

## **From Darkness to Daylight: The Ascendancy of Psychological Research of LGBT in Puerto Rico.**

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### **Resumen**

En este artículo se provee un trasfondo breve del estatus actual de los estudios psicológicos de LGBT en Puerto Rico. Una revisión histórica resalta el hecho que hasta hace apenas una década atrás, la investigación psicológica y discusiones de erudición sobre LGBT en Puerto Rico eran fragmentadas y escasas. Sin embargo, durante la última década se pueden documentar avances y éxitos en áreas tan diversas como investigación, políticas públicas, actividades profesionales, y presencia sistemática en los medios noticiosos. En este artículo revisamos los contenidos de las dos revistas principales de psicología en Puerto Rico y cuantificamos el número de artículos sobre LGBT desde que estas revistas comenzaron a publicarse y también presentamos los resultados de las presentaciones profesionales de LGBT en las convenciones de la Asociación de Psicología de Puerto Rico (APPR). Por último, cuantificamos el número de libros profesionales sobre LGBT en las últimas tres décadas. Los resultados indican que desde el 1980 al 2005 las publicaciones profesionales psicológicas y presentaciones en la APPR incrementaron exponencialmente luego del 2007. Documentamos que desde el 2007 hasta el presente se ha incrementado el trabajo sistemático relacionado a LGBT, en donde incluimos libros, artículos, disertaciones doctorales, boletines especiales, guías, presentaciones y política pública. Un avance notable ocurrió en el 2007 cuando dentro de la APPR se creó un Task Force cuyo propósito era avanzar la presencia del tema dentro del seno de la psicología puertorriqueña. El Task Force permitió, por primera vez en Puerto Rico, la alianza de un conglomerado de psicólogos/as que facilitaron el estudio riguroso y y discusión de LGBT en foros públicos e incluso dentro de la APPR. A la luz de la productividad y éxito obtenido en la última década,

ofrecemos ciertas recomendaciones que pueden ser de ayuda para continuar avanzando los estudios en Puerto Rico y otros países Latinoamericanos.

Palabras claves: *LGBT, psicología en Puerto Rico, política pública, investigación psicológica*

### **Abstract**

In this article, we provide a brief background of the current status of psychological LGBT studies in Puerto Rico. An historical inspection highlights the fact that until a nearly a decade ago psychological research and scholarly discussions of LGBT in Puerto Rico was fragmented and negligible. Nevertheless, the last decade has seen notable advances and successes in such diverse activities as research, public policy, professional activities, and a wide and constant presence in mass media activities. We review the contents of the two leading psychological journals published in Puerto Rico and quantified the number of articles on LGBT since the inception of the two journals and also present the results of the number of LGBT professional presentations in the Conventions of the *Puerto Rico Psychological Association* (PRPA). Lastly, we quantify the number of professional books related to LGBT studies in the last three decades. The results indicate that from 1980 to 2005 professional psychological publications and presentations were absent or negligible in Puerto Rico. Also, the number of professional presentations in the PRPA incremented exponentially after 2007. We document that from 2007 to the present we have seen a wealth of scholarly work related to LGBT that includes books, articles, doctoral dissertations, special bulletins, guidelines, presentations, and public policy. A particularly notable advancement was achieved in the PRPA when in the year 2007 it established a Task Force to advance the presence of LGBT among Puerto Rican psychologists. The Task Force permitted, for the first time in Puerto Rico, the alliance of a conglomerate of psychologists that allowed the

rigorously study and discussion of the LGBT in open public forums and inside the PRPA. In light of the productivity and successes obtained in the last decade, we offer some recommendations that may be helpful to further advance LGBT studies in Puerto Rico and in other Latin American countries.

Keywords: *LGBT, psychology in Puerto Rico, public policy, LGBT psychological research*

One of the main conclusions of the social history of LGBT communities, is that sexual behavior, orientation, and identity occurs within a cultural context (Greenberg, 1990). As culture is a dynamic and evolving process, it is not surprising to note that LGBT individuals has been constructed differently in many parts of the world and at different periods of time (Aldrich, 2006). For example, while there has been advances in some Western countries related to protections and rights of the LGBT communities, the counterpoint is that at least in 76 countries and societies being gay or lesbian is strictly illegal and/or punishable by death in five countries (Zea & Nakamura, 2014). Such diverse pathways are deeply related to structural and social factors such as the influence of religion institutions, societal stigma, and discriminatory political agendas. The consequence has been that LGBT individuals has been oppressed at multiple levels.

