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Self-Authoring Gender Performance: A Narrative Analysis of Gay Undergraduate Men

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SELF-AUTHORING GENDER PERFORMANCE:
A NARRATIVE ANALYSIS OF GAY UNDERGRADUATE MEN

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
College of Education
at the University of Kentucky

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

SELF-AUTHORING GENDER PERFORMANCE:
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The perspectives of gay men on college and university campuses is informed by a rich gay social history and extensive roots of community politics. The experiences of gay undergraduate men have been illuminated in segmented ways in scholarly literature to date. This narrative inquiry develops and advances those efforts by exploring how gay undergraduate men construct, experience, and make meaning of their gender as a population ascribing to both liberationist and assimilationist viewpoints. Data for this qualitative study were collected at one public, four-year research university in the southeastern United States in the fall 2015 semester using recorded personal interviews with eleven men. Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed for data analysis. The men included in the study represent a broad range of personal identity backgrounds, including a variety of college majors and years of experience in university study. Self-authorship and queer theoretical frames were used to analyze participants' gender interpretations. Findings suggest men do not understand gender in isolation, but in tandem with intersections of familial ethnic and cultural backgrounds, social class status, and involvement on campus. Four major themes of experience that effect self-authorship of gender evolved from narrative analyses: masking, agency, costs, and policing. Implications for higher education professionals, including faculty, staff, and administrators, are discussed. Opportunities for further research in navigating lived experiences of marginalized campus subpopulations are also suggested and explored.

KEYWORDS: College Students, Self-Authorship, Queer Theory, Gay, Gender

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could achieve great things. For my late maternal and paternal grandmothers, who were utmost champions for my ambitions of earning a terminal degree when I was the first in our blended family to attend college, much less indulge in the dream of a graduate education; Granny Odie and Granna Beth, I tearfully hope you are smiling down on this accomplishment that belongs to us all.

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Chapter One: Introduction

College and university campuses are composed of a kaleidoscope of identities and personal backgrounds. Those identities and backgrounds are contributed by individuals experiencing the dissonance of wanting to standout as special and unique, while also hoping to find a means of fitting in and establishing a sense of belonging. Within that tapestry of lived student experiences, I am specifically interested in the narratives of gay undergraduate men. The men in this study are aware of and experience all of those backgrounds and identities on campus. They are keenly aware of what some labeled the "peacockery [of] bullshit masculinity" while explaining, "I go where I fit". Heterosexual college men in the large state university setting report more "intense negative attitudes" toward their gay male peers than lesbian peers (Engstrom & Sedlacek, 1997; Rankin, 2003, 2005). From Catherine Engstrom and William Sedlacek's (1997) survey research published in their article, "Attitudes of Heterosexual Students Toward their Gay Male and Lesbian Peers", it became clear that there is something uniquely stigmatizing about not only having a homosexual orientation in college, but more specifically, being a gay male in college.

The relationship of masculinity performance in college to fitting in and finding spaces of belonging is not a novel issue. In his 2002 book, *Queer Man on Campus: A History of Non-Heterosexual College Men, 1945-2000,* Patrick Dilley shares over fifty individual narratives of "non-heterosexual" men in decades-past where those men deemed a well thought out masculinity performance necessary if they hoped to establish belonging on campus with as little complication as possible. Relatedly, gender researcher and scholar Judith Butler (1990, 2004) asserts gender is a product of social construct and

not a quality innate or inborn. With that, I became interested in completing a contemporary narrative inquiry of how gay undergraduate men self-author (socially construct) their masculinity to establish their personal fit and belonging on campus.

Researcher Background

My particular interest in the topic of gay undergraduate male considerations of masculinity in campus culture is rooted both personally and professionally. As a man who personally identifies as gay, Caucasian, Christian and a cis-gender male, I have my own experiences with reading campus culture to successfully acclimate and self-author gender. I identify with groups that experience marginalization and injustice, but I also identify with groups that experience unearned privilege and merit in our society. I have experienced a series of distinct cultures on several college campuses and in personal, academic, and collegial social groups. I have also lived in the cities and towns throughout multiple states in the southeastern United States.

Reflection on my personal gender performance allowed me to understand there were points when I expressed masculinity by following what self-authorship theorist Marcia Baxter Magolda (2008) calls "external formulas", mimicking others to assimilate and avoid causing friction. As I developed, I felt comfortable challenging the status quo and beginning to fashion a personal masculinity that is comfortable for me. Interviewing the men whose lived experiences are outlined as part of this study, I began to recognize many of the emotions and confusion I felt myself as I began a journey of self-authoring masculinity as a gay man. From the bouts of loneliness and disconnection Jimmy shares in his story to the introduction of "masking" where Rob and Marshall explain the figurative masks they wear to connect and make personal and professional progress with

a variety of individuals and groups on campus, I connected with each of these men in meaningful but different ways.

Over time, I have had exposure experiences that encouraged me to ascribe to a more personally comfortable and honest masculinity rather than seeking out some fictitious bravado. Before that, my own "social drama" of gender performance was made to placate others and attempt to meet expectations set by the norms of my social environment. In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, a foundation of sorts for the concept of self-authorship, sociology scholar Erving Goffman (1959) claimed an individual attempts to control and guide impressions others have of him by adjusting aspects of himself, such as appearance and mannerisms, in various settings. While Baxter Magolda (2008) would label Goffman's action mere performative agency and not necessarily a true self-authorship, Goffman introduced a concept of social performance that would spawn an array of scholarly research and literature related to social acceptance, validation, and freedom in normative culture. I have played both conscious active participant and critical social observer in a variety of settings and have come to recognize the diversity in gender performativity that occurs in everyday life (e.g., use and brands of personal care products, social cues such as handshakes and greetings, and an array of material possessions used in daily life, among others).

As a higher education administrator and developing scholar, I have had the opportunity to not only experience higher education from the vantage point of my time as a student, but also as the developer of students' personal and professional lives. The opportunity to work with students from the countless backgrounds and experiences they bring into their college experience has piqued my interest in working to "meet them

where they are"; that understanding of a rich, exclusive vantage point each student has is also a reason for my intense interest in qualitative methodological approaches. By achieving a greater understanding of gay undergraduate men's perspectives, it will be possible to support their learning and overall success on campuses by offering more appropriate sources for personal and professional development. Higher education professionals can then implore our gay undergraduate men to no longer rely on current informants that are absorbed by gay undergraduate men with little critical literacy such as pornography, media (e.g., news, print and screen production), and other highly visible and marked gay male "role models" (O'Neil & Crapser, 2011). With an educated and informed perspective, higher education professionals can combat students' feelings of doubt, anxiety, and shame that accompany pressures to live up to unattainable gender ideals (Kimmel & Davis, 2011). A substantial number of gay men interviewed for this study lamented about their "body image issues" and those issues are unpacked more in Chapter Four when participant narrative synopses are shared.

It is possible to build up the skills and competencies of professionals at colleges and universities through education about multiple masculinities and performance so that we are capable of helping men develop in healthy, positive ways that avoid focusing squarely on sexual orientation of or supporting feminization of men. A diversity of sexual orientation and all gender displays, both masculine and feminine, can and should be celebrated. Our gay male students should not reach age thirty and respond with an anxiously awkward laugh, like Rob did, to a question about whether or not he considered himself masculine, saying "not very masculine". The way Rob responded was sad; why should he feel shamed in "not [being] very masculine"? He should feel empowered to

live his own comfortable personal gendered perspective and do it unapologetically. However, in order to progress and move forward, it is also important to understand contemporary student perspectives to include comforts, anxieties, shame, joys, and other relevant feelings surrounding their gender performance as campus community members.

As a professional, I have the chance to help students make sense of multiple personal identities that sometimes appear incompatible and paradoxical. I have come to respect the fact that each student has an experience that is uniquely their own. I had a goal in this study of attempting to understand and unpack experiences of gay undergraduate men in a thematic way that can be used to better support that subpopulation on campuses. I hope this study will assist higher education administrators and faculty, including myself, to better serve and assist students in their journey of self-authorship and reaching a comfortable balance in the intersection of their individual personal identities. In addition to improving interpersonal relationships on campus, there is also potential for positive implications related to policy to promote a more inclusive campus environment. I begin an opening discussion of some of those implications in Chapter Six.

Study Background & Rationale

There is a detailed and storied convergence of scholarship and literature that inform the background for this study. In Chapter Two, I review many threads of literature that include a review of relevant gay social history (Chauncey, 1995; Berube, 2010; D'Emilio, 1992; Kimmel, 2011; Marcus, 2002; Rotundo, 1994) illustrating the lives of gay men have been a volatile existence throughout much of American history, especially when the hidden lives of homosexuals began surfacing in the periphery of

society. Chapter Two also includes a detailed review of masculinity in America, in both historical and contemporary contexts. The overarching perspectives of masculinity and manhood are grounded in the broad and deep scholarly writings of prolific masculinity scholars Michael Kimmel and R.W. Connell. Not only have Kimmel and Connell provided critical and disparate perspectives on meaning-making related to manhood, but they have also each devoted decades of scholarly work to understanding masculinities and men.

In addition, there are several scholars from recent decades who have devoted attention and large research agendas to illuminate gay campus experiences and populations. Most notably for this study, Patrick Dilley (2002) focused on uncovering fluidity of male sexualities in his 2002 book, *Queer Man on Campus: A History of Non-Heterosexual College Men, 1945-2000*. Dilley's (2002) book specifically ignited my desire to study men, but from a gender identity standpoint within the gay sexuality identity. I also work to include contributions of scholars who highlight specific experiences for gay undergraduate men over time, some even emphasizing experiences of gay undergraduate men from minority backgrounds (Cintron, 2000; Engstrom & Sedlacek, 1997; Harper, Wardell, & McGuire, 2011; Kimmel & Davis, 2011; Strayhorn, DeVita, & Blakewood, 2010; Yeung & Stombler, 2000; Yeung, Stombler, & Wharton, 2006). However, it is important to acknowledge work is still being done to illuminate the perspectives of gay undergraduate men. This study of narratives of masculinity self-authorship with gay undergraduate men builds on work already published in the scholarly literature, and continues the conversation for additional work that needs to be done.

Chapter Six includes a review of opportunities for further research and scholarly exploration.

As investigation of narratives unfolded, the understanding of culture and place were also acknowledged as an important consideration. Authors of scholarly literature related to culture of organization, campus, and society (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Fox, 2010; Gumport, 2007; Harris & Barone, 2011; Kimmel & Davis, 2011; Meyer, et al., 2007; Schein, 2010; Tierney, 1988, 2012) are introduced and discussed in Chapter Two to encourage deliberate contemplation of culture and place while considering the men's narratives introduced and discussed in Chapters Four and Five. For example, Kent introduces a critical juxtaposition of Eastern and Western cultures in his interview as a means for explaining why adopting a truly authentic masculinity self-authorship with family is complex. History, gender, and culture are all critical backgrounds related to a study of gay undergraduate male self-authorship.

Finally, to get a clear understanding of how to appropriately analyze the narratives of self-authorship for gay undergraduate men, the queer theoretical concepts and self-authorship theory were used to examine the lived experiences of the men from the millennial generation. Introduction and discussion of both theoretical and conceptual frameworks comes at the end of Chapter Two. This newest generation of gay undergraduate men have experienced college and coming of age in a time when sexuality diversity is at its most visible, so visible in fact that the identity and narrative of the gay undergraduate man is highly politicized. An explanation of queer theory and feminist research approaches in Chapter Two will highlight why embracing fluidity and

acknowledging lived experiences outside of gender and sexuality binaries is essential to fully understand the perspectives and impact of the men's narratives in this study.

