

DISSERTATION

HETEROSEXUAL ALLY DEVELOPMENT IN COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGISTS:
EXPERIENCES, TRAINING, AND ADVOCACY FOR THE LGBT COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

HETEROSEXUAL ALLY DEVELOPMENT IN COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGISTS: EXPERIENCES, TRAINING, AND ADVOCACY FOR THE LGBT COMMUNITY

When focusing on advocacy for minority rights, it is beneficial to explore the role allies play in advocating for and supporting their peers. Thus, the purpose of this study was to examine how counseling psychologists working in university counseling settings conceptualize their ally work, as well as how their counseling psychology training impacted their ally development. This study was guided by the tradition of phenomenological qualitative study, and constant comparison analysis served as the strategy for inductive analysis. Pre-doctoral interns and senior staff psychologists, who self-identified as heterosexual, were interviewed regarding their experiences and development with ally work. Results indicated that there is wide variation regarding how psychologists view the ally experience, but that individuals find common meaning, challenges, and training experiences within their ally development. In particular, results showed a predominant need for increased training in social justice advocacy and LGBT support within counseling psychology training programs.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Research studies and historical accounts demonstrate the oppression and discrimination experienced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals throughout the years. Thus, communities in support of LGBT rights have sought to identify ways to enable social change and end oppression for this community. Within those efforts, questions arise regarding how to make a difference as well as who is to be involved in this movement. That is, what role do individuals outside of the LGBT community have in these efforts? How do heterosexual individuals advocate for their LGBT peers?

As similar questions have been asked about White psychologists interested in working with ethnic minorities (Mio & Iwasama, 1993), research has cited the consequences and potential benefits on minority communities when members of a majority group become involved in supporting minority rights. Some of the consequences include frustration that an area of research is not recognized until members of a majority group conduct the research and that stereotypes are being perpetuated through inaccurate interpretations of data by majority psychologists, etc. (Mio & Iwasama, 1993). Reported benefits include having a larger base of support, contribution of political influence and privilege, and bringing access to unavailable social networks (Cortese, 2006).

Yet, questions remain regarding how heterosexual allies can best support their LGBT peers. It is important to explore how allies' increased involvement in the LGBT rights movement could contribute to more opportunities for social change. First, analysis should be conducted regarding ally involvement, specifically exploring the trends and

impact on minority communities. In addition, it is important to explore how an ally identity is defined, what behaviors and experiences support ally identities, and exploration regarding how these identities develop and evolve.

Defining “Ally”

The concept of *ally* has been defined a number of different ways throughout the literature (e.g. Getz & Kirkley, 2003; Broido, 2000; DiStefano et al., 2000), but several basic components are in common. The first component of the definition implies that an ally is an individual in any dominant/majority group. Thus, the definition can apply to White, non-Hispanic individuals advocating for the rights of various ethnic minority groups, as well as heterosexual individuals working to end oppression of LGBT persons. Another key part of the definition focuses on whether this person strives to end oppression in both one’s personal and professional life. The final aspect is the most varied and addresses how an ally ends oppression. Existing definitions note that allies end oppression through support of, as an advocate of, or in defense of an oppressed population. For the purposes of this study the most commonly cited definition in the literature will be utilized:

“A person who is a member of the ‘dominant’ or ‘majority’ group who works to end oppression in his or her personal and professional life through support of, and as an advocate for, the oppressed population” (Washington & Evans, 1991, p. 195).

It is important to note that previous studies have used multiple terms, such as ally and advocate, interchangeably or attempt to differentiate the behaviors associated with these two terms (Ji, 2007; Getz & Kirkley, 2003; Washington & Evans, 1991). Due to the availability of definitions of *ally* throughout the literature as well as for the purpose of consistency, ally will be used throughout this study.

Ally Behaviors

The literature on how heterosexual individuals become LGBT allies is sparse. Broido (2000) provided specific ideas and suggestions regarding behaviors of an ally, recommending the use of non-heterosexist language, as well as joining or starting support networks/safe space programs, advising LGBT students, and developing a LGBT speakers program.

DiStefano et al. (2000) explored ally behaviors as well as other important components of ally experiences. Surveying 87 student affairs professionals specifically in a Network for Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Concerns in the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), the most commonly cited ally behaviors were explored as well as how others reacted to ally involvement, and the life experiences that impacted ally development. Results suggested that participating in or providing LGB affirmative programming or training was the most frequently cited type of ally activity, as well as displaying LGB symbols and having supportive relationships with LGB people. In addition, participants frequently reported confronting homophobia and heterosexism among family members, friends, and coworkers, advocating for LGB affirmative institutional policy changes, and assisting LGB student organizations. In general, participants indicated that both LGB and non-LGB people were supportive of their development and involvement. A few participants discussed their fear of violence from individuals who condemned LGB groups. This comprehensive study also explored reasons why participants did not act as allies. Some of the responses included: feeling it was not effective in the long run, needing to pick and choose one's battles, feeling too young or immature to know how to be an ally, and lack of energy.

When exploring ally behaviors, it is essential to identify how these behaviors impact the minority community whom they are supporting. Thus, the literature has explored positive changes that impact both the LGBT community as well as allies and how heterosexual individuals develop ally identities. One of the main outcomes of heterosexual ally involvement is reflection, understanding, and recognition of privilege as heterosexuals (Washington & Evans, 1991), as well as how heterosexuals can use that privilege to positively impact the LGBT community. Previous research (Middleton et al., 2008) specifically explored this component of ally work and how participants in the helping fields of psychology and counseling came to be more cross-culturally aware and competent through analysis of their own privilege. Through this collection of professionals' narratives about their reflections on privilege, participants saw movement from "obliviousness, to awareness, to open-mindedness, to personal transformation, and ultimately, for some, to social action," (Middleton et al., 2008, p. 22). This analysis is important as many members of dominant groups do not easily acknowledge their status as members of a privileged community (Getz & Kirkley, 2003). However, through awareness of this privilege, allies can learn how to play a role in advocating for more equality in regards to sexual and gender identity (Washington & Evans, 1991).

Ally Development Models

Some researchers have focused on potential stage models to describe the developmental processes of allies supporting both ethnic and sexual minorities, which also could be applied to those advocating for non-able bodied persons and religious minorities. Though no systematic model has been developed and empirically supported,

researchers have identified potential frameworks from which individuals may begin developing as allies.

Expansion of Social Identity Models

Broido (2000) expanded Hardiman's (1982) model of social identity, originally designed for White allies. The stages of this model include heterosexual naïve, heterosexual acceptance, heterosexual resistance, heterosexual redefinition, and heterosexual internalization. In the first stage, heterosexual naïve, individuals are not aware of social differences and have not yet learned to associate love between those of the same gender to be different from love between those of different genders. During the second stage of heterosexual acceptance, attitudes are learned and believed, and the attitudes toward LGB people range from revulsion to pity. In the third stage of heterosexual resistance, people begin to realize that not all LGB people fit into the stereotypes originally taught and begin to resist the attitudes and stereotypes previously learned. During the heterosexual redefinition stage, allies focus on using their privilege to influence social change. Finally, in heterosexual internalization, allies integrate their advocacy against homophobia with advocacy to end other areas of discrimination.

Washington & Evans Stage Model

Washington and Evans (1991) also created a stage model of heterosexual ally development and identified four basic levels or stages of being a heterosexual ally: awareness, knowledge/education, skills, and action. In the first stage of awareness, allies seek to become more aware of who they are, and how similar and different they are from their LGB peers. In particular, allies must understand the power and privileges that they receive, accept, and experience as a heterosexual person. During the

knowledge/education stage, allies gain knowledge regarding sexual orientation and the kind of experiences and oppression that LGB individuals have encountered throughout history. In the third stage, skills, allies learn how to communicate the information they learned regarding the oppression and discrimination LGB individuals have faced. Finally, during the action stage, allies use what they have learned and advocate for LGB individuals through workshops, presentations, research, and legal reform.

Using Cass's Theory of LGB Identity Development

As the two models discussed above provide general steps or stages for a broad group of allies, other studies have explored ally development models with more specific groups. Several researchers (e.g. Dillon et al., 2004; Getz & Kirkley, 2003; DiStefano et al., 2000) have focused on ally development post training that focused specifically on heterosexual ally advocacy for the LGBT community or targeted already self-identified and active allies. One of the first studies exploring the development of LGB affirmative counselors focused specifically on career counseling at Illinois State University (Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995). The authors analyzed their own experiences and studied the stages their staff moved through in order to provide more comprehensive career and life planning services for gay and lesbian clients. The authors used Cass's theory (1979, 1984), which describes cognitive, affective, social, and behavioral variables involved in identity development for gay and lesbian individuals.

Cass's (1979, 1984) theory consists of six stages of identity development which many gay and lesbian individuals experience, including: Identity Confusion, Identity Comparison, Identity Tolerance, Identity Acceptance, Identity Pride, and Identity Synthesis. As individuals move through these stages, their self-esteem and intellectual

ability to further understand the concept of sexual orientation increases (Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995). Although the Illinois State University staff in Gelberg and Chojnacki's (1995) study recognized that the identity development process for their gay and lesbian clients would be more challenging and oppressed, the staff found parallels between the six stages gay and lesbian individuals experience, and what they personally encountered throughout this process.

