

Among the Missing—Revisited: A Comparative Content Analysis of LGBT Journal Publications Over Two Time Periods

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Abstract

This paper examines the value and ethical implications of social work faculty LGBT publication patterns over two time periods, 1988–1997 and 1998–2012. An expanded comparative content analysis was conducted of mainstream social work journals to assess changes in the frequency and category of LGBT publications. There was not an expected proliferation of LGB-focused articles during the second time frame in those journals first examined. However, chi-square analyses revealed there was a greater variety of LGB issues studied among the articles published. There is also clear evidence of more awareness

and understanding of the transgender community. Overall, social work faculty are publishing a wider variety of LGBT-related topics in an environment that now includes more recently established journals that also publish LGBT-based articles.

Keywords: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, social work values and ethics

1. Introduction

As part of their core values, social work faculty promote social justice and social change for oppressed, vulnerable, and disenfranchised populations. Beyond a conceptual connection to

the values of social justice, there is the literal obligation to work to promote social justice and ameliorate oppression as outlined in the six core values that serve as the preamble to the Code of Ethics. Additionally, there are expectations outlined as social workers' responsibility to clients, colleagues, practice settings, and to broader society (National Association of Social Workers [NASW], 2008). Despite the presence of such obligations for action, over the past decades, social work faculty have been under great scrutiny due to the lack of research focusing on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) issues (Logie, Bridge, & Bridge, 2007; Van Voorhis & Wagner, 2001; 2002; Authors, 2007). Notably, a content analysis conducted by Van Voorhis and Wagner (2001; 2002) resulted in two key findings about social work research on the LGBT community and issues related to its members and allies. First, a disproportionately small number of journal articles published between 1988 and 1997 in 12 mainstream social work journals were dedicated to lesbian and/or gay persons and second, the vast majority of those publications dealt with HIV/AIDS. Although Van Voorhis and Wagner (2001; 2002), did not examine the literature published about the transgender community, a literature review of the same 12 journals over the same time frame by the authors of this study found only one article focusing on the transgender community. These findings beg the following questions: What has the social work profession accomplished in terms of LGBT publication patterns since that time, and what are the value and ethical implications of these patterns upon the social work profession and the LGBT community?

The purposes of this study were twofold. Utilizing a contextual framework reflective of the value changes in society and the profession of social work, the first purpose was to assess changes or shifts in the frequency and scope of social work faculty scholarship pertaining to lesbian, gay, and/or bisexual (LGB) content. This first purpose was achieved by replicating key aspects of the original analyses by Van Voorhis and Wagner (2001; 2002) and then expanding upon the original content analyses through inclusion of a broader array

of social work journals. The second purpose was to assess the current status of social work faculty scholarship addressing content related to the transgender community. This was achieved by conducting the same expanded content analysis focusing solely on the transgender community. The study is a comparative summary of both time frames and examines the implications of the findings.

2. Literature Review

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals have been discriminated against and marginalized in society for decades. This oppression has been based upon stereotype, misinformation, and bigoted values. Further, the discrimination and oppression experienced by the LGBT community has resulted in barriers to a full and rich quality of life for members of the community (Martin, Messinger, Kull, Holmes, Bermudez, & Sommer, 2009). Evidence suggests that these forces, while present in today's society, have been weakened, and efforts to help promote justice and equality for LGBT individuals and families have successfully brought about some societal change.

The researchers' analysis in the present study of the academic record with the LGBT community is grounded in the theoretical perspective that considers the unique contributing variables of society and other social forces. The following theoretical perspectives can be understood to explain this research endeavor. A systems or ecological perspective sheds light on the importance of recognizing the mutual influences of various groups upon each other (Rogers, 2013). The empowerment perspective identifies how certain groups become disenfranchised and may also work to combat this disenfranchisement through engagement on a personal, interpersonal, and political level (Gutierrez, DeLois, & GlenMaye, 1995).

2.1 The Status of the LGBT Community in Society

In the last 20 years, the United States has seen significant transformation and progress in the social policies that impact the LGBT population.