Precisely, as psychological research and interventions are deeply influenced by their cultural milieu, psychologists took an active part in the agenda of discriminating the LGBT community by promoting pathological viewpoints related to their covert or overt manifestations (Drescher & Merlino, 2007). In the past three decades, after the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (American Psychiatric Association, 1980) removed homosexuality as a pathological entity, psychologists in general has taken a more proactive

view of LGBT individuals, as reflected in the guideline published by the *American Psychological Association* (2012).

In this article the authors will demonstrate how in about a decade, the field of LGBT studies in Puerto Rico transcended from total obliquity to one that at the moment is a vigorous field in terms of publications, research and a central topic in the *Puerto Rican Psychological Association* (PRPA). One of our goals is to highlight those positive tasks and resolutions that accelerated and consolidated LGBT as a genuine and important psychological topic. In this way, our successes can potentially be extrapolated to other Latin American countries that essentially endorse heteronormativity as a rule.

### **LGBT Studies Prior to 2007**

Puerto Rico is a Caribbean island with a strong preponderance of traditional Latin American values; among them more than 90% of its inhabitants are of a Christian denomination and there is an emphasis on traditional family values. Homosexuality and other variants forms of expressing sexual identities and orientations are strongly condemned by a wide margin in Puerto Rican society. According to a document released by the Pew Research Center (2014), 55% of the Puerto Rican population oppose gay marriage and 62% assert that homosexuality is wrong. The institutionalization of heterosexism and homophobia in Puerto Rico has had a significant impact on the practice of psychologists, as it led many practitioners to assume the adoption of heterosexuality as the standard, natural and only acceptable life option. As psychology has a strong component of reflecting societal values, there was a dearth of information on LGBT communities in our psychological milieu. The consequence was the invisibility of the LGBT community. This invisibility shielded many important domains of psychological practice, specially research and scholarly presentations.

To document this point, a group of researchers recently completed a bibliometric study of the two leading psychological journals published in Puerto Rico: *Ciencias de la Conducta* (Journal of Behavioral Science) published since 1986; and the *Revista Puertorriqueña de Psicología* (Puerto Rican Journal of Psychology) published since 1981 (Martínez-Taboas, et al., 2016). The results of the bibliometric study revealed that from 1981 to 2002 no articles (0%) were published related to LGBT. This is a startling fact because from 1981 to 2002 both journals published over 275 articles. Telling was the fact that the first article on LGBT was published in 2003. *So, in the first two decades of those journals, not a single article was published on LGBT.* Another notable finding was that from 2002 to 2007, of the seven articles on LGBT, nearly all of them (>80%) were related to HIV. No studies were published about the healthy lifestyles of the LGBT community and their resiliency. Importantly, the bibliometric analysis revealed that in eight years (from 2008 to 2016) both journals published 18 articles related to LGBT, which accounts to 72% of all articles in a period of 35 years.

Another proxy to obtain data about the importance of LGBT studies is related to the Annual Conventions of the *Puerto Rican Psychological Association* (PRPA). An analyses revealed that more than 75% of all the conferences related to LGBT studies were presented from 2008-2016. This fact is important as the PRPA is the only and leading organization that represents psychologists in Puerto Rico.

Additionally, scholarly books written by Puerto Rican psychologists about LGBT were absent until 2005. To document this point, we consulted a handbook of LGBT studies that references all the scholarly work that has been published in Puerto Rico (Vázquez-Rivera, Martínez-Taboas, Francia-Martínez & Toro-Alfonso, 2016). We found that the first scholarly book about LGBT was published in 2005 (Toro-Alfonso & Rodríguez-Madera, 2005). Consonant with what we documented with scholarly articles, all the other six books

were published from 2007 to 2016 (Toro-Alfonso, 2007, 2008; Rodríguez-Madera, 2009; López-Ortiz & De Jesús, 2009; Toro-Alfonso & Martínez-Taboas, 2011; Vázquez-Rivera, Martínez-Taboas, Francia-Martínez & Toro-Alfonso, 2016).