In the first stage, counselors become aware of the importance of increased knowledge about these issues and set goals to become more affirmative career counselors. During this initial stage, counselors also expressed low levels of self-esteem in this area and, at the outset, were more private about these thoughts and goals. In the ambivalence stage, counselors experienced a sense of incongruence between their goals and the actual behaviors exhibited. Next, in the empowerment stage, counselors identified a sense of increased self-efficacy and were able to recognize more developmental progress in their awareness and actions. During the activism stage, the counselors become more professionally active at the local and national levels by writing materials that could be added to the career center's library, sponsoring career service programs for gay and lesbian individuals, and provided increased staff training in the areas of heterosexism and homophobia. Next, in the pride stage, counselors reported increased congruence between their goals and behaviors, and challenged other professionals who did not recognize the value in increased training and program intervention. Finally, in the integration stage, counselors noted heightened personal connections between what they had learned and their own feelings about heterosexism and homophobia. Also during this stage, counselors attended more classes and provided more opportunities for staff-wide

programs on these issues (Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995). The authors specifically identified this development as a lifelong endeavor. Final analysis suggested that the overall time period for which counselors may cycle through these stages depends on the professional goals each counselor set.

Although there is little research to support these stages with other career counselors, the experiences of the career staff at Illinois State University provided an initial example of the application of ally stage development into applied practice and experiences as counselors. Following this foundational study, other researchers have begun to explore how stage models of ally identity development might fit within other groups or professionals.

Rainbow Visibility Project

In 2003, Getz and Kirkley sought to explore heterosexual ally identity development within a specific group known as the Rainbow Visibility Project. The Rainbow Visibility Project was initially created with the purpose of raising awareness regarding LGB concerns on the campus of a Roman Catholic university (Getz & Kirkley, 2003). The study focused on faculty, staff, and students who received training and education on issues of sexual orientation. Through this qualitative study, five stages of heterosexual ally development were identified: entry, fear of the unknown, acknowledgement of privilege, engagement, and conscious self-identification as allies/advocates. Though similar to the approach taken from the Gelberg and Chojnacki (1995) study, this exploration added to the literature because the authors observed and interviewed individuals during their immediate process of ally development, as opposed to reflecting on how that development occurred years later. In addition, this study added

breadth by exploring development for faculty, staff, and students, finding similar processes regardless of role in the university.

Ally Experiences and Challenges

Other researchers have focused on specific reflections of allies' experiences, not necessarily studying the development of a heterosexual ally identity model. Dillon et al. (2004) explored specific experiences of allies who were counselors in training. This study originated out of the reality that many counseling graduate students feel inadequately trained to work with LGB clients (Dillon et al., 2004). A group of ten graduate students from a large Northeastern university met weekly to discuss LGBT issues and feelings about being allies. Though a specific stage model was not proposed by Dillon et al. (2004), the outcomes of these meetings were reported to be increased sociopolitical awareness, insight-oriented learning, and increased reflection on sexual self-identity and how the students interacted with LGBT individuals.

In another in-depth study of ally experiences, Borgman (2009) studied the experiences of doctoral level psychologists who also identified as Christian allies to the LGB population. The study asserted that the Christian ally process may involve extensive awareness of the potential conflict between values and identities, experiences of confusion or dissonance, challenging and redefining oneself, and later integration and honoring of one's multiple identities. The study also identified the experiences that helped Christian allies in these processes, which included: relationships, education and training, emotional experiences, and cultural factors.

In a very personal account, Ji (2007) published writings reflecting on his own development as an ally to the LGBT community. Ji (2007) discussed his challenge of not

knowing where to find mentors during his ally development process and proposed the importance of experienced allies advertising their willingness to support those in earlier stages of development. He also reflected on the anxiety and uncertainty of not knowing how his LGBT peers would react to his ally development, as well as his worries regarding having his own sexual identity questioned by non-LGBT persons.

Counseling Psychology and Ally Development

The profession of counseling psychology has a long history of emphasizing social justice and diversity concerns. Social justice has been labeled to be the fifth force in counseling psychology (Ratts, D'Andrea, & Arredondo, 2009). Before further exploring this connection, it is important to establish a clear sense of what social justice means. Social justice is a complex topic and not easily defined (Miller, 1999; Lewis, 2010). When examining a broad definition, this concept relates to issues of fairness and an assessment of whether one is receiving what one is due (Miller, 1978; Prilleltensky & Prilleltensky, 2006). Research has supported a number of more specific definitions of social justice (Goodman et al., 2004; Toporek et al., 2006). For the purpose's of this paper, the definition offered by Lewis (2010) will be cited due to its' comprehensive nature of addressing how social change occurs on a macro and individual level. Thus, an inclusive definition of social justice involves:

The fair and equitable distribution of rights, opportunities, and resources between individuals and between groups of individuals within a given society, and the establishment of relations within this society such that all individuals are treated with an equal degree of respect and dignity (p. 146).

This description originated from the definition offered by Goodman et al. (2004), but Lewis (2010) expanded on these ideas to include treatment of individuals, which is an

essential component of ally work for counseling psychologists in addition to exploring how they can contribute to social change on a macro level.

Speight and Vera (2008) note that the principles of counseling psychology are in alignment with core social justice values and the field of counseling psychology specifically values diversity. More specifically, Heppner (1997) wrote, “The training and philosophical traditions of counseling psychology are ideally suited to address major societal problems,” (p.10). These statements are supported by historical accounts displaying the field’s focus on addressing the needs of underserved populations (Hage, 2003).

A review of the historical roots of the field of counseling psychology is helpful in more fully understanding how counseling psychology has developed a focus on diversity and social justice issues. One of the major changes proposed by counseling psychologists that later evolved into a focus on diversity was the idea that those with mental health diagnoses had strengths that could be used in their rehabilitation (Woody, Hansen, & Rossberg, 1989). These ideas began a shift from a focus on diagnosis and illness to concentration on normal developmental problems and the factors that interfered with their development (Woody, Hansen, & Rossberg, 1989). This early shift provided the foundation for counseling psychologists to take these themes a step further and explore how diversity issues impact clients’ problems and strengths, including an emphasis on how training in diversity issues can be a larger part of the work of counseling psychologists. In addition, a focus on prevention has also been highlighted. This concentration was apparent at the earliest stages of growth within the field.

Counseling psychology more officially emerged in the field of psychology in 1951 (Munley et al., 2004). At the Northwestern Conference on Training of Counseling Psychologists, held in August of 1951, the terms “counseling psychology” and “counseling psychologist” were introduced for the first time. This conference also highlighted the role of counseling psychology, which stated:

The professional goal of the counseling psychologist is to foster the psychological development of the individual. This includes all people on the adjustment continuum from those who function at tolerable levels of adequacy to those suffering from more severe psychological disturbances...Counseling stresses the positive and the preventative. (APA, 1952a, p. 175).

As focus over the past three decades has centered on prevention, counseling psychologists have played a large role in not only adding to the knowledge base on diversity, but also working toward more culturally sensitive research, training, and clinical practices (D’Andrea, 2005). Developments in the 1980s and 1990s highlighted the emergence of multiculturalism and diversity as a prominent feature of counseling psychology in the United States. The field of counseling psychology soon became a leader in addressing multicultural concerns within the context of professional psychology in the United States (Munley et al., 2004). In addition, psychologists within the field emphasized establishment of practice guidelines and competencies related to working with diverse clientele (Gelso & Fretz, 2001). Multiple groups were also established within the field to encourage increased study and attention on multiculturalism including: the Board of Social and Ethical Responsibility and Psychology (BSERP) in 1971; The Committee on Women Psychology and Division 35, Psychology of Women in 1973; the APA Minority Fellowship Programs in 1974; The Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs in

1979; Division 44, the Society for the Study of Gay and Lesbian Issues, in 1980; and the Board of Ethnic Minority Affairs (BEMA) in 1981 (Heppner et al., 2000).

This emphasis on multiculturalism is also exemplified in the commitment to diversity evident in counseling psychology training programs. In 1986, the APA Committee on Accreditation included cultural diversity as a part of effective training within the field (Munley et al., 2004). As more attention has been devoted to diversity within training programs, Murdock et al. (1998) outlined a model training program in counseling psychology to provide a guideline for all counseling psychology training programs. The values of the field in regard to diversity issues are illustrated by the recognition that counseling psychology programs give a high priority to “actions that indicate respect for and understanding of cultural and individual diversity,” (p. 661). The model program highlights the need to have respect for and understanding of issues of diversity as a part of a program’s philosophy, objectives, and curriculum. This model program also includes an entire section devoted to how to train students in the valuing and understanding of cultural diversity (Murdock et al., 1998). Following this requirement, applied psychology graduate programs have reported an increase in their integration of multicultural content (Smith et al., 2006). Clearly, the field of counseling psychology holds cultural diversity as one of its main focuses, demonstrated through the field’s role in supporting underserved populations and its commitment to training in the area of cultural diversity.

Furthermore, the preparation and work done at the 4th National Counseling Psychology Conference (Baker & Subich, 2008; Fouad et al., 2004) demonstrated how the field’s values also align with core social justice values. The Houston Conference,

which was the largest meeting of counseling psychologists ever, devoted a large portion of its agenda to social justice and advocacy for counseling psychologists. One of the main purposes of this conference was to identify ways that counseling psychologists work toward social justice by making a difference in the lives of their clients, communities, and students (Fouad et al., 2004). The conference highlighted specific contributions to social justice by counseling psychologists, within their own field, including the greater parity for women in leadership roles and greater visibility and inclusiveness for racial minorities and disabled persons. Counseling psychologists involved in this conference also created social action groups (SAGs) that worked toward addressing a social action agenda for the meeting. The SAGs helped psychologists to collaborate and generate broader training, research, and public policy agendas (Fouad et al., 2004). This commitment yielded recommendations for counseling psychologists as well as identified barriers to social change. In addition, domains of action and interventions for counseling psychologists to consider and utilize were discussed. The amount of work and time devoted to this theme of the Houston Conference highlighted the emphasis which counseling psychology places on social justice issues.