For example, much had transpired with regard to advocacy by the LGBT population in the 1970s and '80s, and George Bush's signing the Ryan White Care Act into law in 1990 was one of the first significant federal policy developments positively impacting the LGB community making it mandatory for health care providers to serve people with HIV. The 20 years that have transpired since that time have brought much advancement in equality and justice for the LGB community. In 1993, the Department of Defense issued guidance to the U.S. military prohibiting them from denying an applicant admission to the military based on their sexual orientation. The directive indicates "applicants ... shall not be asked or required to reveal whether they are homosexual..." and this begins the now infamous 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' policy (Public Broadcasting Service, 2011, para. 28). Yet in 1996, President Clinton signed the Defense of Marriage Act into law, setting federal policy defining marriage as between one man and one woman. The law also goes further in advancing oppression by asserting that no state is required to honor or recognize a same-sex marriage from another state. In 2000, Vermont became the first state in the U.S. to legalize civil unions and registered partnerships for same-sex couples; and in 2004, Massachusetts became the first state to legalize gay marriage. In the nine years since, 11 other states have followed suit (Human Rights Campaign, 2013). This same year, President Bush announced his support for a proposed federal ban on same-sex marriage; the Congress voted against this legislation later that same year, but his assertion fueled the conservative resistance. This energy among conservatives led to 11 states passing laws defining marriage between one man and one woman. From the passage of the Matthew Shepard Act in 2009, which was the first national-level social policy to include the transgender community by adding 'gender identity' and 'gender expression' in the legislative language, to the repealing of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' in 2010, and the Supreme Court's striking down Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act, there has been significant progress

in recent history toward a more just society.

At the same time, in 2013 there remains intransigence over the passage of the Employment Nondiscrimination Act (ENDA). This legislation would protect the LGBT community from discrimination in the workplace and afford them the same worker protections that are currently available to the heterosexual and cisgender community. This proposed legislation, as currently drafted, would make it illegal to fire, refuse to hire, or refuse to promote a person based upon sexual orientation or gender identity. ENDA is centered on a basic principle: Employment decisions are based upon a person's qualifications and performance. Yet, it has very little traction in the current Congress (NASW, 2013). Finally, in 2013, the Boy Scouts of America reversed a centuries-old policy to allow openly gay boys in their membership. However, they retain their active ban on openly gay troop leaders.

Certainly, there have been many advancements and legislative victories in the past two decades, but one cannot deny that homophobia, transphobia, and oppressive policies and practices still exist. The environment for the LGBT and allied communities is a complex one filled with radically juxtaposed opportunities and oppressive forces concurrently.

2.2 The LGBT Community in Social Work Education

Social work as a profession is centered on the responsibility to promote social justice and to work toward social change alongside and on behalf of vulnerable populations and clients (NASW, 2008). These philosophical underpinnings, which are manifest in the Code of Ethics of the profession, serve as the canon that dictates social work faculty's work against the oppression of the LGBT population. Groundbreaking research into the understanding of how social work responded to the needs of the LGBT population was conducted by Van Voorhis and Wagner (2001; 2002). In their studies, Van Voorhis and Wagner (2001; 2002) conducted a content analysis of the literature published by social work faculty to assess its

level of focus on the LGB population and to have a sense of the preparedness of the profession to help improve the quality of life of LGB individuals, groups, families, and the community. In order to understand the research conducted, it is important to consider the societal context within which the studies were conducted as well as the changes that have taken place since that time. In particular, researchers, practitioners, and academicians must consider the changes that have transpired within the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) as they relate to their treatment, statements, and work with and on behalf of the LGBT population. As a point of reference, the time frame of focus for Van Voorhis and Wagner (2001; 2002) was 1988–1997; and the current study examines the research from 1998 through 2013.

With regard to CSWE, initial actions related to the LGB community included the development of the Gay and Lesbian Task Force, which met first in December of 1980. The focus of the Task Force was to assess and address the presence of material(s) on gay and lesbian issues in undergraduate and graduate social work programs, as well as reviewing the area of field internship settings to allow for competent training for working with the gay and lesbian population (CSWE, 2013; CSWE, 1981). Under the Guidance of CSWE, the task force became the Commission on Gay Men and Lesbian Women and then, ultimately, was transformed into the Council on Sexual Orientation and Gender Expression (CSOGE). Within this evolution from 1980 to 2013, it is evident there was a welcomed and gradual broadening of scope, and inclusion of gender identity and expression over time. CSOGE indicates its purpose is to “promote the development of social work curriculum materials and faculty growth opportunities relevant to sexual orientation, gender expression, and the experiences of individuals who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or two-spirit” (CSWE, 2013, para. 1). Among the charges before CSOGE are: to support development of curriculum resources and faculty development opportunities related to sexual

orientation and gender expression; to work toward advancement of inclusive policies and procedures; to aid in the mentoring of LGBT and two-spirited faculty; and to offer assistance and consultation to faculty and students as it relates to issues of sexual orientation and gender identity (CSWE, 2013).

