



Queering Education Research Institute

Spring 2011 Report



Bridging the gap
between research and
practice in the teaching
of LGBTQ students and
the creation of LGBTQ
youth-affirming
schools: Arts,
Education and Action



Executive Summary

Since 2009, QuERI has been designing and implementing research and educational projects that aim to bridge the gap between research and practice in the teaching of LGBTQ students, the creation of LGBTQ youth affirming environments and LGBTQ youth serving programs.

QuERI strives to foster change for LGBTQ youth through:

- Conducting qualitative research exploring the education experiences of LGBTQ youth, the children of LGBTQ families, and the experiences of their teachers, other school personnel, and youth service providers.
- Developing research-based professional development opportunities to support educators in the creation of affirming learning environments for LGBTQ students in schools and in youth serving social service organizations.
- Evaluating school policy and policy implementation in support of LGBTQ students and proposing new policy and implementation practices to improve school climate for LGBTQ youth.
- Utilizing research to generate new and creative approaches to engaging students, teachers, school personnel and community in working to improve the school experiences of LGBTQ youth and the children of LGBTQ families.
- Generating and disseminating research on the LGBTQ youth experience and on models for creating change in the institutions that serve them through publication, conference presentation, and workshop delivery.
- Providing opportunities for graduate students to engage with LGBTQ young people, and to research and teach in the area of queering education.
- Utilizing QuERI generated research to further develop and refine Institute programming.

Spring 2011 marks a significant milestone for QuERI, as it is the first time the Institute has had program funding to launch a comprehensive initiative to create more inclusive, affirming school environments for LGBTQ youth in Central New York schools.

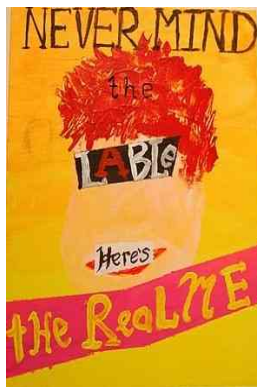


**All artwork was created by CNY LGBTQ students and featured in Queer Students CNY: Art, Education, and Action.*

Spring Semester 2011 At-a-Glance

QuERI has designed and implemented a wide variety of programming this semester. Between January and July, the QuERI team has:

- Visited schools **87** times.
- Implemented programming in **17** schools in **11** districts.
- Worked with **205** students
- Conducted **20** professional development sessions and trained **630** educators.
- Participated in **67** Gay-Straight Alliance or Acceptance Coalition meetings
- Began **2** new Gay Straight Alliances in SCSD, and **1** in a suburban school.
- Facilitated **36** in-school arts workshops and held **25** theatre sessions at SU.
- Organized regional Day of Silence activities, including 3 flash mobs in Syracuse area high schools
- Facilitated two Radical and Responsible Masculinity workshops at Syracuse University.
- Held a book drive to bring LGBTQ age appropriate books into SCSD middle schools.
- Hosted a day-long event for students and educators throughout Central New York— Queer Students CNY: A Day of Art, Education and Action, April 1 at XL Gallery.
- Delivered new Gender workshops to area Gay Straight Alliances
- Hosted an evening of arts expression, “Silent Voices,” at Syracuse Stage for LGBTQ students.
- Served as policy consultants for a school harassment lawsuit in New York State- a test case using Title IX involving the United States Department of Justice.
- Currently serve as the only education researchers/LGBTQ and schools “experts” on the New York State Dignity for All Students Act policy committees.
- Published research about Reduction of Stigma in Schools in *Journal of LGBT Youth*.
- Presented new research on teacher experiences with transgender students at the Gender and Education Conference, the Transgender Health Conference
- Presented research at the Pace University “When Words Become Weapons” conference
- Began a case study in rural Vermont on transgender elementary school children
- Currently consulting and providing qualitative research support on a statewide analysis of the heteronormativity of sex education curricula in New York State.



**All artwork was created by CNY LGBTQ students and featured in Queer Students CNY: Art, Education, and Action*

In-School QuERI Programming

QuERI encourages social change in support of LGBTQ students in a variety of arenas: schools, state and federal policy, and educational research. With increased graduate student engagement, more of QuERI's energy this semester has been focused on empowering area students and educators to change their school cultures. The following summarizes the three major components of this local work:

The Reduction of Stigma in Schools Program: Since January, RSIS has conducted 20 professional development workshops during the Spring 2011 semester and trained approximately 630 educators. The majority of Spring 2011 training occurred in the Syracuse City School District-- both at the school and district (administrator and guidance counselor meetings) level. RSIS trainers also met with district administrators throughout the region to educate them about the need for professional development about LGBTQ issues.

GSA Support: QuERI supported and strengthened existing Gay Straight Alliances and Acceptance Coalitions and helped develop and create two new Gay Straight Alliances at Syracuse City School District high schools and one in a suburban school. QuERI provided programming to all participating student groups including: leadership training, identity art workshops, theatre for social justice and anti-bullying, dance expression, and dialogue about gender and sexual identities. QuERI also organized and supported Day of Silence activities including a "flashmob" dance, which raised school-wide awareness of the Day of Silence in two Districts.

Arts-in-Action: Identity Art Project: 10 schools participated in QuERI's LGBTQ Identity Art Project, requiring an average of 2 in-school visits per week during the Identity Art Project. This project engaged students in visual representations of their identities through painting, and in dialogue about their identities generated through writing, photography, and peer-to-peer interaction. Students were able to complete pieces that represented how they felt being LGBTQ or Allies in school. 80 pieces of student artwork were exhibited to friends, family and educators during Queer Students CNY: A Day of Art, Education and Action, April 1. A second Exhibit occurred in conjunction with the Silent Voices event.

Theatre for Change: QuERI developed and implemented theatre programming that facilitated middle school and high school peer-to-peer dialogue about bullying and provided a creative outlet for students to share their experiences of oppression as LGBTQ youth. The theatre troupe met weekly for rehearsals at SU. Theatre performances were utilized during GSA meetings and used as a tool to build community within these student groups. The theatre program was also integrated into the Identity Art Project. The theatre troupe used themes emerging from the visual art to create a theatre piece about LGBTQ students' school experiences. This piece was performed at Queer Students CNY: A Day of Art, Education and Action. Theatre for Change is part of the Arts-in-Action program. The troupe also staged and filmed scenarios taken from student and teacher experiences in school to be utilized in teacher professional development.

QUEERING EDUCATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Current Research Projects

QuERI believes in utilizing research to generate new and creative approaches to engaging students, teachers, school personnel and community in working to improve the school experiences of LGBTQ youth and the children of LGBTQ families.

Supporting Transgender Students in Elementary Schools

This study addresses the challenge of supporting transgender children in public school contexts by exploring the lived experience, fears and concerns of school personnel working with or preparing to work with young transgender students in Central New York. Data collection and analysis are ongoing, and this project supports continued development of the Reduction of Stigma in Schools programming for elementary schools with transitioned transgender students. Preliminary findings have been presented at the Transgender Health Conference in Philadelphia, PA (June 2010) and the Gender and Education Conference at the University of Exeter, UK (April 2011) and the Transgender Health Conference (June 2011). Future presentations are planned for the American Educational Studies Association Conference (October 2011).

Case Study: Supporting Transgender Students in Elementary Schools

Case study of an elementary school that reports to have successfully created a supportive environment for a transitioning transgender elementary school child in Vermont began in May 2011. This study is funded through Syracuse University School of Education Research and Creative Scholarship Grant .

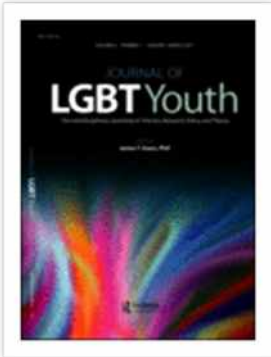
Safe Space stickers and the risks of Ally marking: An exploration of teacher resistance and fear in support of LGBTQ students

This case study explores the stories of fear and surveillance told by teachers in a Central New York suburban school district who participated in RSIS professional development training. After attending the district sanctioned workshop, teachers posted “Safe Space” stickers in their classrooms. Within two days, they were ordered to remove the stickers. Fear of the district and school administration emerged as a central theme in the stories of teachers who felt they “should” be advocating and actively supporting LGBTQ students but believed that they would suffer personal and professional consequences for speaking out. Data have been partially analyzed.