Counseling Psychology and LGBT

Not only does the field of counseling psychology highlight the importance of studying and understanding issues of cultural diversity and social justice, but the field has specifically played an important role regarding LGBT issues. Croteau et al. (2008) asserted that counseling psychologists have played key roles in the evolution toward more complex conceptualizations of sexual identity and that “an LGBT affirmative discourse is definitely present in the profession” (p. 196).

Division 17 of APA (Society of Counseling Psychology, SCP) has an active section that specifically focuses on LGBT issues, with a mission of understanding LGBT issues as counseling psychologists and those in training. This specific focus is not seen in other psychological communities, such as within the Society for Clinical Psychology or the Division of School Psychology (Society for Clinical Psychology; School Psychology). The inclusion of LGBT issues within the Counseling Psychology division provides evidence for the value the field places on supporting and advocating for sexual and gender minorities.

At the same time, Croteau et al. (2008) proposed that the LGBT affirmative discourse should be continually strengthened in the field of counseling psychology. “Discourse in the profession is often shallow, affirming that ‘gay is okay’ but failing to promote advocacy that would change systemic inequalities and heterosexist norms,” (p. 196). Though the counseling psychology field has made progress regarding awareness and study of LGBT issues, continued work is needed. Thus, this recognition of increased attention within the field promotes the importance of exploring how counseling psychologist allies can more deeply and fully advocate for LGBT individuals and how that process may unfold.

Counseling Psychology and University Counseling Centers

It is also important to acknowledge the relationship between the field of Counseling Psychology and University Counseling Centers, as well as how this relationship impacts training on issues of diversity. Counseling psychology and university counseling centers often have relationships due to the role university counseling centers play in training and employing counseling psychologists. During the

early emerging stages of the field of counseling psychology, it was anticipated that educational settings would be a central home for the field, moving away from settings such as hospitals (Munley et al., 2004). Thus, the fit between counseling psychology and university counseling centers was inevitable.

Simino and Wachowiak (1983) conducted a study specifically exploring the relationship between counseling psychology and careers in university counseling centers by surveying 381 members of the American Psychological Association. Results showed that 85% of the participants had some training experience in a university counseling center during their graduate training and 71% of the sample obtained post-graduate employment at a university counseling center. Research has also highlighted how counseling psychology graduate programs and university counseling centers can have positive relationships (Popes, 1981), as it is often common for faculty in a graduate program to be employed at the local university counseling center or for trainees from the graduate program to be involved in practicum opportunities at a university counseling center. Division 17 of APA (Society of Counseling Psychology) has a section that focuses on college and counseling centers, demonstrating the importance of the connection between the field of counseling psychology and university counseling centers. More specifically, one of the purposes of the Division 17 section on college and counseling centers is to provide training and support for counseling center psychologists in their work with diverse populations. This goal highlights the emphasis both counseling psychologists and university counseling centers place on issues of diversity and how to best support students of diverse backgrounds.

Present Study

Previous studies have sought to understand how ally development evolves for heterosexual individuals. The present study sought to understand, in a deeper and phenomenological sense, the concept of being an ally and how that development process may occur for those specifically trained as counseling psychologists working in a university counseling setting. The interviews and work compiled in this study hoped to expand on initial studies exploring ally identity and better comprehend how counseling psychologists specifically understand this concept and identity.

Many previous studies have explored ally development in groups of professionals specifically identified in organizations or trainings focusing on support of LGBT students and clients. This study aimed to explore how psychologists generally view this concept, as professionals that may or may not already be actively involved in LGBT organizations or networks. The purpose was to determine whether training as counseling psychologists is enough to encourage ally development beyond basic ethical standards, or if additional training and awareness is needed for future counselors. The study also aimed to learn about additional examples or experiences of ally involvement that can be highlighted through the work of the psychologists participating in this study. As there are some variations in the definition of “ally” cited in the research literature, it was important to explore how each participant understands the concept and definition of ally. This allowed the primary researcher to explore how the participants’ definitions vary at all from the definitions commonly used in the research literature. Participants were also asked to speak in regard to their transition of developing an ally identity, if that is an identity that

they have adopted. Broido (2000) points out that not many studies look at this specific transition.

Inclusiveness was another purpose of this study. Though many studies cited in this paper have focused specifically on ally development for LGB individuals or just gay and lesbian individuals, this study aimed to expand the way psychologists understand ally support. To be inclusive and gain information regarding ally behaviors for subpopulations within the LGBT community, both ally support for bisexual and transgender individuals were included. It is important to note that sexual orientation and gender identity are different concepts that are associated with different identities and experiences. However, there are also common experiences and needs for those struggling with these concerns, and this study wanted to learn about ally understandings for both sexual and gender identities. In addition, the study explored any other understandings of ally development for bisexual versus gay or lesbian individuals. The questions focused on ally concerns for bisexual students due to how the identity status of bisexual individuals can potentially be more invisible, which can have both positive and negative ramifications. Thus, this study included questions that asked participants to explore their understanding of ally identity in relation to different subpopulations within the LGBT community.

Exploring the kind of training or lack of training that psychologists received, which aided their development as allies, was another goal of this study. Research shows that many graduate students feel inadequately trained to work with LGB clients (Dillon et al., 2004). Thus, it is important to understand how lack of training or mentoring may prohibit the development of ally identities, as well as acknowledging what training models or interventions may be supportive and effective with ally identity development.

Chapter 2: Methods

Participants

Participants in the present study were doctoral level counseling psychologists and pre-doctoral interns currently employed at university counseling centers across the country. Only staff that self-identified as heterosexual were asked to participate. This study specifically focused on those trained in counseling programs to learn more about how the training background in counseling psychology impacted their understanding of the concept of ally and how that relates to the field's values of social justice. There was no distinction made between those who received Doctors of Psychology and those who received Doctors in Philosophy or Doctors in Education, as the most important criterion was a training background in counseling psychology. Pre-doctoral interns were included in the study to explore if recent changes in the values of counseling psychology training programs have impacted students' conceptualizations of social justice and their roles as psychologists. Participants were not required to identify as allies to participate in the study, as the aim of this study was to explore these concepts in both those already familiar with ally development, as well as psychologists who may be less experienced in this area.

This study focused on psychologists working in university counseling centers for several reasons. First, there are ample ways to become involved in LGBT ally work in campus communities, allowing for a range of understandings and definitions of ally development. It is also essential to target a specific audience to fit within the phenomenological framework. Creswell (2007) notes that it is important to avoid creating

a participant pool that is too diverse, as that may increase the difficulty for a researcher to find common experiences, themes, and the overall essence of the experience. Thus, narrowing the field of counseling psychologists to those in university counseling centers fit the intentions for seeking participants within a phenomenological framework. Also, a career in a university counseling center is a personal goal of the author of this study. Thus, exploring this concept in this setting is personally relevant and meaningful.

Fourteen pre-doctoral psychology interns and psychologists participated in the study, 12 women and 2 men. Though fifteen participants were initially interviewed, one participant dropped out of the study after completing the first interview, stating that she did not have enough to say on the topic. Ages ranged from 27 to 63 ($M = 37.57$, $SD = 12.33$). A majority (71%) of the participants identified as White, non-Hispanic, 7% identified as African-American, 7% identified as Asian-American, 7% identified as Bi-racial, and 7% identified as Jewish. Thirteen participants were trained in a Ph.D program in counseling psychology, and one participant was trained in a Psy.D program. Five of the participants were currently pre-doctoral interns working at university counseling centers to finish their degree. The following are the geographic range of states in which participants were working: California, Colorado, Kansas, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, Utah, and Washington. Also collected was the geographic range of states in which participants were trained, which was reported as follows: California, Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Kentucky, Minnesota, Mississippi, Tennessee, Texas, and Utah.

Methodology

Qualitative methodology is a form of research conducted in a natural setting in which the researcher gathers words or pictures in an inductive manner. Researchers

specifically focus on the meaning participants give to the experience being studied.

Creswell (1997) provided an applicable definition of qualitative methodology:

Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting. (p. 15)

This study was guided by the tradition of phenomenology and constant comparison analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) served as the strategy for inductive analysis.

Phenomenology is a broad philosophical approach with multiple roots and methods within the overall category. Giorgi and Giorgi (2008) describe multiple kinds of phenomenology. For the purposes of this paper, only a basic rationale and understanding of phenomenology has been provided. Phenomenologists focus on describing what all participants share in common as they experience a particular/similar phenomenon, with the overall purpose of describing the “universal essence” of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). This approach focuses on the “how” and the “what,” not seeking to understand the “why” of the phenomenon.

Though the roots of phenomenology as a philosophical system can be traced back to Husserl in the 1800s, researchers have more recently created and identified methodologies that can be used by psychologists to better describe and understand psychological phenomena (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2008; Willig, 2001). Interpretive phenomenology is one such method, which seeks to understand the quality of an individual experience, but recognizes that a researcher can never directly access the ultimate experience of the individual. Thus, interpretive phenomenology proposes that the work described by the researcher is always an interpretation of the individual’s

experience as there is an interaction between the researcher's own world view and the participant (Willig, 2001).