In addition, the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) are another area where CSWE has shaped the values and ethics of the profession by way of outlining the curriculum content and approach that social work programs are to utilize when socializing new students into the profession. This education, as asserted by CSWE (2008), “...at the baccalaureate, master’s, and doctoral levels—shapes the profession’s future through the education of competent professionals, the generation of knowledge, and the exercise of leadership within the professional community” (p.1). The 1992 iteration of the curriculum policy standards, a precursor to the EPAS, was the first to include language affirming and acknowledging the LGB community (CSWE, 1992). The policy standards asserted that content on sexual orientation must be included in the curriculum of a program in order to be accredited (CSWE, 1992). This policy change would help to ensure there was information accessible to students about lesbian and gay issues. However, it omitted the constructs of gender expression and gender identity. In addition, the 2008 EPAS expanded the recognition of the transgender population. Up to this time, recognition was barely visible in the policies that arguably impacted the development of social work practitioners and scholars. The expansion added an expectation that students develop competency in understanding the power of diversity, including sexual orientation and gender identity and expression, in shaping one’s life, identity, and lived experiences (CSWE, 2008).

However, these advancements are not without critique and did not transpire without challenges. This is exemplified by a series of CSOGE memoranda to the Council on Social Work Education regarding the 2001 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards advocating more inclusive and strengths-based language for the LGBT

population within the EPAS. In one such example, Martin and Hunter (2001) articulated concerns regarding both student self-report of missing LGBT content within their educational programs and faculty reports of accreditation site visitor's apparent disinterest in and failure to assess the presence of LGBT content within BSW and MSW programs. Concerns have also been voiced over CSWE's lack of initiative in exploring problems identified by CSOGE and other groups as well as a general disregard to address the needs of LGBT faculty or students in social work programs in any organized fashion (Martin et al., 2009). These concerns were partially addressed when CSWE partnered with Lambda Legal to undertake the study of LGBT issues in social work in 2009 (Martin et al., 2009).

2.3 The LGBT Community in the Social Work Profession

NASW, another significant force influencing social work education, practice, and research, has followed a similar pattern of 'evolved' inclusion with regard to the LGBT community through updates to the Code of Ethics, advocacy activities, and practice guidance. In January of 1976, NASW created the Task Force on Gay Issues, which was re-conceptualized in 1979 as an authorized committee of NASW (NASW, 2012). In 1982, the members of the Board of Directors of NASW voted to transition the task force into a formal committee, creating the National Committee on Lesbian and Gay Issues (NASW, 2012). Over time, the Delegate Assembly of NASW expanded the committee's scope and efforts, adding "bisexual" to the title in 1996 and finally "transgender" at the 2005 meeting. The group is currently known as the National Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues and has a mission to advance social justice by "promoting and defending the rights of persons suffering injustices and oppression because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender" (NASW, 2012, para. 6). The NASW has been encouraged by its membership and the Committee on LGBT Issues to be proactive in advocacy both outside and within the profession.

NASW has been active in advocating for the employment fairness that ENDA would bring, has filed numerous amicus briefs and legal documents in cases where LGBT individuals had their rights denied, and perhaps most importantly has also worked to increase inclusionary language in the Code of Ethics of the profession (NASW, n.d.).

While it has taken the efforts of many in leadership in undergraduate and graduate social work education and practice fields, the two bodies perhaps most influential to the development and practice of the profession (CSWE & NASW) have certainly advanced considerably in recent years. Over the duration of time covered by the Van Voorhis and Wagner study (1988–1997) and the current study (1998–2012), both the National Association of Social Workers (NASW, 2008) and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE, 2008) have taken steps to influence the values and culture of social work professionals, educators, and researchers and also to formalize support of the LGBT population. Each organization drafting and embracing standards that advance the expectations and responsibilities of social work professionals to provide respectful and skilled services to the LGBT community via inclusive language embedded in the Code of Ethics. Despite the progressive efforts of CSWE and NASW, questions remain unanswered about the status of social work faculty LGBT journal publications between 1998 and 2012. The authors sought to answer three research questions in this study. First, will there be an expected increase over time of LGB articles in the social work journals under consideration? Second, will there be an increase in the array of LGB-related issues that were published? Third, what is the extent of published articles focused on the transgender community?

