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It Gets Better...For Whom?: A Content Analysis of the 100 Most Viewed "It Gets Better" Videos

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It Gets Better...For Whom?: A Content Analysis of the 100 Most Viewed *It Gets Better* Videos
By Hillary Montague-Asp
Senior Honors Thesis Submitted to the
Department of Sociology
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	2
Abstract	3
CHAPTER ONE: STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	
<i>LGBTQ Youth as an ‘At-Risk’ Population</i>	4
<i>Anti-Bullying Policies</i>	6
<i>Best Practices in Suicide Prevention</i>	9
<i>Identities</i>	13
<i>The It Gets Better Project</i>	14
CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL ORIENTATION	
<i>Intractable Conflict Resolution</i>	17
<i>Suicide Contagion</i>	19
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS	
<i>Content Analysis of Top 100 IGBP Videos: Sampling, Coding, and Analysis</i>	20
<i>Conflict Map Construction</i>	21
<i>Limitations of the Study</i>	22
CHAPTER FOUR: CONTENT ANALYSIS FINDINGS	
<i>Characteristics in the Videos</i>	24
<i>Frequencies of Content in the Videos</i>	32
<i>Significantly Correlated Characteristics</i>	37
CHAPTER FIVE: CONFLICT MAP FINDINGS	
<i>People and Social Networks Conflict Map</i>	40
<i>Events Conflict Map</i>	51
CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	
<i>Justice</i>	57
<i>Conflict Maps</i>	58
<i>Suicide Contagion</i>	62
<i>Trickle Up Social</i>	63
<i>Anti-Bullying</i>	63
<i>Recommendations for Future Research</i>	64
References	65

Appendices

Web Link and Date Video Was Uploaded

Table 6: Significantly Correlated Characteristics

Table 5: Creator,

70

74

ABSTRACT

In September and October of 2010, there were 11 highly publicized suicides of young gay men under the age of 18 across the United States. As a response, author and columnist, Dan Savage, created a YouTube video campaign called the *It Gets Better Project* as a suicide prevention mechanism for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) youth. The campaign has millions of viewers around the world, and people and groups such as President Obama, Justin Bieber and the San Francisco Giants, have participated by creating their own video messages. The *It Gets Better Project* has received criticism from social justice communities for perpetuating white homonormativity and from suicide scholars as contributing to the phenomenon known as suicide contagion. This thesis is a content analysis of the 100 most viewed *It Gets Better* videos (on October 20th, 2011), coded for the identities of the people making the videos (including race, sexual orientation, class background, gender identity and religious beliefs), as well as the video content (e.g., references to ‘it gets better,’ encouraging viewers to come out, and references to getting out of high school). Results of the study showed that the campaign’s videos were mostly made by gay men, as well as by white, and middle-aged people. The primary messages being communicated to LGBT youth were ‘it gets better,’ telling viewers that it is their responsibility to improve their own lives, and using a violent or suicidal story from their own lives to communicate these messages. The study demonstrates the need for an intersectional approach to oppression

work within activist movements, as well as the need to work with field experts (suicide scholars) in producing effective social and political campaigns.

CHAPTER ONE: STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

With recent increases in media attention to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) youth suicides, an interesting dialogue has emerged surrounding the lives of queer youth and ‘best practice’ models for suicide prevention. Politicians, policy makers, school officials, celebrities, social workers, LGBTQ organizations, and countless others are major players in this discussion. A wave of activism advocating for anti-bullying policies in US public schools, as well as an increase in national anti-suicide campaigns, such as the *It Gets Better Project* (IGBP), have been major outcomes of this conversation. Despite the well-meaning motives in such activism, these policies and campaigns have also faced criticism and critique by many involved in the LGBTQ movement. This thesis examines the current work being done around queer youth suicide in the United States, particularly within the context of the IGBP, through the lens of scholarship on intersectionality and the literature on currently established best practice models for suicide intervention and prevention.

LGBTQ Youth as an ‘At-Risk’ Population

For youth between the ages of 10 and 24 living in the United States, suicide is the third leading cause of death, with a *reported* 4,400 completed suicides occurring every year. A national

survey of students in grades 9-12 reported that in the 12 months prior to the study, 15% of participants seriously considered suicide, 11% created a plan for suicide and 7% attempted suicide. Approximately 149,000 Americans between the ages of 10 and 24 are treated at emergency rooms across the country for injuries resulting from self-harm (CDC 2009). Within this population, LGB youth have been labeled as 'at-risk' by the US Surgeon General and the Institute of Medicine since 2001 (Haas et al. 2007), with data for transgender youth being relatively unavailable (Grossman & D'Augelli 2007). Studies report that LGB adolescents have reported suicide rates that are two to six times higher than their heterosexual peers (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation et al. 2011) while studies on transgender youth have found that 45% of participants have seriously considered suicide (Grossman & D'Augelli 2007). While there is not enough data available to establish a suicide rate for LGBTQ youth in the US (many suicides go unreported and sexual orientation and gender identity information are not collected by emergency room or hospital staff), several studies have found that queer youth have a substantially higher suicide ideation, attempt and completion rate than their heterosexual and/or cisgender peers (Haas et al. 2007).

In a 2005 study of 361 LGBT youth, D'Augelli et al. reported that 17% of participants reported attempting suicide and 83% did not. With this in mind, it is critical that as social workers, policy makers and activists, we keep in mind that a majority of the LGB youth population is not attempting suicide and that we reflect upon and form our messaging around this fact (Thompson et al. 1994). Talburt (2004) calls upon educators to work with queer youth in developing effective strategies, as "youth who are not comprehensible within the terms of identity constructed by discourses of risk...may be excluded from interventions designed for them" (120). In a 2008 study, Scourfield notes that many of the queer participants felt that LGBT identities were moral and

natural, but struggled to reconcile their positive identities with the unattractive discourse around unhappiness and suicide prevention that was present in the media, literature and surrounding communities. Recent research has suggested that with vast improvements in policies, laws and cultural acceptance, risks of suicide and self harm in youth due to minority sexual orientations may not be as large of a risk as it has been historically (Savin-Williams 2005). Mustanski et al. (2010) supports the claims of Savin-Williams, stating “given the significant changes in the social statuses of LGBT people and the use of various identity labels among youths, it is possible that findings from adult samples, or from youth samples collected in the past, may no longer reflect the current relationships between sexual orientation and mental health among youths” (2,431). Thus, it is also critical that we are mindful of the exceptionally high rates of trans youth who are suicidal and continue advocating for and supporting LGBTQ youth who are in need, while still creating space to celebrate and foster positive environments for all queer youth.

Anti-Bullying Policies

For many youth in the United States, school is the center of their lives, often being the place they spend a majority of their time. In addition to the academics learned in schools, they are for most youth, the primary place where friendships and romantic relationships are started and ended, and morals and values are reinforced and/or challenged. Because such a substantial portion of American youth spend about 35 hours per week in public or private K-12 schools, whose primary responsibility is to educate, protect and socialize students, it makes sense that this is currently the primary site for intervening in homophobia and transphobia being perpetuated between students, staff and administrators (Kalafat 2003). “Schools are the primary institution responsible for the socialization of students and have substantial access and influence on at-risk youths. Thus, schools

offer a logical setting for suicide prevention” (Lazarus and Kalafat 2001: 30). It is a commonly held belief that schools should be a safe and welcoming environment for all students, providing equal opportunities and access to education for all youth. However, experiences for queer youth in public schools are frequently filled with anti-LGBT slurs, hate speech, verbal attacks, physical attacks, assaults and sometimes even murder (Hansen 2007). In its 2009 school climate survey, the Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN) reported that 84.6% of LGBT students experienced harassment at school in the past year because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity (p. xvi). Varas et al. (2008) outline the causes and risk factors associated with homophobic bullying in schools as homophobia and heterosexism, gender role nonconformity, social acceptability of anti-gay, pejoratives and invisibility of sexual minority. In order to confront issues that gay, lesbian and bisexual students are facing in their schools, the current approaches to fighting anti-queer language and actions in the public school system is coming through a wave of anti-bullying legislation.

King suggests that as a potential site for instrumental change, schools can meet the varying needs of LGBT youth of color by taking an intersectional approach of examining and confronting homophobia and transphobia in the context of racism in academic and social settings. In conjunction with this line of thinking, it is also important to think about other overlapping oppressions that youth might experience as a part of being queer. According to GLSEN, there are currently 14 states with fully enumerated anti-bullying laws. These policies are ones that make bullying and harassment illegal when based upon a student’s sexual orientation or gender identity. It is important to note that some laws incorporate both of the terms “bullying and harassment” into their rhetoric, but there are several that only use one term (“States With Safe Schools Laws” 2011).

While these laws and policies are well intentioned and have been helpful in some legal cases, it is imperative that we examine and understand the ramifications of using the term “bullying” to refer to what is often homophobia and transphobia at the intersections of racism, classism, sexism, ableism, nationalism, and ageism.

Unfortunately, anti-bullying laws may serve to dilute the discourse of rights by minimizing or obscuring harassment. When schools put these new anti-bullying laws and policies into practice, the policies are often overly broad and arbitrary, resulting in students being suspended or expelled from schools for a variety of minor infractions. On the other hand, sometimes egregious behaviors are framed by school personnel as bullying, when in fact they may constitute illegal sexual or gender harassment or even criminal hazing or assault (Stein 2003: 789)

While many anti-bullying policies specific to the protection of gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation have not been in place long enough to assess the impacts on school climate, we must recognize that simply changing or implementing policies does not change oppressive cultures.

Violence against underrepresented people was made illegal with the Matthew Sheppard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Act of 2009. The signing of the Hate Crimes Act into law was monumental for the LGBTQ and other underrepresented communities. It provides legal ramifications for homophobia and transphobia resulting in violence, and is a useful rationale to discuss the subject of “bullying” in schools. However, LGBTQ, particularly trans, people are all too often severely injured or killed based on their identities in the United States.

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) reports that Colorado was one of the first states to pass hate crimes legislation in 1988, adding sexual orientation, including ‘transgender status’ to the law in 2005. However, in 2009, the brutal and violent murder of transwoman of color, Angie Zapata in Greeley, Colorado marked the first hate crime charge for a transgender victim in the

United States, proving that changing policies does not change a violent and transphobic culture. If we apply this same logic to public schools, it becomes apparent that while policies protecting students will help in legal situations after a crime has been committed, it does not serve as a preventative measure.

By labeling actions in an authentic way and creating distinctions between bullying and homophobia, transphobia, racism, sexism, etc. (i.e., calling a peer ‘four eyes’ and calling a peer ‘faggot’), we are holding students accountable for their actions and the potential severity of them. It is imperative the students engaging in these types of harmful behaviors are aware of the impact their words may have on others, and that school officials, parents and other students treat and react to homophobic and transphobic slurs seriously. If we begin to code these situations as homophobia or transphobia, instead of as bullying, the severity of these actions and the incredible potential for residual effects may become clear to students. In order to begin changing school climates and the overall US culture surrounding queer people, we must start with education and celebration of all identities. King suggests 10 essential strategies for creating inclusive schools for LGBTQ youth and their allies: acknowledge and confront your own biases or lack of knowledge about GLBTQ issues, become educated, know your terms, make explicit the schools’ rejection of any and all homophobia, racist and sexist attitudes, statements, or actions, send the message of support, use inclusive language, avoid stereotyping and confront those who stereotype, create opportunities for empowerment and leadership, without assuming that individuals who identify as GLBTQ wish to be spokespersons, foster and make public inclusive hiring practices, and provide inclusive education on reproduction and human development. This list of recommendations was developed under a grant from the Department of Education and are consistent with the previous

critiques made by Stein (2003) of anti-bullying policies as diluting the issue and serve to confront intersectional issues of oppression as they occur in the school setting.

Best Practices in Suicide Prevention

With the establishment of LGBT youth as an at risk population, studies have identified several social factors that can be attributed to increased suicide attempts including lack of family and school connectedness, depression, peer victimization, alcohol abuse, physical abuse by an adult and overall school safety (Hatzenbuehler 2011). It has been indicated that suicidal behavior in adolescents can be classified by the inability to identify healthy and worthwhile solutions to the previously listed stressful and harmful social situations (Langhinrichsen-Rohling 2011). Crisp and McCave (2007) point out that much of the existing literature and models developed on LGBT youth as an at-risk population have been focused on the experiences of white, gender conforming gay men and lesbians, which may not be relevant to youth of color with gender non-conforming identities, and also do not state the importance of self-identification in the identity development process. While many studies have outlined the risk factors involved with a non heterosexual orientation, strategies for identity affirmation and suicide prevention are particularly absent from the data and literature (Davis, Saltzburg & Locke 2009).

Current research is also inhibited by a lack of common definitions of terms such as “suicide attempt” and “sexual orientation,” lack of methodological approaches to measuring such terms, nonrepresentative data samples, lack of appropriate control groups, as well as several other issues (Muehrer 1995). It is important to note that in approaching suicidal behavior and prevention strategies for various sexual orientation groups, attention must be paid to diverse facets of sexual orientation identity, including identity, attraction and behavior, as these are differing categories. An

example of this could be a youth who may be not be engaging in sexual practices with members of a similar gender, but are experiencing feelings of attraction without adopting a non heterosexual identity (Langhinrichsen-Rohling 2011). In direct contrast to this, many studies report data on suicide ideation, attempts and deaths, comparing males and females and reporting homosexual and bisexual identified participants as identical populations (Remafedi et al. 1998). This is problematic in reinforcing a gender binary that is so often blurred within queer communities and should be dismantled, as well as in treating all queer identities similarly, when they have very different social, economic and political privileges and oppressions bound within them. In addition, collected data is rarely analyzed on the intersection of identities (race, gender identity, sexual orientation) to determine how the possession of multiple marginalized identities may impact suicide rates.

