



National Coming Out Day Programming

By: Ryan Jasen-Henne, Tulane University
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This year marked the 23rd celebration and remembrance of National Coming Out Day (NCOD). NCOD was founded on October 11th, 1988 by Robert Eichsberg and Jean O'Leary, marking the anniversary of the 1987 March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights. Since then, on or around October 11th, thousands of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people and allies commemorate NCOD with celebrations, rallies, workshops, and speak-outs aimed at showing the public that LGBT people are everywhere.

This year at Tulane University, two student groups got together to create an installation that our campus has never seen. Through the work of our Queer Student Association (QSA) and Tulane Women of Righteous Dykedom (T-WORD), the "Coming Out Wall" was erected on the center of campus.



Over the course of eight hours, hundreds of students walked by the wall and had the opportunity to write their coming out stories, either as a member of the LGBTQ community, or as an Ally. In addition to this, students engaged in conversation about their experiences regarding being “out” on campus, both positive and negative. Our Office of Multicultural Affairs partnered with QSA and T-WORD and hosted a free BBQueer for students to eat and socialize with each other, while providing information on our Safe Zone Training and passed out LGBTQ Pride and Ally buttons.

Sure, the students did not really know how to build a wall, and realized they could have been more prepared. They learned a lot about creating, construction and hosting a campus wide program. While planning, we expected to see many of our LGBTQ community members, but an unexpected high number of students “came out” as an ally. These students were able to realize the great impact of being a visible ally for their LGBTQ peers.

Coming out is a lifelong process for members of the LGBT community. While the coming out process varies for everyone, for many it leads to empowerment and a positive self-image. To celebrate the coming out experience, and honor the half a million people who participated in the 1987 March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights, NCOD was created and is now celebrated on many college campuses. NCOD promotes authenticity and truth. From a campus speak OUT at Allegheny College, and a flag raising ceremony at Montclair State University, to a drag show at North Hennepin Community College, and a University of Nebraska-Lincoln COW (coming out week) give away, here is a visual sampling of what was organized programmatically this year on campuses across the nation.



(above) From: Alleghany College



(above) From: Georgetown University



(above) From: North Hennepin Community College



(above) From: University of Nebraska-Lincoln

DO Ask DO Tell!

By: Amber Sibley, University of Dayton

Over the past few months, there has been a great deal of conversation both within and

outside the LGBT community about Don't Ask Don't Tell (DADT) being repealed. Put into effect on December 21, 1993, Don't Ask Don't Tell was the common name for the military policy stating that LGBT soldiers were able to serve in the military as long as they did not disclose their sexual orientation. Prior to the law coming into effect, the 1950 Uniform Code of Military Justice stated that no LGBT Americans were allowed to serve in the military and it established the procedures for discharging LGBT soldiers. In a 1982 defense directive from Ronald Reagan, he stated that "homosexuality is incompatible with military service" and that members who were LGBT or engaged in same-sex relationships should be discharged. In 1992, Bill Clinton promised that he would repeal the law preventing LGBT Americans from serving during his campaign. Don't Ask Don't Tell was part of a compromise with Congress to allow LGBT Americans to serve in the military. President Clinton also sent a defense directive stating that applicants should not be asked about their sexual orientation.

The campaign to repeal the law began nearly as soon as the law was put in to effect, but took on new urgency as a campaign promise from Barack Obama. In 2010, a study was completed that was meant to inform whether appeal was the right course of action for the military. After a filibuster in the Senate, a new standalone bill was introduced and passed both houses on December 18, 2010. The military was then given a timeframe to train members on the repeal. The repeal officially became law on September 20, 2011.

[Interactive Timeline of DADT](#)

Post repeal, there have been many question about how it's affecting the military and its members. So we asked. I have 2 friends who are currently serving in the military and I asked them if they would be willing to answer a few questions about DADT repeal. Both respondents names have been changed at their request.

"Michael" is in active duty with the Navy and "Sarah" is an officer in the Coast Guard.

Which branch of the military are you in and how long have you been in the military?

Michael: I'm in the Navy and have been for four years.

Sarah: US Coast Guard (CG), 3 yrs.

What was the initial reaction of those around you when the repeal was passed?

M: There was actually not much shock from anyone. We all knew it was coming and expected it. There were a lot more jokes about "Well, it's a new Navy" whenever somebody was caught doing anything slightly homoerotic. Yes, those antics don't leave guys when they join the military

S: There really wasn't any reaction when the repeal was passed.

How did reactions change as the reality of those changes set in?