3. Methods

Content analysis was used to quantify categories of data. High-quality content analysis is systematic and rule-based, which maximizes objectivity while ensuring the possibility of replication. For instance, selection criteria must be

clearly established and consistently applied to ensure the appropriate inclusion and exclusion of content (Allen-Meares, 1984; Van Voorhis & Wagner, 2002; Rubin & Babbie, 2005). In addition, the use of content analysis in this study allows for a systematic assessment of themes that represent the profession of social work as it relates to the LGBT community (Grinnell & Unrau, 2011). Revealing such themes not only expands knowledge but also has the potential to contribute to curricular considerations and innovations, and influence the trajectory of future research.

In the present study, the researchers replicated methodologies originally used by Van Voorhis and Wagner (2001; 2002). This included the use of a content analysis of the same 12 social work journals used in their 2001 study: *Social Work*, *Child Welfare*, *Social Service Review*, *Families in Society*, *Journal of Social Work Education*, *Social Work Research*, *Research on Social Work Practice*, *Journal on Social Service Research*, *Health and Social Work*, *Journal of Technology in Human Services*, *Affilia*, and *Administration in Social Work* as well as the same inclusion/exclusion criteria. These journals were originally selected because of their status in the social work field and national scope, as well as their representation of current trends in a broad array of social work practice arenas (Van Voorhis & Wagner, 2001; 2002).

There has been significant growth in the number of accredited BSW, MSW, and PhD programs in the field of social work since the time frame reflected in the original analyses of journal articles in the first Van Voorhis and Wagner publication, which spanned 1988–1997. Concomitantly, more social work faculty are publishing as a part of their professional responsibilities and there are more venues within which to publish. As a result of these trends in the social work academy, the authors justified the need for an expanded content analysis to more accurately reflect publication trends in the profession. With this in mind, the authors expanded the original content analysis to

include the following journals because they met the same criteria set forth for the original journals: *Children and Youth Services Review* and the *Journal of Baccalaureate Social Work*.

In both of the original Van Voorhis and Wagner analyses, the authors chose to evaluate articles from 1988 through 1997. For this replication of the original analyses, the present study authors analyzed articles published from 1998 through 2012. Although the length of the time frames is different, the authors of the current study thought this difference was justified so as to ensure inclusion of all relevant content from the time of the original analyses to the time of this publication. As with the original analyses, articles were selected if they addressed the subjects of sexual orientation, homosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexuality, coming out, HIV/AIDS and homosexuality, or homosexual people with AIDS (PWAs). Only full-length articles focusing principally on the identified communities were included, not editorials or other brief materials that journals occasionally published (Van Voorhis & Wagner, 2001; 2002). For the current study, the selected articles were reviewed by the two principal authors to determine inclusion/exclusion and what subject categories were addressed by included articles. The independent coding conducted by the two principal investigators matched 83.3% of the time. In the event of an initial disagreement about inclusion/exclusion or how to categorize a particular article, discussion and negotiation occurred until consensus was reached.

Again, following procedures outlined in the original analyses (Van Voorhis & Wagner, 2001; 2002), the authors first coded each article as (a) addressing HIV/AIDS among the homosexual population, or (b) other issues pertaining to LGB content. Articles about other groups affected by HIV/AIDS, such as pediatric HIV/AIDS and PWAs who were intravenous drug users, were excluded from the original and current analyses. Articles were then coded according to their primary content: (a) client-focused, (b) worker-focused, or

(c) macro-focused. Articles were coded as client-focused if they recommended interventions, such as ways to aid the client to “come out,” cope with HIV/AIDS, develop a positive LGB identity, resolve couple conflict, provide care to a PWA, form an LGB family, and so forth. Articles were coded as practitioner-focused if they addressed areas such as knowledge needed by workers about homosexuality, changes in practitioner attitudes toward gay men, lesbians or bisexuals, or if the content was centered on homosexual clients with HIV/AIDS. Articles were coded as macro-focused if they addressed such matters as health insurance, health care policy, curriculum content on HIV/AIDS in social work programs, or the need for health care facilities for PWAs with dementia. These articles typically proposed interventions that focused on the environment and addressed bias, stereotypes, or inequity. Following the lead of Van Voorhis and Wagner (2001; 2002), articles were also coded as related to adoption, foster care, youth, stepfamilies, gerontological, persons of color, same-sex marriage, bisexuality, coming out, ethical issues, education/curriculum, policy, partners/families, and parenting—not adoption or foster care.

