

# Sexual Orientation and Selected Health Indicators in the National Survey Of Family Growth



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# OVERVIEW

- ◉ NSFG background
- ◉ Description of sexual orientation measure
- ◉ Concordance of orientation, attraction, and behavior
- ◉ Selected demographic and health indicators relative to sexual orientation

# PURPOSES OF THE NATIONAL SURVEY OF FAMILY GROWTH

- ◉ Addressing Section 306 of the Public Health Service Act:  
“NCHS shall collect statistics on...family formation, growth, & dissolution.”
- ◉ Explaining variations in birth rates: e.g., sexual activity, contraception, infertility.
- ◉ Monitoring risk of HIV and sexually transmitted diseases: Number of sexual partners, condom use by type of sex, drug use, same-sex contact.
- ◉ Describing relationships & families: Marriage, divorce, cohabitation; Roles of fathers in raising children.
- ◉ Describing attitudes about sex, marriage, parenthood.

# NSFG HISTORY IN BRIEF

Year	Scope (15-44)	N	Over-Samples	Average Length	Contractor
1973	Ever-Married Women	9,797	Black women	60 Min	NORC
1976	Ever-Married Women	8,611	Black women	60 Min	Westat
1982	All Women	7,969	Black women & teens 15-19	60 Min	Westat
1988	All Women	8,450	Black women	70 Min	Westat
1995	All Women	10,847	Blacks & Hispanics	100 Min	RTI
2002	All Women & Men	12,571 W = 7,643 M = 4,928	Blacks, Hispanics, & Teens	W= 85 min M= 60 min	U of Michigan
2006-2010	All Women & Men	22,682 W=12,279 M=10,403	Blacks, Hispanics, & Teens	W=~80 min M=~60 min	U of Michigan
2011-2013	All Women & Men	10,416 W=5,601 M=5,815	Blacks, Hispanics, & Teens	W=~80 min M=~60 min	U of Michigan

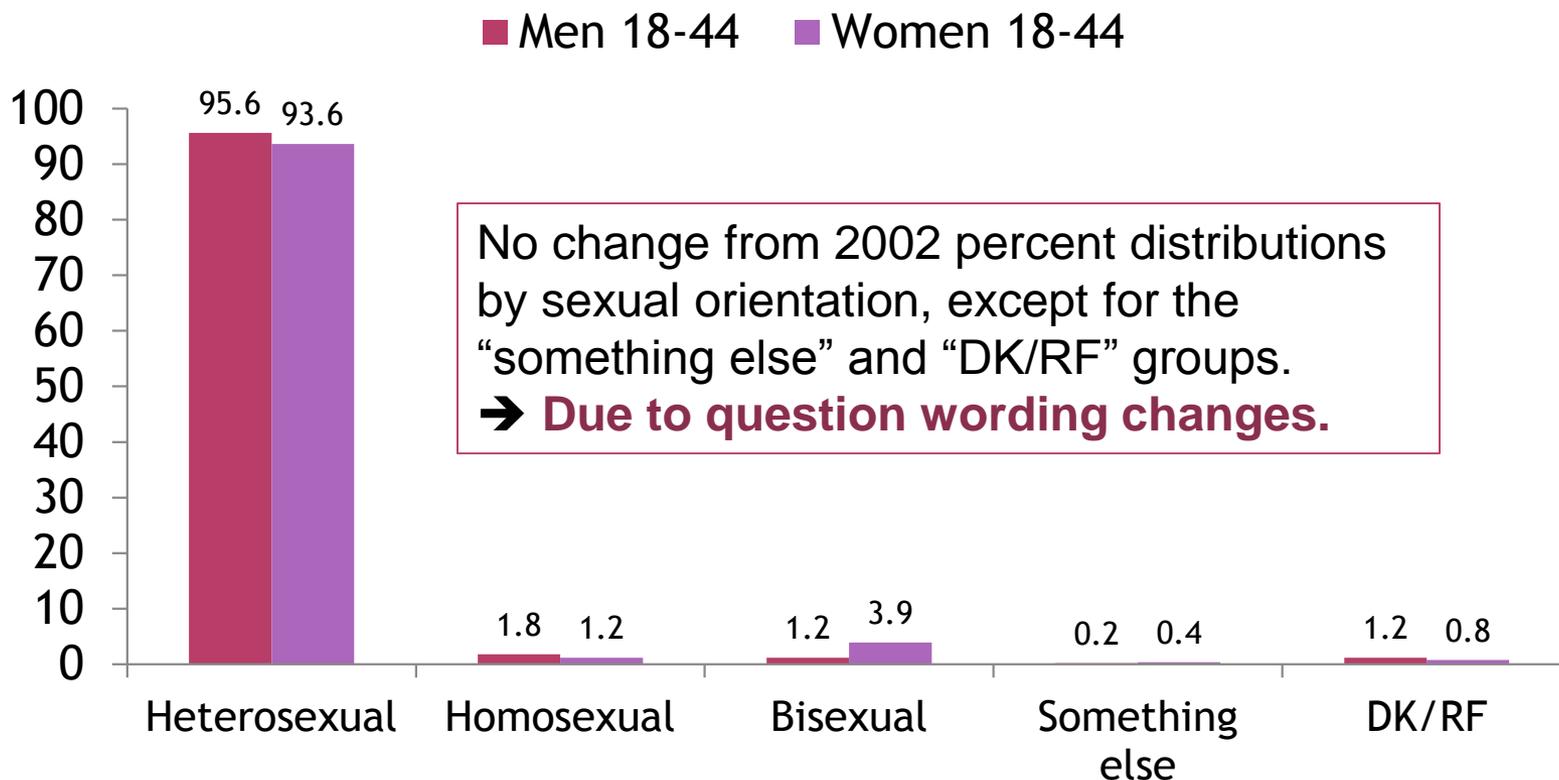
# NSFG IS SUPPORTED BY:

- **National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)**
- **National Institute for Child Health & Human Development (NICHD)**
- **Office of Population Affairs (OPA)**
  
- CDC's Division of STD Prevention
- CDC's Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention
- CDC's Division of Birth Defects & Developmental Disabilities
- CDC's Division of Cancer Prevention & Control
- CDC's Division of Reproductive Health
- ACF's Office of Planning, Research, & Evaluation
- ACF's Children's Bureau
- Assistant Secretary for Planning & Evaluation (ASPE)

# NSFG data on sexual behavior and STD/HIV risk-related topics (mostly collected in ACASI)

- Sexual behavior (vaginal, oral, & anal sex)
- Same-sex sexual behavior
- Condom use at last sex
- Forced sexual intercourse & types of force
- Number of partners (*lifetime and recent, by type of sex*)
- HIV testing (*lifetime and in past year*)
- Substance use, including illicit drug injection
- Exchange of sex for money or drugs
- **Sexual attraction & sexual orientation**
  - Questions based on 1992 National Health & Social Life Survey
  - Asked after behavioral questions, given primary purposes of NSFG
  - Fairly good but not complete concordance with behavior, supporting importance of measuring separately.
  - Sexual orientation also used as a demographic descriptor in HP2020 and other population-based public health monitoring

# Sexual orientation reported by men & women 18-44: United States 2006-2010



Source: Chandra A, Copen CE, Mosher WD. Sexual Behavior, Sexual Attraction, and Sexual Identity in the United States: Data from the 2006–2010 National Survey of Family Growth. In: Baumle AK (ed). International Handbooks of Population, International Handbook on the Demography of Sexuality. Volume VI: Springer Science and Business Media Dordrecht, 2013:45-66. (Available upon request through [nsfg@cdc.gov](mailto:nsfg@cdc.gov))