Procedure and Data Collection

Counseling psychologists were recruited by e-mails sent through a University Counseling Center (UCC) training directors' listserv, which contacted all training directors in the country registered with this listserv. It is estimated that around 200 training directors received this initial e-mail. The listserv was accessed by the training director at the local counseling center at which the primary author was employed during the initial stages of this study. The e-mail included information regarding the purpose of the study, eligibility to participate, and IRB approval information. Training directors were asked to forward the information to their staff. Information was specifically provided to clarify that the author would not be asking participants to discuss their own sexual identity, but that the study was exploring ally awareness with those who **self-identify as heterosexual**. If interested, they were asked to e-mail or call the author of this study to arrange a time for the interview to be conducted and initial paperwork to be completed. An informed consent document including information about the study and a demographics form were mailed to all interested participants.

Phone interviews lasting no longer than sixty minutes each were conducted with interested UCC staff. The semi-structured interview questions utilized are presented in Appendix A. Though semi-structured interview questions were utilized, the interview is seen as flexible and an emergent process was integrated during the interviews. This method involves asking follow-up questions based on the information participants share as well as using the results or experience from one interview to inform the next. The

interviewer followed-up with questions as she saw fit and expanded on information provided, in order to most fully understand the themes presented. All of the interviews were conducted via phone, and recorded using appropriate equipment. The primary researcher also took notes during each interview, in case of any issues with the recording equipment. Each interview was then transcribed by a research assistant and/or the primary researcher and e-mailed back to the participant to verify that the information was correct. Qualitative software was not used for the analysis due to lack of funding and access to such programs. Thus, all coding was done manually. Analysis was conducted throughout this process as described below in the proposed analyses section.

Interviews continued until saturation or redundancy was reached, as analysis was conducted simultaneously with the interviews. Saturation is the point at which no new information emerges from the data, and theoretical saturation occurs when the themes or codes “account for all of the data that have been gathered and illustrate the complexity of the phenomenon of interest (Morrow, 2007, p. 217; Strauss, 1987). Saturation was evaluated by analyzing the themes that resulted from the transcriptions and examining whether or not new themes of note were continuing to be revealed. As new themes continued to emerge from the data, more interviews were conducted until themes were similar or repeated. Morrow (2005) highlights that analyzing numbers is not as meaningful in an interview-based qualitative study. Patton (1990) notes that “validity, meaningfulness, and insights generated from qualitative inquiry have more to do with the information-richness of the cases selected and the analytical capabilities of the researcher than with sample size (p.185).

A follow-up interview of about fifteen minutes in length was also scheduled with the participants for two purposes. First, this follow-up interview allowed participants to share any inaccurate information found in the transcript. Second, the follow-up interview provided an opportunity for participants to share any additional thoughts or reactions to the interview. Thirteen of the fourteen participants followed-up and engaged in the second interview and only one participant engaged in only the first of the two interviews.

Both maximum variation and snowball sampling were used. As previous studies exploring ally development have focused on specific groups of participants, the goal of this study was to sample a variety of participants within the overall focus group of counseling psychologists employed at university counseling centers. Gender, ethnicity, year of graduation, and degree were considered when interviewing participants and efforts were made to have a range of participants in relation to the demographic variables presented above. Snowball sampling was used at the end of each interview, as participants were asked if there were any colleagues at different university counseling centers that they recommended for participation in the study. This follow-up question also focused on the particular subgroup that was of interest. Specifically, though efforts were made to seek more male and older participants, those individuals did not follow-up or express interest in the present study.

Establishing Trustworthiness

There are a number of strategies that can be employed in order to increase validity or trustworthiness of qualitative research. Qualitative researchers are encouraged to apply at least two strategies to boost trustworthiness (Creswell, 1997). For this particular study, four main strategies were implemented to enhance trustworthiness.

In order to prevent the researcher from becoming over-involved, the reflexivity technique was used to assess the influence of the primary researcher's background, perceptions, and interests on the research topic. The primary researcher kept two journals to record several topics. A field journal was kept to record daily schedules and logistics. A personal diary was also kept to reflect the researcher's thoughts, ideas, hypotheses, questions, problems, and frustrations. This method is intended to minimize the effects of researcher biases by being open and aware of personal feelings in order to address those feelings. Yet, it is important to note that in accordance with the phenomenological approach used in this study, the work produced will always be an interpretation of the participants' reports. The personal diary helped the researcher be aware of her feelings and thoughts throughout the study, and allowed her to reflect on the role those experiences played in the study.

The second method employed to increase trustworthiness was peer examination. The primary researcher discussed the research process and findings with one member of her research team and her advisor, both of whom are trained in qualitative methods and familiar with the coding process. Specific coding results and strategies were discussed throughout the process, as the main researcher worked through the transcripts. Each member of the research team independently viewed codes presented/created. If any disagreements or discrepancies arose within the coding process, a plan was created to meet with the two reviewers and discussions in relation to the codes would be held until a consensus was reached among the three reviewers. No meetings were necessary for this present study as no disagreement occurred among reviewers.

Member checking was also utilized. Transcripts were sent back to the participants via e-mail in order to check for accuracy of transcription, as well as to offer participants an opportunity to share any additional thoughts or ideas that came up after the interview. All participants were also asked if they would like to receive a copy of the written results. This will also contribute to the trustworthiness of the study, as participants can later comment on any inaccuracies or questions regarding the themes or description of data.

To allow readers to transfer information to other settings and situations, rich, thick description (Morrow, 2005, Gertz, 1973, 1983) has been used in the final writing of the results from the study. Within this description, direct quotes and information collected from participants has been inserted in the text. This method helps to ensure trustworthiness as it connects direct information from participants to the themes, and provides a context for these themes so that the information can be generalized to other situations.

Personal Perspective

The primary researcher was a 27 year-old, European-American, heterosexual, female, doctoral graduate student in a Ph.D. counseling psychology program. She identifies as a feminist-interpersonal therapist and that framework is essential to note when representing the author's perspective. She has close relationships with those in the gay and lesbian community, and is currently exploring her own identity development as an ally to the LGBT community. It is important to note that the primary researcher has had her own experiences during her graduate training with ally development and wondered how her experiences fit or differed with other allies' developmental experiences. She was also exploring ways to seek further mentoring in this area.

The primary researcher was unsure what the results would display, but anticipated that counseling psychologists would be honest and aware regarding their identities as allies and how those identities were compatible with their behaviors. In addition, the researcher hoped to gain information regarding how training programs are preparing students to develop these identities and if any recent changes in graduate counseling program development impacted these findings. As the ethics of the APA (2003) require psychologists not to discriminate against individuals based on others' sexual orientations and gender identities, and also encourage psychologists to gain training and supervision in areas of multicultural competence, psychologists are expected to put opposing values aside and be able to work with individuals of all sexual orientations and gender identities. The author was unsure whether counseling psychologists would feel compelled to move beyond the ethical expectations of being an affirmative counselor, and also see that additional behaviors are needed in order to explore one's status as an ally to the LGBT community.

The peer reviewer was a 26-year-old European-American, heterosexual, female, doctoral graduate student in a Ph.D. counseling psychology program. She also had close friendships with those in the gay and lesbian community, and has undergone exploration into her own LGBT ally identity. The peer reviewer had little knowledge of the research surrounding LGBT ally development, and thus was unsure what the outcome of the study would be. The reviewer expected to find differences in ally identities across individuals, as well as graduate counseling programs. However, she had little expectations about what the results would show.

Chapter 3: Analyses

Step 1: Interviews and Transcription

Sixty-minute phone interviews were conducted by the primary researcher and then transcribed soon after the interview. A research assistant or the primary researcher completed the transcriptions. The entire contents of the transcripts were analyzed. Transcripts were then sent back to participants to check for accuracy, and a follow-up interview was conducted. The results of the follow-up interview were also transcribed by a research assistant or the primary researcher.

Step 2: Open Coding

Each transcript was described and analyzed using an inductive approach. First, the “open coding” method was conducted to produce a large set of codes for each transcript (Glaser, 1978; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The “open coding” process, also known as Level I coding, produces concepts/codes that fit the data being analyzed (Hutchinson, 1988; Strauss, 1987). There was increased focus on the data that produced concepts that related to “conditions, interactions among actors, strategies and tactics, and consequences” of interest to this particular research question (Strauss, 1987, pp. 27-28).

Step 3: Finding Categories Among Codes

The next phase of analysis examined the relationships among the various codes created and moved the open codes up to a more abstract level, through categorization of concepts. The level I codes were taken from each individual transcript and then put together in categories that addressed the codes for all of the transcripts. These new codes were labeled as the level II codes (Hutchinson, 1988).

Step 4: Analyses of Themes and Other Variables

The final phase of the analysis consisted of analyzing the level II codes across all participants and important classification variables, including age, gender, ethnicity, role in agency, and year of training. This facilitated the process of finding the major themes that fit the data, producing level III codes (Hutchinson, 1988). After the level III codes were produced, the data was formulated in order to address the research questions of this study.

Chapter 4: Results

After conducting the interviews and examining the different levels of abstraction regarding the codes developed, themes were analyzed in the context of the different classification variables of participants. There was no trend regarding gender and the developmental process, except that it can be noted that many more women expressed interest in this study than males, making it more challenging to explore trends within gender identities. No conclusive patterns were seen based on geographic location, either regarding where participants were trained or where they were currently practicing.