The third question of this research project was to assess the current status of scholarship addressing content relating to the transgender community who is often linked with the LGB community. This analysis followed the same procedures and coding schemes mentioned previously and also included coding to distinguish articles as Undifferentiated, Differentiated, and Exclusive. Undifferentiated articles included the term “transgender” in the title, abstract, and/or various other places within the article but did not provide differential definitions for the transgender community or explain the differences in social context relevant to the transgender community. Differentiated articles provided differential definitions for the transgender community, compared and contrasted data as it related to individual groups within the LGBT community, and/or included discussion specific to

the transgender community and the relevant social context. The Exclusive category included only articles focused solely on the transgender community.

4. Results

Table 1 represents findings from the current analysis and presents the total number of articles published followed by the number of LGBT articles published by journal and year of publication. The table displays the results for 12 of the 14 journals included in the study. The two journals not included in the table, *Administration in Social Work* and *Journal of Technology in Human Services* did not publish any articles on LGBT topics. Considering all the journals over this 15-year time frame, a total of 7,309 articles were published. Of this total, 105 articles were dedicated to LGBT issues (1.44%). The journals that published relatively more LGBT focused articles were *Families in Society* (21), *Child Welfare* (20), *Journal of Social Work Education* (15), *Affilia* (11), and *Journal of Baccalaureate Social Work* (11). There were interesting fluctuations in annual LGBT publication rates reflecting somewhat of a skewed bell curve. In other words, a visual review of the annual totals indicates higher LGBT publication rates during the middle years of the designated time frame. However, when the time frame is split into two nearly equal time periods of eight years and seven years, respectively (1998–2005 and 2006–2012), notably more LGBT-focused articles were published in the more recent and shorter time period (58, or 55.2%). It is noteworthy that peak LGBT publication years were influenced by the publication of special issues dedicated to LGBT content. For example, *Child Welfare* published a special issue related to LGBT content in 2006, which is largely responsible for the 19 total articles published that year. Two journals (*Children and Youth Services Review* and the *Journal of Baccalaureate Social Work*) were added to the more recent analysis. Combined, they contributed 19 LGBT content articles out of the total of 105 (18.1 %).

Table 1: Total Publications (Tn) and Publications by LGB Content (LGBn) by Journal and Year (1998-2012)

Journal: JSW	FS	JSSR	JSWE	CYSR	SSR	JBSW	CW	AFF	HSW	RSWP	SWR	Total	
(Tn/LGBn)													
1998	--/0	56/2	20/0	24/0	30/0	23/0	--/0	41/0	24/0	32/0	45/0	20/0	315/2
1999	--/0	66/4	16/0	26/1	42/0	22/0	--/1	41/0	22/0	31/1	47/0	16/0	329/7
2000	--/0	56/3	16/0	30/1	39/0	21/0	--/0	35/0	24/0	28/0	41/0	16/0	306/4
2001	19/0	58/1	14/1	28/2	49/0	23/0	--/1	41/0	24/0	33/0	41/0	14/1	344/5
2002	14/0	60/0	15/1	28/1	43/0	24/0	10/2	40/2	29/0	37/0	44/0	15/1	359/6
2003	19/0	61/2	16/0	27/0	43/0	24/0	19/0	34/1	32/0	32/0	41/0	16/0	364/3
2004	18/0	61/4	18/0	28/2	66/0	24/0	18/0	35/0	35/1	33/0	41/0	18/0	395/7
2005	17/1	60/2	14/0	33/1	69/1	23/0	23/0	46/0	36/0	38/2	47/0	14/0	420/7
2006	17/0	63/2	13/0	38/0	81/0	23/0	17/1	50/16	42/0	35/0	56/1	13/0	448/19
2007	17/1	67/0	16/0	27/2	89/0	22/0	17/3	35/1	36/0	37/1	64/0	16/0	443/8
2008	20/1	63/1	27/0	28/1	114/2	22/0	9/2	57/0	40/0	32/0	56/0	27/0	495/7
2009	22/0	57/0	18/0	29/2	163/1	21/0	16/1	46/0	39/2	33/1	69/0	18/0	531/6
2010	20/0	57/0	18/0	28/1	221/1	22/1	13/0	61/0	38/6	32/1	64/0	18/1	592/10
2011	24/0	59/0	17/0	35/1	305/2	21/0	12/0	59/0	39/0	32/1	60/0	17/0	680/4
2012	32/0	36/0	22/1	48/0	301/1	22/0	19/0	29/0	36/2	20/0	61/0	22/1	648/4
Total	239/3	880/21	260/3	457/15	1655/8	337/1	173/11	650/20	496/11	485/7	777/1	260/4	6669/105