Theoretical Perspectives

For understanding and analysis of narratives in this study, Marcia Baxter Magolda's Self-Authorship theorizations (2001, 2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2010) were used in conjunction with principles of queer theory, a set of perspectives that are deconstructionist in nature. In tandem, self-authorship and queer theory angles allow for a structure of understanding while also preserving the individual voice and agency of study participants to have their lived experiences included in an authentic way. Queer theorists are helpful for this study not only because they honor and acknowledge lived experiences of individuals outside of the normative, established binaries of society, but also due to the useful concept of viewing personal identity as a set of social constructs. Self-authorship is useful as the primary scaffolding of this study because the framework provides enough structure to meaningfully consider and discuss: how an individual knows about identity (epistemology), who that individual believes he is (intrapersonal development), and how he uses knowledge and beliefs of personal identity to interact and develop positive relationships with others (interpersonal development). Both queer theory and self-authorship framework offer mental scaffolding for understanding the meaning-making that occurs in studies like this narrative inquiry.

Queer Theory. The body of literature referred to in the collective as "queer theory" provides perspective on meaning-making related to personal identity (Sullivan, 2003). The scholars who contribute to the queer theory perspective focus on how fragments of identity intersect and how a convergence of personal identity dimensions,

namely those included in the areas of sexual orientation and gender, reject normative frames of social construction. The queer theory posited rejection of normative identity structures encourages a continuum interpretation of sexual orientation and gender instead of an "either/or" binary view. The denunciation of a binary approach to understanding personal identity places the power and agency with the individual, particularly important when considering marginalized and oppressed populations.

Disrupting normative discourse about sexual and gender identity is a "poststructuralist approach", focusing on challenge to language and performance expectations (Sullivan, 2003). As detailed in Chapter Four, gay undergraduate men experience and make meaning of the self-authorship journey of their masculinity in ways misaligned with the formulas supplied by larger society. For example, Rob, Cori, and Matt rely on less tangible and visible qualifiers of their personal masculinity, claiming "politeness", "[being a] gentleman", and "honesty" as primary evidence sources for establishing personal masculinity scripts. In order to fully interpret and understand the narratives of the men included in this study, adopting a lens of personal social construction outside the bounds of current societal standards is necessary. The men in this study do not ascribe to many of the scripts of hegemonic masculinity idolized by peers, media, and the general population. Although their experiences generally lie outside the parameters of what some consider masculine, their authentic experiences and perspectives are not invalid, but have worth and allow them to establish comfort and sense of belonging they may not otherwise attain.

This study uses queer theory concepts to move beyond the ingrained expectations and politics external to individual experience to understand the vantage points of

masculinity meaning-making in gay undergraduate men. As such, queer theory informs

the research by offering the power of shared authority and collaborative exploration

where I use interview questions to guide the progression of individual interviews, but the

men in the study are the true authors of their story, even explaining how they make

meaning out of lived experiences. As a process of meaning-making, the gay

undergraduate men in this inquiry do the work in interviews to process external messages

and relationships related to their personal masculinity development. However, self-

authorship theoretical frame is also used to understand the men's meaning-making

process and introduce a structured model for unpacking the men's narratives.

      Self-Authorship Framework. The work of self-authorship is a personal journey

to ground the individual in personal beliefs, sense of self, and relationship constructs.

Applying self-authorship perspective to individual narratives of lived experience allows

for understanding of an individual's epistemological, intrapersonal, and interpersonal

development; a holistic view of personal development for college students in particular

(Baxter Magolda, 2010; Boes, Baxter Magolda, & Buckley, 2010). Self-authorship

works well when taken with queer theory because it is not a specific listing of static

stages and phases. Also, the frame does not assign a specific population for analysis and

application. Most college student development perspectives either focus on specific

subpopulations of students or do not seem to fit well in their application to lived

experiences of marginalized or oppressed student populations (Evans, Guido, Forney,

Patton, & Renn, 2010). Although Baxter Magolda (2001) originally developed the theory

from higher-socioeconomic status, Caucasian, heterosexual men, the framework has also

been applied to "high-risk" student populations with ease and provided useful insights

into meaning-making experiences and agency of self-authorship with the new, more

diverse groups studied (Pizzolato, 2003, 2004). The self-authorship theoretical

perspective provides a conceptual scaffolding (see *Figure 1*) to understand meaning-

making processes while also retaining the adaptability to honor the power and agency

attractions of queer theory viewpoints.

	Phases			
	Following Formulas	Crossroads	Author of One's Life	Internal Foundation
Cognitive development: How do I know?	Believe what "authority" believes	See need for own vision	Choose own beliefs	Grounded in internal belief system
Intrapersonal development: Who am I?	Define self through external others	See need for internal definition	Choose own values, identity	Grounded in internal coherent sense of self
Interpersonal development: How we construct relationships	Approval seeking in relationships	See need for authenticity	Being true to self – mutual needs met	Grounded in mutuality

Figure 1. Baxter Magolda's (2001) self-authorship theoretical model

The personal quest for achievement of a grounded self-authorship is discernable

by development from an individual "following external formulas" for knowledge and

performance of identity to arrive at a "crossroads" (usually an exposure experience) that

catalyzes subjective definitions, values, and beliefs blossoming into practice of self-

authorship (Baxter Magolda, 2001, 2009a, 2009b). As an individual is continually

exposed to new experiences, people, and scripts (media, etc.) for identity, some new

exposures are so salient they recreate a crossroads for a polished self-authorship. The

self-authorship of personal identity is also stratified by the individual facets that make up

identity (i.e., race and ethnicity, social class status, religion, gender, sexual orientation,

etc.). An individual may be living the power of grounded self-authorship with respect to religion, while continuing to actively work in the crossroads of understanding with race and sexual orientation, or any other number of dimensions of a holistic personal identity.

Cultivating a matrix of meaning-making process, self-authorship also occurs through the scopes of epistemological, intrapersonal and interpersonal development (Boes, et al., 2010). The epistemological factor frames understanding and self-authorship for the "how do I know" question. For example, how does an individual man know what masculinity is? Another factored scope is intrapersonal in nature. The intrapersonal question being posed and grounded is "who am I"?; juxtaposed with what the individual knows and has experienced in his life course, what space does he occupy with regard to personal masculinity. With respect to interactions with others, the other scope in the evolution of self is interpersonal. The interpersonal dimension concerns how an individual constructs relationships and who he constructs those relationships with, in the case of this study, as a man.

The theory of self-authorship, grounded by earlier work Baxter Magolda did to explore knowing and meaning-making in her Epistemological Reflection Model (1992) and taken with Robert Kegan's (1982) positions on self-evolution as process in individual human development, is "complex and nuanced" (Baxter Magolda, 2009b). The framework is malleable and cyclical enough to adapt to the needs of a queer theoretical perspective of deconstructed personal identity. There is no finite goal of self-actualization or ultimate fulfillment that serves as an end point of development. As previously mentioned, the salient exposure experiences throughout an individual's life can have an effect that acts as "crossroads" of new consideration in meaning-making and

grounding self in subjective identity. New crossroads can also happen along any dimension from the more core epistemological perspective to the performative interpersonal work of life. Overall, the goal of a professional working with students should be seeking to understand and support a journey of self-authorship knowing it is a process of refinement in personal perspective, not a finish line to be crossed.

Research Questions & Design

The line of inquiry for this narrative study is also well aligned with the goals of understanding outlined in the self-authorship theory. Three specific questions that guided the study were:

1) How do gay undergraduate men mentally construct and interpret masculinity (epistemology)?

2) How do gay undergraduate men's internal senses of self inform their masculinity performance (intrapersonal)?

3) How do relationships and interactions with other campus community members inform gay undergraduate men's masculinity performance (interpersonal)?

To answer these questions, I adopted a narrative approach of analysis of in-depth interviews. I combined the theoretical frames of self-authorship and queer theory to examine the narratives of eleven gay undergraduate men, one coming out as bisexual in his interview. Through analysis of individual interviews, I assessed the progress of each man's journey toward grounded self-authorship of a personal masculinity. Narrative inquiry provides information rich qualitative data to maximize inference and understanding of lived experience. While not generalizable, narrative studies have

potential to be catalytic for change in targeted use with quantitative datasets and making

way for expansive study of populations (Marshall & Rossman, 2015). The narratives of

the men in this study are compared and contrasted to a degree for understanding of

positionality of each man within the frame of self-authorship of his gender. However,

individual narratives are mostly considered on their own and analyzed to illustrate the

diversity of lived experiences and viewpoints for self-authoring masculinity as a gay

undergraduate man.

Study Significance & Organization

This narrative inquiry of gay undergraduate men's masculinity self-authorship is a

chance for a greater level of understanding beyond the copious campus climate survey

data and quantitative datasets that exist to assess the need for resources and support. The

dissertation is placed into six chapters, including this introductory chapter. Just as this

study is not one that can provide broad generalizations, there are limits to the detail a

quantitative set of responses can offer as well. Interviewing gay men about how they

self-author gender in a particular context is an opportunity to learn from lived

experiences and examples of the gay male orientation to campus. Through the lens of

eleven men's exploration, development, and performance of a personal masculinity, this

study provides details of student experience to serve as impetus for positive change and

continued development toward inclusive and welcoming campus spaces.

In Chapter Two, I introduce the most relevant literature needed to understand the

premise and conceptual lens of this study. I begin with a detailed review of literature

presenting gender (masculinities) as a constructed identity. Rather than being static or a

given dimension of identity, the literature suggests masculinities are constructed as a

social structure composed of ways individuals make meaning from experiences and exposures. That said, understanding specific impact of history of gay masculinities and the path this respective branch of gender identity has taken, in tandem with other identity dimensions and social locations in American society over recent history, is also important to review as well. Dimensions of identity are considered from a variety of sources from race and ethnicity to social class status, religion, and sex roles. The influences of personal identity that affect the men's approaches to gender performativity in some clear way are included. Even still, many of the men did not detail impact of most identity intersections in their interviews beyond hints and allusions, leaving room for more focused research on intersectionality in the future.

Chapter Two continues with a review of literature specifying how campus, as a living organization, and social cultures are grounded, maintained, and fostered. I introduce past findings about interpersonal student experiences of gay undergraduate men, underscoring the necessity for a study of this kind to understand divergent perspectives of students who do not ascribe to normative identity constructs in many collegiate spaces. In particular, the stigma associated with gay male identity on campus and rising visibility of campus spaces for gay men are briefly discussed. The latter part of Chapter Two provides insights from literature that encourage more intentional thought about theoretical philosophies and perspectives used to frame this study. After having considering the dimensions of identity, theoretical perspectives of queer theory and self-authorship are explained in greater detail to ensure understanding of how narratives were approached and reviewed as research data. Finally, Chapter Two concludes with a transition to thinking about the methodological lens for research, primarily a feminist

approach, to ensure authenticity of individual voice. A feminist approach places power

and agency with the men sharing their narratives that is detailed in Chapter Three..

The design of the research study is reviewed in detail in Chapter Three. The

chapter begins by revisiting the purpose of the study and research questions driving the

inquiry. After the research paradigm is discussed, this study is situated as a revision of

sorts for some past work by scholars and distinguished as a unique investigation of lived

experiences of gay undergraduate men in its own way. Explanation of the methodology

follows the research paradigm, with specific information included regarding reasoning

for use of narrative research approach, sample and setting selection, and process for

collecting and analyzing the data from interviews. The third chapter concludes with a

discussion of trustworthiness of data collection and quality, researcher positionality and

potential for bias, and limitations of the study.