We can conclude, with reasonable certitude that for nearly three decades LGBT studies and research were absent from the praxis of Puerto Rican psychologists. We can speculate that a possible deterrent to openly investigate the subject of LGBT were the biases and resistance of the psychological community toward individuals who practiced behaviors that were seen as antagonistic toward the cultural values of Puerto Rican society. That devaluation produces constraints in the intellectual curiosity of most psychologists, creating ambiguity and discomfort, even if merely considering the idea of embarking is a scholarly pursuit of the subject of LGBT. Curiously enough, this situation is not unique to LGBT studies, as Whitley (2010) has empirically documented that until 2000 there were no professional psychological publications related to another highly discriminated subject: atheism. It is not surprising to find that atheists are regarded by most persons in the USA as social outcasts (Gervais, Shariff & Norenzayan, 2011).

### **LGBT Studies in Puerto Rico from 2007 to the Present**

It has been stated with considerable evidence, that science is a social creature (Longino, 2013). By this we mean, that scientific studies are not produced in a vacuum; on the contrary, they are intricately influenced by a host of social, political, economic and religious variables.

We contemplate that the turning point in the study of LGBT in Puerto Rico was the confluence of some social forces that accentuated LGBT as a legitimate and important subject matter to psychologists and Puerto Rican society as well. One of the most notable influences can be

identified to the year 2007. In that year the President of the PRPA (Alfonso Martínez-Taboas, Ph.D.) decided to emphasize in his presidency the subject of LGBT studies, publishing various articles in the popular press and informing members of the PRPA that it was the right time to recognize the LGBT community and to advocate in their favor. Martínez-Taboas also began publicly to raise strong critiques to some widely-held myths about the LGBT community (e.g., that they are mentally insane; that they are incapable of sustaining healthy families). But most importantly, Martínez-Taboas founded within the PRPA a Task Force of LGBT Studies. He decided that this Task Force ought to be coordinated by one of the most respected psychologists in Puerto Rico and one that was particularly interested in LGBT studies: Dr. José Toro-Alfonso (2007). Fortunately, he accepted the invitation and immediately began a productive and creative Task Force that put LGBT studies in front of the PRPA. To give credibility to the Task Force, Dr. Martínez-Taboas recruited some ten additional members that included many well-known and respected psychologists in Puerto Rico that previously has expressed interest in LGBT studies.

What were the aims of the Task Force? In the first place, it would attempt to create an unbiased intellectual space where members of the PRPA and other participants of the general society could be informed about the unsustainability of continuing to ignore an important minority population in our society. So, the members of the Task Force created an intellectual and social conundrum where through press releases, special bulletins, radio, tv, and electronic media began a serious and responsible campaign to articulate the rights of the LGBT community. Secondly, for the first time in the history of the PRPA, in 2008 a Magisterium Panel within the Annual Convention was presented, and in that same year an intellectual space was created to open a dialogue between all the members of the LGBT Task Force and the assistants of the Annual PRPA Convention. Those activities opened an intellectual door that until that moment had been completely closed. Thirdly, the members of the Task Force coordinated with each

successive President of the PRPA for the continuity and expansion of the work of the Task Force. That was important, as each successive president showed a strong commitment to the tasks and goals of the LGBT Task Force.

As we will document in the rest of this article, the LGBT Task Force has had an enormous impact on the subject of LGBT. In a nutshell: dozens of conferences and workshops, two important edited books (Toro-Alfonso & Martínez-Taboas, 2011; Vázquez-Rivera, Martínez-Taboas, Francia-Martínez & Toro-Alfonso, 2016), the creation and publishing of the first guidelines to address in an evidence-based way the LGBT community, and depositions at the legislature at the Senate of the Government of Puerto Rico, are some example of the productivity of the Task Force.

In sum, the LGBT Task Force of the PRPA was a turning point in the history of the advancement of psychological studies of LGBT in Puerto Rico. For the first time, professionals, students, and other scholars could find within the psychological community a well-respected group of activists and scholars who fearless advanced the field of LGBT in a responsible and educational way. The rest of this article aims to articulate many of the details that transformed this field in Puerto Rico.

### **The Impact to the Puerto Rican Psychological Science**

The impact that the LGBT Task Force has had on scientific work has been notable. The Task Force has been responsible for the creation of evidence-based standards to work with the LGBT community (Puerto Rico Psychological Association, 2008, 2014), and also two scholarly books, scholarships, memorials for bills, resolutions for social and legal support on controversial issues, newsletter, online educational campaigns, conferences, dissertations, research, scientific articles and more.