Bisexual youth of color may have a different identity development than white gay men, transgender people of color or lesbians of color, which cannot be ignored in suicide prevention conversations, as intersecting identities are closely linked (Chun 2010). Those wishing to intervene in suicidal behavior of youth in the queer community must be conscious of, have intentional behaviors around and strive to understand intersectional identities and how opposing truths related to identity can impact the experience of individual people. Roen et al. (2008) concluded that adults who are working with, living with or spending a lot of time around youth need to “understand the complex relationships among the need for social connection and the very real threat of ostracism and isolation within peer groups, and the role of suicidal behavior in some young people’s repertoires of coping strategies. The need for those engaging with young people to be sensitive to their emotional context cannot be overstated” (2,096). This approach includes recognizing the diverse nature of the queer community, from socioeconomic status to race to gender identity to

religion to life experiences and goals (Crisp and McCave 2007).

van Wormer and McKinney (2003) write from a perspective of harm reduction, stating, “the theme of this approach, from the treatment perspective, is to ‘meet clients where they are’ and help them protect themselves from harm...problems are compounded by the absence of social support, adult role models, and relevant sex education within a heterosexist school environment” (409). While this approach has the positive impact of meeting youth where they are in their life-long journey of coming out, accepting themselves and learning how to navigate the world, it also pulls in the all too familiar concept of protecting youth from harm.

In the ongoing conversation surrounding suicidal behavior of LGBT youth, it has been highlighted that affirmative practices may be the most productive methods of prevention. In pushing for these sorts of efforts, Uribe (1994) calls for educators within schools to take responsibility in creating liberating environments for queer youth by identifying their personal attitudes and biases towards GLBTQ youth, examining the source of these thoughts and working within themselves to deconstruct harmful assumptions, as well as avoiding the labeling of teens as that practice has the potential to cause harm during their identity development. In conjunction with these thoughts surrounding new approaches to suicide prevention, some post modern scholars have suggested that “an evidence-based, empirical world view is dangerously reductive insofar as it negates the personal and interpersonal significance and meaning of a world that is first and foremost a relational world, and not a fixed set of objects.” (Holmes et al. 2006). In a 2000 study, Kivel and Kleiber critique the typical model of focusing on self-destructive or harmful behaviors of LGBT youth through a shift to leisure activities that queer youth are engaging in to help them make sense of their non heterosexual identities in a world that normalizes heterosexuality. In conjunction

with Uribe (1994) and Holmes et al. (2006) suggestions for reinforcing and individual approaches to identity development, Kivel and Kleiber (2000) were able to identify four themes of leisure activities being used by LGBT youth as methods of expression, coping and exploration: Reading myself (highlighting the positive use of books, comic books and magazines of the lives of youth), Seeing myself – media consumption (youth are using TV and movies as ways of understanding themselves in the context and functioning of the larger world), Playing myself – sports (youth using athletics as ways to find friends, potential partners and build community around those with common interests in the greater context of understanding and developing their gender identities and expressions), and Expressing myself – music (consuming current music and creating new music to understand and challenge current societal expectations surrounding gender and sexuality).

Similarly, Ramey et al. (2010) believe that engaging youth in positive ways will lead to decreased suicide risk. This study defined youth engagement as “the sustained, meaningful involvement of a young person in an activity that has a focus outside the self,” thus proposing that opportunities for positive engagement be a major factor in developing suicide prevention models (244). In a 2008 study in the UK, McDermott et al. interviewed several LGBT youth to interrogate their perceptions of self-destructive behavior in reference to their sexual and gender identity development. The data reflected the conscious decisions of LGBT youth to engage with ‘gay pride’ discourses and rhetoric to exist in their communities as sexual beings, actively resisting the culture of shame surrounding queer identities that often stems from pervasive transphobia, homophobia, heteronormativity and cisnormativity.

White and Morris (2010) argue that schools should be a primary site of youth suicide prevention work in our culture, but it is unreasonable to expect educators to engage in this work

with rigid curricula, based on “expert” knowledge, that leaves no room for situational circumstances or individual case interpretation. As a community working to interrogate and challenge the systems of unsafe schools and suicide for LGBT youth, it is imperative that we recognize the need for flexible terminology and strategies that are not static across identity groups, location or time.

Transgender Identities

Youth with trans and gender variant identities are often pushed to the margins of not only mainstream society, but of the LGBT community as well. Resiliency factors for at-risk youth populations include support and affirmation from family and friends, but provider, educators and other adults working with trans youth should also strive to identify and promote competencies, positive factors and strengths while being mindful of negative or self-harming behaviors (Stieglitz 2010). Trans identities have been ignored or minimized in the existing literature, but Ryan (2003) makes the point that as youth are learning help-seeking and self-care behaviors from providers, educators, and other influential adults, it is imperative that individual experiences, intersectional oppressions and emotional needs are taken into consideration. In elementary, middle and high schools, it is primarily the role of the educators to educate themselves, seek to understand and advocate for trans students, who have different needs than LGB students (Sausa 2005). These needs could include modifications of dress codes to allow trans and gender variant students to dress themselves in a way that matches their gender identity and expression, advocating for gender inclusive restroom facilities in the schools, as well as avoiding any sort of practice that forces students to choose a specific gender (ie. activities that are framed as ‘boys against girls’).

The It Gets Better Project (IGBP)

As can be seen with the current discussion and actions occurring around anti-bullying policies in public schools, the discourse around suicide and creating safe environments for queer youth is *not* one of working from the bottom up to educate the harassers and biggots on LGBTQ issues, but instead one of working from the top-down to change behavior by changing laws.

Activist Yasmin Nair (2011) offers a mindful critique of the current state of addressing high suicide rates among LGBTQ youth:

The current rise in the reports of queer youth suicide does not signify either an epidemic or a crisis. What we are witnessing is the ongoing reality of what it means to be queer in a world where we forego complicated, systemic analyses of our issues in favor of simplistic and sentimental rhetoric about love and bravery conquering all...the long-term work of preventing these suicides in a systemic way can only happen if we consider queer youth as more than just queer. If we are to address the issue of queer suicides, we need to think long and hard about actually addressing the depth and complexity of the problem without resorting to magic pill arguments (¶ 12).

In contrast to suggestions provided by Nair, after the media attention given to queer youth suicide in 2010, columnist Dan Savage and his partner Terry Miller created a YouTube video aimed at US teens, urging them to not take their own lives through their teenage years, because “it will get better” (Savage 2010). Soon after, the campaign took off and now consists of over 30,000 videos, with over 4 million views, made by celebrities, politicians, allies, companies, sports teams and many more around the globe. According to the campaign’s website, “The It Gets Better Project was created to show young LGBT people the levels of happiness, potential, and positivity their lives will reach – if they can just get through their teen years. The It Gets Better Project wants to remind teenagers in the LGBT community that they are not alone – and it WILL get better” (“What is the It Gets Better Project?” 2010). With the growing popularity and media attention being given to the IGBP, many scholars, activist and suicide experts have offered mindful critiques of the well-

intended campaign.

I'm not sure my 13 or 14 or even 18-year-old self would have been able to identify with Savage or his hubby. And my 35-year-old self isn't so that is does 'get better'...it's not that there aren't vulnerable young people, but there are vulnerable people of all ages. Lots of folks, particularly the gender non-conforming and/or trans, never 'grow out' of the kinds of social reprisals for being physically different the hubbies talk about...I appreciate the thought, but maybe it shouldn't be our business to try to paper over the contradictions of our society with salvific images of the family..." (Nyong'o 2010: ¶ 7).

As noted early on by cultural critic Tavia Nyong'o, Savage's IGB video is a mandate to fold into urban, neoliberal gay enclaves, a form of liberal handholding and upward mobility that echoes the now discredited 'pull yourself up from the bootstraps' immigrant model... although lauded by gay liberals for having 'done something' to address the recent spate of queer youth suicides, critics note that queer people of color, trans, genderqueer and gender nonconforming youth, and lesbians have not been inspirationally hailed by IGB in the same way as white gay male liberals...it is imperative that this conversation is connected to broader questions of social justice in terms of race, class and gender. Otherwise, projects like Savage's risk producing such narrow versions of what it means to be gay, and what it means to be bullied, that for those who cannot identify with it but are nevertheless still targeted for 'being different,' It Gets Better might actually contribute to Making Things Worse (Puar 2010: ¶ 2).

In contrast to academic critiques of Savage's project, it is also imperative that the positive impacts be documented and accounted for. In a blog post from The Risk Science Blog from the University of Michigan's Risk Science Center, it has been noted that teens are posting response videos and writing thank you notes to those who have made IGB videos (Stewart 2011) . US teen, Dylan, created a response video to a family who made an IGB video, letting them know that their video had saved his life. This project has been impactful to some young people and could possibly be serving as a coping and communication mechanism for the adults and adolescents creating the videos. This study will provide an analysis of themes, identities and general messages provided by the IGBP videos in comparison with best practices for suicide prevention in 'at risk' populations with specific attention being paid to intersecting identities.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

This study will be approached from the theoretical standpoints of intractable conflict resolution and suicide contagion as frameworks to examine the It Gets Better Project in reference to the identity development of LGBT youth in modern US society.

Suicide Contagion

Suicide contagion is a theory addressing the overlap between media coverage and suicides. Several studies and scholars have stated that there is an increase in suicide among people who are already depressed or contemplating suicide when the media reports suicide in an irresponsible way (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation et al. 2011; Pirkis et al. 2006; Gould 2006; Jamieson et al. 2003; Becker et al. 2004; Mehlum 2000; Phillips 1974). The theory of suicide contagion was first developed in 1974 by David P. Phillips and was referred to as the Werther Effect. This research was conducted in reference to front page reports of suicides in newspapers around the US, documenting that after major newspapers had reported suicides on the front page, there was a rise in suicides amongst the pre-disposed general public. There was a positive correlation between the number of days the story of suicide was published on the front page and the number of suicide deaths reported from those already suffering from mental illness or suicidal thoughts (Phillips 1974).

It is well documented that suicide contagion may be more of a risk for young people and that suicide clusters among youth are a problem, but it is important to look at how Phillips' (1974) ideas are transferred to modern media outlets, such as Facebook, Twitter, television, and so on

(Mehlum 2000). Several scholars and suicide prevention organizations have developed suggestions for responsible media reporting of suicide deaths (Jamieson et al. 2003; Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation et al. 2011; reportingonsuicide.org, Mehlum 2000; Pirkis et al. 2000; Gould 2006). Suggestions specific to LGBT youth include: Emphasize individual and collective responsibility for supporting the well-being of LGBT people, encourage help-seeking by LGBT people who may be contemplating suicide and emphasize the availability of supportive resources, emphasize the vital importance of family support and acceptance – not just as a factor that can help protect against suicide, but also as a crucial part of nurturing the emotional and psychological well-being of LGBT and questioning youth, don't include details of a suicide death in titles or headlines, don't describe the method used in a suicide death, don't attribute a suicide death to experiences known or believed to have occurred shortly before the person died, don't normalize suicide by presenting it as the logical consequence of the kinds of bullying, rejection, discrimination and exclusion that LGBT people often experience, don't idealize suicide victims or create an aura of celebrity around them, don't use terms like "bullycide," don't talk about suicide "epidemics," don't use words like "successful," "unsuccessful" or "failed" when talking about suicide, don't say that a specific policy (or its absence) will in and of itself "prevent suicide" (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation et al. 2011).

With the growing use of social media as a primary form of communication, it is also important to consider the following suggestions about reporting suicides via social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter: don't use Twitter or Facebook to announce news of suicide deaths, don't give details of a suicide death or the ages/personal details of the victim on Twitter or Facebook, don't re-post problematic mainstream media headlines on Facebook or Twitter (i.e.,

“Student, 15, Commits Suicide Over Bullying by Jumping Off Bridge”), don’t talk about suicide ‘epidemics’ in social media and be careful about how you phrase things on Facebook (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation et al. 2011). All of these suggestions should be incorporated into media and social media campaigns (including YouTube) as we are discussing the subject of suicide in a responsible way to avoid further suicide contagion.

Intractable Conflict Resolution

Peter Coleman (2011) defines intractable conflicts as “highly destructive ones that despite people’s best efforts will not go away...” (26). Bullying and the creation of unsafe public school environments are monumental issues that are having tremendous impacts on LGBT youth in the United States today, ranging in effect from lowered self esteem, fear for physical safety to suicide. Paul Wehr came up with the concept of conflict mapping in the 1970s as a visual tool to help those attempting to intervene in intractable conflicts. Wehr states that every conflict is composed of a set of basic elements and is an advocate for the use of conflict mapping as a navigation strategy through complex problems to assist in identifying possible solutions (2006). Coleman presents the idea of conflict mapping as a strategy to see the systems that are at work in intractable conflicts in order to provide those who are going to intervene with knowledge of the attractor landscape.

When you find yourself stuck in an oversimplified polarized conflict, a useful first step is to try to become *more* aware of the system as a whole: to provide more context to your understanding of the terrain in which the stakeholders are embedded, whether they are disputants, mediators, negotiators, lawyers, or other third parties. This can help you to see the forest *and* the tress; it is *a critical step toward regaining some sense of accuracy, agency, possibility, and control in the situation* (Coleman 2011: 117).

Coleman encourages those examining intractable conflicts through the mapping strategy to look for feedback loops, hubs, and energy in the system. Feedback loops are reinforcing events or

relationships within the system that have negative or positive impacts. Hubs are places where lots of action/movement/activities are occurring and energy in the system occurs when there is increased activity, signifying room for intervention.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

This study used mixed methods to examine the It Gets Better Project (IGBP) videos. First, the 100 most viewed IGBP videos were viewed and coded, and second, conflict maps were constructed. This chapter describes both of these methods.

Content Analysis of Top 100 IGBP Videos: Sample, Coding, and Analysis

On October 20th, 2011, I identified and downloaded the URL addresses for the 100 most viewed It Gets Better videos on YouTube. Videos were obtained by typing “It Gets Better” into the YouTube search bar, and sorting the results by ‘most views.’ View counts on October 20th, 2011 were recorded and videos were watched and coded for specific identities of people in the videos and content of the videos. Data collection and coding were completed and coded into Microsoft Excel. Coding categories were chosen to investigate theories and critiques of the It Gets Better Project. These categories were chosen as the researcher watched several videos and recognized major themes occurring in each one (e.g., telling viewers that “it gets better” and “you’re not alone”). In addition, I used Catherine Fox’s (2007) notion of the Safe Schools Movement as producing and reinforcing white, heteronormativity. I wanted to interrogate this notion in reference to the IGBP, and thus coded for characteristics that are considered part of white heteronormativity (race, gender identity, religious background, class background, from a rural/

urban area, language spoken, etc.)

