Sharing the vision: Collective communication within LGBT leadership

by

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Abstract

Leadership is a phenomenon studied in all cultures (Murdock, 1967), yet representation in the diversity of influential leaders is often limited (Moon, 1996). In order to understand the full breadth of leadership scholarship, it is essential that research focuses on how leadership is both enacted and communicated in underrepresented groups. A group that is currently facing marginalization from dominant culture is the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community. With no national anti-discrimination law in place to protect the individuals belonging to this community (American Civil Liberties Union, 2016) it is vital to understand how leaders within this marginalized group are motivating others to fight to enact change. While influential organizations like The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) are fighting for social justice on a national level, it is important to understand how local organizations are engaging in communicative leadership to motivate others to enact change in their own community.

This study seeks to understand how leadership is communicated within a local LGBT rights organization (given the pseudonym the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Campaign, or LGBTC) and to identify the ways LGBT leaders motivate others to enact social change. Using ethnographic methodology, the researcher observed four monthly board meetings held by this group (lasting approximately an hour and a half each) and conducted a focus-group interview where the participants confirmed observations and answered follow-up questions from the ethnographic observations. A qualitative thematic analysis revealed two common themes: the first theme, *cohesive communication*, was exemplified through organizational procedures that allowed for collective discussion and expression of individuality by emphasizing and depending on group members' personal expertise. The second theme, *proactive communication*, emerged

through group members' communication to evoke tenacious defense strategies to counter the opposition and engage in outreach with external organizations.

These leadership communication behaviors resulted in two critical implications on the theoretical and practical levels. In regards to the theoretical implications, LGBT leaders, who have been typically characterized as predominantly transformational, were found to enact leadership outside of that typology, actually engaging in relational styles through shared leadership, communicating in a way that relies on interaction and emotional expression.

On a practical level, other marginalized groups could benefit from inclusivity, or the mode of collective leadership this particular LGBT Rights Group engaged in. By including multiple voices and having a variety of minority representation, the LGBTC was able to successfully motivate community change. Other marginalized groups experiencing social injustice may be able to motivate others to enact change by adopting this mode of collective communication through shared leadership.

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Acknowledgements

Putting my life on hold and leaving a big city that was home to all my family and friends to pursue an academic feat like Graduate School was one of the most difficult processes I have faced in my entire life. This thesis was a close second. There is no way I could have gotten through this process without the help, support, and patience of a number of people.

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Dedication

This paper is dedicated to the LGBT community.

As a nation, the United States has come a long way in just the past decade in regards to LGBT equality, but there is still work to be done. I remember lying awake at night, for years, afraid to admit whom I was. I didn't want to say it out loud because I was afraid. I was afraid how the world would see me. I was afraid at what the government would do to me. I was terrified that my entire life would change and all the opportunities I had available to me would be taken away. It was the encouragement of close friends, "It Gets Better" YouTube videos, and influential research like this that helped me through my coming out process. For any LGBT rights group that is fighting against a current on either the political or social level, thank you for all the work that you have done, that you will continue to do, and for all the lives you are impacting on a daily basis. LGBT rights groups like the one observed in this study will help America achieve sexual equality and bring us one step closer to equality for all.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Leadership is a universal phenomenon (Bass, 1993) and exists within every culture and society (Murdock, 1967). Leadership is so salient in society that whenever groups of people come together for any number of reasons, a leader will usually emerge (Schwarzkoff, 1994). Since society is continuously changing, the call for leadership is always pertinent. Leadership takes many forms, and can be enacted in multiple ways. To understand the scope of "leadership" as a focal topic, a search on Amazon.com, one of the largest online book vendors in the United States, listed 173,225 books on leadership, which ranged from different strategies, motivational styles, and inspirational "How Tos."

However, of the 173,225 books, only 2,965 titles (2%) pertained to minorities and other diverse groups. Narrowing the search even further, only 143 titles (0.0008%) specified Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) leadership. This is problematic because, with the amount of issues currently surrounding the LGBT community, understanding leadership within this community is vital in order for members to achieve not only political rights, but basic human rights as well.

Though marriage equality was issued in early 2015, allowing same-sex couples to legally marry in the United States, many other issues surrounding the LGBT community continue to perpetuate violence and discrimination amongst those with differing sexual orientations. As of 2015, 20 states (six additional states pending) have successfully passed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which protects and upholds the religious beliefs of community workers and business owners, giving them the right to deny service towards anyone who, in their eyes, jeopardizes their faith (Steinmetz, 2015). This is an important issue for the LGBT community because, in line with this Act, rental agencies can deny housing, business owners can deny

service, and community workers can deny licenses or certifications based on an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity (McClam, 2015). Additionally, no nation-wide anti-discrimination employment law/policy is in place. In 28 of the 50 states, business owners can fire individuals who are suspected or confirmed to be gay (American Civil Liberties Union, 2016). Further, AIDS is still considered a *gay* issue, rather than an *everyone* issue, and hate crimes being committed against LGBT individuals across the nation are not declining (Human Rights Campaign, 2015; LGBTQ Nation, 2015).

These ongoing concerns invite a call for leadership. Considering the social and political injustice surrounding this marginalized community, it is important to understand the ways marginalized groups and organizations are fighting for this change. Specifically, it is necessary to better understand how, through their communication, LGBT individuals motivate others to enact leadership. Coon (2001) argues that additional scholarship surrounding the LGBT community is needed; specifically, research should consider how sexual orientation and other characteristics have allowed LGBT individuals to, "successfully navigate through societal prejudices and oppression, [which] may provide the insight necessary for the [LGBT] community to further its agenda" (p. 5).

The definition of leadership differs depending on the scholarly perspective. With many different interpretations of leadership, it is difficult to narrow leadership to just one definition (Bolden, 2004). The purpose of leadership is to get other people to achieve a desired goal (Gardner, 1990). Leadership is also defined as a skill, where certain individuals possess a unique ability to inspire others (Posner & Kouzes, 1997). Since communication is a central factor in leadership (Frese et al., 2003; Riggio et al., 2003; Towler, 2003), and communication and decision-making strategies differ within diverse groups (Foss & Ray, 1996; Orbe, 1997; Swann,

Polzer, Seyle, & Ko, 2004), this research study examines how LGBT individuals use communication and leadership to attain community specific goals. Further, by examining non-dominant leaders, the study addresses how LGBT leaders, as a minority group, contribute to and extend understanding of existing leadership scholarship.

LGBT individuals in leadership roles experience more personal growth than the average, socially accepted leader, which allows them to experience a "higher standard" of leadership compared to their counterparts in dominant groups (Eagly & Chin, 2010). This higher standard comes from a constant need to legitimize their own leadership roles, after facing continuous discrimination from experiences of marginalization (Fassinger et al., 2010). This "higher standard" is articulated in a number of ways. First, when individuals "come out," disclosing their sexual orientation or gender identity publically, they are often viewed differently, impacting how they are perceived and legitimized, not only as a human, but also as a leader (Baker & Green, 2007). Second, LGBT individuals constantly face and fight discrimination, building their ability to continuously rise above and strengthen their moral beliefs and values (Cyton-Hysom, 1999).

Thirdly, due to discriminatory/stereotypical accusations by dominant groups, many LGBT individuals face issues that are specific to their community (like HIV and AIDS, gender identity and confusion, violence and other hate crimes, etc.) and band together to fight for causes (Shilts, 1987). Finally, minority group members (like those belonging in the LGBT community) bring about a unique and different way of thinking that attracts individuals from other minority groups, seeking out new ways of representation and problem solving encouraged by the differences in culture, identity, and expertise (Baron, 2005; Hong & Page, 2004; Page, 2007). It is through localized groups and organizations that the fight for LGBT equality is most politically

salient. The individuals acting as leaders within these groups motivate the ambition for social change within groups who are marginalized due to their sexual orientation (Coon, 2001).

Scholarship surrounding leadership often promotes leadership as hierarchal and typically casts leaders as heterosexual males (Chin & Sanchez-Hucles, 2007). Although this characterization may be common, studying marginalized groups of people is important in order to better understand leadership from the perspective of underrepresented groups to enhance understanding of leadership communication processes (Moon, 1996). Marginalized leaders have a unique opportunity to enact change because the oppression they face allows them to see their own positions surrounding a social or political injustice as well as the position of the entire system as a whole (Frankenberg, 1993). Through communication and considering the vantage points of minority and majority groups, LGBT leaders can enact leadership in a way that differs from the dominant leadership styles that are often studied.

The primary purpose of this research study is to identify the leadership characteristics, strategies, and styles of LGBT leaders by analyzing the ways they communicate ideas of political activism and social change within a group setting. Through ethnographic observations and a focus group interview, this study explores the influences sexual orientation has in regards to leadership and how LGBT leadership is communicated, perceived, and accredited. Further, this study provides insight into the obstacles LGBT leaders face. As a nation, we still have a long way to go in regards to securing equal rights for LGBT individuals. The LGBT leaders reported in this study were selected from an organization that is currently fighting to correct inequalities. Study findings contribute to the scholarship of marginalized leadership, specifically linking ways in which LGBT leaders communicate and enact leadership in unique and beneficial ways by

focusing on the research question: *How do LGBT leaders communicate their leadership in ways that motivate others to enact social change?*

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

Leadership is a universal phenomenon, occurring naturally despite vast differences in culture and race (Murdock, 1967). Yet, as Burns (1978) points out, leadership is one of the most recognized and studied types of phenomenon in human history while simultaneously being one of the most misunderstood. After examining themes throughout leadership scholarship, currently leadership is commonly defined as, "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (Northouse, 2004, p. 3).

Leadership wasn't always thought of as a process, in fact, leadership was originally studied as an individual phenomenon, where a person was born with certain characteristics and traits that destined them for leadership over others (Bass, 1981). These theories surrounding how leadership is enacted exists in four common themes: (1) Individualistic leadership, (2) Contextual leadership (3) Emotional leadership, and (4) Developmental leadership. This chapter reviews these four common themes prominent in leadership research and then discusses leadership communication research focusing on LGBT leadership specifically. Importantly, responding to calls to examine LGBT leaders as potentially different from leaders from dominant groups (Coon, 2001) and to extend understanding of how LGBT leadership pertains to social change, this literature review of the four common themes is used to inform the coding process and study findings.

Leadership Theory

Individualistic Leadership

Individualistic leadership theories focus on the leader as an individual and the unique characteristics he/she possess in order to enhance their leadership status. The "great man"

perspective is prominent in early leadership theory development (Bass, 1981). This theory

articulates that people are natural born leaders and already possess the ability to lead a group of

people based on biological characteristics, one of which is being a male (Mostovicz, Kakabadse,

& Kakabadse, 2009). The "great man" theory has since been debunked by current scholars

(Bennis, 2007; Lieberson & O'Connor, 1972), but is still what many researchers report when

promoting what an effective leader looks like (Chin & Sanchez-Hucles, 2007). Individualistic

leadership is typically governed by two types of theories: (1) the trait theory of leadership and (2)

charismatic theory of leadership.

Though debunked, the "great-man" theory of leadership informed researchers that people

do possess certain personality traits that influence their ability to lead over others (Colbert,

Judge, Choi, & Wang, 2012). Trait theory focuses on individuals' personality traits and

characteristics which enhance their ability to engage in leadership roles or positions (Zaccaro,

2007). These traits rooted within the individual, like being extroverted, disciplined, and sociable,

enhance their effectiveness as a leader (Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002; Mumford, Campion, &

Morgeson, 2007).

Charisma is also seen as a personality trait and leaders that possess a charismatic pull

tend to maintain an influence over their followers (House & Howell, 1992). This pull incites

followers to associate their ideals with their leaders' (Bryman, 1992). Like trait based theories of

leadership, charismatic leadership is often viewed as an effective leadership style (Shamir,

Arthur, & House, 1994). Charismatic leaders seep confidence and dominance, set clear goals,

and uphold a sense of purpose for their followers (House & Howell). These leaders have an

exceptional hold over their followers (Burns, 1978), and are often seen as highly effective and

mystical (Bryman). Charismatic leaders enact a specific strategy of leadership to motivate their

followers. According to Shamir et al., charismatic leaders increase intrinsic motivation within their followers, enhance their follower's notions of self-esteem and self-worth, emphasize a bigger, better world, and continuously encourage personal commitment and determination from their followers.

Charismatic leaders tend to rise in times of trouble or crisis, as people turn to them for guidance and they often have the ability to completely transform society and the world in which we live in (Bass, 1981). It is this notion that gave rise to situational leadership, or leadership governed by the context of a situation (Graeff, 1983). In this second theme of leadership theory, the context of situation births the enactment of leadership (Osborn, Hunt, & Jauch, 2002).