Arts Spaces/Safe Spaces: Exploring the Mythology

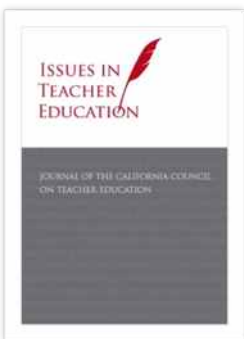
LGBTQ youth narratives have for decades marked arts spaces as their spaces of safe retreat within the schools. However, there is no research exploring the arts classroom as a supportive environment for LGBTQ students. This study will explore the experiences of arts educators with LGBTQ youth, their awareness of the presence of LGBTQ young people in their classrooms, the environments they create for youth, and their preparedness to support LGBTQ young people. Preliminary data currently being collected by the Arts-in-Action coordinator.

PUBLICATIONS 2010-2011:



Payne, E & Smith, M. (2011). The Reduction of Stigma in Schools: A New Professional Development Model for Empowering Educators to Support LGBTQ Students. *Journal of LGBTQ Youth, 8(2), 174-200.*

ABSTRACT: This paper describes the rationale and design of The Reduction of Stigma in Schools (RSIS)—an innovative professional development program that aims to empower educators to create supportive learning environments for LGBTQ students. Part of a larger evaluation study, this paper illustrates how the core design components are visible in participants’ experiences with the program itself and with working to create supportive environments for their students. Key design elements, such as the educator to educator program delivery, research based workshop content, and basing the program in a university school of education, were reported by participants to significantly increase the perceived relevance of LGBTQ issues for their professional practice. The paper concludes with reflection on the design elements which have proven effective, plans for expanding the model, and recommendations for actions educators can take to move toward supporting LGBTQ youth.



Payne, E. & Smith, M. (2010). Reduction of Stigma in Schools: An evaluation of the first three years. *Issues in Teacher Education, 19 (2), 11-36*

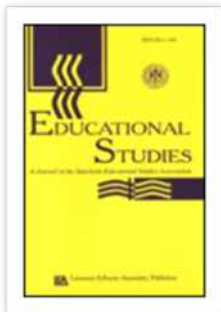
ABSTRACT: The Reduction of Stigma in Schools (RSIS) program began the work of educating school personnel about the school experiences of LGBTQ youth in Fall 2006 and reached the “1000 educators trained” mark in September 2009. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and this study explores the experiences of those who participated in the RSIS program over its first three years. The goal of the larger project was to identify successes and areas in need of improvement and to gain understanding of the meaning teachers make of their workshop experience in terms of their professional responsibility. This paper explores portions of the research relevant to the three workshop objectives and other evaluative data offered by educators on their experience.



Payne, E. & Smith, M. (under review) Rethinking safe schools approaches for LGBTQ students: Changing the questions we ask. Submitted to *Multicultural Perspectives*.

ABSTRACT: Conversations about the creation of safe schools for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) youth often focus on eliminating individual acts of bullying and harassment targeting queer kids and fail to address the ways in which schools value and validate hegemonic gender. As a

result, “current interventions...tend to conceptualise the problem of bullying in terms of individual or family pathology” (Bansel et al, 2009, p. 59), rather than examining the systems of power that persistently privilege specific groups of youth while marginalizing others. This paper aims to accomplish three goals: (1) Respond to the questions most often asked in discussions of safe schools for LGBTQ students using a sociological frame which views schools both as cultural sites in which students position themselves in terms of power- marginalizing those who do not conform to heteronorms—and as institutional structures and systems in which hegemonic gender and sexuality are privileged. This perspective is largely unconsidered in discussions of violence in schools in the United States. (2) Explore the possibilities and limitations of litigation and legislation for creating change in schools. (3) Propose a research agenda that moves beyond defining “the problem” in terms of individual-to-individual or group-to-group interactions and, rather, identifies school culture as the object of inquiry.



Related Payne Publication:

Payne, E. (2010). Sluts: Heteronormative Policing in the Stories of Lesbian Youth Educational Studies: A Journal of the American Educational Studies Association. Volume 46, Issue 3, 2010, Pages 317 - 336

Abstract: The power of compulsory heterosexuality regulates the sexuality of adolescent lesbians as strongly as it does their heterosexual peers. Marked with a sexual(ized) identity, young Southern lesbians in this life history study made claim to moral high ground by consistently identifying with the hegemonic good girl

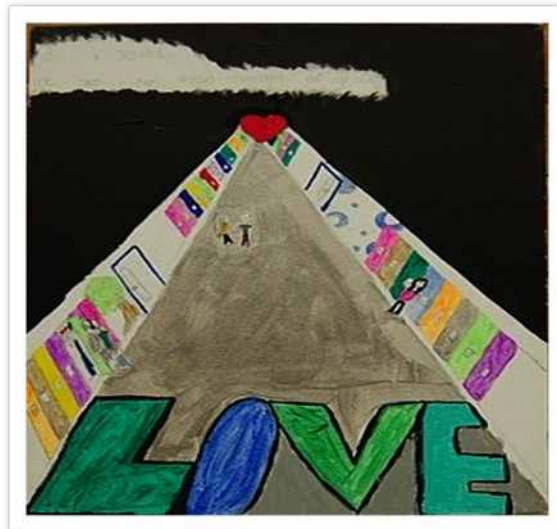
construct and by participating in the naming of women whose sexual behavior demonstrated a disregard for the “rules.” The good girl/bad girl, the virgin/slut binaries, played significant roles in their identity claims, in their relationships, and in their choices of friendships. Personal self-control (“just kissing”) is seen by these young women as admirable and sluts are seen as dangerous women who harm others and themselves. This article explores the marking of sluts and too experienced women in the life stories of White Southern adolescent lesbians and the continued social controls imposed on adolescent female sexuality through the devaluing of women's sexual agency.

Papers in Progress

INVITED BOOK CHAPTER:

Title: Supportive or not? Educators' evaluations of school climate for their LGBTQ students.

Abstract: In order for conversations about creating safe and affirming environments for LGBTQ students to be productive, it is imperative to give voice to educators who are engaged in the work of making their schools as inclusive as possible. This chapter is an exploration of how middle and high school educators assess their schools' climates for LGBTQ students. The educators in this study are all past participants in the Reduction of Stigma in Schools program, which is a professional program that aims to provide educators with tools and resources that will empower them to create more affirming learning environments for LGBTQ youth. Part of a larger qualitative study evaluating the effectiveness of the RSIS program, the data presented here specifically illustrate educators' perceptions of their school's successes and failure in terms of being supportive or welcoming for LGBTQ youth. The educators' assessments of their schools' climate for LGBTQ students are based on their perceptions of these students' experiences with violence in the school environment and their evaluation of the level of "tolerance" or "empathy" in their respective contexts. Thus, this chapter will explore how educators are framing "the problem" of negative school climates for LGBTQ youth and use these criteria to measure (1) their own success in creating positive classroom climates—as well as the failure of others; and (2) their schools' overall level of support for LGBTQ students. Analysis will explore the limitations of this framing in terms of its dependence on "add on" solutions such as anti-bullying programs and GSAs and failure to disrupt the "Othering" of the LGBTQ student. We will conclude by proposing possibilities for pushing schools beyond these familiar safety and tolerance frameworks and toward critical strategies that confront the systemic oppression of LGBTQ youth.