When an identity characteristic of an individual in the video was unknown (e.g., race or gender identity), I attempted to determine identity based on content of the video, or through additional research (e.g., if the person in the video was a celebrity, the internet could be used to find out many of their personal identities). However, if an identity remained unknown, it was coded as such (missing or unknown). Quotations from videos were also collected as additional data to support codings. After coding was completed, data was converted to and run through SPSS (data analysis computer program) to determine frequencies of, and correlations between identity categories and content themes.

Data analysis of the coded IGBP videos was conducted using frequencies (univariate) and correlations (bivariate). The frequencies allow the representation of the primary people and content in the videos, while the correlation analyses allowed a portrayal of which variables were significantly related to each other. The frequency tables are reported in Chapter Four. The significant correlations are reported in tables in the Appendix. Frequencies of identities and content, as well as correlations to the average number of times each video was viewed per day are discussed in Chapter Four. Views per day is the only variable for which significant correlations are reported. Because so many correlations were significant it was beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss all of them (although they are reported in the table in the appendix). Given that viewership (measured as views per day) is a key variable in this study, Chapter Four reports and discusses what was significantly related to the number of views per day, as it demonstrates the primary messages and identities being portrayed to viewers of the IGBP.

Conflict Map Construction

Conflict maps can be used to demonstrate the relationship between various parties, events, and actors in intractable conflicts. The method of constructing a physical diagram to assist those interested in conflict resolution can be beneficial in the following ways to help viewers break down often over-simplified issues and identify forces that are escalating, deescalating and stabilizing the situation. Conflict maps also help in working through grievances between those involved in the conflict, identifying factual information, and recontextualizing how conflicts are seen by identifying patterns, hubs, and loops in the systems. (Coleman 2011). Conflict maps were constructed and annotated based upon Peter Coleman's (2011) theories of solving intractable conflicts. These maps will be used to demonstrate the current relationships occurring between school officials, students and outside parties (those not directly involved in public schools) as they are relevant to the subjects of LGBT bullying. The events map, in conjunction with Coleman's (2011) theories, will be used to demonstrate the dynamics and critical timing of events surrounding suicide contagion and the pivotal moment lawmakers and school officials are currently at in creating safer schools for all students.

Limitations of the Study

While this study contributes to the existing literature with new applications of theory and research on previously unexplored campaigns, it was not without limitations. First, makers of the videos could not be contacted, largely due to the celebrity status of a substantial amount of the video makers. This resulted in a lack of desired information about the impact of creating an IGBP video on the video creators. Second, specific identities of people in the videos were not readily available, so the researcher had to do her best to determine some personal characteristics. While 'unknown' was a categorical option, some identities (i.e., gender) were assumed based on gender

presentation, race was determined based upon skin tone or marked as unknown. It is important to acknowledge the researcher's white and cisgender privilege in coding these videos that may have affected the coding of identity characteristics of people in the videos. Third, while conflict maps were constructed in an objective manner, it is impossible to construct and analyze diagrams of conflicts without researcher bias (Coleman 119). This is evident in the issues included on the maps, as well as sources used to gather information for the maps. The study also does not control for videos that may exceed the viewership (number of times viewed) for videos uploaded after October 20th, 2011.

CHAPTER FOUR: CONTENT ANALYSIS OF IGBP VIDEO FINDINGS

This section presents the findings from the coded videos. The findings from the videos will be divided into two categories: identity characteristics of people in the videos and content of the videos.

Frequencies of Characteristics in the Video

The lengths of the videos ranged from 21 seconds to 14 minutes and 57 seconds. The mean length was 3 minutes and 49 seconds, the median length was 3 minutes and 4 seconds and the mode was 1 minute and 6 seconds. The average number of times a video was viewed per day ranged from 141 times to 10,446 views per day. The mean number of views per day was 1,092.4, the median number of views per day was 410.5, and the mode was 197 views per day. 72% of the videos had one person in them and 28% of the videos had two or more people in them. 92% of the videos were home/professionally made videos, meaning that they were made with people looking into a camera and speaking directly to the viewers. 7% of the videos were music videos, 4% were technology related, meaning that the video was primarily animated without actual people speaking to the viewers, and 1% of the videos were a recorded public speech.

Significant Frequencies of Characteristics of People in the Videos

TV/Internet personalities were the most frequent identity category to make videos, 36% of the videos had a TV/Internet personality in them. 31% of the videos had a musician in them and 24% of the videos were made by an actor or actress. In looking at the most common identities of people in the videos, the least common frequencies must also be examined to report what is

missing from the IGBP. To date, there are 2 videos that have been made by LGBT youth who went on to kill themselves. However, this sample only includes one of those videos, as it was the only one that had been made at the time of the sample collection, so 1% of the videos were made by someone who committed suicide. 2% of the videos were made by soldiers, 2% were made by religious figures, 3% were made by athletes and 4% were made by politicians.

The ages reported by the study are only those that were definitively known to the researcher because they were stated in the video or the person was a celebrity and their age was publicly available on the internet. 53% of the videos were made by people with known ages and 47% of videos were made by people with unknown ages. Of the valid data, the mean age was 33.74 years of age, the median age was 33 years of age and the mode age was 33 years of age. 4% of videos were made by people under the age of 20, 16% of videos were made by people between the ages of 20-29, 21% of videos were made by people between the ages of 30-39, and 12% of videos were made by people over the age of 40.

The sexual orientations of people in the video were not mutually exclusive categories and were coded based upon information stated in the video or readily available data on celebrities. This data is some of the most important and telling as systems of oppression and structures of hierarchy are considered. 57% of videos had gay men in them, 14% of the video had lesbian women in them, 5% of the videos had bisexual people in them, 27% of the videos had straight people in the and 34% of the videos had people with unknown sexual orientations in them.

The gender identities of people in the videos were also not mutually exclusive categories and were determined based upon gender presentation. If gender presentation was androgynous and gender identity was not disclosed in the video, the gender of the person was coded as

unknown. The gender identity frequencies are also critical statistics for this study in that 72% of videos had a man in them, 41% of the videos had a woman in them, 12% had a transgender person in them, and 1% had a genderqueer person in them. 15% of the videos were made by people with unknown gender identities.

The race of the people in the videos was determined based upon visual characteristics or direct statement in the video. It is important to note that these codings are through a lens of white privilege from the researcher, but were also coded in several circumstances as 'unknown.' This category had frequencies that are also critical in this study. 79% of the videos had a white person in them, 24% of the videos had a Black person in them, 16% of the videos had a Latina/o person in them, 15% of the video had an Asian person in them, 3% of videos had a Middle Eastern person in them and 2% had an American Indian person in them. 23% of the videos had a person with an unknown race in them.

Religion of the people in the video and whether or not the person in the video is from a rural area were based on whether or not the video maker specifically spoke about their experiences with religion or growing up in a small town. 81% of the videos had people in them who did not talk about their religious beliefs. 19% of videos had someone in them who identified as a general Christian, 7% of the videos had someone in them who identifies or was brought up specifically as Catholic, 2% of videos had someone in the who specifically identifies as Methodist, 3% had someone who identifies as Jewish, and 1% had someone who identifies as Muslim. In 84% of the videos, people did not mention where they grew up. 14% of the videos had people who specifically mentioned that they were from a small town and 2% of the videos had someone who grew up in a large city.

Economic class was coded based upon content of the video, specific mention of the topic, or celebrity status of those in the video. The economic class of 51% of people in the videos was unknown, 44% of the videos had someone of celebrity status in them, and 5% of the videos had people who the researcher coded as upper-middle class or upper class due to specific statements made. An example of this can be seen in the founder of the IGBP, Dan Savage's, video when he was asked to share a happy memory from his life with viewers. Savage states,

I remember going to Paris as a family for the first time, the three of us, and DJ, our son, couldn't sleep, cause he had jet lag. Terry was exhausted and wanted to sleep and kept trying to get DJ to go to bed and eventually I just figured, I'll let Terry sleep, cause either all three of us don't sleep or one of us gets to sleep, so I went out at 4 o'clock in the morning and strolled through the streets of Paris with DJ as the sun came up and talked. He was 5 years old, 4 years old, we just chatted and we strolled around Notre Dame and the Marais and the bakeries opened and we went to the back door of a bakery, ordered some croissants with sugar crystals on them, got some juice and we sat and watched the sun come up with the Eifel Tower off in the distance...(4:44, Dan Savage IGBP Video).

The language that the videos were in also sends a message as to who the desired audience for the campaign is. 100% of the videos were in English, 3% of the videos had at least a portion of the speaking in Spanish, 1% of the videos had a small portion in American Sign Language, and 2% of the videos had a small portion in a language that the researcher was unfamiliar with.

The status of official It Gets Better Video was determined by the video being uploaded onto YouTube by the It Gets Better Campaign itself, or the IGBP logo being displayed in the video.

10% of the videos were official IGBP videos, and 90% were unofficial. When the It Gets Better Project was asked about how decisions are made regarding what videos the campaign will

officially upload, the response was received on November 14th, 2011 with a link to the submission guidelines on the IGBP website. Submission guidelines include: one video under 7 minutes in

length, a YouTube or Google account, clear sound, clear visuals, a title and tag for the video and a request to not use the IGB logo, as it is trademarked (“Submission Guidelines” 2010).

Table 1: Characteristics of the Videos

Characteristic	%
<u>Video Length^a</u>	
< 1 minute	13.0
1:00-1:59 minutes	17.0
2:00-2:59 minutes	19.0
3:00-3:59 minutes	13.0
4:00-4:59 minutes	13.0
>5 minutes	25.0
<u>Times Viewed Per Day^b</u>	
<200 views per day	21.0
200-499 views per day	33.0
500-999 views per day	16.0
>1,000 views per day	30.0
<u>Were There Multiple People in the Video?</u>	
No, only one person	72.0
Yes, two or more people	28.0
<u>Person(s) in Video^c</u>	
Politician	4.0
Musician	31.0
Company/Organization	10.0
Journalist	5.0
Actor/Actress	24.0
Fashion Designer/Fashion Model	6.0
TV/Internet Personality	36.0
Athlete	3.0

Religious Figure	2.0
Soldier	2.0
Committed Suicide	1.0 ^d
Unknown Identity	11.0
<u>Age of Person(s) in the Video</u> ^e	
<20 years of age	4.0
20-29 years of age	16.0
30-39 years of age	21.0
>40 years of age	12.0
<u>Sexual Orientation of Person(s) in the Video</u> ^f	
Gay	57.0
Lesbian	14.0
Bisexual	5.0
Straight	27.0
Unknown	34.0
<u>Religion of Person(s) in the Video</u> ^g	
Catholic	7.0
Jewish	3.0
Christian (general)	19.0
Methodist	2.0
Muslim	1.0
Unknown	81.0
<u>Race of Person(s) in the Video</u> ^h	
White	79.0
Black	24.0
Latino/a	16.0
Asian	15.0
American Indian	2.0
Middle Eastern	3.0
Unknown	23.0
<u>Gender Identity of Person(s) in the Video</u> ⁱ	
Transgender	12.0
Genderqueer	1.0

Male ^j	72.0
Female	41.0
Unknown	15.0
<u>Economic Class of Person(s) in the Video</u> ^k	
Unknown	51.0
Unknown Celebrity	44.0
Assumed Upper/upper-middle class	5.0
<u>Person in Video from a Rural Area</u> ^l	
Yes	14.0
No	2.0
Unknown	84.0
<u>Type of Video</u> ^m	
Public Speech	1.0
Home/Professionally Made Video	92.0
Music Video	7.0
Technology Related	4.0
<u>Language the Video Is In</u> ⁿ	
English	100.00
Spanish	3.0
American Sign Language	1.0
Unknown	2.0
<u>Official It Gets Better Video</u> ^o	
Yes	10.0
No	90.0

^a The video lengths ranged from 21:00 seconds to 14 minutes and 57 seconds. The mean length was 3 minutes and 49 seconds, the median was 3 minutes and 4 seconds and the mode was 1 minute 6 seconds.

^b The average number of times a video was viewed per day ranged from 141 times per day to 10,446 times per day. The mean number of views per day was 1,092.04, the median number of views per day was 410.5, and the mode was 197 views per day. The number of views per day was calculated by dividing total number of views by the day number of days since the video was posted

and when it was the data was retrieved (October 20th, 2011).

^c The following categories are not mutually exclusive. A video could have many people in it, so the percent reported is whether a person of the characteristic was in the video (i.e., a video could have a politician and an actor). Also, some individuals fit into more than one category (i.e., the person is both a musician and an actor).

^d The data set was collected as the 100 most viewed 'It Gets Better Videos' on YouTube as of October 20th, 2011. Jamey Rodemeyer uploaded a video on May 4th, 2011 and killed himself on September 20th, 2011. His video is analyzed as part of this study. On December 10th, 2011, Eric James Borges uploaded a video and killed himself on January 11th, 2012. This video was not analyzed as part of the data set.

^e This table only reflects the ages of people in videos that were known (age was stated in the video or could be found out due to celebrity status.) 59% of videos are reported on in this table, 41% of them had people of unknown ages in them.

^f Sexual Orientation of people in the video was determined as it was stated in the video or if the video maker was of celebrity status and was open with their sexual orientation. No one whose sexual orientation was known identified outside of the categories of gay, lesbian, bisexual or straight. These categories are not mutually exclusive. A video could have many people in it, so the percent reported is whether a person of the characteristic was in the video (i.e., there was a person who identifies as a lesbian and another who identifies as gay in the same video). The researcher is using the term 'gay' to reference male-identified people who are physically, sexually, emotionally and/or romantically attracted to other male-identified people. 'Lesbian' refers to woman-identified people who are attracted to other woman-identified people, 'bisexual' is used as an umbrella term to encompass people of all genders who are attracted to people of all genders, and 'straight' is being used to refer to people who are attracted to a gender that is specifically different than their own.