Salient aspects of each of the eleven participant narratives are shared in Chapter

Four. Narratives included responses of varying degrees of depth and detail. However,

care was taken with all narrative descriptions to detail the age, major area of study, and

personal background of each man, including racial, religious, class status, and sexuality

details as deemed necessary for disclosure from the interviewee. Chapter Four provides a

detailed summary of each study participant's lived experience as a lead into Chapter Five,

a section that unpacks the narratives with a thorough analysis of the sample, separately

and in aggregate, through the lens of the Baxter Magolda's (2008, 2010) self-authorship

theoretical framework. Throughout the fifth chapter, attention to detail was paramount,

pulling together all available information provided in the narratives and avoiding

inference based on assumptions, to ensure the authentic voice of the study participants

was at the forefront of all analysis. Care was also taken to avoid a reductionist view of the narratives, exploring ways in which some details shared by the men included in the study cannot be explained through self-authorship framework application.

Chapter Six is the concluding chapter, reviewing implications of findings from the study and potential contexts and situations for which the data and findings can prove useful to others. After reviewing potential implications for higher education policy and practice, advantageous pathways for further research are suggested and explored. Avenues for further research explored were: disparity of lived experience (specifically age and geography), difference in identity dimensions and intersections, group interaction effects, and longitudinal change effects. The concluding chapter of the study provides a useful summative look back at the reach of the study and forward-thinking, optimistic outlook for continuing work toward the goal of more supportive and inclusive spaces in higher education for student populations.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter is a review of relevant literature and theoretical perspectives employed in the grounding of this narrative study. Chapter Two begins with an exploration of gender (masculinities) conceptually and explaining the perspective of masculinities as a social construction and not an innate characteristic. Also included early in the chapter and before a discussion of more contemporary college and university campus climate, I review salient aspects of history of gay masculinities in the U.S. also needed to understand the researcher viewpoint from which the study was approached. Since I present masculinities as socially constructed, it is integral to highlight the instances throughout much of U.S. history where men have self-authored gay masculinities with changing tides of social acceptance, refashioning their gender identity when so often considered problematic.

Midway through Chapter Two issues related to interpersonal student experiences and overarching cultural climates of campus and local community are explored in connection to the study population of gay undergraduate men. As a precursor to the detailing of theories used to direct study and examine findings from interviews, the dimensions of identity noticeable from study interview sessions are also considered. The dimensions of identity that intersect with many of the men's self-authorship of masculinity, at least in some way, and are touched upon include: race, religion, sexuality, and class. While the men do not necessarily make identity intersectionality a salient consideration in narrating their lived experiences, it is worth acknowledging and considering the presence of such intersections to make way for future research. The chapter concludes with a discussion of queer theory and self-authorship as applicable for

understanding how gay undergraduate men make meaning of and perform their gender as a portion of their college experience.

Colleges and universities claim to be sites of critical thinking; sites of learning that educate students about perspectives on a global scale, help them adopt a broader view and approach to problem-solving, and encourage them to "find and be themselves" in our complex society. However, Michael Kimmel and Tracy Davis claim in "Mapping Guyland in College" that institutional policies and professionals too often take a "simplistic and reductionist view" of men and masculinities that is dangerous and leaves behind those whose gender performance lies outside of the binary (Kimmel & Davis, 2011). One of the participants in this study, Jimmy, specifically shares about his feelings of isolation and disconnection that result from his inhabiting a liminal space outside of campus gender norms. Men on campus who do not seem to meet the expectations of what a man is supposed to look or act like on campus can be seen as somehow unfit. Those men are not necessarily viewed as wholly effeminate or feminine, but they certainly are not always deemed masculine enough for some campus spaces either.

Undergraduate men from all backgrounds still usually seem to find organizations and groups on campus that accept their respective individual gender performances and do not consistently make it the center of discourse (Kimmel & Davis, 2011). With a multitude of campus spaces and organizations allowing for freedoms of variance in identity performance, college men have some agency in constructing (self-authoring) a gender identity that is both comfortable and operational. Even still, there are boundaries of what is deemed socially acceptable, or even tolerable, based largely on place. I briefly

discuss significance of place when reviewing literature related to campus culture later in this chapter, but first, I consider masculinity variance across place and time.

Masculinities

In *Masculinities*, R.W. Connell (2005) asserts conceptualizing masculinities in the multitude of variations presented throughout society is particularly challenging because they are "historically changing and politically fraught". As a means to completely comprehend the enormity of work the men in this narrative study are doing to perform their individual masculinities and navigate the uncertainties encountered in the many social contexts of their lives, it is critical to explore literature that explains motivations for men to construct gender expressions workable for them. In agreement with Connell (2005), additional authors review a rich history of masculinity constructs in America that have changed based on anything as meaningful as professional necessity, such as a need for physical strength for work roles, to the more trivial, such as highlighting male peers' mannerisms, clothing, and stature (Chauncey, 1995; Kimmel, 2011; Rotundo, 1994). The marker of what is considered socially acceptable for gender expressions moves and changes based on a host of situations and stakes. I will share scholars' analyses of multiple masculinities in American society through this chapter section on masculinities. With that understanding of how and where variations of masculinity exist, I will then turn to literature that proposes why the men in this narrative study find it necessary to use different adaptations of gender expression to navigate systems and settings laden with possibilities for wielding power and personal connection based in historicity.

Constructing Masculinity

Indeed, there is great variance in how men experience and make meaning of what it is to "be a man". Decades of research on masculinity and how it occurs in American society, and more specifically on college campuses, illustrate just how divergent gender performances can be for both young, developing men and mature men (Rotundo, 1994; Dilley, 2002; Kimmel & Messner, 2012; Kimmel 2011; Laker & Davis, 2011). Beyond the confines of American college and university campuses, Anthony Rotundo (1994) vividly describes how masculinity is not only varied in a single time point, but also malleable throughout the short history of the United States. In his book, *American Manhood: Transformations In Masculinity From The Revolution To The Modern Era*, Rotundo (1994) explains that manhood and what is considered manly, or characteristically male, is dependent not only on time period, but also geography, social class, and patterns of lived experience. Introduced by Rotundo (1994) and corroborated by Kimmel in *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (2011), both authors highlight the claim from Connell (2005) that masculinities are "historically changing"; Rotundo and Kimmel both detail how ideal masculinity traits have been replaced throughout different time periods and were based largely in utility. For example, Rotundo and Kimmel both highlight the the 19th century and the call for masculinity to rise in the form of physical strength and a head-of-household mentality that Rotundo calls the "heroic artisan" and Kimmel refers to as the "self-made man". In a more agrarian society, physical strength was simply valued due to necessity, an ideal somewhat in opposition to the former century when British masculinity influences placed what Rotundo calls the

"genteel patriarch" above the "heroic artisan" due to a class system based in power of wealth and ownership.

The dissonance of powers between physical strength and wealth (ownership) appear once again when Rotundo (1994), Chauncey (1995), and Kimmel (2011) write their way into 1920s America. The men who "powered" the rise of industrial revolution with their strength to lift and literally build our country are juxtaposed by the authors with the men who lead revolution via their class status and powers fueled by financial capital. Compared with the scripts of masculinity reviewed by the men in this narrative study, detailed in Chapter Four, the many versions of masculinity that have situational power still exist, but with a refashioned spirit of display. Some of the men in this study shared their recognition of masculinity via physical strength they see in fitness facilities and athletics, while other men included in the study highlight visions of masculinity in less brute presentations such as mannerisms, character qualities, and referent power. Kimmel (2011) cites the differences as a societally perceived "crisis of masculinity", while Connell presents the "crisis" as a contest for recognition as the definitive socially palatable masculinity scripts in his 2013 book, *The Men and The Boys*. Connell (2013) proposes normative scripts of masculinity are considered such due more to their pointing out fault in alternative representations of masculinity than making a case for validation. As such, some alternative presentations of masculinity, including some performed by gay undergraduate men, are targeted, stigmatized, and mocked in an effort to maintain the heteronormative.

Specifically on college and university campuses, one could spend time as a social observer and recognize many ways men choose to showcase their "manliness". Laker

and Davis (2011) edited an anthology of chapters from various authors in their book, *Masculinities in Higher Education: Theoretical and Practical Considerations*, pulling together a more contemporary representation of the prismatic variability of masculinity performance on college campuses. Much like the fragments of manhood detailed in Rotundo (1994), Chauncey (1995) and Kimmel (2011), the Laker and Davis (2011) anthology highlights how different masculinities are well received depending on location, socially and geographically. Particular contributing authors share theorizations rooted in intersectionality of identity and queering of gender to illustrate how masculinities are varied and seemingly limitless (Berila, 2011; Harper, Wardell, & McGuire, 2011). Harper, Wardell, and McGuire's "Man of Multiple Identities" chapter share who salience of a man's identities in relation to individual masculinity representation is situational; for instance, in some spaces race has a large influence on mannerisms and performance, while other situations may call for a more "professional" or solemn-toned masculinity based on being in spaces connected to religious identity or profession. That idea is present in Jace's narrative in Chapter Four, where he briefly discusses how his perceived lack of masculinity due to ascribing to a gay identity was problematic for his grandparents. Jace's race and religion ruled his acceptable masculinity performance parameters as a high schooler; now that he is in college, the "masculinity police" that drive him to "mask" his most authentic masculinity are related to his profession. Berila (2011) also adds, in her chapter "Queer Masculinities in Higher Education", that the policing and masking are not only difficult for gay undergraduate men to traverse, but also for heterosexual men who find it impossible to reach and maintain ideal masculinity performance standards set through normative scripts on campus and in profession-based

spaces. Again, as Connell (2005, 2013) asserts, the work of campuses to acknowledge and embrace multiple masculinity expressions is necessary not only for a subset of men, such as gay undergraduate men, but for all men throughout the campus community.

When compared with more historical accounts like Dilley's (2002) contributions in *Queer Man on Campus: A History of Non-Heterosexual College Men, 1945-2000*, it becomes clear that masculinities, as a segment of identity and personhood with a range of expression, are being accepted more widely than ever in the past as well. While there is still intentional work to be done on campuses that is proposed by many contributing authors in the 2011 Laker and Davis anthology, the problems of masculinity policing and feelings of a need to placate and lean into the masculinity performance demands of culture-driven scripts is not a novel issue. Based on the accounts included in Dilley's (2002) book, he managed to compartmentalize masculinity into typologies such as: "normal, closeted, parallel and denying". Even with dozens of interviews with men all across the U.S., Dilley (2002) affixed each man's story into one of his typological categories in a relatively neat way. Connell's (2005, 2013) abstractions of masculinities allow for more agency of the individual; as such, while typologies like the one's developed by Dilley (2002) are helpful in conceptualizing masculinity and managing to unpack many decades of masculinity-related experiences of college men, typologies and categorizing are harmful and problematic. As suggested in the narratives of men included in this study, young men are exploring masculinity in ways that not only help them to become comfortable in their own skin, but to find a place of belonging in their interpersonal connections. To encapsulate such a myriad of lived experiences and perspectives into typologies with relatively hard lines steals away the agency of the men

to do the work of meaning-making and have the space the live most authentically. While I do present themes of my own in the analysis of the men's narratives, I also want to be clear that the researcher and reader's interpretations and understanding should not overshadow the voice of the man's perspective on an experience that he himself has lived. In order for higher education professionals and other agencies or services to provide support and assistance for authentic masculinity expressions, certainly we have a need to explore and attempt understanding, but without having power and privilege overshadow voice and the need to meet each individual man on his plane of understanding.

