Educating about LGBQ Diversity in Introductory College Courses

by

Mark Donald Spalding

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Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Erin Rotheram-Fuller, Chair
Madelaine Adelman
Alfredo Artiles

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

Information concerning sexual minorities is conspicuously absent from secondary education curriculums. Student attitudes toward sexual diversity are impacted, and those entering higher educational environments are at a disadvantage when faced with diverse university populations. This study attempted to close the information gap among first year college students and to improve attitudes by teaching about sexual minorities, especially gays and lesbians. In addition to their standard coursework, 41 student participants (31 in the intervention group, and 10 in the control group) who were enrolled in required introductory college courses received six short lessons on sexual diversity. Mixed methods data collection and analysis included a pre and post intervention survey, the *Riddle Homophobia Scale* (1985), and qualitative electronic discussion boards throughout the intervention. Surveys revealed a significant decrease in negative attitudes but no increase in more affirming attitudes. Qualitative data showed somewhat inconsistent results with quantitative surveys, but allowed deeper analysis of the familial, social, religious and societal influences on student attitudes toward lesbian, gay, bisexual and questioning (LGBQ) people. Discussion includes possible explanations for the findings, suggestions for future research, and suggests refinements of the *Riddle Homophobia Scale*.

DEDICATION

To my father Donald Gilbert Spalding who supported me through the writing of this action research project and so much more. He did not live to see this dissertation completed, but his passion for social justice was and will forever be my inspiration. I will continue his legacy of respect and compassion for all.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> *…There is a pervasive and impenetrable silence concerning gays and lesbians in most schools, not just in the curriculum but also in extracurricular activities. The result is that gay and lesbian students are placed at risk in terms of social well-being and academic achievement…Heterosexual students receive the message that gay and lesbian students should be ostracized because they are deviant and immoral. The humanity of all students is jeopardized as a result* (Nieto, 2004, p.353).

Universities receive students who have not been prepared by their elementary or secondary environments with knowledge or understanding of lesbian, gay, bisexual (LGB) diversity. The social and educational climate from which most students come is frequently hostile, resistant, dismissive or silent toward these identities. Therefore, the first year in college is an opportunity to close a significant gap in students' multicultural education by confronting these attitudes in a systematic manner.

Heterosexual college students stand to benefit from a curriculum that includes themes about lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning people because it enables them to better understand the world and their relationship to it. It also increases the likelihood they will be able to successfully live and work in communities with people who are different than they are. Importantly, it also prepares them to become LGB allies. LGB students, or those from LGB headed families, benefit by being validated for who they are, and by having the opportunity to learn more about their own LGB community.

This intervention was intended to provide students with a sense of support and encouragement to advocate for themselves and others.

Overall Educational Significance

There is little empirical research related to reducing anti-gay bias or increasing prosocial attitudes toward sexual minorities (Tucker & Potocky-Tripodi, 2006). Such studies add to the literature base and provide forums that might encourage more anti-bias training in educational settings. As this body of research grows over time, it may inspire more educators to teach about sexual minority diversity, and it may inspire students to demand more inclusive social policies that endorse equality for all.

National Context

Individual bias. Because there has been a reduction in rancor toward sexual minorities on a societal and individual level, there may be a perception that queer people as a minority group no longer need support (Herek & McLemore, 2013). Indeed, over time younger and more progressive members of the sexual majority are taking the place of older members, who have principally held the most negative feelings and beliefs concerning sexual minorities (Andersen & Fetner, 2008; Herek & McLemore, 2013). Moreover, individual citizens of all ages are increasingly affirming of sexual minorities and their basic civil rights than they have been since opinion polls on the topic were first measured in 1981 (Andersen & Fetner, 2008; Herek & McLemore, 2013). However, hate crimes and discrimination persist despite these changes, suggesting that bias against LGB individuals is not over.

In spite of a reduction in bias in the United States, there is an assortment of individual and institutional power structures which sustain prejudice based on sexual

minority status (Herek & McLemore, 2013). National opinion polls demonstrate that substantial numbers of citizens have negative attitudes regarding sexual and gender minorities (Herek, 2002; Norton & Herek, 2012; Herek & McLemore, 2013). The U.S. Department of Justice reports that, although hate crimes against LGB individuals are underreported (Langton & Planty, 2011), 1,376 such victims were documented by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 2012 (FBI, 2013). An estimated 50% of LGB adults report being the victim of verbal name-calling, and some 20% even report encountering physical violence or property damage (Herek, 2009a; Herek & McLemore, 2013). Herek and McLemore (2013) assert that sexual minorities continue to suffer bigotry and animosity from members of the sexual majority, just as ethnic, racial, and religious minorities do. However, with the exception of those having sexual minority status, the open expression of prejudice is "…typically discouraged by social norms" (p. 313).

Institutional bias. Just as shifts in individual attitudes toward sexual minorities have taken place, systemic shifts have also taken place. These include the overturning of the ban on openly gay military personnel (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 2014), various U.S. Supreme Court rulings against state sodomy laws, and the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which denied sexual minorities the federal benefits of marriage (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 2013; Lambda Legal, 2014). The most recent supreme court ruling in favor of sexual minorities has made same sex marriage legal throughout the United States (Lambda Legal, 2015). Additionally, an increasing number of states protect sexual minority citizens from employment discrimination (National Gay

and Lesbian Task Force, 2014), although there are still no federal statutes which do (Human Rights Campaign, 2015a).

Also at the institutional level, workplaces and the healthcare system continue to discriminate against sexual minorities. Approximately 21% of sexual minorities report discrimination in employment based on their sexual orientation or gender expression (Pew Research Center, 2014). Gay men overall have lower earnings than straight men with the same qualifications and experience (Carpenter, 2007). In the health care system, a lack of information about the LGB population permits stigma and stereotypes to interfere with the quality of their health care (Institute of Medicine, 2007). In many states (unmarried) gay partners may be barred from visiting one another in hospitals because they are not legally recognized as family (Human Rights Campaign, 2014; Human Rights Campaign, 2015b).

Religious institutions discriminate as well. Historically, conservative theology began demonizing and condemning queer identities as they became more visible (Herman, 1997). This evolved into an aggressive political stance against permitting sexual minorities legal protections, and became a "defining feature" of the religious right (Herek & McLemore, 2013, p. 318). In the last 15 years, religious organizations gained enough support to compel 16 states to pass statutes or constitutional amendments which prohibited same-sex unions (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 2013). In February 2014, the legislature of Arizona approved a measure that would allow businesses to deny service to LGB people on religious grounds, but it was vetoed by the governor (Shoichet & Abdullah, 2014).

Bias in secondary education. Within educational institutions, bullying due to actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender expression is rampant (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2011). K-12 students receive little to no positive information about sexual minorities in civics, history and health courses, rendering LGB students "invisible" to their teachers and peers. Such invisibility hinders the healthy psychosocial development of sexual minority youth, impedes support systems in schools, and invites heterosexual students to regard queer youths as less valuable "others," increasing their likelihood of harassment (Lipkin, 1999).

Several tragedies associated with anti-LGB bias in secondary education have been highlighted in the media over the past decade. Although suicide is a generally complex issue with multiple contributing factors, anti-LGB behaviors undoubtedly added to the sense of isolation, fear and depression felt by victims. In 2003 Ryan Halligan, a student at Albert D. Lawton Middle School in Vermont, committed suicide after years of homophobic tormenting by classmates. He had been the target of name-calling and cyberbullying (Norton, 2007). In 2007 Eric Mohat killed himself after being targeted for anti-gay bullying at Mentor High School in Ohio. His parents reported that their son had received taunts and epithets such as "gay," "fag," "queer," and "homo". These epithets were sometimes even used against him in front of his teachers (James, 2009a). In 2009, eleven-year-old Carl Walker-Hoover killed himself after being bullied repeatedly with anti-gay slurs at New Leadership Charter School in Springfield, Massachusetts (James, 2009b). In 2010 Zach Harrington, a gay student who had recently graduated from North High School in Norman, Oklahoma, took his life after attendees at a Norman City Council meeting vociferously opposed acceptance of an LGB history month. His parents

said he had feared for his safety in high school where anti-LGB bulling was rampant (Knittle, 2010). In 2008 Lawrence King, an openly gay student at E. O. Green Junior High in Oxnard, California, was shot dead by a classmate after asking him to be his Valentine (Setoodeh, 2008).

***Bias in higher education*.** Not surprisingly, studies on the campus experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and questioning (LGBQ) students in higher education indicate a climate that is still "structured by heterosexism and homophobia" (Holley, Larson, Adelman & Treviño, 2010, p.82). In a study of approximately 1000 queer college students, 33% experienced harassment on their campus (Rankin, 2004). Thirty-one percent of queer college students left for at least a semester due to harassment, and 33% dropped out of their institution entirely because such negative behaviors were directed at them (Sherrill & Hardesty, 1994).

There are tragedies associated with anti-LGB bias involving victims who were attending college at the time. Some of these have been highlighted in the media over the past two decades. In 1998, Matthew Shepard, a first year college student at the University of Wyoming, was tied to a fence and beaten to death because he was gay (Shepard, 2009). In 2010 a gay first-year college student took his life when anti-LGB bias doubtless contributed to feelings of shame, ostracism, isolation or depression. Tyler Clementi of Rutgers University jumped from a bridge after learning that his roommate had maliciously used a webcam to broadcast him expressing his sexuality with a man (Aboujaoude, 2010). Not all such tragedies have had the widespread public exposure that these have had, but such incidents highlight the need for further educational policy interventions to improve adverse campus climates in higher education.

Local Context

Climate for LGBQ students at my university. According to my university's own 2013 self-study report, there is a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, and allies (LGBTQA) Services program in place to "sustain an environment of respect, compassion, and equity for all, and to foster an inclusive and affirming academic and campus environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning students". The services offered through this program include advocating for educational opportunities such as an LGBT Studies Certificate and a Safe Zone program (see below). The university currently supports several LGBT clubs and a gay fraternity, which was founded in 2003.

In spite of these positive efforts, administrators decided that there was no longer a need for the advocacy of an LGBTQA specialist on campus, so this position was eliminated at the end of the 2013 school year. Students believed that this indicated a lack of priority given to LGBTQA concerns on campus, and Campus Pride, a nonprofit organization which rates universities according to their level of LGBT friendliness, awarded the university only 2.5 out of 5 stars in 2013. This ranked the university as one of the least LGBT friendly of 82 universities evaluated. Campus Pride reached this conclusion based on LGBT recruitment and retention efforts, administrative policies, opportunities to learn about LGBT people, student life, and LGBT student safety on campus (www.campuspride.org). Currently Campus Pride does not rate my university, because it no longer participates in the Campus Pride Index survey. An official for university inclusion and community engagement informed me that, rather than participate

in the Campus Pride survey, the institution would rely on a new self-study to measure climate for LGBT students (Tsosie, Personal Communication, Mar. 1, 2016).

Additionally one of the leaders of an LGBTQ organization on my campus revealed that university administrators had requested that clubs dedicated to sexual minorities refrain from placing literature on tables at "freshmen orientation," where first year college students visit the university with parents, and browse brochures about student organizations. I concluded that the university's environment may be conservative toward some manifestations of queer visibility, but that administrative support is likely on a continuum just as student attitudes are.

In academic areas such as psychology and sociology there are courses which openly address the subject sexual minorities. However, university students would probably not get exposure to such education without requesting it. To help broach the subject for more students at the university, I became dedicated to devising and implementing an intervention that would allow more of them exposure to sexual diversity education and issues.

Researcher Background

Helping students tackle hard issues is not new for me. When I began my career teaching Spanish to adults I discovered that my students were reticent to speak a new language because they felt they would appear less articulate or intelligent than when they spoke English. As they struggled to grasp new vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation, I learned to create less stressful classroom environments so as to lower students' "affective filters" (Krashen, 1982). Simply put, the affective filter is a metaphor for emotional tension or discomfort that inhibits or filters out new learning. Being able to facilitate

environments in which students felt safe to make mistakes was key to the quality of their learning and to my success as a language teacher. This skill later became useful in facilitating the intervention for this study.

As an instructor for twenty-seven years, I taught Spanish in higher education for the first ten, then Spanish and English as a Second Language (ESL) in secondary education for the next ten. My career path then took me back to higher education where I have been teaching introductory college courses in subjects such as major and career exploration, strategies for academic success, and critical thinking. My focus for this study has been on the academic success courses I currently teach. University 101 (UNI 101) and University 201 (UNI 201) are for students who have not declared a major area of study. These courses help them decide on a major and an associated career. University 102 (UNI 102) is an academic success class required of all first year students in their respective colleges. My students are categorized as "undeclared" because they have not yet decided on a major area of study. It is these undecided students who are my study participants.

Local Context of this Study

The campus where I teach is one of the five that comprise the whole university--a very large public institution. Depending on the campus, some lecture halls have the capacity for hundreds of first year students taught by one instructor. The courses I teach, however, are capped at 19 pupils no matter on which campus they are taught. This is so that the instructors of student success courses can more effectively facilitate a personal environment. Boening and Miller (2005) emphasize the importance of such 'new student' courses in creating a sense of belonging in order to prevent attrition. This sense of

belonging is critical to creating a community of pupils who, by virtue of being admitted to the university, are expected to collaborate as leaders among their peers and as student scholars.

The major and career exploration courses UNI 101 and UNI 201 are comprised of curriculums that focus on personal, vocational, and diversity awareness. Exploratory students who have not decided on a major reflect on their interests, values and skills with self-assessments. These help them decide which of approximately 500 university majors is most aligned with their talents and "workplace personalities". They then connect majors with the corresponding occupations and work environments that are most likely to bring them satisfaction.

There are approximately 600 sections of UNI 102, representing an administrative commitment to retain pupils throughout their undergraduate years. In this course, my first year college students learn academic and personal success strategies by means of a curriculum that can be adapted to meet their particular needs. The content includes various study and reading strategies, concepts related to time and stress management, self-assessments of personal health and wellness, and information about university resources, such as those that are available to students who need tutoring.

In all three courses student engagement is critical, and I foster it by using multimedia presentations that explain the scientific basis for the course assessments. I also generate enthusiasm for reflective writing exercises, and I facilitate discussions which take place primarily online, but also face to face in the classroom.

Multiculturalism is part of the curriculum of all of these courses. It raises awareness about the diverse campus environment and organizations within which

students may work, and the increasingly global economy. This is important for the many first-year students who come from K-12 districts with little racial or ethnic diversity. However, the established curriculum does not include sexual minorities or their issues. This is an important omission because it fails to recognize, raise awareness about, or ameliorate the antipathy that LGB people endure in the United States. Moreover, it does not create awareness of the important contributions that sexual minorities have made throughout history. The university receives many undergraduate students from foreign countries, some of whom have cultural norms that also preclude lesbian, gay, bisexual, or questioning awareness or education. Omitting sexual orientation from the multicultural perspective of these introductory courses fails to promote the university as a place where all sexual orientations and gender identities are welcome. I therefore resolved to create a curricular intervention which would supplement the current diversity training and provide opportunities for students to think critically about social attitudes toward LGB individuals.

Purpose and Goal

The broad purpose of this study was to explore the effects of LGB diversity instruction on first year college students. The writing style is at times narrative in form, so that others can come to understand how it was possible that this innovation and action research came about, how it could be examined systematically and methodically with disciplined inquiry, how my role as researcher and practitioner evolved, and the obstacles that the workplace environment posed.

Attitudes. A more specific goal of this study was to decrease negative attitudes toward the LGB population and to increase positive attitudes toward it. In order to

evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention aimed at changing ingroup attitudes toward outgroup members, I employed a mixed methods strategy of inquiry. Quantitative data were in the form of a survey, and qualitative data were in the form of electronic discussion board posts. All data were combined to help create a detailed understanding of participant attitudes**.**

Research Questions and Hypothesis

Because attitude change toward sexual minorities in society at large cannot be accomplished without discourse, the purpose of my study was to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent can the opportunity for first year college students to learn about and discuss issues of LGBQ diversity reduce negative attitudes toward sexual minorities?
2. To what extent can the opportunity for first year college students to learn about and discuss issues of LGBQ diversity increase affirmative attitudes toward sexual minorities?

My hypothesis was that an educational intervention of short duration could decrease negative attitudes and increase positive ones significantly.

CHAPTER 2

THE LITERATURE

Overview

This review situates LGBQ social justice education in the broader literature. It begins by defining terms used to refer to sexual minorities, emphasizing the terms' importance to one's identity. It then discusses the effects of heterosexism in educational environments and provides a background for the educational intervention used in this study. Afterwards, it introduces a theoretical framework for advocacy education, which served as the foundation for this study, informing the development of its transformative educational approach to promoting change and resistance. This theoretical framework also informed the analysis and interpretation of results.

The literature review continues with the concepts of heterosexism and privilege, the social learning of identity, sexual stigma and oppression, and how attitudes and behaviors are mediated by their social functions in contemporary U.S. culture.

Terminology

Reappropriation of nomenclature. Stigmatized people have gained a sense of personal power by reclaiming words previously used against them as pejoratives (Adams, Blumenfeld, Casteñeda, Hackman, Peters & Zúñiga, 2010). Using this reclamation as a strategy to overcome oppression, sexual minorities have taken the word *queer* and reframed it as a positive term. *Queer* is now widely used in political and academic environments to refer to sexual minorities generally. This includes lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex identities. *Intersex* refers to people who are born with ambiguous genitalia. They constitute a gender minority because they do not fit common biological

definitions of male and female (Hill, 2002; Hill & Willoughby, 2005). *Transgender* refers to those who do not identify themselves with traditional notions of what is male and female. Transgender people have a gender identity or a gender expression that does not match social norms accorded to their biological sex (Hill, 2002; Hill & Willoughby, 2005).

It should be noted that some authors use *gay* to encompass the entire spectrum of gender and sexual identities. This study avoids that tendency by using the terms *sexual minority* or *queer* to indicate all gender and sexual minorities, and it otherwise distinguishes the difference between sexual orientations: lesbian, gay, bisexual (LGB) and gender identities: transgender, intersex (T/I).

This study therefore uses the common acronyms LGBT or LGBTQ, where "Q" refers to those who are questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity. The acronym is also sometimes seen with "and their allies" included (LGBTQA), a reference to the importance of allies who contribute to the well-being of queer people. All of the above terms are favored by targeted groups, rather than the pathologizing *homosexual*, which been used by medical professionals, psychologists and researchers, although it is not per se a scientific term (M. Adelman, personal communication, Apr. 2016). It is also commonly used by those who oppose LGBT rights (M. Adelman, personal communication, Sept. 2013).

Therefore, in this study *homosexual* is used mainly when quoting from the opposition, from legal materials or surveys that use the term, or when quoting from this study's participants. It is important to note that the intervention materials and survey for this study used the acronym LGBTQ to be inclusive of most sexual minorities, but due to

time constraints, intervention activities and discussions focused primarily on gay and lesbian identities because they have comprised the most visible part of the LGBTQ spectrum in equal rights endeavors and in the media. Therefore, an acronym frequently used in this study is LGB or LGBQ.

Perspectives and Constructs

Phobias and "isms". The current study measures what is commonly referred to as "homophobia" which is supported by heterosexism. It was important that participants understand both of these social forces on attitudes toward heterosexual and non-heterosexual identities. *Heterosexism* is an ideological system of discriminatory beliefs and behaviors directed at gay men and lesbians (Nieto, 2004). Herek (1990) includes all sexual minorities in his definition of the term. For him, heterosexism ideologically and systematically "…denies, denigrates, and stigmatizes any non-heterosexual form of behavior, identity, relationship, or community" (p. 316). Denial and stigma also underscore the term h*eteronormativity*, which refers to the creation of a "…[cultural] illusion that heterosexuals are the only people on the planet and are the center of all sexual practices…" (Morris, 2005, p. 9).

Homophobia is a term coined by George Weinberg to explain fear or hatred toward homosexual persons (Weinberg, 1972). The term has also been used to represent a fear of other sexual minority groups, such as bisexual and transgender people. However, neologisms based on the term, such as *biphobia*, a fear of bisexual people, *transphobia*, a fear or revulsion of transgender people (Weiss, 2003), *intersexphobia*, a fear or revulsion of intersex people (Organization Intersex International, 2015), have emerged.

For the purposes of transformative research, Herek & McLemore (2013) suggest that the term *homophobia* is better referred to as *sexual prejudice* or *sexual stigma*. Weinberg's definition, "the dread of being in close quarters with homosexuals—and in the case of homosexuals themselves, self-loathing" (Weinberg, 1972, p. 4), has drawbacks for social scientists because phobias are understood to be "[an] intense fear response associated with unpleasant physiological symptoms that interfere with the individual's life and that the individual recognizes as irrational" (Herek & McLemore, 2013, p. 311). Herek and McLemore (2013) point out that anger and disgust are likely more common emotions than a fear of gays and lesbians, and they view negative attitudes toward sexual minorities as having a cultural origin rather than an idiosyncratically individual one.

> It is a cultural phenomenon rather than a psychological one, comprising knowledge that is shared by the members of society about the devalued status of homosexuality and sexual minorities relative to heterosexuality and heterosexuals (Herek & McLemore, 2013, p. 312).

Sexual prejudice and stigma are therefore

> …the negative regard, inferior status, and relative powerlessness that society collectively accords to nonheterosexual behaviors, identity, relationships, or communities (Herek, 2009b, p. 66).

But because the term "homophobia" is still commonly understood by the general public and by the student participants in this investigation, it is used in this study and the intervention lessons with the understanding that it refers to sexual prejudice and social stigma rather than an individually derived fear of non-heterosexuals.

The Effects of Heterosexist Attitudes

Heterosexism and homophobia in schools. The deliberate omission of LGBQ information in K-12 school curriculums reproduces the heterosexist status quo, creating a condition in which homophobia is allowed to arise unchecked (Lipkin, 1999). Lipkin (1999) states that although other harmful prejudices, such as racism, are regularly challenged by teachers, homophobic name-calling is typically not. He believes that the "consequences for students of the failure to address such issues are serious: a distorted view of human nature, bigotry, self-hatred, and violence" (p.3).

Lipkin (1999) further asserts:

> Teaching about gays and lesbians and the diversity of their community would help reduce these problems. Yet school-based tolerance programs are almost always restricted to religious, racial, and ethnic understanding…Few school leaders recognize how homophobia is related to student promiscuity, substance abuse, academic problems, and suicide (p.3).

These consequences not only affect LGBQ students themselves, but also straight students who are perceived to be queer, those who feel pressure to prove they are not queer, and even those who are open minded toward differences in sexuality.

Straight students. Anti-LGB bias has various negative effects on straight youth. "Research suggests that victimization as a result of homophobia is not necessarily limited to LGB-identified individuals, but can create a hostile climate for all students, as it is a way in which masculine/feminine gender-role norms are promoted and maintained" (Epstein, 2001 in Espelage & Swearer, 2008, p. 155). "For every lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth who is bullied, four straight students who are perceived to be gay or

lesbian are bullied" (National Youth Association, 2010). Homophobia hurts everyone because it "inhibits the ability of heterosexuals to form close, intimate relationships with members of their own sex,…locks all people into rigid gender-based roles that inhibit creativity and self-expression,…compromises the integrity of heterosexual people by pressuring them into treating others badly, actions contrary to their basic humanity" (Blumenfeld, 2010, p. 380-381).

The law and LGBQ diversity education. Many first year college students come from K-12 schools where discussion of issues related to sexual minorities have been ignored or are openly discouraged.

Current Arizona State law mandates restrictions on the presentation of LGBQ topics during education about HIV/AIDS in K-12 schools. Revised Statute ARS 15-176 (2002) states, "No district shall include in its course of study instruction which: 1) Promotes a homosexual life-style. 2) Portrays homosexuality as a positive alternative life-style." Such legislation, referred to by LGB rights activists as the "no promo homo" law, has a chilling effect on teachers who wish to educate about LGBQ topics in elementary or secondary schools. This is because many teachers believe the law means they cannot address the subject of LGBQ diversity at all in their curriculums, even though the legislation applies only to HIV/AIDS education. Teachers then perpetuate the myth among themselves (Adelman, personal communication, April 21, 2012). In 2010, another State law was enacted, the "Parent's Bill of Rights Act", SB 1309. It requires that parents be informed when any presentations related to sexuality are given in Arizona public schools, and the right to opt out of them or any material which parents deem objectionable. What is meant by "sexuality" in this bill remains undefined.

Laws such as these undoubtedly increase the discomfort level of school administrators with the subject of LGBQ identities. In a nation-wide survey of elementary, middle and high school principals, only 51% believed parents would be supportive of efforts to improve LGBQ safety in schools. Only 46% believed that community members would be supportive (Harris Interactive & GLSEN, 2008). Although six in ten principals expressed that their professional development efforts during the past school year addressed bullying or harassment, fewer than one in twenty principals said these addressed LGB issues specifically (Harris Interactive & GLSEN, 2008).

Inclusion of LGB topics in schools, "provokes great anxiety and formidable resistance, responses that are exploited by those who allege a conspiracy…" (Lipkin, 1999, p. 7). Even the specific mention of sexual orientation in the harassment policies of most K-12 schools is absent. "A majority of school/district policies do not specifically mention sexual orientation or gender identity or expression, compared to the two-thirds that mention other characteristics such as religion or race/ethnicity" (Harris Interactive & GLSEN, 2008, p. iv). This leaves queer students and teachers vulnerable to oppressive attitudes and behaviors because the categories of people to be protected by harassment policies remain ambiguous.

Climate for LGBTQ Students in Secondary Education

Queer youths are undeniably the most unrecognized, underserved and underrepresented population of students in the United States. This is in spite of estimates that between 3.5% and 8% of the U.S. population is a sexual minority. The National Survey of Family Growth determined 4.1% of adults between the ages of 18-45 identify

themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual. Therefore, approximately 8.8 million adult Americans are LGB in the United States (Gates, 2006). In another study, approximately 7% of women and 8% of men identified as gay or bisexual, but, as the study authors noted, the percentage of people in the United States who have at some time had same-sex attractions or experiences is even greater (Reece et al, 2010).

The most recent and largest scale study found that U.S. states having the most supportive climates had more respondents who identified as lesbian, gay bisexual or transgender. For example, 10% of respondents in Washington D.C. identified as LGB T and 5.1% of respondents in Hawaii identified as LGBT. But in more conservative states such as North Dakota, only 1.7% of adults identified themselves as LGBT. The nationwide average was therefore 3.5% (Gates & Newport, 2013). The percentage of respondents who are willing to honestly identify themselves as a sexual minority has been increasing over time due to the heightened visibility and acceptance of gay and lesbian people in public spaces and in the media (Gates, 2006).