# Sexual Orientation Question Wording: “Do you think of yourself as...”

## 2002

- Heterosexual
- Homosexual
- Bisexual
- Or something else
  
- No follow-up for “something else”

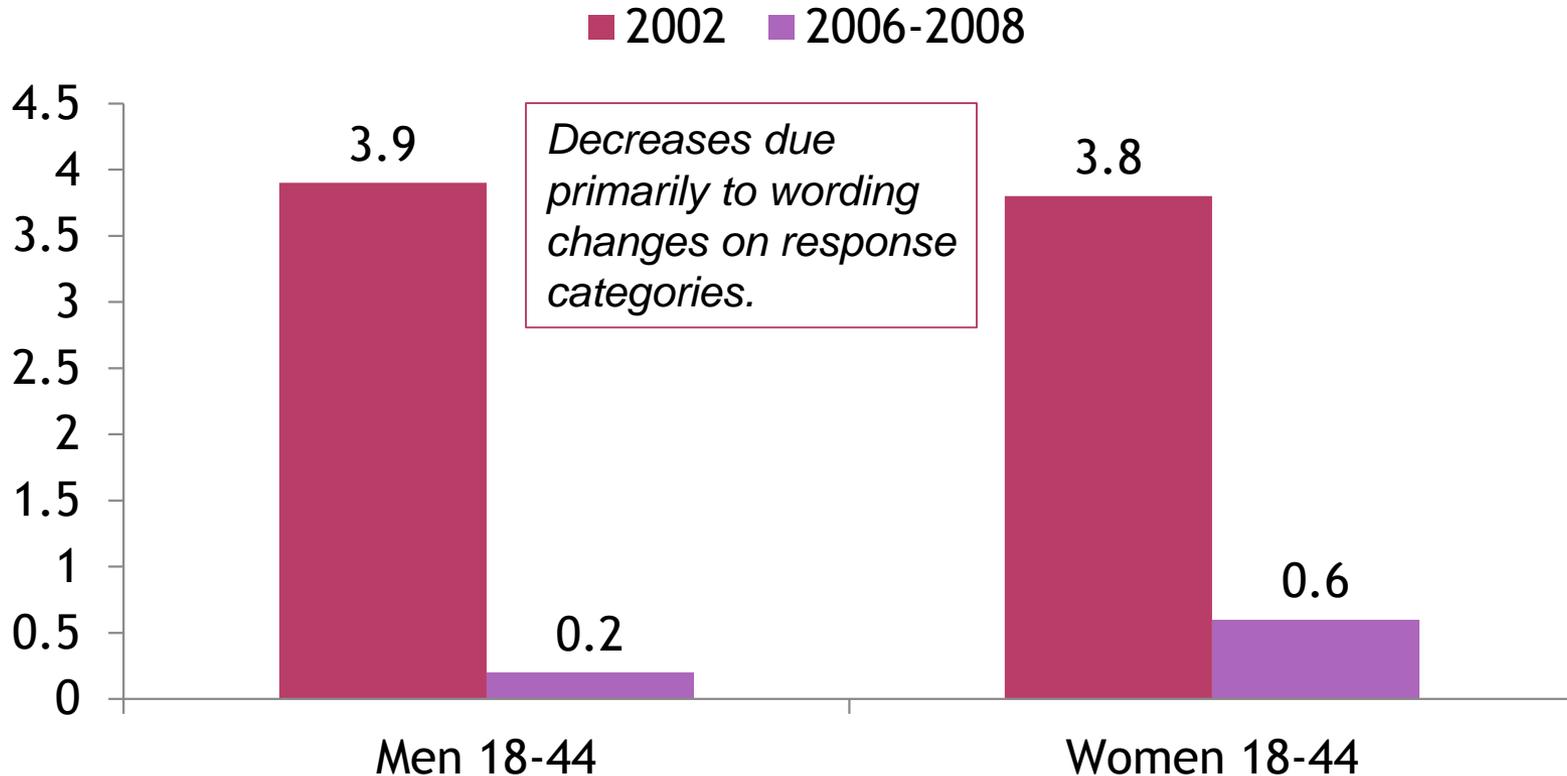
## 2006-2008

- Heterosexual *or straight*
- Homosexual *or gay (or lesbian)*
- Bisexual
- Or something else
  
- Follow-up (verbatim) for “something else”
- Able to back-code into provided categories for:
  - 20 of 39 men 18-44
  - 37 of 87 women 18-44

## 2008+

- Heterosexual or straight
- Homosexual or gay (or lesbian)
- Bisexual
  
- “Something else” category was deleted

# Percent of men & women 18-44 reporting sexual orientation as “something else”: United States 2002 and 2006-2008



Source: Tables 12 & 13 in Chandra A, Mosher WD, Copen C, Sionean C. Sexual behavior, sexual attraction and sexual identity in the United States: Data from the 2006-2008 National Survey of Family Growth. NHR #36. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2011.

## Percent of men and women 18-44 who report sexual orientation as “something else”: NSFG, 2002 and 2006-2010

	2002 Men	2006-2010 Men	2002 Women	2006-2010 Women
Hispanic	7.3	0.5	6.1	0.4
NH White	2.3	0.2	2.3	0.3
NH Black	7.5	DSU	6.5	1.0
Less than High School	9.5	DSU	10.2	0.5
High School Graduate	6.3	0.4	5.4	0.3
Some College	1.3	0.2	1.9	0.2
College Graduate	1.3	DSU	0.6	0.4
ACASI in English	3.6	0.2	3.6	0.4
ACASI in Spanish	8.1	0.4	5.9	0.9

Note: Education figures are limited to those aged 22-44. **DSU = Data statistically unreliable.**

Sources: Table II in NHR #36 plus tables 4.6 and 4.7 in book chapter.

## Percent of men and women 18-44 who report sexual orientation as “don’t know” or “refused” (or NA): NSFG, 2002 and 2006-2010

	2002 Men	2006-2010 Men	2002 Women	2006-2010 Wome
Hispanic	3.5	2.7	4.1	2
NH White	0.7	0.6	1.2	0
NH Black	3.2	0.5	2.0	0
Less than High School	3.2	2.6	4.9	2
High School Graduate	2.4	1.8	3.0	0
Some College	0.4	0.6	0.6	0
College Graduate	DSU	0.6	0.9	0
ACASI in English	1.8	0.8	1.5	0
ACASI in Spanish	3.9	5.6	6.7	5

Note: Education figures are limited to those aged 22-44. **DSU = Data statistically unreliable.**  
 Source: Table II in NHR #36 plus tables 4.6 and 4.7 in book chapter.