^g Religion of people in the video was determined as it was stated in the video. This included a statement of current religion or a statement of childhood religion imposed by parents and/or guardians. These categories are not mutually exclusive. A video could have many people in it, so the percent reported is whether a person of the characteristic was in the video (i.e., there was a person who identifies as a Christian and another one who identifies as Jewish in the same video).

^h Race of people in the video was based on self-identification within the video if possible. If race was not made available by video maker, their race was marked as 'unknown.' These categories are

not mutually exclusive. A video could have multiple people of multiple races in it, or have people who identify as bi- or multi-racial in it. Percentages reported reflect whether a person of the characteristic was in the video (i.e., there was a person who identifies as Black and Latina, or there was a video with a white person and an American Indian person).

ⁱ Gender Identity of people in the video was based on self-identification within the video if possible. If gender identity was not made available by video maker, their gender was marked as ‘unknown.’ These categories are not mutually exclusive. A video could have multiple people of multiple genders in it, or have people who identify as more than one gender. Percentages reported reflect whether a person of the characteristic was in the video (i.e., there was a person who identifies as transgender and as woman, or there was a video with a male identified person and a genderqueer person).

^j Gender identity is being referred to as ‘male’ and ‘female’ with intentionality. I believe that biological sex and gender identity are both socially constructed. By making the distinction between biological sex and gender identity, unjust legitimacy is given to those who are cisgender by making the implication that only those born with a penis deemed appropriate by medical practitioners can be male.

^k Economic class of people in the videos was inferred based upon known celebrity status or from the lifestyle described in the video (i.e., vacationing in Paris and skiing in the Alps with an adopted child, was assumed upper-class). These categories are not mutually exclusive. A video could have people of multiple classes in it.

^l Percentages reported for this data reflect only what was said in this video. This category was not mutually exclusive if there were multiple people in the video.

^m The category of ‘Public Speech’ refers to an It Gets Better Video recorded in a public setting (i.e., a city council meeting). ‘Home/Professionally Made Video’ refers to videos that are the person(s) simply talking to the camera without an audience or special effects. ‘Music Video’ refers to a video that is set to a song where the main creator of the video is singing the song. ‘Technology Related’ refers to a video that is animated or has several special effects in it (i.e., the Google video is a series of computer related animations to showcase Google as a company and portray the message of It Gets Better).

ⁿ These categories are not mutually exclusive. Videos with multiple people had several languages in them, or one person would say various phrases in different languages. There were no videos that were completely in another language besides English.

^o Videos were coded as ‘official It Gets Better Videos’ if they had been uploaded to YouTube

from the It Gets Better page or if It Gets Better merchandise was worn during the video or if the official It Gets Better logo was displayed during the video.

Frequencies of Content in the Videos

Content and messages being portrayed by the videos were important as they provide the primary themes that viewers are exposed to as they consume videos from the IGBP. 44% of video makers expressed love for the viewers of the video, 39% of videos explained how graduating high school and leaving the high school environment would make life better for the viewers, 35% of videos referenced hating bullies or getting revenge on them, 26% of video makers referenced an increase in LGBT suicide, 59% of videos encouraged viewers to take control of their own lives and make themselves happy, 92% of the videos held the theme of “it gets better,” or “don’t give up”, 71% of the video makers described bullying or suicide incidents from their personal lives, 34% of the videos referenced finding overall happiness as a result of a monogamous relationship, 70.7% of the videos told viewers that they were not alone in their struggles. While 60% of the videos did not reference a specific support system, 33% of the video makers stated that they had a support system of friends and 28% stated that biological family was a primary support system in their lives. 21% of videos advocated for viewers to come out and 9% of videos stated that adults were responsible for ending bullying aimed at LGBT youth.

Table 2: Content of the Videos

Content Area	%
<u>Expressed Love for GLBT People/Viewers of the Video</u>	

Yes	44.0
No	56.0
<u>Reference to Getting Out of High School</u>	
Yes	39.0
No	61.0
<u>Reference to Trans (besides using GLBT acronym)</u>	
Yes	12.0
No	88.0
<u>Reference to Sexual Orientation^a</u>	
GLBT Acronym Only	21.0
Gay	55.0
Lesbian	13.0
Bisexual	4.0
<u>Reference to GLBT Bravery</u>	
Yes	7.0
No	93.0
<u>Reference to Hating/Getting Revenge on Bullies/Bullies Being Less</u>	
Yes	35.0
No	65.0
<u>Reference to Increase in GLBT Youth Suicides</u>	
Yes	26.0
No	74.0
<u>Reference to Other Resources/Suggestions of Who to Talk To</u>	
Yes	60.0
No	40.0
<u>Reference to Making Yourself Happy/Controlling Your Own Life</u>	
Yes	59.0

No	41.0
<u>Reference to Adults Being Responsible for Ending Bullying</u>	
Yes	9.0
No	91.0
<u>Reference to LGBT Identities as a Choice</u>	
Yes	3.0
No	97.0
<u>“Don’t Give Up”/“It Gets Better”</u>	
Yes	92.0
No	8.0
<u>Description of Violent/Bad/Suicidal Incidents from Personal Past</u>	
Yes	71.0
No	29.0
<u>Reference to Finding Happiness as a Result of a Monogamous Relationship</u>	
Yes	34.0
No	66.0
<u>Reference to a Type of Specific Support System^b</u>	
Biological Family	28.0
Friends	33.0
Look to a celebrity for guidance	7.0
Online Groups	3.0
Support System Not Mentioned	60.0
<u>Advocating for Viewers to Come Out</u>	
Yes	21.0
No	79.0
<u>Telling Viewers, “You’re Not Alone”^c</u>	
Yes	70.7

No	29.3
<p>^a These categories were not mutually exclusive. One person in a video could mention several of these identities, or multiple people could mention various identities. Percentages reported reflect mention and/or description of experiences specific to a particular identity within the GLBT acronym.</p> <p>^b These categories were not mutually exclusive. One person in a video could advocate for several support system methods, or multiple people could advocate for various support system methods.</p> <p>^c The theme of ‘You’re Not Alone’ did not become apparent to the researcher until half-way through the coding process. Due to time constraints, this data only reflects 58 out of the 100 videos coded.</p> <p>To aide in the understanding of coding categories, the researcher collected specific quotes from videos as examples of coding content areas. The descriptive quotes are displayed in Table 3.</p>	

Table 3: Notable Quotations Demonstrating the Video Content

Content Area	Sample Quotation	Video Information
<u>Expressed Love for GLBT People/ Viewers of the Video</u>	“...and you have my full support and all of my love...I love you guys.”	0:36 – Ke\$ha
<u>Reference to Getting Out of High School</u>	“Honestly, things got better the day I left high school.”	1:08 – Dan Savage
<u>Reference to Trans (besides using GLBT acronym)</u>	A character in the music video was a biological male and presented as female during the video, wearing a dress and make-up.	Todrick Hall
<u>Reference to GLBT Bravery</u>	“At such a young age, you have the courage and conviction to be exactly who you are.”	0:23 -- Rob Thomas
<u>Reference to Hating/Getting Revenge on Bullies/Bullies Being Less</u>	“Half of the people making fun of you are going to be working at Burger King at 50 years old.”	4:56 – Danny Noriega
<u>Reference to Increase in GLBT Youth Suicides</u>	“Teen bullying and suicide has reached an epidemic in our country, especially among gay and lesbian youth, those perceived to be gay, or kids who are just different.”	2:45 – Joel Burns

<p><u>Reference to Other Resources/ Suggestions of Who to Talk To</u></p>	<p>Suggestion of Resources: The Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN) ^a The Trevor Project ^b Suggestions of Who to Talk To: Jewish organizations in New York City, teachers, rabbi, family, friends</p>	<p>Suggestions of Who to Talk To: Gay Orthodox Jews</p>
<p><u>Reference to Making Yourself Happy/Controlling Your Own Life</u></p>	<p>"If you're hungry, you find food for you to eat, if you get bullied at school for being gay, you stand up for yourself, you find a way to end the bullying, whether that be avoiding the bullies, changing schools, telling the teachers, telling a parent, standing up to your bullies, and getting completely beaten up, whatever it takes, you just have to</p>	<p>1:30 – Luan Legacy</p>
	<p>stand up for yourself. I don't understand how someone can have the courage to put a gun to their head and pull the trigger, I don't understand how someone can have the courage to tie a knot and hang themselves with it, but they don't have the courage to stand up to their bullies. It doesn't make sense. How can you have the courage to kill yourself but you don't have the courage to stand up for yourself?"</p>	

<u>Reference to Adults Being Responsible for Ending Bullying</u>	<p>"I believe that it gets better when parents start to lead by example. We have to teach our children, not only through our words, but through our actions, that every single human being has equal value. And to bully someone or to force society to discriminate against someone because they have a different sexual orientation is unacceptable. I don't have any children, but the day I do, before they can walk or even crawl, I will make sure they know how important that is. I hope you do the same."</p>	<p>0:05 – Alexander Skarsgard</p>
<u>Reference to LGBT Identities as a Choice</u>	<p>"You'll never see us making fun of someone for who they are or who they choose to love."</p>	<p>0:15 – Vinny Guadagnino</p>
<u>Description of Violent/Bad/Suicidal Incidents from Personal Past</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I tried to take 600 pills of Aspirin, the kind that you buy at Sam's club, I took the whole bottle." 2. "Kids would throw desks and chairs at me and I would have to go to the principal's office with these kids that were obviously torturing me, and the teachers would just pretend like they didn't see what was happening to me." 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1:45 – Linnix, David, Rannan 2. 1:20 – Jake Shears
<u>Reference to Finding Happiness as a Result of a Monogamous Relationship</u>	<p>"Butterflies...you'll fall in love, and get on one knee with a ring and then you two will be married and maybe then start a family."</p>	<p>2:27 – Chris Salvatore</p>
<u>Reference to a Type of Specific Support System^b</u>		
<p>Biological Family</p>	<p>"I don't think I'd be as close to my family now...I wouldn't have, you know, seen my mother come around...when my mom and I talked about it, I felt this huge sense of relief."</p>	<p>4:27 -- Pixar</p>

Friends	"Walking into a gay bar and feeling like you belong...I would have missed great friends, great relationships,"	3:55 -- Pixar
Look to a celebrity for guidance	Discussion of watching Neil Patrick Harris on TV as a child and seeing someone who identified like the video maker does	Perez Hilton
Online Groups	Use internet resources, blogs, online chat rooms, etc.	Brian Galvin
<u>Advocating for Viewers to Come Out</u>	"I consider the process of coming out as liberation, freedom...its very liberating to come out. It's very liberating not to have to lie. If you're not out, you are lying all the time."	6:30 – Canadian Celebrities

^a 5% of the videos reference GLSEN as a resource for people who are looking to actively make a difference in their school environments and aren't necessarily needing support.

^b 29% of the videos referenced the Trevor Project, the United State's only 24 hour GLBT Youth Suicide Hotline, as a resource for viewers.

Significantly Correlated Characteristics

While there were many significantly correlated characteristics (complete tables of significantly correlated variable are available in the Appendix), below is the table of significantly correlated variable to views per day. The researcher decided to focus specifically on views per day, as this data is showing what videos, messages, content, themes, etc. that are being seen most prevalently by viewers of the IGBP. The most significant positive correlations were between views per day and the video having a portion of it in American Sign Language (.53**), the video being an official It Gets Better video (.48**), the maker of the video can be assumed upper/upper-middle class based on content of the video (.39**), the person in the video had committed suicide (.39**), and the video made reference to adults as the parties responsible for ending bullying (.39**).

36**).

Other significant correlations to the number of views videos received per day were the video was a public speech (.34**), the video was technology related (.34**), the video had a soldier in it (.28**), the video had a portion that was spoken in Spanish (.27**), the video referenced online groups as a primary support system (.26**), and the video had people who were Methodist in it (.22*).

The most significant negative correlations to the variable of views per day were the video was home/professionally made (-.41**) and the video had a TV/Internet personality in it (-.21*).

Table 3: Significantly Correlated Characteristics ^a

Characteristic	p-value
<u>Views Per Day</u>	
TV/Internet Personality	-.21*
Soldier	.28**
Committed Suicide	.39**
Methodist	.22*
Assumed Upper Class	.39**
Public Speech	.34**
Home/Professionally Made Video	-.41**
Technology Related	.34**
Spanish	.27**
American Sign Language	.53**
Official It Gets Better Video	.48**
Reference to Adults as Responsible for Ending Bullying	.36**
Online Groups	.26**

^a * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

CHAPTER FIVE: CONFLICT MAPS FINDINGS

This section will present findings from the conflict maps. The conflict maps will be divided into two sections: People & Social Networks and Events. Each map provides a detailed explanation as well as a discussion of what these maps indicate about the IGBP, suicide contagion, and strategies for moving forward in the discussion about LGBT teen bullying and suicide. Figure 1: People and

Social Networks Conflict Map **People and Social Networks Map**

- v **People in the schools (above the green line)** – School administrators, parents (volunteering PTA meetings, etc.), teachers, LGBT students, bullies.
 - v **People influencing the schools (below the green line)** – policy makers (local, state, or national), religious institutions (churches, synagogues, temples), conservative family organizations (Focus on the Family, National Organization for Marriage, Exodus International, etc.), GLBTQ Advocacy Organizations (Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, Advocates for Youth, Gay and Lesbian Anti-Defamation League, Human Rights Campaign, American Civil Liberties Union, local community centers, etc.)
 - v **LGBT Students** – those being bullied, harassed or assaulted based on their sexual orientation, gender expression or gender identity.
 - v **Bullies** – students perpetrating assault or teasing of LGBT students.
- All lines drawn in purple signify a direct relation to or impact on LGBT students.

- All lines drawn in orange have a significant or direct relationship to bullies.
- All lines drawn in blue are signifying a relationship to an outside party that is not bullies or LGBT students.

Major connection or relationship line. This line is symbolic of the major relationship we are trying to examine on this map, the relationship between LGBTQ students and bullies. We can reference this line in further examination of the map to see how this primary relationship is affected by all other relationships on this map.

The reciprocal relationship between LGBT students and school administrators occurs where school administrators make policies directly affecting LGBT students and students are able to advocate for themselves to get the policies that they want. According to the Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN), “more than half of the school principals surveyed in a recent study view bullying as a serious problem at their schools, yet they appear to underestimate the extent of the harassment that LGBT students experience.” It is also important to note the power the LGBT students have in advocating to administrators to change and/or implement policies that will affect them.