LGBTQ youth invisibility. Adolescents have been coming out of the closet at younger ages than they had in decades past. The average age a queer teenager comes out of the closet is currently estimated at sixteen (Savin-Williams, 2000). In a 2004 poll, 5% of U.S. high school teens self-identified as gay (Widmeyer Research, 2004). On average then, every classroom of thirty would contain one to two gay youth. But there are ostensibly many more who remain closeted about their sexual identity when such polls are taken, effectively remaining invisible and distorting the statistics.

Consequences of anti-LGB bias on students. In GLSEN's *National School Climate Survey* (2007), 73.6% of respondents who were randomly surveyed in American

secondary schools reported hearing derogatory remarks and name-calling targeting LGBTQ students frequently or very often (Kosciw, Diaz & Greytak, 2008). There is a logical connection between feeling safe in school and academic achievement in both secondary and higher education. Eisenberg, Neumark-Sztainer and Perry (2003) found that students performed better in school when they felt safe and supported:

> …associations found here among peer harassment, school connectedness, and grades further support the need for school-wide approaches to prevention of harassment… and its potential sequelae among adolescents (p. 315).

These sequelae include symptoms such as insomnia, stomach ache, headache and depression (Forero McLellan, Rissel, & Bauman, 1999); all of which can contribute to academic disengagement or absenteeism.

In its *2007 National School Climate Survey* report, the Gay, Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN) determined that sexual minority students are disproportionately at risk for absenteeism. The study revealed that 32.7% of LGBTQ secondary students said they felt unsafe and therefore did not attend a day of school. This compared to 4.5% of a nationwide random sampling of middle and high school students. Additionally, 31.7% of the LGBQ respondents had not attended a class in the past month, compared to 5.5% of a nationwide random sampling of middle and high school students (Kosciw, Diaz & Greytak, 2008).

GLSEN's 2013 *National School Climate Survey* revealed that 74.1% of sexual minority respondents had been verbally harassed due to their sexual orientation and 27.2% experienced this harassment repeatedly or frequently. Assaults were also reported.

Sexual minority respondents indicated that 16.5% of them were attacked at school due to their sexual orientation (Kosciw, Greytak, Palmer & Boesen, 2014).

GLSEN contributed to a 2015 special issue published by the American Educational Research Association entitled *LGBTQ Issues in Education: Advancing a Research Agenda*. This report reinforced results of previous studies and reached several important conclusions. Sexual minority high school students achieve less academically than their straight counterparts. This is in part the result of being targeted for bullying, the victim's anxiety in the school environment, and feeling a lack of belonging in the educational system. The report emphasized that this combination of stresses increases the likelihood of lower achievement in higher education (Wimberly, 2015). The report called for further studies on best practices in bullying prevention and educating school populations and parents about the harm of anti-LGBT bias.

Other social consequences. In his report *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth: An Epidemic of Homelessness* (2006) author Nick Ray adds:

> According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the fact that LGBT youth live in "a society that discriminates against and stigmatizes homosexuals" makes them more vulnerable to mental health issues than heterosexual youth. This vulnerability is only magnified for LGBT youth who are homeless… Specifically, familial conflict over a youth's sexual orientation or gender identity is a significant factor that leads to homelessness or the need for out-of-home care (p.2).

Ray states that between 20% and 40% of all homeless youth identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Yet he asserts that between 3% and 5% of the U.S. population

identifies themselves as lesbian, gay or bisexual. It is therefore apparent that LGBT youth experience homelessness at a disproportionate rate (Ray, 2006).

Hegemonic forces greatly influence the "unwritten rules" which inform the attitudes of families, students and teachers, creating conditions which cause bias, bullying and other suffering. Furthermore, these attitudes insert themselves into legislation as a means of reinforcement. Both LGBTQ and privileged students will arrive on college campuses affected, and perhaps biased by such attitudes.

Higher Educational Environments

Community colleges. Unlike secondary education, there is a stronger likelihood that higher educational institutions will have anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies explicitly for LGBTQ students and faculty. Community colleges have seen the need to educate about diversity through programs and curriculums because they enroll the most minorities in higher education, and they recognize that they possess a student body with little exposure to diversity (Williams, 2004). However, these diversity programs and curriculums are not required of students and therefore do not reach them all. Many community college campuses do contain clubs for queer students, providing further support for sexual minorities and their allies.

Universities. Universities have evolved to adopt similar policies, clubs and programs, but even when official policies espouse the value of diversity, courses about LGBTQ issues often must be embedded within majors such as Women's Studies. There is growing interest in the campus climate experiences of non-majority students, but it is still possible for a university student to graduate without ever having exposure to training in multiculturalism or knowledge from research studies on diversity (Renn, 2010). There

is also a lack of research on the experiences of LGBQ college students of color and transgender students (Renn, 2010).

Diversity exposure and training in higher education support improved institutional climates and intergroup relations. For educational leaders diversity is primarily conceptualized as a choice to implement affirmative action when considering race in admissions (Chang, 2002). Mitchell Chang (2002) agrees that this is important, and asserts that institutions of higher learning must take legal precedent into account:

> [From] the 1978 U.S. Supreme Court decision in Regents of the University of California v. Bakke…[Justice] Powell…argued that diversity in the student body broadens the students' range of viewpoints and subsequently allows a university to provide for students an atmosphere that is "conducive to speculation, experiment and creation-- so essential to the quality of higher education" (Regents, U.S. 312; 98 S. Ct., 2760)… It is perhaps a sound strategy for educational leaders to embrace a discourse of diversity that is largely shaped by the courts (Chang, 2002, pp. 127-128).

However, Chang argued that a focus on admissions practices alone may obscure attention to the need of more transformative school environments which embrace and embed all types of diversity education across curriculums and internal practices. If they do so, universities must emphasize the importance of historical diversity movements so that students understand their importance in changing current relationships of privilege and power within the microcosm of schools and the macrocosm of larger society (Chang, 2002).

Sexual minorities in history and civil rights movements are part of the curriculum for this study's intervention. The aim of the innovation was to raise awareness about intergroup attitudes, the dynamics of power and oppression in daily lives, and why these should and can be changed. Sylvia Hurtado (2005) emphasized that various studies and a longitudinal research investigation across nine colleges have demonstrated that curriculums containing diversity training, and or opportunities for intergroup interactions, have substantial positive effects on intergroup attitudes and relations (Hurtado, 2005).

Background of the Intervention

A source of educational interventions which my university supports is the Safe Zone project. The origin of Safe Zone is unclear, but many centers of higher education now offer Safe Zone as a means to inform students and staff of LGBT issues (Finkel, Storaasli, Bandele & Schaefer, 2003). According to the National Consortium of Directors of LGBT Resources in Higher Education, some colleges and universities offer similar trainings with names such as Safe Space, Safe Harbor, and Safe on Campus. These initiatives are primarily university based, but some businesses also offer such support for building allies (www.lgbtcampus.org). All initiatives like these are based on the notion that informing heterosexuals about sexual minorities is the way to foster such allies (Obear, 1989). This notion was fundamental to the intervention for this study, but the Consortium emphasizes that there is little empirical research related to how best to educate and develop allies.

Nevertheless, Safe Zone materials and trainings have had success in improving intergroup relations in higher education. Safe Zone program materials have been used, and even required, of some students to help produce allies and improve relations with the

LGBTQ community. In particular, graduate schools have used Safe Zone materials for the preparation of clinical psychologists. A study at the University of Denver's Graduate School of Professional Psychology concluded that the positive impact of a Safe Zone curriculum on psychology students was because of the accurate information Safe Zone conveyed about sexual orientation, which fostered "acceptance and affirmation of LGBT individuals, and a commitment to training, recruitment, and retention of LGBT and LGBT-sensitive psychologists and allies…[to] usher in a new, more inclusive generation of clinician advocates" (Finkel et al, 2003, p.555).

Safe Zone at my university. At my research site Safe Zone is currently a short educational forum for informing students and employees who seek to understand more about sexual minorities and how to show support. As in other Safe Zone programs throughout the nation, the hallmark of this support is symbolized by the display of a Safe Zone placard, which participants receive upon completion of training. It informs members of the university queer community which instructors and staff members can be safely approached about concerns they may have as sexual minorities on campus.

But Safe Zone training is required of no one. In the Spring of 2012, I took a Safe Zone training along with the supervisor of the courses I teach. In our group only one was a student; the others were university staff who took the training as a way of fulfilling requirements for professional growth. At the end of the training, we filled out an evaluation which asked us to reflect on how our opinions may have been affected by what we had learned.

Social Constructivism and Advocacy Education

This research is situated within the epistemological paradigm of social constructivism (Freire, 1970), because of the social justice nature of its intervention. Freire's "problem-posing education" attempts to engage students and teachers in dialogue to bring about an understanding of the constructed nature of social attitudes and practices. It is through this lens that participants can construct prosocial ideas or attitudes.

The constructivist paradigm which frames such an educational approach lends itself especially well to a form of data collection and analysis known as mixed methods. Using both quantitative and qualitative data helps to construct a clearer rendering of student attitudes, and the effectiveness of an intervention (see below).

A critical pedagogy. It is because "the self-understandings of individuals may be shaped by illusory beliefs, which sustain irrational and contradictory forms of social life," that a condition is created in which there is "the illusion of an 'objective reality' over which the individual has no control, and hence to a decline in the capacity of individuals to reflect upon their own situations and change them through their own actions" (Carr & Kemmis, 2004, p.130).

An understanding of this can be achieved through the subject's own self-understanding and self-reflection (Carr & Kemmis, 2004). Braa and Callero (2006) believe that a critical pedagogy can transform oppressive social structures through democratic and activist approaches to teaching and learning. Giving students the opportunity to think critically about social issues, and to understand the construction of their own identities and roles in oppression, enables them to seek solutions.

The concept of a critical pedagogy underlies the approach of the intervention lessons created for participants in this study. It attempts to situate social norms "in historical and cultural contexts" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002, p. 52), revealing the socially constructed nature of identity and emphasizing the role members of a society play, not only in their own repression, but also in the suppression of others. It helps students to critique social phenomena, raises awareness of the constructed nature of social attitudes and norms, and aims to bring about social transformation through consciousness-raising and self-reflection (Carr & Kemmis, 2004).

This pedagogical process encourages new prosocial attitudes and potential behaviors, the central purpose of this study and its intervention. However, Carr and Kemmis (2004) warn that such a pedagogy "may be subject to the criticism that [it] transforms consciousness (ways of viewing the world) without necessarily changing practice in the world" (p.144). While behavior change would be ideal, this study focused on changing attitudes. Before behaviors can change attitudes must be changed first.

Foundations of Heterosexism: A Conceptual Framework

Social oppression and privilege. Social justice work in education requires an analytical tool known as a conceptual framework to define concepts and to organize ideas around them. Such a framework helps to identify sources of social problems, determine feasible interventions, and distinguish best methods to implement them (Bell, 2010). The intervention for this study drew upon a conceptualization of oppression as *social stigma*, which manifests as prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory behaviors (Herek & McLemore, 2013). In this conceptual framework, social stigma has the purpose of oppressing one group of people and privileging another. It is reified at the individual and

cultural levels, producing social inequality which becomes systemic and institutionalized. (Herek & McLemore, 2013).

Most people do not view oppressive cultural biases as such because they are established historically over time so that they appear as ahistoric facts of life. Johnson (2010) indicates that most people unconsciously view the world through a cultural lens they take for granted:

> What makes socially constructed reality so powerful is that we rarely if ever experience it as that. We think the way our culture defines something like race or gender is simply the way things are in some objective sense (p.16).

For this reason socially constructed definitions about race, gender and sexual orientation appear to be "the way things are", rather than based on the human ideas that construct them over time.

Justification of oppression by labeling. One goal of this transformative research was to help participants become cognizant of the constructed nature of biased ideas toward non-majority sexual orientations, gender identities and their expressions. Such biases serve to justify oppression, and they become pervasive within personal consciousness and social institutions. This is achieved by "classifying and labeling human beings, often according to real or assumed physical, biological, or genetic differences…" (Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, 2010, p.11). People are classified in order to

> …ascribe particular characteristics, to prescribe social roles, and to assign status, power, and privilege. People are to know their places. Thus, social categories such as gender, race, and class are used to establish and maintain a particular kind of social order. The classifications and their specific features, meanings, and

> significance are socially constructed through history, politics, and culture (Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, 2010, p.11).

Socially constructed reality tends to center on personal characteristics that people have no control over. In addition to race, gender, sexual orientation and social class, these characteristics include nationality, ethnicity, religion, physical ability, age, and language.

> These social categories are at the foundation of the structural inequalities present in our society. In each category there is one group of people deemed superior, legitimate, dominant and privileged while others are relegated—whether explicitly or implicitly—to the position of inferior, illegitimate, subordinate, and disadvantaged. (Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, 2010, p.11).

In Western culture, LGBTQ identities have been categorized in ways that have disadvantaged them as inferior, psychologically unhealthy, and even threatening to the natural order of the world. (Blumenfeld, 2010). This social justice intervention sought to raise awareness about the social construction of sexual identities and change attitudes toward them, so as to challenge disadvantaging and oppressive categorizations.

Privilege. Those who fit social descriptors that categorize people in ways that advantage them as superior are accorded commensurate unearned privilege in U.S. culture (Johnson, 2010).

> To have privilege is to be allowed to move through your life without being marked in ways that identify you as an outsider, as exceptional or "other" to be excluded, or to be included but always with conditions… (Johnson, 2010, p. 20).

But this explanation of social privilege is not as simple as it may seem on the surface. Privilege is not accorded in equal amounts to all those who possess it. This is because of

the complexity of biased ideas toward a wide array of overlapping differences (Johnson, 2010).

Privileged is not necessarily oppressor. Johnson (2010) clarifies that someone in a privileged group is not necessarily oppressing others, even though s/he does belong to a category of privileged people in a relationship of oppression with another category of people. Herek and McLemore (2013) contend that most people understand that sexual minorities are not valued as much as heterosexuals, but that not all people internalize sexual stigma, i.e. approve of this devaluation, in spite of participating in a culture that generally privileges heterosexuals over non-heterosexuals. This contention informed the intervention for this study in that the privileged majority of participants were encouraged to recognize their role in oppression, unwitting or not, and to use the power of their own social status to ameliorate it.

Functional approach as an organizing framework. Herek and McLemore (2013) emphasize that attitudes and opinions serve social and psychological needs and functions. For example, people hold to their beliefs in order to have a world view compatible with their morals and values, to be accepted within various social groups, and to defend their views when personal schema is threatened. Herek and McLemore (2013) therefore recommend that researchers do more than describe the "what" and "how" of participant attitudes and their expression, but also consider possible explanations for "why" when attempting to change attitudes.

To change attitudes, Herek and McLmore (2013) suggest that a psychological need, such as a belief in personal liberty or empathy for the plight of others, must become stronger than another, such as the need to adhere to religious beliefs that condemn others

for their sexuality, even if holding those beliefs provides a sense of belonging. Understanding that negative beliefs, opinions and attitudes hold social functions which can be supplanted by new attitudes informed by a stronger belief or need inspired the construction of the current study's intervention lessons, and the subsequent discussion about data gathered for this study. There are various studies in the literature which have attempted to change attitudes and build allies in this manner.

Previous Ally Building Interventions

Ally building interventions aim to improve heterosexual attitudes toward sexual minorities. These interventions have primarily consisted of educational materials and or opportunities to attend speaker panels with sexual minorities. For example, LGB speakers have visited counselors and other professionals in need of professional development (Gelberg & Chojanacki, 1995). They have also visited classrooms in psychology or sexuality courses (Nelson & Krieger, 1997; Waterman, Reid, Garfield & Hoy, 2001). Other ally building interventions have consisted of educational workshops or coursework on LGB issues, with discussions about the individual's identity formation. These help to build critical thinking and empathy through an understanding of the similarities between heterosexual and LGB identities. Participants have then discussed ways of supporting sexual minorities as allies (Ji, Du Bois & Finnessy, 2009; Wallace, 2000). Such strategies formed the basis of the educational intervention for the current study, but previous measures have revealed that, although educating about LGB topics has some efficacy to improve attitudes toward sexual minorities, results have been varied.

Pettijohn II and Walzer (2008) measured attitudes toward sexual minorities at the beginning and end of two different psychology courses using Kite and Deaux's (1986)

Attitudes Towards Homosexuality (ATH) scale. This 21-item Likert-type scale demonstrated that students enrolled in their Psychology of Prejudice course had significant decreases in prejudice, while those enrolled in a standard Introductory Psychology course did not. Bassett and Day (2003) used supplemental content about gay men in a required course for social work students. They used a modified version of the Attitudes Toward Lesbians and Gay Men, a 20-item Likert scale (ATLG; Herek, 1988) for pre- and posttest measures. It indicated significant lowering of negative attitudes on the posttest. Hood, Muller and Seitz (2001) created content for an organizational behavior course in order to improve LGB diversity competency. They developed their own five-item Attitude Toward Gay Men and Lesbians (ATGML) scale. Pre- and posttest measures at the beginning of the course and at its conclusion indicated significant change for their students. Probst (2003) exposed students taking a workplace diversity psychology course to LGB content. They used the Homonegativity Scale (Morrison, Parriag, & Morrison, 1999) consisting of six items. Pre- and Posttest measures at the beginning and at the end of the course indicated significant improvement of attitudes toward sexual minorities. Finkel, Storaasli, Bandele, & Schafer (2003) implemented two 2-hour Safe Zone diversity trainings which were six months apart. Results measured with the Likert-type *Riddle Homophobia Scale* (1985) revealed no significant differences in attitude among participants after the intervention.

Black, Oles, Cramer and Benett (1999) implemented a speaker panel of two gay men and two lesbians to talk about LGB issues in a social work course. Using a modified version of the ATLG (Herek, 1988), the authors found no significant difference in student responses pre-survey to post survey. However, Nelson and Krieger (1997) also

implemented a speaker panel of two gay men and two lesbian women in a course on the psychology of young adults. They used a modified version of the Attitudes Toward Homosexuality Scale (ATHS; MacDonald & Games, 1974), with pre- and posttest scales revealing significant change.

In qualitative studies Hubbard, Snipes, Perrin, Morgan DeJesus, and Bhatttacharyya (2013) provided educational information about LGB issues to students from psychology courses, who were then asked to confront heterosexist statements in writing. The intervention did not appear to change the prevalence or manner in which theses students confronted heterosexism, compared with a group that did not receive the intervention. However, Ji, Du Bois and Finnessy (2009) found that exposure to activities with LGB persons, and opportunities to interview LGB persons increased student confidence in confronting LGB bias.

Combining aspects of the interventions and measures used above, this study implemented educational materials such as Safe Zone's, and commercially available video interviews with LGB persons in lieu of a speaker's panels (see Methods). Quantitative measures were similar to the Likert-type scales used in previous studies, in this case the *Riddle Homophobia Scale* (see Methods).

Research Methods Used to Study Attitudes

Use of mixed methods. Creswell (2009) explains that interest in mixed methods for research has been traced to psychology investigations as early as 1959, when Campbell and Fiske created a multitrait matrix that combined quantitative and qualitative methods of inquiry. In 1979, Jick took an interest in converging both quantitative and

qualitative data. In recent decades mixed methods became a distinct approach to inquiry (Creswell, 2009).

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) also enumerate the advantages of mixed methods. They suggest that mixed methods combine the strengths of qualitative and quantitative methods, presenting a more complete understanding of what is being studied. While quantitative methods are generally deductive and attempt to prove a generalized hypotheses with specific data, qualitative methods are inductive, intuitive and interpretive, allowing the researcher to be the most important tool for interpreting specific data in forming broader hypotheses.

Researchers have employed various mixed methods instruments to measure participant attitudes and self-reports of behaviors. These instruments have been used to measure students' beliefs and attitudes about LGBQ issues and ally behaviors. Two primary approaches have been used: quantitative surveys and qualitative reflective writing exercises. Quantitative and qualitative data derived from these instruments can be examined and compared to one another. This kind of corroboration is often referred to as triangulation of data sources (Jick, 1979; Mills, 2011).

Surveys of attitudes. Survey research is a method in which questionnaires are used to gather data to understand the characteristics of a population. Survey instruments are used to gather and measure qualitative or quantitative data about opinions, attitudes, values, experiences, beliefs, motivations or intentions of subjects (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Surveys can be administered using a paper-and-pencil format, or electronically using web sites such as surveymonkey.com, which tabulates results

automatically. To ensure that my students completed their surveys, I chose paper-and-pencil format because class time could be used for this purpose.

Most studies on attitudes toward queer individuals have focused only on the negative attitudes manifested from homophobia. These studies have measured bias with scales such as the Index of Attitudes Toward Homosexuals (IAH) (Hudson & Ricketts, 1980). Few have focused on more positive attitudes such as tolerance, respect and acceptance.

According to Prittinsky (2011), surveys which measure positive attitudes toward diverse groups have the advantage of enabling the prediction of future prosocial behaviors. Constructs that measure positive attitudes are therefore important in determining whether or not a diversity training intervention has been effective for participants, and what inference about the participants' future social behavior can be drawn. He advises researchers to include both positive and negative attitude measures when testing interventions that are intended to improve ingroup and outgroup relations. Prittinsky emphasizes that resulting measures allow for more precise conclusions and theory development (Prittinsky, Rosenthol & Montoya, 2011).

Survey instrument for this study. The survey instrument used for this study combined negative attitude measures similar to that of the IAH, and positive attitude measures similar to Prittinsky's *Allophilia Scale* (2011). The *Riddle Homophobia Scale* (1985) rates an individual's level of homophobia on a Likert-type range of constructs that represent an individual's attitudes and beliefs. There is no defined zero point, and constructs are arranged in a subjective hierarchy from extreme homophobia to support and nurturance of LGBT people (Clauss-Ehlers, 2010). According to the Staten Island

LGBT Community Center (www.silgbtcenter.org) the *Riddle Homophobia Scale* was developed by psychologist Dorothy Riddle in 1974 while she was part the American Psychological Association Task Force on Gays and Lesbians. The scale is cited in the literature as a paper for a conference on sexual minority issues (Riddle, 1985) and as an article (Riddle, 1994).

The *Riddle Homophobia Scale* is typically interpreted as being composed of four positive constructs and four negative constructs. *Tolerance* and *acceptance* lie near the center of Riddle's range, but are still contained within its negative domain. These two attitudes are commonly interpreted as positive, but Riddle suggests they can be interpreted as negative concepts because

> [they] can, in actuality, be a mask for an underlying fear or even hatred (one is tolerant, e.g., of a baby crying on an airplane while simultaneously wishing it would stop or go away), and acceptance because it assumes that there is indeed something to accept" (Blumenfeld, 2010, p. 380).

Riddle's scale contains terms which enabled discernment of changes in both positive and negative attitudes toward LGB individuals after the intervention.

Reflective writing exercises. Written exercises can serve the same purpose as qualitative interviews which are designed to elicit data about the knowledge or attitudes of participants. Like interviews, reflective written exercises typically maintain a questioning protocol, such as the use of open-ended questions, which allow deep exploration of participants' thoughts on a topic. For this reason Johnson & Christensen (2008) refer to semi-structured interviews and reflective written exercises as "depth" interviews and "depth" exercises.

Summary. There is a need for interventions which address homophobia in educational institutions. A conceptual framework about the purpose and construction of social stigma, and a functional approach about the ways stigma supports social structures, can help define and conceptualize the cultural forces that lead to oppression of sexual minorities at both the individual and systemic levels. A critical pedagogy forms the basis of strategies used to teach about oppression of sexual minorities, and these have been used in educational interventions to help create safer campuses for all students. Such strategies inspired the advocacy intervention for this study.

Participant attitudes about a topic such as homophobia can be assessed for changes using a pre- and post-test assessment format carried out prior to and following an intervention. Using the same quantitative survey for each measure provides the simplest method to directly compare data before and after an intervention. Using a scale that contains measures for both positive and negative attitudes enables demonstration of changes in each.

A thematic analysis of qualitative data can assess the extent of change in attitudes, adding depth of understanding to quantitative results. Quantitative and qualitative data can be examined and compared to one another. This kind of corroboration is often referred to as triangulation of data sources (Jick, 1979; Mills, 2011).

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This chapter presents the method used to better understand the attitudes of first year college students toward LGBQ individuals. It describes characteristics of the participants and explains procedures used to attempt to change attitudes using a brief educational intervention. There were no similar interventions rated as methodologically sound in the literature (Tucker & Potocky-Tripodi, 2006), so this intervention was based on curriculums and activities which have been used by advocacy groups such as Safe Zone and GLSEN in their ally trainings. Components of these curriculums attempted to raise awareness of the constructed nature of gender, privileged and oppressed identities, and structural inequalities in U.S. society. The aim was to reduce negative feelings toward LGBQ individuals, while increasing positive attitudes. Methods of data collection and analysis are explained in detail.

Intervention group. Participants were first-year college students with undeclared majors known as "exploratory students." In order to facilitate a full semester in which the same students would have the opportunity to bond with one another in these first college courses, two seven-week sections of UNI 101, aimed at providing students with information and self-assessments for informed major selection, continued with their respective sections through another sequential seven-week course, UNI 102, aimed at providing students with a knowledge of university resources, academic integrity, study skills and time management strategies. Because each section consisted of the same students for both sequential courses across the semester, the university referred to these sections as "cohorts" of students. Each cohort was capped at 19 students to allow for the

individual student-teacher interaction that the exploratory curriculum called for. Selection was quasi-experimental as students were not chosen randomly. Nevertheless, this convenience sample was reflective of the general student body of first-year college students enrolled at the university.

When the study began, there were 33 participants who took the pretest, but two of them did not fill out demographic data. Because 8 of the students who took the pretest dropped out of the courses, and six students entered after the initial survey of attitudes had been administered, the number of participants who took the posttest was 31. There were 25 intervention group participants who took both pre and post surveys. Because of the anonymous nature of the pre and post-tests, students were guided in creating a personal code which would allow for disaggregation of those who did not participate in both the pre-test or post-test. Students who did not participate in both were excluded from quantitative analysis, but their discussion board comments were included in qualitative analysis.

Control group. Student attitudes from the intervention sections were compared with student attitudes in two similar seven-week courses that the researcher practitioner also taught, but which did not receive the treatment. These two sections of UNI 201 served as control groups. The UNI 201 courses contained a student success curriculum which served as a continuation of the UNI 101 major and career selection content, for students who had still not declared a major after taking it. These control sections also contained the same representative population of first year university students as the intervention group, but were smaller in number. Section 1 consisted of 5 students and section 2 also consisted of 5 students. In these sections, no students dropped from their

section or entered the course after the pretest survey was administered, so the total participants included in pre and post-test survey data was 10.

