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In August 2008 and August 2010 we three coordinated International Summer Institutes in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Psychology at the University of Michigan. On each occasion we invited nine or ten diverse field leading experts to offer keynotes, seminars, workshops and formal and informal mentoring to approximately fifty postgraduate students and junior career psychologists. Of course one of our aims was to build a supportive professional community of researchers in the psychology of sexuality that might increase the visibility and influence of LGBT psychology. However, unlike other training and networking events, this intervention in LGBT psychology was oriented toward psychologist *researchers* rather than psychologists whose primary work was the provision of care. We recall these two explosions of discussion, planning, enthusiasm, community building and perspective changing in Ann Arbor, Michigan with very happy memories. We were among psychologists with interests in hormones, health, and history, sampling, sex, social cognition, and serostatus, power, parenting, prejudice, polyamory, Pakeha privilege and Proposition 8.¹ A quite unscripted and spontaneous conversation among the international delegates to the 2008 institute has been previously published in this journal (Adams et al., 2010). The present special issue includes more systematic and sustained collaborations among the emerging scholars that developed from these Institutes.

Why organize these Summer Institutes? Some might argue that the field of LGBT Psychology is now so well established that it needs no special nurturing. Indeed, some participants in 2008 and 2010 told tales of support from their own academic departments. However, others felt isolated and unsupported. We were also aware of the modern prejudice literature that suggests that prejudice can work through the labelling of support for minority individuals and groups as “special” treatment (e.g., Morrison & Morrison, 2002). Research on the education of LGBT psychologists also suggests that ‘heterosexist’ environments (Herek, 2007) may engender minority stress (c.f., Meyer, 2003). Undergraduate and postgraduate sexual minority students do not always find themselves recognized in the psychology curricula that purport to represent them (Biaggio, Orchard, Larson, Petrino, & Mihara, 2003; Hodges & Pearson, 2008). Their textbooks erase LGB lives, or use them to illustrate nature-nurture questions (Barker, 2007; Simoni, 1996). Going beyond the textbook to *Psycinfo*, a student will find mostly articles that pathologize children who do not identify with their assigned gender (Ansara & Hegarty, 2012). Theories of heterosexism describe the *fear* of negative treatment as a major component of minority stress (Herek, 2007; Meyer, 2003), and many postgraduate researchers are tutored to fear that an interest in LGB psychology will be bad for their careers (Biaggio et al., 2003). Stigma theories also show how LGB people are resilient against minority stress when provided with spaces in which they do not have to counter heterosexist ideologies, and innovative teachers of LGBT psychology have moved away from textbooks toward exercises that draw out students own thinking about difference in organic ways (Battle, 2004; Hillman & Martin, 2002, see also the essays in Green & Croom, 2000). Such teaching is moving. Students who take undergraduate courses in “the psychology of homosexuality” or “LGBT psychology” become less interested in the kinds of ontological questions *about* sexuality that populate common textbooks, and more curious about supporting real LGB people with diverse life stories (Hegarty, 2010; Waterman, Reid, Garfield, & Hoy, 2001).

We drew on this evidence base to conceptualize how we would intervene in the careers of postgraduate and junior career level LGBT psychologists. We aimed to respond to a lack of stable academic contexts in which LGBT Psychologists can do ordinary academic identity development that requires face-to-face conversation (as should happen in classrooms and lab meetings, for example). In our loftiest aspirations, we hoped that the institute might provide a context in which the dynamics of an ‘invisible college’ might begin to occur. We envisioned a format for the Summer Institutes that would be demanding of “senior tutors”—asking them to offer not only a lecture, but also a small group workshop (several times!), and individual consultations. We were positively surprised that most of the senior scholars we approached agreed to act in this hardworking role for our first institute. When we began organizing the 2008 Summer Institute we did not have a specific group of young LGBT Psychologists in mind. Twice as many people applied as we could accommodate, and we tended to reject applications from very junior scholars with open-ended research plans, and from psychologists whose primary professional interests were in the provision of care rather than research. This level of interest from tutors and students was repeated in 2010. In both years, the University of Michigan was a warm environment for the institutes and in both years we received funding from The John D. Evans Foundation, the University of Michigan College of Literature, Science and the Arts, Rackham School of Graduate Studies, Psychology and Women’s Studies Departments, and Institute for Research on Women and Gender. Both in 2008 and 2010, Heather Carney sponsored one student’s attendance with a scholarship to honor her father Riley Carney. In 2010, both Divisions 9 and 35 of the American Psychological Association sponsored individual students to attend the institute.