However, there were notable differences when reviewing demographic variables such as age and ethnicity. In general, participants trained in the early 1980s or before expressed less experience and training regarding LGBT and social justice issues while in their graduate programs. For example, one of the participants in the older cohort of those interviewed identified what was lacking in this participant's program "so when I started this work, I had no training in my academic program with LGBT individuals and had no identified (LGBT) faculty members at that time" (Participant 4). Though this was not true for all participants trained in this era, participants discussed having more experiences of learning about the issues at their workplace or through personal interactions. There were some added components to the developmental processes for participants who did not identify as White, non-Hispanic. These participants understood the ally process with a different layer of knowledge. They discussed how their understandings of the term ally were shaped by their own personal experiences with allies to their ethnic communities

and identities. One participant highlighted how other cultural identities impact one's belief of ally engagement.

I think that is kind of the reason I approach being an ally that way. Just because you are an ally doesn't mean you get anything. It doesn't mean that community may not still want to have their private spaces, so try to not get too caught up in that term or what it means, because of my own experience of being a part of a cultural community, and how we view allies for us (Participant 9).

This quote exhibited the beliefs this participant held about the process of ally engagement and how that process is impacted by the needs of the community. For this participant, this belief came from the experience of being a member of an oppressed group and reflecting on the needs of that particular group. Other allies may or may not have engaged in this kind of reflection depending on the identities of privilege they hold.

The following themes exhibit the important data that emerged from this study. Notable sub-themes and contributions to the literature are also described within each theme. Five main themes are discussed below: 1) ally meaning and essence, 2) ally growth and development, 3) ally challenges, 4) intersection, and 5) diversity within the LGBT community. The main themes and sub-themes are also outlined in Table 1.

Ally Meaning and Essence

The present study sought to learn more about how counseling psychologists define the term ally in addition to how they understand and apply ally work. The main sub-themes within this theme included how participants defined the term ally, terminology which participants use when discussing this work, the values associated with their ally identities, and the behaviors and activities participants integrated into their ally identities. Overall, the meaning participants gave to this concept varied, and builds on information previously shared in the literature presented earlier in this study.

Definition. Participants were asked to define the term ally in order to determine whether the participants' definitions matched those presented in the literature. Despite the wide range of descriptions regarding the concept of "ally," three main components were identified in their definition. First, most participants presented the idea that "ally" is not a title or label, but a process or way of being in the world. Participants talked about the fact that their ally development was always evolving and growing. They disagreed with the idea that attending certain trainings or engaging in a number of activities would achieve an ally identity. Second, participants talked in depth about how advocacy is a main component of ally work. The following ally advocacy components were suggested: educating other heterosexuals about the LGBT community and heterosexual privilege, challenging derogatory comments, advocating for equal laws, and supporting the efforts and programming of the local LGBT community. Third, participants highlighted that continually examining one's privilege, as a part of a dominant group, is a central component to the definition of an ally. Discussion occurred regarding how exploration into their privilege impacts ally work. Most participants addressed the same components in their responses as the definition presented earlier in this study. In addition, they provided meaningful and comprehensive explanations of how that definition fit for each of them individually.

Terminology. Exploring how individuals understand the term ally led into conversations about the interchangeable terms that are used in this area, which are primarily ally and advocate. Some identified these terms very similarly, and did not see a distinction as important or helpful to their ally work. For others, the distinction was important for both themselves and the LGBT community. How participants understood these terms appeared

to depend on the agency culture or local politics in which they worked, their personal experiences with the LGBT community, and participants' own experiences as members of other underrepresented groups.

One participant described how this participant became more knowledgeable, confident, and able to do more for the LGBT community as this participant grew as an ally. Through this process, this participant talked about how members of the community specifically labeled the participant as an advocate because of the participant's skills and involvement with the community.

“ Moving from that role, moving from being an ally to being an advocate, where I was going out and trying to initiate activities and presentations and not just supporting what was already being done by the members of the community, but creating experiences for the members of the community... I was introducing myself as an ally and identifying myself as an ally, and it was a member of the community who said, no, you are an advocate, because this is what you are doing, and educated me about it. (Participant 7)

This participant continued to share how, in this participant's experience, the distinction between ally and advocate was important for members of the LGBT community because it signified a different level of commitment.

Another participant struggled with the label of advocate and what that term may signify. This participant expressed concern that the term advocate may be less collaborative than ally and may imply that people might push their privilege onto others as opposed to working collaboratively. Other participants explored the fact that they do not typically use either term in their professional identities or work with clients. One participant discussed how those terms would not be received well within some students' backgrounds and cultures. Thus, this participant talked about aiming to do the work of an

ally, but also being careful about how that identity is labeled within the work environment in order to be inclusive of clients' various identities.

Values. Participants moved beyond sharing what the various terms meant to them, identifying how they understood the whole experience. Many expressed that they cannot label themselves as an ally, and that only the community they are advocating for has the right to claim someone as an ally. Participants explained this value in different ways. First, the act of individuals labeling themselves as allies does not mean that the community for which they are advocating would describe them as allies. A person may not be welcomed into an underrepresented group and may not be someone the community would like to advocate with them/for them. Second, some participants expressed the danger that can come with self-labeling as an ally because it may allow heterosexual individuals to stop their growth if they feel they have reached their desired end-goal. Some expressed concern that once psychologists self-identify as allies, they might stop challenging stereotypes and therefore miss biases that can negatively impact their work as allies. The quote below highlights the value that many participants emphasized regarding the constant need for awareness and growth.

Like most things, we avoid pain, and the stuff we are talking about here is painful, it is you peeling back what I need to see and telling me, you're still not seeing it... we think that we have gotten somewhere that we haven't gotten. I think we fool ourselves into thinking that we are further down the road..." (Participant 15)

Based on participants' responses, there was some disagreement regarding whether being a counseling psychologist qualified a psychologist automatically to be an ally. Some identified that based on individual beliefs and values, not all counseling

psychologists may be LGBT allies. Another participant expressed wonderment that counseling psychologists could not be allies to the LGBT community.

It just seems like if you're talking to counseling psychologists about the whole ally thing, it just seems like uh how could they not, you know? I don't know it's interesting. (Participant 1)

These various opinions reflected, at the minimum, a hope that counseling psychologists would receive the kind of training and hold a set of values that fit the role of being an ally to the LGBT community. Unfortunately, some have experienced personal relationships with colleagues that have demonstrated a different outcome.

Behaviors. Participants shared multiple activities, behaviors, and experiences that they have been involved in as a part of their ally identity or role. Table 2 demonstrates some of the common activities reported by participants as well as some of the common categories of those behaviors and experiences. Behaviors fell into the following categories: clinical, educational, and institutional/campus/community activities.

Ally Growth and Development

As they described their growth processes as allies and counseling psychologists, many of the participants shared personal stories and experiences as a part of that process. The four sub-themes within this overarching theme explored how relationships impact ally growth, how others' responses to their work impact their ally development, how experiences with individuals affirming their own identities impacts their development, and the variation and fluidity seen within the ally development process. It is important to note that the title of this category is ally growth process and development. Though psychologists were not required to identify as allies to the LGBT community to participate in this study, all of the participants self-identified as allies. There was

variation regarding how strongly each participant held this identity and variation in where each participant described their place in this growth process. Despite the variations, when viewing the results of this study, these themes represented the self-described growth of either self-identified allies or psychologists who have been identified by some members of the LGBT community as allies.

Relationships. One of the most commonly shared experiences that either initiated or deeply contributed to ally growth for the participants was having one or more relationships with members of the LGBT community. Some participants talked about relationships with gay family members, neighbors, friends, etc. as they were growing up, which impacted the formation of their affirming views of the LGBT community. Others talked about having more general and supportive attitudes toward the LGBT community, which were strengthened in graduate school. After developing strong relationships with colleagues or mentors in their graduate programs, some participants described specifically choosing to become more active and educated around LGBT issues as a way to advocate for colleagues and friends, as well as clients.

Responses. Another sub-theme that emerged related to how others' responses to their ally work impacted their continued developmental processes. Feedback from other colleagues, family members, and students strongly impacted individuals' interest in continuing ally work, taking time off from ally work, and/or increased reflection regarding the meaning of this work. One of the most commonly cited reactions, which spurred continued work in this area, was having positive responses from a member or members of the LGBT community. Participants spoke about how LGBT individuals' recognition or appreciation of their ally work motivated allies to continue their work and

learn more about this community. Some of these examples included: LGBT students approaching a participant to run a support group for them, a leader in the LGBT campus community labeling one participant as an advocate as opposed to an ally, LGBT clients asking to work with one particular participant at her counseling agency. Other reactions slowed growth or caused participants to question their ally status. One participant shared an experience in which another LGBT colleague expressed disapproval of heterosexual individuals working with LGBT clients, and how this disapproval impacted the participant's ally work.

I realized that when we had a lesbian (colleague)... she didn't seem to feel that anyone who was heterosexual could be helpful to someone who is lesbian or gay. I realized that unconsciously, I totally stepped back from the work here... I would refer those people to her or somebody else if they came my way. I questioned whether I should be doing the work or not. (Participant 4)

For this participant, it was important to respect the feelings of a member of the LGBT community, and thus stopped engaging in ally work. This participant later returned to involvement in ally work after another conversation with a colleague who identified within the LGBT community. This participant indicated that confirmation from another member of the LGBT community was important in order for this participant to continue to engage in ally work. This example highlights the impact of others' reactions, especially if it comes from a member of the community one is trying to support.