Consent. All participants in both the intervention and control groups signed a consent agreement before the project began. This assured students of anonymity and that they could quit the study at any time. The aim was to elicit the most sincere responses possible from both the treatment and control group, in order to determine if the intervention produced a change in self-reported attitudes or behaviors. A blank copy of the consent agreement can be found in Appendix A.

Demographics. Demographic information is related in Table 1 below. Students were given the opportunity to identify themselves as either *male*, *female* or *other* on the survey demographic section; they were not asked to reveal their sexual orientation. One student indicated *other* for gender in the intervention group, but otherwise gender was stratified. In the control group 8 out of 10 participants indicated they were female, which was the only unusual aspect of the control sample. There was not much variability in age as most students were either 18 or 19 years old, with the exception of one participant in the treatment group who was 33 years old. Of the 33 participants in the intervention group who took the pre survey, 23 were Caucasian, 6 were Hispanic, 1 was Asian, and 1 was mixed race. Of the 10 control group participants 4 were Caucasian, 3 were Hispanic, 2 were Native American, 1 was Asian. Because of the anonymous nature of the pre- and post-tests, and small sample size, gender and ethnicity were not controlled for in analyses.

Table1. Demographic Information for Participants who Completed the Pre Survey

	Treatment	Control
Sample size	31*	10
Gender		
Male	13 (41.9%)	2 (20.0%)
Female	17 (54.8%)	8 (80.0%)
Other	1 (3.2%)	0 (0.0%)
Age (Mean and Standard Deviation)	18.6 (2.7)	19.1 (0.6)
Race		
Caucasian	23 (74.2%)	4 (40.0%)
Hispanic	6 (19.4%)	3 (30.0%)
Native American	0 (0.0%)	2 (20.0%)
Asian	1 (3.2%)	1 (10.0%)
Mixed	1 (3.2%)	0 (0.0%)

*Two of 33 students did not report demographic data

Intervention

With the permission of the course supervisor, the content of the standard UNI curriculum was augmented with lessons about LGBQ issues, and class and homework time was dedicated to this topic. The standard curriculum was compressed by the instructor so that the additional material could be added to it, rather than supplant any of it. Students would primarily have the opportunity to consider diversity in terms of gender roles and sexual orientation, but the intervention also took into account its racial, religious, and socioeconomic dimensions. In this manner, students were able to consider their own multiple identities.

The intervention took place in the fall semester of 2012, within the fourteen week duration of a UNI 101 and UNI 102 course sequence, during which six intervention lessons were taught. This intervention was not implemented until students in UNI 101 had an opportunity to acclimate to the routine of the courses, begin to get to know one another and the instructor, and were prepared to expect the augmented diversity curriculum.

A good deal of emphasis was placed on student understanding of the need for this intervention, and how it related to the overall diversity component and mission of the UNI 101 and UNI 102 courses. This was in an effort to ensure to the greatest extent possible that students would not oppose the concept. It was also intended to minimize any discomfort students might feel in learning about and expressing opinions on basic LGB diversity.

Ground rules. Because students have been raised in a society where prejudice is prevalent, homophobic or racist viewpoints could possibly be expressed in class. Thus, rules for appropriate expression of these sentiments was explicitly discussed as learning opportunities. Students could agree to disagree when expressing opinions, as long as those opinions were not intentionally offensive.

Prior to implementing the intervention, the first 4 weeks of the course sequence were devoted to community building. During this time I worked to create an environment of trust in the classroom, making explicit my expectations of students. Ground rules were based on Safe Zone guidelines and consisted of students knowing that it was acceptable if they did not understand or agree with all the information presented, that they had permission to ask questions that might appear naïve, that they had permission to be

honest about their feelings and share them respectfully. They also did not have to feel guilty about what they knew or believed, but they did need to take responsibility for their behaviors and could agree to disagree. The six-week intervention curriculum, which consisted of one 20-30 minute lesson each class session, was not introduced until the fifth week of the 14 weeks the students were together. Thereafter, the ground rules were briefly reviewed for the classes on a Power Point slide at the beginning of each new intervention lesson as a reminder.

Intervention Curriculum components. The intervention curriculum was informed and inspired by that used in Safe Zone programs in various centers of higher education throughout the nation. It also borrowed from the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network (GLSEN) *Lunchbox 2*, an educational program designed to promote allies for sexual minorities. Intervention curriculum lasted approximately twenty to thirty minutes of the 100 minute class periods each time it was administered. The curriculum was based on information from the Power Point slides used by Safe Zone, supplemented with an LGB history game from the *GLSEN Lunchbox 2*, and interview segments with LGB youths from two Groundspark Media videos, a Cambridge Documentary Film, and a Smithsonian World video. The Groundspark Media videos were accompanied by curriculum guides which helped to inspire discussion.

Learning was facilitated by lecture and in-class activities and discussions. After each lecture or activity, students were asked to reflect on learning and share opinions on electronic discussion boards. See Appendix C for the discussion board prompts. Because some students requested anonymity in their online writing, opportunities for anonymous expression of opinion were granted as an option in several of the discussion board writing

assignments. This was in an effort to ensure that all students felt safe to express what they believed, felt or experienced.

Curriculum lessons. The six-lesson curriculum was developed to create a progression from concepts like the effect of stereotypes, privilege and oppression on their targets, to the impact these have on all people. Other lessons presented examples of gay and lesbian historic figures and current celebrities, as well as interviews with every-day LGB students and gay and lesbian headed families. This reinforced that LGB people are as culturally important as heterosexuals, and that the ordinary lives of LGB people are more similar to heterosexuals' lives than they are different. Finally, an overview of the history of the LGBT civil rights struggle was presented. The concept of LGBT allies and their supportive behaviors was introduced as an invitation to positive action by participants.

*Lesson 1: Diversity and privilege***.** The purpose of LGBQ diversity training in UNI 101 and UNI 102 was briefly discussed. The instructor provided rationale and background information regarding the need for LGBQ diversity training on college campuses. The Safe Zone and GLSEN educational missions were highlighted, and the reasons elements of each of their curriculums were adapted into the courses for this study.

The concept of primary and secondary social identities was presented by means of a short power point presentation, and the instructor elicited from students that sexual orientation and gender identity are defined as primary social identities. Another short Power Point presentation defined words such as *sexual orientation*, and *sexual minorities*

with a focus on the terms *gay*, *lesbian* and why these terms are preferred over the more scientific *homosexual*, which has a negative political connotation.

The Power Point defined *gender expression* as the degree to which one expresses traits thought of as masculine or feminine, and mentioned the umbrella term *transgender*, which represents people who feel their gender identity is different than their biological sex, or people who feel their gender is neutral or fluid, neither man nor woman or both.

The notion of social privilege as it pertains to race, ability, age, sex, sexual orientation, and social class was also presented. Two in-class activities allowed students to process these concepts from a personal point of view. This prepared them for a discussion board homework regarding their own multiple identities and social status.

Lesson 2: Gender stereotypes and heteronormativity. A presentation on gender stereotypes and heteronormativity prepared students to relate these concepts to the career focus of the course. Students viewed a brief Power Point created by the instructor, containing an overview on gender stereotypes in our society. Slides depicted photos from various types of advertising media promoting gender stereotypes and gender roles. The term *heteronormativity* was defined as "a world view that promotes heterosexuality as the normal or preferred sexual orientation" (www.oxfordictionaries.com).

Participants then discussed a handout containing the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics *Salaries by Occupation and Gender 2011* (www.bls.gov) in order to emphasize wage-related gender bias. In-class activities included a hand raising exercise in which students signaled which occupations they stereotypically associated with which gender. A Groundspark Media vignette from the video *Straightlaced* profiled young adults who felt gender stereotypes and heteronormativity had affected their lives negatively. A

homework discussion board provided students the opportunity to express their views about the effects of gender stereotypes on everyone.

Lesson 3: Impact of gender rules, homophobia and transphobia on everyone. A Power Point presentation defined homophobia as an "aversion to, or discrimination against gays or lesbians due to internalized cultural stigma". It was also alluded to as the pervasive social concern of being thought of as gay or lesbian, if one does not stay within rigidly defined gender expectations for dress, mannerisms, interests, or professions. It was explained that this way homophobia keeps all people oppressed with rigid gender expectations. Transphobia was similarly defined with regard to transgender people, and *heterosexism* was defined as "discrimination or prejudice by heterosexuals against homosexuals" (www.merriamwebster.com).

The Power Point presentation imparted statistics on queer victimization, suicide, bullying and harassment in schools. The instructor facilitated discussion to relate these statistics to the prevalence of homophobia and transphobia in schools and in society.

Students then constructed the stereotypical attributes of a socially acceptable man and woman under headings such as "Act Like a Man" and "Act Like a Woman" on the white board. Subsequently they constructed a profile for the stereotypical gay man and lesbian woman and related these to the concept of homophobia.

A video segment from the Smithsonian World television series *Gender: The Enduring Paradox* introduced ways in which other cultures accept gender differences. The segment profiled a Native American *berdache* whose biological sex was male, but who was granted the social status of both genders and was highly respected in his community.

A *Straightlaced* video segment depicted straight students questioning their own freedom in light of social expectations for their behaviors within a "gender box."

A discussion board homework assignment asked students to describe the impact of homophobia on their own lives and to think about and discuss how homophobia and transphobia restrict the freedom of individuals to behave, dress, or participate in certain kinds of professions, activities, or sports. Students also discussed how rigid gender roles reinforce these phobias, and how they impact the ways in which friends of the same gender can relate to one another. They also discussed the impact of social cruelty or even physical violence on people who are perceived to be breaking gender rules.

Lesson 4: Focusing on similarities rather than differences and the importance of sexual minorities in history. Students played the *GLSEN Lunchbox 2* game of famous sexual minorities in U.S. History, emphasizing their contributions throughout history. Students also learned that sexual minorities and their families are much the same as other families. They listened to interview excerpts by youth from the Groundspark Media video *That's a Family* and a Cambridge Documentary Films segment from *We are Family.* Discussion board homework allowed students to process the information and express their own views.

Lesson 5: Ally attitudes and behaviors. The instructor explained the difference between support and activism. A Power Point presentation illustrated a timeline of LGBT political history much like the civil rights movement timeline for African American history. This timeline also included landmark incidents of violence and murder against members of the queer community. The importance of allies in the gay rights movement was stressed. An Ally Action Continuum graphic (Adams, Bel, & Griffin, 1997) was then

explained in terms of the level of support straight people might contribute to the wellbeing of sexual minorities. The corresponding discussion board assignment allowed students to evaluate where they felt they were located on the continuum and to explain why.

Lesson 6: Integration and debriefing. The researcher practitioner assigned an essay for students to summarize all learning in the course. Students were encouraged to write about anything impactful that they learned in the diversity training. A summary of the essay was presented as a short presentation on the last day of class. The post-intervention survey was taken by students in both the treatment group and the control group at the end of this final day.

Instrument

Student attitudes were measured using the *Riddle Homophobia Scale* developed by Dorothy Riddle (1985). This scale is sometimes referred to as the A*ttitudes Toward Difference Survey*. An important feature of the scale is that it measures both positive and negative attitudes in one survey. This feature is unique compared to other surveys such as the *Index to Measure Attitudes toward Homosexuality* (IAH), which is considered to be reliable, but which measures negative attitudes only. The Riddle scale is reported to have good face validity (Finkel et al., 2003), but reliability measures and psychometric properties of the scale are not known (Tucker & Potocky-Tripodi, 2006).

The *Riddle Homophobia Scale* also has the advantage of simplicity. It measures a range of attitudes concisely enough to use when class time is short. Participants are more likely to answer thoughtfully when they feel a survey is not so lengthy that it poses an imposition on their time. The Riddle scale is commonly used in ally trainings such as

GLSEN workshops to evaluate their effectiveness. It is included in the *GLSEN Lunchbox 2* diversity training materials. See Appendix B for this survey tool.

For her survey, Dorothy Riddle describes homophobia on an 8-construct continuum, with each construct representing a level of either negative or positive attitudes. The constructs are composed of two statements each, and respondents are to place a check mark next to statements they agree with and then bracket the part of the scale they feel most strongly represents their attitudes. Riddle's four negative constructs range from *repulsion*, *pity*, *tolerance*, to *acceptance*. She describes ally attitudes with four affirmative constructs ranging from *support*, *admiration*, *appreciation*, and finally to *nurturance* (Riddle, 1985).

Operationalizing the Riddle scale constructs. Riddle (1985) refers to her constructs as either positive or negative, but her definitions of *tolerance* and *acceptance* differ from currently held understandings about the meaning of these terms. Riddle's definition of *tolerance* is that same sex attraction is merely a phase of adolescent development to be tolerated until it is outgrown. Riddle's definition of acceptance hinges on viewing sexual minorities as abnormal "others" who must somehow be accepted for their difference. Her emphasis on the binary "normal" "abnormal" makes *acceptance* a kind of reinforcement of difference. But participants' own internal critiques of these words in class discussion boards revealed that for them both *tolerance* and *acceptance* were positive and affirming of difference.

An expansion of Riddle's definitions of these two constructs helped to operationalize them for the contemporary perspectives of participants. Merriam Webster's online dictionary defines *tolerance* as "sympathy or indulgence for beliefs or

practices differing from or conflicting with one's own" (www.merriam-webster.com), where "sympathy" appears to indicate "empathy" or understanding. Because *tolerance* is now commonly viewed as positive in relation to differences of all kinds, and because. students in discussion boards spoke of this concept similarly, the definition of tolerance was expanded to include Websters'.

In addition, Merriam Webster's online dictionary defines acceptance as a form of "approval" (www.merriam-webster.com). Because this definition of *acceptance* is positive in relation to differences of all kinds, and because participants used this term similarly in their own discussions, it became the meaning of acceptance for this study. See Table 2a below.

Table 2a. Reinterpretation of Riddle Constructs

Attitude	Direction	Characteristic Defined	Direction Reinterpreted	Characteristic Redefined
Repulsion	Negative	LGBT people are strange, sick, crazy, and aversive	--	--
Pity	Negative	LGBT people are somehow born that way and it is pitiful.	--	LGBT people are either unfortunately born that way or experiencing a phase they must outgrow and it is pitiful.
Tolerance	Negative	Homosexuality is just a phase of adolescent development most people grow out of, but some do not.	Positive	Sympathy or indulgence for beliefs or practices differing from or conflicting with one's own.
Acceptance	Negative	One needs to make accommodations for LGBT	Positive	Approval and a welcoming attitude toward LGBT people. Sexual

		people's differences; a homosexual identity does not have the same value as a heterosexual one.		minorities are acknowledged as belonging.
Support	Positive	The rights of LGBT people should be protected and safeguarded.	--	--
Admiration	Positive	Being LGBT in our society takes strength.	--	--
Appreciation	Positive	There is value in diversity. Homophobic attitudes should be confronted.	--	--
Nurturance	Positive	LGBT people are an indispensable part of society.	--	--

Operationalizing the Riddle scale statements. Because the qualitative data demonstrated that students interpreted *tolerance* and *acceptance* as positive concepts in their discussion board comments, it was evident that they were not personally defining some terms in the ways they were originally conceptualied by Riddle (1985). Therefore, some negative survey statements were re-interpreted as positive for the purpose of data analysis. Statement 3 "We should have compassion for LGBT people because they can't be blamed for how they were born" was part of Riddle's negative construct *pity*, but it was generally interpreted by participants as a supportive statement. This was suggested by the very high percentage of agreement to it (see Chapter 4 Results). It contrasted with the other more clearly negative statement 4 comprising *pity* "If LGBT people could change they would surely do so", which had a very low percentage of agreement.

Because statement 3 described compassion for others' differences, but without the approval of *acceptance,* statement 3 was re-categorized under the construct *tolerance,* which had been redirected as positive. Riddle's survey statement 5, that homosexuality is a phase that must be outgrown, was originally categorized by Riddle as an indicator of *tolerance*. It was re-categorized as an indicator of *pity*, because it was interpreted as sympathy for an unfortunate phase that must be outgrown.

In a similar fashion, negative statement 6, "LGBT people need support and guidance as they deal with the difficult issues associated with their lifestyles," was re-interpreted as positive because it contained attributes of helpfulness toward sexual minorities. This statement remained as part of the composition of *tolerance*. Finally, the word "flaunt" in Riddle's statement 7 was unclear to some participants who, in qualitative discussion boards, wrote that they were supportive of sexual minorities but did not believe anyone, gay or straight, should display affection publically (PDA). Statement 7 was therefore viewed as ambiguous as to whether it referred to a dislike of any PDA (gay or straight), or a belief that sexual minorities are only acceptable as long as they stay in the closet. Consequently, it was not used in statistical analysis that aggregated data about positive or negative attitudes together. However, results for statement 7 were presented whenever individual survey statements were considered in data analysis. Table 2b and 2c below show the direction of constructs and survey statements. They are identified with a plus sign (+) or minus sign (-), and, in the case of the ambiguous statement 7, with both (+/-).

Table 2b. Riddle Survey Statements Direction Reinterpreted and Re-categorized

Construct Categories and Direction	Riddle Survey Statements and Direction	Survey Statement Re-categorized
Repulsion (-)	1 LGBT people are sick or immoral(-)	--
	2 LGBT people need reparative therapy(-)	--
Pity (-)	3 We should have compassion for LGBT people because they can't be blamed for how they were born (-)	5 Homosexuality is a phase many people go through and most grow out of.(-)
	4 If LGBT people could change they would surely do so. (-)	--
Tolerance (+)	5 Homosexuality is a phase many people go through and most grow out of.(-)	3. We should have compassion for LGBT people because they can't be blamed for how they were born (+)
	6 LGBT people need support and guidance as they deal with the difficult issues associated with their lifestyles. (+)	--
Acceptance (+)		--
	8 What LGBT people do in the privacy of their own bedroom is their business. (+)	--
Support (+)	9 LGBT people deserve the same rights and privileges as everybody else. (+)	--
	10 Homophobia is wrong and we must take a stand against it. (+)	--
Admiration (+)	11 It takes strength and courage for LGBT people to be themselves in today's world. (+)	--
	12 It is important for me to actively support the struggle for LGBT equality.(+)	--
Appreciation (+)	13 There is great value in our human diversity and LGBT people are an important part of it.(+)	--
	14 It is important for me to defend LGBT people from those who	--

	demonstrate homophobic attitudes.(+)	
Nurturance (+)	15 LGBT peo[le are an indispensable part of our society and have contributed much to our world. (+)	--
	16 I would be proud to be part of an LGBT organization, and to openly advocate for LGBT rights.(+)	--
Ambiguous statement removed from statistical analysis	7. I have no problem with LGBT people, but see no need for them to flaunt their sexual orientation publicly. (+/-)	--

Table 2c. Riddle Survey Statements Reordered According to Direction.

Construct Categories and Direction	Riddle Survey Statements and Direction
Repulsion (-)	1 LGBT people are sick or immoral(-)
	2 LGBT people need reparative therapy(-)
Pity (-)	4 If LGBT people could change they would surely do so. (-)
	5 Homosexuality is a phase many people go through and most grow out of.(-)
Tolerance (+)	3.We should have compassion for LGBT people because they can't be blamed for how they were born (+)
	6 LGBT people need support and guidance as they deal with the difficult issues associated with their lifestyles. (+)
Acceptance (+)	8 What LGBT people do in the privacy of their own bedroom is their business. (+)
	9 LGBT people deserve the same rights and privileges as everybody else. (+)

Support (+)	10 Homophobia is wrong and we must take a stand against it. (+)
Admiration (+)	11 It takes strength and courage for LGBT people to be themselves in today's world. (+)
	12 It is important for me to actively support the struggle for LGBT equality. (+)
Appreciation (+)	13 There is great value in our human diversity and LGBT people are an important part of it.(+)
	14 It is important for me to defend LGBT people from those who demonstrate homophobic attitudes.(+)
Nurturance (+)	15 LGBT peo[le are an indispensable part of our society and have contributed much to our world. (+)
	16. I would be proud to be part of an LGBT organization, and to openly advocate for LGBT rights.(+)
Ambiguous statement removed from statistical analysis	7. I have no problem with LGBT people, but see no need for them to flaunt their sexual orientation publicly. (+/-)

Procedure

Pre and posttest measures and data collection. The intervention group and the control group received a pretest and posttest survey with the Riddle scale. As mentioned previously, the instrument yielded pre and post dichotomous data (checked or unchecked statements) grouped within constructs that represented positive and negative attitudes toward sexual minorities. The constructs were ranked in a hierarchy from least to most supportive.

Pre and post surveys were identified by means of anonymous ID codes which each student created at pre-test. These were based on their month of birth, middle initial and last two digits of their student ID. Students who wished to identify themselves on surveys were allowed to write their names on them. This was done for the purpose of matching responses with qualitative data to check for consistency of attitudes.

The intervention group received the pretest on the first day of their courses and a posttest on the last day of their fourteenth week, which marked the end of their UNI 101 and UNI 102 course sequence. The control group received a pretest on the first day of class and a posttest at the end of their seven-week UNI 201 courses.

Other measures and data collection. In addition to responding to the preloaded statements of the quantitative survey, qualitative data were collected from participants as electronic discussion board posts, which were required as homework between the structured intervention lessons. For each of the six lessons, participants provided qualitative data in the form of written homework exercises, responding to prompts and stating opinions on electronic discussion boards. See Appendix C for the prompts.

Participants were asked to respond thoughtfully to discussion board writing exercises, with a minimum of 50 words each. Each discussion board homework was worth a total of 10 course points per intervention lesson. Students were also asked to reply to at least two classmates' responses. On one occasion there was time in class to allow the discussion board writing to take place during class, so that it could become a real-time "chat"

Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis. Quantitative data were analyzed and presented in the following way. Participants agreed with survey statements by marking them with a check, and bracketed statements were counted as checked for agreement. Frequencies of checked survey statements for the control and treatment groups were presented as a percentage of overall group agreement per statement. Each subscale construct was considered to be scored for agreement if either of the two statements composing the

construct was checked, and results were presented as frequency percentages. Responses to the pre- intervention survey provided an overall impression of the participants' initial attitudes toward sexual minorities.

Control and treatment groups were then compared in the same manner with regard to their posttest responses. These responses provided an impression of the participants' final attitudes toward sexual minorities. Next, a within-group analysis compared both the treatment and control groups for changes from pretest to posttest. This was done in order to observe possible change in the direction of desired change within each group. It was important to know whether or not the control group experienced change, because no change would indicate that changes in the treatment group were the result of the intervention.

A McNemar's Test was then conducted on the treatment group and the control group, comparing pre to post results on individual survey statements and on the composite constructs with statistical accuracy. McNemar's test is the most appropriate test in comparing pretest and posttest results for each participant (paired data pre and post) with a dichotomous variable (checked or unchecked survey statements). P-values determined if there was any significant change in overall group opinions.

To determine whether there had been a decrease in negative attitudes or an increase in positive attitudes, the responses from participants in the treatment and control groups were aggregated into a negative feeling score and a positive feeling score. For each student, the negative feeling score was determined by an average answer for negative survey statements 1, 2, 4, and 5. For example, if a student agreed with negative statements 1 and 2 and disagreed with negative statements 4 and 5, then the student

would have received a negative feeling score of (1+1+0+0) = 2, indicating that this student agreed with half of the negative statements. The positive feeling score was determined by an average answer for survey statements 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16. As mentioned previously, statement 7 was left out of aggregated statistical analysis because it was determined to be too unclear and ambiguous. A t-test was then conducted to look for a decrease in negative feeling scores, and an increase in positive feeling scores that reached statistical significance. P-values determined if there was any significant change in overall group opinion related to the aggregated negative and positive feeling scores.

Qualitative data analysis. Qualitative data were analyzed and presented in the following way. Computer software was used to code participants' imported discussion board entries. Initial coding was according to Riddle's eight construct categories: *repulsion*, *pity*, *tolerance*, *acceptance*, *support*, *admiration*, *appreciation* and *nurturance*. Criteria for coding to a category was that the writing must express a complete thought related to the attitude. Memo notations about the manner in which participants expressed the construct attitude determined whether sub categories of meaning were constructed (Charmaz, 2006). These analytic memos about emergent categories were written by hand on paper because paper provided a handier reference to them than the memo tool which was provided with the analytic computer program. At times this process led to Riddle's concepts being reinterpreted or expanded as indicated above. See Chapter 4 Results.

Content analysis, consisting of open coding, permitted identification of additional ideas which emerged from the student discussion boards. These were inductively grouped into categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) within the analytic program used for analysis.

The criteria for identifying a category was that the writing must express a complete thought related to an additional attitude. Constant comparison of categories with data at times facilitated the construction of smaller subcategories. In other iterations of analysis it facilitated construction of higher and broader themes which encompassed the categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Charmaz, 2006).

For example, coded quotes were compared for their relationship to attitudes about sexual minorities. Some of these were "persistence of negative attitudes toward queer identities" and a belief that queer identities are a "choice". Comparison of the larger categories allowed for a reorganizing of data into higher and more abstract themes about student attitudes toward sexual minority issues and individuals. Resulting categories were referred to as major themes (Strauss & Corbbin, 1990) and pointed to "influences" which were derived from comments coded for "religion","family", "the intervention experience", "personally knowing a sexual minority" etc. These helped to explain why some students experienced either "defensiveness" or "fair-minded decisions". The qualitative methods, researcher procedures and types of inductive results can be seen in table 3 below.

Table 3. Qualitative Methods Steps for Data Analysis Support

Qualitative Method	Researcher Procedure	Result
Content Analysis- Open Coding	Application of codes to units of analysis.	Categories
Content Analysis –Constant Comparison	Constant comparison of codes and analytic memos to articulate their meanings.	Themes
Thematic Analysis: Coding into positive and negative themes	Comparison of specific categories and themes to inductively construct broader themes.	Major Themes

Procedure for Mixed Methods Integrated Analysis

Once quantitative data were analyzed qualitative data were compared to it. The goal of this mixed methods approach was to bring all data sources together in order to relate them to one another. Qualitative data informed the revision of constructs on the quantitative survey, and quantitative constructs from the survey tool became codes for qualitative analysis. Both research questions were answered with quantitative data from the survey, then qualitative discussion board writing confirmed and expanded the quantitative answers to the research questions for a deeper understanding of participant attitudes and experiences.