# Crossover Study using NSFG & NHIS sexual orientation questions:

Beginning in Sept 2015, NSFG will be doing a randomized 50-50 crossover study within ACASI:

- **NSFG question, as used since 2008:**

*Do you think of yourself as...*

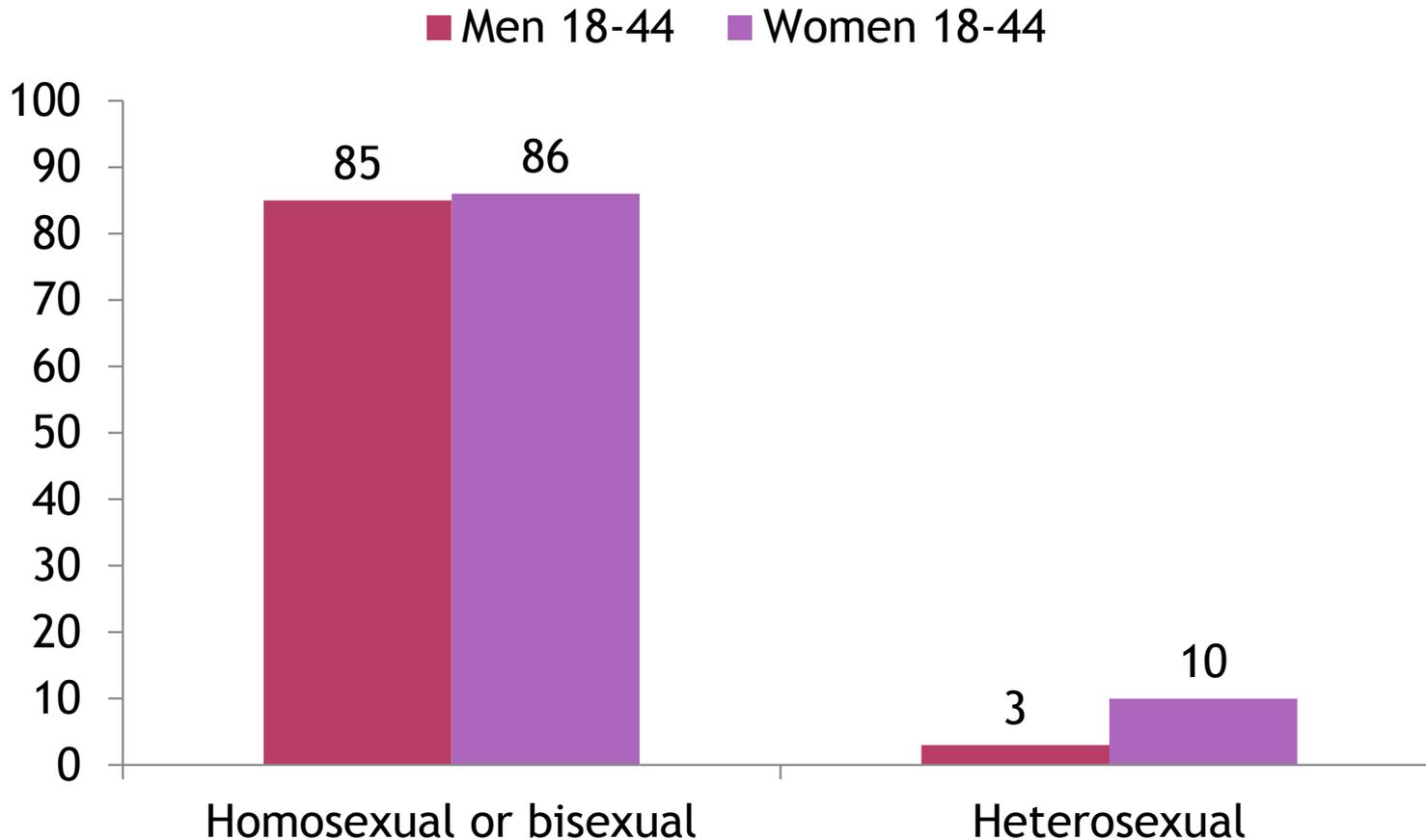
- *Heterosexual or straight*
- *Homosexual or gay (or lesbian)*
- *Bisexual*

- **NHIS question, as used since 2013:**

*Which of the following best represents how you think of yourself?*

- *(Lesbian or) gay*
- *Straight, that is, not (lesbian or) gay*
- *Bisexual*
- *Something else*

# Percent of men & women 18-44 reporting any same-sex sexual behavior, by sexual orientation: United States 2006-2010



Source: Chandra A, Copen CE, Mosher WD. Sexual Behavior, Sexual Attraction, and Sexual Identity in the United States: Data from the 2006–2010 National Survey of Family Growth. In: Bauble AK (ed). International Handbooks of Population, International Handbook on the Demography of Sexuality. Volume VI: Springer Science and Business Media Dordrecht, 2013:45-66. (Available upon request through [nsfg@cdc.gov](mailto:nsfg@cdc.gov))

# Sexual Attraction Question

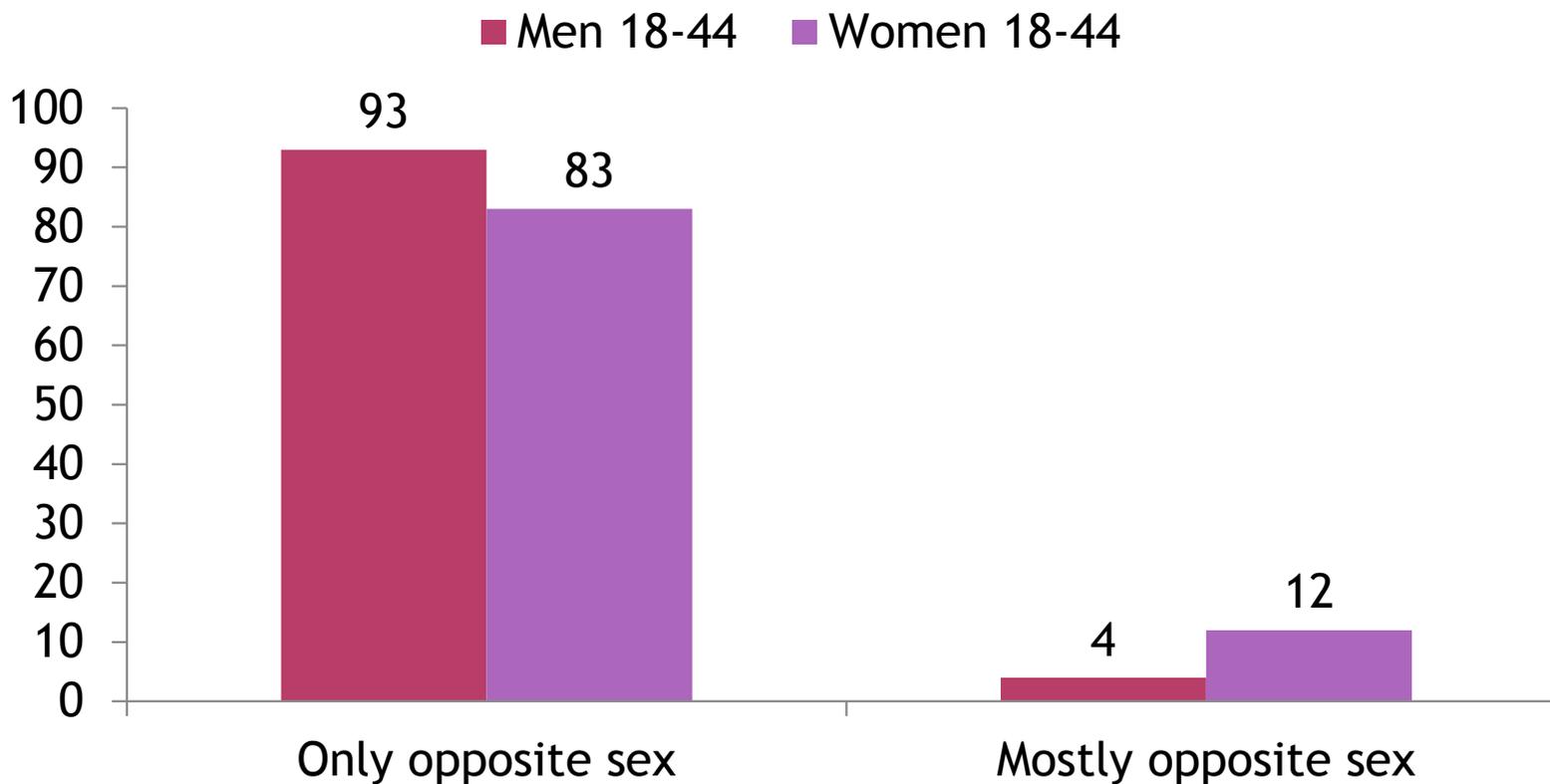
Question wording for FEMALES (asked since 2002 NSFG)