JSW (Journal of Social Work), FS (Families in Society), JSSR (Journal of Social Service Research), JSWE (Journal of Social Work Education), CYSR (Children & Youth Services Review), SSR (Social Services Review), JBSW (Journal of Baccalaureate Social Work), CW (Child Welfare), AFF (Affilia), HSW (Health and Social Work), RSWP (Research on Social Work Practice), ASW (Administration in Social Work), JTHS (Journal of Technology in human Services). SWR (Social Work Research) ASW and JTHS were not included in table since they did not publish any articles with LGB content.

Table 2 is a comparison of the results of the Van Voorhis and Wagner (2001) study with the current data and also displays distinct transgender content. The current study included two additional journals, a longer time frame, more total publications, as well as articles focused on transgender content, so it might reasonably be expected that there would be more total LGBT-focused articles. However, this was not the case. Numerically, there were more lesbian- and gay-focused articles in the original study (121) than in the current study (105), which also included articles focused on the transgender community. The difference in the percentage of LGB articles published compared to total articles is even more notable: original study—3.2% and current study—1.44% (transgender inclusive). When comparing the publication

rates of the 12 journals included in both studies, it is notable that only three journals published a higher percentage of LGB (T) articles during the most recent time period: *Child Welfare*, *Journal of Social Work Education*, and *Social Work Research*. When combining the total number of LGB (T) articles from both time periods, the results indicate that *Families in Society* (55), *Social Work* (38), *Health and Social Work* (30), *Child Welfare* (24), and *Journal of Social Work Education* (24) accounted for 171 of 226 (75.7 %) total LGB (T) articles.

Van Voorhis and Wagner did not consider transgender content. However, keyword searches using the term “transgender” on several databases and the journal websites for the original time period (1988–1997) yielded only

one transgender-focused article from the studied journals. During the most recent time period, 26 articles were published that included transgender content, or 24.8% of the total number of LGBT publications. *Child Welfare* accounted for 12 (46.2

%) of that total. The majority of those articles were published in a special issue that included the transgender community. *The Journal of Social Work Education* published the second highest number of articles (4, or 15.4%).

Table 2: Comparison of Articles on Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual (Transgender) Subject Matter over two Time Periods with Separate Analysis of Transgender content

Journal	1988-1997			1998-2012			1998-2012	
	Total n	LGB n	%	Total n	LGBT n	%	Transgender (only) n %	
Administration in Social Work	232	1	0.4	287	0	0.00	0	0.00
Affilia	222	8	3.6	496	11	2.22	2	0.40
Child Welfare	462	4	0.9	650	20	3.08	12	1.69
Children and Youth Services Review	260	-----		1655	8	.48	1	0.06
Journal of Tech. Human Services	219	0	0.0	236	0	0.00	0	0.00
Families in Society	608	34	5.6	880	21	2.39	2	0.23
Health and Social Work	272	23	8.5	485	7	1.44	1	0.21
Journal of Baccalaureate Social Work	-----	-----		173	11	6.36	2	1.16
Journal of Social Service Research	179	1	0.6	377	3	0.80	0	0.00
Journal of Social Work Education	310	9	2.9	457	15	3.28	4	0.88
Research on Social Work Practice	208	3	1.4	777	1	0.13	0	0.00
Social Service Review	293	3	1.0	337	1	0.30	1	0.30
Social Work	603	35	5.8	239	3	1.26	0	0.00
Social Work Research	179	0	0.0	260	4	1.54	1	0.38
Total	3,787	121	3.2	7,309	105	1.44	26	0.34

1988-97 data reported previously by Van Voorhis & Wagner (2001). Prior to 1990, Families in Society was published as Social Casework. Research on Social Work Practice began publication in 1991. Prior to 1994, Social Work Research was published as Social Work Research and Abstracts. Prior to 1991, The Journal of Technology in Human Services was published as Computers in Human Services.