One of the Task Force's first works was the *Standards to Work and Intervention with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Communities* (APPR, 2008). This publication represented a fundamental, essential and ethical positioning to the psychologist working with the LGBT community. This material was approved by the PRPA Council, College of Social Work Professionals of Puerto Rico, Teachers of Puerto Rico Federation, Latin-American Center of Sexual Health Promotion, Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors, and Therapists (AASECT), Puerto Rican Association of Education, Counseling, and Sex Therapy (AsPECTS) and the American Academy of Clinical Sexologists. This document was the first of its kind in Puerto Rico, and it gave professionals the assurance of effective and ethical interventions. Because of the advances in international and local research, six years later, the standard was evaluated, edited and updated (APPR, 2014). Furthermore, a glossary section was attached to introduce the reader to LGBT terminology and the format was adjusted to make it easier to read.

The Task Force was also responsible for the first professional book to systematically review LGBT issues in the Island "*Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender: Notes on their health from psychology*" (Toro-Alfonso & Martínez-Taboas, 2011). This seven chapter's book, was a compilation of reviews and research related to LGBT in Puerto Rico. The contents of the book represented the best LGBT research that existed at this time.

To increase the scientific and clinical interest on the LGBT community the Task Force created a student annual scholarship that granted \$1,000.00 for the best dissertation on the subject. This scholarship has the purpose of increasing the attention of graduate students to the topic of LGBT and increase scientific knowledge about the LGBT community in Puerto Rico.

Five years later, the Task Force decided to publish a second book; this time more like a comprehensive handbook, which included an interdisciplinary viewpoint, and the collaboration of some 30 leading Puerto Rican historians, social workers and psychologists. The book was titled "*LGBT 101: An introductory look*" and had 19 chapters covering theoretical, psychological and legal issues about the community (Vázquez-Rivera, Martínez-Taboas, Francia-Martínez & Toro-Alfonso, 2016). The *LGBT 101* book has been used as a textbook for courses in many disciplines such as psychology, counseling, social work, and law.

As an additional professional outlet for publishing about LGBT, in the year 2010 the Task Force created a bi-annual bulletin titled "*Diversity*". The Diversity Bulletin is intended to educate the membership of the PRPA and the general public. Consequently the bulletin publishes short scientific articles, literature reviews, brief research reports, book reviews, debates, LGBT literary art, and news of interest, among others. This newsletter has facilitated the divulgation of current practices and debates on the topic.

The increasing importance and priority of the LGBT subject in psychology caused an upsurge of investigations on the subject. The first dissertation on LGBT in Puerto Rico was written by Norma Maldonado (1994) and was linked to the issue of HIV in homosexual men (see Table 1). After this dissertation, more than 40 thesis and dissertations have been published about different facets of LGBT from the viewpoint of psychological science (see Figure 1). It should be noted that the number of publications increased and doubled since the creation of the LGBT Task Force due to the visibility that it created. Particularly the issue of gay men was the most studied and the subject of bisexuality the least attended.

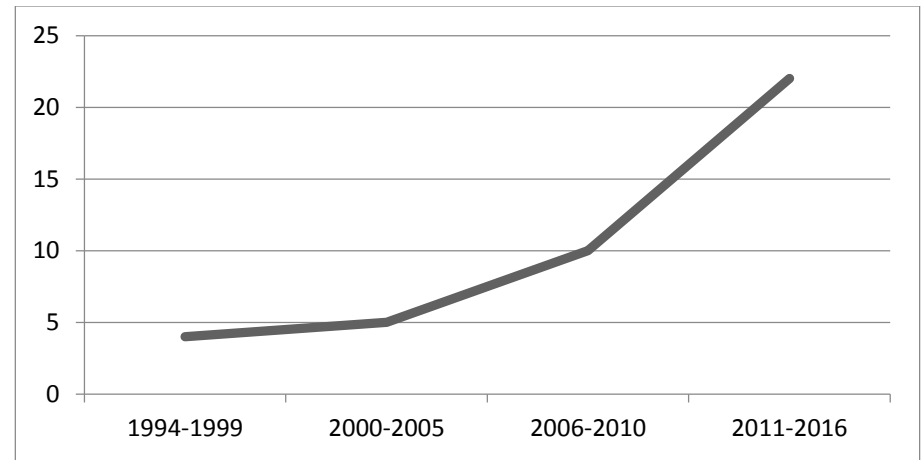


Figure 1. Number of Dissertations in LGBT Topics per Year.

