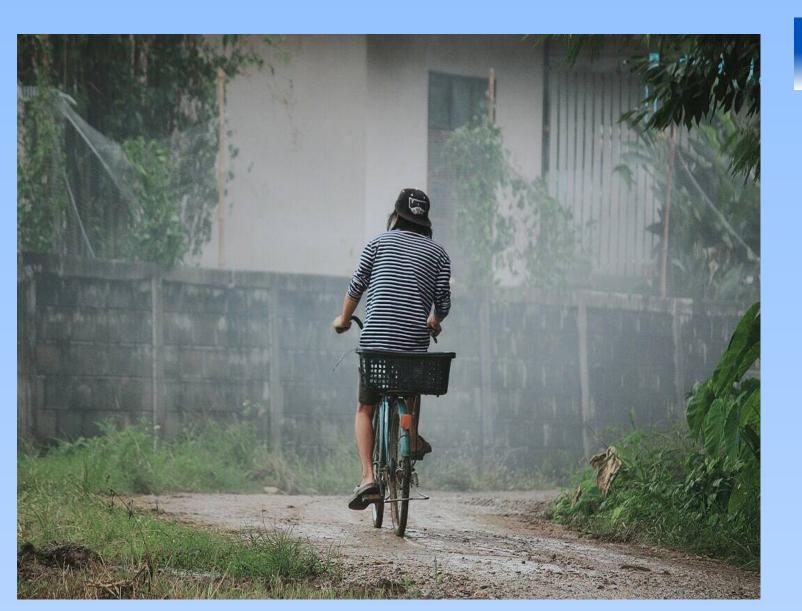


# LGBTQ+ Youth Perspective in Northern Thailand



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# Chiang Mai & Chiang Rai **Thailand**

- Located in South East Asia
- Population of about 68 million
- Official language is Thai
- Only country in Southeast Asia that has not been colonized by the west
- 94% of the country is Buddhist
- 50% of population live in rural areas
- Nick-named "Land of Smiles"

### Connections

SW510: Critical Intersectionality (helped me understand my own identities and look at others as complex intersectional individuals) SW521: IP Individuals, Families, Groups (gave me facilitation skills to really listen and work with groups)

**SW648:** Issues Global Practice (prepare and utilize knowledge specific to Thailand)

WS531: LGBTQ Studies Seminar (introduced me to a huge amount knowledge in the realm of LGBTQ issues and Queer theory).

## **LGBTQ+ Youth**

The aim of this study was to explore the experiences of LGBTQ+ youth in northern rural Thailand. In a country where non-normative gender and sexuality is tolerated but not openly discussed, Photo Voice methodology was chosen to allow a marginalized group the opportunity to share their experiences.

## We explored:

- Religion
- Culture and traditions
- Familial and peer relationships
- Self-expression
- Levels of acceptance
- Institutional oppression
- Situational openness



#### **Outcomes**

- Design and implementation of a research project
- Utilizing Participatory Action Research methodology
- Cross-Cultural Collaboration

# **Skills Developed**

- Data collection
- Youth organizing
- Cultural consciousness
- Cultural relevance

## Social Work practice utilizing the arts Research around global human rights

 Program development with a focus on cultural fit

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- Thoeng Wittayakom School
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- Ms. Sudarat Borihantachot
- Ms. Pirakorn Seekham
- Dr. Berit Ingersoll-Dayton
- The participants, who created this project entirely.

## Advice

**Career Connections** 

- Learn about the culture as much as possible before you leave the U.S.
- Live like a local
- Be flexible

#### **Lessons Learned**

- The extreme importance of building interpersonal relationships and the time commitment that requires
- Navigating systems cross-culturally
- The ability to think on my feet
- Listening to the desires of the community



Note: All photos were taken by participants.