer is “yes” or “no”. In this case students are asked to imagine that they are over 16 and one half of the class is asked to respond to ten questions as if they are same sex attracted and the other half is asked to respond as if they are opposite sex attracted.

All students are asked to stand up, and the teacher counts down from ten, asking students to sit down when the number corresponding to the number of times they answered “yes” is called out. The purpose of the activity is to identify the difference in experience for the two groups. In this case, student responses may show that more students would be comfortable inviting an opposite sex partner home than a same sex partner, or taking an opposite sex partner to a school formal than a same sex partner...

Although Stepping Out is a familiar classroom activity, teachers’ views about its appropriateness were mixed. Some thought it quite appropriate. Others thought that it might be difficult for Year 7-8 students to imagine that they were same sex attracted. Further, it was thought that it might be uncomfortable for the last student left standing in the exercise, the student who answered “yes” to the fewest questions.

The onus for any psychological harm will fall squarely on the education system.

No formal studies of the side effects of this intervention based on the equivalent of a random controlled clinical trial with students have been reported. Even pharmaceutical products undergo rigorous testing before being released for public use.

³² *All of Us* Student Handout, p. 39 et seq.

³³ Louden, W. (2016). *Review of appropriateness and efficacy of the Safe Schools Coalition Australia program resources*, pp. 10-11.

Controversial issues in schools

Education Departments have guidelines for the treatment of controversial issues in schools. *All of Us* may contravene some of these guidelines.

I am relying on excerpts from the “Direction for the management of controversial issues in schools, whether by the use of teaching-learning material or views expressed by teachers or visiting speakers” from the New South Wales Department of Education:

“Schools are not arenas for opposing political views or ideologies”.

My comment - *All of Us* is an ideology that is opposed to mainstream thought.

“Discussion is not intended to advance the interest of any group, political or otherwise”

My comment - *All of Us* is designed to advance the interests of the LGBTI community.

“Schools are not places for recruiting into partisan groups”.

My comment - Safe Schools Coalition is a partisan group and does seek to recruit through *All of Us*.

“Teachers have a privileged position... They therefore have a special responsibility to maintain objectivity, to avoid distortion of discussions, and to acknowledge the right of students and parents to hold a different viewpoint”.

My comment - psychosexual development is not a topic of objectivity and even with the best of intentions it is not possible to avoid some distortion in the selection of topics, materials, resources, activities.

EDUCATIONAL HARM

The material in *All of Us* is cognitively demanding. Allow me to take a single lesson as an example of the intellectual demands.

We may use the Lesson 2 that was outlined in Table 2 above as it is accessible to the reader but this exercise could be undertaken for any of the seven scenarios.

For a start, the estimated Flesch reading grade level of the material in Lesson 2 was Grade 8.4. This is well above the average reading level for Australian adults, let alone a significant proportion of students in Years 7-8.

In lesson 2, I have identified 23 ideas or actions involved aside from those promulgated in the video clip.

The concepts have been broadly categorised according to Bloom's cognitive taxonomy although they also encompass the affective domain (Table 3).

Table 3. Concepts, ideas and actions from Lesson 2 (*All of Us*)

Knowledge - gay, lesbian, coming out, standout group, sex, bisexual, straight, queer, pansexual

Comprehension - coming out, stereotype, attraction, gender identity, sexual identity

Application - coming out, welcome, Facebook posting, Queer-straight Alliance Meeting, holding hands

Analysis - fears,

Synthesis - feelings,

Evaluation - supportive and safe environment, being a good friend and ally

Alternative categorisations are possible but the important point is that there are more than 20 complex concepts involved within this single lesson for a Year 7-8 student. This is achievable but it is intellectually and emotionally challenging.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

While the *All of Us* resource is aligned with the Australian Curriculum it is not agreed that it is “suitable, robust, age appropriate, educationally sound”.³⁴

All of Us is important because in a sense this program deconstructs the concepts of sex, gender and identity in our society.

- It has the capacity to cause psychological harm in adolescents;
- It advances individual versus collective values;
- It does not promote normal psychosexual development;
- It has the potential to cause long-term damage to the social structure;
- This program discriminates against students who are not homosexual, bisexual, trans-sexual, queer or inter-sex.

All of Us is not an anti-bullying program of the type already in schools. It seeks to normalise, promote and celebrate homosexuality, bisexual and transgender behaviours. The word “bullying” appears only twice in the *All of Us* Student Handout.

This openness about same-sex attraction will influence the behaviour of adolescents. The discussion about transgender and intersex will exploit confusion in some students.

There is a clear imbalance against heterosexual relationships that are non-discriminatory towards others.

In the final analysis *All of Us* is a type of sexual propaganda. This is fine so long as it is acknowledged and promoted as such.

It seeks to generate sympathy through the implementation of classroom activities. Students are encouraged to become activist. My guess is that any student hesitation or opposition is likely to be hidden. Students may fear being labelled as a homophobe or bigot.

³⁴ Louden, W. (2016). *Review of appropriateness and efficacy of the Safe Schools Coalition Australia program resources*, p. 2.

The statistical foundation for the Safe Schools program has been challenged in this report and it is regrettable that the review of the Safe Schools Coalition Australia program resources admitted that it did not evaluate “the veracity of the statistics cited”.³⁵

Finally, *All of Us* was never evaluated in the sense of a controlled randomised clinical trial. The impact of this program in terms of criteria such as ethics, costs, coverage, objectives, effects and stakeholders is long overdue. That it was adopted and funded in spite of the catalogue of concerns such as those listed in this report beggars belief.

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Declaration of conflicting interests

None declared.

³⁵ Louden, W. (2016). *Review of appropriateness and efficacy of the Safe Schools Coalition Australia program resources*, p. 8.

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OCCASIONAL PAPERS

1. *A critical analysis of Writing Themselves In 3*. March 2016
2. *A critical comment on the 5th National Survey of Australian Secondary Students and Sexual Health*. March 2016
3. *The practices and behaviour of men who have sex with men: A summary of "Sexual Health and Behaviour of Men in New South Wales 2013-2014"*. April 2016
- 4.2. *Appraising the importance of bullying for the National Safe Schools Framework*. June 2016
5. *A preliminary note on the use of words such as "gay", "lesbian" or "homosexual" and terms such as "same-sex" or "LGBTI"*. May 2016
6. *A critical review of the All of Us program*. June 2016