Further analyses were conducted to determine whether the differences between key results of each study were statistically significant. Chi-square analyses were used for these analyses. (See Table 3.) Notably, the current analyses, which also included articles involving transgender topics, resulted in significantly fewer articles dedicated to the LGBT community than the original analysis ($M= 38.66, p<.01$). The original study reported a large majority of articles

focused on HIV/AIDS issues, while the current analysis found only a small number of articles focused on HIV/AIDS. The difference was significant ($M= 90.18, p<.01$). The current analysis included significantly more articles that were youth-focused ($M= 11.79, p<.01$). There were significantly more articles that had a macro focus in the current analysis ($M= 38.32, p<.01$) as well as significantly more articles that were focused on curriculum-related issues ($M= 6.17, p<.05$).

Table 3: Chi Square Analysis between Analysis Time periods and Specific Variables

Analysis/Variable	Yes/No	Chi Square
1st Analysis-LG focused	121/3666	
2nd Analysis-LGBT focused	105/7204	38.66**
1st Analysis-HIV/AIDs focused	80/41	
2nd Analysis-HIV/AIDs focused	5/100	90.18**
1 st Analysis-Macro focused	4/73	
2 nd Analysis-Macro focused	50/55	38.32**
1st Analysis-Youth focused	9/112	
2nd Analysis-Youth focused	25/80	11.79**
1st Analysis-Curriculum focused	12/109	
2nd Analysis-Curriculum focused	23/82	6.17*

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Several other comparisons were investigated that did not yield significant findings or were not appropriate for chi-square analysis. The original study found that none of the LG articles examined adoption or foster care. The current analysis resulted in 15 LGBT articles that addressed these topics. Both analyses found minimal attention given to persons of color (4 and 5, respectively). Policy issues were underrepresented in these two analyses (4 and 5, respectively). Gerontological topics received scant attention in both analyses (2 and 1, respectively). The number of articles in each analysis that specifically focused on ethical issues was small as well (4 and 5, respectively). Topic areas specific to the current analysis that also received minimal attention included issues related to the coming out process (1), stepfamilies (2), and same-sex marriage (1).

Recall that Van Voorhis and Wagner (2001; 2002) did not include the transgender

community in their analyses and that only one article related to transgender content from the 12 journals in the original time frame was found. The investigators of the present study sought to remedy this and created three additional subcategories specifically related to the transgender-focused articles: Undifferentiated, Differentiated, and Exclusive. The results of this analysis (Table 4) were as follows: Undifferentiated articles—10 (38.5%), Differentiated articles—11 (42.3%), and Exclusive articles—5 (19.3%). Of the other key subcategories related to the transgender community that were examined, it is noteworthy to mention that 12 of 26 articles were related to macro practice issues; 5 of 26 had a curricular focus, and 13 of 26 were focused on transgender youth. Other categories identified in Table 4 received scant attention in the related literature during this time period.

Table 4: Transgender articles by specific category (n=26)

Category (not mutually exclusive)	n	%
Undifferentiated articles (LGBT)	10	38.5
Differentiated articles (LGBT)	11	42.3
Exclusive articles (T only)	5	19.3
Macro	12	46.2
Policy	1	3.9
Curriculum	5	19.2
HIV/AIDs	1	3.9
Youth	13	50.0
Adoption	0	0.0
Foster Care	1	3.9
Parenting (not adoption/foster care)	1	3.9
Couple/family	1	3.9
Person of Color	2	7.7
<u>Gerontological</u>	0	0.0

5. Discussion/Implications

It is rare to find a comparative content analysis of this type in the social work literature. Yet, an analysis of this type allows for an examination of the profession's values and relative heterosexism, cisgenderism, and homo/transphobic attitudes by means of an analysis of social work faculty's publication patterns over two distinct periods of time. A systems/ecological perspective (Rogers, 2013) provide an explanatory framework reflecting the intersystem exchanges that have resulted in the gradual positive value changes in society and the social work profession in terms of their treatment of the LGBT communities as well as our cultural resistance to change. These changes can also be understood through the empowerment perspective (Gutierrez, DeLois, & GlenMaye, 1995), which emphasizes change through personal, interpersonal, and political arenas. For instance,

the challenging intrapersonal and interpersonal dialogues as well as the political strife and negotiation that occurred prior to changes in CSWE and NASW policy related to greater subsequent inclusion of the LGBT community. This would no doubt affect social work faculty and their decisions to publish in these areas. Two of the three research questions were answered affirmatively, yet all warrant further investigation given the evolving climate of the social work value base. First, there was not an expected proliferation of LGB-focused articles in the 12 journals studied over two time periods. Second, there was a greater variety of LGB issues studied among the published articles. Lastly, there is evidence of beginning levels of awareness and understanding of the transgender community. Van Voorhis and Wagner (2001) noted that in 1992, CSWE added a requirement to its Curriculum Policy Statement that programs

include curricular content on sexual orientation. Given this mandate occurred more than 20 years ago, the overall frequency of articles published in the current analysis appears discouraging.