M: On my last ship there were a few people who were adamantly displeased about it, but that wore off after a few months. Most people just said, "hey if they want to fight and can do the job then we'll take them."

S: Again, there really wasn't any reaction. I'm not a cutter (a member assigned to live/work on a Coast Guard ship) so I don't know how those who have to share close quarters are reacting. However, I think the only difference is in the jokes. Now when someone says something that could be construed as being gay, they say "that's ok now" or "DADT has been repealed so you can do whatever you want buddy." I believe there is still a lot of homophobia and homophobic remarks, but overall if someone in a unit was gay and was doing their job, it wouldn't be a problem. They would respect them for their work ethic and ability. In the Coast Guard, if there was a complaint about discrimination or sexual harassment the Coast Guard would come down pretty hard. We don't tolerate that kind of stuff and we are a very small service (52,000 members, 8,000 of which are reservists) so it would get around. I think our Commandant put it best when he said we will respect our shipmates the same as we did the day before the repeal passed...I think that has held very true.

Did all members of your unit receive training around the repeal? Can you share what the training entailed?

M: It was mandatory that each command have an appointed DADT Repeal Training Officer (I happened to be selected at my command, which didn't bother me considering both my brother and one of my best friends are gay) We had to report 100% completion to our higher authorities and take accurate musters of attendance at the repeal training. The training focused on what the law formerly stated and what that would mean for those who were currently gay or those who were discharged for being gay. It also covered certain aspects of sodomy which is a punishable offense under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ). Basically, it said that what you do in your own home between you and your partner is fine and not a violation of the UCMJ.

S: We received the same training as all the other DOD services. In fact, I believe it was constructed to be the same for every service on purpose.

Have there been any major changes since DADT repeal went into effect?

M: I haven't seen any on a personal level. No people at my command have come out as openly gay. I am aware of one of the first gay marriages between a military member and his partner was a Navy Surface Warfare Lieutenant.

S: No major changes at all.

Any thoughts on overall how DADT repeal is affecting the military?

M: Honestly, the military is busy. We're still involved in a costly war, and our units are

being redeployed almost as soon as they return back home. People are busy focusing on their jobs and taking care of their families. The military is a job after all, and if someone is gay where you work it doesn't do much to affect the work environment if you're all swamped with work.

S: The CG is unique in that majority of our members are stateside so we aren't necessarily in the desert living on top of each other which is where I could see this being a problem. Overall the CG is very familial so we treat each other with great respect.

As student affairs students and administrators, we know that being able to tell your truth and be yourself in the place where you work and live makes life much easier. Hopefully this will prove true in our armed forces as well.

Taking off The *Straight* Jacket

Heterosexual Identity Development and Implications for LGBTQ Advocacy

By: JaQuan Bryant, University of Maryland, College Park

Though sexual identity has been a topic of scholarly discourse for some time, a cursory overview of research done in the area reflects a clear focus on LGBTQ identity development (Worthington et al, 2002). The lack of interest in heterosexual identity development is a clear continuation of trends. Wherein, the non-dominant minority group, LGBTQ identifying individuals, labeled as exotic or peculiar is scrutinized because of its perceived difference. The dominant group, individuals who identify as heterosexual, are perceived as normal or natural, receiving significantly less attention than those perceived as the "other"; a product of hegemonic control's tendency to relegate the dominate identity to social unconsciousness (Worthington et al, 2002/Holt, 2002/Cammett, 1967). This article will focus on the need of a concerted effort to address heterosexual identity development as a means to better advocate for LGBTQ individuals and promote general wellbeing.

Contrary to the implications of the aforementioned interest gap, heterosexual individuals are not "a monolithic, stable group with predictable attitudes about nonheterosexuals and a consistent and clear sense of their own (hetero) sexual identity" (Eliason, 1995). All people, regardless of sexual orientation initiate and, or discontinue progression through sexual identity development processes over the course of a lifetime. The small body of knowledge focusing on heterosexual identity development shines light on the fact that

LGBTQ identifying individuals are more likely to be aware of their sexual identity than individuals who identify as heterosexual (Worthington et al, 2002).

Progression through the sexual identity process, be it LGBTQ or heterosexual, is often described as being motivated by incongruity that exist between an individual's internal self and their environment (Cass, 1979/Eliason, 1995). Given the differences in progression through sexual identity development processes that exist between self-identified heterosexuals and those who identify as LGBTQ, we might hypothesize that the greater the discrepancy between a person's environment and their internal sense of self, the greater the likelihood of that person progressing through their sexual identity development process. For all of the negative experiences one might have as a person who openly identifies with the LGBTQ community, it may be those very experiences that are the key to self-liberation. Individuals identifying as heterosexual might not be as likely to personally experience such a severe difference from the socially ordained norm as would individuals who identify as LGBTQ. Because the differences between a heterosexual person's concept of self and the broader social norms are more likely to be less overt than that of individuals who identify as LGBTQ, we find a difference in one of the major hurdles individuals must overcome in their sexual identity formation; coming out and or taking it off.