The Task Force has also contributed to the advancement of scientific research. Annually the Task Force performs a research plan that includes some type of empirical investigation on LGBT. These investigations are generally focused on issues related to the improvement of adequate and effective interventions with the LGBT community. Such efforts culminate in the publication of peer review articles and professional conferences aimed at disseminating information and increasing scientific data about the Puerto Rican LGBT community (Martínez-Taboas, Jiménez-Colón, Torres-Narváez, Colón-Laboy, Méndez-Ruiz, Valdez-Pimentel & González-Jiménez, 2016).

Other important activities that has emanated from the Task Force are the following: First, a one-day symposium titled *Eliminating myths: Clinical, legal and health perspectives of the LGBT Community* (April 28 and 29, 2011). Second, a series of Continuum Education on homophobic bullying, affirmative therapies, and LGBT elderly. Third, various educational panels at the Annual PRPA Conventions with topics such as LGB adolescence (2010), community violence (2011), lesbianism (2012), bisexuality (2013), same sex families (2014), LGB

affirmative therapies (2015), trans affirmative therapies (2016), and eight university tours across the island discussing the Task Force objectives and goals. Definitively, the diverse intellectual production of the members of the Task Force of the PRPA, produced an upsurge of interest in LGBT in recent Conventions of the PRPA. In Figure 2 we can appreciate the marked recent intellectual production at the conventions of the PRPA from 2008-2016. Additionally, some members of the Task Force has been publishing research articles and literature reviews in important psychological journals published in Puerto Rico (Esteban & Vázquez-Rivera, 2015; Francia-Martínez, Esteban & Lespier, 2016; Vázquez-Rivera & Esteban, 2015).

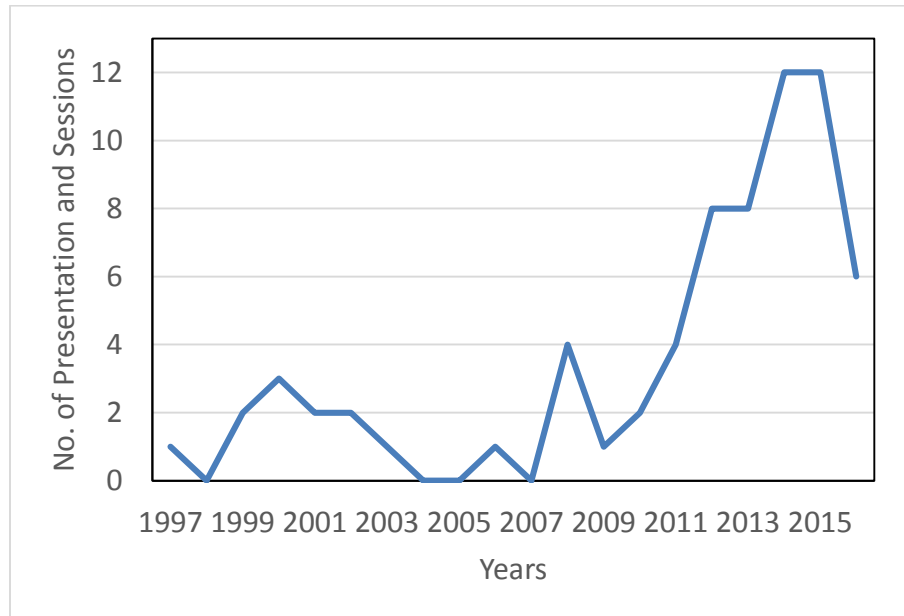


Figure 2. Number of Presentations and Sessions at the Puerto Rican Psychological Association Addressing Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Trans Topics Per Year.

Note. 2005 and 2007 data are missing. Cartels are not included.

### Public Policy Impact

The Stonewall riots are the single most transcendent event in gay liberation movements in the United States. These riots consisted of violent reactions of the gay community towards police raids in the Stonewall Inn in June, 1969, in Greenwich Village, New York City. Bottles, punches and clog blows sent a message to police and an intolerant government, but also provoked in a ripple effect LGBT movements across the world. Puerto Rico was no exception.

