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Sign Here: Best Practices for Protecting LGBTQIA Youth Research Participants

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Project Title: Sign here: Best practices for protecting LGBTQIA youth research participants

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Proposal Identifier: RCEU20-SOC-JPS-01

Project Description

Research with mixed-race people has traditionally utilized almost exclusively cis-gender heterosexual samples, meaning that current theories, for example about mixed-race identity development, potentially may not apply to mixed-race people who are LGBTQIA. In addition to creating a gap in the academic literature, lack of information on LGBTQIA mixed-race people means that parents, school counselors, social workers, doctors, and others who work with and care for this population are operating without evidence-based information. Dr. Sims' larger research project "Decentering Heteronormativity in Critical Mixed Race Studies" focuses exclusively on LGBTQIA mixed-race people in order to begin to address these gaps. Thus far, 19 older adolescents and adults have been interviewed for the study.

Older adolescents who volunteer for the project are allowed to consent to participate on their own; that is, no parental permission is required despite them being under 19 years old. This allowance is a departure from most research which sees obtaining parental permission as the gold standard for protecting youth research participants. Nevertheless, previous research suggests that waivers of parental consent may actually better protect LGBTQIA youth research participants due to the potential harms of requiring permission from parents who may not be aware or accepting of their child's gender identity and/or sexual orientation. Dr. Sims' study asked interviewees their opinion on this issue. The present project, "Sign here: Best practices for protecting LGBTQIA youth research participants," will analyze that subset of data in order to help researchers gain insight into ways to protect LGBTQIA youth who want to participate in research studies.

Student Duties, Contributions, and Outcomes

The student-researcher's duties will include data analysis and reading previous studies on LGBTQIA youth research participation. The student-researcher will learn to use *NVivo*, a qualitative data analysis software package, while working with Dr. Sims to analyze interviewees' responses regarding their opinions of the best ways to protect LGBTQIA mixed-race youth research participants. The student-researcher will gain practice with inductive and deductive qualitative analysis. These skills will be useful in future research courses, graduate school, and/or employment positions that involve organization and analysis of textual data.

Secondly, over the course of the first eight weeks, the student-researcher will find and read about 15 peer-reviewed research articles (i.e., about two per week) on LGBTQIA youth in

research. During the final two weeks, they will make an annotated bibliography that they and/or the faculty member can later use to write a literature review for an academic journal article reporting the findings. From searching for and finding relevant literature and completing the annotated bibliography, the student-researcher will gain specific knowledge about best practices for research with LGBTQIA youth as well as learn or refine how to find, read, and identify key findings from scholarly work. This will help prepare them for social service work with LGBTQIA youth and to write their own literature reviews in upper level courses and/or graduate school.

Student Selection Criteria

The student-researcher must have an interest in supporting LGBTQIA youth and studying race/ethnicity. They must also have at least junior standing by summer 2020, and have passed the following college level courses (or have the transfer equivalent): both EH101: College Writing I and EH102: College Writing II; either SOC100: Introduction to Sociology or PY101: General Psychology I; and any research methods course (e.g., SOC300: Research Methods, PSY302: Experimental Psychology, ED315: Education Evaluation and Measurement). Completion of college courses that focused on Qualitative Research Methods, Race/Ethnicity or Multiculturalism, or Gender or Sexuality is preferred.

Faculty Mentorship

Dr. Sims will provide the skills training and mentorship. Meeting two times a week in the Sociology Department Office, one meeting will be devoted to data analysis and the other to literature review. During data analysis meetings, Dr. Sims will first teach, then supervise, and finally simply hear reports on the student-researcher using *NVivo* to analyze the textual data. During literature review meetings, the student-researcher and Dr. Sims will discuss the most recently read articles. Dr. Sims will ensure that the student-researcher is finding appropriate academic literature and that they are learning how to identify and synthesize key information from the studies by listening to the student-researcher's summary of the articles as well as reviewing drafts of the annotated bibliography.

The student-researcher will have access to the computers, printing, and desk space in the Sociology Department Office to work on campus during non-meeting days if so desired.