*Male question is similar, just reversing the response categories.*

People are different in their sexual attraction to other people. Which best describes your feelings? Are you:

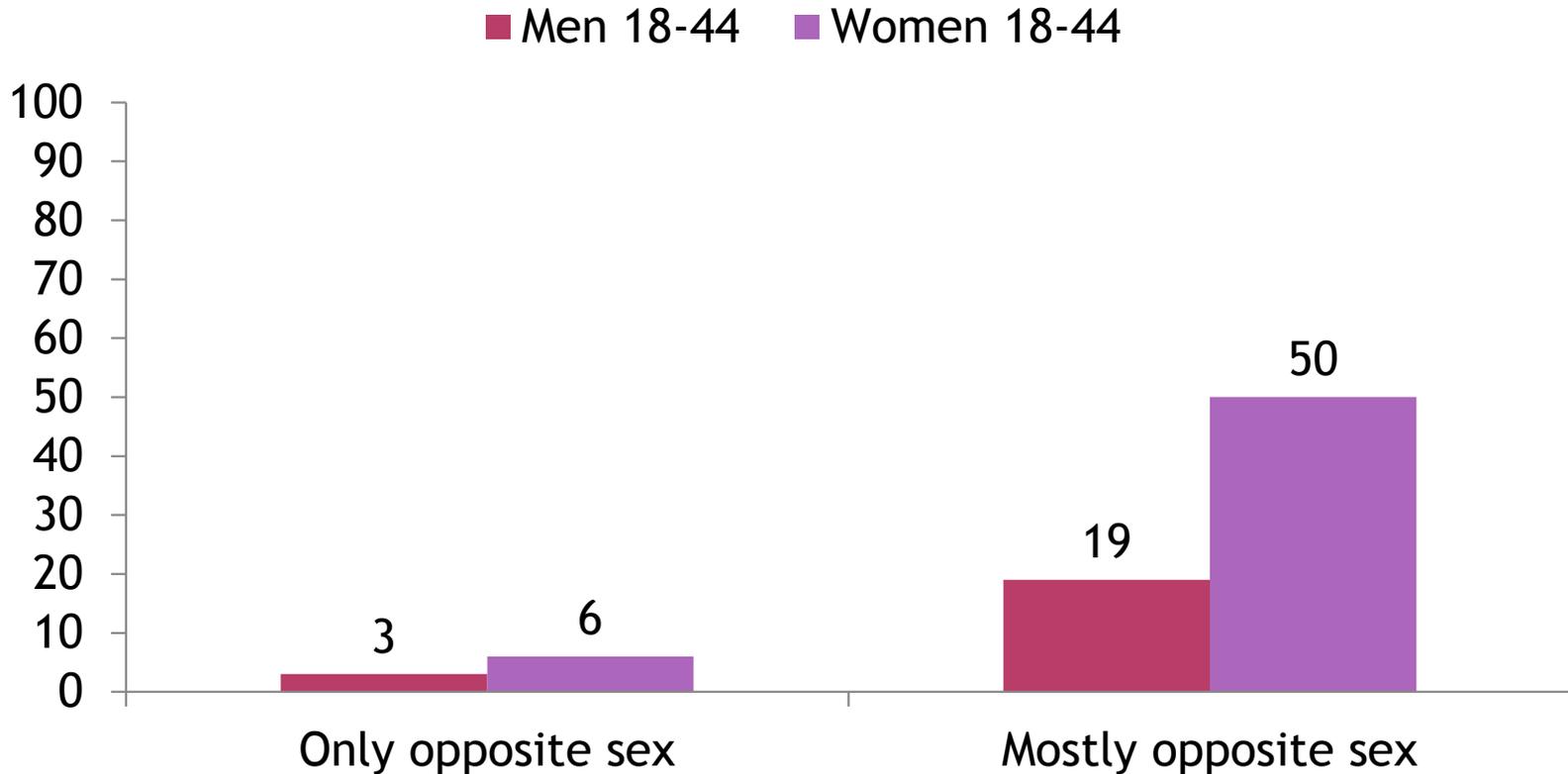
- ◉ *Only attracted to males*
- ◉ *Mostly attracted to males*
- ◉ Equally attracted to males and females
- ◉ Mostly attracted to females
- ◉ Only attracted to females
- ◉ Not sure

## Sexual attraction reported by men & women 18-44: United States 2006-2010



Source: Special tabulations with 2006-2010 NSFG.

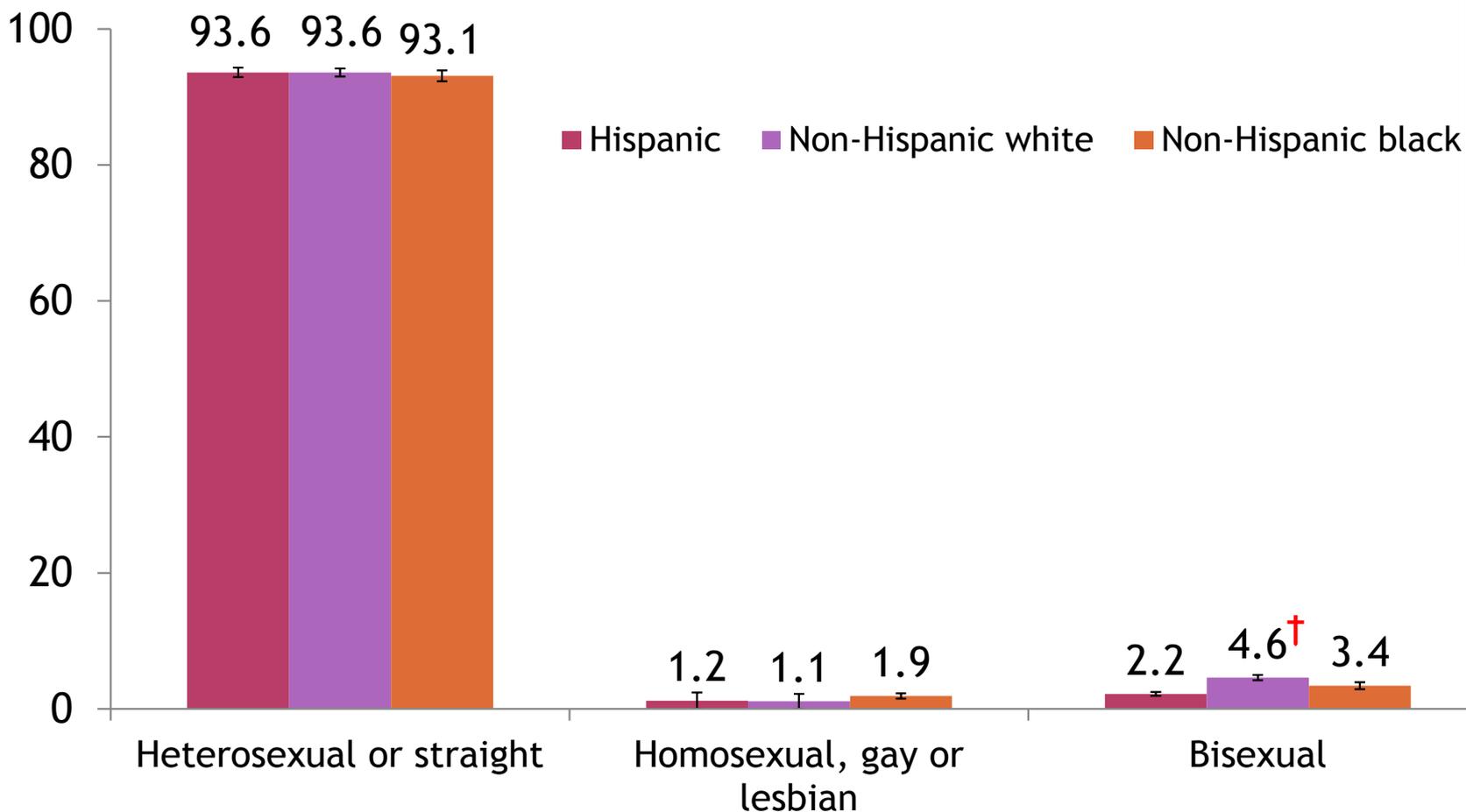
# Percent of men & women 18-44 reporting any same-sex sexual behavior, by sexual attraction: United States 2006-2010



