

Abstracts

of the Tennovation Research Symposium at the 2018 LGBT+ College Conference Research and Partnership Presentations

Volume 4 • April 2018

2018 TENNOVATION RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

James Union Building
Middle Tennessee State University
Murfreesboro, Tennessee
Thursday, April 5, 2018

REGISTRATION

*James Union Building Lobby, Middle Tennessee
State University*
Thursday, April 5—9:00 am-11:00 am

WELCOME

The Tennovation Research symposium highlights the value of research and collaboration consistent with the Tennovation mission statement—*Cooperation, Collaboration, Success!*

SESSIONS

Tennessee Room
*James Union Building, Middle Tennessee State
University*

Research presentations

10:00 am-11:00 am

Tennovation Keynote

11:15 am-12:15 pm

Concurrent:

Lunch/Nissan Tour

12:30 pm-4:00 pm

Safe Zone (*Hazelwood Dining Room*)

12:30 pm-4:00 pm

THANKS

Thank-you to all of the presenters who have generously offered their time and expertise to share their projects with us today.

2018 LGBT+ COLLEGE CONFERENCE

All Identities—Bridging the Divide

mtsu.edu/LGBTplusCC



RESEARCH SESSION
Thursday, April 5, 2018, 10:00 am
James Union Building Tennessee Room

• **PRESENTATIONS** •

Sponsored by Middle Tennessee State University
 Department of Social Work

(1001)

An Exploration of Bullying and Incivility Research in Higher Education. Mitsunori Misawa, *University of Tennessee, Knoxville*; Meghan Pfeiffer, *University of Memphis*

Bullying, incivility, and violence are prevalent in US society, especially within the LGBTQ community as heteronormative and homophobia still are prevalent. Therefore, this research presentation will explore studies that were conducted on the experiences of lesbian Division I student-athletes and gay male faculty members of color to capture the phenomenon of bullying and incivility in higher education. However, there is still research needed on the topic of bullying, incivility, and violence in order to ultimately reduce and eliminate such behaviors. This research presentation will also inform higher education practitioners how bullying and incivility still permeates the postsecondary system for LGBTQ student-athletes and faculty members and how to combat such actions by providing implications for practice in order to create spaces that are more inclusive.

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(1002)

New Heteronormativity and the Gay-Straight Tipping Point for Innovative Suicide Prevention in Higher Education Environments. Scott Allan Ellis, *Newcastle University*

Male students die by suicide more often than their female peers. There are significant additional risks for gay, bisexual and transgender men. Despite this, young men as a population group lack coherence and mutual support in mental health defence. The gay-straight paradigm in universities, epitomised by gay-straight alliances, could signify a model of inclusion that embeds heterosexuality in the promotion of positive mental health and the prevention of suicide. The paradigm seeks to

reconcile the constructed divisions present between gay and straight students through the increasing acceptance that sexual identity is a combination of fragmented social constructs. To explore the conflict this research, carried out in 2017, sought out the first-hand views of gay and straight male students and asked them to explore dominant frameworks of masculinity within the context of equality and intervention campaigns that used heterosexual ‘gatekeepers’ as supporters and protectors of LGBT young people.

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(1003)

Navigating Words and Social Spaces: Community and Social Interactions’ Impact on Transgender and Gender-nonconforming Experiences of Identity Language. Rebekah Dawson, *Middle Tennessee State University*

The importance of affirming language and labels is noted throughout scholarly literature on the LGBT+ population. In order to better understand this language and its effects on LGBT+ people, I am conducting a narrative study on transgender and gender-nonconforming people who have experience with non-traditional identity language. I interview participants about their current gender and sexuality and the process that they went through in order to see what role language has played for them. In this presentation, I will be discussing the impact that language and community had on these participants. This includes interaction between different LGBT+ people and between LGBT+ people and non-LGBT+ people and communities. Participants describe both having faced experiences which has impacted their situational language use as well as their self-concept and related language use. This research has implications for professionals and community allies alike.

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(1004)

Combatting Queer Racism and Racist-Homophobic Bullying in Higher Education: A Queer-Crit Examination of the Experiences of Gay Men of Color. Mitsunori Misawa, Ph.D., *The University of Tennessee, Knoxville*

One of the parallel purposes of contemporary education and Critical Race Theory is to pursue social justice. Conventionally, Critical Race Theory has been utilized to create safer environments for people in higher education from the perspectives of mainly race, gender, social class, and disability. However, Critical Race Theorists have not extensively examined the intersectionality of racism, homophobia, and heterosexism. Often times, queer people of color are at the margins of contemporary society and are internally discriminated and marginalized from their racial and LGBT communities. That means, queer people of color experience queer-racism where racism and homophobia co-exist to oppress queer people of color. The purpose of the presentation is to examine the intersectionality of race and sexual orientation from a queer-crit perspective in higher education. In particular, the presentation will address how racist homophobic bullying affects gay men of color in higher education from the author's previous empirical research studies.

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(1005, blitz)

Media Attitudes Towards Transgender Victims of Violence: An Analysis of Articles Covering Transgender Violence. Rebekah Dawson, *Middle Tennessee State University*

Lack of LGBT+ representation is a clear issue to many LGBT+ people. The main focus of representation has been in television or books; however, journalism is an important place to look that shows us a lot about public opinion and

a place that shapes many people's understanding of the world around them. Specifically looking into the representation of transgender victims of violence, we can see important things about societal opinion and understanding of transgender stereotypes and can better help people advocate for more accurate representation. This project would also have the potential to give us a historical look at opinions and understanding of transgender people.

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(1006)

The Hierarchy of Rights and The Expression of Values in the LGBTQ+ Rights Movement. Charlotte Archer, *Middle Tennessee State University*

A study which measured the level to which the progressive values of inclusion, intersectionality, and solidarity are actually valued by participants in social movement organizations (SMOs) within the LGBTQ+ rights movement, and whether participants perceive their organizations as following these values, utilizing a web survey. The study examines the LGBTQ+ movement in the context of new social movement theory and the theoretical establishment of a hierarchy of rights within social movements to see whether the LGBTQ+ movement seems to follow the older theoretical rules of narrow agendas (i.e., agendas focused on the needs of the majority or "dominant population," over minorities within the social movement) or is moving towards embracing the strategies predicted by new social movement theories, which suggest that the shared values of a broader membership dictate the pursuit of agendas which focus on the needs of all group members, not just the majority.

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TENNOVATION KEYNOTE
Thursday, April 5, 2018, 11:15 am
James Union Building Tennessee Room

Standing on Holy Ground: An Argument for Queer Spaces as Sacred.

Keven Lewis, *Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Middle Tennessee State University.*

I argue that while sacredness is created "through the telling of stories and the singing of songs," queer spaces are also made sacred through acts of ostracism from the dominant heterosexual community. This argument follows, in part, the perception of San Francisco as a "homeland" and a site of pilgrimage, wherein it is noted that "because...queers have been persecuted in many times and places, ...territorializing a place, ...can offer a sanctuary from oppression." If indeed San Francisco functions as a "queer homeland" then queer spaces outside of this "homeland" are places of sacredness in that they operate to provide an "escape from oppression 'back home'" and are "comprises[ed of] many voices, built...through diverse practices over time." This paper makes a case study of the Orlando nightclub, Pulse, wherein the club itself constitutes the creation of a sacred space which functions against and alongside everyday heteronormative operations.

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