Contextual Leadership

Context theories pertaining to leadership consider the times, contexts, and circumstances requiring leadership (Bass, 1981). Osborn et al. (2002) argue that leader effectiveness is reliant upon the context in which leadership is created, explaining, "change the context and the leadership changes as does what is sought and whether specific leadership patterns are considered effective" (p. 797). The need for leadership is decided by outside factors, such as the ability for a group to come together and achieve a common goal, complete a specific task or series of tasks, and identifying stronger members, more suited for leadership roles, from weaker members (Dienesch, & Liden, 1986; Graeff, 1997; House, 1996).

During the development of contextual leadership theories, researchers began looking at the whole group, rather than one person specifically, and how the environment or situation influences the group in developing a leader or solving a problem together as one (Bogardus, 1918; Hocking, 1924). Contextual leadership is not rooted in one, specific individual, but rather a product of the occasion (Murphy, 1941).

Contextual leadership is not the same as situational leadership, however. While contextual leadership arises out of the need for a leader at a specific time and place, situational leadership takes place when an already determined leader evaluates the factors governing a situation and adopts the best type of leadership strategy to develop their followers into potential leaders and maximize the current outcome (Lynch, 2015). Situational leadership is unique because it works as an identification process where leaders can be matched to positions or they can be trained to either change the situation to better fit their leadership style or adapt their leadership style to the situation (Fiedler, Chemers, & Mahar, 1976).

Randolph & Blackburn (1989) noted that leaders engaging in situational leadership typically develop either a directive style of leadership or a supportive style. These styles exist within four strategies depending on the context of the situation. They continue to iterate that leaders either will direct, coach, support, or delegate work among followers depending on the situation. The context elicits a need for action, therefore leaders who demonstrate situational leadership evaluate this need to consciously decide and engage in the leadership strategy that best suits their followers.

Relational Leadership

Another tradition of leadership theories focuses on how leaders express emotion as a way to connect and relate with their followers (Boland & Tenkasi, 1995; Fiedler et al., 1977; Humphrey, 2002; Mayer & Salovey, 1994). In these relational theories, leaders not only expressed their own emotions, but often encouraged the expression of emotions in their followers (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Tichy & Devanna, 1986, Yammamiro, Spangler, & Bass, 1993). The theories surrounding this relationship-based type of leadership tend to break away from the

notions of the previously mentioned task-oriented leadership and shift toward relational-oriented leadership practices (Kellet, Humphrey, & Sleeth, 2002).

Leaders engaging in relational styles motivate their followers by relying on emotional expression in four ways: (1) they understand their own emotions, (2) they're able to recognize emotional states in their followers, (3) they're skilled in managing their own emotions, and (4) they can reframe and direct the emotions experienced by their followers (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The focus on leadership is rooted in the interactions the leader has with his/her followers and the expectations that are set between leader and follower as a result of these interactions. Relational theories highlight the importance of roles, change, goals, and contingency (Bass, 1981). This notion of establishing roles, changing relationships to motivate others, and identifying followers who best perform those roles aids the relation-building process (Bass, 1960; Homans, 1950; Stodgill, 1959). Individuals engaging in relational leadership rely on the interaction with their followers to evaluate the best way to achieve goals and create cohesion amongst everyone in the group (Argyris, 1962; Graen, 1976; House, 1971; McGregor, 1966).

Developmental Leadership

Burns (1978) developed transformational leadership as a contrast theory to transactional leadership. Transactional leadership is characterized as a purposeful exchange of power, where the leader is in charge and directs/delegates their followers to accomplish certain tasks (Bass, 1990). Transactional leadership is motivated by reward and punishment. In contrast, transformational leadership is a mutually beneficial style of leadership, where leaders act as change agents to develop their followers into leaders (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987). Bass (1985) applied transactional and transformational leadership to organizational management and reported that transformational leaders work along-side their followers to achieve a sense of transcendence,

a state in which allows members to evolve from their follower status into effective leaders on their own.

In transformational leadership, the leader encourages followers to utilize their unique differences and individual characteristics (paired with past experiences, knowledge, and creativity) to shape the group, molding it into something bigger than what it once was and making each member stronger (Yummarino & Bass, 1990). Transformational leaders look for new ways to accomplish goals, take risks, find more effective ways of doing things, and are more likely to go against the status quo (Lowe, Kroeck, Sivasubramaniam, 1996). Leaders who employ a transformational style set high expectations for their followers and work alongside them to achieve those expectations (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Ferrter, 1990).

Transformational leaders "elevate the follower's level of maturity and ideals as well as concerns for achievement, self-actualization, and the well-being of others, the organization, and society" (Bass, 1999, p. 11). This style of leadership strengthens follower commitment and loyalty to an organization while enhancing overall group member performance (Bass). The transformational leader can elicit these responses from followers using four unique dimensions that simultaneously establish the leader's credibility and influence the behaviors of others (Bass, 1981). These dimensions are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

First, Judge & Piccolo (2004) identify idealized influence as "the degree to which the leader behaves in admirable ways that cause followers to identify with the leader" (p. 755). Charisma is a unique quality that is often intertwined with idealized influence and, the more charismatic a leader is, the more effective they are at achieving this first dimension. This charisma envelopes pride, faith, and respect within the group and promotes those same feelings

for the group's organization as a whole (Garcia-Morales, Jimenez-Barrionuevo, & Gutierrez-Gutierrez, 2012).

Second, inspirational motivation is "the degree to which the leader articulates a vision that is appealing and inspiring to followers" (Judge & Piccolo, 2004, p. 755). A crucial criterion of this dimension is the leader's ability to challenge their followers with a vision that may consist of high standards, but is also appealing and beneficial (Podsakoff et al., 1990). This can be particularly useful when leading public, service, and volunteer organizations, where the mission of the group is focused on the needs and benefits of the community at large (Wright, Moynihan, & Pandey, 2011).

Third, intellectual stimulation is "the degree to which a leader challenges assumptions, takes risks, and solicits followers' ideas" (Judge & Piccolo, 2004, p. 755). This is where Yummarino & Bass' (1990) notion of individualization and creativity come into play. When leaders are engaging in this dimension of transformational leadership, they are encouraging their followers to think outside of the box to solve bigger problems in new ways that tap into internal strengths (Jung, 2001; Jung & Avolio, 2000; Lowe et al., 1996). In engaging their followers in this kind of cognitive stretching, leaders encourage followers to become "active thinkers within the organization" (Tims, Bakker, & Xanthopoulou, 2011), making the followers feel more connected and involved in the organization or group.

Finally, Judge & Piccolo (2004) distinguish individualized consideration as, "the degree to which the leader attends to each follower's needs, acts as a mentor or coach to the follower, and listens to the follower's concerns and needs" (p. 755). This dimension relies on the leader's ability to personalize their leadership to specific followers and delegate extra assignments "as opportunity for growth" to develop followers into strong leaders (Bass, 1999, p. 11). Individual

consideration is critical in transformational leadership because, having consideration for their followers spreads positive morale throughout the group, reduces stress when accomplishing tasks, and increases clarity and expectations when perusing goals/outcomes (Liu, Siu, & Shi, 2010).

Transformational leaders use each of these dimensions to gain the trust of their followers, enhance follower responsibility to the leader, and increase follower desire to engage in more than the required work, thus motivating followers to internalize the need to exceed expectations (Podsakoff et al., 1990; Yukel, 1989b). These transformational leadership dimensions transcend the group into something bigger, thus pulling away from a traditionally transactional motivation to a more effective style of leadership (Rubin, Munz, & Bommer, 2005).

Since the beginning of leadership research, theories have played a game of tug-of-war with one another, where some scholars believe that a leader possess traits, behaviors, and characteristics, like charisma and charm, that condition them into leadership roles while others argue that the leader can be trained or appointed (Bass, 1981). Current research indicates that leadership is more than biological (Bennis, 2007). Leadership exists, not only from within the individual, but through the contexts, emotional pulls and relational exchanges (Bass, 1981; Bennis, 2007). The potential for leadership can be recognized, developed, enhanced, and encouraged through motivation and creativity (Afshari, Siraj, Ghani, & Afshari, 2001). All of the theories discussed thus far extend the previous notions of the hereditary leader, molding leadership into the notions of process and influence that it is typically defined today (Northouse, 2004).

Leadership research predominantly focuses on majority groups, often the white, upper-class, heterosexual individuals enacting the strategies articulated above (Chin & Sanchez-Hucles,

2007). Minority groups, including the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community are less frequently represented in leadership research (Coon, 2001; Fassinger et al., 2010). Though great strides have taken place globally in establishing positive and influential changes, LGBT individuals still have yet to secure political and societal protection. It is important to understand what strategies leaders within this marginalized group are enacting to motivate others to fight for change. Further, better understanding LGBT leadership may also speak to the ways other marginalized groups might engage in this enactment.

The following section begins by summarizing the rise of community leadership throughout LGBT history. Then, discussion of the existing research on LGBT leadership is explained; this includes how leaders engage in multiple forms of effective leadership, utilizing not only the characteristics established by sexual orientation, but other relational, emotional, and motivational styles that enhance their ability to lead a group of people fighting for their right to, not only be seen as legitimate beings, but to simply fit in.

LGBT Leadership

The Rise of Community Leadership

Individuals within the LGBT community have made significant contributions and accomplishments benefiting society (Hogan & Hudson, 1998). From influential poets such as Oscar Wilde and Gertrude Stein, to political leaders like Alexander the Great and Harvey Milk, LGBT individuals have solidified their footprints in history (Polaski, 2011). Unfortunately, the accomplishments of many LGBT leaders are not widely publicized, thus making the strides of the LGBT community under-acknowledged (Fassinger et al., 2010; Leipold, 2014). This is because, through fear of repercussion, rejection, and criminalization, the sexual orientation of these influential LGBT leaders was often kept hidden or neglected by the individuals themselves

(Coon, 2001). In fact, it wasn't until the rise of the gay rights movement in the 20th century, that the LGBT community received any recognition at all (Clendinen & Nagourney, 1999). Despite lack of representation, LGBT individuals tend to possess a unique ability to relate to their followers and motivate others to fight for a common goal, due to a shared marginalized status, frustration, and empathy towards others who experience similar inequalities (Brown, 1989; Chang & Bowring, 2015; Snyder, 2006). In order to understand how LGBT individuals are presently exercising effective leadership, it is important to consider the historical context of how this community has engaged in leadership.

While the events that took place during the gay liberation in 1969 are often attributed to the rise of the gay rights movement, the fight for legitimization started long before then (Cain, 1993). The first group to advocate for the civil rights of gay individuals was developed in Germany in 1897 to advocate the idea of a "third sex" (Adam, 1987). The third sex argument explains that homosexuality is a gene determined at birth, rather than behaviors that are learned or adopted by the individual (Cain). Cain notes that, with little success from German medical doctors, American doctors were much more accepting of this idea of the third sex, however, decided to treat it as a disease rather than a legitimization.

This led to the creation of the first American gay-rights group called, The Society for Human Rights (Blumenfeld & Raymond, 1988). Despite the group's efforts to combat against prejudice, they were not successful; many of the group members were arrested, for what seemed to be, engaging in homosexual activity (Cain, 1993). After the quick decline of the first gay-rights group, America was thrust into World War I.

Due to all the terror focused around the "Red Scare," which fixated on the threat of communist influence, the United States found themselves caught in a time where the fear for

anything that could be perceived as "Un-American" was a real threat (Johnson, 1963). What was deemed as Un-American, was also deemed as different and a bad thing during the 1950s, when the nation desperately needed to feel united (Cain, 1993). This fear of difference lead to the creation of The Mattachine Society by Harry Hay, an openly gay political activist, in 1950 (Coon, 2001).

The Mattachine Society started in Los Angeles, California and their goal was to fight against the oppression and discrimination against the LGBT community (Katz, 1992). The Mattachine Society members hoped that, by educating the public about LGBT individuals, people belonging to the social majority would accept them and see them as legitimate, thus reducing or eliminating discrimination (Garnets & D'Augelli, 1998). The Mattachine Society was so successful that chapters started forming across the country (D'Emilio, 1983) and an increasing number of pro-gay groups with similar mission statements led by gay men and lesbian women began forming (Faderman, 1991).

The continuous fight to end anti-gay discrimination was aggressive in the years leading up to the late 1960s. While no laws were in place to make homosexuality illegal, consequences of homosexual behaviors made LGBT individuals feel as though their sexual orientation was a criminal act (Cain, 1993). Specifically, dressing in drag (the art of female impersonation typically performed by gay men) was cause for arrest and police raids in gay bars occurred routinely (Marcus, 1992). Further, homosexual individuals were considered to be a security risk and were deemed unsuitable to hold government/leadership positions (Rivera, 1979), thus keeping voices for this marginalized group silenced. LGBT individuals feared losing their jobs, being "outed" by their neighbors, and being condemned by law for being "perverts" (Cain).