The comparison of different data types was accomplished in the following way. Quantitative data were viewed as qualitative so that it could be compared with the qualitative data. Smith (1997) "qualitizes" quantitative data and considers both data types as "symbolic," neither being more legitimate than the other. This comparison was managed in two ways: 1) By taking the overall percentage of agreement on survey constructs and comparing them to the percentage of discussion board excerpts which had been coded for the Riddle constructs. This allowed both data types to be compared for complimentarity (Greene, 2002) or contradiction. 2) By taking the individual construct scores from a subset of participants and comparing them to what these same participants had said in discussion boards. Both of these strategies checked for consistency to determine the reliability of quantitative and qualitative data sources. Memos articulated conjectures about any inconsistencies or inconclusive results found between the two data types.

Summary

Both quantitative and qualitative data were used to buttress one another in analysis. Quantitative measures were undertaken before and after the treatment to compare numeric trends in surveys with qualitative open-ended responses in online writing assignments. Aspects of Riddle's survey were reinterpreted and expanded for analysis based on this comparison. The convergence of these mixed methods strategies conveyed the trends and voices of participants, and checked for reliability. Each mixed method strategy of inquiry supported the development of categories and themes leading to major themes. The goal of data analysis was to determine if negative student attitudes toward sexual minorities had been decreased, and if positive attitudes had been increased as a result of the intervention.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Research Questions

1. To what extent did the opportunity for first year college students to learn about and discuss issues of LGBQ diversity reduce negative attitudes toward sexual minorities?
2. To what extent did the opportunity for first year college students to learn about and discuss issues of LGBQ diversity increase affirmative attitudes toward sexual minorities?

Quantitative results

This section explains how results from the quantitative survey helped answer the research questions. In this analysis, the effects for gender were considered but none were found, so gender was not controlled for in subsequent analyses.

Overall pretest scores. Figure 1a below presents the control and treatment group pretest results for each individual survey statement. These responses provided an overall impression of the participants' initial attitudes toward sexual minorities. The plus signs in the table represent survey statements that indicate positive feelings toward sexual minority issues, and the negative signs represent statements that indicate negative feelings toward sexual minority issues. These pretest responses are expressed as an overall percentage of student agreement with individual survey statements. In Figure 1b the results of the pre-test for control and treatment groups are presented as percentages of agreement with the Riddle constructs (combined item scores).

Generally on the pretest, negative opinions related to *repulsion* and *pity* toward sexual minorities were low in both treatment and control groups. These constructs were composed of statements related to the immorality of same sex attraction, the idea that sexual minorities should participate in reparative therapy, and that sexual minorities would surely change if they could. Pretest agreement with positive attitudes such as *tolerance*, which was related to statements about compassion and understanding for the difficulties that sexual minorities must face, and *acceptance* related to intimacy in the privacy of one's own bedroom, were high in both the treatment and control groups.

Figure 1a. Pre Responses by Survey Statement

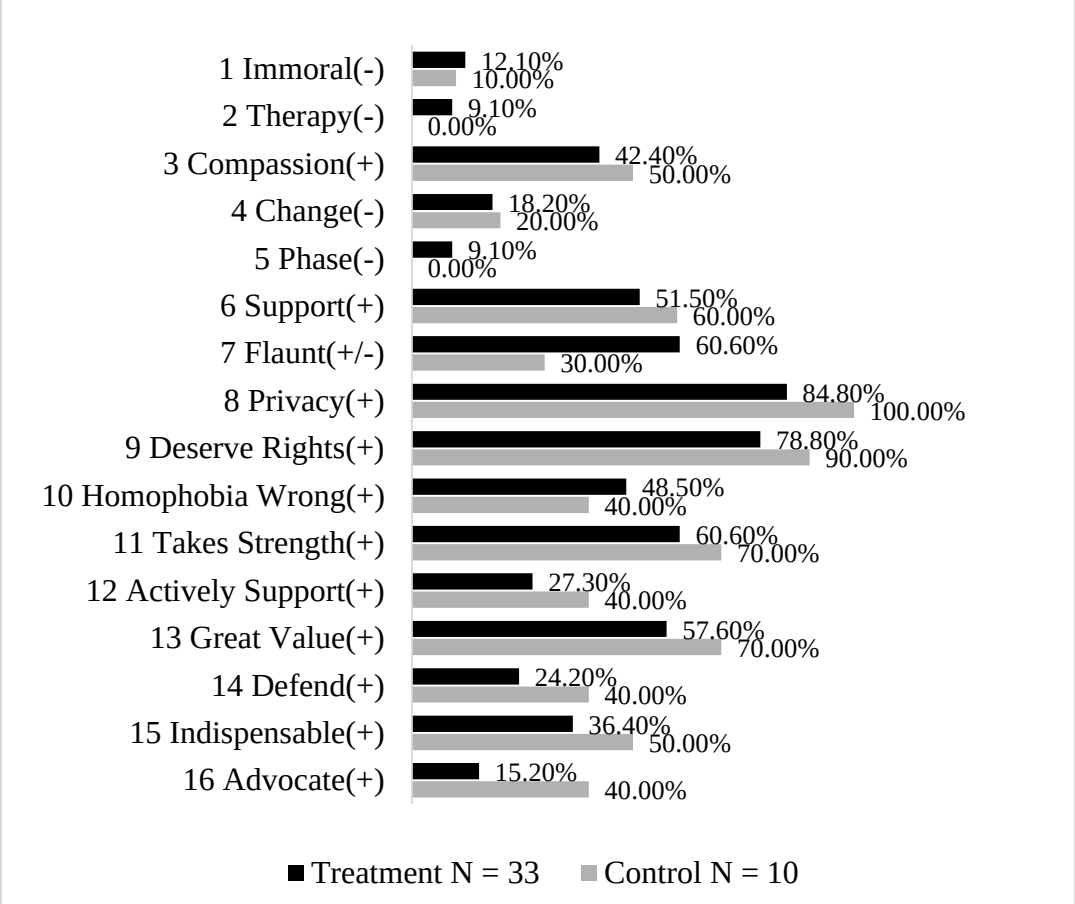
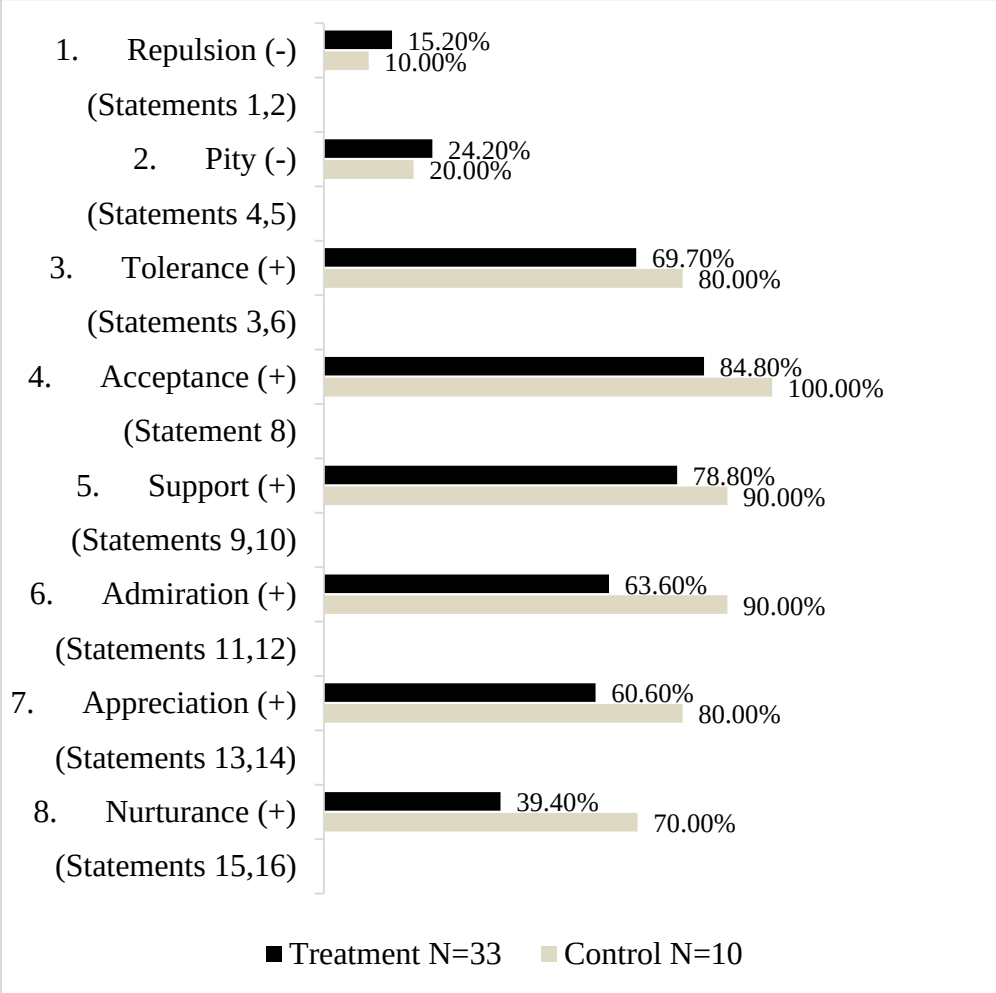


Figure 1b. Pre Responses by Construct



Overall post-test scores. Figure 2a below compares the control and treatment groups on their posttest responses on each survey statement. These responses provided an impression of the students' final perceptions about and feelings toward sexual minorities. Figure 2b presents the posttest results of both groups for Riddle's survey composite scores. Similar to the pre-test, negative opinions related to *repulsion* and *pity* toward sexual minorities were very low in both treatment and control groups. Positive attitudes such as *tolerance* and *acceptance* were high in both groups.

Figure 2a. Post Responses by Survey Statement

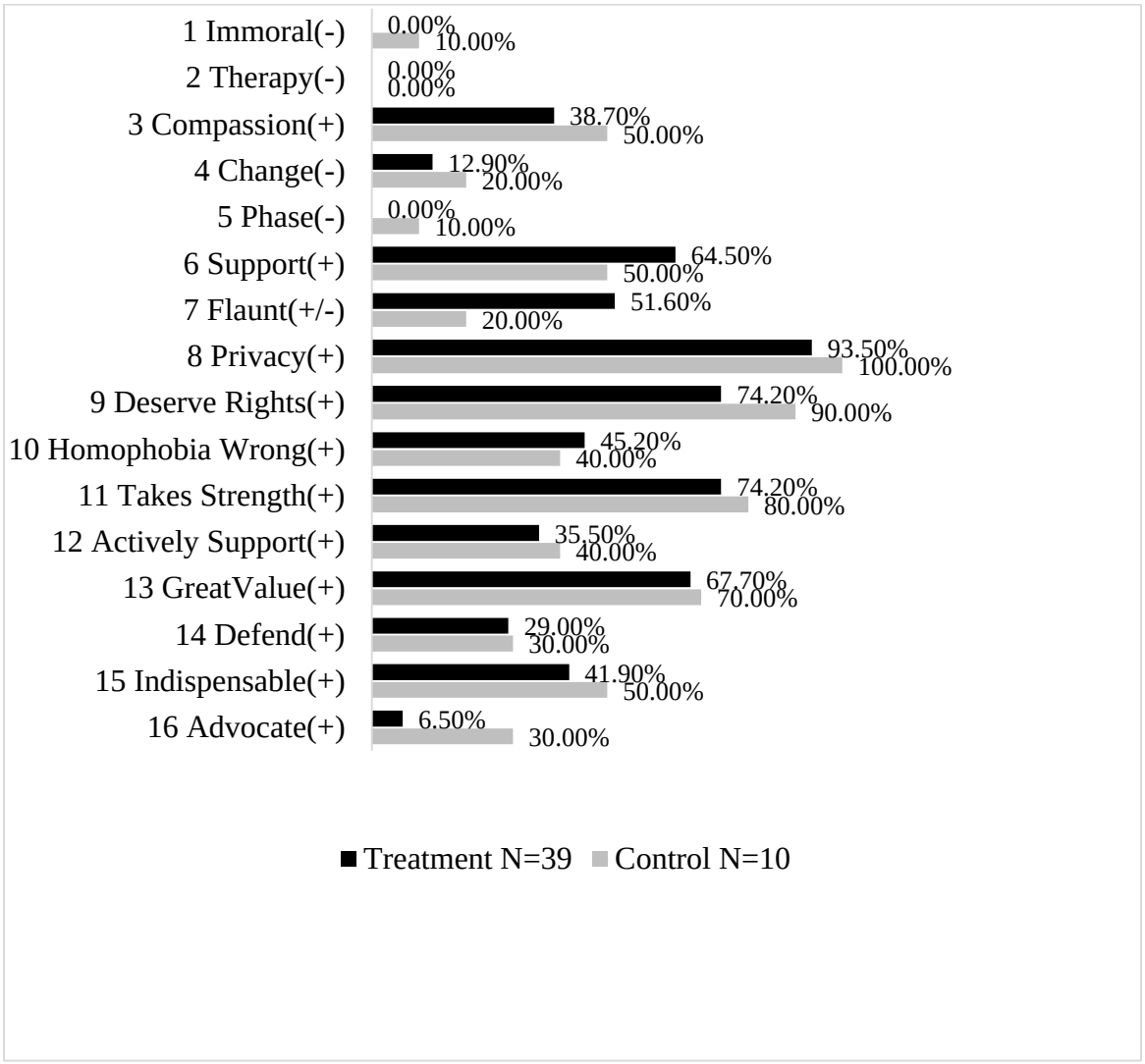
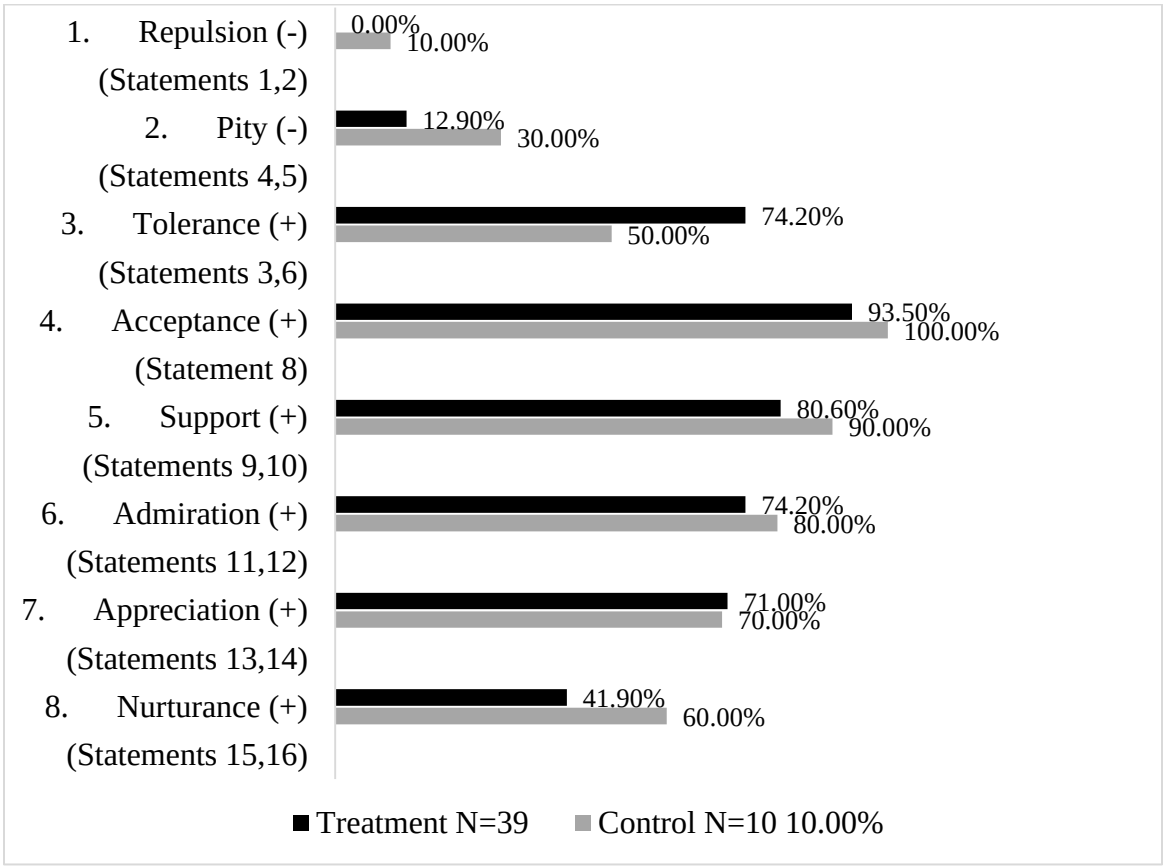


Figure 2b. Post Responses by Survey Construct



Comparison for change using exact p-values. A McNemar's Test was conducted to determine if there was any significant change in overall group attitudes from pre-test to post-test for each of the sixteen survey statements and construct scales. The results of this test are in Table 4 below. They demonstrated that there was no significant change in the feeling scores of the students in the treatment group or the control group when each item was examined individually. There was also no significant change in agreement with any of the composite constructs for both groups.

Table 4. McNemar's Test for P-values Pre vs. Post per Individual Survey Statement

Statement	Exact p Treatment	Exact p Control
1 Immoral(-)	0.250	1.000
2 Therapy(-)	0.500	1.000
3 Compassion(+)	0.727	1.000
4 Change(-)	0.625	1.000
5 Phase(-)	1.000	1.000
6 Support(+)	0.688	1.000
7 Flaunt(+/-)	1.000	1.000
8 Privacy(+)	0.500	1.000
9 Deserve Rights(+)	0.125	1.000
10 Homophobia Wrong(+)	1.000	1.000
11 Takes Strength(+)	0.688	1.000
12 Actively Support(+)	1.000	1.000
13 Great Value(+)	1.000	1.000
14 Defend(+)	1.000	1.000
15 Indispensable(+)	0.688	1.000
16 Advocate(+)	0.375	1.000

Treatment group change pretest to posttest. Figure 3a below compares the pre-test and post-test results of the treatment group. Although there was no significant change, it is noteworthy that all of the negative statements dropped in percentage over time. It is also noteworthy that two of the positive statements (Numbers 9 and 16) showed a drop in the percentage of students that agreed. Statement 9 related to agreement with equal civil rights for sexual minorities, and statement 16 related to the willingness of participants to openly advocate for sexual minorities. Figure 3b shows the results in terms of Riddle's construct subscales. The drop in statement 3 about compassion did not cause a drop in its corresponding construct *tolerance,* because statement 6 about supporting

sexual minorities, which also comprised *tolerance*, went up by the same amount. The drop in statement number 9 did cause a drop in its corresponding construct of *support*. *Nurturance* increased even though there was a drop in corresponding statement 16. This was due to the increase in statement 15 related to sexual minorities being indispensable members of society.

Figure 3a. Treatment Pre vs Post by Statement

Treatment (N=25)

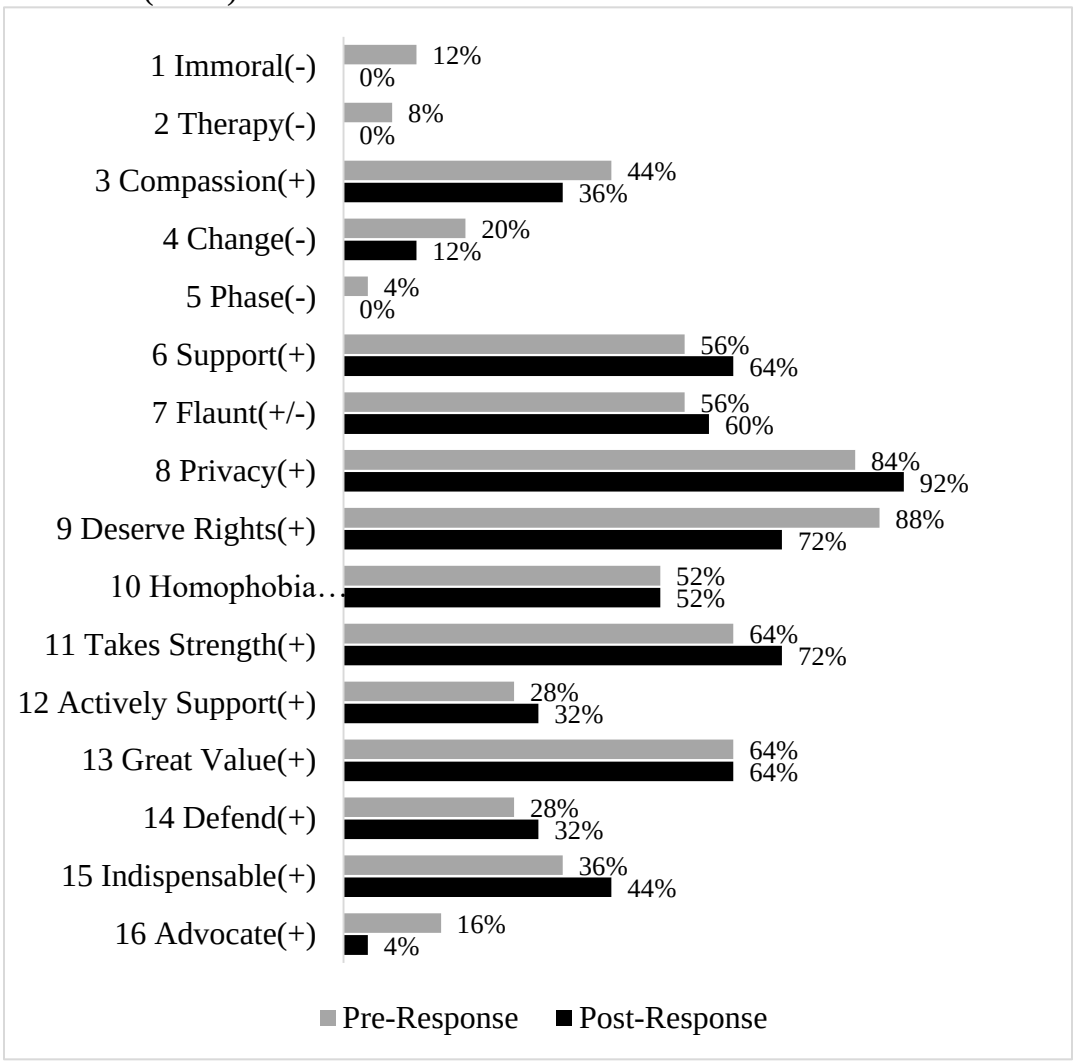
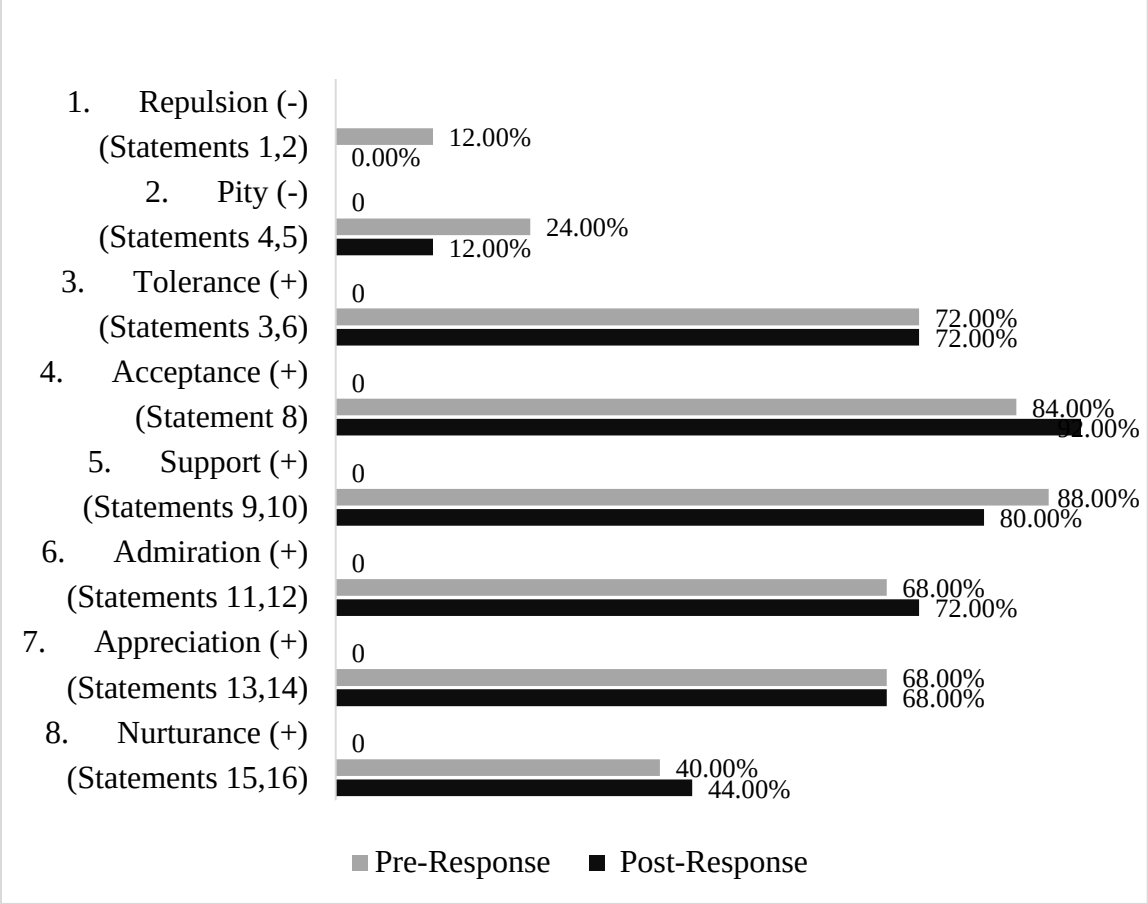


Figure 3b. Treatment Pre vs Post by Construct

Treatment (N=25)



Control group change pretest to posttest. Figure 4a below compares the pretest and posttest results of the control group. There was almost no change in the opinions of students on sexual minority matters from pre to post-test in the control group, and none of the changes were significant. Figure 4b expresses this lack of change in terms of the Riddle subscale constructs. The tables demonstrate that any changing of opinions is the result of the intervention on the treatment group.