The applications from the Institute’s participants often suggested that they had one foot on the career ladder in academic psychology and another firmly planted in LGBT community work. In other words, this diverse group shared and enacted a commitment to social change. They had resources to draw upon – both intellectually and interpersonally – that did not originate in their training as psychologists. As a result, we were initially optimistic that the participants would evince social creativity in the face of heteronormative environments that were scripted to exclude them (Brown, 1989).

How did they do? Did we achieve our ends? We report here briefly on the findings from a post-institute survey we conducted in 2008 and then more in depth on the pre- and post-institute surveys conducted in 2010. As scholars interested in social change (from both professional and personal perspectives), we noted that that the institute seemed to not only facilitate the “invisible college” we had hoped for, but that participants also reported some shifts that are often associated with an increased commitment to social change: the development of new networks, critical perspectives on the inclusion of LGBT people/and issues, shifts in identity, and new possibilities for reaching (and changing) other people through research and teaching. We were pleased to see that the Institutes could foster these commitments across a group of scholars whom we hope will continue to nurture the field, and bring their community experiences to the academy (and vice versa).

We surveyed the 50 participants from the 2008 program, of whom 46 responded. Twenty seven (58.7%) of those who responded commented positively on the sense of community fostered by the event, 21 (45.7%) described the institute as exceeding their expectations and only one reported that it did not meet their expectations. One hundred percent of the senior tutors and 93% of the participants reported that they would recommend the Summer Institute to another person, 98% of participants reported that they wanted to stay in contact with other Summer Institute participants. Informed by those results, we conducted a more detailed

evaluation of the 2010 Summer Institute, surveying both participants and senior scholars before and after the event. A full 42 of 45 participants (93.0%) reported that they had worked on an LGBT Psychology research project, 28 had published in this area (62.2%), and 20 (44.4%) had incorporated LGBT issues into their teaching. However, these students were often achieving in isolation, and this group included some of the tutors' own students. Only 10 of 45 (22.2%) had ever worked with any of the senior tutors before, and only 28 of 45 delegates (59.6%) reported that they knew even one LGBT psychology researcher personally.

We asked questions both pre- and post-institute about a range of issues, but focus here on their answers to questions about their goals for the Institute, perceptions of their institutional climate and teaching LGBT Psychology. As in 2008, participants' goals matched ours and centred on learning, networking, and being exposed to a wider range of LGBT psychology and getting a better 'geography' of the field. The 34 participants reported that after the institute their goals had been met fully ($n = 31$, 91.2%), partially met, ($n = 2$, 5.9%) or did not respond ($n = 1$, 2.9%).

Building the Invisible College: Exposure to New Knowledge and Networks

The qualitative responses to the post-institute survey suggested that participants had found the exposure to a wider range of LGBT psychology research that they sought (*"I gained a lot of knowledge, especially in several themes that were rather new to me intersexuality and transsexuality"*). In some cases, participants made connections and planned joint projects (*"I was connected to other LGBT academics of color (which I specifically needed) and may present with them at the [Convention Name]"*). One participant was *"relieved and happy to find that the attendees were so interested in being collegial and that the institute faculty and support folks did so much to encourage that. I liked the connections made over meals, in the poster sessions, in the staying in the hotel, and in the regular suggestions to work and write together"*. This response was not the first indication that participants were pleasantly surprised by the atmosphere of the Institute. As talk about research among research psychologists is quite ordinary, perhaps such experiences are particularly and unnecessarily rare in the careers of some LGBT Psychologists? Responses to our questions about participants' institutional climate also bear this out.