Up until the late 1960's, the LGBT community remained relatively quiet, experiencing few victories in regards to anti-discrimination and civil rights (D'Emilio, 1983). On June 27th, 1969, however, the silence that kept LGBT individuals out of the spotlight was broken, as the New York police raided Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in Greenwich Village (Carter, 2004). This police raid and the ensuing events are referred to as the Stonewall Riots. Instead of remaining complacent, the LGBT individuals facing the violence by the police fought back. This sparked days of riots, in which hundreds of outraged LGBT individuals retaliated, leading to the visibility of LGBT issues which, before Stonewall, remained relatively unseen (Leipold, 2014). Stonewall was the catalyst for liberation among gay men and women, encouraging them to "come out" instilling the courage and pride within them to step out of the shadows of fear and into the light enveloped by pride (Carter). The events that took place during the Stonewall riots sparked leadership within the LGBT community, motivating LGBT individuals and allies (non-gay men and women who support LGBT equality) to vocalize their inequalities and demand the right for legitimization (Carter).

The awakening within the LGBT community after Stonewall evoked a "movement focused on the sexual oppression of all people" (Cain, 1993, p. 1582), and invited a call for leadership. Within the twenty years that followed Stonewall, the rise of organizations that fought for anti-gay discrimination laws and the legitimization of LGBT individuals (lead by LGBT individuals themselves), flooded across the United States (Bullough, 1986). These groups focused on sodomy laws, immigration of LGBT individuals, military issues surround LGBT soldiers, HIV/AIDS relief and support, and public employment (Coon, 2001; Garnets & D'Augelli, 1998).

Fast-forward to the 21st century, the commitment of previous LGBT groups that laid the foundation for current pro-LGBT groups like Gay Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), Get Equal, The Human Rights Campaign (HRC), National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE), and many more have been able to continue on a national level. Since the Stonewall Riots, the efforts made by LGBT leaders to vocalize the importance of change, followers motivated by LGBT leaders have made significant changes to the status quo, benefitting the lives of LGBT individuals (Coon, 2001). Some notable changes include the repealing of "Don't Ask Don't Tell" (a national policy in place banning openly gay men and women from serving in the military) in 2011 and the legalization of same-sex marriage in 2015 (Bumiller, 2011; Liptak, 2015). The efforts provided by LGBT groups like The Mattachine Society, gave rise to the leadership existing within this marginalized community, and have allowed LGBT organizations to further the fight today; many of these organizations are now being led by open gay men and women like Chad Griffin, president of the nation's biggest LGBT civic rights group The Human Rights Campaign ("HRC Story," 2016).

From the successful planning and completion of liberty marches (Cain, 1993), the continuous battle against biases relating to the AIDS crisis (Rudolph, 1989), fighting discrimination surrounding employment/promotion opportunities (), and family building efforts, including adoption (Fassinger, 1991), progress has been made, but LGBT equality has still not been fully achieved. LGBT leadership research has been conducted to determine how LGBT leaders motivate others to fight for change and, if the leadership styles differ from scholarship on common leadership strategies (Brown, 1989; Cyton-Hysom, 1991; Fassinger et al., 2010; Goodman, Schell, Alexander, & Eidelman, 2008). The following section reviews this research specific to LGBT leadership.

The LGBT Leader

Marginalization is "the experience of existing on the fringes of society because of gender, racial, ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, age, disability, or other minority status" (Cytron-Hysom, 1991, p. 4). LGBT individuals are marginalized because of their perceived differences and the exclusion of their culture, beliefs, and values from the dominant culture or majority. Discrimination restricts leadership opportunities available for marginalized groups to be recognized and represented (Coon, 2001).

As noted earlier, marginalization arises from the stigmatization of specific groups. This elicits negative social and psychological states within members of the minority group and allows the majority group to maintain order, specifically in regards to LGBT individuals (Herek, 2007; 2008). This stigmatization manifests within two realms; societal and individual (Herek, Gillis, & Cogan, 2009). In societal stigma, "heterosexist assumptions are deeply and nonconsciously embedded in societal institutions such as law, religion, health, and the workplace" (Fassinger et al., 2010). Because of the social norms placed on LGBT individuals by the majority, LGBT individuals must exist within a world deemed unfit for them, making them inferior to the majority group.

While social stigma is a way to marginalize large groups of people, individual stigma exists within a person and develops in three very distinct forms: enacted stigma, felt stigma, and internalized stigma (Herek, 2007). Enacted stigma is a behavior that promotes the marginalization of an individual or group of people based on the norms perpetuated by social stigmatization (Fassigner et al., 20010). Hate crimes against LGBT individuals are a prime example of this. In October of 2015, Keisha Jenkins, a 22-year old, transgender woman of color was fatally shot and killed by two straight men (Sherouse, 2015).

While enacted stigma is salient within majority group members, felt stigma is experienced by the marginalized individual and refers to the awareness of the stigmatization, whether the individual is experiencing the marginalization or not (Herek, 2007). LGBT individuals perceive a constant stigmatization from the dominant group, making them fearful and causing them to adopt strategies in order to hide their true sexual orientation or gender identity (Meyer, 2003; Meyer & Wilson, 2009). Exemplifying this notion, in an experimental study done by Goodman et al. (2008), gay leaders were rated as less effective when derogatory remarks about the leader's sexual orientation were verbally spoken by followers and more effective when the derogatory remark was omitted. This study provides insight for why LGBT leaders adopt strategies to hide their sexual orientation or gender identity, so that their followers may perceive them as more effective.

The final key factor to individual stigma is internalized stigma, which refers to the, "acceptance of the legitimacy of stigma and the incorporation of stigma into one's self-concept" (Fassinger et al., 2010, p. 206). This can result in self-hatred within the LGBT individual, specifically in regards to staying closeted and refusing to identify a queer sexual orientation (Herek & Garnets, 2007). This causes many psychological issues within the LGBT individual including depression and mental distress (Smith & Ingram, 2004). This is why, when an LGBT individual decides to reveal his or her true sexual identity, the action is seen as a milestone in identity construction, because the individual breaks the binds of stigmatization and exhibits healthier mental states than closeted peers (Herek & Garnets).

Interestingly, marginalization, despite the heterosexist effects it has on the LGBT community, can bring some positive outcomes (Cytron-Hysom, 1991). "Learning to cope with the stresses related to marginalization actually may catalyze certain kinds of skill development

that aid in LGBT individuals in leadership roles" (Fassinger et al., 2010). These developed skills can be a heightened state of flexibility, increased cohesiveness amongst other marginalized groups or cultures, or instilling a greater sense of diversity (Cytron-Hysom). For example, LGBT individuals develop a sense of "crisis competence" through the coming out process that may allow them to accept and react better to criticism, evaluate their own stances on important issues even when opposed, develop a strong network of support with others, advocate for inequality, and assess their own needs, goals, and psychological/mental state (Friend, 1991).

Cytron-Hysom (1991) reports that leaders existing within marginalized groups are able to see the bigger picture, already used to being viewed as an outsider, and can easily bring forward new ideas and perspectives. He also concludes that, it is through these experiences LGBT individuals have dealt with, regarding their marginalization and stigmatization that they have accepted their own otherness and assessed the need for leadership.

Brown (1989) also argues that LGBT individuals have the ability to effectively enact leadership due to a marginalized status. In her research, she explains that LGBT individuals possess a sense of biculturalism, or the ability to simultaneously exist within two cultures, internalize their otherness, and use creativity in decision making. By operating with a sense of biculturalism, LGBT individuals have the ability to exist within the majority culture. They understand the societal norms and rules governing this realm, yet they are also able to place these norms within their own culture and assess what needs to be changed.

This ability to construct change around the majority allows the leader to "facilitate an understanding of the rules by which the mainstream culture operates, while simultaneously being able to envision new forms by which the same task might be accomplished" (Brown, 1989, p. 450). Due to their marginalization and stigmatization, LGBT individuals must come to terms

with their otherness. Once this marginalization is recognized, then LGBT leaders can influence others to look at the dominant behavior differently while getting other sexual minorities to "see differently, hear differently, and thus potentially challenge the conventional wisdom" (Brown, p. 451). Finally, since LGBT individuals are constantly having to invent a new way of enacting change, LGBT leaders can restructure society creatively, allowing other sexual minorities to "create boundaries that will work where none exist from tools that may only partially suited to the task" (Brown, p. 452).

The hypotheses expressed in Brown's (1989) research were further supported by Cytron-Hysom (1991) in regards to the coming out process, diversity, integrity, and creative patterns. "Gays and lesbians, through the process of coming out, declare their ability to conform, and build skills in challenging cultural norms. They appear ideally suited to exercising innovative leadership in organizations" (p. 61). He argues that "Coming out" is a necessity for an LGBT individual to both identify the need for leadership and begin enacting it. In regards to diversity, because LGBT leaders recognize their otherness and marginalized status, they express "concern for 'others' who experience oppression" (Coon, 2001, p. 50). This is what allows them to identify with and internalize the feelings associated with other marginalized groups.

Knowing the importance of equality and what it takes to fight prejudice, LGBT leaders act with integrity and justice (Coon, 2001; Cyton-Hysom, 1991). "Gay and lesbian leaders can bring special strength, sensitivity, and awareness to this area, greatly benefiting the organizations and lead to positive organizational change" (Cytron-Hysom, p. 63). In order to fight fairly, LGBT leaders constantly "establish new directions for their organizations" (Coon). These patterns of creativity "lead organizations to start new programs, embrace new positions and think in new ways" (Cytron-Hysom, p. 65).

Inspired by Brown's (1989) notions of the need to advance the scholarship surrounding LGBT leadership, Fassinger et al. (2010) argue for a model of LGBT leadership enactment. Their model "contains three intersecting dimensions relevant to sexual minority identity status as enacted in a leadership role" (p. 204). These dimensions are surrounded around sexual orientation (the level of an LGBT leader's "outness"), gender orientation (how the leader defines their gender), and the situation (the need for leadership). Fassinger et al.'s LGBT Leadership model leverages Bass' (1985) criteria for transformational leadership, explaining how LGBT individuals achieve the notions of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

In their first dimension, Fassinger et al. (2010) discuss sexual orientation, specifically the disclosure of a leader's "outness" to other group members, is a key factor for LGBT leadership, much like the idealized influence dimension of transformational leadership. In studying LGBT student leaders in college, Renn (2007) reports that two types of LGBT leaders emerge in regards to the disclosure of their sexuality. Positional leaders identify themselves as LGBT and are more comfortable working within systems already set in place to achieve political equality for the LGBT community (Renn). Transformational LGBT leaders, however, tend to simply identify as "queer" and are motivated to question systems in place and seek to change society by setting much higher goals and standards (Renn). Like transformational leaders, LGBT leaders too, "demand deeper change … enacting transformational and other modern leadership approaches" (Fassinger et al., p. 207).

Self-disclosure plays an important part in student leadership development (Fassinger et al., 2010). The more actively engaged an LGBT student is in leadership, the more open they are in regards to their sexual orientation, the more vital they interpret their leadership roles (Renn &

Bilodeau, 2005a, 2005b). Moving from student leaders to adult leaders, Coon (2001) reports that many openly gay men and lesbian individuals employed in leadership positions within the workforce credit their sexual orientation as having a positive impact on their career. These men and women identify that their sexual orientation gave them unique leadership practices like, successfully changing the status quo of the organization and improving the working environment, motivating and empowering other co-workers, implementing an organizational vision for goal achievement, inspiring others to take risks, and being open towards others by expressing empathy and strong listening skills (Coon).

"Outness" is linked to positive job satisfaction, workplace morale, and higher levels of engagement (Snyder, 2006). According to Snyder, after interviewing 150 openly gay male executives, these leaders exemplified leadership practices commonly associated with transformational leadership including adaptability, creativity, and strong communication. Woods & Lucas (1993) also report that LGBT individuals felt more valuable to the organization because of their openness in regards to their sexual orientation, crediting many of the same characteristics and traits as reported by Coon (2001).

LGBT leaders communicate multiple facets of the various theories concerning leadership enactment. Through the review of leadership theory, how LGBT individuals have historically and professionally enacted leadership, and existing research on LGBT leadership, it is clear that the LGBT community has effective leaders. What is less clear is how LGBT leaders use communication to create social change. In order to study LGBT leadership communication, this research study observed a local LGBT activist group currently fighting to enact change within a community experiencing political inequality. This study is designed to enhance understanding of leadership communication generally and marginalized leadership specifically. In order to explore

how LGBT leaders communicate leadership, it is important to return to the research question in regards to this study: *How do LGBT leaders communicate their leadership in ways that motivate others to enact social change?*

The next chapter details the research methodology for this study. The chapters that follow, provide an in depth analysis of results and a discussion regarding the theoretical and practical implications. Finally, limitations and future research directions are detailed.

Chapter 3 - Methods

This research project examines how LGBT leaders use communication in their leadership to motivate others to enact change. In order to better understand LGBT leadership, this chapter outlines the study methodology by explaining design choices to use qualitative methodology, including the benefits of ethnographic field research and focus group interviews. Then, participant and group information is discussed, followed by information on data collection, coding, and analysis.