Figure 4a. Control Pre vs Post by Statement

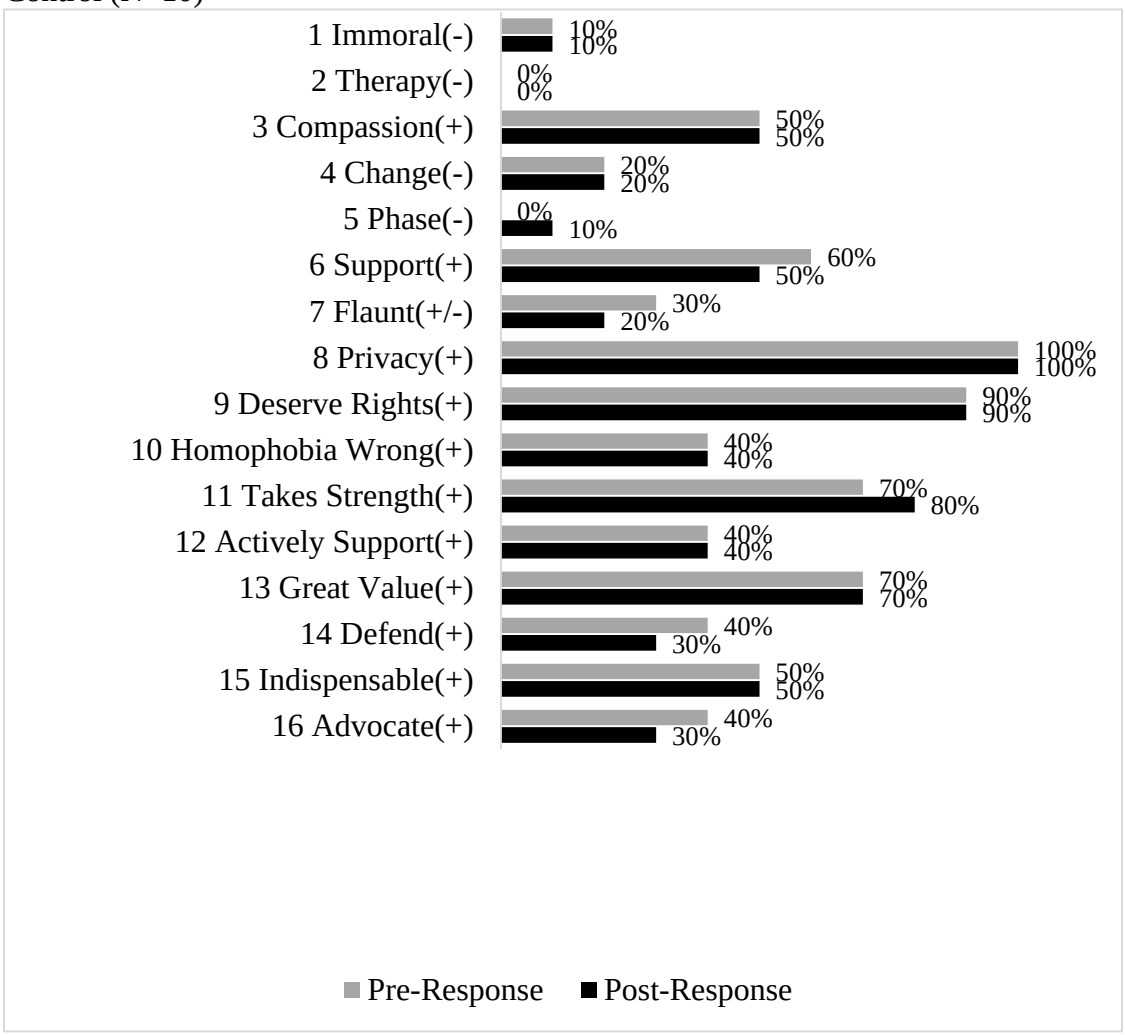
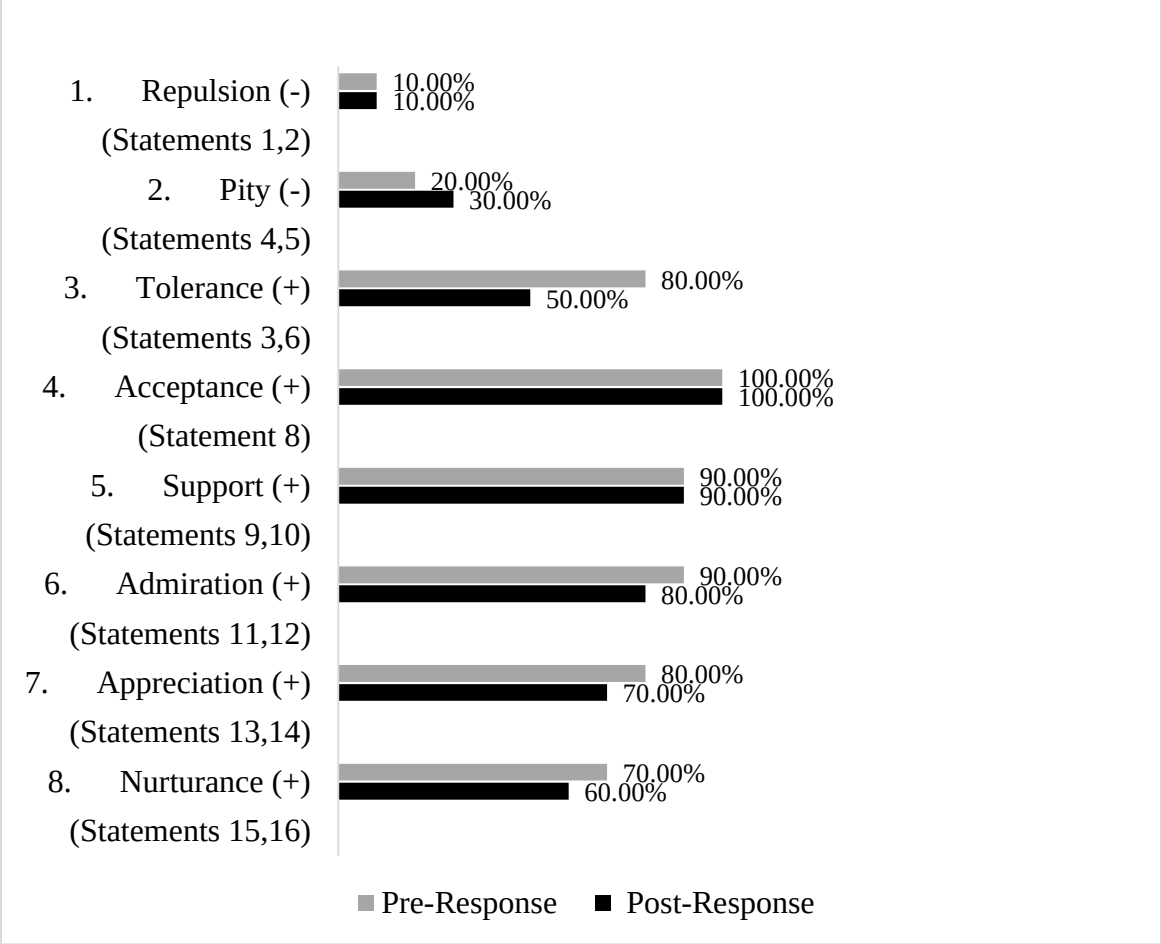


Figure 4b. Control Pre vs Post by Construct

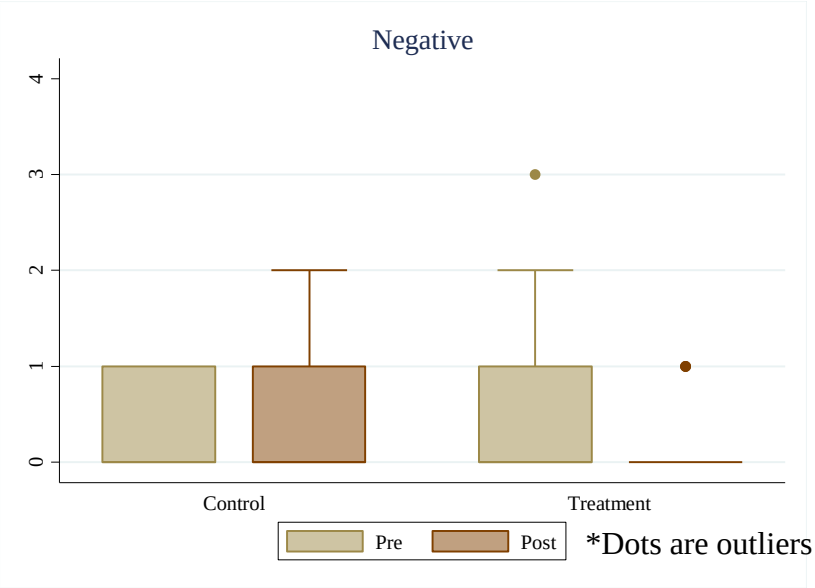
Control N=10



Negative feeling scores and positive feeling scores. To further explore the research questions, the responses from students were aggregated into a negative feeling score and a positive feeling score. Figure 5a below presents a boxplot which depicts the negative feelings of participants for the pretest and posttest within their respective groups (treatment and control). It demonstrates that students generally did not have many negative feelings about sexual minorities. This was because the majority of students in the pretest agreed with no more than 1 out of the 4 negative statements. Only one outlier

in the treatment group agreed with 3 of the 4 negative statements regarding queer issues in the pre-test.

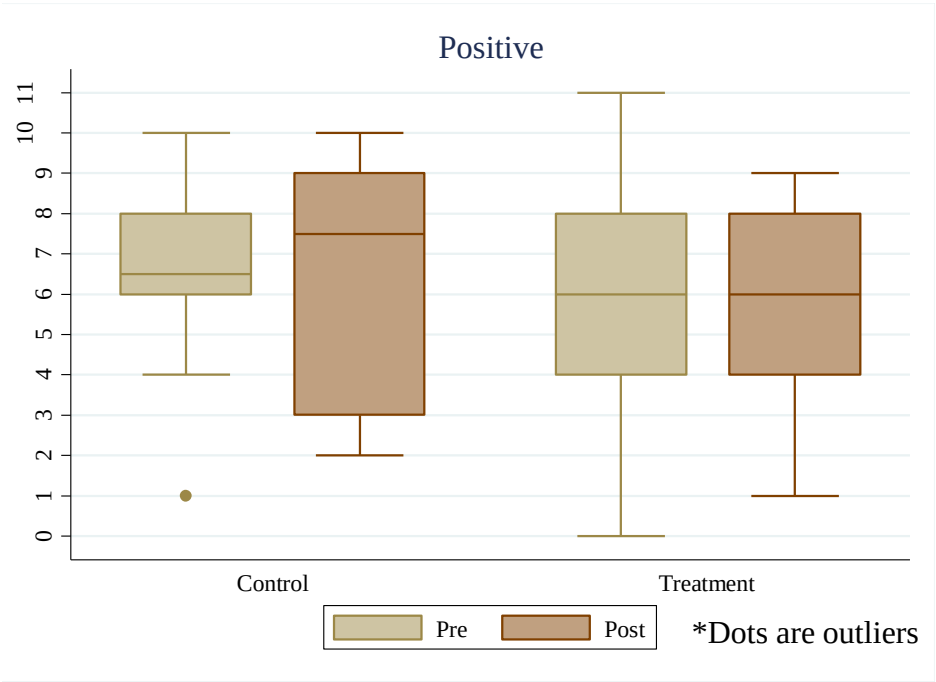
Figure 5a. Aggregate Negative Feeling Scores



T-test for significant decrease in negative feelings. To determine if the average negative feeling score of the participants decreased over time, two one-tailed paired t-tests were conducted, one for the control group and one for the treatment group. The p-value for the control group was 0.83 which revealed that there was no significant decrease in the negative feelings of students over time. The p-value for the treatment group was 0.03, which was significant. Therefore, there was a significant decrease in the overall negative feelings for students in the treatment group.

Visual representation of positive feeling scores. Figure 5b below is a boxplot which depicts the positive feelings of the students for the pretest and the posttest within their respective groups.

Figure 5b. Aggregate Positive Feeling Scores



T-test for significant increase in positive feelings. A one-tailed paired t-test was then conducted to test for any increase in positive attitudes within each group. The resulting p-value of 0.37for the control group and 0.54 for the treatment group showed that there were no significant differences between the positive feeling score for the pre-tests and post-tests of both groups.

Summary of quantitative results. The overall picture of participant attitudes in the treatment and control groups were examined between groups at pre and post-test, and within groups from pre- to post-test. At the pre-test, students reported low negative

feeling scores in areas such as *repulsion* and *pity*, and high positive feeling scores in areas such as *tolerance* and *acceptance*.

Within group comparisons across time showed that although there were some minor changes in individual item and construct scores, none of these changes were significant for either group.

Examining negative and positive feeling scores, however, indicated that the intervention did significantly reduce negative attitudes in the treatment group, but did not significantly increase positive attitudes. The control group showed no significant changes in positive or negative attitudes.

Qualitative Results

Qualitative data helped to further explore the research questions beyond the quantitative data, on changes in negative and positive attitudes as a result of the intervention. Discussion board excerpts were coded to the Riddle constructs to confirm the quantitative data. A subset of individual participant survey results were compared to their own discussion board comments to check for consistency. Conflicting results raised questions as to why these might have occurred, and open coding created new categories and themes, which suggested why some participants changed attitudes and others did not.

Qualitative Data Supported by the Riddle Constructs. The Riddle constructs were used as qualitative categories so that qualitative data could be used to check quantitative results for consistency. Excerpts were coded for each of the Riddle categories when participants either explicitly mentioned the concept or strongly implied it in their discussion board comments. As mentioned previously, most of Riddle's construct

definitions were supported by students' comments, but the meaning of several items were broadened by the interpretation of students' explanations of their use of words such as *tolerance* or *acceptance*. Such reinterpretation of their meaning was facilitated by the participants who took it upon themselves to define them explicitly in their discussions, so that there would be no confusion in their expressions to classmates. (The reinterpretation of these items is described in table 2a in Methods.) Also, Riddle's definition of *repulsion* did not correlate with any of the discussion board writings, so any clearly negative attitudes were coded for *repulsion*. *Pity* for sexual minorities was also not expressed in any of the discussion board posts.

Table 5 below displays the number of participant comments coded to the Riddle scale constructs. Most attitudes related to Riddle's scale were coded in lesson 5 because it asked students to consider their comfort level with sexual minorities and issues, and their readiness to be an ally for them. As expected, there were higher levels of codes for *repulsion* in the student comments than on the survey, because the coding definition for *repulsion* was broader than Riddle's. Most codes were for *tolerance, acceptance* and *support*.

Table 5. Comments Coded for each Riddle Construct.

	Rep	Pity	Toler	Accept	Supp	Admir	Apprec	Nurt	Total Codes
Lesson 1	1	0	5	3	4	0	0	2	15
Lesson 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lesson 3	5	0	0	7	5	2	0	1	20
Lesson 4	2	0	3	4	3	0	0	0	12
Lesson 5	11	0	18	22	16	8	3	1	79
Lesson 6	2	0	4	8	5	1	1	1	22
Totals	21 (14%)	0 (0%)	30 (20%)	44 (30%)	33 (22%)	11 (8%)	4 (3%)	5 (3%)	148 (100%)

Evaluation of Negative Attitudes

For this study, Riddle's negative attitude constructs were considered to be *repulsion* and *pity*.

Repulsion. There were 21 statements coded for the construct of *repulsion*, which represented 14% of all student comments coded to the Riddle constructs. Riddle defined *repulsion* as a belief that sexual minorities are strange, sick, or crazy and should be helped to become heterosexual. Although this belief was not directly articulated by any participants, student writings that expressed aversion to sexual minorities or otherwise expressed sexual prejudice received codes for the category of *repulsion*. Sexual prejudice was defined as negative attitudes toward sexual minorities because of their group membership. All excerpts (100%) coded for *repulsion*, which were self-identified in discussion boards, were written by male students.

***Discomfort with queer visibility*.** Almost all qualitative expressions of *repulsion* demonstrated discomfort with sexual minority visibility. For example, some participants expressed *repulsion* at being reminded of the existence of sexual minorities, "I think they are suitable for our society, except when they begin to advertise their sexuality all over the media almost in an attempt for attention." Similar reactions to the subject of gays and lesbians surfaced in other students, "One can hold their beliefs strongly, and not have to constantly shout it out at the top of their lungs or make a scene," "I have been around gays and seen them but still cannot accept it. It's just something that is instilled in me and will always stick." One student stayed after class to discuss his discomfort with the openly gay students in his residence hall. He was especially concerned that they might approach him for sexual favors and was not sure how to respond to such advances.

Another student asserted his discomfort with the increasing visibility of sexual minorities this way:

> …just keep your thoughts to yourself and stop the whining about who's gay, who's not etc...Who cares. If gays and lesbians alike were just left alone and not scrutinized against then everything would be cool.

This sentiment, that if queer individuals would remain quietly in the closet other people could more easily tolerate their presence, was echoed by several participants throughout the intervention. One exclaimed, “I wouldn't mind if LGBTQA people are everywhere as long as they are not flashing it around all the time.” Other participants echoed, “I'm pretty much the same way. I won't say anything, I respect their views but I wish if they would just keep quiet and go about their lives,” “…I could care less what everyone does as long as they’re not advertising it to everyone,” “I respect the fact they stick with who they are but I still feel a little awkward around them. It doesn't bother me as long as they don't make it a public issue,” “I realize people are different, but I don't believe in what the LGBTQA stand for. I don't care if you're in that category, and I'm not going to be mean to you or anything, but don't try to push your beliefs onto me.” Another participant became so defensive about queer issues toward the end of the intervention that he exclaimed:

> At the beginning of this class, I didn't care if someone was gay or "different" as long as they weren't trying to push it in my face. Now, after all of this "ally" training, I am becoming annoyed at this LGBTQA community. Just settle down, I realize that you want other people to respect you, but it's not going to happen if you're trying to change their beliefs, people are stubborn.

Pity. Riddle's definition of *pity* relates to a belief that sexual minorities are pathetic because they are unfortunately born as they are, and would surely change if they could. It was also operationalized for this study as a belief that sexual minorities are going through an abnormal phase which must be outgrown, implying that non-heterosexuals need help from those who are "normal." Quantitative data related to these definitions of *pity* were lower than in other subscales, such as *tolerance* or *acceptance*, but in qualitative data no participants made comments directly related to Riddle's definition of *pity*.

Evaluation of Positive Attitudes

Tolerance (positive). There were 30 excerpts (20%) coded for the construct *tolerance*, which, as mentioned above, was considered positive based on participant interpretation of the word. This was congruent with the quantitative data which showed that students in pre and posttests generally scored themselves high in the category of tolerance. Riddle defines *tolerance* as a belief that homosexuality is only a phase of development to be outgrown and necessitating support and guidance from heterosexuals. There were no excerpts coded for these notions as they were not directly found in the discussion board commentaries. The re-interpretation of Riddle's scale for statistical analysis included the survey statement that "we should have compassion for LGBT people. They can't be blamed for how they were born." Therefore, participant commentaries which indicated compassion for those with social stigma were counted as part of tolerance.

Most students expressed compassion regarding those who experience the social stigma of difference. These comments mainly arose after Lesson 5, which taught about

the ill treatment that sexual minorities have endured over the years. Participant compassion often reflected a lack of prior knowledge of these injustices. One student asserted her compassion for sexual minorities this way, “As a result of learning about LGBT people, I have more compassion for them. They're going to experience trials and tribulation due to their sexuality. However, that does not make it okay to bully or tease them.” Others echoed, “They are still people and deserve to live how they like without anyone bothering them.” One student who was surprised to learn of the prevalence of sexual minority oppression expressed compassion and empathy, “What I found interesting is how a lot of people stick up for gay people because they feel so oppressed. It must be a weird feeling to be considered such an outcast…”

Tolerance (Neutral). Other students suggested a more neutral *tolerance* by indicating a lack of interest in the subject of lesbians and gays. One student who did not feel sexual minorities were applicable to his own life or experiences commented, “I am… neutral in my views towards LGBT people…” Others expressed similar views, “I am neutral. I don't overly support nor do I oppress the LGBT community for its beliefs. I don't really feel that it is much of a concern to me at this point in my life.” Another student agreed:

> I don’t hate or dislike LGBT people, but since I don’t accept their choice of lifestyle/sexual orientation, I tend to ignore their problems…I really don’t even think about them in general; the only time they cross my mind is if they are actively brought up in a discussion, since the subject is not that important to me.

Other students appeared to have tolerance as long as gays and lesbians acted as though they were heterosexual in public and aligned with expected norms of gender expression.

“I am indifferent toward the LGBTQA community. As long as they aren't being weird about it then I'm fine.”

Acceptance. There were 44 (30%) of participant excerpts coded for *acceptance*, the highest in relation to the other Riddle constructs. This was congruent with the quantitative data which showed that students pre and posttests generally scored themselves high in this category. In Riddle’s scale, *acceptance* was generally considered a negative attitude. Her definition of *acceptance* suggested an attitude of accommodation, i.e. that one needs to make adjustments for another’s differences, and that another’s identity does not have the same value as one’s own.

However, the word *acceptance* connoted other meanings when it was used spontaneously by students. For the purposes of this study, Riddle’s definition was made broader so as to operationalize the category of *acceptance* and encompass the large number of positive excerpts which related the word *acceptance* to a more welcoming attitude. The Oxford Dictionary defines acceptance as, “the action or process of being received as adequate or suitable, typically to be admitted into a group” (Oxforddictionaries.com).

Participants indicated acceptance with comments such as, “I am pretty acceptable to LGBTQA people. I don't make a scene and I don't use words like ‘[that’s so] gay’ very often.” Other students wrote, “I honestly just think we should… accept the world around us as being what it is,” “they are normal people like you and I,” “they are humans like all of us,” “people should accept everyone the way they are because we are all people,” and “I accept them [gays and lesbians] as they are because I know that if I was in that situation I would want someone to understand.”

The university was referred to in student discussions as a place of acceptance. Comments included, "...everyone is …accepted," "our campus doesn't judge people on their decisions or actions and accepts people for who they are," and "I have seen all over campus, people helping one another and friendships formed with the absence of racial discrimination and the judging of sexuality preference." Although no students reported a significant lack of acceptance for sexual minorities on campus, the researcher observed the utterance "that's so gay" or "that's gay" three times in classroom settings.

Support. There were 33 excerpts (22%) coded for *support* within the discussion board dialogue. This was congruent with the quantitative data which showed that students in pre and posttests generally scored themselves high in the category of support. Riddle's definition of *support* included a stance against anti-gay bias and for equal rights. The concept of civil rights and political change for sexual minorities were brought out in intervention lessons and, although the word "support" was not often used by participants, as the intervention progressed, many of the commentaries related *acceptance* to ideals such as liberty and equality for all. These comments were coded as *support* and included participant statements such as, "Students need to understand that everyone is equal and that one should just work through our differences," "people are still fighting for the right for who they love," "they are fighting for a right to make themselves happy," "it's important to recognize the LGBT because it helps to learn to treat everyone fairly and equally," "our society has a hard time accepting others' differences and always giving them hard times about it. If people would put that aside then America would truly be 'land of the free.'" Some students also suggested that people should "continue to just be

kind to everyone and accept [gays and lesbians] as they are; that is what is going to change our world for the better."

Some students recognized that the queer civil rights movement was similar to other civil rights movements, "…discrimination isn't right. No one should feel less than someone else because of their race or relationships." Some students seemed to instinctively connect the concept of "judgment" with *support*. As one student put it, "I've always supported gay rights but it's more of an issue of not judging anyone. In my opinion, they're just regular people and I don't think sexual orientation should matter." Other students commented, "I don't think there's anything wrong with a person stepping out of their gender box or being actually gay either." These supportive responses were reflective of the high level of support indicated in the quantitative data pre and posttest.

Evaluation of Very Positive Attitudes

Riddle's highest attitude categories are *admiration, appreciation,* and *nurturance*. *Admiration* is defined as recognition of the strength necessary to thrive as an individual who is different, and as the capacity to examine one's own negative attitudes in order to actively support equality. *Appreciation* is defined as a valuing of diversity with a willingness to confront insensitive attitudes. *Nurturance* is the highest level of support for diversity because sexual minorities are recognized as providing important contributions to society.

Quantitative results were lower in categories of very positive attitudes and tended to be lower qualitatively as well. Nevertheless, as the intervention progressed, comments related to these three constructs appeared within discussions about sexual minority figures from history and current queer celebrities in the entertainment industry. Such very

positive attitudes also appeared within discussions about video excerpts depicting the challenges facing ordinary lesbian and gay headed families and LGB pupils.

Admiration. There were 11 excerpts (8%) coded for *admiration*, and this was commensurate with low quantitative results in this category. Riddle defined Admiration as recognizing that it takes strength to be a sexual minority in our society and a willingness to examine one's homophobic attitudes. Aside from expressions of admiration for the accomplishments of popular lesbian and gay entertainers such as Ellen Degeneres, Neil Patrick Harris and Elton John, several students noted that ordinary sexual minorities had to develop especially admirable coping skills.

After the challenges facing a lesbian and a gay male student in a high school were profiled, one student commented:

> What made the difference is inner strength. Just about anyone can lift weights, but to be strong throughout relentless oppression and persecution is extremely tough. The people who had positive experiences were strong enough to overcome their obstacles and see the good in their lives.

Another student added, "They [gays and lesbians] may even be stronger than us [heterosexuals] because they put up with so much difficulty and pressure from people."

Appreciation of LGB teachers and peers. There were 4 excerpts coded (3%) for *appreciation*, which was reflected similarly in the quantitative data as low. Riddle's definition referred to an appreciation of the validity of gays and lesbians as part of diversity and a willingness to combat homophobia within one's self and in others.

Several students expressed an appreciation for diversity and the opportunity to discuss it. One stated, "I've learned that [our university] is a very diverse college and I

honestly love it! I love learning about new cultures and getting to know the people of those cultures! The … sharing that has been going on in the class [is] so interesting to me!"

Other students expressed a willingness to examine their attitudes because they had interacted with sexual minorities and had developed an appreciation for them. One student explained:

> Two of my favorite teachers I've ever had were both gay, so I want to think I'm comfortable around LGBT people. I think I can be myself around them, because I have been before. At a friend of mine's party a while back, a few of his friends he had invited over were gay and lesbian, and that didn't change my attitude towards them at all…I'm especially inspired by my former physics teacher in high school. He was openly gay and his students, including me, loved him because he was just awesome and passionate about his work.

One student expressed appreciation for the allies of sexual minorities. "I am impressed by the people who try to stop people from using negative language towards LGBT [people]."