Fostering Critical Perspectives and Commitment to LGBT Spaces in The Academy

At pre-test, we asked participants to describe, using their own words *"What is the environment like for LGBT Psychology at your current institution (e.g. supportive, discouraging, etc?)"* At post-test we asked participants *"Has your attendance at the institute changed your view of your current institution?"* Of the 33 who responded, 18 indicated "no" and 15 indicated "yes." These 15 then responded to our item *"how has your view of your current institution changed?"* In the pre-test participants were more likely to describe their environment as *supportive* than as *discouraging*; only a very few explicitly critiqued their institutional climate (e.g., *"Ignored. Silent."*). Many descriptions of supportive environments were unqualified (e.g., *The [Institution Name] community is extremely supportive, and representative, of LGBT students and faculty*). However, descriptions of qualified support were equally common (e.g., *"Supportive, but there are some rough patches."* *"Supportive to a certain degree. There is still much work to do."* *"Not actively supportive, but not hostile either."* *"A mixture of supportive and apathetic.(sic)"* *"Very supportive, though not very knowledgeable."*). Some participants described their climate as 'supportive' but also told stories attesting to a lack of support (e.g., *My presumption is that the institution is supportive,*

or doesn't see a reason to make it something to talk about directly, in a good way. As for my fellow students, it is hard to gauge the average climate toward sexual minorities. In an (sic) meeting I was not comfortable discussing my sexuality given the actions/conversation, so I decided not to discuss it much.)

The narratives of the 15 participants who reported afterward that the Summer Institute had changed their perception suggest a changing perception of environments that might previously have been labelled “supportive.” Some participants reported an increase in their own felt sense of entitlement to give voice to LGBT issues within their departments:

Personally I feel more 'legitimised' to bring up LGBT issues during lectures as there is a lack of it. Initially I thought my institution is supportive of LGBT issues, however since I attended the institute I feel that my current institution should provide even more teaching and support on LGBT awareness.

For other participants, the Institute lead them to recognize that they were experiencing a much more supportive environment than many of their counterparts:

After meeting with so many LGBTSI participants who were the only LGBT Psychology scholar at their home institution, I felt more fortunate than ever to be at a place that values, embraces, and funds this type of work. Of course, [Institution Name] is not perfect and could benefit from even more institutional change, but it is better than not having any support at all.

Many participants answered this question by talking about how *they* had changed. Some reported a broadening of academic identity and career goals:

It hasn't changed my view of my current institution, but it did make me question whether I'd be happier in a position that was more LGBT- or sexuality-focused. There were a couple of job ads this cycle that focused on LGBT or sexuality studies from a social science perspective, and participation at the institute led me to think about applying, even though I'm very happy at my current institution.

In one case, this change in perspective on the participant's own career precipitated a rethinking of past decisions:

I realized during the Institute how poorly a fit my current program is for me, but luckily I have a supportive advisor who lets me research what I want. In hindsight I probably would have been better off in a different grad program with more of a women's studies/feminist/gender/sexuality focus.

For still others the institute provided a means of meeting concrete others:

There are some smart people around [Institution Name] doing great work; the institute gave me a chance to meet them.

New Possibilities for Identity Integration

Similarly, when we asked participants how they had changed what they did in daily life, they reported shifts in their socially situated practices. They described changes in the ways that

they put together sexual minority identities and professional identities as LGBT researchers (e.g., *"The Institute rekindled my desire to be assertively out as bisexual in a broad variety of situations," "I think more inclusively about the LGBT community and I am more confident about my interests in pursuing LGBT psychology"*). Some were already engaged in new kinds of professional activity (*"as a result I am now on the [professional committee name] for LGBT concerns along with another participant"*). Some narratives suggest that the Summer Institute was a crucible for the exchange of perspectives among individuals that are too often isolated, leading to new 'creative' imaginations of future careers not prescribed by disciplinary norms (c.f., Brown, 1989):

As my work incorporates more international or transnational dimensions, I have begun to consider opportunities to work, study and live abroad. In some small and silly ways, and in other more meaningful ones, I feel myself expanding beyond the physical, political and scholastic borders that have circumscribed my life up until this past year.