Identity Experience. Another notable finding developed from participants' experiences with allies supporting their own ethnic identities. One participant specifically spoke about how relationships with LGBT individuals not only moved the participant to further advocate for the LGBT population, but how the participant was able to have conversations with LGBT friends about the differences between their identities and how

they can both advocate for each others' groups. Other participants shared how experiences with allies of their communities impacted how they chose to act as an ally of the LGBT community. These participants talked about the awareness they bring from their personal struggles with, and appreciation for, allies who have tried to support and advocate for their communities.

I felt like that was the one community that took me in and didn't really question whether I belonged or didn't. I knew that was a community I had felt very much a part of, in an adopted sort of way, and that I could relate all of my experiences, even though I fully understood that they were very different...so I had privilege, and because I had privilege that I could advocate for them in some ways, and because of their privilege because of race, or ethnicity, or culture, they could advocate for me, so it was very much a partnership. (Participant 10)

This is an example of how having a positive experience with allies encouraged this participant to learn more about the LGBT community and grow as an ally in this particular area. This participant also spoke about requesting to be a liaison for the campus LGBT group, even though the participant was already assigned to be a liaison to another group. This story beautifully described the partnerships that different communities can have with each other when looking at multiple identities, privilege, and oppression. In addition, this example demonstrated ways to both seek and receive support depending on the status society provides to certain identities.

Variation and Fluidity. The widest range of opinion and feelings in this category arose from discussion around how people conceptualize the development and evolution of their ally identities. Some participants saw the identity as a very natural growth process, not involving active effort to become an ally. One participant specifically described the identity as not something "that I really identify as a role, it's either just natural or not (Participant 14)." Others conceptualized their identity within a strengths-based

framework. One participant talked about the components of an ally identity that are harder for her to engage in, whereas others play into her strengths as a clinician. For this participant, part of an ally identity is finding a niche within the ally role, working to an individual's strengths, and then helping support other allies who have strengths in different areas of ally work. Most participants noted that there would always be ways in which they can continue to grow as allies, as well as feedback that they can integrate from other professionals, allies, and members of the LGBT community. Most would not describe this work as a static role, but as an always-evolving role.

Results in this area did not support a particular stage model of ally development. Participants spoke about this growth as more fluid, describing constant changes that occur with increased awareness and experience, which were hard to classify into a stage or phase of development. An experience that some members talked about is the experience of pulling back from ally work. Participants provided different reasons for why they were not as active within their ally identities as they had been previously in their careers or training.

Ally Challenges

Participants identified the struggles within this identity as well as how various influences impacted their development as allies. In particular, participants spoke about challenges regarding time, balancing of multiple roles, and the difficult emotions that can result from this work. Discussion also explored the role that religion can play in ally development and growth.

Main Challenges. In addition to the rewards participants received from growing and evolving as an ally, most participants explored the challenging aspects of such work. The

most common response from participants was related to time constraints. Participants expressed struggle with engaging in all of the ally activities they wanted to participate in and feeling as if their jobs did not allow enough time for some of those activities. One participant specifically identified how taking on a more administrative role negatively impacted the ability to be more involved in outreach and advocacy projects. Participants also talked about the difficulty of balancing the many ally events that they would like to engage in and having time with family and friends. Many shared emotions of guilt when confronted with the feeling that they were not doing “enough” or confronted with the awareness that they could do more.

Another common challenge was confronting derogatory language with family members. Participants talked about the difficulty of educating family members, as these conversations can often strain relationships.

It was always harder, it still is hard, to explain how I can care so much about something that they see as not really directly impacting my life...then I decide, this is just not something we are going to be able to talk about...if I want to keep a relationship with these people, I will just have to accept that this is a part of my belief system that they don't agree with. (Participant 13)

Along with these challenges, many participants talked about the common occurrence of guilt and frustration they have felt when faced with derogatory remarks. Participants talked specifically about the guilt they feel when choosing not to challenge a derogatory comment as well as the frustration they have felt when seeing how people continually choose to discriminate against the LGBT community after all of their efforts to educate and advocate for this community.

Religiosity. Participants shared a range of experiences with how their religious upbringing or religious values impacted their development as allies. For some, they found

acceptance and affirmation in certain religious backgrounds, which allowed them to integrate fully their personal and professional ally identities. For some, it caused challenges within their development process and involved increased reflection regarding conflicting values, behaviors, and identities. One participant talked about how the predominant religious views of the area in which the participant worked often conflicted with the participant's affirmation and support for LGBT clients and students. This participant described that, at times in this participant's professional history, the local climate created an unsafe environment to hold events such as LGBT support groups. Another participant specifically identified moments in the participant's religious classes or religious growth that conflicted with the values of psychology and the values of an ally. For this participant, it was a painful, but important process to try and integrate the participant's religious and ally values.

All of a sudden, I had to fit my beliefs with the beliefs of psychology, and I wasn't sure how I was going to do that. It was really very painful, it wasn't just on GLBT issues, but on a lot of issues...my program was fairly derogatory toward religion... So then it came to, how do I integrate this into my religious beliefs and not give up those religious beliefs, and then I found a church that fit that, and my family was very accepting of my beliefs. (Participant 12)

This participant honestly identified the hesitancy with continuing to explore this process and develop as an ally, out of fear that the participant may find biases rooted in religious beliefs that this participant may not want to face. Despite that hesitancy, the participant acknowledged the motivation to confront those biases. The experience presented here reflects the complexity of the ally development process for those who hold identities or other values that may conflict or have conflicted at different times in their lives.

Intersection

Important trends emerged regarding how participants' values for social justice were associated with their identities as counseling psychologists. Sub-themes of these views included the central focus of social justice within counseling psychology, the desire for increased training in social justice, the helpful experiences provided by programs and faculty, and the importance of modeling and mentorship in this area. Participants explored the ways in which their identities as counseling psychologists influenced their interest in and work with social justice issues.

Central Focus. In general, psychologists highlighted the importance of social justice values intersecting with their roles as counseling psychologists. Participants mentioned how this intersection often played a role in their choices to receive training from a counseling psychology program and continued to influence how they understand their current professional roles. A majority of the participants highlighted the importance of doing work in the community, getting out of their offices, working with communities that are oppressed, and advocating for social change that ultimately will have a positive impact on their clients. Thus, this intersection was identified as one of the primary ways that participants understood their roles as allies.

Increased Training. Despite viewing this intersection as important, the majority of participants expressed disappointment with the lack of training or applied discussion within their graduate programs regarding practical incorporation of social justice elements into their professional work. Most participants shared that they learned how to apply these social justice values predominantly from work colleagues and not from the faculty in their programs or psychologists in their practicum sites.

I think counseling psychologists, unfortunately, talk the talk., but don't always walk the walk. At least in the program I was in, that was not a priority, teaching us to be advocates....we need to know how to research and counsel people, we need to know how to teach and supervise, but there wasn't any ever...this is how you advocate for members in the community, or this is how you develop programs...there wasn't anything like that. (Participant 2)

Participants also presented concerns that the majority of their learning regarding social justice and advocacy happened after receiving their degrees. Multiple participants expressed the importance of conceptualizing and applying social justice themes in their work and wished that they had been better prepared to engage in this work by the training experiences in their graduate programs.

Beneficial Training. It is important to note that not all participants fit the trend discussed above. Some participants identified that the majority of their ally growth and development came from their personal life experiences prior to graduate school. Thus, for those participants, what was provided from their graduate programs regarding ally growth was not as pertinent or important to them. For those that did seek that growth from their graduate programs, some participants felt mentored and supported by psychologists in their program to apply more practically their social justice values within the field of counseling psychology. Some participants shared that they believed the field is on the cusp of being more intentional and explicit in terms of how the social justice values are taught and modeled within training programs. As mentioned earlier in this study, small differences in themes were found based on the year during which participants received their degree and during which phase of the field's history they were trained. Some participants, who were trained in the early 1980s or before, mentioned that they had no training in or discussion of social justice issues and certainly no training in LGBT issues.

For those who felt supported by their faculty and mentors, participants spoke about the helpfulness of several strategies utilized by their trainers. Specifically, participants identified the benefit of presenters or faculty using experiential activities to facilitate growth and discussion regarding LGBT issues. Participants also expressed that having specific LGBT classes within their program was helpful in their growth processes. However, there was disagreement regarding how to change the academic curriculum within the field. Some participants advocated for more classes on social justice, outreach, and more specifically, on LGBT issues. Other participants disagreed, explaining that requiring additional classes to already long training programs was not practical and unrealistic to expect from training programs. Some participants suggested offering a variety of classes, but not requiring them for their students. Others presented the idea of simply encouraging faculty teaching multicultural courses to have more discussion around the idea of ally identities and how to facilitate the beginning of those social justice growth processes for students. Ultimately, there was no clear answer regarding how to change the curriculum. Yet, based on participants' collective responses, a general desire to have more comprehensive training programs regarding social justice and LGBT issues was noted.

Mentorship. Multiple participants spoke about the benefit of watching others, in the field, do advocacy and ally work. Participants also emphasized appreciation for discussions with mentors regarding how to develop those identities within their professional identities. Many participants reported that their first experiences of truly understanding the connection between their professional work and advocacy came from watching other professionals carry out activities and observing others' growth in their

ally identities. Participants shared how that learning specifically happened on internship or in their first jobs as early level psychologists. This common response highlighted the importance of having “out” and vocal allies, who are able to mentor trainees and early level psychologists, as well as emphasized the need for ally faculty members to be more vocal within their training programs.