This event provoked in Puerto Rico the creation of the Gay Pride Coalition (*Coalición de Orgullo Gay*) which was created in the 1970's to fight against a sodomy law that existed in the Island (Laureano, 2016). This group created a news bulletin called *Come Out (Pa'fuera)* which developed a gay newsletter never before seen. Even though *Pa'fuera* wasn't as widely spread at the organizers would have liked, it connected the gay community. Another contribution of this coalition, was the Gay Pride House (*Casa de Orgullo Gay*) which was a place where the LGBT community could meet. They organized the first Gay Pride Parade in 1974 even though death threats have been made public.

Thirty-eight years after Stonewall and thirty-three years after the first intent of a gay pride parade in the island, psychologists in our Island decided to take a stand and make public, in a political and professional act, that our profession supported the LGBT community. The PRPA Task Force on LGBT studies was created in 2007 to precisely take a stand and offer responsible and evidence-based information on LGBT.

The LGBT Task Force has placed diverse sexual orientation and gender identity as central issues in its agenda. Since the creation of the Task Force, it has been active to send press releases educating the public at large about evidence-based practices as related to LGBT issues. In 2013, the members of the LGBT Task Force diligently wrote various memorials on bills that pursued to legitimate same sex, another

related to domestic violence protection laws, another to protect LGBT individuals of work discrimination, and finally arguing to extend adoption rights to same sex partners. Two of these memorials requested public depositions at the senate, appearances which were also reported on the written press. Even more, in March 6, 2014, a local radio personality used homophobic language to call upon a university chancellor. The committee expressed its repudiation to this conduct, and urged all media companies to use appropriate and inclusive language. To secure the PRPA affirmative viewpoint, the committee has developed and sought approval on some resolutions. Since 2007, the LGBT Task Force has passed, in the annual meeting, resolutions that were in favor of same sex marriage (2011), homoparental adoptions, and the ban of conversion therapies.

Moreover, in 2016, for the first time, the PRPA participated in the March against LGBT phobias and the San Juan Pride March. These political events take place in the summer, and our committee promoted the participation of members of the PRPA. The active support of the PRPA to our committee is a clear indication that Puerto Rican psychologists are removing from their agendas the noxious stereotyping of the LGBT community as pathological and in need of treatment. The future of Puerto Rican psychology is moving in the direction of recognizing the human rights of the LGBT community.

### **Media Impact**

In terms of media presence and impact, in 2007 the members of the LGBT Task Force gave an interview to one of the major television channels in the island, to announce that the Task Force had been established and that its main objective was to educate psychologists and the general public on evidence-based knowledge on the LGBT population. This was subsequently reinforced with multiple columns and articles in local newspapers, educating about gay marriage, the

harmful effects of reparative therapies, discrimination and prejudice, among other topics.

Two principal outlets by which the LGBT Task Force impacts the Puerto Rican media are through social media pages and the Diversity Bulletin Website. As of January 21, 2016, our Facebook page has 2,061 likes and 2,038 followers. This page publishes important LGBT policy from the Island and around the world, education and research projects, fundraising events, and general announcements and news. The page is a way of engaging with the general public and maintaining LGBT issues in mainstream discussions. Moreover, the Diversity Bulletin page uploads biannually our publication which focuses on professional discussions on LGBT topics, and has a community literary section which encourages individuals to submit essays, poems, short stories, among other pieces depicting gender identity and sexual orientation. This page gives presence in the online community and stores our activities, announcements, documents, scholarships, among other interesting things. This page had 2,264 visitors last year alone. There is a media team dedicated to maintain active both pages and respond to interactions with visitors.

In the last decade the LGBT Task Force generated two social media campaigns against conversion therapies. Both were focused on educating the general public and mental health professionals on the negative effects of conversion practices. The campaigns were aimed at consumers of psychological services so that they could become more aware of the harmful effects of such interventions. Later this year, the members of the Task Force plans to develop a law project to ban conversion therapies in our Island.

Furthermore, the LGBT Task Force has made public impact through the media in six television interviews, and two radio interviews in 2016. Also, after June 26, 2015, the Orlando Massacre, the members



of the Task Force decided to instate a clinical program that provides free psychological services for the victims and their families.