Nurturance. Riddle defined *nurturance* as an understanding that gay and lesbian people are an indispensable part of society, a feeling of affection for them and a willingness to be their advocates. Quantitative results were lowest in this area and no participants made comments interpreted as nurturing of sexual minorities in qualitative data. Nevertheless, there were 5 excerpts (3%), which reflected a consciousness that society would be less without them. One participant suggested, "…diversity is a very important entity to have in any community and society… all different types of people should be accepted." Another student expressed that diversity is important in all societies

and that he was particularly inspired by sexually diverse people as he became aware of their daily struggles:

> I have a very positive attitude for LGBT people, and more than anything respect because it takes a lot to not care what other people think. I have no way to really relate other than having LGBT friends. I am very interested in learning the points of view of LGBT people. I am impressed and inspired by the LGBT community in general.

It is noteworthy that quantitative data revealed an increase in *nurturance* even though one of the statements that composed it, about a willingness to advocate for queer inclusion, decreased over time. The increase in *nurturance* was due to an increase in agreement with the other statement that composed it. This statement related to sexual minorities being an indispensable part of society.

Summary of Qualitative Data Supported by the Riddle Constructs

Table 6 summarizes Riddle's categories and the subcategories of meaning which emerged from student writings on electronic discussion boards. Results indicated that participants had high levels of open-minded attitudes toward sexual minorities. These findings were corroborated with the survey data.

Relatively few excerpts were coded with Riddle's negative theme of repulsion. These data showed that Riddle's concept of *repulsion* was not applicable to most participants' views. Expressions of negative attitudes toward sexual minorities mainly related to discomfort with their visibility. No excerpts were coded for *pity*. Participant comments were high in *tolerance* and especially *acceptance. Tolerance* mainly related to compassion and empathy for sexual minorities. It was also expressed as a neutral interest in them by some participants. *Acceptance* was expressed as more of an approving or welcoming attitude toward differences. Riddle's definition of *support* included taking a stance against anti-LGBT bias and favoring equal rights for all. There were more excerpts coded in relation to *acceptance* and *support* than any of the other Riddle themes.

The most favorable of Riddle's subscales, *admiration*, *appreciation* and *nurturance,* were coded less frequently in discussion board excerpts. This was similar to the low quantitative results in these categories. Nevertheless, some students admired the strength it takes to be a queer in our society, appreciated the opportunity to discuss diversity, and expressed gratitude for past teachers who were openly gay and had impacted students' lives in positive ways. Although no students expressed *nurturance*, some expressed that they were inspired by sexual minorities and asserted that such diversity is important in all societies.

Table 6. Expanded Understanding of Riddle Categories Based on Participant Perceptions

Riddle Category	Riddle Definition	Expanded understanding of the category based on participant understandings
Repulsion	Same-sex sexual orientation is a crime against nature. LGBT people are sick, and should be made to become straight.	Discomfort with LGBT visibility.
Pity	LGBT people are born that way and it is pathetic.	
Tolerance	Same-sex sexuality is a phase of adolescent development to be outgrown. Those who do not outgrow it should be treated with the protectiveness and indulgence one uses with a child.	Sympathy or indulgence for beliefs or practices differing from or conflicting with one's own (Webster's Dictionary) Compassion toward those who are different. Neutral interest in LGBTQ people
Acceptance	LGBT people are abnormal "others" who must somehow be accepted by those who are normal.	Approval (Webster's Dictionary) Welcoming attitude.
Support	Homophobia is wrong and the rights of LGBT people should be safeguarded.	Same
Admiration	Being LGBT in our society takes strength.	Same
Appreciation	LGBT people are valued as indispensable members of society.	Same
Nurturance	A willingness to openly advocate for LGBT inclusion as an ally.	Same

Consistency between Quantitative Results and the Riddle Qualitative Coding by Individual

After checking overall quantitative data consistency with qualitative coding to the Riddle constructs, quantitative results were further checked for consistency by comparing individual survey results with qualitative data by the same individuals. Eleven participants identified themselves by name on surveys. Results of their pre and posttests were considered for consistency in relation to the qualitative coding of their discussion board comments using the Riddle construct categories. The tables below present them as *consistent, inconsistent,* or *inconclusive*. *Consistent* was defined as two or more points of qualitative overlap within related pairs of survey constructs. These related pairs were *pity* and *repulsion*, *tolerance* and *acceptance*, *support* and *admiration*, *appreciation* and *nurturance*. *Inconsistent* was defined as only one point or no points of qualitative overlap with any construct pair. *Inconclusive* was defined as unclear or incomplete qualitative overlap with survey constructs.

Table 7a presents the five students out of eleven whose quantitative and qualitative results were the most consistent. Of these results, participants 9, 28, and 34 demonstrated the highest positive attitude scores and qualitative codes. They overlapped in the areas of *acceptance*, *support*, *admiration* and *nurturance*. It is noteworthy that over time, participant 9 did not score for *nurturance*, even though she had in the pretest. Participant 29 scored for *pity* and "flaunt" in the pretest but not in the post survey. He scored high in the most positive attitudes, and qualitative results did overlap within the areas of *acceptance* and *support*. However, participant 29 did not qualitatively express the *admiration* or *appreciation* he scored in his pretest and posttest. Participant 24 scored

in the mid to high range of positive attitudes and scored “flaunt” in the pretest but not in the posttest. His comments were consistently coded for *acceptance* and *support*.

Table 7a. Quantitative and Qualitative Consistency by Student

ID	Sex	Quantitative Pre	Quantitative Post	Qualitative Code	Excerpt
9	F	Tolerance Acceptance Support Admiration Appreciation Nurturance	Tolerance Acceptance Support Admiration Appreciation --	Acceptance	Since we live in the "Land of the free and the home of the brave", we should be able to be whoever we are, right? People limit themselves just because they do not want that pressure or those labels. I do have friends that are Gay and that does not make me uncomfortable at all. I am not gay, but I just feel that people should be able to live their life however they want.
				Support	By learning about the LGBTQA I could become better informed and I could show support. I think people should be able to do whatever they want as long as they are happy and not hurting anyone. The people I think should change are those people that are judgmental and those who feel the need to try to demean others. It is a judgmental world out there and it is just sad to see people hate or discriminate against certain people because of their race or sexuality
				Admiration	LGBT have definitely gone through a struggle and are still going through it so I am very impressed by their struggle and

					how far they have gotten. Oscar Wilde wrote The Picture of Dorian Gray, which is one of my favorite books. He was a great writer and I did not know he was also gay until I recently did research on historic LGBT icons.
24	M	Tolerance Acceptance Support Admiration Appreciation “Flaunt”	Tolerance Acceptance Support Admiration Appreciation --	Acceptance Support	We’re all human, aren’t we? Why should [sexual minorities] be singled out and hurt because they’re not what everyone else thinks they should be? “Even if we don’t understand each other, that’s not a reason to reject each other.” –Alder I don't believe there would be much difference in children who live with LGBT parents and those who live with heterosexual parents. I feel the only real difference would be, especially for younger children, that awkward point where they first have to explain to their friends that they have two mommies or two daddies when their friends have only one mommy and one daddy. I'm pretty sure it's not easy for children to have to understand and accept difference. Being a heterosexual, I haven't had to face discrimination because of my sexual orientation, so learning about the LBGTQA community would help me to learn to be more supportive of people who have faced discrimination. People tend to be hostile to things they don't know or understand, and helping people learn more

					about the LGBT community helps them to understand LGBT people better and to alleviate prejudice against them. They have it hard enough in society as it is, so a place where they don't have to worry about discrimination is good for them.
28	M	Tolerance Acceptance Support Admiration Nurturance	Tolerance Acceptance Support Admiration Nurturance	Acceptance Support Admiration	Yeah it is sad that people would take their lives for this cause. It is sad that it has gone that far and people are still fighting for the right for who they love. I am glad you accept the gay community... they are fighting for a right to make themselves happy. I am at ease with the LGBT community because I have family and friends who are either gay or lesbian. I have always accepted the gay community and after these discussions about it I am more on their side than I was before. I see myself as supporting/encouraging LGBT People. I am impressed by the LGBT people and their struggle for equality because they are fight for a right to be as equal as the straight community and be gay, married, and be happy. I have respect towards the LGBT people because they are standing up for what they believe in and how they are open to their sexuality and not scared to face the community.

29	M	Pity Tolerance Acceptance Support Admiration Appreciation "Flaunt"	-- Tolerance Acceptance Support Admiration Appreciation --	Acceptance Support	No one should judge other people because they wouldn't want to be judged either. In this course we learned about LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender), this course taught me to accept the people who are different. I personally have no problem with the LGBT community and I have no problem accepting those who choose it. It is very important to make people feel comfortable and safe. If the world was an environment where people don't discriminate based on if you're LGBTQA it would be a much more peaceful place… This is also good because when people are comfortable they have a higher chance of success. …[education] will help people understand that people in LGBTQA aren't bad or different people.
34	M	-- Support Admiration Appreciation Nurturance	Acceptance Support Admiration Appreciation Nurturance	Acceptance Support	…people are all equal and when humans are [not] treated right bad events could happen or bad situations occur. I think it's important to acknowledge the fact that people in the category of being LGBT are also humans and it's important to treat them equally. I have always been familiar with the LGBT organization and have always been a supporter.

				Nurturance	Growing up in a Liberal family and town…I strongly believe that everyone should have equal rights and opportunity. Gay pride parades that happen once a year are a good way to support that community. I think you should go to one, they are very fun and if you wanted to actually be educated on the topic you could join a parade. I see myself… recognizing differences with actions of some kind.

Table 7b presents a comparison of the three students whose quantitative and qualitative data were inconsistent with one another. Participants 4, 30, and 37 all scored themselves high on pretests and posttests in such areas as *acceptance*, *support* and even *admiration* and *nurturance*. However, all of them also scored against LGBT "flaunting" of sexual orientation on both pretest and posttest. Comments related to "flaunting" appeared in their qualitative data as well. The primarily negative qualitative comments of participants 4, 30, and 37 were inconsistent with their otherwise high survey scores. Because comments were negative and none of them expressed *pity*, their excerpts were coded for *repulsion* and "flaunt" for this analysis.

Table 7b. Quantitative and Qualitative Inconsistency by Student

ID	Sex	Quantitative Pre	Quantitative Post	Qualitative Code	Excerpt
4	M	-- Acceptance Support -- "Flaunt"	Tolerance Acceptance Support Admiration "Flaunt"	Repulsion	The only problem I would have which has actually happened before was where a gay guy had hit on me and tried to pick me up from the bar after I was very very drunk. Luckily my friend was there to stop it but yeah, if I tell you I'm not gay and hate that stuff, don't try to pick me up that would be a bad deal on your part. Did god create Adam and Eve or Adam and Steve. I am very comfortable with my sexuality and my fiance's…I think having gay couples confuses our children. I'm a guy and as a guy it just makes sense to me that 2 women can be together as opposed to 2 men. I know that is a sexist comment but that is how I openly think and feel about things. If my girl I'm with had made out with another woman, which she has, it's a total turn on. Two guys kissing total turn off. Sry I'd rather see a couple of chicks dancing on a pole as opposed to 2 guys riding one. Yeah, noooo.
				"Flaunt"	Two guys together basking in the sun, Nah not right at all...
30	M	Repulsion Tolerance Acceptance Support Admiration --	-- -- Acceptance Support Admiration Appreciation Nurturance	Repulsion ("Flaunt")	Some gay celebrities that we encounter in the media almost everyday are people like Elton John, Neal [sic] Patrick Harris, Ellen DeGenerus [sic] and many more. I think they are suitable for

		-- "Flaunt"	"Flaunt"		our society, except when they begin to advertise their sexuality all over the media almost in an attempt for attention. I wouldn't mind if LGBTQA people are everywhere as long as they are not flashing it around all the time. Our campus is very supportive and doesn't show any problems with those individuals. I think the children of LGBT people are heavily affected by this and are more commonly raised with a completely different aspect toward the whole situation than a regular boy or girl. The maturity level stays the same, however, the home life is completely different.
37	M	Acceptance Support "Flaunt"	Acceptance -- "Flaunt"	Repulsion (with "Flaunt") Tolerance (neutral)	I respect their views but I wish if they would just keep quiet and go about their lives. I have learned a lot about the LGBTQA community, diversity, and respect towards others. Respecting others plays a major role in an effective functioning society.

Table 7c presents a comparison of quantitative and qualitative results that were inconclusive. There were three participants interpreted as inconsistent when comparing their quantitative survey results with their qualitative comments. Most participants with inconsistent results scored themselves high in the very positive constructs of *appreciation*

and *nurturance*, but these highly positive attitudes were not reflected in their qualitative comments, which tended to reflect neutral acceptance. Participants 26 and 27 scored agreement on survey statement 7 "flaunt," and participant 26 expressed it openly in qualitative data in spite of high quantitative scores in affirming constructs. Participant 22 spoke less about her own opinions and more about what "should" be and about other cultures, so it was difficult to distinguish what her own feelings were. Participant 26 expressed *acceptance* in her quantitative survey results, but in discussion board comments she spoke more about being interested in hearing the opinions of others than in sharing hers. Paradoxically, she expressed that "looking down on others" was not the same as judging them.

Table 7c. Quantitative and Qualitative Inconclusive Consistency by Student

ID	Sex	Quantitative Pre	Quantitative Post	Qualitative Code	Excerpt
22	F	Tolerance Acceptance Support Admiration Appreciation Nurturance	Tolerance Acceptance Support Admiration Appreciation Nurturance	Acceptance	I have learned that ASU is a very diverse school and that people should accept everyone the way they are because we are all people. It's so weird how other cultures are more accepting than the cultures in the US, but then there are some that are even stricter than ours.
26	F	Pity Acceptance "Flaunt"	-- Acceptance "Flaunt"	Tolerance (neutral) "Flaunt"	This class has… showed me that diversity is not a bad thing. I have learned so much about LGBT in the last semester and I am very surprised to see what other people think. I went to a private Catholic

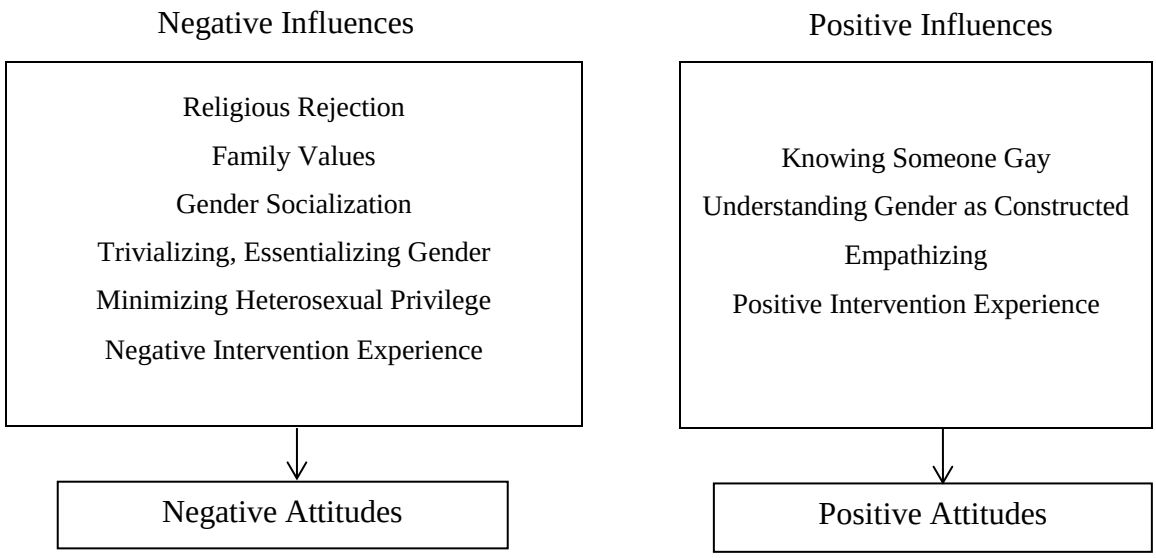
					school so [LGBT people] were looked down upon but not judged in any way. I do not mind them as long as there is no PDA. But that goes for everyone; I do not like any couple, gay or straight, to be making out in public.
27	F	-- Acceptance Support Admiration Appreciation Nurturance "Flaunt"	Tolerance Acceptance Support Admiration Appreciation Nurturance "Flaunt"	Acceptance	[This class] will help people be more accepting of new and different things. Coming from such a small town with such little diversity I love the experience of being with everyone. There's nothing that I learned from class because I already know that we are all the same, and that discrimination isn't right. No one should feel less than someone else because of their race or relationships.

Summary of Consistency between Quantitative and Qualitative Data by Individual

Five of eleven participants demonstrated consistent overlap of quantitative and qualitative results. Most scored high in areas of *acceptance, support, admiration* and *nurturance*, consistent with their qualitative comments. Three of the eleven had inconsistent alignment of quantitative and qualitative results. They scored high in areas such as *acceptance* and *support* but also against "flaunting" of sexual orientation on both pretest and posttest. Comments related to "flaunting" appeared in their qualitative comments in spite of their overall high survey scores. Three of the eleven individuals compared for consistency between quantitative and qualitative data had inconclusive alignment between data types. They generally scored themselves high in the very positive

constructs of *appreciation* and *nurturance*, but these highly positive attitudes were not reflected in their qualitative comments, which tended to reflect neutral acceptance. Some of them scored agreement against "flaunting" and commented about it qualitatively as well. Some spoke mainly about what others were expressing in qualitative data rather than their own personal attitudes.

Figure 6. Attributes and Processes Informing Participant Attitudes



Themes Informing Attitudes

Thematic analysis led to further qualitative categories and themes which identified major themes of influence on attitudes, and their impact. See Figure 6 above. Themes of *influence* included family and friends, religion, gender socialization, other environmental factors and the intervention itself. Depending on the influence, participants responded to the diversity topics with varying degrees of enthusiasm, neutrality, or resistance.

For the most part, institutional forces such as, religion, gender stereotypes and family upbringing negatively impacted participant self-reports. Knowing someone gay within such contexts, or otherwise having gay acquaintances or friends had a positive impact.

Negative Influences on Attitudes

Religious rejection. The influence of religion was expressed by several participants. Some participants recognized that religious beliefs can predispose one to judge others' sexual orientation:

> I feel like we live in a world that is extremely homophobic. A world in which you have to be just like everyone else, because if you are different, you are viewed as an outsider…Not only is it a judgmental world, but it is also a pushy world. I say this because a lot of people want to push on their own beliefs and religion onto other people. Sometimes, in their eyes, they want to make people, "see the light". I just think people should be able to do whatever they want in their life, whatever makes them happy. It is after all their life and …there should not be any oppositions.

One of several students who was the most vocally religious expressed her frustration with the attitude changes occurring among her peers and society at large:

> …it's been painful to be Christian dealing with society's push to be "politically correct." If I don't agree with homosexuality, then automatically I am a horrible person. How dare I not agree, or have my own opinions! People also assume that just because we as Christians disagree with something that it means we are hateful people. Just because I disagree with same-sex relationships doesn't mean that I

> wish homosexuals to be bullied, teased, or hated on…I should be allowed to have my own opinions without having people jump down my throat and call me things.

The theme of religious influence on attitude was also evident in other participant comments:

> I have been around gays and seen them but still cannot accept it. It's just something that is instilled in me and will always stick…the religious views on it can be relatively confusing and I'm just too confused to talk about it really. I'll just say the bible talks about Adam and Eve not Adam and Steve.

Other students acknowledged the influence religion had on their views of sexual minorities, "I was given a strong Christian upbringing and because of that, I long believed being LGBT was amoral [sic]" (based on context the intended word was *immoral*). Some Christian students acknowledged having gay friends or acquaintances, but for them the religious influence persisted. One student who had self-identified as Christian expressed her belief that it was one's choice to be gay and that she did not agree with it:

> I would describe myself as at ease with LGBT people. I have gay friends, but they understand that I do not always support their decisions. I don't want to judge them. Ultimately it's their choice, and their choice will not affect our friendship.

More expressions of this notion emerged as students with religious beliefs contrary to homosexuality began to assert themselves in classroom discussions. These participants paradoxically mentioned "respect" when referring to a *lack* of acceptance, which was interpreted for this study as neutral tolerance. One student commented, "I do have respect for people in the LGBTQA community because of their roles as humans in

society... although I don't support that lifestyle…" Other examples of participants indicating respect without acceptance were, "I don't hate LGBT people, but their choices don't correlate with my beliefs", "Although I show respect for those individuals, I would not choose that lifestyle for myself", "I respect them but I do not understand why this happens or how one becomes gay," "I feel comfortable around them as long as they are careful on what they behave around me (e.g. saying jokes that I feel are "gay" but make me feel uncomfortable)."

Another participant who asserted that her religious beliefs influenced her attitude toward sexual minorities seemed to sum up the feelings of many students who tolerated sexual minorities in a neutral way, but did not accept them:

> I respect LGBT people, and I believe that they should not be bullied. But do I accept what they stand for? No, because it's not what I personally believe. There's definitely a difference between respect and acceptance so I guess that's how I feel about the whole thing—that they should be respected and not oppressed, but I myself am not going to condone their choices/lifestyle.

One participant even suggested that neither respecting attitudes, accepting attitudes, nor supportive attitudes were necessarily an indication of strong commitment to the social integration and well-being of gay or lesbian people:

> …respect and acceptance does not mean that you subscribe to the beliefs of another, but that you understand that they believe or live the way that they do, and that it is their prerogative to indulge in that life style. Being supportive of a person just means that you have their back when trouble occurs, not that you particularly agree with their choices.

These students did not use the word *tolerance*, although comments relating the semantics of respect without acceptance demonstrated that some students were grappling with the meanings of such words, and signifying their attitudes by ascribing these meanings aloud.

Family Values. Some participants attributed an aversion to queer people on their own family upbringing. One put it this way:

> My grandparents could not stand gays, they taught their children (my mom and uncle) to despise gays. They, in turn, raised me pretty much the same way. It's generation to generation teachings. I have learned this in class but did not realize the heavy impact it had on society…either through beliefs or core values you learn along the way.

Another student referred to challenges posed by his family upbringing in this way:

> I'd like to think I have a positive attitude towards LGBT, but because of the way I was raised, I subconsciously have thoughts about them I don't want to have… I do my best to be an open-minded person, so I want to be more understanding of their experiences and struggles. Yet I feel like the way I was raised is constantly hindering my progress of being a more understanding and sympathetic person.

Other students agreed:

> I also was raised in an environment where everyone is supposed to be straight because it is normal and if you are not straight than that is a "bad thing." I am working through by realizing that there are all kinds of people out in this world and we need to understand that. It's a messed up world and we have to make the best of it.

Gender Socialization. Some participants recognized the cultural influence on their perceptions of gender conformity. One put it this way:

> I agree that society has affected us on a subconscious level. I believe that this will never be broken since we have been exposed to this our whole lives. I also agree that there is nothing wrong [with staying in a gender box]. From an evolutionary standpoint, there may even be a reason why gender roles are engrained in people's heads. In the beginning of time this gender role was a way for primitive societies to survive, with men hunting and women raising children.

Another participant who agreed with this explanation asserted:

> Honestly, I don't really see a problem with gender stereotypes, in that there is clearly a reason for them to exist, and that they do sometimes apply or had applied in the past. That being said however, I do see a problem with attacking somebody for either adhering to or defying the stereotype. Just because someone decides to be a stay at home mother does not mean that they are dragging down women's rights, and just because someone becomes a stay at home dad does not mean that they are lazy good for nothings.

Impact of Negative Influences

Perhaps as a result of the above influences, some participants trivialized aspects of the lesson material, minimized their heterosexual privilege or expressed gender in essentialized terms, rather than in constructed terms. For these participants, social norms, such as those surrounding gender, seemed to influence their perceptions so that the intervention material did not interrupt their beliefs.

Trivializing gender norms. In spite of the fluid exchange of ideas between participants about gender stereotypes, as the lessons became more focused on homophobia, its connection to gender stereotypes, and its pervasive influence on everyone, some participants began to trivialize the complexity of gender oppressions, as though a solution were easy. This had the effect of minimizing the importance of gender oppressions. One student shared her simplified view of overcoming gender norms:

> In order to avoid the pressure, we must be comfortable with who we are. The more a person does what they want and not what others want, the more confidence this person will build. More confidence equals less pressure to fit in and a happy individual.

Several students expressed their belief that overcoming the daily social pressure to conform to gender stereotypes was as simple as occasionally wearing clothing or doing activities not normally associated with one's gender. One female student stated:

> I have to agree with the others that say there is nothing wrong with fitting into the gender box just like there is nothing wrong with not fitting into it as well. Someone should have the freedom to do as they choose and not be judged for which they decide to do. I like getting dressed up, doing my makeup and hair, but at the same time I enjoy playing and watching football. It's ok to be on both sides of it.

Other female participants agreed with this simplistic view of what gender-based oppression was, and how easily it could be overcome:

> I agree with you that I have many sides to me-- I love shopping, but I have no problem wearing jeans and a t-shirt and going out in the country somewhere.

> People should know by now and accept that people aren't going to fit the norms and that it's ok, and it doesn't necessarily mean they are gay/lesbian.

This "take it or leave it" attitude concerning gender norms appeared to reveal a certain heterosexual privilege which minimized the concept of gender oppression and which some participants seemed to accept without question.

Essentializing gender as ahistoric. In spite of lessons which related the constructed and historic nature of gender, some students still appeared to view it as a predetermined fact of human existence. One student commented, "Girls are supposed to be girly and like guys because that's how society has always been." After learning about historic figures who were sexual minorities, one student commented, "I was a little surprised to see that the historic figures we learned about in class were part of the LGBT community because some of them were born back when that was really uncommon." She seemed to view the existence of gays and lesbians as only a contemporary phenomenon, perhaps in conflict with the natural order. Another student believed that learning about sexual minorities would "help people be more accepting of new and different things", as though differences in sexuality were a social fad breaking with normalcy.

Minimizing one's heterosexual privilege. At the beginning of Lesson 3 on the impact of homophobia and heterosexism, the instructor polled the class as to the meanings of these terms. No students were able to define heterosexism as prejudice by heterosexuals against those who do not or cannot conform to gender expectations. Some students spoke of an awareness of their heterosexual privilege, but did not question the full ramifications of accepting it, "I suppose some people get advantages by fitting into a gender box because they're looked at as normal by society and are probably generally

treated better." Another student commented about a superficial benefit for conforming to female cosmetic gender expectations:

> I think there definitely is some advantages of fitting into a gender box and many people often do use it to their advantage. People have been known to use their looks to get things and in reality it does and can happen. As a result this may be seen as an advantage to fit into a gender box.

Many students did not seem to acknowledge the deeper significance of their own heterosexual privilege, or how it worked in their favor at the expense of those who did not or could not conform.