Benefits of Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is recognized as an influential tool in studying social sciences (Srivastava & Thomson, 2009). While quantitative survey methodology tends to answer the *who*, *what*, *when*, and *where* questions (Crabtree & Miller, 1999; Silverman, 2000), surveys are less effective at capturing the *how* or *why* a phenomenon occurs (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Qualitative methods allow researchers to dive deeper into a given phenomenon, allowing for a clearer understanding and the occurrence or process of the given phenomenon (Symon & Cassel, 1998).

Furthermore, qualitative data can capture rich descriptions of attitudes, beliefs, and interactions directly from the people who are engaged with and actually experiencing a phenomenon (Platton, 2002). Qualitative methods also provide an opportunity to better understand the experiences and voices of a marginalized community (Denzin, 2010). Because the purpose of this study is to better understand LGBT leaders who are working to obtain social justice and examine how the communication processes they use to lead and motivate followers, qualitative observation methods are well suited to addressing the research question.

In particular, ethnographic methods were selected because they feature "a strong emphasis on exploring the nature of particular social phenomena, rather than setting out to test hypotheses about them" (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994, p. 248). Ethnographic methods are important because the best way to understand social phenomena is to be part of it (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). As an active participant, the researcher has the ability to understand the identity of a group in ways that the participants may not be able to themselves (Narayan, 2012).

The ethnographer is governed by the observations and experiences based on understanding of the group and how those individuals construct the overall group identity (Geertz, 1973). In doing this, ethnographic research can explain patterns that exist in society (Katz, 2002), while getting at deeper, more descriptive meaning of what's actually occurring in a given group, environment, or culture (Geertz). Ethnographic work also allows the researcher to define what a phenomena means to the people that experience it (Becker, 1993).

Participant observation and ethnographic research go hand in hand (Atkins & Hammersley, 1994). In order to experience the given phenomena, the researcher has to immerse himself into the group. This is an important aspect of ethnography because, as Dewalt and Dewalt (2010) point out, "being actively engaged in the lives of the people brings the ethnographer closer to understanding the participants' point of view and achieving understanding of people and their behaviors is possible" (p. 261). Though being an active participant is a beneficial research method (Atkins & Hammersley, 1994; Dewalt & Dewalt, 2010), it can also be problematic. This is because "participation implies emotional involvement; observation requires detachment. It is a strain to try and sympathize with others and at the same time strive for scientific objectivity" (Paul, 1953, p. 69). Because it is impossible to reject notions of

personality and knowledge, this type of research often brings in researchers' own past experiences, expertise, biases, opinions, and beliefs (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2010).

Finally, in conjunction with ethnographic observations, this research utilizes focus group methodology to allow the researcher to engage group members in open-ended discussion centered on a specific topic or identified set of issues (Robinson, 1999). Focus groups are a useful way of collecting data when information regarding these specific issues or topics is uncertain (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011). Though focus groups use a discussion-based format, this methodology is rooted in interview procedures, where the researcher asks the participants a series of questions and the group reflects on the answers (Robinson, 1999). This allows for a group interaction to occur, where participants encourage and build upon ideas and responses, enriching the data, rather than relying on one voice (Kitzinger, 1994).

Focus groups are usually used when facilitating groups of minority status (Hughes & Dumont, 1993) and to probe assumptions made by the researcher in regards to the data generated, offering the participants a chance to express their own viewpoints and opinions on the focused issue (Robinson, 1999). Focus groups typically generate more influential comments from participants than standard interviews (Watts & Ebbutt, 1987) because of the space provided for everyone to speak openly and emotionally on the topic (Kitzinger, 1996; Polzer & Miles, 2007). This study uses a focus group interview both to enhance the underlying assumptions identified by the researcher within the data and to engage the participants with the data, discussing common themes, trends, and issues that were salient during the observations.

Qualitative methodology is a beneficial tool for this research because, through ethnographic and focus group methodology, the researcher was able to immerse himself within the group, engage as an active participant, and live the same experiences as the group members.

Including a focus group allowed for a centered discussion while allowing individuals within the group to build upon one another's ideas; this enriched the discussion with multiple voices, shared experiences, and elaborations. Now that the methodological choices made for this project have been explained, the following section describes the participating group, the type of members belonging to it, and the roles the leaders played.

Participants

To understand how LGBT individuals communicate leadership and motivate others to enact social change, the researcher selected a civic rights group in a Midwestern town (which will be given the pseudonym of Smalltown) who agreed to the study. While mostly progressive, the state in which this town is located does not protect LGBT individuals from discrimination in the forms of employment, housing, or service. This group was chosen due to its success in achieving influential changes benefiting the lives of LGBT community members. This group, referred to as the LGBT Campaign (LGBTC), was specifically selected due to the achievements they have made within the community and the reputation held throughout Smalltown. Currently, the group consists of approximately 50 members that are a mix of LGBT individuals and allies. This group exists as a local chapter of a national LGBT rights campaign that identifies with the larger organizations vision and mission statement (to achieve equality for all) and engages in ways to enact them on a local level. Membership within LGBTC was identified by the researcher on three levels of involvement: (1) Donor, (2) Passive, and (3) Active Membership.

In the first level of membership, *donor membership* is identified as non-participatory commitment. The majority of LGBTC members (approximately 29 out of the 50) participate in this level of membership. These members of LGBTC simply pay annual dues ($10 a year) and never engage with the decision-making processes to accomplish group tasks. Donor members

recognize the need for change within the community and support LGBTC's mission, which is to enhance the lives of LGBT individuals within the community and state, but do not want to be fully involved. It is through the donations made by these members, that the more active members are able to accomplish goals on behalf of LGBTC, such as being able to afford attendance to community events.

The second level consists of *passive membership*. This level of membership contained the second highest level of member participation at approximately 12 of the 50 group members. Passive members continue to pay their annual dues, however they also take on other minimal responsibilities. These responsibilities range from attending social events such as barbeques or what the group calls "Flash Parties" (random get-togethers at a local bar where members of the local LGBT community can get-to-know one another, hang out, and surround themselves with like-minded people). These members filter in and out of board meetings from time-to-time, but tend to stay away from the more political events and focus on the social gatherings.

The final level of membership, *active membership*, consists of nine of the 50 members who provide a heavy hand in the decision-making process and leadership regarding LGBTC. These members hold formal positions within the group, including President, Secretary, and Treasurer or unofficial positions, identified simply as Members At Large (someone who holds no formal "title" but whose commitment and opinion is valued). Active members plan and attend the social gatherings that the passive members typically attend. In addition, active members organize and participate in political gatherings, aiding in the enactment of community change within Smalltown. These members are responsible for all financial decisions of LGBTC, including how much LGBT spends on sponsoring events, donating to causes, and on supplies needed to accomplish goals. The nine individuals in the active member category, meet on a

regular, month-by-month basis for board meetings, and discuss issues concerning the LGBT community. This research focuses on these nine individuals in order to explore the research question and ways in which LGBT leadership is communicated to motivate others to enact change.

All nine of the active members are white, but differ in age, sex, gender and sexual identity. The ages of these nine individuals ranged between the upper twenties to upper forties. Five of the nine individuals self-identified as male and four self-identified as female. Four of the individuals (three of the males and one of the females were allies of the LGBT community (neither gay nor transgender), while the other five were members of the LGBT community (four gay/lesbian and two transgender). The researcher changed the names of these nine individuals to keep their identities confidential.

Research Participation

The researcher, while actively engaging in participatory involvement during LGBTC's monthly board meetings, relied heavily on the theory of social ontology (Katz, 2002). Katz suggests that there are, "three universal aspects of social life [that] offer a kind of theory" (p. 259). Specifically, Katz is referring to aspects that (1) explain social conduct and are visible through a groups social interaction with one another, (2) explain how interactions within the group leads to a specific course of action or common goal, and (3) how all these actions are above the actor's themselves, but are within the realm of awareness for the researcher. In short, the research conducted is guided by the way the participants construct their own meaning (Katz) and the researcher went into every board meeting observing through this lens of social ontology.

After contacting the president of this group, the researcher was granted access to attend monthly board meetings and social gatherings, as well as the public City Commissioner

meetings. The researcher both applied and was approved by the University IRB to conduct this research. The group members were fully aware of the role the researcher held as both an active participant, as well as a research observer. The participants signed an informed consent document that detailed the researcher's role and provided basic background information about the study. The researcher then answered any questions the participants had in regards to the study. As a participant observer, the researcher brought his own ideas surrounding social justice and LGBT equality to these meetings and engaged in the decision making process the group detailed to attack socially unjust roadblocks the community was facing. In bringing his own experiences as a gay man, the researcher acknowledges that he could not be completely objective throughout the observation process, as the decisions made within the group often influenced his personal life as well.

Data Collection

The researcher attended five monthly board meetings, which lasted anywhere from one to two hours. The first board meeting attended by the researcher was in August of 2015. This meeting was used to introduce the group to the research process and focused mostly on the researcher assimilating into the group (paying organizational dues, learning the organization's mission statement/history, and introducing the researcher to the individual roles held by all the board members).

Actual observations of the group took place during four board meetings (one in September 2015, one in October 2015, and two in November 2015) that were held in the evening at a local café or the living room of a board members' home. During these meetings, the researcher was an active participant, where he engaged in group discussion and suggested ways to solve issues surrounding civic injustice experienced by the LGBT community within

Smalltown. After having the board members complete consent forms giving permission, the

researcher audio recorded and personally transcribed the board meetings (which generated 64

pages of typed, double-spaced text). The researcher also took hand-written field notes at each

meeting (30 hand-written pages) which detailed who talked when, instructions given, how often

the individuals asked for help from the other group members, when emotion was salient during

conversations, and how the members within the group engaged with one another throughout the

meeting. Along with the meetings conducted by the board members belonging to the observed

group, the researcher also attended a City Commissioner meeting in May of 2016 when the

proposal of an LGBT anti-discrimination ordinance generated by LGBTC was discussed.

After observing LGBTC board meetings for five months, the researcher conducted a

focus group interview, lasting approximately one hour, which was used as a way to check the

meeting observations with thoughts and opinions of the group members. The researcher

familiarized himself with the data generated from the ethnographic observations and used this

focus group as a way to engage in member checking procedures so that the data accurately

represented the experiences of the LGBTC members and helped alleviate personal biases held by

the researcher. Member checking is a unique tactic the researcher engages in when building

trustworthiness with the participants (Carlson, 2010). Member checking is important because this

allows participants to reflect on the researcher's observations to verify the accuracy and add to

the researcher's understanding of the observations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This enhances the

quality of findings because the participants are able to recognize accuracy and inform the

researcher of mistakes (Krefting, 1991).

Of the nine board members, four attended the focus group interview, including three

LGBTC Members at Large as well as the President. While not all voices of the LGBTC board

members were represented in the focus group, the four members that attended were four of the more active members, attending the most City Commission meetings and educational events throughout the researcher's observation time. The four board members that participated in the focus group talked about their roles within the organization, how the leadership throughout LGBTC is identified and credited, and some of the challenges they felt the group was facing, answering questions like, "How is leadership within LGBTC rotated? How has the variety of LGBT representation within the group added to your success?" and, "What is the overall goal you want to accomplish for LGBTC?" The full list of interview questions asked during this focus group is provided in Appendix A. This focus group interview was conducted at a local coffee shop, audio recorded, and transcribed (20 typed double-spaced pages).

Data Analysis

After observing the monthly board meetings and conducting the focus group interview, the researcher used the transcriptions to engage in a coding process that developed a thematic analysis of two major themes and subsequent secondary themes that exemplify the commonalities expressed by the group. In order to arrive at this thematic analysis, the researcher first coded the observed board meetings by following two coding phases. Then the researcher developed questions and conducted a focus group interview based on initial analysis of the observational data, using the focus group interview to engage the participants in member checking procedures. Importantly, the focus group allowed the researcher to make sense of the previously identified themes and clarify the initial analysis.

Initially, the coding of the observed board meetings occurred in two phases: (1) an initial phase, where the data was coded line-by-line, identifying the concept or theme salient in the data; and (2) a focused phase, where the line-by-line codes were then evaluated. First, during the

initial coding phase, the researcher identified utterances that fit the four common themes of leadership noted in the literature review (See Appendix B for codebook). Initial coding consists of a close reading of the data (Charmaz, 2006). During this stage of coding the researcher engaged in three major practices. First, the researcher read through the transcriptions to gain a better understanding of the observed meetings. Second, as the researcher went through the transcriptions a second time, he color coordinated text of common themes reflecting existing leadership literature. For example, any utterances that articulated relational leadership were highlighted in yellow, while any utterances concerning developmental leadership were highlighted in blue. In this initial phase of coding, the researcher was not looking for one, specific theory of leadership, but rather open to the fact that participants might engage in any number of strategies defined in the previous literature review. Third, as patterns of leadership communication immerged, the researcher added memos in the margins of the transcriptions, noting how the utterances reflect communicative practices. Memos are valuable tools in the coding process because they allow the researcher to identify and support each theme with other examples within the observed data (Charmaz, 2006).