The relationship between teachers and school administrators is also reciprocal in that school administrations forms policies that affect teachers and the power they have to intervene in bullying situations, but teachers can pressure administrators to create inclusive or exclusive policies at staff

meetings, etc. This relationship is heavily affected by the fact that there is currently no federal law that protects LGBT people from employment discrimination; it is still legal in 29 states to discriminate against an employee based upon sexual orientation and legal in 34 states to discriminate based upon gender identity. This will affect the rates in which teachers intervene out of fear for their jobs (being fired on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity), which has a direct effect on LGBT students in public school environments.

The relationship between teachers and LGBT students is directly affected by the above listed federal policy, limiting the protections that teachers are able to provide for students based upon fear for their own jobs. Teachers also have a certain amount of power in controlling LGBT students based on grades provided, classroom environments, etc. The relationship is made reciprocal when LGBT students have the autonomy to report teachers for harassment and take the situation into their own hands (although this is not always possible.)

The system between 2,3,and 4 creates a loop in the system that works in all directions between students, teachers and school administrators. This demonstrates a site for possible intervention from any of the parties. This loop demonstrates both positive and negative feedback because arrows connecting all three parties are extended both ways. Positive intervention (administration implementing anti-bullying policies, teachers stopping bullying in the hall, students staging and rally) could affect all parties in a positive way, just as negative action could. This loop demonstrates

great potential for change (both positive and negative) in the system.

Parents affect LGBT students by raising LGBT students and influencing how they view themselves, either in a positive or negative way.

The reciprocal relationship between parents and teachers occurs when parents bring issue or support for what is occurring in the classroom to the teachers and teachers choose to either agree or disagree. This has a direct impact on LGBT students when parents influence choices about diversity or inclusive curriculum in the classroom in a queer-friendly or unfriendly way.

In public school districts, parents have a large influence over school administrators with pressure for policy and curriculum change. Pressure from parents has always been a monumental influence over how administration and teachers react for fear of their jobs.

Teachers have a direct impact on bullies, in that they are responsible for (or not) implementing anti-bullying policies and seeing that they are strictly enforced around the school.

There is a loop between teachers, bullying, and LGBTQ students that can be considered a local actionable, or a place where an intervention can be made that will affect the direction or continuity of a feedback loop to create change in the system (Coleman 2011: 140). This loop is serving as a local actionable because not only is it significant in the fact that LGBT students and bullies alike,

spend an immense amount of time with teachers every day, but also that other parties can easily be drawn into this loop for influence. For example, this loop can be expanded to include school administrators and/or parents, creating the potential for several intervention strategies that will have effects on multiple youth in the school systems. Because this loop has the potential to directly affect almost all parties in a public school, this is a prominent gateway for high impact intervention.

In a way that is similar to #5, parents have a direct effect on the bullies through strategies of parenting and conversations that are had in the home around these issues. Parents have immense power in this situation to teach their children anti-LGBT sentiments or values of love and acceptance.

School administrators are responsible for implementing state and national policies in their schools, as well as for creating policies that are specific to their school environments. This is a direct effect on bullies in that these policies will either allow or prohibit their behavior in a school environment.

In almost the exact same way as #7, parents have the ability to advocate for non-inclusive discrimination policies or against bullying policies to the school administration, which has direct positive correlation to bullies and their behavior.

Again, as similar to #6, parents and teachers have a relationship with each other where parents have the power to complain or support the decisions' teachers are making as far as inclusive curriculum

and interrupting bullying in the classroom are concerned. Teachers have the option to interact with parents in multiple ways that could lead to support or opposition to their stances around bullying.

Religious institutions have influence on school administrators, mostly through personal beliefs, but also if religious institutions have a large influence on the school community and neighborhood, or have a financial stake in the public education system.

Religious institutions also influence parents in a similar way to school administrators. Often, parent's values and the way they influence their children are based on religious beliefs that infiltrate the school system through feedback loops.

Again, we can see religious institutions affecting teachers on a personal level that often will infiltrate classroom and work behavior, similar to school administrators.

Religious institutions have an influence on bullies in a personal way, similar to the previous three groups of people. This can be in a personal way, or religious organizations often reach out to people who are troubled to help them get through their teen years, while also enforcing anti-LGBT sentiments. These beliefs can get translated into classroom behaviors.

There is energy in the system around the religious institutions box, especially because it is a hub of outgoing energy. While there isn't much influencing the religious institutions, there is tons of energy and interactions leaving the religious institutions box, suggesting a significant point of tension in the system that is serving as a major factor in several reinforcing feedback loops to

intensify the conflict.

A critical relationship holding lots of energy in the system is the reciprocal relationship between LGBT students and policy makers. This is critical because policy makers are one of the only groups that LGBT students have a direct impact on (instead of being directly impacted) and policy makers are a hub because they are influencing so many groups and being influenced by those groups simultaneously. This relationship is so important because reinforcing feedback loops can be created by adding conservative family organizations or religious organizations to the relationship, while actionables can be seen when school administrators or teachers are added to the relationship.

While it has been stated that the loop between policy makers, conservative family organization, religious institutions and LGBT students is incredibly powerful and reinforcing feedback loop, it is also a place for high-impact intervention. This loop is so reinforcing because there is a smaller loop within it, between policy makers, religious institutions and conservative family organizations, that serves as an attractor. If people with similarly oppressive backgrounds are placed within the leadership of these groups, this loop can become very powerful and become a major negative influence on LGBT students, school administrators, teachers and bullies. However, the relationship that is important to point out in this situation is that between GLBTQ advocacy organizations and LGBT students, as these advocacy organizations often have a goal of

empowering students to take part in their own activism. If the advocacy organizations are successful in this endeavor, then the LGBT students can be brought into the loop between policy makers, religious institutions and conservative family organizations to disrupt the conversations and shift it towards a more positive outcome or start to find compromises and similarities in ways of thinking.

Policy makers have a direct affect on school administrators with the laws they are signing into action, causing school administrators to take certain actions. School administrators can have an effect on policy makers by lobbying or setting up meetings with congress people, etc.

Parents can influence policy makers by lobbying, voting and setting up meetings with elected officials and even running for elected positions.

Policy makers and teachers have a similar relationship to policy makers and school administrators. Policy makers affect teachers with the laws they put into place that teachers must enforce in the classroom and teachers can affect policy makers by voting, lobbying and setting up meeting with elected officials.

Policy makers have the potential to enact and enforce laws and regulations the directly affect the well being of LGBT students. Examples of these are fully enumerated bullying policies that can be seen in 14 states around the country. Legal protection is a first step in protecting LGBT students.

Religious institutions influence policy makers because the policy makers are often part of specific religious organizations or receive significant financial contributions from religious institutions.

Representatives of religious organizations can lobby and set up meetings with policy makers as well as vote. Policy makers influence religious institutions via the laws and regulations they enact.

GLBTQ advocacy organizations have direct impact on bullies in trying to educate them on issues relevant to queer students, as well as in advocating for policies that directly impact the consequences of bullying behavior.

GLBTQ advocacy organizations have a significant relationship with policy makers in that they are usually responsible for a large portion of the lobby work and consulting that goes into writing an anti-bullying law or policy.

GLBTQ Advocacy Organizations have a direct effect on GLBTQ students in the policies and educational programs they are creating and lobbying for that are to protect and increase the well-being and self-advocacy of queer students in schools.

Conservative family organizations influence policy makers through lobbying, political support, financial campaign support, etc. These two groups are often the same people. Policy makers influence conservative family organizations by creating laws that state how much power these organizations can or cannot have in public schools.

Conservative family organizations and religious institutions are very closely linked in that they are

typically the same people operating in society via different routes (i.e. spiritually, politically or organizationally).

The relationship between religious institutions and conservative family organizations is powerful in this system. As previously stated, these parties are often the same people, and can feed off of each other to create an incredible amount of influence and power over almost all other groups. It is important to note that religious institutions are not influenced by many parties, except the policy makers and the conservative family organizations. These relationships need to be kept in mind as we think about ways to disrupt the imbalance of power occurring here.

Conservative family organizations have a direct impact on LGBTQ students with the messages they portray in media, as well as through several institutions such as Exodus International.

Religious institutions impact LGBTQ students in a way similar to conservative family organizations, often causing pain, exile, questioning, etc. in these youth who are part of these communities.

Figure 2: Events Map **Event Map** – Numbers represent the chronological order of events.

August 1966: While the general public tends to think that the Stonewall Riots began the LGBT

Right movement, it is important to point out the Compton Cafeteria Riots, happening almost 3 years prior. The riots were started at a restaurant in downtown San Francisco when the owner called the police when he thought the clientele were too loud. When the police arrived, the customers (primarily drag queens and transgender people) engaged in physical violence, making the police retreat. This started the series of police raids and riots in restaurants and bars across the country (eventually leading to the Stonewall Riots), drawing attention to lack of rights for LGBT people. It is also important to note that this is happening on the heels of the Black Civil Rights Movement after the passing of the Civil Right Act in 1964.

June 1969: There were not many places where being openly gay in public was legal, including New York City where the Stonewall Inn is located. As part of regular raids and shut downs, the Stonewall Inn was invaded by law enforcement in June of 1969. Customers fought back and many gay and lesbian people from around the city came to join in the fighting. The police had to bring in riot squads to calm the crowd. The effects of Stonewall were seen around the city with protests and demonstrations for days following, as well as around the country, as national organizations were formed to fight for LGBT rights, including the Gay Liberation Front (the first group to openly use the word 'gay' in its title, although there have been these types of organizations around since the 1950s.)

December 1993: Brandon Teena was a young transman in Humbolt, Nebraska, was repeatedly raped and shot (along with his girlfriend and friend) because of his gender identity. While this story made national news, putting a spotlight on anti-LGBT violence around the country, it became

known again when the film, *Boys Don't Cry*, based on Brandon Teena's life, won Hilary Swank the Academy Award for Best Actress in 1999.

April 1999: In conjunction with the release of *Boys Don't Cry* and the murder of Matthew Shepard, the state of Georgia passed the first anti-bullying law in public schools, requiring character education programs in all grade levels that specifically discourages bullying and violence towards other students.

October 1999: The release of this film and attention to the life and violent murder of Brandon Teena sparked controversy and discussion across the country. The release of this film, happened within days of the murder of Matthew Shepard.

October 1999: A gay University of Wyoming student is taken from a bar by two men, tied to a fence, beaten and left to die. He is found by a runner in the early hours of the morning, taken to a Fort Collins hospital and dies 5 days later on October 12th. This murder is arguably the most well known anti-LGBT hate crime in US history. This sparked national movements against LGBT violence, and happened at a time when the country was simultaneously hit with *Boys Don't Cry*, an incredibly violent movie about the same subject that was being internationally recognized. The LGBT movement is starting to pick up force very quickly.

November 2008: California voters supported the following language in the state constitution, “Only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in the state of California.” This vote sparks national attention, as California already had legal same-sex marriages, and rights of LGBT people were being taken away. The ‘gay’ debate now becomes a popular and controversial topic.

2009: The Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act was signed into law in 2009, making violence against people based on their gender identity or sexual orientation illegal. This was an inhibitor to the reinforcing feedback loop present in the history of events.

September 2010: The suicides of 9 gay men under the age of 18 are highly publicized. These young people killed themselves due to bullying and harassment in public schools and universities around the country. The string of deaths is followed by two more in early October. This leads to movements in support of safer schools for LGBT people and against anti-bullying policies and inclusive curriculum.

September 2010: Dan Savage and his partner start a national You Tube campaign to let LGBT teens know that “it gets better” once they get out of high school and escape the bullies and that they shouldn’t kill themselves. Everyone from President Obama, to the major league baseball teams, to Apple, Google, Facebook, Justin Bieber, and the cast of the Jersey Shore have made videos for this project.

September 2011: President Obama and the Pentagon repeal Don't Ask, Don't Tell, now allowing gay, lesbian and bisexual people to serve openly in the military. This is a controversial policy and will affect the presidential elections of 2012.

February 2012: The Ninth-Circuit Court of Appeals found Proposition 8 unconstitutional. There are several routes for conservative family organizations and religious institutions to appeal this ruling (either to ask for a reread with a panel of different judges or to go to the US Supreme Court). The trial is ongoing, but is a heated debate in the context of school bullying, LGBT rights, the presidential race, etc.

2012: The media is highly covering the presidential primaries and campaigns for the 2012 national election. Policy makers, LGBTQ Advocacy organizations, religious organizations and conservative family organizations are all weighing in on the issues. President Obama has stated his support of the repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act, while some GOP candidates support organizations such as Exodus International and actively participate in anti-gay sentiment. Several GOP candidates have also said that they would reinstate Don't Ask, Don't Tell upon election.

2012: National LGBT advocacy organizations are pushing for federal bullying policies to enhance the 2001 No Child Left Behind Policy that provides federal support for safety in schools, but doesn't specifically address bullying. Currently, 48 states have anti-bullying laws.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study emphasizes the need to critically examine media being produced by the LGBT community to prevent bullying and suicide among young people. The findings of this study are a demonstration of the intersecting oppressions and the prevalence of racism, sexism, classism, ableism, and Christian privileges in the queer community. The findings demonstrate the dangers that lie in creating campaigns without an intersectional or broader social justice lens as well as not collaborating with experts on the issues.