**All artwork was created by CNY LGBTQ students and featured in Queer Students CNY: Art, Education, and, Action.*

INVITED BOOK CHAPTER:

Title: Passing the Intolerance Buck: School Administrator Resistance to LGBT Training and Research through “Community blame”

Abstract: Administrative support is necessary for any school change initiative to succeed and research indicates that principals substantially influence the impact of social justice initiatives in school, the availability of teacher training on diversity issues (Kose, 2009) and the extent to which faculty and staff feel they can participate in advocacy for and research studies on the school experiences of minority students. When the topic is LGBTQ students, that administrative support is often missing and our research reveals a pattern of blocking teachers from engaging in advocacy and research on LGBTQ issues to prevent “community backlash.” Preserving silence and hoping the “problem” will “go away” is positioned as a preferable approach to formally addressing the negative experience of LGBTQ youth thereby potentially raising community awareness of the school’s activity on their behalf and reproach for “supporting,” and/or “advocating” for LGBTQ students. Administrators name their communities “conservative” in justification for their resistance to allowing school engagement with LGBTQ issues and often framed their approach as response to a rational fear that the community will respond that a.) the school should not condone homosexuality and gender non-conformity and b) the school should not be talking about sex – particularly not deviant sex . One interview conducted with an educator breaking lines and participating in a study on school climate for transgender youth reported an administrator “panicked” and “freaked out” at the prospect that “people could find out” about the presence of a transgender student in the elementary school . This school principal forbade teachers participation in the research study and refused comprehensive professional development on LGBT issues for his staff (despite strong encouragement from the District office to engage in both). The stated goal was not to create the best environment for this transgender student, but to get through the school year without community awareness of the student’s presence and thus avoid the “backlash”. Based primarily on data collected on three schools in Central New York, this paper explores administrative and educator resistance to active engagement with LGBTQ in-schools issues through claimed acquiescence to conservative community standards. Implications for framing school’s responsibility not as educating all students equitably but rather conforming to the community expectations of discrimination are discussed.



How I feel in the high school as a whole, abandoned. No one to offer salvation, no one to guide the constantly thrown off track high schoolers. Guidance counselors offer some, but they can’t reach out. Most high schoolers are nothing more than left for dead.

FOR JOURNAL SUBMISSION:

Title: They're "freaking out": Elementary school educators' responses to the presence of a transgender child.

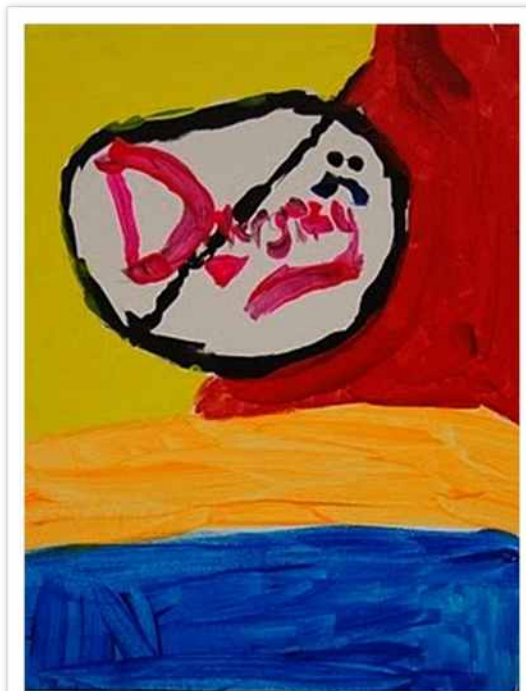
ABSTRACT: In Fall 2009, the Reduction of Stigma in Schools (RSIS) program was approached by two Central New York elementary schools with reports that their teachers were "freaking out" over the presence of transgender children in their classrooms. They expressed high levels of fear and anxiety over the teaching of these children and fear of the community's potential response to their providing a supportive environment for these students. RSIS is a research-based professional development program that supports educators to create affirming learning environments for LGBTQ youth (Payne & Smith, 2010) and is part of the Queering Education Research Institute (QuERI). Research and new workshop development grew out of this call. In the absence of literature on the experiences of transgender children at any grade level and the absence of the experiences of teachers in supporting transgender students, we drew heavily from work on gender enculturation in childhood and elementary schools as gendered spaces (Thorne & Luria, 2002) and gender in elementary teacher practice (Korth, 2007) to begin to explore and better understand the reactions of educators to transgender children. Educators often rely on unnamed gender assumptions to interpret their students' activity (Korth, 2007; Skelton & Read, 2006) and classrooms reflect a cultural assumption that girls and boys are essentially and naturally different (Rands, 2009). The presence of a transgendered child makes visible some of these assumptions and, we believe, disrupts teacher identity and sense of pedagogical competence. "If gender truly has such boundaries, then [a gender non-conforming child] is...some kind of failure who needs help...." If we understand such boundaries as not true but as "a function of a normalization of power...it is the description of gender that fails [the child] and not the child who fails gender" (Boldt, 1996, p. 120). We began interviewing elementary educators on their experiences with transgender children in 2009 and data collection continues. Preliminary data were utilized to generate a professional development workshop for teachers which we began offering summer 2010. Our data and in-schools experiences indicate that educators' initial reaction to awareness of the presence of a transgender student is fear. Words most frequently used to describe their response to the awareness of a transgender child in school included: "freak out"; "panic"; "crisis"; "fear"; "un-prepared" with the fear related descriptors appearing in all interviews. Preliminary themes that emerged in the data related to the fear included: "The other kids"; "flirting"; The "bathroom issue"; "fixing" the child/"fear" of harming the child; threat of "puberty"; gender is/as sexuality; ways of teaching/framing the world; and "community backlash." Carspecken's (1996) critical ethnography has guided the development and execution of the study.



FOR JOURNAL SUBMISSION:

Title: Safety and Gay Day: The Limits of Safe Schools and Inclusion Discourses in Creating Affirming Environments for LGBTQ Students.

Abstract: Research has explored multicultural teacher education from multiple, sometimes divergent perspectives, yet these studies agree that what passes for multicultural teacher preparation is often “not multicultural at all” and retains a focus on “celebrating diversity or understanding the cultural ‘other’ rather than a commitment to educational equity” (Gorski, 2009, p. 309). Interviews conducted with RSIS participants indicate that though the training utilizes a critical approach, what teachers embraced from the workshop was a call to understand and “protect” students harassed for gender or sexual identities through the “safety” discourse—a form of understanding and valuing the “cultural other”—and an investment in one time visibility events like participation in the annual Day of Silence as a symbol of improved school climate. Additionally, we found that educators frame LGBTQ issues as “risk” issues rather than as equity issues. These frames of thinking—safety from bullying; noting days of recognition highlighting school bullying and silencing, disease, and murder; and grouping LGBTQ issues with risky behaviors—continue to mark LGBTQ students as “victims” or “problems” in need of saving or solving. We posit that participant responses to the RSIS workshop content reflect educators’ understanding of their obligation to “diversity” as presented during their teacher preparation programs and that workshop content which resonated with them was that which they could easily fit into these familiar frameworks.



**All artwork was created by CNY LGBTQ students and featured in Queer Students CNY: Art, Education, and, Action.*

Conference Presentations

American Education Studies Association (AESA) Denver, CO, October 2010.

Panel Title: No 'Gay' Left Behind: Exploring Multiple Points of Exclusion and Possibilities for Change in the School Lives of LGBTQ Youth

Panel Abstract: For LGBTQ students, school can be a battleground where attempts to define themselves—through dating, academic work, or experimentation with self-expression—are regulated by cultural systems that stigmatize identities that transgress hegemonic gender norms. The social scene, curriculum, extra curricular activities and policy all contribute to school climates where “successful” performance of masculinity and femininity are rewarded and non-conformity is punished through silencing and exclusion. This panel aims to explore the complicated problem of creating more affirming environments for LGBTQ students by examining sites in which LGBTQ identities continue to be marginalized—sex education curriculum—as well as avenues for possible change—teacher training and policy reform. Collectively, these papers address the need to expand the definition of the “problem” of unsupportive schools beyond issues of violence and discrimination and toward comprehensive understanding of the cultural systems that persistently marginalize LGBTQ youth.