Increased Integration/Representation of LGBT Perspectives in The Classroom

Finally, we examine participants' responses to our questions about teaching to consider what they might be intending to carry forward to interactions with their own students. The pre-test data on teaching suggest that there may be some resistance to making psychology curricula more inclusive of LGBT psychology. Fifteen of 54 delegates (27.8%) didn't answer our question on teaching or reported that it was not applicable to them (*"Prior to the Institute, have you focused on LGBT Psychology in your teaching?"*) Of the remainder, 25 delegates (46.3%) had focused on LGBT Psychology and 14 (25.9%) had not. The answers to the follow up question *"Why or why not?"* saw respondents citing a lack of opportunity, rather than lack of personal interest, as their reason for not yet focusing on LGBT psychology (*"Haven't had the opportunity, but would like to!"*) Respondents cited diverse reasons for focusing teaching on LGBT psychology, including the need to address ideologies that particularly misrepresented or silenced sexual minorities (e.g., *"I believe it is important to give voice to the experiences of LGBT people, especially LGBT people of color in my classrooms."* *"I feel that it is critical to highlight assumptions about heterosexuality in some research."*). Others mentioned reasons to teach LGBT psychology that would apply to any area of psychological research (e.g., *It is one of my key areas of expertise*).

During the 2010 Institute, conversations about teaching ranged further than the specific workshops devoted to it. On the post-Institute survey we asked participants *"Since attending the Institute, have you started thinking about doing something different in your teaching?"* And to tell us what they were doing different if the answer was "yes." Eleven participants (32.5%) did not answer this question or described it as not applicable, five (14.7%) reported not doing anything different, and 18 participants (52.9%) reported doing things differently. Participants in this last group reported feeling validated in their beliefs (e.g., *"I never thought a biologically deterministic approach to LGBT psych was the way to go, and Peter [Hegarty]'s research confirmed this for me."*). Others reported growing confidence in teaching a wider range of topics, and changing their department's culture (*I also used to feel a bit hesitant about including polyamory and BDSM in that seminar, because I was worried that those topics weren't what students (or my department, for that matter) had expected would be covered...Since the Institute, though, I feel less concerned about this*). Still others reported on learning new teaching methods, particularly those modelled in Meg Barker's seminar in which participants used lego to build models of identity (e.g., *I thought about*

using lego blocks to have students construct a scene that represents their perspectives on different topics. I learned this from Meg Barker and I think that it is incredibly creative).

Fostering Research Collaborations

After the 2010 Summer Institute, all three of us decided that it was time to ‘pass the baton;’ each of us was facing new projects and challenges that meant that we were unlikely to run a third Summer Institute. However, we remained interested in encouraging the research collaborations among Institute attendees, to the extent we could. Encouraged by the editors of this journal, we invited participants in the two Summer Institutes to submit manuscripts that reflected ongoing research collaborations that originated in the summer program, and operated across different institutions. We were interested in providing a forum for the product not only of the networking and ‘support’ that was provided through the program, but also in the new research endeavours that might help change the field. Late in 2010, we invited the participants in the 2008 and 2010 Summer Institutes to co-author articles with participants at other institutions with whom they had established contact during the Institutes. The six papers reported here are the final results of that process. However, we would caution readers to remember that participants in both Institutes have published several other papers and made many others presentations at conferences together and separately since the Institutes took place). The papers presented here include the first international survey of modern homonegativity (McDermott and Blair), a new investigation of the relationship between rurality and community development in the US (Swank, Frost, and Fahs), psychometric approaches to sexual fluidity in young women (Preciado and Thompson), analysis of the essentialist and constructivist narratives of practitioners of BDSM (Yost and Hunter), an agenda for research on the psychology of religion among intersex and transgender people (Rodriguez and Follins) and an innovative approach to using intersectionality as a key pedagogical tool for teaching LGBT psychology (Case and Lewis).

Notes

1. California Proposition 8 was a ballot initiative which recognized only marriage between a woman and a man as valid in the State of California, eliminating the rights of same-sex couples to marry. On August 4th, 2010, proposition 8 was overturned in the *Perry v Schwarzenegger* suit by Judge Vaughn Walker who found no compelling state interest in denying the right to marry to same-sex couples. This event occurred during the second Summer Institute. Two of our senior tutors, Charlotte Patterson and Letitia Anna Peplau, had given expert testimony in this case. This ruling was subsequently upheld by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in February 2012. At the time of writing, there is a stay on the granting of marriage licences to same-sex couples in California.
2. ‘Pakeha’ is a Maori word that refers to New Zealanders of European descent, primarily those of British and Irish descent; the majority European groups in New Zealand/Aotearoa. Jeff Adams comments on Pakeha privilege in the context of the inclusion of international delegates in the Summer Institutes in Adams et al. (2010).

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