Trickle Up Social Justice

The most overwhelming frequencies were seen in the age of the video makers, the race of the video makers, the sexual orientation and gender identities of the video makers and the languages used in the video. In examining privilege and oppression, we must note that only 4% of the videos were made by people under the age of 20, and 1% of that group committed suicide. 57% of the video makers were gay men, while only 14% were lesbian women, 79% of the videos contained people who were white while the next most frequently observed racial category was Black video makers, who only appeared in 24% of the videos. 72% of the videos had men in them, while only 41% had women in them and 12% had transgender people in them. 100% of the videos were in English, while the next most frequent language used was Spanish, which was observed in 3% of the videos. These statistics are relevant when they are thought of in the context of Dean Spade's (2011) theory of trickle-up social justice. Spade advocates that social justice cannot 'trickle-down' or be passed from people in positions of power and privilege, but can come

from the oppressed groups themselves and trickle-up to affect those in power. The IGB project is a perfect example of trickle-down social justice, where overwhelmingly middle aged, white, English speaking, gay, cisgender men are speaking to populations of youth, who may or may not identify in the same ways. If the theory of trickle-up social justice were to be applied to this project, it may be transformed to have video makers from a variety of different backgrounds, not only discussing personal experiences with sorrow and depression, but also of happiness and great joy. The videos would discuss all sexual orientations and gender identities, not just those that are prevalent in the queer community and would also be made by those in the target audience (LGBT youth, LGBT youth of color, etc.).

Conflict Maps

From the intractable conflict method, the complexity of the issue is emphasized by the data. Bullying in schools and LGBT youth suicide cannot be solved using one campaign or method.

People and Social Networks Map. Overall, this map can provide us with information about the attractor landscape for the conflict of anti-LGBT bullying in schools. First, there is a lot of shared influence between all parties in the schools (administrators, parents, teachers, LGBT students and bullies). This is important because in this system, there isn't one party that has a significantly higher amount of power than another. This is an arena for opening the discussion to include intervention strategies that are primarily based on safety, liberation and working together as a group of diverse people who are all physically present in the school environment. Intervention strategies here could be much more authentic and community driven instead of policy coming from an authoritative standpoint.

The hubs in the system can be seen around policy makers and religious institutions, but

they are acting as different kinds of hubs. Policy makers are incredibly influential to the community, but are also heavily influenced by the community. Religious organizations are heavily influential in the community, but are hardly influenced by anyone. This speaks to the kinds of interventions and achievable actionables for this part of the system. Because religious organizations are an attractor here, it may be possible to create less of an attractor by working with the policy makers that have a direct influence on the organizations. This may not be a simple task because religious organizations are typically value based, but there is possibility for change.

GLBTQ advocacy organizations are playing a major role as a source of action because they have influence over bullies, LGBT students and policy makers (which are arguably the most important groups in the system). These organizations are empowering LGBT students to get involved in the changes that are necessary to create safe schools, as well as encouraging bullies to join them. The approach of education for both of the major parties in this situation has an incredible amount of potential to create that sense of authentic, community-driven change that is coming from those involved and not being dictated from an authoritative figure.

Parents, teachers and school administration are working closely with each other and with both sets of students in this scenario, and there could be high-impact interventions created if all three of these groups were to work together to influence the bullies and the LGBT students. If these three groups were able to merge into one, they would then gain the most power in the system and could work within the schools to create cultural change, in conjunction with their influence over the policy makers who are changing the rules.

This map serves to show the complications of the issue and the various components of this conflict, ranging from moral and value based, to policy and law based. Because there are so many

factors of this conflict, it is imperative that we examine not only the historical aspect of how we arrived in this situation, but also look at where power in the system lies now (policy makers and religious institutions) and ask how we can make a shift in that power to redistribute it to folks who are in the schools everyday to create community driven change.

Events Map. As a stakeholder in this situation, the researcher is most concerned with why this conflict is escalating so quickly over the past decade or so. While the history of the GLBT movement extends prior to the 1960s, this map is primarily focusing on recent events, with a brief history of major events that demonstrate the rapidly moving state of rights for LGBT people. Most of the events in this history of the GLBT movement have been reinforcing and lead to more protests, gaining of rights, etc. The Compton Cafeteria Riots lead to increased anger among the queer community, sparking the Stonewall Riots on the other side of the country three years later. Taking a large jump in history, riots and violence tend to also be reinforcing, and the violence did not stop in the LGBT movement. Brandon Teena was killed in 1993, reminding the general American public that LGBT people still exist (after the AIDS crisis of the 1980s) and that violence has not stopped. 1999 marked a huge year, with the murder of Brandon Tenna reinforcing the making of the movie *Boys Don't Cry*. As previously stated, violence is often reinforcing and within days of the movie release, Matthew Shepard was brutally murdered in Wyoming. At this same time, an attempt at non-violent reconciliation was made when Georgia passed the first anti-bullying law specific to schools. This event marks a significant inhibition in the long process of violence. Almost 10 years later, in 2008, voters in California made marriage between two people of the same-sex illegal and again stirred a national outrage, sparking protests and demonstrations from all sides of the issue.

In 2009, another rare inhibitor was introduced into the system, with the passing of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, making hate crimes prosecution legal for crimes committed based on sexual orientation or gender identity. This was a positive influence that policy makers were able to have on all parties involved and was a way to shift the attractor landscape to something less pervasive. In September and October of 2010, there were 11 nationally publicized suicides of young gay teens due to bullying and harassment in schools. This seems to be a huge attractor, and a reinforcing one, as this pattern has not necessarily stopped, although media coverage may have.

The pattern of suicide among GLBT teens is one that has been happening for years at rates higher than heterosexual students, but that is an entirely different conflict map. The increase in media coverage of suicide reinforced waves of action around the country to confront anti-LGBT bullying and Dan Savage started the It Get Better Project to send a message to LGBT youth that it gets better once they are out of high school and away from bullies. Regardless of the validity of this message, the campaign sparked participation from an array of celebrities, public figures, LGBT organizations, etc. Soon after, President Obama showed his support for lesbian, gay and bisexual folks by encouraging and ultimately repealing Don't Ask, Don't Tell in September of 2011, making it legal for GLB people to serve openly in the US military. It is still illegal for transgender people to serve in the military, as transgender is still listed in the DSM IV and will be included in the DSM V as a mental illness.

Acting as another inhibitor to negative action and violence is the recent ruling of a 9th circuit court calling Proposition 8 unconstitutional. This sparked celebration and a sense of

freedom across the country, while also creating a sense of fear to see how the appeal process will play out over the next year. This will be primarily dependent on policy makers who will be heavily influenced by conservative family organizations, religious institutions and LGBT advocacy organizations. This energy has been brought into the presidential campaigns of 2012 with candidates (eventual policy makers) taking clear stances on LGBT issues. In conjunction with a recent sweep of action, many LGBT advocacy organizations are pushing for federal bullying policies to make schools safe for all students across the country.

Overall, the energy in this system has been building since the 1960s and hasn't stopped. The energy has been steadily increasing since September of 2010 with media attention to gay suicides and is at a point of possible explosion or at a point of creating a large reinforcing loop. Based on the theories of Peter Coleman (2011), it is critical that action is taken now to make a positive intervention, as there is so much energy in the system and potential for change is at its peak. The presidential election, pushes for anti-bullying policies, and the ruling of Prop 8 (all occurring over the next year) will determine a large amount of whether or not this conflict goes back into the feedback loop of violence, protesting/riots, implementation of inclusive policies or if a large inhibitor is going to start a process towards liberation for LGBTQ students and safer schools for everyone.

Suicide Contagion

According to theories of suicide contagion, the IGBP is falling directly into what is not advocated for by current research. By broadcasting videos that explicitly describe the means of attempted suicide in 71% of videos, the campaign is contradicting many theories of suicide contagion that ask the media to avoid this type of reporting (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against

Defamation et al. 2011). Phrases such as ‘suicide epidemic’ were used in many of the videos, and number of views are some of the highest reported for videos made by youth that committed suicide. These characteristics of the IGBP fall under the list developed by groups of what not to do in social media. The IGBP could work within the models for responsibly reporting suicides in the media by posting a list of recommendations on their website and asking video makers to responsibly discuss suicide in a way that will not lead to contagion.

Suicide Prevention

In working within the best models for suicide prevention, the literature clearly states that there is not a standard best practice model that will work for all groups of people. Oppressed youth need to be affirmed in their identities and have programs that are specific to possibly intersecting marginalizations (Crisp and McCave 2007). Based on these theories, the IGBP is currently working towards the white, gay male, English speaking population, leaving out a large portion of LGBT youth, including poor or homeless youth of color, who are arguably some of the most at-risk populations. In revising the project to make it inclusive to more struggling youth, the campaign could reach out to specific organizations, communities or advocacy groups that are working around intersectional identities and issues to make the project truly represent the diverse experiences of the national LGBT community. However, it is also important to note that a majority of LGBT youth are not considering suicide, so an evaluation of national and local programs to provide positive reinforcement and identity development for youth who do not need help is imperative.

Anti-Bullying Policies

As previously stated, the problem of bullying and teen suicide cannot be solved from a

one-dimensional approach. There must be campaigns, along with advocacy, education and legal efforts happening at local, state and national levels in order to make authentic and positive change. In supporting the legal efforts being made to hold schools, teachers, and student accountable for bullying and harassment, the IGBP needs to be weary of videos advocating for students to wait to ‘get out of high school and it will get better.’ Statements such as this were seen in 39% of the videos, and are failing to hold the public school system accountable. Public schools in the United States should be places that feel safe, validating, and celebratory for all students in order to foster a positive learning environment. Instead of encouraging students to simply survive their high school years, resources to change the schools should be provided to students, teachers, parents and staff where a collective effort can be made to create liberating school and classroom environments. Such resources would include: extensive training on issues of social justice and diversity for staff and administrators, requirements of inclusive curriculum (i.e., discussing GLBT history, authors, scientists, mathematicians, etc. in the classroom), implementation of accessible gender inclusive restrooms in every public school, libraries that have a variety of books including fiction/non-fiction/magazines/newspapers that are about queer people and queer life, access to LGBTQ websites and inclusive and fully enumerated anti-bullying policies with genuine intervention methods.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research needs to be done on intersectional and multi-method approaches to anti-bullying and anti-suicide oppression models. This research may be impossible to obtain as suicide rates of LGBT youth are currently unavailable due to problems with reporting and under reporting, and data on the amount of bullying happening in schools is limited. A political push for emergency

rooms to include sexual orientation and gender identity on reports of suicide would help to collect this necessary data, although it must be acknowledged that these identity categories are not always known. Inquiries into the current effectiveness of multi-method models as well as implementation of such methods will be beneficial as research starts to investigate what strategies have worked in different communities around the country. Overall, the goal of future research should be to create authentic forms of intervention and prevention that are effective for various members of the GLBTQ communities, including those with intersecting and overlapping

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APPENDIX

Table 5: Creator, Weblink and Date Video Was Uploaded

Video Link	Creator	Date Uploaded
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ax96cghOnY4	Joel Burns	Oct. 13th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DV4EmSviDfQ	Ke\$ha	Oct. 5th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7skPnJOZYdA	Google Chrome	May 2nd, 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7IcVvyg2Qlo	Dan Savage and Terry	Sep. 21st, 2010

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Pb1CaGMdWk	Jamey Rodemeyer	May 4th, 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4a4MR8oI_B8	Pixar	Nov. 22nd, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=geyAFbSDPVk	President Obama	Oct. 21st, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_QVknV-M6U	Adam Lambert	Oct. 18th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5RKmnAJ3ZWM	Chris Colfer	Oct. 4th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pYLs4NCgvNU	Google Employees	Oct. 19th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IfQJ_V9K3EM	Todrick Hall (American Idol Contestant)	Oct. 11th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9GGAgtq_rQc	Tim Gun (Project Runway)	Oct. 5th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCfKCEPd2uo	Sassy Gay Friend (Brian Galvin)	Oct. 9th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KnYa9R4N-8c	Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles	Oct. 26th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eFsGp2tpjpM	Nicole	Oct. 16th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPg02qjL40g	FaceBook Employees	Oct. 26th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D0OeSs870ys	Zachary Quinto	Oct. 6th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l3Y52kD0G2c	Neil Patrick Harris	Oct. 3rd, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2TWvKL9Qx18	Lala and Ciara	Sep. 28th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mf9tcxHnVds	Kim Kardashian	Oct. 13th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dI3mlNINmg	Lizzie Velasquez (Living with a rare syndrom)	Nov. 1st, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aHfM_iV-554	Max Adler	Nov. 16th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWYqsaJk_U8	Apple Employees	Apr. 13th, 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NeKI8biAglU	Broadway Stars	Oct. 16th, 2010

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_0uN6Ghjp48	Cast of Wicked	Oct. 1st, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4LtB0dV_U0	The Trevor Project (celebrities)	Oct. 4th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BThRZbCs-p8	Stephen Colbert	Jul. 13th, 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBOxrgwGH4U	US Military, pre DADT repeal	Sep. 14th, 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7OuAem1jEws	Luan Legacy	Oct. 3rd, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cTQNwMxqM3E	Rebecca Drysdale	Jan. 4th, 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yOGSDzYoZGo	Vinny Guadagnino (Jersey Shore)	Oct. 22nd, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Xg-8CZuN7A	Jason Derulo	Oct. 4th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VeEunG9M2s0	Perez Hilton	Sep. 21st, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IC-ZnayVEX0	Gay Cop, Gay Marine (JD and Allen)	Oct. 4th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SbkbIhpzLTo	Jesse Tyler Ferguson and Eric Stonestreet (Modern Family)	Oct. 9th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=faw-8iEpFUs	Alexander Skarsgard	Jul. 25th, 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VrvczbSpq6I	Sara Racey (model)	Oct. 28th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FjFxsDnzOo	Jake Shears (Scissor Sisters)	Oct. 6th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5p-AT18d9IU	Canada (celebrities)	Nov. 2nd, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hUJ4oVvrcqY	Justin Bieber	Nov. 23rd, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SB_VNjsCGcA	"The Other Tyler"	Oct. 8th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=46cJRh8Hj_o	Jeffery Self and Guy Branum	Oct. 1st, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oaMdllWsqno	Eve	Oct. 2nd, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BuHzaBSPbfU	Danny Noriega	Oct. 5th, 2010