After the researcher coded all of the transcribed board meetings during this initial phase, identifying themes and providing memos of examples and support, the researcher then engaged in focused coding. In this second phase of coding, the researcher selected the richest of the previous initial codes to explain, organize, and sort through the data (Charmaz, 2006). During this phase of coding, the researcher reviewed the transcriptions and organized all the color coordinated utterances into separate documents to allow for closer comparison of the utterances. For example the blue colored utterances of developmental leadership were all clustered into a separate document for easier access and identification. As the researcher reviewed the separate

codes that exemplified the five common themes of leadership communication he began to notice that, throughout these codes, other commonalities were taking place. From here, the researcher then color coordinated these commonalities, using the memos taken in the margins as a guide, into five common themes of leadership communication specific to LGBTC (Organizational Communication, Discussion-Based Communication, Emotional Communication, Tenacious Communication, and Communicative Outreach) he then began to compare these themes together to look for similarities and how these five themes related to one another a whole. After the focused coding process, the researcher noticed that these five initial themes worked as two main themes where organizational and discussion-based communication were used by the leaders to establish *cohesive communication* and *proactive communication*, resulting in two primary themes from the five communication patterns.

Secondly, considering the initial and focused coding and the resulting themes, the researcher generated questions for the members of LGBTC to respond to during as a focus group. At this conversation, LGBTC members confirmed and enriched the data by articulating uncertainties and expanding on patterns they agreed with. An example of this data enrichment through the member checking procedure is that the participants articulated an identification and assimilation process by which previous board members identified new/current board members and the new board members were assimilated into the already existing group. This resulted in an additional secondary theme (Identification and Assimilation) under the primary theme of *cohesive communication* and would have been missed without the researcher engaging the participants in the ability to check for accuracy. Finally, the researcher went through the meeting and focus group transcriptions and revisited and re-interpreted the utterances that the focus group members indicated did not agree with their normal group processes.

The following section provides the detailed results of this data analysis. The thematic analysis resulted into two primary themes that articulate how LGBT leaders motivate others to enact social change: *cohesive communication* and *proactive communication*.

Chapter 4 - Findings

Focusing on the research question: *How do LGBT leaders communicate their leadership in ways that motivate others to enact social change?* careful analysis of the data indicates that the leaders of LGBTC enacted leadership differently than dominant leadership theories. As detailed in the literature review, common practices of leadership predominantly involve an individual leader motivating a group of followers and these followers relying on their leader for guidance. However the leaders of LGBTC enacted leadership collectively by coordinating their communication and activity as a cohesive unit. In order to do so, the leaders of LGBTC motivated others to enact change through two common strategies: (1) cohesive communication and (2) proactive communication.

Cohesive Communication

Cohesion is the first major theme that emerged during the coding process. Throughout observations during the board meetings, the responses from the focus group interview, and the speeches during the city commissioner meeting, the LGBTC leaders communicated and acted as a cohesive unit in order to enhance the group's ability to enact change within Smalltown. LGBTC engaged in cohesive communication through three distinct methods: (1) Identification and Assimilation, (2) Group Discussion, and (3) Individual Expertise.

Identification and Assimilation

Identifying influential leaders was the first component to communicating cohesion within LGBTC. LGBTC has been an integral part in enhancing the lives of the LGBT citizens in Smalltown for many years, however 80% of the group's board members are currently new to the board, serving their first term in these roles, including the group's official President. These new board members recently transitioned from the *passive* level of membership to the *active* and it

was through the identification process the previous board had engaged in, that put them in these positions. During the focus group interview, Casey, a current board member holding an official position, explained that the previous board was made up of mostly allies and wanted to incorporate the voices of LGBT individuals so the group could actually provide representation of the community they were trying to protect:

> [The previous board members] were trying so hard, but they couldn't get any LGBT people! I mean most of the board was straight. They wanted some fresh faces and ones that actually represented our group because they thought that would help engage the community more.

Jamie, an LGBTC Member At Large also spoke about this dire need for representation within the group:

> [The previous board members identified] people who had specific and special areas of knowledge or very closely held interests and could bring that specialty to the group in order to come at things with maybe a little bit different of an angle, or with a little bit different information than the others had because of that.

The previous board members looked for *passive members* who possessed the specific qualities needed in order to continue LGBTC's mission.

Casey, being a *passive member* for a couple years before taking on her current *active* role talked about this identification process and how the previous board members approached her and articulated the need for new leadership within the group. She stated in the focus group interview, "the [previous] board was tired. They had a tough city commission comprised of mostly conservative officials and they were getting tired of fighting against that." Casey continued to explain that, "[The previous board] knew that if they couldn't find the right people to take over,

then LGBTC was gonna fold." Pat, a current LGBTC Member At Large explained that the previous board members started holding house parties where they invited some of the more active *passive members* to begin this identification process. Casey emphasized this notion of identification by stating, "the old board members knew they wanted off and they were throwing these parties to try and feel people out." When approached, Casey and Pat both agreed to take on responsibilities. Neither one of them wanted LGBTC to cease to exist, believing in the work the group was already doing and wanting to continue that work. Casey said, "they asked and I said I would do it."

While none of the previous board members were interviewed about their identification process, it is clear through Casey and Pat's remarks during the focus group interview that they were specifically approached to take on these responsibilities. The kind of responsibility (to hold an official position or volunteer to be a Member At Large) was up to them, but the old board invited the most determined and committed *passive members* they felt would best carry on LGBTC's mission. "We have always been involved," Pat stated, "so we felt it was our duty to step up."

Once the new members to comprise the board were identified, they then had to assimilate into the group's culture. In order to do this, two of the previous board's official members decided to stay on with the new board, but step down from holding official positions to Members At Large. Casey detailed that those two board members made that decision for assimilation purposes, so that the new seven members could be guided when necessary, as well as uphold the establish systematic process of the monthly board meetings the original board had developed:

That was the reason [the two previous board members] stayed on, so that somebody

would be there to steer the ship, because otherwise it would have been all of us going,

"alright, what do we do? Let's go have a party!"

This decision of the old board to keep people on in the new board was their way of assimilating

the new members into the group. These two previous board members helped the new members

learn the processes of *active membership* and gave the new members holding official positions

the tools they needed to essentially "run" the organization. One of the ways in which the

previous board members did this was to introduce the new board members to the political side of

things, since, as *passive members* the new board members had only been introduced to the more

social aspects of LGBTC. Casey explained that, "yea, when we took over it was in the midst of

the new city commissioner election and [the two previous board members] were like, "Hey! You

guys have to identify candidates we would like to run that would help support our mission." Pat

stated, "we didn't know anything about the voter questionnaires and the other political things I

didn't know we were gonna have to do." The two previous board members that had stayed on

helped them in this process.

Jamie, another new and current Member At Large, indicated the difficulty of assimilating

into the political culture of the group. "That was one of the first things we all did together, was

go to the candidate forums and take notes on people." Since the city commission election

happened almost immediately after the new seven members began their *active membership* with

the board, they relied heavily on the support from the previous board members who had stayed

on to help them through that process. Pat noted that those two members, "really took on a lot of

the political responsibilities" since it was so foreign to them.

Another way in which the previous board members helped the new board members assimilate into the group was by providing a systematic process for their board meetings. Based on field observation data, the board meetings always started and ended the same way. Issues regarding the LGBT community would be articulated, what LGBTC did to combat these issues or educate others on these issues were debriefed, and goals to achieve by the next meeting were set. This allowed for a sense of familiarity so that the new members could ease into their new roles. In many of the earlier board meetings, LGBTC planned their attendance of community events. Here, the past experience of the two previous board members was most helpful. In discussing the budget for one event, Casey asked, "How did we pay for this last year?" and in discussing the attendance of another event, Casey asked, "Was this beneficial? Should we attend again this year?" By relying on the two previous board members early on, the new board members of LGBTC were able to build upon their past knowledge of expenses, logistics, and events rather than starting from scratch in the planning process. It is important to note that the previous board members did not tell the new members what to do, but provided historical information to allow the group to benefit from that knowledge.

During the focus group interview Casey talked about how the planning process of the monthly board meetings have changed from when they first took their positions on the board to now, after being in their positions for a little over a year.

> It definitely started the first few months when we were all new where it was mostly social events that lead to issues and we would write down what we had done. [Planning] has definitely picked up. I think about it a lot more. I mean, now it's gotten to the point where, every single day I'm at work and I'm thinking, "Alright, who do I send emails to today?" So there's been more planning.

Casey noted that she really relied on Erin, one of the previous board members who stayed on the current board to help through this planning process.

> I'll write a broad topic and think we'll cover it [during the board meeting], but [Erin's] like, "A! B! C! D! 1! 2! 3!" [The meetings] have become a lot more strategically planned now that we actually understand the political process.

Without the help of the two previous board members who stayed on to help the current board, assimilation would have been next to impossible. By assimilating into the culture of LGBTC, which differed in political commitment from that of *passive membership*, the nine current board members were able to engage in cohesive communication surrounding political action and systematic flow.

Group Discussion

The second way in which the leaders of LGBTC engaged in cohesive communication was through discussion-based decision-making. In this method of cohesive communication, all nine of the board members came together in order to make decisions that effected the way in which they tried to motivate others to enact change within Smalltown. It is important to note that conflict was often salient throughout the observed board meetings. The leaders of LGBTC often disagreed on ways in which to achieve social change. In order to resolve this conflict, the leaders of LGBTC engaged in group discussion, where an idea would be presented and they would deliberate the best decision. Every tactic implemented by LGBTC was agreed upon by the entire group, unifying their decisions in regards to creating social change and creating cohesion amongst the nine of them. The group discussion process that shaped the cohesive decision-making existed on two levels: (1) when educating the community and (2) addressing legislative concerns.

First, in regards to educating the community of Smalltown on issues regarding LGBT equality, the leaders of LGBTC felt that it was important for everyone in Smalltown to understand the discrimination faced by LGBT individuals on a daily basis. During the focus group, Pat articulated the importance education plays within the community because it disillusions some of the common misconceptions about LGBT individuals.

> There are so many people who just have such a knee jerk reaction to things, especially [in this state]. I think we fix that when we have booths at places and they see normal people sitting at them.

Jamie also agreed with Pat, emphasizing that, "Yea, they see these LGBT people who don't run right up to them and try to recruit them or whatever their knee-jerk fears are and they see us differently." Pat and Jamie went on to talk about how, by just going to certain events where they could set up a table and pass out pamphlets, LGBT individuals who may have been unaware of the group's existence became aware and some sought membership or simply thanked them for the work they were doing.

> Pat: When the [LGBT] kids who come by and see us out there supporting them, they often stop and thank us for what we are doing
>
> Jamie: When people see me at these events and they come up to me and tell me that they're interested in what we are doing I always say, "I'm glad you're interested" and then I ask them, "Why are you interested?" and they say, "Well, I've been involved with this LGBT group, or that LGBT group or whatever." I mean, [going to these events] is like helping other people get to a higher level of involvement in other ways with more awareness.

Getting community members to achieve this state of "awareness" that Jamie talks about was a crucial tactic for the leaders of LGBTC and going to these social events was one of the influential ways in which they were able to motivate others to enact change. Attending these events, however, took time and planning during the monthly board meetings and this is where the conflict often came from. In order to come up with the best strategy for motivating others, the group opened these plans up for discussion to arrive at a high quality unified decision.

An example of this group discussion process occurred during the August meeting, when the main focal point of the meeting was planning for a community fair in which LGBTC would set up a booth and inform the attendees about current issues regarding LGBT rights. Because of the recent Supreme Court decision to legalize same-sex marriage, the group was experiencing some pushback in their mission. People were blanketing all LGBT rights under this legalization. Because LGBT individuals can get married, their fight for inequality was over. This is a common misconception, not only in the state in which the researcher made observations, but also across the US in general (Allen, 2016). Casey noted during this meeting that presenting information regarding LGBT rights is challenging because "all of the moving parts," emphasizing that it's not as fluid as everyone believes. Casey also noted that, "everything is changing so quickly with the religious freedom laws [in the state]," justifying the importance to get the record straight for community members of Smalltown. LGBTC couldn't fight for social change if others in the community weren't motivated to do so. By showing Smalltown community members that there still was a problem, LGBTC hoped to get more support.

Because of Casey's notions of "all the moving parts" in regards to LGBT rights, the leaders of LGTC knew they had to cover various areas of awareness, but couldn't

decide on what should be bulleted on posters or detailed in pamphlets. To guide through this decision making process, the group engaged in back and forth deliberation over what information should be covered and how it should be presented. Casey opened this discussion by stating, "last time we talked, we decided on posters, but we were uncertain on content, so maybe we should start there?" to which Alex, a Member At Large responded, "It's not about content, rather something to spark talk about the issue or what's going on." Here Casey articulated that the group needed to identify specific content to inform the attendees regarding LGBT issues, but Alex disagreed. Alex thought it would be best to engage the attendees in a conversation about all the different issues, rather than just provide a pamphlet or poster containing a bunch of bulleted facts. This sparked a discussion between multiple group members, which was held over an open table. When LGBTC board members felt as though they had something to add, they jumped in, building upon ideas that were brought to the table to arrive to a unified solution.

