

GLSEN StoryBank

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Motivation

- Utility for GLSEN
- Utility for my dissertation research
 - Digital sociolinguistic ethnography
 - Title: "Figurations, orientations, and stylizations: Mapping the contours of language, gender/sexuality, and childhood in the contemporary U.S."

Project Description

- Organizational oral history archive
- Community-engaged (Gordon da Cruz 2018)
- Narratives of personal experience (Ochs & Capps 2011)
 - Educators, students, and volunteers
 - Recorded remotely and transcribed

Context

- In sociolinguistics, childhood is viewed primarily as developmental (vs. sociocultural)
- LGBTQ youth speech is peripheral
- Schools are the most typical ethnographic sites (vs. nonprofits)



Image 1: Map of GLSEN's 42 chapters (source: glsen.org)

GLSEN's 42 locally accredited chapters are distributed roughly even across the six major dialect regions in the U.S. (Labov, Ash & Boberg 2006).



The primary project goal is to produce an **oral history archive** alongside an **organization-based sociolinguistic account of LGBTQ youth language practices with speakers across the U.S.**



Project Deliverables

- Phase 1 (pilot): 16 interviews with GLSEN Phoenix storytellers (Jun-Aug 20)
- Phase 2 (scaled out): 6-8 interviews with five other GLSEN chapters (Feb-Dec 21)
- Model and resources for the GLSEN StoryBank oral history archive
- Dissertation monograph
 - Analysis of constructed speech, youth and regional variation / slang, and media analysis

Potential Impact

- Redefining childhood in sociolinguistics
- Elaborating a digital sociolinguistic ethnographic methodology
- Studying youth language practices outside of schools, within a nonprofit
- Centering LGBTQ youth voices in sociolinguistic scholarship

References

- Gordon da Cruz, Cynthia. (2018). Community-engaged scholarship: Toward a shared understanding of practice. *The Review of Higher Education* 41(2), 147-167.
- Labov, William, Ash, Sharon & Boberg, Charles. (2006). *The Atlas of North American English: Phonetics, Phonology and Sound Change*. Walter de Gruyter.
- Ochs, Elinor & Capps, Lisa. (2001). *Living Narrative*. Harvard University Press.

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