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqENROhtbsE	Joel Madden	Oct. 1st, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A1TcD95kmGQ	San Francisco Giants	Jun. 1st, 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DEoCyLQgdCU	Kermit the Frog	Oct. 30th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sqh_SFNdzMc	Christ Crocker	Oct. 3rd, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k-5BA5dHXn0	"Gregory Gorgeous"	Oct. 4th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JdGq0KukZfM	Kristin Bauer (True Blood)	Jul. 25th, 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KYa0wi4XzeI	Randy Roberts Potts (Oral Robert's grandson)	Oct. 25th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JxhZJJAGjW0	Kate Bornstein	Oct. 1st, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=486otan-Y5I	"The Amazing Athiest"	Aug. 10th, 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qXuhNL2xTvg	Ronnie Kroell & Taylor Proffitt	Oct. 2nd, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPZ5eUrNF24	Bishop Gene robinson	Oct. 13th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bnev14XfUjY	San Fransisco	Sep. 27th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HhhTir-UQTQ	Darren Hayes (Savage Garden)	Sep. 29th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epYOIExJxIQ	NOH8 Campaign (celebrities)	Nov. 10th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mbECOomyr-0	Suze Orman	Nov. 2nd, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F9tSmwqpWQM	Youth Pride Chorus	Oct. 6th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPagiYPSgGQ	Michael Buckley (What the Buck Show)	Sep. 29th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2l2WnpZCcms	Anna Paquin	Aug. 1st, 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NJ8b300e94	Tyler Oakley	Sep. 30th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vL42t8R_WFU	Holly Madison and Josh Strickland	Oct. 7th, 2010

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CtvHq67VhRw	Wynter Gordon	Nov. 3rd, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7lVqbmQ--4o	Chris Salvatore	Oct. 15th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H-xy9j4-YqI	Rob Thomas	Oct. 12th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SrSDP-_o-dE	Jewel	Oct. 2nd, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZ-tPsvltBI	LGBT Aging Project	Oct. 19th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SqMZVk_sP4Q	"SomeoneToShoutFor"	Oct. 2nd, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iL2Ed_iKiG4	White House Staff	Dec. 20th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OA-PWIT-4BI	"Soundly Awake"	Oct. 25th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KnaqGCY28_k	EA Employees	Dec. 17th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AuHoijh4nD4	Adrienne Curry (ANTM)	Sep. 29th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L4Fiq1Ltog0	Andy Cohen (Watch What Happens Live)	Oct. 1st, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUZQBTCrXgI	Ryan James Yezak	Oct. 6th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6tziaCqv1hA	"firstpigeon"	Sep. 24th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m0lGt-jeqlo	Eva	Sep. 25th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ir1EempCAmo	Linnix, Rannan, David,...	Oct. 2nd, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INNHL9qway4	Gloria Estefan	Oct. 17th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uzHKZlfYWg4	Rutina Wesley (True Blood)	Jul. 25th, 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gOiVTfH-REU	Margret Cho	Oct. 18th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ytzzq9rwhQA	Gay Orthodox Jews	Nov. 9th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wj8zBtcgTjA	"lecercle01"	Sep. 29th, 2010

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GsvZJcMJevs	Jay Manuel	Sep. 30th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g0t-Ft-vRUE	Janet Mock	May 12th, 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nOVbupyhOVA	Ben and Jamie from NYC	Oct. 3rd, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0SjZ9wfVUo4	John Quale	Oct. 13th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kKuxJu6yAbs	"LoveBScott"	Oct. 21, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLN50wsIAeg	HOUSE Cast	May 10th, 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gukeeCRP3fQ	"pacifistfish"	Sep. 21st, 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8jPzMU-nfQo	Joshua Lindsay	Oct. 4th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i0miLYq4qBc	Deborah Ann Woll (True Blood)	Aug. 8th, 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=agVcR1GcvI0	AJ Mclean (Backstreet Boys)	Oct. 2nd, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQaXz22Ok-c	Gap Inc. Employees	Nov. 3rd, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mrechcKQxNo	sia	Oct. 1st, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1R8cqLJkks	Adam Levin (Maroon 5)	Jul. 11th, 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d_2jR2qNIoY	Gareth Thomas (Whales Rugby Player)	Jan. 4th, 2011
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dNh56l5LjU	"johnnyboyxo"	Nov. 20th, 2010
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2mymkFotvg	Chaz Bono	Oct. 7th, 2010

Table 6: Significantly Correlated Characteristics of the Videos

Characteristic	p-value
<u>Views Per Day</u>	
TV/Internet Personality	-.21*
Soldier	.28**
Committed Suicide	.39**
Methodist	.22*
Assumed Upper Class	.39**
Public Speech	.34**

Home/Professionally Made Video	-.41**
Technology Related	.34**
Spanish	.27**
American Sign Language	.53**
Official It Gets Better Video	.48**
Reference to Adults as Responsible for Ending Bullying	.36**
Online Groups	.26**
<u>Politician</u>	
Company/Organization	.27**
Person in Video Identifies as a Lesbian	.21*
Person in Video Has or Does Identify as a Methodist	.33**
Person in Video is Black	.24*
Person in Video is Asian	.20*
Person in Video is Middle Eastern	.26**
Person in Video is from a Rural Area	.35**
Public Speech	.49**
Official It Gets Better Video	.27**
Mention of Trans (besides the GLBT acronym)	.23*
Mention of Lesbian Identities	.22*
Reference to Adults as Responsible for Ending Bullying	.29**
Reference Biological Family as a Support System	.21*
<u>Musician</u>	
TV/Internet Personality	-.27**
Person in Video Identifies as Gay	-.20*
Person in Video Identifies as Straight	.27**
Person in Video has an Assumed Economic Status of Upper Class	-.20*
Person in Video has an Unknown Economic Class, but is a Celebrity	.27**
Music Video	.49**
Mention of Trans (besides GLBT acronym)	.28**
Reference to Adults as Responsible for Ending Bullying	-.21*
<u>Company/Organization</u>	
Politician	.27**
Multiple People in Video	.53**
Person in the Video Identifies as Gay	.29**
Person in the Video Identifies as Lesbian	.73**

Person in the Video has an Unknown Sexual Orientation	.46**
Person in the Video is Black	.35**
Person in the Video is Latina/o	.30**
Person in the Video is Asian	.51**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Ethnicity	.61**
Person in the Video Identifies as Transgender	.39**
Person in the Video Identifies as Genderqueer	.30**
Person in the Video Identifies as a Woman	.33**
Person in the Video Has an Unknown Gender Identity	.51**
Person in the Video Has an Unknown Economic Class, but is a Celebrity	-.29**
Person in the Video Has an Assumed Economic Status of Upper Class	.22*
Home/Professionally Made Video	-.27**
Technology Related	.44**
Spanish	.33**
American Sign Language	.30**
Mention of Gay Identities	.30**
Reference to Other Resources (Recommendations of Who to Talk to)	.20*
Description of Violent/Bad/Suicide from Their Own Experience	.21*
Reference to Finding Happiness as a Result of a Monogamous Relationship	.39**
Reference to Biological Family as a Support System	.31**
Reference to Friends as a Support System	.33**
Advocating for Viewers to Come Out	.40**
<u>Journalist</u>	
Unknown Identity (i.e., politician, musician, actor, etc.)	.21*
One Person in the Video	.33*
Person in the Video has an Unknown Sexual Orientation	.22*
Person in the Video Identifies as American Indian ^a	.29**
Person in the Video Identifies as Transgender	.48**
Official It Gets Better Video	.22*
Mention of Trans (Besides GLBT acronym)	.48**
Reference to Finding Happiness as a Result of a Monogamous Relationship	.22*

<u>Actor/Actress</u>	
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Status	-.24*
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Status, but is a Celebrity	.35**
Mention of Gay Identities	-.19*
Reference to Other Resources (Recommendations of Who to Talk To)	.22*
<u>Fashion Designer</u>	
Athlete	.20*
Reference to making Yourself Happy/Controlling Your Own Life	.21*
Reference to Online Groups as a Support System	.20*
<u>TV/Internet Personality</u>	
Multiple People in the Video	-.23*
Person in the Video Has/Does Identify as Catholic	.20*
Person in the Video is Black	-.22*
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class	.27**
Person in the video has an Unknown Economic Class, but is a Celebrity	-.24*
Home/Professionally Made Video	.22*
Music Video	-.20*
Reference to "Increase" in Suicides	.26**
Reference to Making Yourself Happy/Controlling Your Own Life	.28**
<u>Athlete</u>	
Fashion Designer	.20*
Spanish	.31**
Unknown Language	.39**
Mention only GLBT acronym	.19*
<u>Religious Figure</u>	
One person in the Video	.36**
Person in the Video is Jewish	.39**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Religion	-.29**
<u>Unknown Celebrity Identity (Not Famous)</u>	

Journalist	.21*
Multiple People in the Video	.20*
Person in the Video Identifies as Muslim	.28**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class	.21**
Person in the Video is from a Rural Area	.41**
Reference to Biological Family as a Support System	.20*
Support System Not Mentioned	-.30**
<u>Soldier</u>	
Assumed Upper Class from Video	.29**
<u>Committed Suicide</u>	
Assumed Upper Class from Video	.43**
Official It Gets Better Video	.30**
Reference to Celebrity as a Support System	.36**
Reference to Online Groups as a Support System	.57**
<u>Multiple People in Video</u>	
Company/Organization	.53**
TV/Internet Personality	-.23*
Unknown Celebrity Status (not famous)	.20*
Person in Video Identifies as Gay	.31**
Person in Video Identifies as Lesbian	.51**
Person in Video has an Unknown Sexual Orientation	.44**
Person in Video was Black	.48**
Person in Video was Latina/o	.51**
Person in Video was Asian	.48**
Person in Video had Unknown Race	.66**
Person in Video Identifies as Male	.29**
Person in Video Identifies as Female	.29**
Person in Video had Unknown Gender Identity	.48**
Person in Video was from a Rural Area	.32**
Home/ Professionally Made Video	-.22*
Technology Related Video	.21*
Spanish	.28**
Mention of Gay Identities	.20*
Reference to Other Resources (Recommendations of Who to Talk To)	.37**
Description of Violent/Bad/Suicide Incident from Their Own Experience	.20*

Reference to Finding Happiness as a Result of a Monogamous Relationship	.25**
Reference to Biological Family as a Support System	.35*
Reference to Friends as a Support System	.36**
Telling Viewers “You’re Not Alone!”	.36**
<u>One Person in Video</u>	
Journalist	.33*
Religious Figure	.36**
Person in the Video Identifies as a Lesbian	.31*
Advocating for “Don’t Give Up”/”It Gets Better”	.29*
Reference to Finding Happiness as a Result of a Monogamous Relationship	.40**
<u>Person in Video Identifies as Gay</u>	
Musician	-.20*
Company/Organization	.29**
Multiple People in the Video	.23*
Person in Video Identifies as a Lesbian	.23*
Person in Video Identifies as Straight	-.47**
Person in the Video is White	.24*
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class	.32**
Person in the Video has Unknown Economic Class, but is a Celebrity	-.36
Person in the Video is Assumed Upper Class	.19*
Person in the Video is From a Rural Area	.23*
Reference to Getting Out of School	.19*
Specific Mention of Gay Identities	.39**
Reference to LGBT as Choice	-.20
Description of Violent/Bad/Suicide Incident from the Own Experience	.20
Reference to Biological Family as a Support System	.31**
Reference to Friends as a Support System	.266**
Support System Not Mentioned	-.21**
Advocating for “Don’t Give Up/It Gets Better”	.31*
<u>Person in Video Identifies as a Lesbian</u>	
Politician	.21*
Company/Organization	.73**
Multiple People in the Video	.51**

One Person in the Video	.31*
Person in the Video Identifies as Gay	.23*
Person in the Video has an Unknown Sexual Orientation	.44*
Person in the Video is Black	.31**
Person in the Video is Latino/a	.29**
Person in the Video is Asian	.55**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Race	.60**
Person in the Video Identifies as Transgender	.29*
Person in the Video Identifies as Female	.42**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Gender Identity	.55**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class	.22*
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class, but is a Celebrity	-.30**
Home/Professionally Made Video	-.20*
Technology Related Video	.21*
Mention of Trans (besides using GLBT acronym)	.20*
Specific Mention of Gay Identities	.30**
Specific Mention of Lesbian Identities	.35**
Specific Mention of Transgender Identities	.20*
Reference to “Increase” In Suicides	-.23*
Reference to Other Resources (Recommendations of Who To Talk To)	.27**
Reference to Finding Happiness as a Result of a Monogamous Relationship	.38**
Reference to Biological Family as a Support System	.32**
Reference to Friends as a Support System	.39**
Advocating for Viewers to Come Out	.35**
<u>Person in the Video Identifies as Bisexual</u>	
Person in the Video Identifies as Male	-.36**
Telling Viewers “You’re Not Alone!”	-.27*
<u>Person in the Video Identifies as Straight</u>	
Musician	.27**
Person in the Video Identifies as Gay	-.47**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class	-.39**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class, but is a Celebrity	.41**
Reference to Getting Out of High School	-.20*

Reference to LGBT as a Choice	.289**
<u>Person in the Video Has an Unknown Sexual Orientation</u>	
Company/Organization	.46**
Journalist	.22*
Multiple People in the Video	.44**
Person in Video is Black	.43**
Person in Video is Latino/a	.37**
Person in Video is Asian	.40**
Person in Video has an Unknown Race	.66**
Person in Video Identifies as Transgender	.45**
Person in Video Identifies as Female	.47**
Person in Video has an Unknown Gender Identity	.52**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class	.19*
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class, but is a Celebrity	-.25*
Spanish	.24*
Mention of Trans (Besides Using GLBT Acronym)	.25*
Reference to GLBT Bravery	-.19*
Reference to “Increase” in Suicides	.23*
Reference to Other Resources (Suggestions of Who to Talk To)	.28**
<u>Person in the Video Has/Does Identify as Catholic</u>	
TV/Internet Personality	.20*
<u>Person in the Video Has/Does Identify as Jewish</u>	
Religious Figure	.39**
Person in the Video Has an Unknown Religious Identity	-.36**
Love for GLBT People/Viewers of the Video	.19*
<u>Person in the Video Has/Does Identify as Christian (General)</u>	
Person in the Video Has an Unknown Religious Identity	-.41**
Person in the Video Identifies as Genderqueer	.20*
Person in the Video Has an Unknown Economic Class	.22*
Reference to LGBT as a Choice	.21*