When considering foundations of gender studies, Simone de Beauvoir has stressed "one is not born a woman, but *becomes* a woman" (Beauvoir, 1989, c1952); the same could be said for men. Gender studies scholar and author Judith Butler (1999, 2004) also claims gender, no matter if referring to women or men, does not preexist our performance of it; there is no essential man or woman—we create gender sense through a series of acts, acts of how we talk, what we do, and our interactive intimacies that drive us to behave in distinct manners (Laker & Davis, 2011). Scholars such as Connell (2005) and Kimmel and Davis (2011) are in agreement with Laker and Davis (2011) and Butler (1994, 2004), but they add the critical component that creations of masculinity, in society and in college spaces, are driven by the hope of attaining power and influence. Those hopes and desires are founded by narratives of men included in this study, such as the specific instance where men like Marshall and Rob employ "masking" techniques to present masculinities that yield deference of male peers on campus as well as those in positions of authority (e.g., supervisors and faculty). Others provide us with feedback via

their perceptions of us throughout a variety of lived experiences and expressions of

gender, including, but not limited to our choices in clothing, personal product use, and

mannerisms. I thematically refer to that feedback from others as a "policing" of

masculinity, but Connell (2005) articulates it best by couching the feedback as a chance

to employ gender expressions as "social practice". In a variety of social locations and

throughout lived experiences, individuals have the chance to explore alternative gender

representations and acts and receive reaction from those with whom they are interacting.

Depending on the reception of certain expressions of masculinity scripts, the individual

has a chance to alter his performance for more desired social outcomes in the future.

However, scholars like Dilley (2002) and Kimmel and Davis (2011) suggest some

situations are more high stakes than others, so it becomes critical that a man read his

surroundings with care to ensure the social situation does not breed a lack of belonging or

being ostracized on campus. While not every waking moment of our gendered being is

or even feels scripted, we are performing a gendered existence that allows us to not only

fit into social spaces, but establish a sense of belonging. If feedback from others is

negative, it is often a motivation to augment gender performance that conforms and

aligns with standards deemed palatable by those around us.

On a distinct level, gay men are known for their obsession with the chiseled

physique, sexualized imagery, and scrutiny of a man's masculinity based on aspects so

superficial as the amount of body hair he maintains (Bordo, 2000; Drummond, 2005).

While Bordo and Drummond claim that fixation for men, other scholars (Cotton-Huston

& Waite, 2000; O'Neil & Crapser, 2011) make the case for those ideals of masculinity

are unhealthy and are a call for more men's programming to not only expand the frame of

what is considered "masculinity", as Connell (2005) implores, but also to have a wider range of visible and scholarly examples of masculinity on campuses from classroom texts to inclusive policy and student affairs support practice. Community and culture of gay men can be so invested in the visual representations of the masculine, as outlined by Bordo (2000) and Drummond (2005), that young gay men, in search for validation and acceptance, are driven to adopt impractical or personally-undesired body image standards in an effort to be welcomed as part of the core group. A few of the men who shared narratives in this study claimed problematic body self-image and have been robbed of a sense of efficacy about personal masculinity due to a perceived failure to reach normative ideals reinforced on their university campus. As supported in the literature (Dilley, 2002; Kimmel & Davis, 2011; O'Neil & Crapser, 2011; Yeung & Stombler, 2000), individual college men have particularly personal experiences with how they acclimate to the masculinity framework supported by their own campus' culture. Whether they use coping mechanisms ranging from the "parallel" lives cited in Dilley (2002) related to sexual experiences or creating "safe space" to relax the machismo in privacy of gay fraternity that is cited by Yeung and Stombler (2000), college men seek out means for living more authentically that make sense and are comfortable for them individually. Based on a man's male role models and experiences with development of a personal masculinity, he could adjust to masculinity expectations of his new campus home in any number of ways.

Indeed, choices, both conscious and unconscious are made by individuals who are performing gender every day. Some choices may be conscious decisions where gendered being is palpable, such as that noticeable air in a classroom where Rob, one of the men in

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this study, details a need to "fly under the radar" and not be conspicuous by displaying

his most authentic gender expressions he labels "flamboyant"; in other instances,

socialization via consumer marketing, role modeling, and how individuals were "raised"

makes gender choices seem innate. The latter examples are a primary part of the

"formulas", shared by the men in this study, which were ingrained as appropriate and

acceptable representations of masculinity as a child and, for some, well into their young

adult lives. Through a man's material possessions and purchases, how he spends his time

with hobbies and involvement, and whom he chooses to associate with in social strata, he

is performing a masculinity he believes is ideal for gaining a sense of acceptance and

belonging (Connell, 2013; Kimmel, 2011). These foundational understandings of how a

scaffolding of personal masculinity is developed are supported by both Connell (2013)

and Kimmel (2011), but make the most sense when the texts of each author are

considered in concert. Connell (2013) includes personal narratives, but builds an

argument for personal narratives informing understanding of patriarchy, a source of

power for hegemonic norms of masculinity that leave agency an afterthought. Relatedly,

Kimmel (2011) focuses on the power between men and how men work to build their

power by belittling the masculinity of the other, a concept also cited by Connell in his

Masculinities (2005) text. In *The Anthropology of Experience* (1986), anthropologists

Victor Turner and Edward Bruner call this performance a "ritual social drama", a

"repeated performance in which an individual reenacts and re-experiences a set of

meanings already socially established" (Turner & Bruner, 1986). Whether focusing on

the interpersonal or the overarching societal structures, the agency of men to author a

personal masculinity is indeed limited. Due to the on-going work a man does to develop

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and maintain his individual masculinity, I support scholars' claims (Butler, 2004; Connell, 2005; Kimmel, 2011; Rotundo, 1994; West & Zimmerman, 1987) masculinity is socially constructed and will more specifically discuss how my inquiry is shaped by an exploration of gender role conflicts and performances in the literature as they are related to my research.

Gender role conflict. In Jason Laker and Tracy Davis' *Masculinities in Higher Education: Theoretical and Practical Considerations* (2011), James O'Neil and Bryce Crapser say at times, men find themselves in a dyad or group where they are in "gender role conflict", a psychological state that can results in feelings of anger, fear, guilt, shame or other emotions. When constructing masculinity, men can find occasions of gender role conflict to be frustrating and difficult to circumnavigate effectively and efficiently. In those instances, the frustration lies in the fact a man does not meet the expectations and assumptions of established gender roles deemed acceptable for men in that particular social space (O'Neil & Crapser, 2011). Connell's (2005) work would suggest those instances of unsettled psychological states are a result of being overpowered by men seeking to belittle the masculinity concept of another to ensure his own. At any rate, to get the fullest view of how gender role conflict happens it is most helpful to massage an understanding of both the conscious and unconscious aspect of masculinity performativity; that assertion is important when considering the fact my study focuses on the conscious aspects specifically due to the nature of the study being one where I conduct interviews but do no set observations. While my study is helpful to provide insights and perspective, additional work to explore the unconscious gender performances of men could prove useful to be sure. O'Neil and Crapser (2011) declare it

is essential to explore the "cognitive" (i.e., how one thinks about his gender role),

"affective" (i.e., how one feels about his gender role), and the "behavioral" (i.e., how one

acts, responds and interacts with others and themselves because of gender roles) when

attempting to completely unpack gender role conflicts. That said, my study includes

cognitive and affective, but only allusions to the behavioral. For greater understanding of

the behavioral, a more ethnographic, immersive approach would be helpful. There are

many unanswered questions about how gay men on college campuses today are

negotiating a personal masculinity that ensures they feel comfortable and establish a

sense of belonging on campus. O'Neil and Crasper's (2011) framework melds well with

the primary theoretical perspectives used for vantage points and analysis of findings in

this study, chiefly Marcia Baxter-Magolda's (2008) take on self-authorship. Taken

together, the "gender role conflict" and "self-authorship" perspectives provide a concrete

roadmap for exploring personal masculinity performance with gay undergraduate men.

As a primary tool for narrative analysis, I'll explore self-authorship more in-depth and

separately later in the theoretical perspectives section of this chapter.

     The conflicted feelings that campus men experience when they do not fit and

belong with the prevalent scripts of masculinity in respective spaces are rooted in

Kimmel and Davis' (2011) statement of there being a "simplistic and reductionist views

of gender" present on campus.   Other scholars examine the conflicted feelings from

alternate angles by also calling for change. Dilley (2002) shares examples of men doing

work to normalize their experiences and bevel individual perspective and actions to fit

into normative frames of masculinity while also illustrating how those examples of

performativity hinder the men from living most authentically with regard to personal

masculinity. Connell (2005) and Berila (2011) also support Kimmel and Davis' (2011) call for changes to campus culture. Connell (2005) states the need to end juxtaposition of straight and gay, heterosexual and homosexual to embrace more fluidity in gender and sexuality expression that ends the lingering idea that gay identity is somehow a pathology or mental and social defect. Berila (2011) adds to the conversation by asserting how even heterosexual men have difficulty living up to ideals of hegemonic norms in masculinity and would also benefit from an openness to fluidity and multiple masculinities. Men on campus can experience masculinity as "difficult, elusive and confusing". As such, O'Neil and Crapser (2011) have challenged higher education institutions to prioritize campus programming for men to assist them in making sense of their experiences.

In my constructivist approach, gender is seen as an "accomplishment", a result of "work" that has been done to convey one's gender and "work" also done to evaluate gender of others (Kessler & McKenna, 1978). That foundational understanding is reinforced and supported by a host of gender studies scholars I have reviewed in this chapter section. However, there is no literature that fully explores how gay undergraduate men read the social cues to develop a personal masculinity to fit in on campus. Patrick Dilley's 2002 book, *Queer Man on Campus: A History of Non-Heterosexual College Men, 1945-2000*, comes close to telling the tale of how men operationalize gender cues on campuses, but focuses more squarely how men defined their *sexuality* in relation to what degree in which they were "non-heterosexual". This study provides a new and unique lens for viewing gay undergraduate male gender performance by interviewing men who have already accomplished the work of accepting their identity as a gay man and exploring how those specific men perform masculinity on

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campus allowing them to establish, or attempt, a sense of belonging. Moving beyond the

confines of specific campus organizations and involvement, I investigated what the

spheres of gender influence are for gay undergraduate men broadly on a campus and how

those gender influences inform actions and behaviors in their daily gender performance.

Much like the men Dilley (2002) describes in *Queer Man on Campus* whose *sexuality*

was influenced by what and who they saw, heard, and knew, I heard from gay

undergraduate men whose *gender* is influenced by those same parameters.

In past studies of gay male undergraduate experiences on college and university

campuses, there have also been comparative analyses in which the researchers juxtapose

gay men and straight (heterosexual) men, gay men and lesbian women, and gay men of

different races and religious experiences within the gay male subpopulation to illustrate

the qualitative difference of experiences between groups and highlight "conflicts"

(Barton, 2012; Cintron, 2000; Dilley, 2002; Strayhorn, DeVita, & Blakewood, 2008,

2010; Yeung & Stombler, 2000; Yeung, Stombler, & Wharton, 2006).   Those studies

focus on participants who identify as gay men, delineated by race, religious affiliation, or

organizational involvement, and how those combined attributes alter campus or

community experience. In this study, I specifically investigated how gay undergraduate

men, from a myriad of intersecting personal identity perspectives, are reading masculinity

prompts from many sources connected to each of them personally to fashion their own

masculinity performance. Taken together, the findings of those past studies could help a

reader make sense of my study findings, but my findings could assist in explicating the

findings of those past studies as well.

For the purposes of this study, I explored how gay undergraduate men epistemologically examine their campus' culture in search of established gender norms and how each man experiences campus in gendered ways. New findings from my inquiry support the need for continued development of specific studies that have a goal of understanding viewpoints within marginalized campus populations. Masculinity is an aspect of a man's personal identity that, when supported by campus officials, has potential of positive implications for other qualities of personal and professional development (i.e., self-efficacy toward mature adulthood and active, engaged scholarship) that occur on college and university campuses (Cotton-Huston & Waite, 2000; Engstrom & Sedlacek, 1997). Without preoccupation of how to successfully perform a socially acceptable masculinity, young gay men can focus their attention on matters beyond personal identity. However, there are power and performance politics at play that act as a massive hurdle for making that sort of progress. Those gender politics are not easily overcome because they are also deeply rooted in history.