Source: Chandra A, Copen CE, Mosher WD. Sexual Behavior, Sexual Attraction, and Sexual Identity in the United States: Data from the 2006–2010 National Survey of Family Growth. In: Baumle AK (ed). International Handbooks of Population, International Handbook on the Demography of Sexuality. Volume VI: Springer Science and Business Media Dordrecht, 2013:45-66. (Available upon request through [nsfg@cdc.gov](mailto:nsfg@cdc.gov))

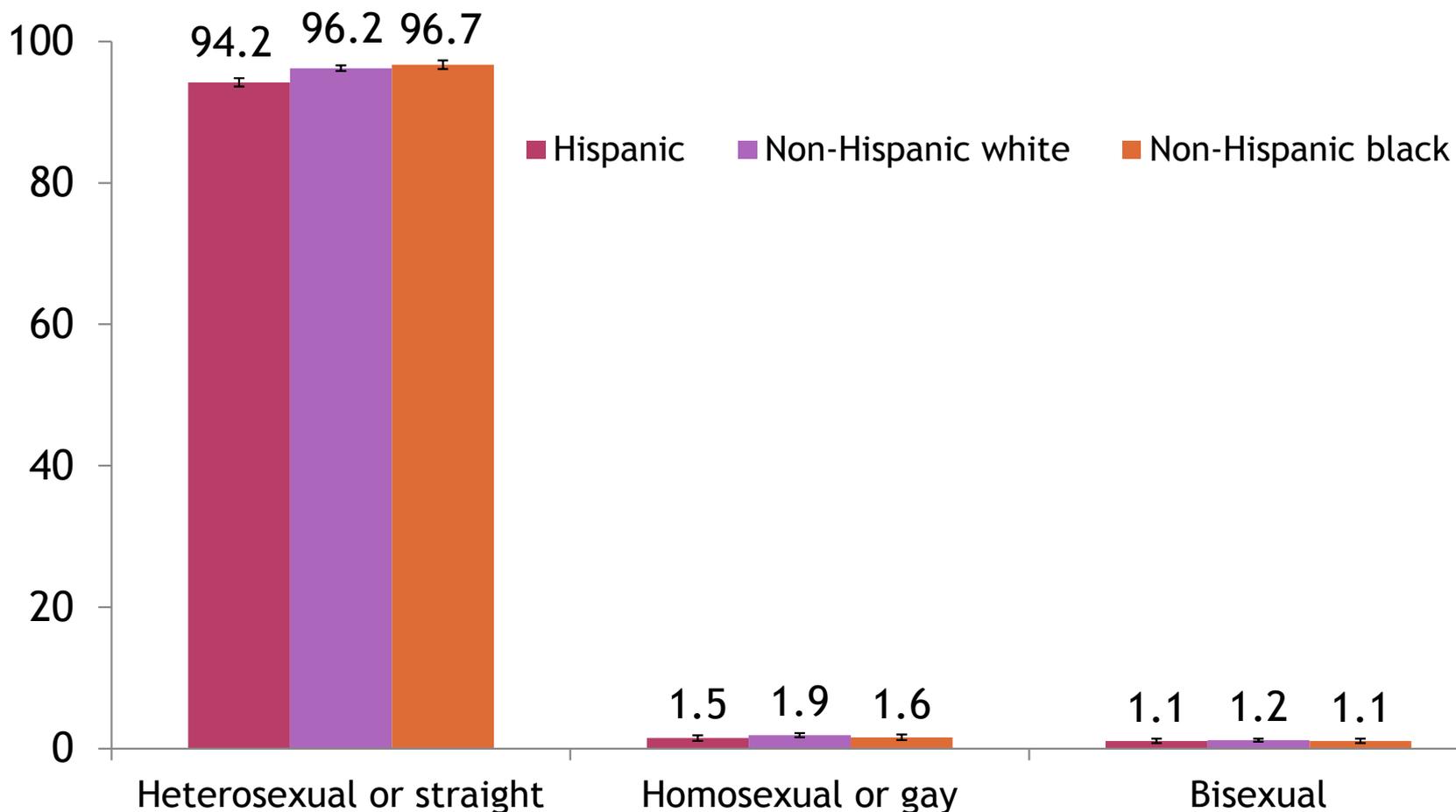
# SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC AND HEALTH MEASURES