<u>Person in the Video Identifies as Methodist</u>	
Politician	.33**
Public Speech	.70**
Home/Professionally Made Video	-.22*
Reference to Adults as Being Responsible for Ending Bullying	.20*
<u>Person in the Video Identifies as Muslim</u>	
Person in the Video has an Unknown Celebrity Status (Not Famous)	.28**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Religious Identity	-.20*
Person in the Video is Middle Eastern	.57**
<u>Person in the Video Has an Unknown Religious Identity</u>	
Religious Figure	-.29**
Person in the Video Has/Does Identify as Jewish	-.36**
Person in the Video Has/Does Identify as Muslim	-.20*
Person in the Video Identifies as Female	.30**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Gender Identity	.20*
Public Speech	-.20*
Reference to Adults as Being Responsible for Ending Bullying	-.20
Reference to LGBT as a Choice	-.21*
Telling Viewers "You're Not Alone!"	.27*
<u>Person in the Video is White</u>	
Person in the Video Identifies as Gay	.24*
Person in the Video is Black	-.28**
Person in the Video Identifies as Male	.33**
Person in the Video is from a Rural Area	.20*
Reference to Making Yourself Happy/Controlling Your Own Life	-.23*
<u>Person in the Video is Black</u>	
Politician	.24*
Company/Organization	.35**
TV/Internet Personality	-.22*
Multiple People in the Video	.48**
Person in the Video Identifies as a Lesbian	.31**

Person in the Video has an Unknown Sexual Orientation	.43**
Person in the Video is White	-.28**
Person in the Video is Latino/a	.52**
Person in the Video is Asian	.35**
Person in the Video is Native American	.25*
Person in the Video has an Unknown race	.47**
Person in the Video Identifies as Transgender	.29**
Person in the Video Identifies as Female	.38**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Gender Identity	.28**
Music Video	.30**
Spanish	.31**
Specific Mention of Trans Identities	.22*
Reference to Friends as a Support System	.25*
Telling Viewers “You’re Not Alone!”	.38**
<u>Person in the Video is Latino/a</u>	
Company/Organization	.30**
Multiple People in the Video	.51**
Person in the Video Identifies as a Lesbian	.29**
Person in the Video Has an Unknown Sexual Orientation	.37**
Person in the Video is Black	.52**
Person in the Video is Asian	.42**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Race	.60**
Person in the Video Identifies as Transgender	.29**
Person in the Video Identifies as Genderqueer	.23*
Person in the Video Identifies as Female	.35**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Gender Identity	.42**
Music Video	.20*
Spanish	.40**
American Sign Language	.23*
Reference of Other Resources (Suggestions of Who to Talk To)	.24*
Reference to Friends as a Support System	.21*
<u>Person in the Video is Asian</u>	
Politician	.20*
Company/Organization	.51**
Multiple People in the Video	.48**

Person in the Video Identifies as a Lesbian	.55**
Person in the Video has a Unknown Sexual Orientation	.40**
Person in the Video is Black	.35**
Person in the Video is Latino/a	.42**
Person in the Video is an American Indian	.34**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Race	.56**
Person in the Video Identifies as Transgender	.36**
Person in the Video Identifies as Genderqueer	.23*
Person in the Video Identifies as Female	.39**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Gender Identity	.52**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class, but is a Celebrity	-.26**
Reference to Other Resources (Suggestions of Who To Talk To)	.22*
Reference to Happiness as a Result of a Monogamous Relationship	.34**
Reference to Friends as a Support System	.36**
<u>Person in the Video is an American Indian</u>	
Person in the Video is Black	.25*
Person in the Video is Asian	.34**
Reference to Happiness as a Result of a Monogamous Relationship	.19*
Reference to Friends as a Support System	.20*
<u>Person in the Video is Middle Eastern</u>	
Politician	.26**
Person in the Video Has/Does Identify as Muslim	.57**
Person in the Video Has an Assumed Economic Status of Upper Class	.22*
Reference to Biological Family as a Support System	.28**
<u>Person in the Video Has an Unknown Race</u>	
Company/Organization	.61**
Multiple People in the Video	.66**
Person in the Video Identifies as a Lesbian	.60**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Sexual Orientation	.66**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Religious Identity	.20*
Person in the Video is Black	.47**

Person in the Video is Latino/a	.60**
Person in the Video is Asian	.56**
Person in the Video Identifies as Transgender	.23*
Person in the Video Identifies as Female	.36**
Person in the Video has an Unknown gender Identity	.63**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class	.25*
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class, but is a Celebrity	-.29**
Home/Professionally Made Video	-.27**
Technology Related	.25*
Spanish	.32**
Reference to Other Resources (Suggestions of Who to Talk To)	.30**
Reference to Happiness as a Result of a Monogamous Relationship	.26**
Reference to Biological Family as a Support System	.24*
Reference to Friends as a Support System	.27**
<u>Person in the Video Identifies as Transgender</u>	
Company/Organization	.39**
Journalist	.48**
Person in the Video Identifies as a Lesbian	.60**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Sexual Orientation	.66**
Person in the Video is Black	.29**
Person in the Video is Latino/a	.25**
Person in the Video is Asian	.56**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Race	.23*
Person in the Video Identifies as Genderqueer	.27**
Person in the Video Identifies as Female	.31**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Gender Identity	.36**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class	.23*
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class, but is a Celebrity	-.26**
Technology Related	.39**
Spanish	.29**
American Sign Language	.27**
Mention of Trans (Besides Using GLBT Acronym)	.52**
Specific Mention of Trans Identities	.43**

Description of Violent/Bad/Suicide Incident From Their Own Experience	.23*
Reference to Happiness as a Result of a Monogamous Relationship	.25*
<u>Person in the Video Identifies as Genderqueer</u>	
Company/Organization	.30**
Person in the Video Identifies as a Lesbian	.24*
Person in the Video Has/Does Identify as Christian (General)	.20*
Person in the Video is Latino/a	.23*
Person in the Video is Asian	.23*
Person in the Video Identifies as Transgender	.27**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Gender Identity	.23*
Spanish	.57**
Reference to Celebrities as a Support System	.36**
<u>Person in the Video Identifies as a Man</u>	
Multiple People in the Video	.29**
Person in the Video Identifies as Gay	.58**
Person in the Video Identifies as Bisexual	-.36**
Person in the Video is White	.33**
Person in the Video Identifies as Female	-.56**
Specific Mention of Gay Identities	.19*
Specific Mention of Bisexual Identities	-.21*
Specific Mention of Trans Identities	-.24*
Reference to Increase in Suicides	.21*
Reference to Happiness as a Result of a Monogamous Relationship	.21*
<u>Person in the Video Identifies as a Woman</u>	
Company/Organization	.33**
Multiple People in the Video	.29**
Person in the Video Identifies as Gay	-.38**
Person in the Video Identifies as a Lesbian	.42**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Sexual Orientation	.47**
Person in the Video has a Unknown Religious Identity	.30*
Person in the Video is Black	.38**
Person in the Video is Latino/a	.35**

Person in the Video is Asian	.39**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Race	.36**
Person in the Video Identifies as Transgender	.31**
Person in the Video Identifies as Males	-.56**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Gender Identity	.27**
Specific Mention of Lesbian Identities	.22*
Specific Mention of Transgender Identities	.31**
Reference to Hating/Getting Revenge on Bullies	-.22*
Reference to Other Resources (Suggestions of Who to Talk To)	.26**
<u>Person in the Video has an Unknown Gender Identity</u>	
Company/Organization	.51**
Multiple People in the Video	.48**
Person in the Video Identifies as a Lesbian	.55**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Sexual Orientation	.52**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Religious Identity	.20*
Person in the Video is Black	.28**
Person in the Video is Latino/a	.42**
Person in the Video is Asian	.52**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Race	.63**
Person in the Video Identifies as Transgender	.36**
Person in the Video Identifies as Genderqueer	.23*
Person in the Video Identifies as Female	.27*
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class	.30*
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class, but is a Celebrity	-.31**
Technology Related	.34**
Spanish	.25*
American Sign Language	.23*
Specific Mention of Gay Identities	.21*
Reference to Happiness as a Result of a Monogamous Relationship	.29**
Reference to Friends as a Support System	.24*
Advocating for Viewers to Come Out	.26**
<u>Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class</u>	
Musician	-.20*
Actor/Actress	-.24*

TV/Internet Personality	.27**
Person has an Unknown Celebrity Status (they are not famous)	.21*
Person in the Video Identifies as Gay	.32**
Person in the Video Identifies as a Lesbian	.22*
Person in the Video Identifies as Bisexual	-.39**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Sexual Orientation	.19*
Person in the Video Has/Does Identify as Jewish	.22*
Person in the Video has an Unknown Race	.25*
Person in the Video Identifies as Transgender	.23*
Person in the Video has an Unknown Gender Identity	.30**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class, but is a Celebrity	-.86**
Person in the Video Has an Assumed Economic Status of Upper Class	-.23*
Home/Professionally Made Video	-.21*
Official It Gets Better Video	-.20*
<u>Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class, but is a Celebrity</u>	
Musician	.27**
Company/Organization	-.29**
Actor/Actress	.35**
TV/Internet Personality	-.24*
Person in the Video Identifies as Gay	-.36**
Person in the Video Identifies as a Lesbian	-.30**
Person in the Video Identifies as Straight	.41**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Sexual Orientation	-.25*
Person in the Video is Asian	-.26**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Race	-.29**
Person in the Video Identifies as Transgender	-.26**
Person in the Video has a Unknown Gender Identity	-.31**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class	-.86**
Person in the Video has an Assumed Economic Status of Upper Class	-.20*
Home/Professionally Made Video	.26**
Mention of Trans (Besides Using GLBT Acronym)	-.20*
Specific Mention of Gay Identifies	-.21*

Reference to Celebrities as a Support System	-.24*
<u>Person in the Video as an Assumed Economic Status of Upper Class</u>	
Soldier	.29**
Committed Suicide	.43**
Person in the Video Identifies as Gay	.19*
Person in the Video is Middle Eastern	.22*
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class	-.23*
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class, but is a Celebrity	-.20*
Specific Mention of Gay Identities	.20*
Reference to Online Groups as a Support System	.22*
<u>Person in the Video is From a Rural Area</u>	
Politician	.35**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Celebrity Status (Is Not Famous)	.41**
Multiple People in the Video	.32**
Person in the Video Identifies as Gay	.23*
Person in the Video Has/Does Identify as Catholic	.22*
Person in the Video is White	.20*
Public Speech	.24*
American Sign Language	.24*
Reference to Getting Out of High School	.20*
Reference to Making Yourself Happy/Controlling Your Own Life	.21*
Reference to Biological Family as a Support System	.26**
<u>Video is a Public Speech</u>	
Politician	.49**
Person in the Video Has/Does Identify as Methodist	.70**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Religious Identity	-.20*
Person in the Video is From a Rural Area	.24*
Home/Professionally Made Video	-.34**
Official It Gets Better Video	.30**
Mention of Trans (Besides Using GLBT Acronym)	.27**
Specific Mention of Lesbian Identifies	.26**
Reference to Adults as Being Responsible for Ending Bullying	.32**

<u>Home/Professionally Made Video</u>	
Company/Organization	-.27**
TV/Internet Personality	.22*
Multiple People in Video	-.22*
Person in the Video Identifies as a Lesbian	-.20*
Person in the Video Has/Does Identify as Methodist	-.22*
Person in the Video is an American Indian	-.22*
Person in the Video has a Unknown Race	-.27**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class	-.21*
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Class, but is a Celebrity	.26**
Public Speech	-.34**
Music Video	-.49**
Technology Related	-.50**
American Sign Language	-.34*
Mention of Trans (Besides Using GLBT Acronym)	-.34**
Specific Mention of Trans Identities	-.23*
Reference to Happiness as a Result of a Monogamous Relationship	-.25*
Reference to Biological Family as a Support System	-.22*
Reference to Friends as a Support System	-.26**
Support Systems Not Mentioned	.21*
<u>Music Video</u>	
Musician	.40**
TV/Internet Personality	-.20*
Person in the Video is Black	.30**
Person in the Video is Latino/a	.20*
Person in the Video is an American Indian	.24*
Home/Professionally Made Video	-.49**
Description of Violent/Bad/Suicide Incident from Their Own Experience	-.25**
Reference to Friends as a Support System	.22*
<u>Technology Related</u>	
Company/Organization	.44**
Multiple People in the Video	.21*
Person in the Video Identifies as a Lesbian	.21*

Person in the Video has an Unknown Race	.25*
Person in the Video Identifies as Transgender	.39**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Gender Identity	.34**
Home/Professionally Made Video	-.50**
Spanish	.26**
American Sign Language	.49**
Advocating for Viewers to Come Out	.27**
<u>Video is In English</u>	No Correlations Because the Variable was Constant
<u>Video is in Spanish</u>	
Company/Organization	.33**
Athlete	.31**
Multiple People in the Video	.28**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Sexual Orentation	.24*
Person in the Video is Black	.31**
Person in the Video is Latino/a	.40**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Race	.32*
Person in the Video Identifies as Transgender	.29**
Person in the Video Identifies as Genderqueer	.57**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Gender Identity	.25*
Technology Related	.26**
Video is in an Unknown Language	.39**
American Sign Language	.57**
Love for GLBT People/Viewers of the Video	.19*
<u>Video is in an Unknown Language</u>	
Athlete	.39**
Spanish	.39**
<u>Video is in American Sign Language</u>	
Company/Organization	.30**
Person in the Video Identifies as Transgender	.27**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Gender Identity	.23*
Person in the Video is From a rural Area	.24*
Home/Professionally Made Video	-.34**
Technology Related	.49**
Spanish	.57**
Official It Gets Better Video	.30**

Reference to Adults as Being Responsible Ending Bullying	.32**
<u>Official It Gets Better Video</u>	
Politician	.27**
Journalist	.22*
Committed Suicide	.30**
Person in the Video has an Unknown Economic Status	-.20*
Public Speech	.30**
American Sign Language	.30**
Mention of Trans (Besides Using GLBT Acronym)	.28**
Reference to Adults as Being Responsible for Ending Bullying	.24*

^a For the purposes of this paper, the term American Indian refers to the nations of people who originally inhabited the entire continent of North America before colonization by white settlers. This term is being used as an umbrella term to encompass all nations and geographical regions.