Paper Title: Policy as Protection?: An analysis of school policy in a district sued for failing to protect a student harassed for his gender and sexual identity

Increasingly, efforts to improve school climate for LGBTQ students are turning to legislation, policy, and litigation. Researchers have asserted that in order to disrupt patterns of harassment, schools need “clear, comprehensive, and accessible...policies” that clearly communicate to the entire school community that LGBT students are afforded the same protections as their peers (Anagnostopoulos et al, 2009). However, inclusive policy does not equate to inclusive school culture, and policy without commitment to communication and enforcement is ineffective. This paper explores the limitations of policy and litigation as illuminated by a 2009 school harassment case in Upstate New York. We outline the inconsistencies and ambiguities in the school’s anti-discrimination policies and examine these policies alongside parent and student affidavits which indicate school officials did very little to disrupt the pattern of abuse. The administration’s reported indifference to the policies—which included sexual orientation—was central in supporting a school climate that actively tolerated LGBT harassment. In summary, the larger issues of legislation, litigation, and inclusive policy as tools for improving school climate for LGBT students are explored.

Paper Title: The Reduction of Stigma in Schools Program: Evaluation of the First Three Years.

Schools are the cultural sites in which youth “struggle to define themselves in relation to others” (Wilkinson & Pearson, 2009, p. 545), and as “sexuality becomes increasingly central to identity and social relationships...schools are critical social contexts in which dominant beliefs about sexuality are played out” (546). For LGBTQ youth, social relations are fraught not only with the usual adolescent tensions, but also include fears of having their sexual or gender identity discovered, of losing friends, of being outcast. Youth who are “out” or who are judged by peers to fail in their performance of heterosexuality or hegemonic gender experience frequent taunting and harassment (Adelman & Woods, 2006). The Reduction of Stigma in Schools Program (RSIS) is an innovative professional development program designed to educate school personnel about the stigma LGBTQ youth face in school and empower educators create more affirming school environments. This study explores which elements of program content were “taken up,” met with resistance, or absent from participants’ reported learning. Authors make recommendations for program revisions that aim to engage educators in recognition, critique and disruption of schools’ participation in the heteronormative cultural systems that marginalize LGBTQ students.

Paper Title: Safety and Gay Day: The Limits of Safe Schools and Inclusion Discourses in Creating Affirming Environments for LGBTQ Students.

Research has explored multicultural teacher education from multiple, sometimes divergent perspectives, yet these studies agree that what passes for multicultural teacher preparation is often “not multicultural at all” and retains a focus on “celebrating diversity or understanding the cultural ‘other’ rather than a commitment to educational equity” (Gorski, 2009, p. 309). Interviews conducted with RSIS participants indicate that though the training utilizes a critical approach, what teachers embraced from the workshop was a call to understand and “protect” students harassed for gender or sexual identities through the “safety” discourse—a form of understanding and valuing the “cultural other”—and an investment in one time visibility events like participation in the annual Day of Silence as a symbol of improved school climate. Additionally, we found that educators frame LGBTQ issues as “risk” issues rather than as equity issues. These frames of thinking – safety from bullying; noting days of recognition highlighting school bullying and silencing, disease, and murder; and grouping LGBTQ issues with risky behaviors—continue to mark LGBTQ students as “victims” or “problems” in need of saving or solving. We posit that participant responses to the RSIS workshop content reflect educators’ understanding of their obligation to “diversity” as presented during their teacher preparation programs and that workshop content which resonated with them was that which they could easily fit into these familiar frameworks.

Paper Title: Passing the Intolerance Buck: School Administrator Resistance to LGBT Training and Research through “Community blame”

Research has explored multicultural teacher education from multiple, sometimes divergent perspectives, yet these studies agree that what passes for multicultural teacher preparation is often “not multicultural at all” and retains a focus on “celebrating diversity or understanding the cultural ‘other’ rather than a commitment to educational equity” (Gorski, 2009, p. 309). Interviews conducted with RSIS participants indicate that though the training utilizes a critical approach, what teachers embraced from the workshop was a call to understand and “protect” students harassed for gender or sexual identities through the “safety” discourse—a form of understanding and valuing the “cultural other”—and an investment in one time visibility events like participation in the annual Day of Silence as a symbol of improved school climate. Additionally, we found that educators frame LGBTQ issues as “risk” issues rather than as equity issues. These frames of thinking – safety from bullying; noting days of recognition highlighting school bullying and silencing, disease, and murder; and grouping LGBTQ issues with risky behaviors—continue to mark LGBTQ students as “victims” or “problems” in need of saving or solving. We posit that participant responses to the RSIS workshop content reflect educators’ understanding of their obligation to “diversity” as presented during their teacher preparation programs and that workshop content which resonated with them was that which they could easily fit into these familiar frameworks

Paper Title: An Exploration of Heteronormativity in Sex Education Curricula

Between 2000 and 2009, conservative US government control over sex education dramatically increased. This control can be categorized into three areas: control over dissemination of sex and sexuality information; control of federal funding for sexuality education and research (Irvine, 2004) and control over what “counts” as legitimate sexual expression: heterosexual intercourse. From 1988 to 2003 the percentage of public school teachers utilizing abstinence only curriculum with no information on condoms or contraception escalated 28% (Irvine, 2004), and in 2003 the National Institutes of Health increased scrutiny of federally funded research around same-sex sexual behaviors and HIV prevention in response to conservative claims that these were a “waste” of public funding. This cultural re-entrenchment in heteronormative sexuality further distanced LGBTQ youth from the possibility of comprehensive, accurate, non-stigmatizing sexual education. Continuing to the present, the United States has seen a consistent rise in the number of HIV and STI cases in youth—the largest concentration in young men who have sex with men. In an effort to better understand the heteronorms that inform sex education, four popular curricula were explored using textual analysis. The review suggests that heteronormative messages and assumptions underlying sexuality education impede efforts to empower youth sexual health in general, and LGBTQ identifying youth sexual health specifically. Furthermore, both gendered messages and fear tactics serve to marginalize and disengage LGBTQ youth. Implications for development of an LGBTQ youth affirming curricula are discussed.



**All artwork was created by CNY LGBTQ students and featured in Queer Students CNY: Art, Education, and Action*

Conference Presentations

Gender and Education, University of Exeter, UK: April 2011

Title: They're "freaking out": Elementary school educators' responses to the presence of a transgender child.

ABSTRACT: In Fall 2009, the Reduction of Stigma in Schools (RSIS) program was approached by two Central New York elementary schools with reports that their teachers were "freaking out" over the presence of transgender children in their classrooms. They expressed high levels of fear and anxiety over the teaching of these children and fear of the community's potential response to their providing a supportive environment for these students. RSIS is a research-based professional development program that supports educators to create affirming learning environments for LGBTQ youth (Payne & Smith, 2010) and is part of the Queering Education Research Institute (QuERI). Research and new workshop development grew out of this call. In the absence of literature on the experiences of transgender children at any grade level and the absence of the experiences of teachers in supporting transgender students, we drew heavily from work on gender enculturation in childhood and elementary schools as gendered spaces (Thorne & Luria, 2002) and gender in elementary teacher practice (Korth, 2007) to begin to explore and better understand the reactions of educators to transgender children. Educators often rely on unnamed gender assumptions to interpret their students' activity (Korth, 2007; Skelton & Read, 2006) and classrooms reflect a cultural assumption that girls and boys are essentially and naturally different (Rands, 2009). The presence of a transgendered child makes visible some of these assumptions and, we believe, disrupts teacher identity and sense of pedagogical competence. "If gender truly has such boundaries, then [a gender non-conforming child] is...some kind of failure who needs help...." If we understand such boundaries as not true but as "a function of a normalization of power...it is the description of gender that fails [the child] and not the child who fails gender" (Boltd, 1996, p. 120). We began interviewing elementary educators on their experiences with transgender children in 2009 and data collection continues. Preliminary data were utilized to generate a professional development workshop for teachers which we began offering summer 2010. Our data and in-schools experiences indicate that educators' initial reaction to awareness of the presence of a transgender student is fear. Words most frequently used to describe their response to the awareness of a transgender child in school included: "freak out"; "panic"; "crisis"; "fear"; "un-prepared" with the fear related descriptors appearing in all interviews. Preliminary themes that emerged in the data related to the fear included: "The other kids"; "flirting"; The "bathroom issue"; "fixing" the child/"fear" of harming the child; threat of "puberty"; gender is/as sexuality; ways of teaching/framing the world; and "community backlash." Carspecken's (1996) critical ethnography has guided the development and execution of the study.