Diversity within the LGBT Community

This study examined how individuals understand the ally process depending on the various identities within the LGBT community for which they may be advocating. Participants spoke to the importance of being educated in the different needs and experiences of members in the LGBT community, the importance of being aware regarding how intersecting identities impact experiences, and the challenges and benefits of grouping such diverse communities together.

Differences. In general, most participants identified the potential for transgender and bisexual individuals to be discriminated against more than those who identify as lesbian or gay. They discussed how, as an ally, it is important to be knowledgeable of the fact that many transgender and bisexual individuals feel isolated from the gay and lesbian community, in addition to the heterosexual community. More specifically, participants talked about the additional knowledge and training that is important to receive in regard to transgender issues, as there are often increased medical, legal, and insurance barriers for those who identify with this specific community. Participants also reported experiences where bisexual clients and students have felt pressured to “pick a side” and that many well-intentioned allies or heterosexuals may assume that the bisexual identity is a transitional phase in which some people identify while transitioning from

heterosexual to gay. Participants indicated that they saw their role as contributing to increased education for these specific populations as well as maintaining an increased sensitivity to the needs of bisexual and transgender communities that gay and lesbian individuals may not necessarily have to face.

Intersecting Identities. This study also highlighted the difference between the coming out processes for those who identify as White, non-Hispanic and those who identify with an underrepresented ethnic group. One participant spoke about the complexity of understanding visible and invisible identities, as well as how previous experience with oppressed identities impacts the process of coming out.

I think with racial or students that are minorities and that are also LGBTQ, they have had experiences in which they are aware of discrimination or prejudice and so I think they process the experience of being LGBTQ a little differently, because they have experiences previously that have prompted them, or wanted them to remain closeted more, because they already have a minority status, and adding another one...they feel a little overwhelmed. I have had Caucasian students who have felt similarly, but I think the process is different because of that. (Participant 9).

This participant's thoughts highlighted the importance of ally awareness around how identities intersect with each other and how that may impact the way an ally may choose to advocate for or work with a particular student.

Grouping. These ideas led into a frequently discussed theme of this study, which focused on the way in which LGBT individuals are grouped into one community. Some identified that grouping these communities together can be helpful in terms of the collective power it creates, as well as the unity and camaraderie that can be found in the struggle for equal rights based on sexual orientation and gender. At the same time, participants talked about how lumping these communities together in one group, office, community, etc. can lead to a lack of understanding of the differences within this

community, particularly by those not a part of the community. Also, participants spoke about the potential loss of some of the richness communities can gain by being in smaller, more intimate groups or conversations. As a result, participants presented the importance of being educated as an ally regarding the diversity within the community and how to share that education with others.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The present study provided an increased understanding of how ally identities evolve for counseling psychologists working in university counseling centers. In addition, the study addressed how ally identities are impacted by professional training and work roles. Despite the variation in participants' ally growth experiences and understandings, common themes and trends emerged from the data. Participants cumulatively described a range of understandings of "ally" as well as associated terminology that they feel or do not feel comfortable using when discussing this identity. More specifically, there was variation regarding participants' level of comfort with the term "advocate" as an interchangeable term as opposed to a separate more involved identity. Some had clear feelings regarding their level of comfort and awareness regarding these terms, whereas some had not put much thought into whether there are important differences between those terms. Some described their hesitancy to label themselves as an ally, which is rooted in the value that only those with whom they advocate can define who their allies are. Participants also spoke to the variety of behaviors and activities they integrate into their ally identities.

Each participant had an individual story and process when describing their ally role, but there were some common trends. Individuals' relationships with LGBT individuals were very impactful to their growth processes, as well as others' responses to their ally work. Various research studies cite the positive role that relationships with members of the LGBT community have regarding further ally growth and/or general

acceptance toward LGBT individuals (Snively, et al., 2004; Borgman, 2009; Wolf, 2009). Research also shows that heterosexual people who know LGB people tend to have more positive attitudes toward them (Herek, 2000). Thus, these kinds of experiences are a major component to allies' growth processes. Themes also emerged around the role that intersecting identities of privilege and oppression play in ally development and awareness. Some participants highlighted the learning that occurred about ally identities from their own personal experiences with individuals attempting to ally with their ethnic communities.

Although the purpose of this study was not to develop or discount any stage model of ally development, it is important to note that results support the idea that the ally identity is an open, fluid, and non-fixed identity. There is wide variation in regard to how allies explain and understand this identity. When looking back at the stage models of ally development that have been discussed previously, the Washington and Evans (1991) stage model is most congruent with how participants discussed their ally growth process in this study. The four stages of awareness, knowledge/education, skills, and action fit best with participants' description. With that said, participants spoke strongly about the fluidity and evolving nature of this identity and a stage model may be too restricting to explain the variation of each participant's experience. Thus, the data that emerged from this study did not fit into an already established stage model and potentially challenged the helpfulness of ally stage models for this particular sample. The unhelpfulness of ally models for some is also supported by previous research (Ji, 2007).

Several challenges of being an ally emerged, including time constraints, frustration over lack of change, and guilt when not confronting derogatory language as

the main challenges of this process. Previous studies report possible reasons for the experience of guilt that many allies feel, including feeling like they are not doing enough and experiencing guilt when confronted with their own privilege as heterosexuals (Ji, 2007; Washington & Evans, 1991). Participants also described different impacts of their religious values and beliefs on the process, ranging from their ally values conflicting with their religious values to feeling that their religious affiliation further supported their growth as allies. The experience and struggle that some participants described is supported by previous research conducted specifically with Christian allies to the LGB community (Borgman, 2009), confirming the potential conflict between some religious denominations and psychologists' beliefs about sexuality. The emergence of discussion regarding the role of religiosity in ally development confirms previous findings that socialization factors, including family and religious values, influence LGB affirmative attitudes (Dillon et al., 2004). For some participants, religiosity was an impactful component, motivating some to continue in their ally work or finding that a belief system initially challenged their ally work.

Participants also spoke about the different levels of awareness an ally holds when supporting and advocating for the LGBT community. The importance of allies recognizing the diversity within the LGBT community is also supported by work previously conducted on heterosexual allies (Washington & Evans, 1991). Individuals identified that they find their bisexual and transgender clients get discriminated against to a greater degree because of the lack of acceptance in both the heterosexual and, sometimes, the gay and lesbian communities. Participants also discussed how awareness regarding multiple identities is important as an ally, that is, how the coming out process

may be more challenging for individuals who identify as an ethnic minority or how some individuals may already feel overwhelmed by the discrimination resulting from one identity. Thus, some LGBT people of color may feel more hesitant to come out than European-American LGBT people due to holding multiple identities that are oppressed. The challenge that LGBT people of color face has been documented in the literature, as well as the importance of supporting those who seek integration of multiple identities often devalued by society (Nabors et al., 2001).

Finally, a general trend that emerged was participants' desire for more training in counseling psychology programs regarding how to integrate advocacy or social justice work into the curriculum and/or graduate experiences. Participants' responses regarding the central nature of social justice work and conceptualization within counseling psychology was confirmed. Despite that central focus, research has demonstrated that there are limited empirical examinations of LGBT affirmative counseling training approaches (Dillon et al, 2004; Gilliland & Crisp, 1995; Israel, 1998), as much of the current literature focuses on theoretical understandings of how counseling psychology and social justice training can be integrated (Hage & Kenny, 2009; Nilson & Schmidt, 2005). There was variation regarding how much exposure and learning happened for individuals in their graduate programs around issues of social justice, but most highlighted the need for continued or increased education in this area. This finding is supported by previous research demonstrating that when counseling psychologist trainees are surveyed, they request increased training and mentoring in social justice services (Singh et al., 2010). Because accreditation of counseling psychology programs and the current American Psychological Association (APA) Ethical Principles of Psychologists

and Code of Conduct (2002) lack specific guidelines about social justice issues or training, there is an additional lack of accountability within the discipline to engage in advocacy and infuse social justice concepts throughout training curricula. This lack of clarity in guidelines may be influencing the outcome that 85% of the counseling psychologist trainees in the Singh et al. (2010) study had never taken a course on social justice issues.

Based on the report of participants, some trainees are getting the mentoring and training in this area for which they hoped. For those participants, the elements of trainings/experiences that were most helpful included having experiential components to training, having modeling or mentorship around the area of social justice integration into their work, and having more discussion in classes regarding how to grow in ally identities. These mixed results regarding participants' requests and training experiences fit with previous literature stating that the content and focus of multicultural training across counseling psychology programs is highly variable (Ponterotto, Alexander, & Grieger, 1995; Smith et al., 2006).

Implications

There are multiple important implications resulting from this study. First, this study highlights the importance of increased information and study about ally development. As many participants discussed the always-evolving nature of ally work, it is important to continue these discussions throughout training and employment experiences. Thus, it is essential that counseling psychologists more deeply explore their power and privilege and find ways in which they can offer increased support to minority communities. The goals of better advocating for oppressed groups and influencing social

change are constant needs within the field and an important responsibility of counseling psychologists.

Furthermore, creation of more visible and accessible networks of allies would be beneficial to further growth and development in this area. The fact that many participants expressed eagerness to read the results of this study and learn more about others' ally experiences supports the need for increased networks and discussion groups regarding ally work. As many participants also identified the need for mentors, creating ally organizations in campus, university counseling center, and counseling psychology program settings may help foster these identities in trainees as well as psychologists in all different phases of their careers. Such ally organizations could also ensure that appropriate and current education regarding social justice issues as well as LGBT community needs is disseminated among counseling psychologists. These efforts may help to decrease stereotypes, biases, and assumptions that many well-intentioned allies may reinforce unintentionally.