Since 2013, the Task Force has developed funding activities for a doctoral dissertation scholarship for LGBT research, aimed to the promotion of the development of scientific knowledge in this topic. There have been three scholars as of 2016 who have researched the following subjects: *Experiences of adult sons and daughters of same sex couples* (2013), *Masculinity: Quality of life and psychosocial wellbeing in a sample of gay and bisexual men of Latin-America* (2014), and *Perceptions of homo-negative micro-aggressions in a sample of gay, lesbian, and bisexual Puerto Ricans* (2015). The funding has been recollected in an annual fundraiser that has consisted of three media filled concepts such as the two short film movie nights (September 21, 2012 and December 6, 2013), a music concert (May 7, 2015) and a LGBT Prom Night (November 11, 2016). Such activities have been fundamental to bring awareness to the LGBT issues and have permitted to collect the sum of more than \$12,000. These activities have done more than raise money; they have raised awareness of the need of a more cohesive Puerto Rican LGBT Community, and has permitted to educated mental health professionals. In this years' prom, many activists of many LGBT organizations and causes were present to celebrate a night of pride and resilience in the community.

### **Conclusion**

The last decade can be rightly characterized as crucial in the advancement of LGBT psychological studies in Puerto Rico. Books, pamphlets, dissertations, conferences, symposiums, guidelines, direct contact with the general public and with the government's legislature, are only some of the major advances reached in a few years. One of the thesis that we have presented in the current article is that the organization and creation of the LGBT Task Force in the PRPA was pivotal in the dissemination and creation of new knowledge about the

LGBT community. Previous to the Task Force, we only encountered a few fragmentary efforts to approach the subject. In fact, three years after the creation of the Task Force, a resolution was presented and approved at an Annual Conference of the PRPA to transform the Task Force into a permanent Committee of the PRPA. At the present time it bears the name of the LGBT Community Issues Committee (LGBTCIC). On Table 1 we present a summary of the importance of the LGBT Task Force in advancing LGBT studies in Puerto Rico.

We recognize that there is still much work to do concerning the rigorous study of LGBT in Puerto Rico. There are still many prejudices, inflammatory statements, and misleading information in the general press and particularly by influential religious leaders in Puerto Rico. We take the view that such statements must be neutralized with data, sophisticated theoretical viewpoints and immediate press releases to educate the public at large.

There are two challenges that merit serious thought. First, as the overwhelming population in Puerto Rico is religious (mostly Catholics), we must generate an intellectual space to debate and offer alternative narratives to some biblical passages that many pastors and clerics offer as "proof" that homosexuality is inherently sinful. A future step is to create intellectual bridges with more liberal religious leaders and hence offer alternative interpretations of those specific biblical passages. This could potentially create more aperture to approach the subject of LGBT with interest and with a humanistic perspective.

Secondly, the Task Force is mainly composed of psychologists and psychology students. This has been a necessary step and one in the right direction. But now, ten years later, we think that the time is ripe to make a rapprochement with other scholars from such diverse fields as sociology, social work, anthropology, psychiatry, politics, and religion. The result could be a more coordinated and solid effort to

advance the field of LGBT studies. The end result could be an integrative science of LGBT, with a more wide-ranging perspective.

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Table 1

*Increases of Professional Activities after the Creation of the PRPA Task Force in 2007*

Activity	Evidence
Professional Books	2 seminal books (Toro-Alfonso & Martínez-Taboas, 2011; Vázquez-Rivera, Martínez-Taboas, Francia-Martínez & Toro-Alfonso, 2016) by members of the Task Force.
Scholarly articles published in the two leading psychological journals	An increase of over 70% after the establishment of the Task Force
Professional presentations on the Conventions PRPA	An increase of more than 75% from 2008-2016
Dissertations on LGBT	An increase of over 70% from 2008-2016
Standards of Care	Published by the Task Force: 2008 & 2014; none before 2007
First specialized Bulletin on LGBT and the field of psychology	Created by members of the Task Force in 2010; none before 2007
Annual grant for publishing on LGBT	Created by the LGBT Task Force in 2009
Tours to universities explaining the importance of studying LGBT	Began with the coordination of José Toro-Alfonso, Ph.D. and the Task Force members
A 2-day symposium on LGBT supported by the PRPA	The first was in 2010 and was coordinated by the members of the Task Force