QuERI Provides Training Directly to Educators

REDUCTION OF STIGMA IN SCHOOLS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The **Reduction of Stigma in Schools Program (RSIS)** is a research-based, educator-to-educator professional development training model brought into area schools to generate dialogue on the experiences of LGBTQ students and provide tools for change. RSIS has been operating in Central New York since Fall 2006.

Five basic ideas provide the foundation for RSIS design:

- Utilizing an educator-to-educator model
- Giving *all* educators access to the information
- Facilitating connections of content to that specific school's environment
- Creating training content that is research-based and relevant to that school or participant group
- Supporting teachers as they make the application to practice

How are educators responding?

RSIS continues to receive overwhelmingly positive feedback. The following are examples of educator feedback during Spring 2011.

- Good session! Start an LGBTQ club would benefit ITC
- The workshop covered important topics-bottom line: all students, all people should be respected regardless of gender
- Good info—eye opening
- I am glad to have had this training
- (Appreciated) the speakers' ability to answer questions
- Very well done
- Strength—presentation was informative and neutral-not preachy
- As a counselor, all of the information was very useful and needed
- It was good the awareness was raised and it forced me to re-evaluate how I respond to LGBTQ students
- Strength: content, Weakness: time
- Loved it, wished it was longer-more time for discussion
- I had a good amount of knowledge but it was a great refresher and the presenter hit some points I had not thought of.
- I was somewhat informed on many issues, but am now more aware of how and what to do
- I have to be more cognizant of seemingly harmless expressions like "guys" as pejorative to some people
- Powerful information disseminated in a very effective way.

AUGUST 2011

Spring 2011

Thus far, RSIS has conducted 18 professional development workshops during the Spring 2011 semester and trained approximately **580 educators**. The majority of this training has occurred in the Syracuse City School District--both at the school and district (administrator and guidance counselor meetings) level. RSIS trainers have also met with district administrators throughout the region to educate them about the need for professional development about LGBTQ issues.

*Transgender Health Conference, Philadelphia, PA; June 2011
QuERI presented on Transitioning Transgender Elementary School Students at the conference's ten year anniversary.*

Title: Reduction of Stigma in Schools: Empowering Educators to Support Transgender Students

Abstract: This professional development workshop aims to provide knowledge and resources that will empower educators to support Transgender students. The program was designed using the most current educational research exploring the school experiences of Transgender and gender non-conforming youth, teacher and parent interviews, and our own experiences working with Transgender youth, educators who are working to support them, and others who have expressed resistance. This session is a product of The Reduction of Stigma in Schools Program (RSIS)—an innovative research-based program in the Syracuse University School of Education that brings training and professional resources into schools to help teachers, counselors, administrators and all other school employees meet the challenges of creating supportive environments for LGBTQ youth and the children of LGBTQ parents.



RSIS Workshop Abstracts

Gender, Sexuality and Middle School

As students transition from elementary to middle school, academic and social dynamics change dramatically. Thus, the middle school RSIS workshop focuses on teaching educators about the “abrupt increase in aggression” (Pellegrini, 2002, p. 151) that occurs in early adolescence as the boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable expressions of masculinity and femininity become more stringent and are regularly “policed” by young people. Youth who do not conform to sexual and gendered expectations of heterosexuality face isolation, ridicule, and physical harassment (Wyss, 2004; Thurlow, 2001). Therefore, this workshop aims to give middle educators the tools to recognize these shifts in their students’ social lives and take action when they witness social isolation and harassment.

LGBTQ High School Experience

Research indicates that the combined effect of lesbian, gay, or bisexual sexual orientation and a high level of in-school victimization is consistently associated not only with truancy, but with higher levels of drug and alcohol use, sexual risk behaviors and suicide attempts (Botempo & D’Augelli, 2002; Fontaine, 1997; APA, 2008). Therefore, schools have an important role to play in efforts to help kids engage in school and avoid these risks. The high school workshop aims to provide educators with tools and knowledge to make LGBT identities visible in the school environment, challenge structures that marginalize students who do not conform to the heterosexual norm, and create strategies for school-wide efforts to end physical and verbal harassment. Ultimately, these strategies are meant to aid teachers in helping LGBT kids focus their energy on learning, not resisting or avoiding harassment.

Supporting Transgender Elementary School Students

This workshop assists teachers in recognizing the role of the gender binary in their curriculum and pedagogy through exploring the research and cultural messages about who boys and girls should be. The ways in which children are valued and evaluate each other through gender roles and the gender policing in schools is covered as well as the ways children’s participation in school is limited by gender assumptions adults make. The ways in which transgender children make the gender binary visible and the ways in which they require new ways of thinking and specific accommodations are explored. No peer reviewed research literature exists on the experiences of transgender children in schools. Further development of this workshop is supported by on-going research.

In the Fall of 2010, a QuERI workshop on LGBTQ Youth & Suicide was developed for the New York State Office of Mental Health.

Future NEED for RSIS

Although RSIS has trained over 1500 Central New York educators since 2006, we are constantly reminded that continued education is needed if we hope to disrupt the social marginalization experienced by LGBTQ youth in their schools. QuERI staff keep fieldnotes on their experiences in schools, and the following are 2011 data excerpts that highlight the continued need for professional training.

- I talked to him about starting a GSA and he said that he would talk to the school counselor and see what he thought about it and if perhaps some staff were interested in starting one. He said his worry is that other MS kids will think that due to the GSA they will want to "try out what its like to be gay too". I encouraged him that we have much more data and research to prove that claim false and that we would introduce it to him and his staff during the RSIS training session. (meeting with middle school principal).
- (School counselor) I am concerned that classroom teachers, on the front line, are not so aware of this topic.
- Students left class to participate in an art workshop. They said their teachers were upset that they were leaving and asked why they would want to participate because they weren't even gay. (high school students)
- While speaking about the problems of dividing students into groups according to the binary gender, a teacher spoke up and said, "Those [gender non-conforming] kids can just go to a different school." (RSIS workshop, middle school)
- She [said]...the GSA only attracts 'emo' students and that gay boys have to be girly to be accepted as gay at [school name]. I told her that it wasn't my experience with the students and it seemed like the GSA was very diverse but I said it is hard for male students to join GSA's gay or straight. ... She then added that all the students in the GSA desperately need to belong to something and have sexual issues. (high school vice principal)
- Students all expressed that they didn't trust any teacher at the school. [Guidance counselor] was upset by that sentiment. She talked about how adults need to relate to when they were young too. (notes from a GSA meeting)
- (Middle school teacher) said she wanted to put up safe space sticker but school would not let her because it had to be approved by all teachers before she could, so she made her own safe space sticker.
- Art teacher expressed that the principal sees no need for a GSA because it is a phase they will grow out of. "He is very Catholic", she added.

happen to me" (WKTV)



QuERI Fights Homophobia and Gender Discrimination at State Level

Mohawk Valley School District

In September 2009, the QuERI policy team was asked to serve as consultants for a student harassment lawsuit in New York State. The New York Civil Liberties Union requested we review (pro-bono) the school's current anti-discrimination/harassment policies and procedures, student handbook, and other training materials and offer recommendations on how to change policies and procedures to ensure that anti-LGBTQ harassment is minimized and appropriately addressed in the future. This case was the **first** of its kind in New York State, and in January 2010 it became the first LGBTQ student harassment case addressed by the United States Department of Justice. The DOJ cited Title IX, which aims to prevent gender discrimination, as their basis for joining the lawsuit. This action carries important implications for the future application of Title IX to cases of LGBTQ harassment in schools. The case was settled in March 2010.