Gay Masculinity and Social Histories

In her article, "'So you think you have a history?': Taking a Q from Lesbian and Gay Studies in Writing Education History", Karen Graves (2012) claims the last three decades as an explosive period of research and publication of lesbian and gay historiography. While the publication dates of the majority of literature referenced throughout the dissertation are inside of the last three decades, the time and space that the publications address go far beyond that time frame. Gay social history literature maps content as far back as the late nineteenth century and even makes reference to much earlier dates. Even with the information that can be gathered from available literature,

the histories related to the gay male world are vast and still being uncovered. The literature included in this chapter section illustrates the potential for research and writing that can be done to mold a richer and more diverse gay social history, specifically in United States history. In particular, the historically-focused literature in this chapter section, connected with the more contemporary theorizations, serve to provide evidence for the argument that the ways masculinity and manhood are currently viewed as "in crisis" have come to this place from past problematic states that are now converging. In addition, the segments of identities within the masculinity histories highlight the importance of social location and the need to be attentive to intersections of personal identity stratified by social class, sex roles, race, religion, geographies, and membership in organizations and groups.

      Developing a Gay Male Social World. Some of the literature already introduced (Kimmel, 2011; Rotundo, 1994) provides a window into social periods of the past where masculinity was shaped by utility in survival and maintaining social exclusions based in social class that were fueled by the powers of wealth and ownership. As previously discussed, physical strength had been prized in society to fuel the physical and survivalist needs of agrarian society, expansion of the U.S. into the western states and territories, and rise of the industrial revolution and manufacturing. Outside of the needs for the "heroes" of development, the leadership of the "genteel patriarchs" and "self-made men" who wielded the powers of money and prestige cemented the legitimacy of their masculinity by means of a different sort of resourcefulness (Kimmel, 2011; Rotundo, 1994). When specifically considering the space for gay men, George Chauncey's *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940* (1995),

provides a great amount of detail about early gay social spheres. Working in tandem with the timelines of history covered by authors like Rotundo (1994) and Kimmel (2011), Chauncey's (1995) work is more limited with a focus solely on one urban area, New York City, but it provides a context for the subpopulation of gay men that are not a particular concentration for other authors. Chauncey's (1995) contribution aligns with the comprehensive work of Michael Kimmel (2005b, 2011) that reviews history of American masculinities, gay and otherwise, and is able to provide a richness of a vivid window into gay men's social lives at the turn of the twentieth century and well into it. Chauncey was able to get so specific in his work because he made a choice to actively research only the developing gay male world. With that, Chauncey's details of the more visible gay male world that was developing in New York City at the arrival of the twentieth century can be placed in opposition to the challenges of the gay men in the Midwest and the Southeastern U.S. to establish a gay social space well into the middle of the 1900s (Dilley, 2002). New York City was not the only center for gathering gay masculinities either; other authors (Bérubé, 2010; D'Emilio, 1992; Dilley, 2002) have shared that similar visibilities of alternatives to the heteronormative scripts of masculinity were rising in San Francisco, California and Chicago, Illinois as early urban beacons of supportive social location.

Chauncey (1995) explains that the impetus for the development of a gay male social world in New York City at the end of the nineteenth century was driven largely by the socioeconomic conditions of the time. Young, single men were leaving families in rural areas behind to pursue lucrative opportunities that could be attained much easier in a metropolis like New York City (NYC). In addition to NYC, there were other cities,

namely San Francisco, which experienced the same influx of young, single men in search of work. John D'Emilio (1992) confirms the same timeline Chauncey offers as a time that ushered in a gay male social world due to the socioeconomics demands of the era. With the growth of industry and factory work, young, single men had little choice to stay at home in a rural area when they and their families could make use of the more rewarding pay that the men could get from factory work. That being the case, there was suddenly a massive amount of unattached men living in cities that promised more opportunity than small town America.

Although the men's narratives in this contemporary study of gay undergraduate male masculinity performance unveil geographical movement for the purposes of education or migration of entire families and not employment opportunity, the transitions of separating from family and experiencing new social freedoms are alike. With new social freedoms to explore identity and desire by men both historically and contemporarily, men experience the balance of liberty and constraint with regard to maintaining status in their personal masculinity. Having a physical separation from family and more opportunities for social privacy, the gay men of history, like the men whose narratives are shared in this study, could compartmentalize gender expressions and more fully experience the power of performing ("masking") to avoid social penalty. Several authors (Butler, 2004; Connell, 2013; Dilley, 2002; Goffman, 1959; Kimmel, 2011; West & Zimmerman, 1987) have introduced the "masking" idea in one way or another. Butler (2004) and Connell (2013) both refer to the principles of patriarchy and how gender is governed (or "policed") in order to reinforce the legitimacy of the heteronormative and establish it as the standard by which all other gender (masculinity) is

measured. In order for men to move more freely from authentic representations of masculinity and the normative scripts, the "masks" of performing gender in prescribed appropriations becomes necessary; this is aligned with the "parallel" and "closeted" typologies in the Dilley (2002) text as well. Kimmel (2011) and Dilley (2002) both share how performing with the "masks" of altered masculinities is required for some men's social acceptance and establishing a sense of belonging. Without performing gender in a palatable way, the chances of connecting interpersonally as a legitimized member of the community, particularly in more rural areas, was more difficult. The specific examples Dilley (2002) provides about men's fears of becoming a rural community pariah are still valid today as well. Jimmy and Marshall, two men whose narratives are shared in Chapter Four, share details about their and their families' fears that they would be known as *the* "queer" in the community. As resilient as one must be in order to trudge the uncertainties of masculinities present through social spheres, the murkiness only grows with the addition of other identity parameters.

In recent years, there has been more focus on gay male students in writing and research efforts. In addition to individual pieces of published literature, there are writing groups, academic departments, and entire academic journals devoted solely to writing and research related to LGBTQ individuals and groups. However, much of what is available is centered on sexual orientation in relation to specific identity groups (i.e., ethnicity, religious affiliation, etc.). Selecting study populations by subjects' status as gay-identifying men, researchers have studied sexual orientation on campuses related to everything from a man's sex, racial, ethnic, religious, or organization identities and affiliations (Abes, Jones, & McEwen, 2007; Cintron, 2000; Collins, 2005; Fox, 2010;

Strayhorn, DeVita, & Blakewood, 2008, 2010; Yeung & Stombler, 2000). Even still, there are other facets of identity, particularly social class status, that have received very little attention from researchers.

While scholarly discourse about gay undergraduate men has received more attention, on the whole, there is a need to explore the experience of what the contemporary undergraduate gay man reads as valued masculinity on his campus and how he uses that to usher in his own personal gender performance. In the process, acknowledging the intersectionality of all identities an individual ascribes to will allow for purposeful inquiry that develops a better understanding of unique lenses through which gay undergraduate men read their campus culture for masculinity cues. Identities are neither consistent or constant, meaning that gay undergraduate men experience multiple realities on campus; not only do these men experience campus through the myriad of personal identities such as social class status, race and ethnicity, and religion, but they also confront a new milieu with each new campus group, classroom, and social space they enter (Dilley, 2002; Harper, Wardell, & McGuire, 2011; Harris & Barone, 2011; Kimmel & Davis, 2011). By selecting the narrative analysis methodology discussed in the next chapter, it allowed me, as the researcher, to take the time to critically consider the prismatic configuration of personal identity at play for each interviewed man and allow the voice and agency of the interviewed to share what is salient with respect to his identities and why. Michael Kimmel and Tracy Davis, two scholars who have spent decades studying masculinity in relation to all other aspects of personhood, assert, "Men as a category and masculinity as a phenomenon needs to be deconstructed and interrogated as historically, culturally, and ideologically situated"

(Kimmel & Davis, 2011). With that call to cultivate an understanding, respective aspects

of identity (i.e., social class, race, religion, etc.) have developed in divergent ways that

create dissonance and unique challenges for individuals. In this study, I maintained a

focus on examining identity beyond the confines of a binary and consider many planes of

identity that effect gender performance from each man's personal background to his

motivations for interpersonal connections as a college man.

   Code language. Throughout the decades of literature covering the gay male

social worlds, there are also some very useful insights lexically since many of the terms

are still in use today in certain social circles. Even though many terms, codes, and labels

are still in use today, it is interesting that the terms apply for different populations in a

new temporal space. As a principle example, the term "queer" has been part of social

language since the turn of the twentieth century. However, the population that the term

applies to has changed over time. In the early twentieth century, Chauncey (1995)

explains that the term queer referred to "normal men", or men who took the active role in

male same sex sexual relations. In any case, it was far better to be known as a queer who

was acting on the masculine urge to be sexual than a "fairy" that was a passive,

effeminate gay male who was the absence of all things masculine. Over time the term

queer acquired a more negative connotation due to growing hard lines drawn between

working and middle class status. Middle class men began to use "queer" to stigmatize

men as competition for class mobility stiffened in the 1920s and 1930s when

opportunities were more scattered. Thus, Chauncey (1995) attributes the shift in meaning

for the term queer to the rise of the "heterosexual", an event that delineated hard line

differences between the "real" man and the queer man. The rise of "heterosexual" is

substantiated by other authors (Bérubé, 2010; D'Emilio, 1992; Kimmel, 2011) who also more specifically discuss homosexuality as contrasted with heterosexuality by psychoanalysts regarding homosexuality as pathology; as a means for further legitimacy of heterosexuality as superior and "correct", homosexuals were historically falsely construed to be moral deviants, sexual perverts, and unfit for anything from military service to professional employment as a whole. In his text, *Coming out under fire: The history of gay men and women in World War* II, Bérubé (2010) details in the very late 1930s that the psychoanalytic view of homosexuality as a "sickness" was adopted and men would be disqualified if they did not pass a psychological examination with a psychologist. Some heterosexual men who were looking for a means of getting out of being drafted would claim to be homosexual, but those plans diminished and backfired for many when employers outside of the military asked for papers related to the draft that would bar them from work for being diagnosed as homosexual. The contemporary gay culture is attempting to reclaim some terminology like "queer" as a positive, but there is a clear generational divide among those older members of the gay community that view the term as negative and the younger generation that hopes to reclaim the term.

How terms, concepts, and perceptions related to the gay male world change temporally, or in some cases do not change, is a critical point of understanding. While the gay rights movement and active outcry from the last half century have curbed the talk of homosexuality as a perversion of pathology, there are still negative encounters for individuals and groups. Much of the activism work from the last half century is documented by authors such as John D'Emilio in *Making trouble: Essays on gay history, politics, and the university* (1992) and Eric Marcus in *Making gay history: The half-*

century fight for lesbian and gay equal rights (2002). Even with that work of many detailed by D'Emilio and Marcus, there are challenges still experienced by the men in this contemporary study who share problematic encounters with faculty instructors, work supervisors, and countless peers throughout their narratives in Chapter Four.