However, caution is suggested, given the growth of more recently established mainstream social work journals with a history of publishing LGBT content, including for the sake of example, the *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, *Child and Adolescent Social Work*, the *Journal of Social Work Values and Ethics*, and the *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*. In addition, there has been a proliferation of LGBT-focused journals in recent years, including but not limited to the *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services*, *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, *Journal of Bisexuality*, *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Issues in Education*, and the *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*. While it may be argued that the social work journals examined in this study have not progressed related to the frequency of the LGBT-related content, the emergence of more recently established publishing venues provide additional quality outlets that together provide more opportunities to disseminate information throughout the profession.

The types of articles published have changed dramatically. A vast majority of the lesbian- and gay-focused articles published during the first time period addressed HIV/AIDS issues, while very few articles during the time period of the current study addressed concerns related to this global pandemic. These data provide evidence that during the late '80s and '90s, the profession was concerned about the biopsychosocial consequences of the spread of HIV/AIDS. However, this narrow focus limited social workers' ability to fully understand, appreciate, and support LGB communities in terms of their humanity, experience of oppression, and strengths. An encouraging finding among the articles published in the recent time frame is that a larger and notable portion of those in the current analysis were focused on macro issues, curricular issues, and youth and adoption/foster care issues that were not addressed or minimally so during the first analysis. These findings suggest

a more holistic, sophisticated, and strengths-based appreciation of the LGB communities and their institutional oppression.

The transgender community is often coupled with the lesbian, gay, and bisexual community despite their unique identities and social context. It is evident that there is notably less understanding and acceptance of the transgender community (Erich et al., 2007), and often researchers fail to make distinctions between the LGB and T communities as well as the various groups that compose the transgender community in terms of their identity and the oppressive nature of their social contexts. The virtual absence of publications focusing on the transgender community during the first time period supports this thinking. The findings from the present study suggest emerging understanding and a shift in values within the profession based on the frequency of publications as well as the diverse foci with notable emphasis on macro, curricular, and youth issues. However, nearly 40% of the articles that included the transgender community failed to provide differential definitions for the transgender community or explain the differences in social contexts relevant to the transgender community. Moreover, less than 20% of the articles focused exclusively on the transgender community, indicating more work needs to be done.

Van Voorhis and Wagner (2001) suggested several reasons for low LG[BT] publication rates subsequent to their initial analysis: LG[BT] scholarship is not valued; LGB (T) authors may fear further marginalization; lack of interest by non-gay authors; fear of being labeled gay; and belief by journal editors that LG[BT] articles should be published in specialized journals. All of the aforementioned reasons represent artifacts of a value base that marginalizes the LGBT community. Perhaps all of these reasons and fears are still relevant, particularly in a social context where the rise of powerful conservative evangelical political groups have a significant presence in the media. Certainly, the participation of these groups in the recent attacks on higher education (Schrecker, 2010) could also help to explain hesitation to publish in this area. As is suggested in the theoretical frameworks

of a systems/ecological and empowerment perspective, it is impossible to separate the political and social contexts of the United States from the values and ethics of the social work profession and individual social work faculty research efforts.

In terms of future research, it is incumbent upon academic leaders in the social work field to support and encourage all faculty, including pre-tenured faculty, LGBT faculty, and doctoral students who are interested in publishing in this area. There needs to be a concerted effort to advocate for the LGBT communities through publications in all mainstream social work journals—not simply in specialized content-area publications—on a variety of topics to ensure comprehensive dissemination of information to social work practitioners and other key stakeholders as a way to assist in the ownership and capacity to work within the values and ethics of the profession. Because the findings from the present study reveal potentially encouraging patterns, consideration should be given to examining mainstream social work textbooks, book reviews, and academic journals dedicated specifically to the LGBT community in a similar manner to further explore these issues.

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