As part of the settlement, the QuERI policy team collaborated for 8 months with the New York State School Board Association (NYSSBA) to review and analyze the district's existing policies and present new policy recommendations to the school district's Board of Education. QuERI submitted two products to the Board of Education in March 2011. The first was policy analysis and recommendations designed in collaboration with NYSSBA. These documents addressed the following concerns: (1) Invisibility of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in policies and procedures; (2) Inconsistent implementation of policy at the school employee level; and (3) Lack of transparency in implementation. The second was a supplemental document outlining QuERI's recommendations for "best practices" for facilitating shifts in school culture and meeting the Dignity for All Students' Act's standard for inclusive and non-discriminatory school environments.

He suffered **near-constant verbal assault**, his personal property was **defaced and broken**, and he was **regularly pushed** and had **things thrown at him**. During the school year that ended in 2009, a student **knocked J.L. down the stairs** and **sprained his ankle** and another student brought a **knife to school** and **threatened to kill him**. – **NYCLU**

"They (the school district) hope the settlement serves 'as a model for other school districts confronting issues of bullying and intolerance of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and gender non-conforming students.'" -Associated Press



What Happens Next?

QuERI Works to Provide Long-Term Strategies and Resources to School

QuERI Mohawk Supplement Abstract

This document represents QuERI's current recommendations for a "best practices" approach to DASA compliance and **proactive strategies** for creating supportive school environments for stigmatized youth and preventing all forms of harassment and discrimination in the school environment. A "best practices" approach to designing LGBTQ culturally competent policies relies on education research and understanding schools as social and institutional spaces. Such an approach includes anti-discrimination, anti-harassment and anti-bullying policies, but is **broader** than protecting the physical and emotional safety of victimized students and looks at schools as social systems where not all student contributions are visibly valued. We recommend a policy strategy that allows platforms for contributions of **all** students to be valued in the school community. Beyond curricular inclusion, this would include **diversifying** students' avenues for earning **recognition** or **prestige** in the school environment. This is an important step because schools have historically rewarded idealized performances of **traditional gender and heterosexuality** in very visible ways (i.e. athletic events; Homecoming traditions), while other kinds of success—arts, academics—are much less likely to be ceremoniously recognized.

QuERI's description of a proactive approach to designing and implementing these institutional components followed.

Ultimately, our hope is for schools to think **broadly** and **creatively** about the kinds of institutional changes that can be implemented in efforts to create school cultures that affirm **all** identities.



How can we value all students?



How can LGBTQ students gain recognition and prestige?



How can we diversify symbols of achievement?



QuERI Recommendations for LGBTQ Affirming Schools

We believe these recommendations are the initial necessary steps toward creating affirming and respectful school environments for LGBTQ and gender non-conforming students and the children of LGBTQ families. What follows is a list of elements we believe are the initial necessary steps toward creating affirming and respectful school environments for LGBTQ and gender non-conforming students and the children of LGBTQ families:

- Clear, consistent and comprehensive anti-discrimination, anti-bullying and anti-harassment policies that are consistently enforced.
- Dissemination and education plans for anti-discrimination, anti-bullying and anti-harassment policies to faculty, all school staff, parents and students.
- A student, faculty and staff code of conduct that sets a clear standard of respect for all students and takes specific measures to create a safe affirming environment for students who have historically been marginalized in the school setting.
- A comprehensive supervision and monitoring plan for all school spaces when students are present.
- Thorough, respectful accommodation plans for transgender students.
- A professional development plan that trains educators to (a) be supportive of stigmatized student populations; and (b) understand the complexities of stigmatization, marginalization, bullying, discrimination and harassment; (c) prevent and respond to microaggressions as well as visible violence and harassment; (d) create inclusive curricula and avenues to recognition; (e) understand the specificities of LGBTQ discrimination and harassment; and (f) trains school counselors and social workers to address the experiences of marginalized student populations in a nondiscriminatory and supportive way.
- A proactive plan for creating a positive school culture that looks beyond eliminating overt acts of violence and addresses the school's roles in systemically marginalizing some students while privileging others.
- Explore possibilities for elevating prestige and community visibility given to academics and the arts.
- Inclusive curriculum
- Begin and support a Gay Straight Alliance student club. Research supports that schools with GSAs have more positive climate and less harassment. Presence of the GSA sends the message that the school acknowledges the presence of LGBTQ students.
- Documented administrator support for LGBT issues to empower teachers in directly confronting LGBT harassment.



New York Becomes 10th State to Enact Anti-Bullying Law with LGBT Protections-GLSEN

QuERI serves as the only education researchers on the New York State DASA implementation Committees With State Legislature

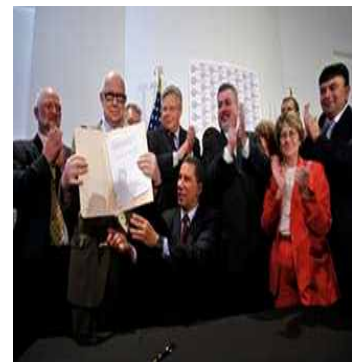
The Dignity for All Students act was passed in June 2010 and will go into effect in July 2012. The purpose of this law is to provide a “safe and civil educational environment” to all students in New York. Starting in Summer 2011, the New York State Education Department is setting up a task force to design the implementation procedures for DASA, and the task force will oversee four “working groups”: State Policy, Local Policy, Professional Development and Curriculum. QuERI will be participating in the State Policy, Professional Development and Curriculum groups.

New York State Dignity for All Students Act Implementation Committees

- No educators were originally slated to serve on any New York State DASA implementation committees.
- All committee participants were bureaucrats and attorneys.
- After QuERI participation in the Mohawk case, we were invited to sit on the committees.
- Currently, Elizabeth Payne and Melissa Smith are the only educators/education researchers/specialists in the field of student identity based harassment serving on any committees.



“We commend Governor Paterson for signing a bill into law that, *if implemented properly*, will make New York schools safer for all students”- GLSEN Executive Director Eliza Byard



QuERI's Arts in Action Program

Theatre For Change

Identity Art Workshop

QuERI provided CNY students with the opportunity to participate in a free theatre group weekly on campus. Students became skilled in improvisation to collaboratively create numerous stories and performance pieces around LGBTQ and Ally school experiences. The theatre program also provided workshops in schools to help students discuss and work out issues of oppression in their environments. The theatre group created a collaborative piece inspired by the art work done in schools and performed their final piece at the XL Projects Exhibit. Theatre for Change worked in nine different high schools and inspired GSA's to create their own pieces that dealt with LGBTQ issues in their school environment.

Kristin Goble, doctoral student in Arts Education, created a lesson plan, LGBTQ and Ally Empowerment through Visual Representation. The workshop was three months worth of school visits to ten high school GSA's in Syracuse. Students were asked to explore the relationship between image and text to create a painting or mixed media piece that reflects how they see themselves in school. We used the above quote to explore how one might liberate oneself from fear, and in doing so how that might liberate others. From an exercise in combining found imagery and text, students were asked to create a piece that examined the following questions about their identity and school.

QuERI exhibited over 100 pieces of LGBTQ student artwork at XL Projects Gallery along with the Theatre For Change piece about the student artwork to an audience of over sixty people that was made up of peers, family, and teachers.

On-site Gay Straight Alliance Support

GSA groups often have difficulty establishing themselves as stable, visible fixtures in the school environment. QuERI's program aims to support GSA advisors as they work to improve the school climate for LGBTQ youth.