Another fine example that Chauncey (1995) provides in code language and masculinity expression is that the middle class men who participated part-time in the gay male social and sexual world, transitioning from their middle class life to the gay male world and back, were thought of more as gay men who wore "masks" while in their middle class life. These men were gay, but they put on the "mask" to move without detection into and out of the middle class social world at their convenience. Rather than a "closet", men were thought to be simply applying and removing a "mask" at their will, a concept illuminated by Rob and Marshall in Chapter Four, but used in application differently. In Rob and Marshall's narratives, they own their gay male identity, but they "mask" by altering their masculinity expressions and perform less authentically in public and professional spaces, such as the classroom, politically-driven student organizations, and academic writing; in more private spaces with close friends and intimate partners, Rob and Marshall share their tendency to relax and perform gender more authentically and less consciously. When men "came out" in the historic periods covered by Chauncey (1995), they were coming out into a gay male world much like a debutante was introduced to society. Terms, codes, and concepts related to the gay male world, and gay culture in general, have shifted and somewhat changed over time to shed some meanings and acquire others. As a lesson from history, being careful to clarify and fully understand not only terms and concepts, but also the meanings attached to them in a specific space

and time is critical for a project like this one that has a goal of being true to the voices of men of this specific population and culture in question. To that point, reviewing the development of fragmentations of personal identity more individually is helpful to understand how gay masculinities have been developed from a variety of identity perspectives.

  Dimensions of identity. *Social class*. The need for money and a transient status being driving factors for the "new" gay male world in more urban areas across the U.S., it is clear there was an underpinning of social class ushering in newly minted gay social circles (Chauncey, 1995; D'Emilio, 1992; Dilley, 2002). It is not that the only men who had sex with men were of lower, working class social strata, the men in lower classes simply had more opportunity to develop a gay identity because there was not as much to lose in the way of class status. This idea, driven mostly by the Chauncey (1995) text, is also reminiscent of the narrative of one of the study participants, George, who remarked about how he did not like to label his gay identity and his family avoided the topic to protect the social status of his family through his rural, Appalachian hometown. In many cases due to the nature of their residency in the city being work-based historically, many men were unattached and had families that were far from the city and kept unaware of their social and sexual activities; it was a matter of circumstantial convenience. Without families to go home to each evening, the non-working hours made men new to the city available for whatever social or sexual advances they wished to entertain. However, the gay male world was made more easily accessible to some men more than others. The situation of queer men of a working-class status who found sexual expression freedoms

in the cities of past is not so different from the idea of going away to college like the men in this narrative study have done.

Chauncey (1995) also specifically detailed how men in middle class communities within the city carried on relationships and had sex with other men, but in more covert ways that would not expose them to stigma in more social spheres. Unlike some of the men who were new residents of the city for work that was far from family or anyone who knew them personally, middle class men who wished to be involved in the gay male world had to be more creative in their masking of gay social engagement and sexual activity. Connell's *Masculinities* text (2005) theorizes a protection of status to validate that fear of losing sociopolitical influence and power in communities has not dissipated over time either. The idea of a loss of power also appears in the men's narratives and is a specific theme, "costs of authorship", unpacked in Chapter Five. In order for some men to live most authentically in their personal masculinity performance, the power and privilege of a class status and interpersonal connections is at stake in many cases. Developing an authentic self-authorship of masculinity may be understood by many, but their embracing of that authenticity may be hindered by fear of associated costs. Of course, lower class men are not free from stigma; those men still had chances of losing steady employment or being arrested for "disruptive behavior" or "lewd acts" historically just like the middle class men, but there was still less at stake for lower class men than for middle class men (Chauncey, 1995; Dilley, 2002; Marcus, 2002). In many cases, middle class men had worked diligently to build an "honorable" reputation for themselves and get the respect of family and community that was in danger of being forfeited if they were found out as a gay male. While class status was in danger of being lost on these

men throughout history, there was also a status of masculinity and being a "man" that was lost if they assumed the passive role sexually. Class status is only one vein of personal identity in play with masculinity performances and expressions.

There have been few conversations (Bérubé, 2010; Chauncey, 1995; Connell, 2013; Dilley, 2002) of social class impact in the lived experience of gay men, and even those few are introduced as an afterthought in the primary focus of research literature to date. While I took the opportunity in this study to consider how social class status may have bearing on the narratives of the study participants in this research project, the interviewed men focused more on loss of social power, a factor in developing wealth and social class status, but also not wholly the same. A future project with a more concentrated approach to unload the complexities of effect of class status on one's actions and motivations for performativity could be quite interesting. Works of a social class status focus and how it alters perceptions and personal experience has been largely omitted in scholarly research as a primary investigation (Adair, 2005). However, the different aspects of one's personal identity can and does have affect when it comes to issues like self-authorship. From the men's narratives in this study, it is clearer how a lack of social class status and capital has potential for impeding a man's ability for successfully self-authoring the gender he hopes to develop and maintain. For example, many of the men in the study cite clothing and material possessions as a means for overtly presenting a case for personal masculinity legitimization. More specifically, the need for fraternity men to wear certain types and brands of clothing and receive a stamp of approval for masculinity standard on campus was cited by almost all interviewed men in the study.

Sex roles. It is fascinating how a man's social power and legitimacy as masculine was, and in some ways still is, at stake by taking the passive role sexually in those early years of the twentieth century. As Chauncey (1995) and Dilley (2002) describe it, men who were penetrated as sodomites were stripped of their masculinity and status as a man. Although Chauncey (1995) provides a richer set of terminology to accompany sexual roles (e.g., "queer", "fairies", and "pansies"), Dilley (2002) shares pieces of men's tales about a fear of being known to take a passive sexual role in a same-sex sexual encounter, referring to that typology of men in his study as "normal"; Dilley shared how the "normal" men gave themselves a pass for the same-sex sexual encounters and avoided ascribed to bisexual or gay sexual identities by claiming "it is natural" for them since they were not being penetrated. With regard to masculinity concept in more contemporary culture, the state of sexual role in male same sex activity does not necessarily offer up a man's masculinity wholly on a platter, but is discussed in Chapter Four by the men in this study. Chauncey (1995) provides many examples of men who surrendered their masculinity in the face of taking the passive role in their relations with other men. He shares that in general gay male culture, there were the "fairies", the "punks" in prison, and the "whores" of sailors and soldiers passing through the city on their way to their next assignment. No matter their name, Chauncey (1995) made one thing very clear: the "fairies", "punks", and "whores" were men anatomically, but in no other sense. In the social sphere, these men might as well have been viewed as female for all intents and purposes. The social powers and prestige related to patriarchal systems and a fight for priority standing that Connell (2005) outlines in such detail are not

forfeited by all who have engaged (are engaging) in same-sex sexual activities, but with a layer of discretion delineated using the morality compass of a few.

To further complicate the ideas about sex roles and fluidity of masculinity intertwined with sexuality, Dilley (2002) takes an inclusive approach, including men who have had same-sex sexual experiences or consider themselves bisexual, but may not identify as "gay"; Dilley strategically uses "queer" and "non-heterosexual" terms to include men who are still partnered with women and have children later in life or continued to date both men and women after college. Conversely, I interviewed a sample of enrolled undergraduate men who identify more specifically as gay. However, gay identity is not static and is complicated in its own way; taking time at the beginning of each interview to build rapport and get to know each participant allowed me to gain an understanding of how participants situated themselves within their gay male identity and masculinity. Some of the men shared about past sexual experiences with women, or at the least divulged they critical eye for qualities and characteristics they found attractive in women. The lines of sex role identity and mentality are not completely consistent in a neat way either.

As ranges of sexual and gender identity are explored by different scholars, the lack of clarity with regard to identity development and maintenance is more easily accepted as fact; embracing fluidity and not demanding a need for distinct conditions identity is seen as more realistic with further review of the literature. Bernadette Barton's *Pray The Gay Away: The Extraordinary Lives of Bible Belt Gays* (2012) and Dilley (2002) both share information from interviews with many men who shared about their gender performance and sexual experiences in the community and on college campuses,

introducing a continuum of human sexual and gendered experiences in place of the binaries. Those texts not only support the power politics theorizations asserted from the Connell (2005) text, but also the multiple variations of masculinities tied to not only to guilt over sex roles, but also religious indignations; again, reaffirming masculinities as "historically changing and politically fraught". Barton's (2012) focus on religion expands the scope of the gay experience in one specific way that is still connected to other identity intersections such as sex roles and performativity related to community and social class status; the authors who have researched in other identity dimensions have expanded the conversation about what the gay male experience looks like as well.

Religion. Whether a consideration of community status and political or how the personal is political, religion is undoubtedly thought about in relation to the idea of studying gay masculinities and personal identity. Some of the men interviewed for this study of personal narratives of masculinity performance cite religion as a cornerstone of fragmented relationships and one of the many "external formulas" they navigated in a quest for authentic self-authorship of gender. In Rob's interview, he cited the religiosity of his family as a major hurdle for their accepting his lack of overt masculinity traits. Jace faced similar disintegration with his familial connections as Rob did, naming religious grandparents as and status in the local church as the root of contention for their acknowledgement of his gay identity. In Barton's (2012) book, she interviews gay men from a conservative portion of the United States (i.e., the southeastern U.S.) known for fervent religious observance and practice. Barton's (2012) book includes many tales of distress in merging one's identity as gay with personal religious beliefs and beliefs of their families, but some of the interviewees also share stories of how things worked out

well for them when they began to integrate all facets of their personal identity. Indeed, while Rob and Jace experienced troubled integration of gay identity and religious affiliations, others, namely Nate and Owen, referenced respective families who ascribed to religious affiliations but approached their gay identity from the perspective of love and not resentment.

A complicating factor is that religion and church memberships, particularly in rural locations, are tied to power and status in the community. Chauncey (1995) and Connell (2005) both situate the importance of power and status in their texts and as much as a masculinity performance can ease a wielding of power and status, non-normative identities, especially ones historically tied to pathology, puts that perceived power in jeopardy. The unknown effect of status for the men's families was likely overwhelming and the uncertainty bred offense in some cases. With Barton's (2012) findings with the individuals in her text being similar to the experiences of men whose narratives are part of this study, it is clear religion can be challenging to assimilate with introductions of non-heterosexual orientations to the mix of personal identity. The accounts of religious backgrounds from study participants and how those values and beliefs are incorporated into their self-authorship of gender is uncovered more in Chapter Four. While none of the men in this study place a great deal of attention of time in their interview unloading the complications of religion in their lived experiences, it did play more of an active role in the difficulty, or ease, of conciliation of personal identity dimensions for a few. While Barton's (2012) interviewees were not necessarily on college campuses, her book highlights the diversity of experience gay men have in relation to integrating their religious self with other aspects of the personal identity and why was necessary to

introduce religion as a discussion point with my interviewees to see if there was salience in relation to self-authorship of their masculinity.

  Race and ethnicity. Another factor of personal identity intersections where there was variation of emphasis placed on how active a role it played in authorship of masculinity as gay undergraduate men was race and ethnicity. About half of the men interviewed for the study identified as non-Caucasian. Even though most men did not emphasize impact of racial or ethnic background as a primary variable in decisions about their masculinity performance, there were some noticeable allusions of impact that need attention to make way for future study. Chauncey (1995) introduced a historicity of White culture that had "normal men" who just happened to partake in male same sex sexual activity and the more effeminate "fairies" who openly assumed passive sexual roles with other men. In addition, Chauncey (1995) introduced the "pansies", men who would perform in drag balls and on stage in more public, mixed gay-straight crowds as entertainers in the Greenwich Village neighborhood in NYC. White men had a variety of options for how they would welcome their involvement in a gay male social world. Black men, on the other hand, were seen as entertainment in every case. To be a male who was both Black and gay meant he was to be an entertainer of people in Harlem to have any sort of life. The options for a Black man were far fewer than his White counterpart in how he chose to operationalize and prioritize his sexual identity. The working class "pansy" and the gay Black man were made out to be a feeder of taboo salacious desire in areas of the city where those from the higher social classes came to "slum" and be entertained socially, sexually, or both. While Chauncey did not develop the racial lines of the gay male with nearly as much detail as class and gender lines, it is

apparent that Black gay men during the early twentieth century were far more restricted in how they could incorporate their sexual identity into their life in an effective way that did not leave them living as a hollow entertainment display.

