

(Parillo, 2007)

### 3. Sexual Orientation Privilege

Sexual orientation privilege is associated with the marginalization of nonheterosexual lifestyles and the view that heterosexuality is the normal sexual orientation. Instances of this include the idea that people fall into two distinct and complementary categories (male and female), that sexual and marital relations are normal only when between people of different sexes, and that each sex has certain natural roles in life.

Department of Defense Directive 1020.02, *Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity in the Department of Defense* (2009) establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides an overarching framework for DoD diversity, military EO, and civilian equal employment opportunity (EEO) programs and plans to prevent unlawful discrimination.

In July 2014, President Obama signed an Executive Order banning Federal contractors from discriminating against employees on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity (CNN Politics, 2014).

All Service members, regardless of sexual orientation, are entitled to an environment free from personal, social, or institutional barriers that prevent Service members from rising to the highest level of responsibility possible. Harassment or abuse based on sexual orientation is unacceptable and will be dealt with through command or IG channels.

However, perceived privileges associated with sexual orientation are evident in today's society.

Historically, a heterosexual orientation came with certain privileges, such as:

- a. Public recognition and support for an intimate relationship
- b. Kissing, hugging, and being affectionate in public without threat or punishment

As an EOA, it is important to note that **sexual orientation will not** be considered with race, color, religion, sex, and national origin as a class under the Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) program and will not be handled through the MEO complaint process.

Executive Order 11478, section 1 prohibits discrimination in employment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, or age, and to promote the full realization of equal employment opportunity through a continuing affirmative program in each executive department and agency. This policy of equal opportunity applies to and must be an integral part of every aspect of personnel policy and practice in the employment, development, advancement, and treatment of civilian employees of the Federal Government