Negative intervention experience. Several students expressed discomfort with sexual diversity education in discussion boards and in the classroom. One student expressed disdain at the thought of being in a class that would contain diversity training that included information about sexual minorities:

> I just don't get the whole gay thing nor will I think I ever will. As far as education, I don't want it …If I was to get a flier on my door for an LBGTQ whatever meeting or awareness thing. It would go to the trash. Sorry, I am who I am…I feel the education that other people could learn from [diversity training] is beneficial but is it really necessary?"

Other students vocalized discomfort with education about sexual minorities in the classroom setting. Two participants repeatedly asked, "Why are we doing this?" even though classmates had discussed the importance of the lessons and had generally agreed that diversity education was lacking in their prior schooling. Two other students looked at one another and grimaced when a slide about transgender minorities was projected in the

classroom. Some of these participants had previously expressed negative religious and or familial influences and did not report attitude change during the intervention.

Positive Influences on Attitudes

Knowing someone gay. Knowing a sexual minority correlated with positive attitudes toward queer people for all participants who had a sexual minority friend or relative. But it was not until the fifth lesson, when the researcher practitioner himself revealed that he had a gay brother, that any students revealed they had a gay or lesbian relative or friend. It is noteworthy that participants waited for this cue from the instructor, even though they are of a generation thought to be more open and tolerant of sexual differences. Participants were able to think critically about gender stereotypes and they talked conceptually about tolerance for others' sexual orientation, but there was a hesitance to assert concrete associations with a sexual minority without this social cue.

Once the researcher practitioner revealed he had a gay relative, students began to disclose about their own gay family or friends. A participant exclaimed for the first time, "I am at ease with the LGBT community because I have family and friends who are either gay or lesbian."

Other students spoke of gay family members:

> I think it's cool to have gays in the family as you can learn a lot. My Uncle is gay and I could choose to learn from him but it seems the only thing I have learned is to not be gay myself. He has a lot of problems with his partners and it just doesn't work out. There is actually more drama than what my girlfriend and I have. It's just funny...

One student related that sexual orientation was not a factor in her poor relationship with a gay relative:

> I have a gay uncle and I choose not to learn from him and accept him. He was never there for me growing up as a kid and now he needs my support. I choose not to help him or accept him [not] because he is gay but because he never helped me out as a youth. He takes it as it is because he is gay [but] this is not the truth in the matter.

Other students acknowledged their gay relatives:

> LGBT actually runs in my family, so around the holidays I am around that a lot and have nothing but respect for them even though I disagree on their views. Two of my cousins are gay, but that does not make me look at them any differently, they are my family.

Students also proclaimed friendships with sexual minorities:

> I describe myself as being accepting of people who are LGBT. I have friends who are and I'll let them live the way they want to. I'm not going to treat them in a hateful manner because nobody deserves that.

Some participants understood that happiness is what is most important:

> I do have friends that are Gay, and that does not make me uncomfortable at all. I am not gay, but I just feel that people should be able to live their life however they want.

Another agreed stating, “One of my best girlfriends is now dating a girl and knowing she’s happy is all that should matter.”

Understanding gender as constructed. In the early lessons of the intervention, most participants, including some of those who later resisted positive attitudes toward same-sex relationships, were open to thinking critically about gender stereotypes. Many participants appeared to understand that everyone is impacted and potentially restricted by such stereotypes, and that they vary from culture to culture because they are a social construction:

> More than anything, I am struck by how our society "promotes" gender stereotypes. People are told to embrace their gender, but only if that is in the "right" or accepted way. Women are told by the media to promote their femininity by way of sexuality, while men are told to promote masculinity by means of aggression. These expectations, if anything, only make people uncomfortable with who they are. Who decided they had the authority to distinguish between feminine and masculine? Why should we feel that we need to follow society's rules on this subject?

A student validated and expanded on her observation:

> I agree… if the media portrayed women differently, then they would be seen differently. The media clearly portrays men as the stronger authority figure so that is how things are going to continue to be viewed until something is changed.

Another student questioned the idea of "normal" and received this reply:

> I like how you mentioned that by fitting into a gender box you are seen as "normal". Well who gets to decide what is normal or not? You also said gender boxes are based on society's opinion of how people should act, therefore gender is

> created. I agree, it is learned at a very young age and can define how we choose to live our lives.

Others participants were struck by lesson material about the intersection between race and gender construction:

> Today I also see the stereotype of gender through race. Some races are very selective of what their women can or can't wear, as well as who they are allowed to talk to. It is crazy to think about but this world is full of many different stereotypes of gender.

This open and reciprocal learning between students continued with a comment from one of the students who had identified herself as religious. She spoke of international differences:

> I think living in a different country and having a different culture definitely affects the way a person thinks about gender norms. For example, in Korea the men have a strong sense of fashion and it is completely normal for them to wear makeup. If a man tries to wear makeup here in America he would most likely be thought of as gay…In some countries people greet each other by exchanging a kiss on the cheek as a way to be polite. Here people would question your sexuality if you're a guy giving another guy a kiss on the cheek.

With the subject of questionable sexuality broached, a student asserted her open-mindedness about gender nonconformity:

> I hate it when we focus so much on the fact that someone is wearing clothing that typically is representative of the other gender that we forget that they are human and treat them as a terrible abnormality. It's annoying, and it can lead to bullying

> and it really closes our minds to the world around us. I personally do not care one way or another if someone dresses differently, or what their sexual orientation is. I do not feel it is my right to judge others on such things.

An understanding of the nature of homophobia and how it can affect everyone, especially males, was then expressed by this participant:

> I think that quite a few people may feel, due to gender stereotypes, that they are unable to do things for fear of being labeled as gay. For instance, if a guy is more artistic/likes to dance then some people automatically assume he's gay, and that may make him avoid doing the activities he really likes to do. I think it's worse for guys because there's a pressure to be manly from every guy and if you aren't, then you're labeled as homosexual.

A student who brought to the class more prior knowledge and passion for the subject of gender stereotypes than most participants contributed:

> When a woman is pregnant, her friends and family, even passing strangers acknowledging her "bump", ask, "Is it a boy or a girl?" By this social tradition, gender socialization that [sic] suppresses the majority of the gender spectrum at conception. This gender binary manipulates how a child will then see him/herself, via pink bedroom walls painted for a girl or toy trucks given to a boy to play with. But what about when a child begins to see an image that isn't reflective of how they feel? This elicits problematic social complexes and interpretations of the self, even dissipates one's sense of belonging. A life lived in a society greatly determined on the gender binary can be very harmful to an individual’s sense of self-worth; which is often the basis of many mental/psychological health issues.

Impact of Positive Influences

Empathizing. The students who appeared to be the most enthusiastic about discussing sexual diversity issues were those who expressed empathy for others. Participants discussed empathy when describing how the intervention was relevant to them. For example some participants stated, "[It] helps us create a new understanding and puts us in the shoes of other people, which creates a more safe and supportive environment," "learning about this [helps] me grow by helping me understand the problems that LGBTQA people have with fitting in society," "[It] help[s] me connect with other people and understand why they feel the way they feel, ultimately making me a better person. It brings [the university] together as a family leaving no gaps...," Participant empathy and interest in understanding others was important in receiving the intervention material.

One students commented:

> Learning about diversity in this classroom, doing activities…has really enhanced my way of thinking for the better. I now try to put myself in that other person's shoes and see the situation through their perspective…

Video interviews with queer youth, and discussions about bullying and violence toward sexual minorities appeared to engender empathy and compassion among some participants:

> I knew bullying LGBTQ people was a problem, but I didn't realize that it was such a drastic problem over the entire globe. I never participated in the act but I never stepped in to stop it. Knowing it's such a big problem now I will more often.

One of the students who had expressed her neutral tolerance of sexual minorities due to her religious beliefs stated, “My views toward people who are LGBT have changed in the fact that I want to be more accepting because they get a lot of grief sometimes and I don't want to add to it.” Other participants emphasized a new awareness of their own heterosexual privilege and empathized with others who did not have it:

> Before this semester, I admittedly knew very little about the struggles of the LGBT community and their struggles in society. I mean, I figured they had trouble being accepted by non-LGBT people, but I had no idea that being bullied or discriminated was that damaging to them.

A participant who had previously stressed his neutral stance on sexual diversity issues, and had felt that they did not pertain to his life, emphasized his increased awareness and empathy, “I learned that aside from them being attracted sexually to the same gender, they really aren't that much different than straight people and I didn't realize all of the problems that they face until I took [this training].” Another student commented:

> Discussing LGBT a lot in class at first was strange for me because I have never had to do that before. I feel that I have more diversity and understanding after having these conversations. The discussions helped me understand people who are different than me; not just LGBT people but also people of different heritage and race.

Throughout the intervention it was the students who found social relevance and personal meaning in the trials and tribulations of sexual minorities who expressed the most change in awareness or attitudes.

Positive intervention experience. The above commentaries indicated that the intervention promoted personal growth in some participants. But it was a positive experience for other students who also recognized changes in their awareness or attitudes. For example, a few participants were surprised to learn that sexual minorities were present in all walks of life, "The most surprising thing that I realized during our discussions about LGBT issues would be that they are serving in our armed forces," "The most interesting thing I learned about LGBT was just how many famous people are LBGT."

Others were surprised to learn that there were significant numbers of sexual minorities:

> The most surprising thing I learned during our LGBT discussions is that there are 10% of people who belong in this group and that they are being discriminated against every day. Knowing there are so many people who are LGBT, one would think they would have more rights.

Some participants had not previously known that sexual minorities have been present throughout history, "I found that many great people in history have been LGBT. Therefore, my view of straight people always being the historical figures has changed." Other participants had not previously been aware of gay and lesbian headed families, "Something I found interesting was that many LGBT couples raise kids and have families. They act as normal families." One student who had persisted in her belief that sexuality was a choice expressed a change in attitude, "Though I had already accepted that there's nothing wrong with being LGBT before this class, I still believed it was a choice. I learned that way of thinking was ignorant."

As a result of their positive intervention experience, some participants conveyed a stronger commitment to support sexual minorities. For example, information about the history of the LGBT civil rights movement prompted some students to commit to being more supportive of sexual minorities or to further educating self and others. “I have always accepted the gay community and after these discussions about it I am more on their side than I was before,” “It is important to the [university] to widen the understanding of LGBTQA, to teach understanding and to not judge,” “I see myself as someone that educates others on LGBT because I always tell people not to use "gay" as a [negative] adjective. I am still learning and educating myself on LGBT issues though as well…” “We should be using the same strategies to handle diversity in LGBTQA that we do with race, ethnicity, etc.” Although most participants did not see themselves as political activists, the intervention appeared to have had an influence on many participants’ awareness, enthusiasm, and supportiveness for social justice.

***Fair-minded attitudes*.** Throughout the intervention participants were invited to consider how they would like to be treated in a democratic society, and then relate this to the experiences of “others.” Participants who had gay friends or who otherwise had a positive intervention experience tended to express a strong sense of fairness and equality for all. One participant who had gay friends and believed that one’s sexuality is a lifestyle choice put it this way, “…they should be treated fairly even if you don't agree with their lifestyle choices.” Others expressed fairness through non judgement, “It is important to the ASU community to widen the understanding of LGBTQA, to teach understanding and to not judge.” Another participant exclaimed, “The problem lies with people who are too judgmental and won't just let other people be themselves. If we had a country that

was more tolerant of diversity, we wouldn't have the problems that we do now.” A participant replied this way:

> In society people are constantly judged and cannot be "truly free." It’s a shame because our slogan in America is "land of the free." This is not the case at all. If anything America is one of the most judging countries in this world and don't allow people to be who they truly are.

Being conscious of fairness gave some participants the impetus to challenge the more closed-minded students in electronic discussion boards. When a male participant complained that gays and lesbians were “weird” with their behaviors, another who had conveyed his wish to become more affirming of diverse sexual identities replied:

> What exactly do you mean by you being fine, "as long as they aren't being weird"? Do [you] mean you're ok if they don't act gay in public? I mean no offense to you personally, but don't you think that's a bit of an ignorant way of thinking? It would be kind of like saying "I don't mind straight people, as long as they act gay in public." Just give it some thought.

A male student who reacted negatively to the political visibility of queer people stated, “If gay people didn’t march down the street with flags and seem like they were begging for attention or respect, I might support their cause a little more.” To this a more affirming male student challenged:

> I don't know anyone who marches down the street and parades around showing off their gay pride. Gay pride parades that happen once a year are a good way to support that community. I think you should go to one, they are very fun and if you wanted to actually be educated on the topic you could join a parade.

Students who defended the rights of sexual minorities to be themselves professed a good deal of comfort with sexual minorities and their issues, which buttressed their attitude of supportiveness. Even after a classroom discussion about the risk that straights face in being perceived as gay for supporting sexual minorities, some students commented, “I would say I'm at ease when I'm around the LGBT and I feel like I will not be judged because of it,” “I see myself as supporting/encouraging LGBT People.”

Summary of Additional Qualitative Analysis

As lessons progressed and historic facts were presented, some students resisted attitude change toward sexual diversity issues because of religious beliefs or a lack of interest in others different from themselves. A few were strongly negative due to these beliefs and their family upbringing, and these negative attitudes did not change. Some students were sympathetic to the plight of sexual minorities and indicated a desire to change their own attitudes, but remained conflicted. Most participants said they were tolerant or accepting, but they seemed unaware of the difficulties sexual minorities themselves experience as a result of oppression, and several of them expressed surprise when they learned of it. As awareness of their heterosexual privilege increased, a few participants appeared to experience greater empathy. In some cases this empathy led to increased interest in prosocial change, but no participants went so far as to indicate that the intervention had inspired a willingness to openly advocate for LGBT rights. However, a number of participants demanded more education on the topic or voiced an interest in helping to informally educate others about LGBT issues.

Chapter Summary

Participant attitudes in the treatment and control groups were examined side by side using pretest and posttest results. This comparison revealed low negative feeling scores for both groups in areas such as *repulsion* and *pity*, and high positive feeling scores in areas such as *tolerance* and *acceptance*. When the treatment and control groups were compared for change over time there were no significant changes. However, p-values of aggregated negative and aggregated positive feeling scores indicated that the intervention did significantly reduce negative attitudes in the treatment group. It did not significantly increase their positive attitudes. The control group showed no significant changes in positive or negative feeling scores over time.

Next, qualitative data were checked for support by the Riddle Constructs. Results corroborated survey data indicating high levels of open-minded attitudes toward sexual minorities. Relatively few excerpts were coded with Riddle's negative themes, and these mainly related to discomfort with queer visibility. Participant attitudes were high in *tolerance*, *acceptance* and *support*, and there were more excerpts coded in relation to *acceptance* and *support* than any of the other Riddle themes. *Tolerance* mainly related to compassion for or neutral interest in people with diverse sexualities. *Acceptance* was a more welcoming attitude toward differences. S*upport* was the notion of taking a stance against anti-LGBT bias and favoring equal rights for all. The most favorable of Riddle's subscales, *admiration*, *appreciation* and *nurturance,* were coded less frequently in discussion board excerpts. All of these qualitative results were similar to the quantitative results.

A consistency check then tracked quantitative and qualitative results for eleven participants. Five of eleven participants demonstrated consistent overlap of quantitative and qualitative results, which were all high. Three of the eleven had inconsistent alignment of quantitative and qualitative results, because they scored high in areas of *acceptance* and *support*, but also against "flaunting" of outgroup sexual orientation. Their qualitative comments were more negative than their overall high survey scores. Finally, three of the eleven individuals compared for consistency had inconclusive alignment between data types. They generally scored themselves high in the very positive constructs of *appreciation* and *nurturance*, but these were not reflected in their noncommittal or ambiguous comments, which tended to reflect a more neutral tolerance.

Finally, thematic analysis revealed themes of *influence*, both positive and negative. These included religion, gender socialization, family, friends and the intervention itself. Depending on the influence, participants responded to the diversity topics with varying degrees of resistance, neutrality, or enthusiasm. Some students resisted attitude change toward sexual diversity issues due to expressed religious beliefs, family upbringing, or a lack of interest in others different from themselves. For the most part their negative attitudes did not change. They persisted in trivializing the impact of gender stereotypes or recognizing the significance of their own heterosexual privilege. A few expressed inner conflict and wanted to change negative attitudes they held from their upbringing, but found it difficult to do so.

Other participants became more open to learning about the impact of gender stereotypes and the forces of privilege and oppression. They were more likely to be empathetic and to sympathize with the plight of sexual minorities. Most participants

indicated they were tolerant, accepting and supportive, but they seemed unaware of the difficulties sexual minorities themselves experience as a result of oppression. They voiced surprise and used supportive language when they learned of it, but did not indicate a willingness to openly advocate for queer rights. Several participants did, however, express an interest in promoting more education about sexual minorities.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This study benefitted participants because the innovation was the first opportunity most had, within an educational setting, to be introduced to and discuss sexual diversity issues. It helped some participants become more comfortable with the topic. It raised awareness and decreased negative feelings. Some participants indicated increased support for sexual minorities or for education about them.

This study was also a benefit to the other instructors of the UNI courses and the course supervisor, because the results encouraged them to expand the diversity component of the curriculum to include sexual minorities. As a researcher practitioner, it increased my confidence in broaching a topic rarely addressed in K-12 or higher educational settings, especially when the courses involved were required of students who did not know they would be receiving sexual diversity training. It also helped me assess how I might improve the innovation in the future. Therefore, the discussion below consists of four major parts: lessons learned from this study, barriers to implementation, limitations of this study, and implications for future studies.

Lessons Learned by Implementing Sexual Diversity Education

Hypothesis was not supported. The original hypothesis, that an educational intervention of six lessons could decrease negative attitudes and increase positive ones significantly, was not confirmed. While negative attitudes did decrease significantly, positive attitudes did not increase significantly. Overall, students scored high in tolerance, acceptance and support from the beginning of the study, mirroring the more positive attitudes of the larger society, especially among young people (Anderson & Fetner, 2008;

Herek & McLemore, 2013). With such high levels of tolerance and acceptance, there was little room for the participants to grow in their positive feelings about sexual outgroup issues. Where there was room for change, was in negative attitudes.

We know from the literature that stronger attitudes are much more resistant to change (Krosnick & Smith, 1994; Petty & Krosnick, 2014). Thus, it is possible that those who held stronger positive or negative attitudes did not change their opinions as a result of such a short intervention. Many reasons were cited by students on why they held their specific beliefs about sexual outgroup issues, and regardless of the direction of those feelings, the strength of the feelings could have helped them to maintain their original attitudes about them.

The lack of substantial increase in positive attitudes among participants, and the casual use of anti-gay expressions among the generally open-minded sample, may also be explained as the result of internalized sexual stigma and prejudice. Because prejudice toward sexual minorities is prevalent in U.S. culture, most citizens internalize it as part of their upbringing and socialization process. The subsequent stereotypes and antipathy which arise in them are "automatically activated" when the subject of sexual minorities receives attention (Herek & McLemore, 2013, p. 323). This "felt stigma" is challenging to replace with more positive and accepting attitudes and behaviors (Herek & McLemore, 2013, p. 323).

Social function of sexual prejudice and gender norms. Societal change is slow for many reasons, especially when prejudice serves particular social functions. In the case of the male student outliers of this study, who spoke with disdain for openly gay people or for having attention brought to them, sexual prejudice may be serving important

demonstrative functions. These have to do with asserting social identity or affirming social belonging (Herek & McLemore, 2013). In U.S. culture, men who do not comply with rigid gender norms jeopardize their masculine identities with consequences such as accusations of being gay (Bosson & Vandello, 2011; Herek & McLemore, 2013), or being targeted for antigay name-calling or even physical violence (Parrott, Peterson & Bakeman, 2011; Herek & McLemore, 2013). Therefore, expressions of sexual prejudice may function as a psychological defense of their masculinity, which can help them maintain their social status (Herek & McLemore, 2013). U.S. women also receive social pressure to align with gender expectations, but their roles are not as rigidly defined as those of men (Eagly, Diekman, Johannesen-Schmidt & Koenig, 2004; Herek & McLemore, 2013). Therefore, expressing sexual prejudice is not important to most heterosexual women's concept of their gender identity (Herek & McLemore, 2013).

It is noteworthy that the consistency check for some of the males who were vocally negative showed much higher survey scores than their very negative qualitative comments. See Table 7b. This could be explained by the current cultural climate in which prejudice toward sexual minorities is still openly expressed, but where survey respondents in progressive settings like universities are often pressured to appear nonbiased, even when they actually are (Rye & Meaney, 2010; Herek & McLemore, 2013).

***Social function of sexual prejudice and religion*.** Participants who identified as religious did not report much change in attitude over the course of this study. Religious rejection represents a negative attitude toward diverse sexualities, but some question whether rejecting diverse sexualities can truly be defined as prejudice if it is faith-based.

Nevertheless, this rejection is frequently accompanied by negative actions, which lead to discrimination, rather than simply remaining a moral belief (Herek & McLemore, 2013). Such actions often include opposition to civil rights laws (Herman, 1997; Haider-Markel & Joslyn, 2008), or opposition to laws that would allow equality in job opportunities or that would permit a same-sex partner to visit a sick loved one in the hospital. "The mere fact that intergroup attitudes are grounded in moral beliefs or religion does not exempt them from being considered a prejudice" (Herek & McLemore, 2013, p. 316).

For the religious outliers of this study who expressed very negative attitudes, sexual prejudice undoubtedly served important demonstrative functions. These may have had to do with affirming one's identity as a faith member, strengthening one's social connection to the church, or managing one's own personal insecurities about a socially evolving world by attempting to reinforce rigid traditional roles and behaviors. (Herek & McLemore, 2013).

Response to increased threat. Toward the end of the intervention most participants indicated said they were not ready to more fully support sexual minorities beyond tolerating, respecting or accepting them. But a few male participants became especially vocal in their discomfort with the visibility of sexual minorities. These students indicated that sexual minorities should not "parade around" or "flash" their sexuality to gain attention and equality. Their negative comments began after Lesson 5 presented the history of the LGBT civil rights struggle, defined what an ally is, and asked participants where they stood on taking action as an ally. There were subsequent drops (although not significant) on survey statement 3 about compassion, statement 9 about

support for LGBT civil rights, and statement 16 about a willingness to openly advocate for LGBT people.

A possible reason for the qualitative drop in support, and the increase in negative comments among a few participants after Lesson 5, may be a phenomenon noted by Angela Bahns and Christian Crandall (2013). Their study found that straight people who consciously or unconsciously supported inequality were more likely to express prejudice and discrimination when they believed that gay people were gaining social status, such as equal rights or social power. This was because they felt their own dominant status was threatened. The heterosexuals in their study tended to be much more supportive of sexual minorities as long as they viewed their social status as low and, therefore, nonthreatening.

Another study noted that an ironic result of strong anti-prejudice messages was to increase prejudice. This occurred when researchers made participants feel obligated to support sexual minorities. Conversely, messages that emphasized choice and self-motivation to reduce prejudice resulted in decreased prejudice from the pre to posttest (Legault, Gutsell, & Inzlicht, 2011). These phenomena may help to explain why quantitative posttest data of the current study dropped slightly in the constructs of support and nurturance, although this drop was not significant.

Risk to allies. Only one participant alluded to having attended an LGBT pride parade in his past experience, and, as mentioned in Chapter 4, no participants indicated that the intervention had inspired any interest in openly supporting members of sexual outgroups. There are several possible reasons for this reticence, as revealed in prior studies about ally building. In one study, some participants resisted becoming allies because they felt they were putting themselves at too much risk for negative reprisals

from straight acquaintances (DiStefano & Maznevski, 2000). Other participants stated that they might be discriminated against for their support of sexual minorities (DiStefano & Maznevski, 2000). Another study pointed to the fears some potential allies have of being thought of as a sexual minority, just for supporting sexual minorities (Ji, Du Boois & Finnessy, 2009). Some potential allies were concerned that they lacked knowledge and strategies for challenging anti-LGBT bias. Still others feared or that they would be considered a hypocrite for having used biased words or expressions in the past (Ji, Du Boois & Finnessy, 2009). Clearly, for some potential allies a fear of the unknown has prevented them from taking an active stance in advocacy.

***Knowing someone gay*.** Prior to the fifth lesson, participants chiefly expressed subject matter in an abstract or conceptual way, remaining silent about their own interactions with sexual minorities. During lesson 5, however, I disclosed that I have an openly gay brother who recently married his same-sex partner. It was as though this revelation finally gave some students the permission they were waiting for to disclose that they had gay or lesbian friends or relatives. Participants began to acknowledge who they knew and their personal connections to them. Had I modeled this sharing of personal experience sooner, students may have felt increased comfort to express their personal support much earlier in the intervention, providing more time for it to inspire positive attitude change in peers who did not believe they knew any sexual minorities. It is noteworthy that no students "came out" about themselves, even though studies have shown variously that 3.5% - 8% of people are likely a sexual minority (Gates, 2006; Reece et al, 2010; Gates & Newport, 2006, 2013).

Barriers to Implementation

Personal Challenges. Attempting to change attitudes among first year students was more challenging from a personal standpoint than expected. Younger generations tend to hold more positive attitudes toward LGBTQ people than older generations, so I expected that the intervention would be well received. But lesson content about sexual minority issues is still of a politically controversial nature. LGBT rights are believed to be the central conflict of our nation's current "culture wars" (Brown, Knopp & Morrill, 2005). Therefore, this study had to be approached carefully, justifying it and explaining it to administrators beforehand. Implementing change required permissions from these university authorities, and there was an agreement that the researcher would carry out the innovation in such a way that participants would not reject the treatment, or protest that they were offended or felt threatened by it. These sorts of potential reactions were not completely under my control, and this left me concerned that I might somehow become the focus of administrative attention. Throughout most of the six-lesson intervention I continued to worry that students with strong bias might challenge my ally work in a disruptive manner.

In spite of much time and effort devoted to preparing students for the intervention, at times some students questioned, "Why are we doing this?" or "Aren't we finished with talking about this?" In discussion boards a few reticent students even stated directly that they did not want or appreciate sexual diversity education, which added to my anxiety. The struggle for me personally was to rise above my concern that such expressions indicated willingness to complain to administrators. There were no formal complaints, however, and all students completed the lessons within their class.

Accommodations for discomfort. Helping students to understand the importance of sexual diversity education, and ensuring that participants from many different backgrounds and beliefs could "agree to disagree" in a free-flowing exchange of ideas was no easy task. Among various participants there was at times uneasy body language or facial expressions such as grimaces, questioning glances between peers, eye-rolling, disengaged side talking and other signs of discomfort. When participant discomfort did appear to interfere with learning, I made adjustments as necessary. For example, while viewing a Power Point slide on transgender individuals, two students exchanged glances with uncomfortable facial expressions. Discussion on this portion of the lesson was therefore shortened, and I waited until the next class meeting to resume the topic. This gave students more time to process the information.