The term closeted is often used to describe LGBTQ individuals who do not outwardly or openly express their sexuality in some or all situations (Gortmaker & Brown 2006). Where negative experiences may serve as motivation to self-liberate by way of progression through sexual identity development processes, they may also motivate individuals to hide or dampen self expression. Coming out of the closet is a specific process that is somewhat unique to individuals whose sexual orientation is starkly different from the perceived social norm; a revelation that is readily observable. The term coming out does not quite capture the dynamic at work with individuals who identify as heterosexual. Full expression of ones sexuality as a heterosexual, by and large, may not include a readily observable difference from the perceived social norm. We might best describe the marked decision of individuals who identify as heterosexual to explore their sexual identity, challenge norms, and synthesize experiences, as taking off the straightjacket.

The straightjacket confines expression of one's self to what is perceived as socially acceptable. Worthington et al. describe what they refer to as Biophysical influences on heterosexual identity development (2002). These influences include biology, systematic homonegativity, sexual prejudice, and privilege, culture, microsocial context, religious orientation, gender norms and socialization (Worthington et al, 2002). We can reframe these influences as the straps that hold the straightjacket together; the greater their authority on the individual, the more confined their actions and thought processes, leading

to delayed or suspended sexual identity development.

Knowing that individuals are socialized into gender roles and other social categories, in many cases, from birth (Ausdale & Feagin, 2001), in addition to the non-tangible nature of discrepancies that exist between most heterosexual identified individuals' sense of self and perceived social norms, it can be assumed that most self-identified heterosexuals are unaware that they are being confined at all. The lack of consciousness around one's socially limited sexual identity speaks to the need for a concerted effort to systematically draw this issue to the forefront issues facing the population.

By providing opportunities for individuals who identify as heterosexual to engage in discussion about sexuality and their own sexual identities, we can help encourage a more self aware populous. Facilitating progression through sexual identity formation processes may lead to individuals who are more understanding of differences, as they are more apt to frame their self image as an individual and not as the majority, tasked with upholding the social norm; they are likely to experience relationships in a more fulfilling way and one could assume that instances of non-inclusive behavior would decrease with the need to aggress toward LGBTQ individuals as a means of asserting one's own heterosexuality (Marcia, 1987/Worthington et al, 2002).

The straightjacket is placed on individuals by external forces; it is, therefore, safe to assume that the straightjacket is best removed with the assistance of others. As we advocate for and assist LGBTQ individuals, it is important to realize that those who identify as heterosexual play a monumental role in the advocacy process as well, and that individuals who are better actualized are also better equipped to identify as allies with the LGBTQ community.

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The Presidential Candidates Come Out

By: Ryan Darling, College of the Holy Cross

The 2012 Presidential race is already kicking into high gear. The primaries are only a few months away, and Republican candidates have held several debates since the summer. Those candidates considered to be in the running include Minnesota Representative Michele Bachmann, businessman Herman Cain, former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, former ambassador and Utah governor Jon Huntsman, former New Mexico governor Gary Johnson, Texas representative Ron Paul, Texas governor Rick Perry, former Louisiana governor Buddy Roemer, former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney, and former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum. While few candidates or voters are defined by a single issue, our communities should be informed on the positions of the candidates on LGBT issues.

Unfortunately the bulk of the current major Republican candidates for President are not friendly to these concerns. When it comes to marriage equality, all ten candidates oppose repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act. Only Huntsman and Johnson support civil unions, and Roemer and Gingrich have unclear or mixed positions. Romney has stated that if he were forced to choose marriage or civil unions, he would choose civil unions as a "lesser evil". Partner benefits are fully or partially supported by Gingrich, Perry, Huntsman, and Johnson. Additionally, candidates like Roemer, Paul, and Johnson have stated opposition to federal marriage amendments –on either side - based on states' rights grounds. Following New York's passage of its marriage equality statute, Roemer and Perry have made public statements affirming the legal right of states to do as New York did.