# Hispanic origin and race among women aged 18-44, by sexual orientation: United States 2006-2010



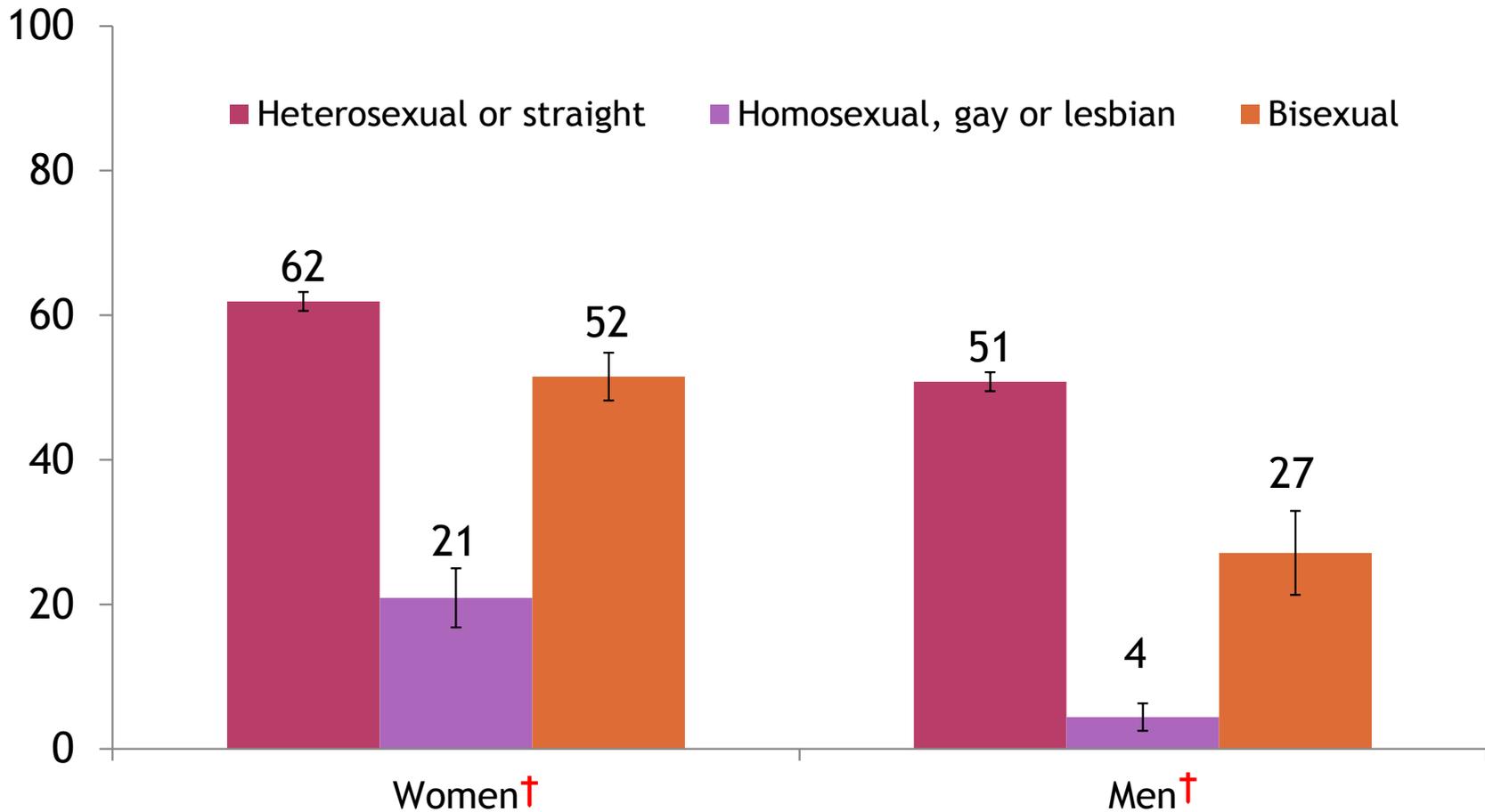
Note: † Significantly different from Hispanic women at the  $p < 0.05$  level.

# Hispanic origin and race among men aged 18-44, by sexual orientation: United States 2006-2010



Source: NCHS/CDC, National Survey of Family Growth 2006-2010

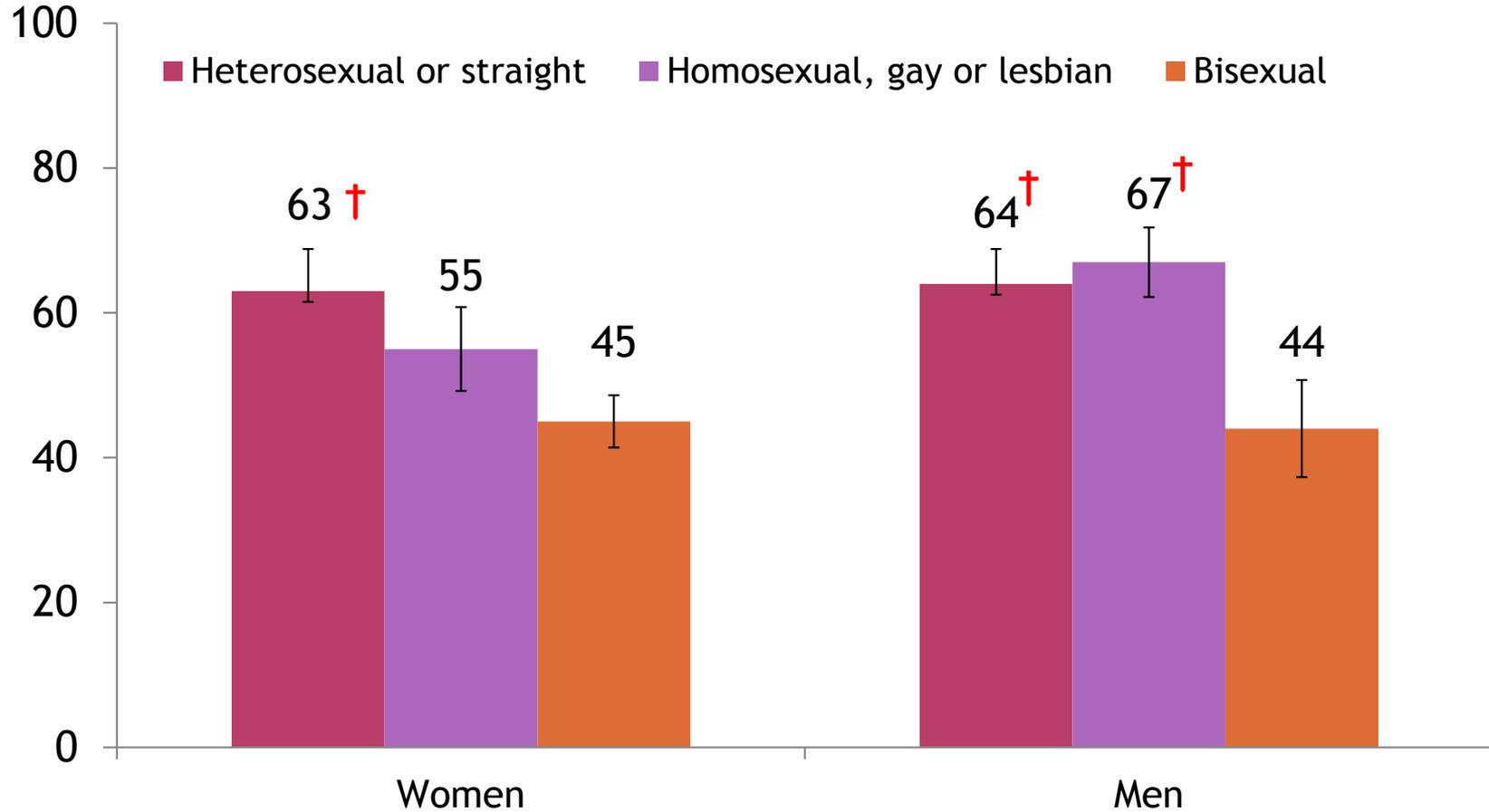
# Percent of women and men aged 18-44 who have had any biological children, by sexual orientation: United States 2006-2010



Note: † All three groups significantly different from one another at the  $p < 0.05$  level.