- QuERI helped create three new GSA's in high schools that did not previously have an after-school organization for LGBTQ students and is working in another District to start a GSA with School Board approval.
- QuERI provided programming to all existing GSA's including leadership training, identity art projects, theatre for change, Day of Silence planning, gender dialogue, and Day of Silence flashmob dance rehearsals.
- From January to June, QuERI has been to over 60 GSA meetings in CNY Schools.



QuERI Staff's Experience in the Field:

Growth, Success, Change, and What Still Needs to Be Done

Melissa Smith is a doctoral student in Cultural Foundations of Education, a QuERI research fellow and the QuERI training coordinator.

I have been a Reduction of Stigma in Schools trainer since Fall 2008, and every semester of QuERI work has deepened my understanding of the difficult work of dismantling deeply rooted cultural and institutional structures that tell many LGBTQ kids that who they are is not who they are "supposed" to be. The push for change can be frustrating, but every semester I meet kids and educators who remind me that small increments of positive change are happening all the time. This semester, I was honored to have the opportunity to watch youth from across the city participate in our arts program and speak out--through visual art, theatre and dance--about their experiences in school and their visions for change. These kids have been truly inspiring to me, and I think about them as I continue to push their teachers and school leaders to take on the work of creating more inclusive, affirming school environments.

Kimberly Aspden is a graduate student in Secondary English Education and works as the Gay Straight Alliance Coordinator for QuERI.

My work with the GSA's in schools has shown me that there are many teachers, counselors, and other staff that care about LGBTQ students and try to support them in any way they can. Running GSA's despite the opposition that administration, other staff, and students sometimes present is challenging, and the school's overall environment plays a big factor in the group's success. In schools where the GSA is struggling to gain and keep membership, the overall student body often doesn't see a problem with the attitudes towards LGBTQ students or the group's perception as only for students who identify as gay or lesbian keeps students out. LGBTQ students in schools without GSAs have no safe, open forum to discuss their experiences and fears about being LGBTQ, and providing that space is vital for the health and safety of these students.

QuERI Staff's Experience in the Field:

Growth, Success, Change, and What Still Needs to Be Done

Marcia Ranieri is currently studying in the Teaching and Leadership Doctoral Program and is a Reduction of Stigma in Schools program trainer.

Through working with the QuERI team this semester I have learned that social justice work is hard. There is so much still to be done to make schools become a place where all students feel included and welcomed on a daily basis. Students who identify as LGBTQ long to be a connected member of the school community just like their peers so that they have someone to sit on the bus with, someone to pair up with in physical education class, and someone with whom they can share their lunch period. All too often teachers and administrators do not know what to say to help these relationships form naturally, therefore the work that we have done through QuERI is so critical in bringing it to the forefront of their minds. Additionally the QuERI work brings a voice to students and families who have been silenced in schools for too long, and allows them to feel that their lives are worth celebrating. Hopefully teacher and leader preparation programs at the university level will be altered so that there is a stronger component infused into the curriculum that focuses on LGBTQ issues, with accompanying strategies that result in success for all parties involved. Education is power!

Kristin Kelly is a 5th year Engagement Fellow and the Arts-in-Action Coordinator for QuERI.

I have learned through QuERI that LGBTQ students rarely see positive representations of themselves in public schools and even the teachers trying to support them have limited resources and time. My freedom to be open with the students about my sexuality and committed relationship, impacted them and made them see that they can be successful and in healthy and loving relationships. I saw a shift in students when they attended GSA meetings; they were passionate, engaged, and positive. Even teachers noted that they had never seen positive behavior from a particular student but saw a different side to her where she was working with others and excited to be there. Another teacher expressed that the GSA was really the only other positive after school activity occurring in their school besides sports and other teachers were grateful for the energy and spirit of the GSA. I believe through my experiences that students need to be encouraged everyday and educators must believe in the student's best version of themselves. However, this can be increasingly difficult with the day to day stress of teachers in addition to LGBTQ students bearing a great deal of weight and stigma from peers and family members and perhaps protecting themselves with difficult behavior. GSA's need to exist in this social climate in order for students to feel accepted and have a place where they can talk about all facets of themselves without judgment or fear and the more teachers can become active Ally's to the students, the easier it will be for them to succeed and feel safe and happy in high school.

QuERI Staff's Experience in the Field:

Growth, Success, Change, and What Still Needs to Be Done

Lauren Hannahs is a 2011 graduate of the Higher Education Administration Master's Program. She has been the LGBT Resource Center Graduate Assistant for two years and a QuERI Fellow.

As a Higher Education student, I spent most of the last two years working on issues of homophobia and heteronormativity at the college level. As the coordinator for the Ally Development Training Program at SU, I was able to learn how people - young and old - think about and conceptualize gender and sexuality. This experience was foundational to my work with QuERI over the last year as I began to work with younger students, exploring similarities and differences in age cohorts wrestling with LGBT issues. Through gender workshops in the local area high schools I was able to understand how embedded the social construction of gender is in the fabric of our culture, but also how more and more young people are pushing those expectations of gender. I not only saw students recognize and verbalize their gender in complicated and empowering ways, I also saw faculty and staff supporting these young people through their gender exploration. There is always more work to do but working with QuERI over this past year has further solidified my belief that there is a cultural shift taking place and our LGBTQ youth are the driving force behind it.

Kristin A. Goble is a doctoral student in the Teaching and Curriculum Department at Syracuse University and a QuERI Associate

Working with high school aged students in an art-making environment has proved to be very empowering for both students and myself. I have been doing art workshops with high school students with QUERI for some time. A lot of preparation goes into creating a lesson that HAS to work within a two-to-three visit format. The lesson has to be timely, engaging and inclusive. If it is not, I have to be flexible in my thinking in order to make it relevant to a particular group so they will feel a connection to the prompt. One of the scariest parts of creating art is that sometimes you need to be vulnerable in order to create something that sends a message to viewers. Recognizing this vulnerability as a teacher and for the students is a critical element when engaging in an art experience. It never ceases to amaze me how we can go into schools for workshop visits and students will open up, participate and really explore deeper personal meaning through a dialogue with art materials. The arts provide them a safe space to really examine and experiment with their ideas and feelings to create an artwork that is a representation of themselves. The arts allow for students to have a voice, and a powerful voice at that! Seeing all the art hanging, and performed provided a collective voice that is impossible to silence.

QuERI Special Events:

Queer Students CNY: Arts, Education, and Action

April 1st, 2011 XL Projects Gallery, Syracuse University



QuERI Special Events:

Queer Students CNY: Arts, Education, and Action

April 1st, 2011 XL Projects Gallery, Syracuse University

**LGBTQ and Ally Student Panel:
Eights students from various
high schools
bravely shared**



**their
experiences
of being out
in school.**



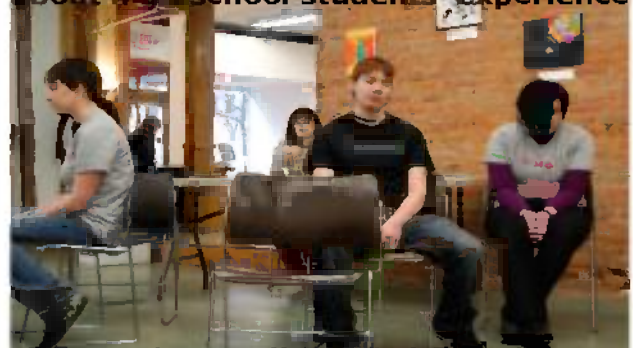
**Family members and teachers
were able to ask
questions and
applauded their
courage.**



**The stories unified the
students and the audience.**



**Theatre For Change Performance:
Students used the artwork and
students' text to create a play
about high school students' experience**



**The students allowed the audience
to see what the school climate is
like for students who are LGBTQ
or who feel like they don't fit into
the social constructs in school.**



**Audience members said the piece
was entertaining but more
importantly they felt like it helped
them view the artwork and
experience the reality
of their children,
students, and peers.**

QuERI Special Events:

Day of Silence: Flashmob Dances

April 15th, 2011 CNY High Schools



*Syracuse University Campus Rally:
Participating high schools also attended
SU LGBT Resource Center's Rally at
Hendrick's Chapel where QuERI
awarded Cindy Squillace for her support
of LGBTQ students in school. QuERI's
success in schools relies on strong
relationship with teachers and
administrators committed to safe and
supportive environments for LGBTQ
students.*

QuERI Special Events:

Silent Voices: LGBTQ Open Mic Night

June 17th, 2011 Syracuse Stage



Students' work dealt with coming out and bullying but also most of the pieces displayed a positive image of young LGBTQ relationships and expression because of the event's safe and encouraging atmosphere that they rarely experience in school.