In more contemporary references, Collins (2005) details in her text, *Black sexual politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism*, how many Black men feeling the need to engage his gay sexuality and identity in secret, or "on the down low", to avoid intense stigmatization and shame associated with identifying in a non-heteronormative way. Collins (2005) goes on to declare how damaging those actions can be to the health of the overall racial community and psyche of the men who are made to hide and live parallel lives, an experience also cited by Dilley (2002) in his interviews with a variety of men. Connell (2005) also explores marginalization within gay identity intersections of race. Connell (2005) explains how the situation of owning a gay identity and a masculinity alternative to the hegemonic scripts of local communities is particularly problematic due to not only marginalization within the Black community, but also the reception of a second-class status as a gay man. To be dually marginalized in a more contemporary set of social spaces leaves Black men to a communal fate not far from life as an exhibit of objectification in Harlem in the early twentieth century as introduced by Chauncey (1995).

More specific to collegiate spaces and related to the stigma Cotton-Huston and Waite (2000) and Engstrom and Sedlacek (1997) share about identifying as a gay man in college, Terrell Strayhorn, James DeVita and Amanda Blakewood (2010) and Jamie Washington and Vernon Wall (2010) took the investigation of the gay college male experience further and focused more specifically on the challenges of Black gay men on

campuses. In addition to the difficulties Black gay men may experience in relation to their masculinity, they were also burdened with the idea and reality of being ostracized in their racial group due to their sexual orientation, much like the atmosphere of the larger community detailed by Collins (2005). Strayhorn, DeVita, and Blakewood (2010) and Washington and Wall (2010) shared Black men found it tremendously difficult to get the peer support they needed on campus when they also identified as gay. Rosa Cintron (2000) echoed Strayhorn, DeVita, and Blakewood (2010) and Washington and Wall's (2010) findings with another ethnic group in her exploration of experiences of Latino gay men on college campuses. Hispanic (Latino) identifying gay men have exclusionary experience not far off from those of Black men; still, there is much less literature available to explore the marginalization of Hispanic (Latino) gay men.

With all the complications in the nature of masculinity and manhood on a college campus Kimmel and Davis (2011) share, those complications in navigating an accepted masculinity only compound in difficulty when one adds the homosexual and racial minority identities to the conversation as Cintron (2000), Collins (2005), Connell (2005), Strayhorn, DeVita, and Blakewood (2010), and Washington and Wall (2010 have done. Due to the complex landscape of gender and sexuality experiences on college campuses, more research exploring gay undergraduate men's experiences as men on campus will only add to the conversation about how to support minority student groups not aligning with accepted norms as well. A study like Strayhorn, DeVita, and Blakewood's (2010) study of Black gay men on predominantly white campuses could be expanded upon as well to explore more specifically how those men may tailor their gender performance for the sake of establishing sense of belonging. While Strayhorn, DeVita, and Blakewood

(2010) shared how black gay men who are on predominantly white campuses have a unique challenge to fit in and establish a sense of belonging and support, those experiences are also evocative of the experiences Cintron (2000) shares in her accounts of experiences from Latino gay men on campus. In my study, I was able to collect narratives of gay undergraduate men that included multiple ethnicities, social classes, and religions. From related literature, there appear to be shared and unique experiences alike; having the ability to hear from a diversity of gay undergraduate men highlighted just how diverse the gay undergraduate male population is on a campus. For example, having multiple interviewees from marginalized racial and ethnic backgrounds included in the study, I would have assumed a more contentious set of narratives related to racial and ethnic complications to establish grounded identity development. The two most salient tales came from Jace and Kent's interactions with family, not the campus community. Sometimes the intersections of personal identity bring up significant obstacles, but other times the men in the study experienced an easy fusion. At any rate, all men found challenge in navigating and at least a few social locations.

Social location. The importance of having the skills to read the atmospheres of different social locations is key in ensuring less conflict when ascribing to one or more marginalized identities, particular one as politically charged as that of the gay male. In order to ensure smooth transitions between spaces, gay men have long had to employ a high level of self-regulation via "masking" and variant gender trait expressions. Chauncey (1995) details the use of code language and social cues of gay men is his thick description of the places where the gay male social world came to life in NYC in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. A topic also somewhat dictated by social class

status, gay men found a variety of spaces to bring the social and sexual aspects of their identity to life. The bars, cafeterias (restaurants), and nightclubs of the city had covert patronage of gay men who were less obvious in appearance. Still, the "fairies" carved out some spaces for themselves with more obvious displays of the effeminate, stereotypical characteristic gay culture. As Rob alludes as part of his Chapter Four narrative, the places of patronage for gay culture still exist in enclaves of towns where gay men are free to express gender more authentically without the "macho bullshit". The fairies and the pansies were noticeable and remained patrons in more liberal cafés and bars in urban areas that overlooked laws that outlawed service to the "perverts" of the gay male world (Chauncey, 1995; Dilley, 2002). Much like the fairies and pansies, Jimmy and Marshall, two more men included in this narrative study, share about their experiences of being ostracized by many socially as high school students, and in Jimmy's case as a college student as well, for their refusal to adopt masculinity expressions less authentic and natural for each of them. However, a key difference for Jimmy and Marshall is that Marshall adopted more self-regulation and "masking" of more flamboyant personal traits when attempting to attain and maintain a desired political status on campus. Although it leaves Jimmy feeling inadequate and socially isolated, he remains obstinate about living his more authentic representation of personal masculinity.

The "normal, queer" men of the early 1900s would connect with their passive sexual partners via code talk and "dropping hairpins" to let the fairies know they were interested (Bérubé, 2010; Chauncey, 1995). While not exclusively related to gay male social spaces, Kimmel (2011) and Rotundo (1994) share how even heterosexual men found use for self-regulation of gender expression in their social spaces as well.

Chauncey (1995) and Dilley (2002) argue that some of those "heterosexual" men in the

Kimmel (2011) and Rotundo (1994) texts were having same-sex sexual encounters as

what Chauncey (1995) and Dilley (2002) term "normal" men, but in covert ways. Unlike

the self-regulating performances a man like Marshall employs to downplay authentically

flamboyant gender expression, the "normal" men mentally separated sexuality and what

it implied about his gender; in their minds, having same-sex sexual experiences did not

inherently suggest a lesser masculinity like it does for gay identifying men. This is also

the site of confusion where another man in my study, Matt, is in an early crossroads of

integrating sexuality and gender for himself.

In addition to the bars and cafés, there were parks and boarding houses (e.g.,

YMCA) where fairies would "cruise for rough trade" and make connections with the

"normal" queers who wished to remain as anonymous as possible in their sexual

escapades. (Chauncey, 1995) Even during more conservative times when bars could not

serve liquor on Sunday, they opened rooms for temporary rental and became "Raines

Law Hotels", popular among both fairies and normal queers. There were also the baths,

originally meant to serve working-poor in tenement houses that had no indoor plumbing

for bathing, which became hot spots for gay men cruising. Eventually when indoor

plumbing was more widespread, baths did not disappear, but became more common and

more exclusively served a homosexual clientele. There were a variety of places and

means for finding a new sexual partner for male same sex relations, catering even more to

temporary and singular encounters. Dilley (2002) expands the idea of covert meeting

locations for the more salacious activities of "normal" and "parallel" men who chose to

either mentally compartmentalize their sexuality or live a double ("parallel") life where

they could enjoy the same-sex sexual experiences while maintaining "heterosexual" public identities.

Bérubé (2010) adds an additional layer with references to military men "buddying up" in war times and deployment and being close with that buddy as a friend, companion, and trusted person, in some cases, getting so close to one another that sexual advances were assumed. However, the encounters were not discussed in a group setting because some of those buddies did not identify as homosexuals; the homoerotic nature of being without the company of a member of the opposite sex for many months or over a year at a time sometimes meant that military buddies became romantic companions due to circumstance. The buddy system found out so many homosexual GIs that dishonorable discharges abounded during the war. There were cases where the passive buddy was the only one who received discharge papers. This is another example of how hegemonic masculinity views about "normal men" were carried over through time from the early years of the twentieth century that Chauncey (1995) detailed to the war era that Bérubé (2010) wrote about in his book and coincides with the times of the the "normal man" in the Dilley (2002) text.

With dishonorable discharge papers detailing homosexuality as the reason for their discharge from military service, many gay men had extraordinary trouble securing any type of employment, housing, credit, or anything that would give them value in civilian society (Bérubé, 2010). However, the country's efforts stigmatize and ostracize gay veterans and not honor their service to the country with Veteran's Administration (VA) benefits the country inadvertently brought gay men together in solidarity to fight for their rights to their benefits, employment, and a life less demeaning. Before the war,

many gay men were scattered across rural towns throughout the country. After returning as a more liberated individual, whether moving through their service to the country undiscovered or via dishonorable discharge, many did not see return to the rural life and masked existence as a viable option. Even in more contemporary military spaces, one of the men in this narrative study who served, Owen, shared his anxieties about being "outed" in his "camp". It turns out he was more well received than he imagined, but his fears were not only rooted in history, but also the modern. There are many authors' more contemporary-focused writings that share how those worries of Owen, and others included in the study, are well-founded to have an effect on status and ability to attain and maintain power and prestige in social and professional circles (Berila, 2011; Connell, 2005, 2013; Kimmel & Davis, 2011; Marcus, 2002).

Cities like New York, Chicago, New Orleans, and San Francisco busted at the seams with a newly minted, young gay generation of men (Bérubé, 2010; Dilley, 2002). As World War II faded into memory, gay men who had discovered their independence during the war were met with an even more conservative era in United States history. Public Service Announcements (PSA) were created and viewed in schools that made men specifically out to be sexual predators, perverts, and child molesters. Children were educated to "beware of the homosexual" at every turn in the media and schools (Bérubé, 2010; Marcus, 2002). The mass assault on gay (homosexual) identity in the last years of the 1940s and early 1950s made way for a time when those with a gay identity were backed into the "closet" once again. In order to stay employed and have any sort of a livable existence, gay men and women were all but forced to muster a heterosexual personality. Even still, gay men were not being stamped out into extinction. In

segmented enclaves, gay men were preparing to organize and do what was possible in

that temporal space of history to hold on to a thread of their sexual identity. There are

also historically-rooted motivations for the sense of activism that some of the men in this

narrative study, namely Nate and Marshall, have developed with their ownership of gay

identity and authentic expressions of gender stratified by self-regulation and situational

policing (D'Emilio, 1992; Marcus, 2002).

Power of class status, both within male peer groups and larger society, and

employability were the high stakes of being found out for engaging in sexual encounters

with other men throughout the twentieth century and into our more contemporary spaces

(Connell 2005, 2013; D'Emilio, 1992). Understanding how important location is, both

geographically and socially, then and now is needed for an appropriate personal vantage

point of the reader in findings from this narrative inquiry as well. There is frustration on

the part of some of the men in this study, particularly Tim, George, and Jimmy, when

considering the heavy amounts of "hairpins dropped" and convoluted work of reading the

social cues of sexuality and regulation of gender and sex role expression today. Each of

the men, Tim, George, and Jimmy, spend time in their interviews sharing feeling of

deflating and anxiety with their misreading of men's intentions regarding social and

sexual connection. The nature of fragility in masculinity constructs and how gay identity

effects power, status, and social privilege is something that has transcended time.