Source: NCHS/CDC, National Survey of Family Growth 2006-2010

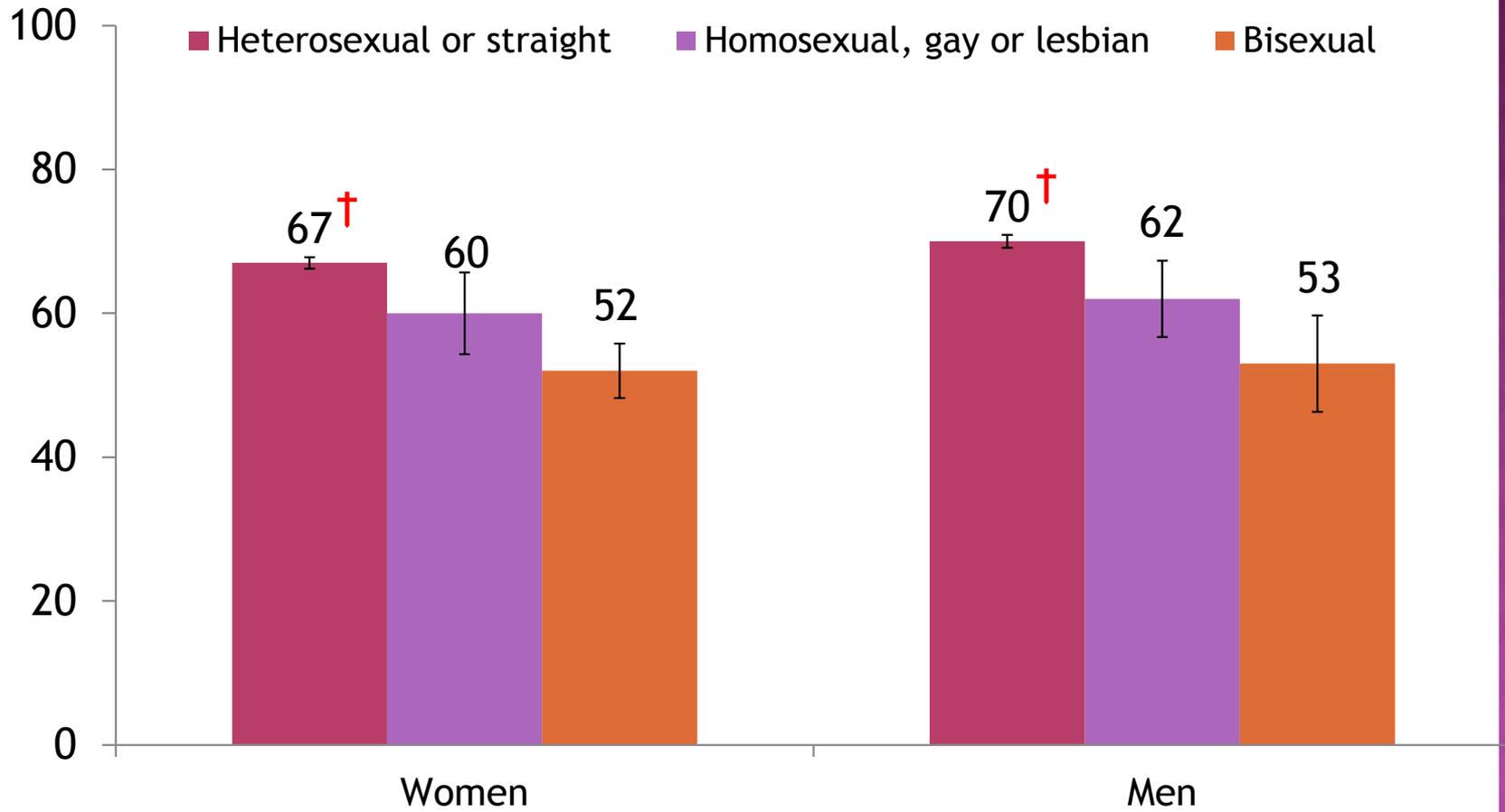
# Percent of women and men aged 18-44 who had private health insurance coverage at time of interview, by sexual orientation: United States 2006-2010



Note: † Significantly different than bisexual persons at the  $p < .0.05$  level.

Source: NCHS/CDC, National Survey of Family Growth 2006-2010

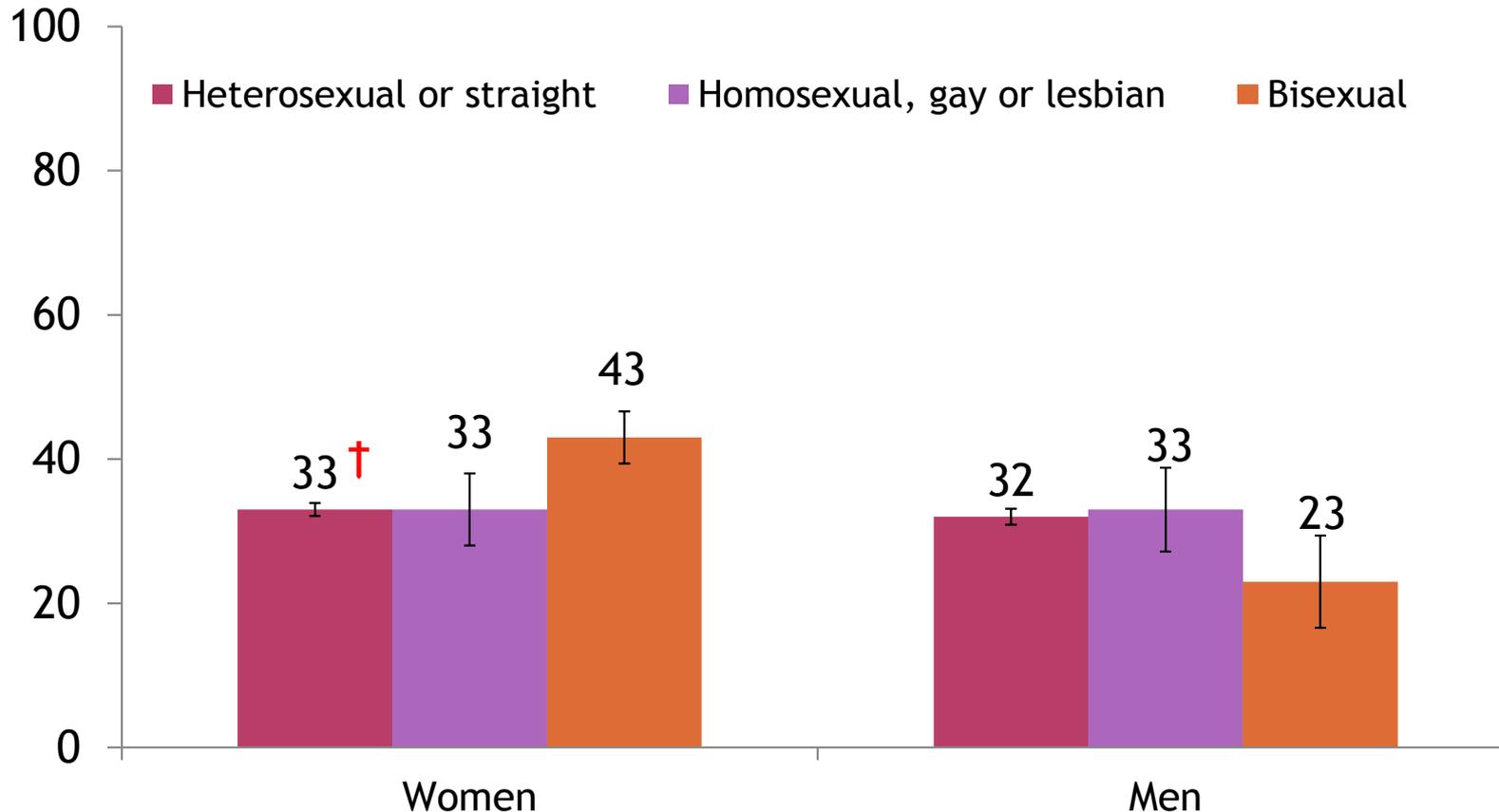
# Percent of women and men aged 18-44 who reported their health status as “excellent” or “very good,” by sexual orientation: United States 2006-2010



Note: Significantly different than bisexual persons at the  $p < .05$  level.