Bachmann, Romney, Perry, and Santorum signed the National Organization for Marriage's

five-point marriage pledge, which includes supporting a federal marriage amendment and defending DOMA, as well as establishing a presidential commission to investigate harassment of “traditional marriage supporters.” Bachmann and Santorum also signed the Family Leader pledge. The pledge took aim at gays in the military, marriage equality, and even originally included a suggestion that African-American children were better off during slavery than under President Obama. Governor Johnson blasted the pledge, stating that “While the Family Leader pledge covers just about every other so-called virtue they can think of, the one that is conspicuously missing is tolerance.”

Moving along, we have the repeal of Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell, supported by Huntsman, Johnson, Paul. Bachmann, Cain, and Santorum have vowed to reinstate DADT. On the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, Santorum, Romney, Paul, Johnson, and Cain are in opposition, with the remaining candidates’ positions unclear. It should be noted that Romney supported the idea under Clinton, and that Johnson’s opposition arises from fear of creating a protected class. And on adoption rights, most of the candidates have come all or partially out in opposition, though Johnson, Huntsman, and Romney have made statements indicating they are not closed to the idea.

The most LGBT unfriendly candidates appear to be Bachmann and Santorum. Let’s recall that Bachmann has made the news for hiding behind bushes to observe a gay rights rally and running screaming from a lesbian woman who approached her after a speech, and has been silent on calls for action on bullying in her own district. And Santorum is famous for his remarks comparing same-sex marriage to bestiality, polygamy, and adultery. On the other end is activist Fred Karger, a lesser known Republican candidate who is also an out, gay man. He supports full equality in all areas, and has even called out President Obama for not being more progressive in this area. Clearly, the choices – when it comes to LGBT issues alone – are a mixed bag.

Sources:

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College Asks the Right Question

By: Craig Leets, University of Maryland, College Park

Questions requesting demographic information have appeared on college and university admissions applications for decades. Institutions request some or all of the following information: race, ethnicity, age, nationality, birthplace, spoken languages, veteran status, and parental information.[1] Additionally, depending on how the question is phrased, institutions ask applicants to identify their sex or gender; however, these questions do not allow for identities outside of the gender binary. A demographic question regarding sexual orientation or non-binary gender identities was not seen until recently.

Elmhurst College in Elmhurst, Illinois, a private, religiously-affiliated school, made national news earlier this semester by being the first college to add an optional question about sexual orientation and gender identity to their admissions application. Prospective students now have the option to answer the following question: “Would you consider yourself a member of the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) community?”[2] This question appears on the application next to other optional demographic questions, such as language spoken in their household and religious affiliation.

The addition of this question on Elmhurst College’s admission application represents progress in the recognition of LGBTQ identities on college and university campuses. Offering the opportunity to answer this question to incoming students demonstrates an understanding by Elmhurst College administrators that LGBTQ identities have an impact on a student’s undergraduate experience. Organizations, such as the Consortium of Higher Education LGBT Resource Professionals and Campus Pride, have been urging the addition of this question to the Common Application for several years. The Common Application, used by over 400 colleges and universities, asks a number of demographic questions, but sexual orientation and gender identity do not appear on this application.

Although a similar question has not been reported to appear on other admissions applications, LGBTQ Student Services Administrators attempt to find other ways to reach out to prospective and incoming students who identify within the LGBTQ community. Many universities have information at orientation events to educate prospective students about the resources offered to LGBTQ students. Other universities, such as American University and the University of Pennsylvania, collaborate with the Admissions units on their campuses to identify students who have material in their application that indicates possible membership or interest in the LGBTQ community.[3] Because a demographic question regarding sexual orientation and gender identity does not appear on their admissions applications, these universities employ other strategies to connect students with resources on campus.

Because this question was added to the application recently, the effects of this additional demographic information on the experience of LGBTQ students at Elmhurst College remains to be seen. However, administrators are optimistic. Dr. S. Alan Ray, President of Elmhurst College, shared in a news release that this information will help the college “to better serve each of [their] students as a unique person” and “allows [the institution] to live out commitments to cultural diversity, social justice, mutual respect among all persons, and the dignity of every individual.”^[4] Gary Rold, the Dean of Admissions, believes that this information will allow the college to offer an experience that acknowledges the identities of each student. The optimism expressed by administration communicates systemic support for underrepresented students at Elmhurst, which will hopefully be seen over the coming year.

Although the impact of this addition to the Elmhurst College application is not currently apparent, it is important to consider the implications of this demographic question and how this question might create broader changes if implemented on other campuses. In the current economy, the number of students served can determine funding for programs, initiatives, and offices, as opposed to other factors. Consequently, could this demographic information provide additional funding for LGBTQ Student Services if larger numbers of LGBTQ students are identifying themselves than was previously estimated? Conversely, if there are less LGBTQ students, will administrators cut budgets? Presently, when certain resources are only offered as a result of adequate funding, are these services threatened by a more accurate number of LGBTQ students on campus? Questions like these might be asked if more institutions allow students to self-identify as members of the LGBT community on their applications.