Action research roles. Other personal challenges took place because of the nature of action research itself. I played the role of both the instructor who wanted a receptive classroom of students learning in a safe environment. But I also played the role of researcher who had to evaluate the data. These data were not always positive and it took further effort on my part to see it objectively rather than personally.

Personal identity. When negative or anti-LGB student comments in discussion boards began to demoralize me, I became aware that my own identity was more present when teaching about sexual diversity than when teaching other subject matter. It was important not to censor myself or the material, however I was reluctant to reveal my own sexual minority orientation to participants because I was concerned that some students might feel they had to emulate my perspective in order to please me—an internal threat to validity based on researcher characteristics or expectation. I wanted the students to share

their own authentic views, so it was essential to make clear that discussion board grading would be based on participation, and that all opinions were welcome.

Limitations

Duration. As mentioned above, prejudice toward LGBT people is prevalent in U.S. culture, and most citizens internalize it as part of their upbringing and socialization process. This "felt stigma" is challenging to replace with more positive and accepting attitudes and behaviors (Herek & McLemore, 2013, p. 323), and an intervention of short duration may not be capable of overcoming years of negative conditioning. This does not mean that the seeds of greater change were not planted as a result of this intervention, but its duration may not have been long enough to measure more slowly evolving psychological change. "Students' increased awareness appears…as gradual shifts in student attitudes toward greater receptivity, and openness to 'the other'" (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 1997, p. 263).

Sample size and composition. The participant sample was small, with little variability, making changes less visible. This small sample also did not represent the entire population of first year students to allow for generalizability. However, action research does not concern itself with generalizability, because its focus is on particular settings and situations. The sample was largely female, especially in the control group, which could have also skewed the data.

Intersectionality. Data for this study was not collected or analyzed with intersectionality as an approach. This approach helps each individual understand their identity as composed of many identities. McCall (2005) believes that it "has been enormously effective in challenging the singularity, separateness, and wholeness of a

wide range of social categories" (p. 1778) such as race, class, gender, sexuality, etc. Nevertheless, participants did an intervention exercise called "Circles of my Multicultural Self" which helped raise awareness about the overlapping identities all people have, some of which are more valued than others culturally.

Data coding and consistency. There was only one coder who analyzed the data, so there was rater consistency. However there was no interrater reliability supported with fidelity checks on coding. Additionally, when quantitative data were compared with qualitative findings from the eleven participants who could be tracked, there were five consistent and three inconsistent. This did not support the reliability of the data. Data linking was not possible with the remaining thirteen participants who may have provided more support for the reliability of the data.

Measurements. This study contained no systematically documented observations which could have added to the data and its interpretation. Also, allowing students to remain anonymous on surveys and on some of the discussion board postings made tracking of student attitude change incomplete. Additionally, the survey had not been evaluated for reliability and validity. It was conceived at a time when terms such as *tolerance* and *acceptance* perhaps held different connotations for researchers and participants than they do today. As mentioned above, it was necessary to make this survey more operational based on current participant understanding of its terms, complicating the process of data analysis. However, it provided an opportunity to suggest refinements of the *Riddle Homophobia Scale*.

Implications for Future Research

Duration. As mentioned above, some social psychologists say that changing "automatically activated" negative feeling associations with sexual minorities into positive feelings and behaviors requires considerable personal determination on the part of participants (Monteith, 1996, Herek & McLemore, 2013), and concerted effort to achieve mental and emotional reconditioning (Devine, 2005; McLemore, 2013). The intervention for this study consisted of only 6 short lessons; not a substantial period of time for motivating participants. Future interventions to change attitudes about sexual minorities could be extended throughout an entire semester to see if a longer exposure to the material improved results.

Also, with limited time for the intervention within each class period, the focus of the queer topics had to center on what was most visible to students: gender stereotypes, negative effects of sexual prejudice on everyone, and the lives and experiences of gays and lesbians seen in video vignettes. Other queer topics, such as the umbrella term "transgender," were only addressed briefly and perhaps too superficially. Increasing class time spent on diversity lessons, as well as overall length of the study would allow a more complete treatment about the components of the acronym LGBT.

Data collection and measures. If this study were to be repeated, I would not permit anonymity on either the survey or qualitative discussion board. This would have permitted the complete linking of data types to all individual participants, providing a more complete picture of their self-reported attitudes and potential behaviors. Outliers could be teased out of analysis in order to better evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention on the mainstream target population.

If I believed that participants were responding as they saw their peers were, rather than giving truthful self reports of opinion, I might have students email their responses privately to me, rather than have them available for all class members to see on an electronic discussion board. However, this would eliminate the possibility of classmates responding and interacting with one another electronically. Alternatively, if the discussion board had the capability, I would try changing the names of students to pseudonyms so that they could interact, replying to one another anonymously without actually being anonymous to me.

After giving discussion board homework I ordinarily had to remind students several times to complete the assignment before all did so. To help ensure that participants created discussion board entries and replied to peers, I experimented with a "chat" during Lesson 5. I asked participants to bring laptops or similar internet capable devices and do the discussing "live". For the discussion board to function like a chat students "refreshed" the web page so that replies to the discussion threads could then be seen. With frequent refreshing students engaged in a real-time chat which appeared to be more engaging than doing the writing for homework. This in part probably accounted for the larger number of responses than for other home works. In future studies I would employ this technique when class time permitted.

I would also choose an alternative survey to measure attitudes toward sexual minorities. The *Riddle Scale* (1985) has largely been used to provide a quick self-assessment for professionals in workshop settings. It may not have been intended to be used with young adults as a pre and posttest, and its items and subscales need modification for the current cultural context. Many empirical studies have used the *Index*

of Homophobia (IHP; Hudson & Ricketts, 1980) or *Attitudes Toward Lesbians and Gay Men* (ATLG; Herek, 1988), which may not measure as wide a range of attitudes as Riddle's scale, however psychometric properties have been reported (Worthington, Dillon & Becker-Schutte, 2005). Nevertheless, Herek (1994) recognizes that these attitude scales were created in a specific social context, and they must either be updated or discontinued in favor of more modern instruments.

A newer example is the *Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Knowledge and Attitudes Scale* for Heterosexuals (LGB-KASH; Worthington et al, 2005). Like the Riddle survey, it is multidimensional and wide-ranging with items that likely fit contemporary participant understanding of terms. It also measures participant knowledge about social and political issues impacting sexual minorities. It's limitation is that it apparently does not measure attitudes specifically toward transsexual persons.

Herek and McLemore (2013) warn that self-report measures in general may eventually need to be replaced by implicit bias measuring instruments. This is because over time it is becoming less socially accepted to make open statements of prejudice about sexual orientation, just as openly biased attitudes about race are no longer accepted. As mentioned previously, while prejudice toward sexual minorities is still openly expressed, respondents in progressive settings like universities are often pressured to appear nonbiased (Rye & Meaney, 2010; Herek & McLemore, 2013).

I would also collect data and measure with intersectionality in mind. McCall (2005) stresses the importance of analyzing social attitudes and privileged versus oppressed relationships along the "multiple dimensions and modalities" (p. 1771) of intersectionality as a category of feminist analysis. Using this approach in an educational

intervention, and analyzing data from the demographics of a sample in this way, would help to expand educational and analytical depth when considering identities and power relations.

Intervention activities with lower risk first. My concern to avoid objections from participants influenced my choices of class activities and their ordering. This information may be of use to others who conduct educational interventions in the future. I felt most comfortable choosing activities that I considered to be lower-risk, for example those that focused on participants' own multiple identities, which they enjoyed talking and writing about. I prepared participants for eventually discussing queer identities by scaffolding with concepts about gender stereotypes, LGBT definitions, the effects of homophobia on everyone, and gradually including information about LGBT history, civil rights efforts, and current celebrities who were openly gay. This kept the lessons and discussions more conceptual and hypothetical, though still relevant to participants.

Later, after participants had developed a certain level of trust with one another, and comfort with the material, I risked lessons featuring video vignettes with LGB young people and gay and lesbian headed families with children. These contained poignant personal accounts of the daily struggles sexual minorities face, and in one such clip a same-sex male couple embraced in the background while their foster son spoke on camera. Because of this public display of same-sex affection I found myself monitoring discussion board posts more frequently for inappropriate language or hostile comments. As discussion monitor, I could edit comments to maintain a safe and professional classroom experience for all. I only had to do this once when a participant alluded to a sex act and I did not want this to influence others to do the same.

Intervention activities with highest risk. High risk activities that could threaten participant identities were avoided. In particular, "guided imagery" exercises were avoided, which invite students to close their eyes and imagine they are someone culturally different. These are supported in diversity research, and have been used to teach about heterosexism (Henderson & Murdock, 2011). Guided imagery is also part of the standard UNI 102 and UNI 202 courses and is intended to help students visualize themselves as successful and happy in their future careers. However, I was reluctant to invite students to see themselves as a sexual minority, or as a straight minority in an imaginary gay-majority world, even if it would have given participants a new understanding of what stigma feels like. I believed that queer identities and issues are too emotionally charged to take the risk a participant would feel offended by such an identity superimposed upon their own. Therefore, I focused on information about sexual minorities to help increase empathy, utilizing commercially available video interviews with queer youth to personalize their experiences for my participants.

The psychosocial impact of political information. As mentioned above, lesson 5 addressed the history of the LGBT civil rights movement, and it also discussed various levels of ally action. This brought about a strong response, both positive and negative. Because this lesson was pivotal to either the expression of changing views or their unchanging entrenchment, the manner in which it was presented is an important consideration. The outcome implied that better preparing participants for its content may have elicited stronger prosocial attitudes among those who were initially without strong beliefs on the subject, and more importantly, among those who were the least likely to change.

Borgman (2009) and Herek & McLemore (2013) suggest that anti LGBT bias loses its social function when individuals become fully aware that it conflicts with their own personal values associated with fairness, liberty, equality and consideration of others' humanity. When individuals view their bias as antithetical to their own self-concept, the resulting conflict may help them work to ameliorate their bias and internalize prosocial attitudes (Russell, 2011; Herek & McLemore, 2013). If lesson 5 had been presented with more emphasis on participant self-reflection about self-concept and personal values, it may have produced a more productive cognitive dissonance in participants with strong negative attitudes.

Perhaps the greatest facilitator for achieving such awareness and change is by associating with an LGBT person and learning about their experiences (Herek, 2009b). As mentioned above, the current study attempted to use professionally produced video interviews to achieve a semblance of meeting someone gay and learning about their life experiences and challenges. However, other studies suggest success bringing queer people into classrooms, in the form of speaker panels who interact personally with students.

LGBT speaker panels. As mentioned in Chapter 2, psychoeducational interventions such as LGBT speaker panels have been presented to counselors (Gelberg & Chojanacki, 1995) and psychology and sexuality classrooms (Nelson & Krieger, 1997; Waterman, Reid, Garfield & Hoy, 2001). Interacting with and relating to openly self-identified sexual minorities may improve the formation of prosocial attitudes in heterosexual participants. Having the opportunity to ask questions, hear about their experiences, or participate in intergroup anti-bias activities with sexual minorities has

broken barriers to understanding. This has led to increases in positive attitudes. In one study, religious students who believed that different sexual orientations were "against the teachings of God" reported they were receptive to the humanity of the members of an LGB speaker's panel, finding them to be "warm and pleasant" (Geasler, 1995, p. 489). In other studies intergroup dialogue between heterosexuals and sexual minorities appeared to build positive relationships between them (Dessel & Rogge, 2008).

Empathy, attitude and action. I created this intervention as part of a model in which information might change attitudes and potentially lead to action. However, this intervention did not go so far as to change behavior, and no participants expressed intent to take specific advocacy actions. For future studies that have behavior change as a goal, I would consider the work of Karen Gerdes and Elizabeth Segal (2009). They suggest that to inspire empathetic action there must be "[an] affective response to another's emotions and actions, cognitive processing of one's affective response and the other persons perspective, and the conscious decision-making to take empathic action" (p.114). They suggest that "all three components of empathy [must] be present in order to experience empathy that is rooted in social justice as well as social cognitive neuroscience" (p.114). The use of role plays can help in the cognitive processing of empathetic response and potantial action (Gerdes & Segal, 2009). Such role plays or skits could prepare participants to take action psychologically, by presenting scenarios where helping others, advocacy, political organizing, or social action are enacted. The scripts could be created by participants, based on personal stories about themselves and connected to their everyday lives.

Conclusion

It was important to acknowledge and discuss among first year college students the anti-LGBT climate in our society. These students were exploring the world on their own for the first time, and there was much at stake for their potential growth, for contributing to a safe and welcoming campus climate at the university, and for me as a leader, researcher and practitioner. I believed I was helping to pave the way for others to educate about sexual minorities in introductory college courses, and, as with any action research, I wanted to gain experience so that I could determine its effectiveness and recommend ways to implement it better in the future.

This action research also served to help the university remain accountable for its claim to embrace diversity. The results of this study encouraged inclusion of LGBQ issues in the UNI diversity materials available to all instructors, and the course supervisor actively encourages their use when addressing staff at meetings about diversity. Further, this action research also provided a snap shot of current student attitudes which must be addressed by instructors when attempting to improve institutional climate. Additionally, this action research also became an opportunity to suggest refinements for a survey of attitudes which is still commonly used today.

One of the most important topics discussed during the intervention was the subject of privilege. Most students were unaware of their own heterosexual privilege. The unquestioned acceptance of racial, gender and heterosexual privileges are not only personal decisions but political ones which ultimately permit discrimination. This is because:

> …taking identity privileges for granted helps legitimize…entitlement...Racism requires white privilege. Sexism requires male privilege. Homophobia requires heterosexual privilege. The very intelligibility of our identities is their association, or lack thereof, with privilege...We cannot change the macro-effects of discrimination without ameliorating the power effects of our [micro] identities. (Carbado, 2010, p.393-394).

Ordinary decisions that individuals make each day reinforce a social structure that encourages discrimination. Carbado (2010) mentions examples such as getting married while others such as gays and lesbians cannot, living in racially segregated communities where almost everyone is white, and associating only with other heterosexuals. These are personal but also political decisions that entrench racism, classism, and homophobia (Carbado, 2010, p. 394).

Perhaps some of the participants in this study did not fully recognize the political importance of their personal decision making. However, for many there was personal growth and change which may help protect or even improve campus climate at my university. I have learned that it was not enough to provide a knowledge base about gender stereotypes, homophobia, sexuality, privilege, and queer history. Another iteration of this study would include guest speakers from various sexual minority groups, perhaps enhancing the positive effects of intergroup interaction and empathy. Increased understanding by the heterosexual majority is fundamental to social change.

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APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM

Attitudes about Lesbian, Gay Bisexual Transgender, Questioning (LGBTQ) Diversity

INTRODUCTION

The purposes of this form are to provide you (as a prospective research study participant) information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research and to record the consent of those who agree to be involved in the study.

RESEARCHERS

Mark Spalding, researcher and instructor in University College has invited your participation in a research study.

STUDY PURPOSE

The purpose of the research is to evaluate the benefits of a curriculum that includes instruction, activities and assignments related to LGBTQ diversity.

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH STUDY

If you decide to participate, then you will join a study involving research about student attitudes toward LGBTQ diversity and the curriculum used to teach about it. The professor will survey participants anonymously, observe them in classroom discussions, and assign essays related to the topic. Participants can skip survey questions or choose not to complete any related assignments without penalty to their grade.

If you say YES, then your participation will last for the duration of this seven week course at Arizona State University. Approximately 38 subjects will be participating in this study.

RISKS

There are no known risks from taking part in this study, but in any research, there is some possibility that you may be subject to risks that have not yet been identified.

BENEFITS

The possible benefits of your participation in the research are in helping determine how a curriculum including LGBTQ diversity may improve student attitudes which are likely to result in desirable behaviors that impact campus climate. Your ability to interact comfortably in multicultural environments may also be improved, resulting in personal satisfaction or self confidence.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential. The results of this research study may be used in reports, presentations, and publications, but the researchers will not identify you.

In order to maintain confidentiality of your records, Mark Spalding will.assign random code numbers to students which take the place of names on surveys and written

assignments. This information will be secured in a locked cabinet and only Mark Spalding will have access to it.

In some cases such as a classroom discussions or electronic discussion boards it may not be possible to guarantee confidentiality. It will be possible that others will know what you have reported.

WITHDRAWAL PRIVILEGE

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. It is ok for you to say no. Even if you say yes now, you are free to say no later, and withdraw from the study at any time. Withdrawal from the study will not affect your grade or employment status if you work for ASU.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT

Any questions you have concerning the research study or your participation in the study, before or after your consent, will be answered by Mark Spalding (602) 448-4334 or his research chair Dr. Kathleen Puckett (480)727-5206

If you have questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk; you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at (480) 965-6788.

This form explains the nature, demands, benefits and any risk of the project. By signing this form you agree knowingly to assume any risks involved. Remember, your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefit. In signing this consent form, you are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies. A copy of this consent form will be offered to you.

Your signature below indicates that you consent to participate in the above study.

_____	_____	_____
Subject's Signature	Printed Name	Date

INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT

I certify that I have explained to the above individual the nature and purpose, the potentialbenefits and possible risks associated with participation in this research study, have answeredany questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature. These elements of Informed Consent conform to the Assurance given by Arizona State University to the Office for Human Research Protections to protect the rights of human subjects. I have provided (offered) the subject/participant a copy of this signed consent document.

Signature of Investigator_____
Date_____

APPENDIX B

ATTITUDES TOWARD DIFFERENCE SURVEY

Directions: Put a check next to each statement with which you agree. Bracket the 2–3 adjoining statements that most accurately reflect your current range of thinking about lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people.

1. Homosexuality is unnatural and immoral. LGBT people are emotionally or psychologically ill.
2. LGBT people should participate in reparative therapy or any other treatment available to help them change their sexual orientation.
3. We should have compassion for LGBT people. They can't be blamed for how they were born.
4. LGBT people didn't choose to be the way they are. If they could somehow become heterosexual, they would surely do so.
5. Homosexuality is a phase that many people go through and most grow out of.
6. LGBT people need our support and guidance as they wrestle with the many difficult issues associated with their lifestyle.
7. I have no problem with LGBT people, but see no need for them to flaunt their sexual orientation publicly.
8. What LGBT people do in the privacy of their own bedroom is their business.
9. LGBT people deserve the same rights and privileges as everybody else.
10. Homophobia and transphobia are wrong. Society needs to take a stand against anti-gay bias.
11. It takes strength and courage for LGBT people to be themselves in today's world.
12. It is important for me to examine my own attitudes so that I can actively support the struggle for equality that LGBT people have undertaken.
13. There is great value in our human diversity. LGBT people are an important part of that diversity.
14. It is important for me to stand up to those who demonstrate homophobic attitudes.
15. LGBT people are an indispensable part of our society. They have contributed much to our world and there is much to be learned from their experiences.
16. I would be proud to be part of an LGBT organization, and to openly advocate for the full and equal inclusion of LGBT people at all levels of our society.

Attitude Characteristics (These are Riddle's definitions of terms and not included on the survey)
Repulsion: People who are different are strange, sick, crazy, and aversive.
Pity: People who are different are somehow born that way and it is pitiful.
Tolerance: Being different is just a phase of development that most people grow out of.
Acceptance: One needs to make accommodations for another's differences; another identity does not have the same value as one's own.
Support: The rights of people who are different should be protected and safeguarded
Admiration: Being different in our society takes strength.
Appreciation: There is value in diversity. Insensitive attitudes should be confronted.
Nurturance: The differences in people are an indispensable part of society.
From: *Alone No More: Developing a School Support System for Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Youth* by Dorothy Riddle, 1994.

APPENDIX C

DISCUSSION BOARD PROMPTS

Lesson 1 Discussion Board 1: Diversity, Stereotypes and Privilege (10pts)

Directions:

Please write a 50 word minimum for numbers one and two. Answer question three filling in the blanks. Please reply to at least one other person's post.

1. Share a story about a time you were especially proud to identify yourself with one of the descriptors you used in the "circles of my multicultural self" handout we had at the end of our last class.

2. Share a story about a time it was especially painful to be identified with one of your descriptors.

3. Name a stereotype associated with one of the groups with which you identify that is not consistent with who you are by filling in the following sentence:

I am (a/an) _____ but I am NOT (a/an) _____.

Lesson 2 Discussion Board 2: Gender Stereotypes and Heteronormativity (10pts)

Directions:

After viewing the video segment on our Course Information page, think about our class discussion inspired by the gender stereotypes power point, handouts about gender roles and inequality in women's salaries, and the Personal Experience Survey where you checked boxes for questions like: Have you ever been insulted for not "acting like your gender"?

Then think about the following questions and use them to inspire a 50 word minimum paragraph. Within your paragraph you will address one or more of the questions, whichever have inspired you to write. No need to mention which question(s) you are referring to, just use them as inspiration. Reply to at least one classmate.

The posts are anonymous this time so you won't see names and neither will I as long as you check the box for “anonymous”. Remember our ground rules for appropriateness, disagreeing respectfully and supporting one another when trying on new ideas.

1. What are some of the rules for what it means to be a girl or guy and where do they come from?

2. In your experience how are young people limited, forced to do things they don’t want to, or kept from doing things they do want to because of gender pressures or because they are afraid they’ll be labeled as gay? Would this have an influence on a student’s decision about which major or occupation to choose?

3. One youth in the film said, “I come from [a country] where it’s just natural for a guy to get his nails done.” Were you surprised by this statement? Why? How does the place, community or culture we come from affect how we learn about gender norms? Can you think of examples of gender norms in your community that may be different in other communities or cultures?

4. How do you think a person’s race or ethnicity might be connected to expectations they face about how their gender is supposed to act?

5. Do you think there are certain stereotypes for males of certain races or cultures? Females? What similarities in stereotypes do you see across cultures?

6. Why do you think that stepping outside gender norms is so often associated with being gay or lesbian? Is that the same in all cultures?

7. What do you think society’s “gender rules” have to say about the relative value of men and women? How is this related to salaries?

8. How can you resist the pressure to fit into a gender box?

9. Is it okay to like traditional gender norms? Many people are comfortable with them, but how do they affect those people who do not fit them?

Lesson 3 Discussion Board 3: LGBTQA Diversity (10pts)

Directions: Comment on the following in 50 words or more.

1. How is learning about LGBTQA diversity something that could help you grow personally?
2. Why is it important to the ASU community?

Lesson 3 Discussion Board 4: Impact of Gender Rules and Homophobia (15pts)

ASU has many diverse students just as the high school students in the video clips we've watched. Write thoughtfully about the following as a 100 word (minimum) discussion post. Address the questions in your writing, but it is not necessary to write the question you are answering. Just incorporate your answers as thoughts in the discussion post (10 pts). It's okay to write more about one question than another, depending on your inspiration. Then reply to a classmate (5 pts)

1. Is there anything wrong with fitting into a gender box? In what ways do some people get advantages by fitting into a gender box and who receives these benefits?

2. Why do you think that stepping outside of gender norms is so often associated with being gay or lesbian? Is that the same for all cultures? Think about the attitude towards gender diversity/sexual orientation among Native American tribes in our video. Also, the students who mentioned their home countries like Viet Nam don't make a big deal of two guys holding hands. Do you have any of your own cultural examples?

3. How are young people's gender experiences affected by society's beliefs about being gay or lesbian? How did our class activity on the white board about gay stereotypes, or the students speaking in the video, affect your own perspective on this subject? Please be thoughtful.

4. One student in the film said he doesn't think people in our society are "truly free." How are young people limited, encouraged to do things they don't want to, or kept from doing things they do want to because of gender pressures or because they are afraid they'll be labeled as gay?

5. How do you feel about some of the more tragic stories in the film—the girl who turned to drugs and the young man who committed suicide? What can be done to prevent traumas like these in our society?

6. What do you think made the difference between some of the sad or hard times students talked about and the more positive and empowering experiences?

Lesson 4 Discussion Board 5: LGBT Awareness (15pts)

Please write 50 words or more related to the questions below (10 pts). Be sure to address each of the three questions within your 50 word minimum post. Then reply to a classmate about something they have written (5 pts).

1. Were you surprised to learn that the historic figures on the history cards in class were all LGBT? Name a historic LGBT figure you are aware of (from the cards, online etc.There are many examples from and world history.) Name a contribution they have made to the or the world.

2. Name famous LGBT celebrities you are aware of. How have they entertained you or been of interest to you or others? Do you know if they are in a committed relationship or if they have children?

3. How do you imagine the experiences of children in LGBT-headed families might be similar to other families? How do you imagine the experiences of children in LGBT-headed families might be different from other families?

4. How does LGBT awareness help promote an ASU campus that is open, safe and supportive of everyone?

Lesson 5 Discussion Board 6: Ally Attitudes and Behaviors (20pts)

Directions:

Answer all four questions either separately or combining your answers into one paragraph. Reply to at least two classmates. You have the option to post anonymously for this discussion. Email me that you have accomplished this so I can give you the points.

(Researcher Note: this discussion was done as a "chat" with students refreshing their web browsers on laptops to update the discussion board posts which were being entered in real time during class. All other discussion boards had been homework.)

1. What was the most interesting or surprising thing you learned or realized during our discussions about LGBT issues?

2. How have your thoughts or views toward LGBT people or issues changed as a result of learning more in ASU 101?

3. Where do you see yourself on the Ally Action Continuum below?

Actively participating in oppression --> Denying, ignoring gender minorities --> Recognizing differences but no action ---> Recognizing differences with action of some kind --> Educating Self on LGBT Issues --> Educating Others on LGBT Issues --> Supporting/Encouraging LGBT People --> Taking a leadership role/Initiating help to reduce homophobia on campus or in your daily life.

4. How would you describe yourself and why:

a. Do you like, have positive attitudes toward, or respect for LGBT people?
b. Are you at ease around members of the LGBT community?
c. Do you feel you can be yourself around LGBT people?
d. Do you relate well to or have a sense of belonging with LGBT people?
e. Are you interested in understanding the points of view or experiences of LGBT people?
f. Are you in any way impressed by LGBT people and their struggle for equality?
g. Are you in any way inspired by any members of the LGBT community?

Lesson 6: Integration, Debriefing, and Final Essay (20 pts)

Directions:
For homework write an essay summarizing all learning in the course. Be sure to write about anything impactful learned in the diversity training.

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