> Alex: Instead of having a whole poster about, "Here's a timeline [of gay rights] and what we need to do. Something to point out the issue that, yea, [same-sex marriage] is great, but there's a lot of stuff that still needs to be done. No matter what the details are, the facts still remain that although you can get married, you can still be fired from your job, especially in this state.
>
> Jordan: Something like, we can have our cake and eat it to?
>
> Al: Something, I don't know… maybe, that would be something?
>
> Jordan: Maybe not cake exactly, but something like that.

Al: I don't know. Something about that, just to point out the issue that, yea, [same-sex

marriage] is great, but there's a lot of stuff that still needs to be done. No matter what the

details are, the facts still remain that although you can get married, you can still be fired

from your job, especially in [this state].

Jesse: And evicted from housing.

Al: Evicted from housing, yes. Maybe it could be something that simple, ya know? Just

something about the positives, something like, "Marriage equality, and that's great, but

did you know these other things can still happen?" That would be pretty simple to make

if we could agree on them.

This instance called for group discussion. In this instance, the decision-making process wasn't

linear. Typically what is seen in regards to leadership communication isn't so collective. Where

one person instructs a group and the followers enact those instructions, here LGBTC begins their

communication with conflict, enacting the need for discussion. Casey isn't telling the group what

to do and Alex isn't simply discrediting Casey's ideas. Together, they are building upon previous

decisions to seek the best solution. This ability to collectively decide creates cohesion through

the group, as all nine members have heard everyone's points of view and come to a conclusion

together.

Eventually, it was the researcher who suggested purchasing bracelets with LGBTC's logo

on them. This way, the bracelets served as the talking point that Alex felt was necessary, and

then the group members could use that moment to begin the conversation regarding the timeline

of LGBT rights.

Researcher: How about a little bracelet with our logo on them?

Jesse: That would be interesting.

Researcher: People really love those bracelets and we could hand them out as we talk to them.

Alex: People do love those bracelets! That's a really good idea. That would be fun to give away.

Jordan: And then we can provide the link to our website on them. I think that's perfect because it would open up a conversation like, "Hey! We are headed in the right direction for gay rights, but not so much for transgender rights," and then use that time to remind everyone that this is still an issue.

In this way, the dynamic of group discussion enhanced the solution to the meeting's identified goal: educating the community about current LGBT injustice. By allowing for everyone's voices to be heard, rather than one leader instructing a group of followers, a new idea was produced and a collective decision was made that everyone was happy with and that they felt would be the best utility for motivating change. By building upon an original idea (Casey's idea of providing content), to incorporating Alex's idea of creating a talking point to bring people over to their booth, the bracelet served as a successful solution that blended two important elements of a problem together and, though the researcher was the one who suggested this, this common theme of relying on everyone's opinions held steady throughout the researchers time observing LGBTC.

While the summer was reserved for a lot of the educational events (June dedicated to gay pride), the meetings after August focused on more political responsibilities and legislative decisions. A major goal of LGBTC while the researcher made his observations was getting sexual orientation and gender identity on the list of protected classes in the city of Smalltown. As detailed earlier, LGBT individuals can still be fired from their jobs, evicted from their homes,

and denied service in the city of Smalltown and LGBTC had made it their priority to fight back on this. The nine leaders started attending the monthly city commissioner meetings and speaking during the Public Comment portion, articulating the importance of this issue. During the September meeting Alex stated, "we need to be there every month and speak during the public comment section. We need to stand up and say, 'It's time we do this' and if they don't do anything, then we start fighting back harder." The group agreed, but was unsure of how to "fight back harder."

After this meeting, Casey attended every commissioner meeting and emailed the mayor of Smalltown every week, Jamie presented statistics about transgender discrimination in the workplace during a commissioner meeting, but was brushed off. Despite their effort, the commissioners were not taking them seriously. From August to November, the group worked in a way where the President would attend the city commissioner meetings and speak on behalf of LGBTC and address the need for social change in Smalltown, but it became clear in those three months that one voice speaking for a group was not enough. Casey emphasized this in the November board meeting saying, "we need more voices than just mine and Jamie's every month. The commission won't fix the problem because they don't feel like there is a problem. We need to prove that this issue is effecting more than just two people." It was in this November meeting that legislative discussion was most salient.

Alex articulated during this meeting that they needed to develop a "political campaign" in order to get the city commission to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the list of protected classes in Smalltown. The group agreed, but Erin, a Member At Large, articulated that this wouldn't be possible unless they could prove they had "political clout." What Erin meant by this was that, though the city commission understood LGBTC's passion for getting this policy

passed, they had no political intentions to do it. Alex agreed, identifying that LGBTC has always been good about speaking up for injustice, but never acted with much political force. Alex stated, "We have a long history about speaking up for injustice, but when it comes to being politically savvy, LGBTC tends to fall flat." In order for anything to get done in regards for the non-discrimination policy to pass, Erin noted that they, as a group, needed to start fighting the commission more politically, enforcing change with "brute force and hardball politics." Erin continued by stating:

> We need to draft an anti-discrimination ordinance, we need to identify voters that would support the ordinance, we need to control the news in our favor, and we need to angle the conversation so that the other side always has to have "I'm a bigot" as their response. That's the brute force to this.

While some of the board members wanted to begin using this "brute force" strategy that Erin suggested, Alex argued that "Political clout is good, but we need to focus on building a campaign first. We need to identify key players that could reach out to possible voters, like a campaign manager. We need to do some research on how other LGBT rights groups passed non-discrimination ordinances in neighboring towns and communities. We need to come up with a strategic, step-by-step plan on how LGBTC was going to fight the commission before we just go into the commissioner meetings guns blazing." Alex was very adamant that simply, "flexing our political muscles" wouldn't be enough. Casey agreed that, not only was drafting and proposing an ordinance going to be a lot of work, but that they were going to have to work together in order to achieve success. "This ordinance needs to pass, but I know it's more than one person can do. If we are gonna' do this, we all have to commit to it."

This is where the outside work being done by LGBTC, in regards to legislation, began to shift to a more collective form of leadership. The decisions made in the board meetings were always agreed on together. This created cohesion within the group, but here the leaders of LGBTC recognized that to motivate others in the community to enact change, cohesion would have to be achieved outside of the group confides. Alex continues to articulate that getting this non-discrimination ordinance was going to be a lot of work and they needed to divvy this up, "I don't think we will have all of it figured out tonight, but what we do need to decide is if we have enough help and who can do what." Jesse furthered this explanation of outside focus and collective commitment passing the ordinance would require, "This is going to take us away from responsibilities that we would rather be doing, life responsibilities. We are all gonna' have to decide tonight if we are willing to give that up to focus on this, so that we can all speak for each other because, in order for this to work, we all will have to know what's going and the only way for that to happen is if everyone in the group is just as involved, responsive, and committed."

The November meeting was much longer than the other board meetings the researcher observed. This was because the leaders of LGBTC understood that they had their work cut out for them and they deliberated long and hard about whether they had the motivation within them to climb the hill ahead. During this meeting, the leaders proposed a chain of ideas, building towards the best possible solution to identify ways in which they could prove this notion of having "political clout" so that, when they proposed their anti-discrimination ordinance to the city commission, the commissioners would take them seriously, instead of brushing them off as they had been.

This meeting was important because, as Casey identified, "I have hit a wall in communication with my contacts in the city commission. I mean, the emails have completely

stopped and no one is returning my calls." Alex noted that, "They are tired of hearing the same voices and seeing the same people. The only way we are going to show we have political clout is if we bring people to these commissioner meetings in the masses." According to the leaders of LGBTC, the decision to remain unified in regards to this ordinance was one of the most influential decisions they have had to make because if they went at this in the wrong way, the commissioners would turn them down and they would lose the battle over obtaining equal rights for the LGBT individuals in Smalltown. Erin exemplifies the importance of this decision at the start of this meeting when he explains, "This is a very important decision we need to make tonight. There are commissioners on the city board that want this ordinance to pass, but they're afraid we will fuck it up. If we want this to pass, we need to be careful and do it right."

The leaders of LGBTC took their time with this decision and deliberated for approximately two hours. The group discussion during this meeting resembled previous discussions the group had engaged in, only the tone of this meeting was much more serious. The leaders of LGBTC were focused, many of them taking notes while others made comments. Their voices were quiet and there were several pregnant pauses throughout the meeting. It was clear this issue was important to all of them. In order to arrive to the best solution, the group engaged in discussion, spitting ideas back and forth, and amending ideas they thought were good, but not strong enough. One instance of this was when the group decided that they needed help to, as Alex suggested earlier, add to their numbers in order to promote Erin's notions of political clout.

> Alex: It would be good to identify the assets we may have on our side. You know, other groups in town that could help us get this ordinance passed? Maybe formal groups like the Smalltown Democrats?

Erin: I don't know about the Smalltown Democrats. They tend to be extremely liberal and our lack of connections with them might not be a bad thing.

Alex: But those people want seats in the commission. So if we identify them now they can help keep the ordinance in play after the next election.

Erin: I don't know, I just think it would be safer and in our better interest if we contacted less extreme organizations like, maybe the Student Democrats at the local University?

Alex: That's not a bad idea! We can also contact the LGBT group at the university too, there's a group of people with energy and a thirst for change.

Erin: See, these are good ideas, but the problem is that it doesn't add to our political clout if we get other people to do it.

Alex: Well, maybe we just send out an email to all of our members and tell them, "Hey, we are doing this, but we need your help." That way we use the people we already have, but we can show up in a large group.

Erin: And get everyone to come to the city commission meeting?

Alex: Exactly!

Jesse: We can get everyone to talk and maybe the commissioners will pass the ordinance just to end the meeting!

Alex: Wouldn't that be something?

Casey: I can draft the email.

Alex: Yea, let's draft an email identifying what we want to do and what we need help with, and then maybe use our annual party as a way to confirm this with all our members.

By the end of this meeting, the group was able to agree on three general directions they needed to take in order to build their political clout large enough for the city commission to take them

seriously. By utilizing a discussion-based method of goal setting, LGBTC was able to recognize that they did need help from others outside of their own organization to support their cause, and they were going to need to eventually run a political campaign, including identifying voters and seeking out commissioner candidates for the next city election. The third decision the group agreed on was that of research. In order to draft an ordinance, the leaders of LGBTC felt it was necessary to understand the process neighboring communities went through to get their anti-discrimination ordinances passed. This was specifically important in order to stress enforcement of discrimination violations.

Alex: How do you enforce it though? The enforcement part is where it gets messy.

Erin: Well, we need to look at other communities in this state that have passed it. I mean, from what I am aware of I don't think they proposed anything that's radical.

Jesse: Yea, but how do you enforce any of it? Whether it's radical or not? I mean, if a landlord refuses to rent to someone, how do they prove it's due to discrimination?

Alex: I agree. We need to study these other ordinances. Figure out what they're doing and if it's working. From what I understand, there is a human rights board that evaluates the situation and then they issue recommendations.

Casey: When I talked to my contacts in the commission already, they were very adamant on fines. If we propose this thing we need to make sure that there are no fines for violations or that the fines are manageable. But I agree, we need to do our research.

This discussion-based process allowed the leaders of LGBTC to identify every angle of the argument, dissect it as a group, and patch up the holes they found to make their strategy the strongest it could possibly be. By focusing the decision-making process through group

discussion, these leaders were able to accomplish more together than any one of them could have done on their own.

Individual Expertise

Lastly, each group member's individual expertise and personal experiences were encouraged in order to enhance the overall leadership of the group. In particular, experiences as a LGBT social minority or experiences as an ally were most salient. Often, the group turned to specific individuals to help solve issues because certain members within the group were better equipped to solve them due to their background, interests, and expertise. By alternating responsibilities based on expertise and experience, there was an ever-changing shift in leadership of the group, which tended to be shared rather than individualized. This reliance on everyone's individual expertise was confirmed in the focus group when Pat, Casey, and Jamie spoke up about the experiences and expertise everyone brought to the group.

After identifying the fact that research in past ordinances would be required in order for LGBTC to pass their own ordinance in Smalltown, Pat self-identified as the best person to do so. "I'm really good at finding articles about all different kinds of things, and I found all the laws and I contacted city attorneys." Members like Casey and Erin, were skilled in politics and took charge whenever LGBTC needed to hold meetings with the city commissioners. Pat identified this notion as well in the focus group; "Erin and Casey have taken on the majority of leadership when it comes to politics and talking to the commissioners." Jamie identified as a Trans Activist and always instructed the group on what to do in regards to transgender rights and injustices. In particular, Jamie often spoke up during the public comment portions of the city commissioner meetings when trans issues went unaddressed. Jamie stated, "No one else on the board can

address Trans issues like I can, 'cause I'm so involved in it and I'm the only Trans person on the board who is entirely out about it."