Source: NCHS/CDC, National Survey of Family Growth 2006-2010

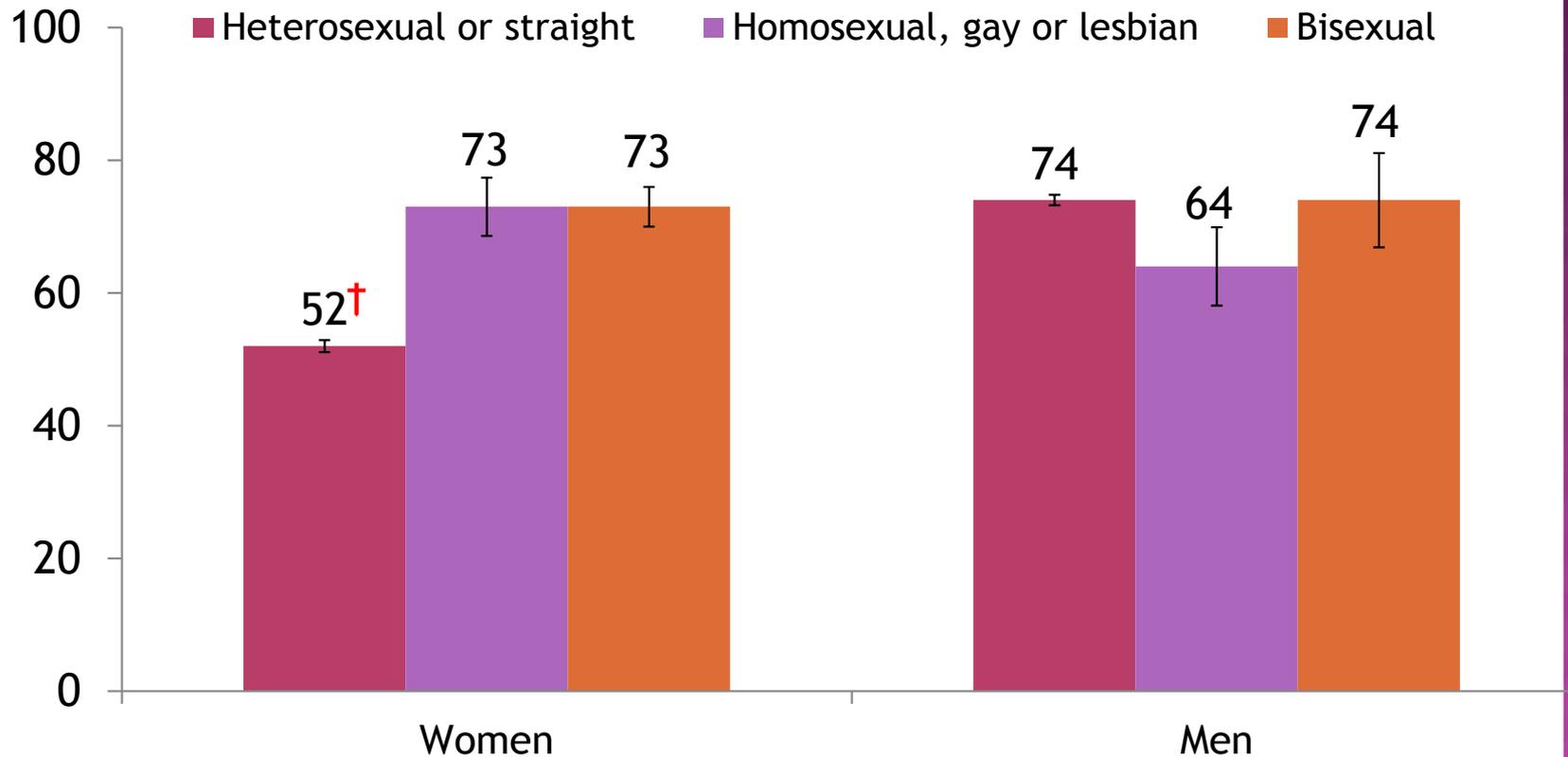
# Percent of women and men aged 20-44 with body mass index => 30 (obese), by sexual orientation: United States 2006-2010



Notes: Body mass index in NSFG is defined based on self reported height and weight for and men aged 20-44 and for women aged 20-44 who are not currently pregnant.

†Significantly different than bisexual women at the  $p < 0.05$  level.

# Percent of women and men aged 18-44 who reported binge drinking in the past year, by sexual orientation: United States 2006-2010



Notes: In 2006-2010, binge drinking for women and men in the past year was self-reported as consuming 5 or more drinks within a couple of hours. In 2011-2013, this measure was changed to 4 or more drinks for women to be consistent with BRFSS.

†Significantly different than gay/lesbian and bisexual women at the  $p < .05$  level.

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION BY SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS AMONG WOMEN AGED 18-44: UNITED STATES 2006-2010

	Heterosexual or straight	Homosexual, gay or lesbian	Bisexual
Bachelor's degree or higher (for 22-44)	32.7 (1.3)	34.3 (6.1)	13.8 (2.1)†
Household income 300% of poverty level or higher (for 20-44)	38.9 (1.2)	40.1 (6.0)	29.7 (2.9)†
Smoked at least 100 cigarettes in lifetime	36.3 (1.1)†	53.6 (6.5)	66.5 (2.9)
HIV test in past year	22.2 (0.8)	30.0 (5.6)	35.2 (3.5)‡

Note: Standard error in parentheses.

† Significantly different than all other groups at the  $p < 0.05$  level.

‡ Significantly different from straight women at the  $p < 0.05$  level.

Source: NCHS/CDC, National Survey of Family Growth 2006-2010

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION BY SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS AMONG MEN AGED 18-44: UNITED STATES 2006-2010

	Heterosexual or straight	Homosexual or gay	Bisexual
Bachelor's degree or higher (for 22-44)	27.1 (1.2)	47.2 (5.8) <sup>†</sup>	28.0 (7.0)
Household income 300% of poverty level or higher (for 20-44)	47.2 (1.1)	54.1 (5.9)	37.8 (7.2)
Smoked at least 100 cigarettes in lifetime	--	--	--
HIV test in past year	13.6 (0.5)	34.1 (4.7) <sup>‡</sup>	24.9 (6.0)

Note: Standard error in parentheses. Data on smoking behaviors has been added to the male questionnaire starting in September 2015.

<sup>†</sup> Significantly different than all other groups at the  $p < 0.05$  level.

<sup>‡</sup> Significantly different from straight men at the  $p < 0.05$  level.

# Other NSFG topics that could be examined relative to sexual orientation

- ◉ Use of family planning & related health services
- ◉ Use of medical help to have a child
- ◉ Adoption-seeking and experience with nonbiological parenting
- ◉ Experience of infertility
- ◉ Other health conditions and preventive screenings
- ◉ Adverse life events including school suspension, housing insecurity and prison experience

# *To learn more about the NSFG:*

- Visit the NSFG webpage  
[www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg.htm)
- Join the NSFG Announcements ListServ
- Contact the NSFG team  
Email: [nsfg@cdc.gov](mailto:nsfg@cdc.gov)  
Phone: 301-458-4222

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