MONTH of JANUARY

QuERI Conferences
 Gender Dialogue

Arts-in-Action
 GSA
 RSIS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday		
				1/6/11 Meeting with NYSSBA Finance Meeting	1/7/11 QuERI Seminar	
	1/10/11 Grant Middle School Initial Identity Art Workshop Curriculum Planning					
		1/18/11 Suicide Webinar				

Queering Education Research Institute | 7/25/11



			Rehearsal			QuERI	Arts-in-Action
						Conferences	GSA
						Gender Dialogue	RSIS
MONTH	1/31 of FEBRUARY Westhill HS						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
	Project	2/1/11 Liverpool HS Identity Art	2/2/11 Theatre For Change Rehearsal	2/3/11 NYSSBA			
		Project Solvay School District					
	2/7/11 Meeting with SCSD- Superintendent Westhill HS Identity Art Project Meeting with East Syracuse Minoa Personnel	2/8/11 Masculinities Conference Meeting SCSD meeting- Steve Gramet	2/9/11 East-Syracuse Minoa HS Identity Art Workshop Theatre For Change Rehearsal	2/10/11 Meeting with Art Teacher Corcoran HS Baker HS Identity Art Project			
	2/14/11 Westhill HS Theatre For Change	2/15/11 SCSD-Guidance Counselors Masculinities Conference Meeting Liverpool HS Identity Art	2/16/11 Onondoga Hill Middle School Anti-Bullying Workshop Theatre For Change Rehearsal	2/17/11 SCSD Principal Meeting	2/18/11 Spectrum Meeting Corcoran HS Nottingham HS First GSA		

	2/14/11 Westhill HS Theatre For Change	2/15/11 SCSD-Guidance Counselors Masculinities Conference Meeting Liverpool HS Identity Art Project Solvay Administrator Meeting	2/16/11 Onondoga Hill Middle School Anti-Bullying Workshop Theatre For Change Rehearsal East-Syracuse Minoa HS Identity Art Project	2/17/11 SCSD Principal Meeting	2/18/11 Spectrum Meeting Corcoran HS Nottingham HS First GSA Meeting	
--	---	--	--	-----------------------------------	--	--



QuERI Arts-in-Action
 Conferences GSA
 Gender Dialogue RSIS

MONTH of MARCH

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
		3/1/11 Meeting with Hillside	3/2/11 East Syracuse Minoa HS Identity Art Project Theatre For Change Rehearsal	3/3/11 Nottingham HS Identity Art Project	3/4/11 Jamesville Dewitt HS Identity Art Project	
		3/8/11 West Genesee HS Identity Art Project	3/9/11 Nottingham HS Identity Art Project East Syracuse Minoa GSA Theatre For Change Rehearsal	3/10/11 Institute of Technology Training West Genesee HS Identity Art Project	3/11/11 Corcoran HS First GSA Meeting Jamesville Dewitt HS Identity Art Project	
		3/15/11 SCSD HS Counselor Training Nottingham HS Identity Art Project	3/16/11 Cicero North Syracuse HS Identity Art Project Theatre For Change Rehearsal	3/17/11 Corcoran HS GSA Henninger HS Identity Art Project	3/18/11 Baker HS Training ACLU	

	3/21/11 Solvay HS Training Nottingham GSA Solvay BOE		3/23/11 Corcoran HS Identity Art Project Theatre For Change Rehearsal		3/25/11 BOCES Project HELP Nottingham Art Project QuERI Seminar	3/26/11 Queer Masculinities Dialogue
	3/28/11 Mohawk Westhill HS Day of Silence Flashmob Dance Rehearsal	3/29/11 Corcoran HS Identity Art Project Henninger HS Identity Art Project	3/30/11 Nottingham GSA Cicero North Syracuse Identity Art Project Theatre For Change Rehearsal	3/31/11 Corcoran HS Identity Art Project		



MONTH of APRIL

QuERI Conferences Gender Dialogue
Arts-in-Action GSA RSIS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					4/1/11 Queer Students CNY: Art, Education, and Action	4/2/11 Radical & Responsible Masculinity Conference

Queering Education Research Institute

			<p>4/6/11</p> <p>Clary Middle School Meeting</p> <p>East Syracuse Minoa GSA</p> <p>Theatre For Change Rehearsal</p>		<p>4/8/11</p> <p>Corcoran HS</p> <p>Day of Silence Flashmob Dance Rehearsal</p>	
	<p>4/11/11</p> <p>Westhill HS</p> <p>Day of Silence Flashmob Dance Rehearsal</p>	<p>4/12/11</p> <p>Nottingham HS Day of Silence Flashmob Dance Rehearsal</p>	<p>4/13/11</p> <p>Theatre For Change Rehearsal</p>	<p>4/14/11</p> <p>Corcoran HS</p> <p>Day of Silence Flashmob Dance Rehearsal</p> <p>Clary Middle School Training</p>	<p>4/15/11</p> <p>Day of Silence in School Flashmob Dances: Westhill, Corcoran, Nottingham HS</p>	
		<p>4/19/11</p> <p>Corcoran HS GSA</p>	<p>4/20/11</p> <p>Theatre For Change Rehearsal</p>	<p>4/21/11</p> <p>Nottingham HS GSA</p>	<p>4/22/11</p> <p>Gender and Education Conference</p>	
	<p>4/25/11</p> <p>Nottingham HS GSA</p>		<p>4/26/11</p> <p>ELMS</p> <p>Corcoran HS GSA</p> <p>Theatre For Change Rehearsal</p>	<p>4/27/11</p> <p>Manlius Pebble Hill HS GSA</p> <p>Meeting with ELMS Principal Kevin Burns</p>		

MONTH of MAY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		5/3/11 Corcoran HS GSA	5/4/11 Theatre For Change Rehearsal	5/5/11 Nottingham HS GSA		
	5/9/11 Corcoran HS GSA		5/11/11 Nottingham HS GSA Theatre For Change Rehearsal		5/13/11 Corcoran HS GSA	
	5/16/11 Westhill HS GSA	5/17/11 Nottingham HS GSA	5/18/11 Manlius Pebble Hill HS GSA Theatre For Change Rehearsal	5/19/11 Corcoran HS GSA		
	5/23/11 Nottingham HS GSA		5/25/11 Corcoran HS GSA Theatre For Change Rehearsal			



QuERI Arts-in-Action
 Conferences GSA
 Gender Dialogue RSIS

MONTH of JUNE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			6/1/2011 Gender Dialogue MPH and Corcoran High School Song/Dance Interpretation Workshop	6/1/2011 Transgender Health and Wellness Conference	6/3/2011 Gender Dialogue Nottingham High School	
	6/6/2011 Westhill High School GSA	6/7/2011 Corcoran High School GSA	6/8/2011 Creative Writing Workshop	6/9/2011 Nottingham High School GSA Drag King Workshop		
			6/16/2011 Theatre For Change Rehearsal		6/17/2011 Silent Voices: LGBTQ Open Mic Night	



MONTH of July

QuERI Arts-in-Action
 Conferences GSA
 Gender Dialogue RSIS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	7/11/11 Pace University Summer Institute	7/12/11 Pace University Summer Institute	7/13/11 Pace University Summer Institute			Queering Education Research Institute 7/25/11
		7/26/11 DASA Meeting	7/27/11 DASA Meeting			

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Empty content area for text or graphics.