Additionally, Jamie talked about how Alex and Erin were knowledgeable in the history of LGBTC after holding formal positions on the previous board for so long and that the rest of the group benefited from their past experiences as well as provide the heterosexual voice for the rest of the group. " Alex and Erin have the whole historical knowledge of what they've gone through in the past with the challenges facing LGBTC, but they also have LGBT family members somewhere along the lines. They're advocates." Whenever the group seemed stumped on how to proceed, Alex and Erin guided them through what LGBTC had originally done and new channels they could take. Alex was frequently in contact with previous board members and was best suited with the ability to enlist help or get advice when the group needed to do so, often times commenting things like, "I'll send out an email to…" or "I'll get in touch with…" Finally, Jesse was well-connected throughout the community of Smalltown and knew what events were being held and how LGBTC could participate. Casey and Pat touched on Jesse's ability to contact other groups and organizations that didn't belong to LGBTC, but were vital to equality within the community of Smalltown.

Casey: Jesse is our main resource for contacting other LGBT groups in the community.

Pat: And he's also a native Smalltown resident, so he knows everybody. Jesse knows everyone in the local LGBT community, so we rely on him for contacts and events.

In order to maximize the results of solving a task or issue surrounding the community, the group would turn to the board member best equipped to suggest and motivate others to enact a solution.

In preparation for the April City Commissioner meeting, where LGBTC would propose their anti-discrimination ordinance, LGBTC divided up the work, taking on the responsibilities

they were individually best equipped to handle. Pat studied the ordinances already passed in neighboring communities. Jamie was always available to speak during the public comment portions of the City Commissioner meetings regarding trans issues, "I'm always ready to get up and speak about any bathroom issues and stuff like that. If someone gets up and tries to address that as a specific objection of privacy for whatever reason, I have like five or six things that I can hop right up after them and be all, 'this is why you're full of crap!'" Casey spoke about how she and Erin were able to draft the ordinance based on the research Pat provided, "What Pat did was give Erin and I the ammo we needed to propose the ordinance to the city commission." Working together to utilize their individual expertise in order to build the group up, allowed them to share the leadership in a collective way, where one person wasn't acting as the leader of LGBTC, they were all doing their individual parts to create cohesion amongst the group, unifying LGBTC as a whole.

By identifying and assimilating new members into the LGBTC board, making decisions through a group discussion process, and sharing the leadership in a way that allowed everyone to utilize their personal expertise and experiences, the leaders of LGBTC created cohesion amongst themselves both inside and outside of the board meeting sessions. As a whole, LGBTC was a cohesive group that relied on collective leadership in order to motivate the city commissioners to enact the social change of adding sexual orientation and gender identity to the list of protected classes, as well as educating other community members about the issues surrounding LGBT individuals.

Proactive Communication

The second communicative tactic the leaders of LGBTC used to motivate others to enact change was that of proactivity. The leaders of LGBTC were always working

against the current, in regards to getting their goals accomplished. In order to argue against the need for a non-discrimination policy, the commissioner's often claimed that, though discrimination against LGBT individuals exists elsewhere, it wasn't happening in Smalltown, forcing the leaders of LGBTC to actively articulate these problems that would otherwise go unnoticed. To do so, they had to proactively approach commissioner meetings in order to highlight injustices that would otherwise not surface as a focal point. The way in which the leaders of LGBTC proactively combated the city commission's defense was by first, building an emotional case that told the narrative of discrimination in Smalltown and second, by identifying allies.

Building A Narrative

Up until October of 2015, LGBTC worked with a strategy rooted in logical arguments, providing an overwhelming amount of statistics and information about the type of discrimination LGBT individuals face in the state on a day-to-day basis. This strategy wasn't getting very far in regards of motivating the city commissioners to vote on the non-discrimination policy. In one of the board meetings, Casey explained that, per her conversation with multiple commissioner members, the city wanted examples of discrimination against LGBT individuals and without documented examples they were not going to vote on an ordinance.

> What they said is our argument is compelling with all the statistics, but it's not
> happening here in our community. They want a documented agenda. I think if we
> give it, there's no doubt in my mind, some of them would vote for it.

The board realized that enacting a *reactive* strategy of defense (providing statistics and logical arguments during the public comment portion of the commission meetings after

the board makes a decision to deny LGBT protection) had gotten them as far as it could and that they needed to enact a more *proactive* line of defense so that they could be ready to set up their argument in a way that motivated the commissioners to want to enact change before they make a final vote.

When Casey explained to the board members that the city commission wanted proof of discrimination after claiming that it didn't exist in Smalltown, Jamie and Taylor immediately spoke up about discrimination they personally had experienced. Taylor, a member holding a formal position said that, "I mean, just thinking on my past experiences, there's no doubt in my mind that if some of these people knew who and what I was, there would be pressure to get rid of me." Jamie also articulated an experience of discrimination, "This has certainty happened to me because when they found out I was transgender, they immediately asked me, "how are we gonna' handle bathrooms?" and that's not something that would ever be asked to a cisgender person." Hearing these stories by two individual group members, Casey suggested gathering discriminatory incidents from as many people as possible within the LGBT community and compiling a list that they could then use as a resource to heighten awareness at a later date, if the commissioners continued deny that discrimination was taking place.

> So, what I'm thinking is, those stories have a date. They can be documented. We don't have to use names, but we need to file specific cases. We need to point out these concerns. If each of us can reach out and bring one story we can start to build a narrative to prove that discrimination is in fact happening here and that this ordinance would stop it.

At the end of this meeting, the leaders of LGBTC agreed that everyone should gather 7-10 stories from people they personally knew or other people that those people could reach out to. This was yet another example of collective leadership, but instead of relying on expertise as mentioned above, they were identifying narratives because, as Erin talked about in the November meeting, this new defense has more of an emotional pull to it, changing the argument from statistics that could happen to anyone into stories that make the commissioners understand that discrimination is happening to people their own community.

> It centers on the more kind-hearted approach, ya know? It's putting faces on what it means to be a [LGBT individuals] in Smalltown and why [this ordinance] isn't some crazy cooked up idea that we're wanting them to pass. This is impacting real people's lives.

> In the LGBTC board meetings that followed, the group discussed the stories each

of them had gathered. Taylor had found a historical case from Smalltown's past regarding employment and LGBT protection.

> Back in the nineties, not the current Police Chief, but his predecessor, got protection for LGBT officers in the contract between the county, but that has since been removed within the past ten years. Then they got rid of that Police Chief and got the present one.

Pat talked about a couple who was experiencing problems with a local school's administration to refuse the use of correct terms a transgender student identified with. "We have a friend whose daughter goes to [a local elementary school] and the school administration hasn't been really cooperative with addressing her as a female."

Gathering stories from community members was an important aspect of LGBTC's proactive defense against the city commission's rebuts because, in doing so, they were able to tell a holistic narrative of a collective community of LGBT individuals within Smalltown, not just stories from nine people who run an LGBT organization.

Not only did the leaders of LGBTC provide a document of written/collected stories from others, but during the April 2016 city commissioner meeting, they shared their own stories and invited others within the community of Smalltown to orally share theirs as well. After proposing the anti-discrimination ordinance to the commissioners, the mayor wanted to open discussion up to the floor, to see if this was an issue valued in the community. A line of people ran from the podium at the front of the room to the door in the back for approximately three hours, comprised of LGBT individuals who had experienced discrimination in regards of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

A local mother told the story of her own daughters' inability to accept their transgender sister and felt that:

> If this ordinance passed, maybe it would send the message to my own kids that being transgender is ok. If my daughter's own family discriminate against her, you can only imagine the kind of discrimination she has faced outside of our home.

A student at the local university got up and spoke about housing:

> I live in the dorm rooms on campus because the university is the only place in town I cannot be evicted from in regards to my sexual orientation. I am a Junior at the university and, while living there is nice, I don't want to live in the dorms forever. I want the experience of getting my own apartment, shopping for

groceries, inviting friends over to watch TV and play video games. I can't do that

because I'm afraid that if a landlord ever found out I am gay, I could be evicted.

Please, don't make me live in the dorms my entire college career.

A local teen arrived a little later in the evening, after watching the meeting unfold on the

local TV station and felt necessary to speak out on LGBT discrimination and the pain it

has caused him the past year:

In the past year alone, I have had fifteen of my friends commit suicide because

they are gay. Fifteen! I saw this all going on TV and I knew I had to come and let

my voice be heard. I haven't even told my parents I am gay because I'm afraid

that they won't accept me, but they're probably watching and know now. I want

to be a politician when I grow up, but when I see stuff like this and I see people

like you all, who have the ability to make our lives better and you don't… that

makes me not want to be one. Please protect us. Fifteen people is too many.

One by one, people stepped up and shared their stories, their personal narratives about

their experiences as an LGBT individual living in Smalltown and the discrimination they

have endured. No one spoke of statistics. No one spat out facts. No logical or deductive

argument had been made. The arguments presented were emotional, rooted in narrative,

which was exactly what LGBTC wanted. By being proactive and reaching out to as many

people as they knew and inviting them to share their story, LGBTC was successfully able

to shift the way in which the city commissioners thought about the issue, thus motivating

them to enact change. At the end of this meeting, the five city commissioners voted

unanimously to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the list of protected classes.

Identifying Allies

The leaders of LGBTC knew that the stories of discrimination were not going to be enough to motivate the city commissioners to enact this change, however. They knew that they could all reach out to LGBT individuals within the community to bring forth their narrations to the city commissioner meeting, but the narrations wouldn't be enough to fight the issue of religion with Smalltown. During the November meeting Alex talked about how, through religion, discrimination against LGBT individuals was allowed via the state constitution:

> The other part of the argument, as far as race and religion go, is that it's in the state constitution. So whatever municipalities for the violations are, well, they're backed by the state. Sexual orientation and gender identity are not backed by the state.

In that same meeting, the leaders of LGBTC talked about how they needed a way to fight the religious argument in order to work in their favor. Casey talked about how she had read a couple editorials published in Smalltown Times (a local newspaper) written by a local congregational leader about the need for equality in Smalltown and that they could try contacting her. "She had written a couple of editorials to Smalltown Times about how we need to be an inclusive community and what we needed to do. Jordan and I can meet with her and see if she'd be willing to help us?"

It was during this meeting that the group decided they needed to contact inclusive congregations and local clergy members who could act as allies for them, promoting the necessity for equality and identifying the religious aspect to it. Identifying these allies was a crucial moment for LGBTC because, as Casey articulated in the focus group, this group of people provided them with the ability to cancel out the oppositional argument:

The commissioner's main argument is that [the anti-discrimination ordinance] is a topic of religious of debate and so essentially, if others get up and say they don't want it for that reason then our clergy members canceled 'em out. Then [religion] becomes a non-issue. That was our strategy, and it worked.

This strategy was in full motion during the April 2016 commissioner meeting when proposed ordinance was brought to a vote. Not only were individuals sharing their stories, but clergy members in support of LGBTC's mission spoke up as well. Casey noted during that same focus group that they had a total of 23 clergy members, representing a total of seven congregations, and at least one member from each congregation was represented at this meeting.

Whenever the opposing side would stand up, read a verse from the bible, and articulate a religious aspect of why the ordinance shouldn't be passed, the supporting clergy members got in line to diffuse those claims, providing another religious remark that spoke in favor of LGBT inclusivity, thus canceling out or crippling the previous religious argument. A local religious leader of the opposing side argued the fact that, "no man shall lie with a man as he lies with a women, as this is immoral. This is in the bible, God's words and thus should be held in high order." A clergy member in support of the ordinance got up and argued that, "'honor and love thy neighbor' is also in the bible, so why should we not hold this in high order?" This went back and forth, some arguments relying on bible verses, others deeply rooted in personal beliefs, but what was good for LGBTC was that they were able to provide voices that were not LGBT and were not connected to LGBTC in any way, other than their support. Casey articulated that in the focus group. "The commissioners wanted other voices. They were sick of hearing the

nine of us talk. By contacting those clergy members and getting them to speak out in support of us provided that variety."

The leaders of LGBTC worked collectively with the local congregations, adding the representatives of these congregations to their email chain so that they could all remain in immediate contact with one another. They worked together to draft editorials for Smalltown Times, and, where the clergy members helped LGBTC understand the religious side of the debate, the leaders of LGBTC educated the clergy members on some of the more political sides to it. "The letters we wrote [to clergy] really helped us," Casey noted in the focus group. "After reading them, other congregations reached out to us or the clergy members we had already been in contact with and asked, 'what can we do to help?'" The relationship LGBTC both developed and maintained enhanced their ability to remain proactive, as the clergy members were able to predict what the opposing congregations would say, based on their understood reputation of them. Together, they were able to remain one step ahead.

Though the city commissioners voted unanimously to amend the list of protected classes to include sexual orientation and gender identity, they did not vote to pass the specific ordinance LGBTC drafted and proposed. This was because the commissioners couldn't agree on the enforcement aspect of violations. One of the commissioners felt very strongly about passing the ordinance the way LGBTC proposed it.