Other factors to consider include connection to resources, outing students, and access to information. In what ways will LGBTQ students receive information about campus resources? Through email communication, information sent home, specialized sessions at orientation programs? Is there a risk of outing students who do not want to be out at home, in their residence hall, or in the classroom? How will this information be kept confidential, and will students have the authority to regulate who receives their responses to this question? These questions and others should be considered by campuses if they hope to add a similar question to the demographics section of their application.

Elmhurst College should be and has been applauded for their progressive move in adding a question about LGBTQ identity to their admissions application. However, administrators should be critical of the ways that LGBTQ students' experiences are being affected by this opportunity to self-identify on their application. Assessment can be used to show the impact of this decision on LGBTQ students at Elmhurst College, and if the assessment concludes with positive results, other campuses may be more willing to follow Elmhurst's

lead in identifying LGBTQ students on their campuses

References:

[1]Demographic categories appearing on The Common Application. Retrieved from: <https://www.commonapp.org/commonapp/downloadforms.aspx>.

[2]Martinez, M. (2011, August 26). Illinois college becomes first to ask undergrads if they're gay. Retrieved from: http://edition.cnn.com/2011/US/08/25/illinois.college.lgbt.question/index.html?eref=mrss_igoogle_cnn.

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[4]Elmhurst College Office of Communication and Public Affairs (2011, August 25). A small change makes a difference. Retrieved from: <http://public.elmhurst.edu/alumni/128382428.html>.

SCLGBTA Awards Announcements

Award Information

Each year, the Standing Committee for LGBT Awareness honors individuals and programs that make significant contributions to our field of higher education and to our work with college students. We invite you to make nominations for yourself or your peers for the following awards. Your submissions (with the information outlined below) should be sent electronically to Ashley Skipwith, Administration Coordinator, at amskipwith@gmail.com, by Friday, November 18, 2011. Award recipients will be announced in conjunction with the 2012 ACPA Convention in Louisville.

Julie B. Elkins Outstanding Service: For significant contributions to the SCLGBTA through their support of and efforts for LGBT awareness in ACPA.

Public Service: For significant contributions to higher education and to their institution (or other institutions around the country) through support of and efforts in LGBT awareness.

Val DuMontier New Professional: Recognition of a new professional (1-5 years in the field) who has made significant contributions in the area of LGBT awareness.

Research Recognition: Recognition for completed or ongoing research on LGBT issues.

Nominations for the individual awards should include:

- The name, title, institution, and contact information of the nominated individual.
- The award to be considered.
- Description of how this individual's work is consistent with the education and advocacy mission of the SCLGBTA.
- Explanation of how the individual has made contributions specific to the award (research, public service, Standing Committee service, new professional, etc.).
- The name, title, institution, and contact information of the nominator.

Remember: Your submissions should be sent electronically to Ashley Skipwith, Administration Coordinator, at askipwith@fas.harvard.edu by Friday, November 18, 2011.

SCLGBTA Webinar Examining the multiple and intersecting identities of LGBTQ populations: Implications for theory and practice

Save the Date!

Tuesday, November 15, 2011
5:30pm EST

A Webinar Co-Sponsored by the Standing Committee for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Awareness and the Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals.

Facilitated by: Dr. James M. DeVita,
Assistant Professor of Counselor

SCLGBTA Volunteers Needed

Awards Committee

The Standing Committee for LGBT Awareness is also seeking members to help with the nomination review process. Individuals who serve in this capacity are crucial to the success of the awards process. Members of the committee will be asked to review nominations, and submit written feedback in order to help make the final decisions. If you are interested, please e-mail Ashley Skipwith at amskipwith@gmail.com by Friday, November 11th, 2011.

Education-College Student Affairs,
University of West Georgia, Carrollton,
GA

This webinar will introduce participants to the multiple dimensions of identity associated with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) individuals' development and engagement, particularly focused on the college environment. Theoretical perspectives that challenge historical representations about LGBTQ individuals as embodying a monolithic identity (e.g., queer theory, multiple dimensions of identity, and intersectionality) will be examined. Additionally, current research that seeks to examine the intersections of identities for LGBTQ individuals (e.g., gender identity and expression, race, and religious affiliation) and implications for reframing work with LGBTQ students will be explored.

More information to follow.

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