As older psychologists reported having much less training in this area, while in their graduate programs than is currently offered for counseling psychology students, it is possible to state with increased confidence that the profession is moving in a positive direction regarding integration of multicultural competence and specifically in work with the LGBT population. Nonetheless, counseling psychologists need to be more thoughtful and purposeful regarding how to talk about ally identities and social justice advocacy, specifically in discussions regarding multiculturalism and training. These conversations could lead to potential change in counseling psychology training conceptualization and requirements. Though training and development as counseling psychologists is a lifelong

endeavor, it is important to more deeply examine how graduate programs create a foundation of learning that can then be expanded on throughout psychologists' careers. Without that early foundation, psychologists may not seek out important opportunities to develop as a social change agent if social justice values are not highlighted in their earliest training experiences.

These results should also encourage faculty to conduct more systematic and widespread studies of counseling psychology students' perceptions of their current training needs and what gaps they identified post graduation. In addition, further analysis of counseling psychology programs may be needed to determine whether training programs have evolved with the changes within the field and how they could be enhanced to reflect the increased attention social justice and multicultural issues have received. Results of a study conducted by Constantine (1997) showed that 70% of responding supervisors in her study reported that they had never taken a formal multicultural or cross-cultural counseling course. These results show that many faculty training the next generation of psychologists may not have had the formal educational background in topics around multiculturalism that they are now being expected to teach and model. Thus, it is important to conceptualize what educational resources faculty may need in order to integrate ethically some of these areas of study and mentorship. Though attention has been given to exploring participants' training experiences, it is important to note that ally growth and development can occur at all career phases for counseling psychologists. Especially for those psychologists who did not receive specific training regarding LGBT and social justice issues, ally awareness and education may be even more essential.

Also, the findings of this study suggest that there is a range of training opportunities available in APA accredited counseling psychology programs. Thus, it is important for APA to more clearly enforce multicultural guidelines within training programs to help counseling psychology faculty more fully understand and implement the guidelines. In addition, counseling psychology programs may benefit from suggestions regarding how to budget and fund such changes in the curriculum. Guidelines regarding how psychologists can continue to develop their social justice values and advocacy work after the completion of their graduate program training would also likely be beneficial for the profession as a whole.

The results of this study also suggest that further exploration and awareness is needed regarding the role that university counseling centers have played in social justice training. As participants identified that much of their growth regarding social justice work occurred on internship or in their early employment experiences within counseling centers, it is important for agencies to be more intentional regarding how this training is introduced and solidified. The results of this study may encourage counseling center staff to have wider discussions regarding the social justice advocacy roles that staff take and how they can more actively mentor interns and early career psychologists in social justice advocacy. In addition, possible rotations and specializations regarding social justice advocacy and the impact on clinical services could be created and implemented.

Limitations

A strength of this study was interviewing participants who have been active in their ally identities for 10 years or more as opposed to some previous studies, which studied results of ally development shortly after a specific educational training or

program. However, this may also be a limitation as many participants were challenged to recall the specific stages or experiences that comprised the earlier phases of their ally identities.

Although individuals were not required to identify as allies to participate, this study attracted individuals who were already active in ally work. Thus, the results may not fully represent the range or variation in counseling psychologists' experiences, phases of development, and awareness regarding ally identities. This study may not have included psychologists who have not yet processed ideas such as privilege, power, and their relationship to those of different identities regardless of whether they were in an earlier training phase (pre-doctoral internship) or have been in the profession for a longer time period. In addition, more females expressed interest in this study and so the impact of gender on the results could not be appropriately analyzed. Thus, results cannot be generalized to all counseling psychologists working in university counseling centers. Readers can individually generalize and integrate themes discussed as it relates to their roles, identities, and experiences.

Future Directions

The findings of this study yield opportunity for further learning and growth. There are a number of directions in which these results can be taken to expand on the identified themes. Given that many participants reported the importance of having LGBT members identify allies to their communities, it would be helpful to further explore how LGBT individuals identify allies and what kind of education, experiences, or involvement they would encourage in individuals interested in being strong allies to their community. Exploration regarding LGBT individuals' feelings about labeling ally identities is an

important theme to learn more about. It is unclear whether LGBT individuals would appreciate the responsibility/ability to define ally work for more privileged individuals and may prefer that allies engage in their own reflection before engaging with their community. It would also be advantageous to learn what kinds of consequences and benefits LGBT individuals acknowledge result from ally involvement.

Second, studies of this nature can be used to spur discussion and conversation in graduate trainings and work environments regarding ally identities. As many participants highlighted their own growth process as always-evolving and never-ending, there will always be reason for additional discussions, trainings, and reflection. Thus, many can learn something from conversations regarding power and privilege as heterosexual individuals and learn how better to advocate for LGBT colleagues, students, friends, and family. Many participants expressed interest regarding what these results would show and how other allies identify these experiences. Thus, using these results as a way to continue these conversations and further explore some of these complex processes may be beneficial and meaningful to individuals who identify as allies as well as individuals who aim to develop an ally identity.

In regard to training, one of the most helpful components highlighted by participants was modeling and mentorship from other professionals. The benefit of mentorship and modeling has been supported by previous research (Singh et al., 2010, Ji, 2007). It would be interesting to examine how professionals view and experience mentorship in ally identities and advocacy. As this study encourages discourse to occur within programs and university counseling centers, those conversations can also extend to discussions regarding mentorship. Not only can students share what would be most

helpful from those mentorship experiences, but it would also be useful for faculty and staff to talk about their experiences in these roles or what may prevent them from being more public about their ally work or identities. Previous research has cited trainees' desire for increased access to faculty who are doing social justice work, while also citing the barriers that programs likely face when struggling to integrate these topics, which include lack of financial resources and faculty support (Singh et al, 2010).

The results of the present study signify the importance of further examination into graduate programs in counseling psychology, training values, and curriculum revisions. As all participants highlighted the importance of social justice to their work and often commented that they specifically chose to attend a counseling psychology program versus other training fields because of the social justice value within the field, it is essential that programs evaluate how social justice themes are incorporated into their curricula and experiences offered to students. Participants expressed interest in more integration and incorporation of social justice and advocacy themes into their training, but also acknowledged the complexity in doing so. They noted that most counseling psychology programs already have intensive curriculums and training requirements established for students. Though it may be a challenging and ambiguous process, it is essential that continued exploration and discourse regarding social justice and LGBT training continually occur within the field of counseling psychology.

Table 1

Main Themes and Sub-themes

Theme 1: Ally Meaning & Essence

Definition: Not a title or label, Importance of advocacy, and Examination of privilege
 Terminology: Variation about ally/advocate
 Values: Don't self-identify ally status, Should counseling status equal ally status
 Behaviors: Clinical, Educational, & Institutional/Campus/Community Activities

Theme 2: Ally Growth & Development

Relationships: Impact views & drive to do this work
 Responses: Both positive and negative feedback had an impact
 Identity Experience: Own experiences with allies
 Variation & Fluidity: Non-fixed identity, Not fitting into a stage model

Theme 3: Ally Challenges

Main Challenges: Time, balance, derogatory language, guilt
 Religiosity: Both guiding and conflicting with ally development process

Theme 4: Intersection

Central Focus: Importance of social justice values to career choice
 Increased Training: Desire to increased focus on social justice application
 Beneficial Training: Experiential training, LGBT classes
 Mentorship: Mentors in early career phases, wanting more visible mentors

Theme 5: Diversity Within the LGBT Community

Differences: Bisexual and Transgender identities experience additional discrimination
 Intersecting Identities: Ethnic and sexual identities impact coming out process
 Grouping: Pros and Cons for viewing LGBT individuals as one community

Table 2

Specific Ally Behaviors and Activities

Clinical Activities

Advocate for LGBT appropriate services in agency
Be inclusive of LGBT issues when discussing more general mental health topics
Create relationships with, and learn from, LGBT staff
Help LGBT students/clients connect with LGBT community
Hire LGBT trainees and staff
Leading LGBT process or identity groups
Leading support groups for LGBT students
Model appropriate language for colleagues and trainees
Supervise LGBT trainees
Support current LGBT clients
Teach trainees how to do social justice work

Educational Activities

Attend specific trainings
Attend workshops on LGBT issues
Commit to self-education on LGBT issues
Educate others about LGBT issues and discrimination

Institutional, Campus, or Community Activities

Advocate for LGBT affirmation within university
Attend local LGBT events
Comment on derogatory language toward LGBT
Create campus partnerships in support of LGBT students
Develop LGBT guidelines within agency and campus communities
Display symbols of support for LGBT
Facilitate LGBT mentor programs
Involvement in LGBT outreach projects
Involvement in campus and agency LGBT training programs
Put name on a public ally list

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Appendix I: Interview Questions

- 1) How, if at all, do you think your role as a counseling psychologist interfaces with social justice issues?
- 2) Describe your work or experience with LGBT clients, colleagues, and students.
- 3) How does your work with gay and lesbian individuals compare to transgender or bisexual individuals?
- 4) What does the concept of being an ally to the LGBT population mean to you?
- 5) How does the way you conceptualize or define how a heterosexual ally to LGBT individuals fits for you? In what ways might it not fit?
- 6) Describe your process of heterosexual ally awareness or development as it fits/does not fit for you.
- 7) Do you know of any other counseling psychologists at a different university counseling center that you believe may be interested in this study?