> If we do not pass this ordinance with the enforcement provided, this will have no teeth and might as well not be passed at all. People need to know that if they actively discriminate, there will be repercussions and this ordinance does this.

The majority of the commissioners were uncomfortable with the articulated instruction of enforcement because it gave Human Rights and Services Board too much power (in their proposed ordinance, LGBTC suggested that a Human Rights and Services Board should act as a mediator to try and settle the dispute, however if an agreement couldn't be made, then this board would levy fines or take other forms of action). However, LGBTC took this meeting and the unanimous vote to include sexual orientation and gender identity as a protected class as a major win, and the first step toward LGBT equality within Smalltown.

By creating cohesion within their group, the LGBT leaders were able to speak, think, and act as a unified force within the community, engaging in a type of shared and collective leadership where they were all stronger together rather than individually. This cohesion allowed them to garner defense in a proactive way, shifting the argument from logical to emotional by building a narrative of discrimination and identifying allies within the community to support their cause and aid in their defense against the opposition. This analysis gives light to two major implications on the theoretical and practical level, which will be detailed further in the following chapter.

Chapter 5 - Discussion

Through this research, it is evident that the leaders of LGBTC enacted a type of leadership style that collectively utilizes the individual expertise of everyone that made up the board. This created a shared form of leadership where, at any given moment, the individual best fit to lead the group (or take charge), was given the ability to do so. This adds to the scholarship of leadership because, though LGBT leaders are often reported to specifically engage in transformational leadership, this research shows that LGBT leaders also engage in relational styles of leadership.

LGBTC enacted shared leadership in order to motivate others to enact change by communicating cohesively and proactively; where the group identified like-minded people to comprise a new board, enabled them to assimilate into an already existing systematic process of political and social activism, utilized group discussion as a decision-making tool so that everyone's voices and ideas would be heard, encouraged and relied on everyone's individual experiences and expertise in order to enhance the overall performance and success of the group, shifted their argumentative rhetoric from that of logical to emotional by building a narration of discrimination against LGBT individuals within Smalltown, and identifying external allies to help combat opposing issues.

This section will articulate the implications proposed by the previous analysis on both the theoretical and practical levels. Next, the researcher will identify the limitations of the study and the areas for future research before, finally arriving to a conclusion.

Theoretical Implications

First, on a theoretical level, the leaders of LGBTC engaged in a form of relational leadership that was heavily dependent on their expressions of their own emotions as well as controlling the emotions of the city commissioners. As noted in the literature review, controlling and expressing emotions is a central factor to relational leadership (Salovey & Mayer (1990). LGBTC was able to do this through their use of narrative, successfully changing the mindset of the city commissioners from that of "discrimination is not happening within the city of Smalltown" to, "we know discrimination exists, let's fix it."

The second way in which LGBTC engaged in relational leadership was through their reactions with one another. Consistent interaction with one another and maintaining relationships within a group setting is a key factor in relational leadership (Humphrey, 2002). The leaders of LGBT did this by, remaining in contact with each other, not only through meeting on a regular month-by-month basis but by engaging in telecommunication in between .This allowed them to establish achievable goals and enact change, which Bass (1981) argues as a vital part of relational leadership.

Finally, LGBTC engaged in a specific form of relational leadership through sharing leadership roles and responsibilities. Shared leadership is defined as, "an emergent team property that results from the distribution of leadership influence across multiple team members" (Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007, p. 1218). This kind of leadership process exists due to the uncertainty groups working as a team often experience and the unlikeliness that one member of that team could successfully perform all functions of leadership (Day, Gronn, & Salas, 2004). Shared leadership also occurs when a group, team, or organization focus on knowledge-based tasks that rely on

expertise and skills, which may differ between the comprised individuals (DeNisi, Hitt, & Jackson, 2003). This kind of leadership is successful when all the individuals that make up the team engage in leadership abilities that build the group up through influencing one another, motivate and support one another, and utilize the tools of interaction and negation to distribute specific responsibilities (Carson et al., 2007).

While not always the best method, O'Toole, Gabraith, & Lawler (2002) articulate that shared leadership is only successful when the group engaging in it experiences three unique divisions of leadership. These three divisions are (1) the division of tasks, (2) the division of credit, and (3) the division of communication. According to O'Toole et al. (2002) Groups that experience success in shared leadership will first be able to adequately divide achievable tasks in order to accomplish goals. This creates a form of teamwork where everyone takes on his or her fair share of the work in order to lighten the load for everyone else. In regards to LGBTC, this is where the group relied on everyone's individual areas of expertise.

Secondly, O'Toole et al. (2002) articulate the need for a division of credit. They argue here that putting aside the individual ego can often be a difficult task for an individual, but groups engaging in shared leadership are able to promote one another after a job well done, as well as recognize their own shortcomings. LGBTC always identified the members enacting change and challenged each other to achieve similar results. Finally, O'Toole et al. (2002) state that the division of communication is key and that everyone within the group should be able to speak about any issues or topics important to the group. Without communication, shared leadership would fail. LGBTC communicated

everything, as previously detailed, with one another. Every decision made was made collectively.

Passing the anti-discrimination ordinance proved to be a difficult task due to all the moving parts of gender equality and acceptance of LGBT individuals, specifically in regards to transgender rights. With the concerns of gender assigned bathrooms and perceptions of fellow employees and customer perception, the city commissioners were hesitant to add gender identity as a protected class. This created a difficulty for the leaders of LGBTC to enact one linear form of leadership. It was clear that, in order to fight this defense, LGBTC was going to have to rely on knowledge, skill, expertise, and experience to de-myth the city's argument. One leader would not have been able to do this, as their President was neither transgender, nor experienced the kinds of discrimination transgendered individuals often do.

This shift in knowledge and skill also occurred in drafting and arguing the ordinance, as LGBTC relied on the skills embedded within specific group members to perform these tasks, such as Pat providing the research on other anti-discrimination ordinances past in neighboring communities and Casey and Erin performing the political action of proposing the ordinance to the city commissioners. The completion of these tasks required expertise and skill that not all of them possessed individually, but existed within the group. By shifting leadership to the appropriate member in order to accomplish a task or goal, LGBTC worked in an incredibly fluid way where they relied on their relationships and trust within each other to accomplish their overall goal (passing the anti-discrimination ordinance).

LGBTC furthers the scholarship of, not only relational leadership in regards to shared leadership, but also the communicative influences LGBT leaders have on motivating others to enact change, which typically elicited emotional pull and relationship building. The leaders of LGBTC encouraged the emotional expression of others, motivating them to attend the commissioner meetings and share their stories. The leaders of LGBTC established relationships with local congregations so they could come together to fight for social change. Without the relationships they developed within the community or the emotional arguments they provided through the use of narration, it may not have been possible for the leaders of LGBTC to convince the city commissioners that discrimination against LGBT individuals was salient in Smalltown.

Practical Implications

Secondly, the collective modes of leadership LGBTC used through their discussion-based decision-making and their ability to create cohesion amongst the entire group provides a practical implication of inclusivity. This idea of inclusivity can benefit other organizations that may be experiencing discrimination of their own, specifically for other minority groups.

LGBTC worked in a way where everyone's voices were heard. By basing the decision-making process through group discussion, there was never one person controlling the direction in which the group should go, rather the entire group was engaged in this process. What benefited LGBTC the most was the inclusion of various members throughout the LGBT community. By having representation of the gay community, the transgender community, and the heterosexual community, all angles of discrimination could be detailed. The inclusive nature of the group allowed for various minority groups to come together fighting for change as one, but also provided a group in mass, allowing LGBTC to prove that they had political clout in numbers.

Though they were never associated with LGBTC, the clergy members from local congregations and the non-LGBTC LGBT community members who experienced discrimination personally enhanced LGBTC's ability to motivate the city commission to enact change. By reaching out to other individuals experiencing discrimination in the community and by identifying local congregations to combat the religious opposition, LGBTC enhance their argument by providing a variety of voices. Without the inclusion of these groups or these voices, LGBTC may not have had enough evidence to prove discrimination existed. It is important for other groups to include voices that give various angles to the argument so that a proactive form of defense can be made. Also, by networking with other organizations, other groups can gain a better understanding of an overall experience within their community, provide numbers, and generate a more inclusive way of achieving their ascribed goals.

Limitations and Future Research

LGBTC was chosen as the focus group for this research because of the injustice experienced within the LGBT community of Smalltown and the commitment LGBTC had to achieving political rights of this marginalized group. After observing LGBTC for five months, patterns of leadership communication to create social change were identified and examined. Because this group existed on a local level in a small Midwestern town, the findings are not representative of all LGBT rights groups or groups sharing the same marginalized status. For example, do larger LGBT rights groups, that exist on a National scale, like The Human Rights Campaign, engage in the same kinds of relational styles?

Additional research also needs to be conducted in regards to how marginalized groups enact relational leadership, specifically in regards to how this shared leadership is communicated. Is this kind of leadership salient in other marginalized groups like the

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), or just groups who are marginalized for their sexual orientation and gender identity? For instance, do groups who are fighting for racial or gender equality engage in the same kind of communication surrounding relational leadership or do they enact other strategies that enable them to motivate others to enact change?

One of the reasons why shared leadership worked so well in regards to LGBTC was because all the members belonging to this group engaged in a shared vision. Lambert (2002) explains that a shared vision occurs when, "participants reflect on their core values and weave those values into a shared vision to which all can commit themselves" (p. 38). Because the members identified with the mission and vision statements of LGBTC and internalized the notions of equality for all, they were all invested with making the community a better place.

This shared vision occurred, in part, because all of the LGBTC board members either personally were impacted or were close to others who were impacted by legislation in Smalltown; in other words, their work promoting LGBT equity had direct bearing on their lives. If the proposed ordinance didn't pass, many of the LGBTC group members wouldn't have achieved equal rights in their home town.

While shared vision helped LGBTC achieve social change, the commitment to this shared vision based on personal investment and consequences may be different for other groups with shared vision. Future research should explore if shared vision can be achieved in a group setting consisting of individuals who do not belong to one specific community or group.

Because the leaders of LGBTC worked on a volunteer status, it would be beneficial for future research to consider other voluntary run organizations. How do leaders motivate others to enact change when there are no extrinsic (e.g. financial) rewards or benefits? How do leaders motivate others to enact change when a specific area of injustice doesn't necessarily affect them?

A final limitation comes from the researchers position in the group. Some of the decisions LGBTC made in regards to motivating other to enact change, were articulated by the researcher. Because the researcher entered the group with existing knowledge regarding leadership and communication, his influence in the group may have directed them to decisions would otherwise not have been enacted. Future research without participatory observation might result in a different focus and perspective of the leadership in the group.

Conclusion

This research was interested in how LGBT individuals motivate others to enact change. By observing a local LGBT civic rights group and identifying the common communicative themes throughout their monthly board meetings, a city commissioner meeting, and a focus group interview, the research was able to conclude that LGBT leaders engage in cohesive communication by relying on group discussion for decision-making, encourage individuality by relying on the personal expertise and experiences held by every member within the group. LGBT leaders also engage in proactive communication, identifying the goal they wish to achieve and develop an emotional argument through the use of narration and identifying external allies to help them fight their cause.

Though no national anti-discrimination law is currently in place, groups like LGBTC are fighting to change this. Discrimination against the LGBT community is lessoning, but there are still policies in place that allow for this discrimination to exist. By communicating the necessities that every person, no matter what their sexual orientation, gender identity, race, religion, or color is, leaders like those belonging to LGBTC may be able to provide this national policy that we so desperately need. Change is happening, and by communicating for the acceptance of everyone we might, one day, all be treated equally.

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Appendix A - Interview Question

1.) In the November meeting, there was a lot of talk about needing a structured plan and, basically, "getting our butts in gear." I believe this proposed ordinance is proof of that, so, why don't you tell me a little bit about that process? What were the steps you guys took to get all that in order?

2.) How was leadership rotated? Specifically from the previous board onto your guys. What did that look like? How did you guys specifically get involved?

3.) from where this organization was when I first started the observations, to where it has come now, it seems that the variety of representation within the group has enhanced the success that you're experiencing? Am I right in what I'm seeing? How has this variety of LGBT representation within the group added to your success?

4.) How would you describe this group of you nine. How do you relate to one another?

5.) How does leadership within FHHRP work?

6.) Describe to me how the planning process for the board meetings. What all goes into that process?

7.) If you could articulate an overall goal, what's the one major thing you want to accomplish with this group?

8.) What more would you need to get those goals accomplished?

Appendix B- Code Book

Code	Definition/Description of leadership style	Units
Individual Leadership	Any form of leadership style that is influences by specific traits or individual characteristics.	44
Contextual Leadership	Any form of leadership style that is governed by situation or context.	34
Relational Leadership	Any form of leadership style that relies on emotion or interaction.	175
Developmental Leadership	Any form of leadership style relies on developing followers into potential leaders.	38