Gay Activism. John D'Emilio's *Making Trouble: Essays on Gay History,*

Politics, and the University (1992) analyzes the personal and political domains on

campuses, and in the general public, which were spaces home to gay rights activism that

paved the way for the more contemporary campus atmospheres experienced today by the

men's narratives for this study. D'Emilio's (1992) work is a fairly comprehensive work

of highlighting gay activism related to university life and is supplemented by

incorporating perspectives of gay historians' texts like that of Dilley (2002) and Eric

Marcus' *Making Gay History: The Half-Century Fight for Lesbian and Gay Equal Rights*

(2002). Dilley (2002) is helpful in placing viewpoint on the impact of decades of gay

rights movement work at an interpersonal level from interview narratives spanning the

latter half of the twentieth century. Marcus (2002), and to a lesser extent Bérubé (2010),

corroborate D'Emilio's (1992) findings and perspective for different society-level

angles. Bringing in the authors' works together strengthens D'Emilio's (1992) claims

about different periods of gay history due to some of his text being more close to his

personal stories coupled with general and political commentaries. Although the motive

of writing is different within D'Emilio (1992), his text provides a focused perspective

that uncovers and illuminates gay social history as a political identity of homosexuality

that Connell (2005) marked as "historically changing and political fraught".

  Rewriting history. In popular history, gay activism and the entire gay social

world, for the most part, might seem to have started with the Stonewall riots in June

1969, but D'Emilio (1992) and Marcus (2002) present the hidden history of gay activism

that began as early as 1950 with the founding of the Mattachine Society. The Mattachine

Society was a small group of gay men who wanted to be liberated from the chains that

had been imposed by the public service announcements (PSAs) and related initiatives

vilifying homosexuals as perverts to be feared that Bérubé (2010) also points out in the

final parts of his book. The Mattachine Society was a group dedicated to liberation and

homophilia. However, in the wake of McCarthyism in the 1950s, the gathering of many

chapters of individuals with differing hopes and goals for the group resulted in a mutiny

where a select but vocal few shifted the trajectory toward an assimilationist

agenda. Rather than affirming the homosexual identity as one of pride and uniqueness

that had its own culture and community, the new leaders of the organization drove the

members toward assimilation. The struggle for power and social status was not only

between heterosexual and homosexual, but indeed between homosexual sects as well; the

"very straight gay" and tensions that lay separation to gay liberationists and

assimilationists (Connell, 2005). D'Emilio (1992) and Marcus (2002) share that the

assimilationist agenda attempted to lean into normative societal standards to downplay

sexual identity as a private identity and argued that outside of sexual preference the

members were just like every other American man and woman. The homophile

movement of the 1950s and 1960s saw more failures and setbacks than success. That

dissonance between the liberationist and assimilationist is clear and present in the

narratives of the men in this study as well. Highlighted as a "cost of authorship" in

Chapter Five, men like Jimmy, Nate, and Owen have their ways for managing their needs

for liberation. As shared in more detail in Chapter Four, Jimmy and Nate embrace a

perceived need to be confrontational and take a stand for their authentic masculinity

expressions, while Owen resides more in the center of the liberation/assimilation debate

by retreating to the safe space of the campus LGBTQ Resource Center.

Even still, new organizations in addition to Mattachine continued to develop in

what could be characterized as a post-war, covert gay renaissance with pockets of

activism that were strong in urban centers, more scattered in a few cities throughout the

Midwest. The homophile movement was carried into the more liberal age of the 1960s

when civil rights and women's liberation became popular causes. Gay history was not dormant and non-existent in the 1950s; there were segments of activists writing, speaking, and gathering in groups to carry on homophile movement that treaded water and prepared for when the time was right to make their presence known on a larger stage (D'Emilio, 1992; Marcus, 2002). The Stonewall riots, of June 1969 in New York, gave gay activists spread throughout the country the momentum and inspiration they needed to ignite a flame that called for change.

Remaking the university. After the events in New York in June 1969, gay people felt a little more power and passion behind their cause. The events acted as a starting point for positive change. D'Emilio (1992) shares his own story as an example of someone who was awakened by the Stonewall events as a young man who was enrolled at Columbia University in New York City. He explained that social and political organization was occurring at an exponential rate, an assertion supported by Marcus (2002) in his text where he claims the post-Stonewall decade as the period when a more true sense of liberation occurred and a continuum of gay identities were made more visible. In 1973, D'Emilio (1992) was a founding member of a faculty and student group, the Gay Academic Union (GAU), which was a support system and enabler of individuals to create change that was within their power and authority. D'Emilio (1992) also shared his experience as a developing scholar who was deciding whether or not to write his dissertation on a gay topic. During the time of his graduate career, the dissertation was a marker of a scholar's trajectory in faculty life. To be cornered into a research agenda and a professional life that limits one's agency so much was a frightening prospect for D'Emilio (1992), but he decided to move forward with his plans

to study gay history. Likewise, Marcus (2002) shares that most of the 1970's was a period where gay identifying people established a voice grounded in more solidarity and a seriousness of purpose.

Once the university campuses ushered in more visible student organizations like D'Emilio's (1992) and his peers "GAU", the campuses presences would grow and change with time, but organizational spaces have continued to exist in some form or fashion up to today. The men from this narrative study share about their experiences with gay organization on campus and in the community as well. Some find the organized community of gay alliance to be refreshing because, as Rob puts it, there is "no macho bullshit", there are others who did not necessarily agree and found gay organization on campus to be "too political" and exclusionary or "cliquey". One such man was Jimmy, who shares in his Chapter Four narrative that people are friendly on the surface, but lack substance for real interpersonal connection to follow through to "hang out". The factions of power and social status within gay organization on a campus is not so far from the dissention of gay men with larger society.

Living politics. Even though gay rights and the activism that accompanies "the movement" may seem mostly harmonious to the outsider, the gay community encompasses every gender identity, all sexes (male, female, and intersex), race, nationality, social class, and religion. With that much diversity, there is a mountain of conflict and turmoil that accompany each individual who is a part of the gay rights movement. D'Emilio (1992) specifically introduces important differences that create conflict. There are certain amounts of privilege throughout identities that is offered up even if it has not been earned (e.g., the cis-gender, Caucasian male). It is important to not

only acknowledge the difference, but ensure that difference has a voice in the setting of agenda and priorities in a rights group. D'Emilio (1992) wrote about the struggle to give difference a voice in a group setting without complicating and convoluting process so much that the movement gets lost in the complications of difference. This is a notion also belabored by Connell (2005, 2013), who claims there are struggles and heightened conflict for a place of power and recognition by those in seats of authority when there are differences between not only gay and straight men, but also differences between gay men based on the many dimensions of identity that have been reviewed earlier in the chapter. Members of identity within the marginalized set exclude and ostracize even though they could theoretically empathize with the feelings of being left out of conversation and consideration. There is no easy solution for giving everyone a voice, but also moving forward with progress at such speed that everyone is pleased. What does it look like for everyone be pleased with a multitude of voices given power and make progress with positive changes in social position? There is no simple solution, but as a researcher, there is a responsibility to do the best to address difference and be the instrument through which it is heard. Without speaking for the person, can we adequately give a voice to those who currently have none? That should be one of many goals for a developing scholar and researcher. This is a point I revisit in the next chapter as I consider concepts like feminist methodology and shared authority in narrative research.

Another area of concern D'Emilio (1992) has in the way of progress is the unforeseen complications that seem to be presented at the most inopportune time. One example D'Emilio (1992) and Marcus (2002) offer is the HIV/AIDS epidemic that took over the gay population in the 1980s and early 1990s, instilling a new distance and fear of

gay men within the general population. There was a mostly positive momentum

occurring up to the point in recent history when HIV/AIDS reared its treacherous attack

on not only gay men, but everyone. However, the gay community has rallied support for

one another and welcomed a vast number of allies in the fight to suppress HIV infections

among gay people and others as well. Even though HIV/AIDS shifted the focus away

from the overarching rights agenda at the turn of the decade in 1980, the gay community

somehow found the strength to get back to the gay rights movement and continue to

political battles that have been waged at some level for many decades.

There is a long and storied history for the gay community and the many forms it

has taken over the last century. Karen Graves' (2012) recently published an article where

she explained how she was staffing a table highlighting gay history at a gay pride event

and was approached by a protestor with the sneering question, "So, you think you have a

history?" Graves (2012) did not include how she addressed the man, but understanding

the sense of community and culture that has existed for gay people since the earliest years

of the industrial revolution in the United States, someone would be hard pressed to

invalidate a gay history based on the rich information and tales from personal lives that

are shared by Chauncey (1995), Bérubé (2010), Marcus (2002), D'Emilio (1992), and

other scholar-authors in the literature of recent decades. Even during the most

conservative and trying times, gay people still organized, sometimes covertly and

inconspicuously.

From the liberationist perspective, gay history may have gotten a later start due to

isolation of those who identified as gay before the late 1800s, but the history exists as

rich and diverse as the people that makeup that gay population, again from every gender

identity, sex, race, religion, social class, and region. Assimilationists could argue the gay population has just as much of a history as the human race because while their sexual preference makes them different, they are human and are not that different at all in the grand history of the human experience. No matter which perspective one identifies with most, liberationist or assimilationist, university scholars are uncovering gay history and making it public at exponential rates with each passing year (Graves, 2012). With a continued commitment of academic scholars, gay history will soon be far-reaching and as vast as the history collected and studied in any other subpopulation in campus curricula.

Campus & Community Culture

Interpersonal Student Experience

On campus specifically, men experience scholarship, personal development, and maturing into adulthood differently based on their effectiveness for adopting socially approved masculinity norms. That constant battle to be positively acknowledged and escape marginalized positions as men on campus is a theme in D'Emilio's (1992) text and Kimmel and Davis (2011). Additionally, the men in this narrative study share a myriad of orientations to campus through variable involvement, interpersonal connections, and turns at conflict to defend personal expression on an individual level. Although D'Emilio (1992) is now considered an expert and highly-referenced scholar in History and Queer Studies, he shares that, as a young scholar, he fought for recognition and appreciation as a gay male academic in the History discipline from the start. He discussed in *Making Trouble* (1992) that even in the 1990's he was still insecure about being acknowledged for his contributions to his discipline. Those feelings of insecurity remained even after decades as a campus and community activist for gay rights, author,

and speaker in several newsletters and occasions that brought social protestors together. In addition, he detailed that self-doubt is seared into his psyche by having the ready approval of students and his social peers while clinging for scraps of validation and encouragement received from university administrators and faculty professional peers. D'Emilio's (1992) account of challenging experiences on college campuses is one that is echoed in the narrative of Jimmy in this study; being ridiculed by a faculty instructor for his emotionality in front of dozens of peers in the classroom has way of easily embedding a lack of efficacy not simply overcome.

D'Emilo's (1992) narrative is also reminiscent of the narrative of gay male campus experience today for Marshall, a man whose story is shared in this study in Chapter Four, as someone involved in contemporary university politics on his campus and made to self-regulate his mannerisms and voice inflection to garner respect in that social location . Gay men are known to be significantly more likely to be college educated, graduate with higher academic grade point averages, and be more actively involved on campus, in general, than heterosexual men (Carpenter, 2009). However, while gay male students are already successful in college in many respects, that success has not yielded much in the way of being a legitimate stakeholder of what it means to "be a man" by campus standards and expectations (Berila, 2011; Cotton-Huston & Waite, 2000; Davis, 2010; Engstrom & Sedlacek, 1997; Kimmel, 2010; Kimmel & Davis, 2011). By encouraging professional dialogues of masculinity performance on campuses, hopefully colleges and universities can successfully expand the scope of what is seen as "masculine" to avoid the instances of "gender role conflict" experienced by men working to reconstruct their masculine identity as a new college campus community member

(Davis, 2010). There is an added assumed benefit of reducing pressures felt by heterosexual men on campus who have been widely labeled as "in crisis" by means of popular professional discourse regarding declining enrollment and retention numbers.

Although gay men on campus today have more visibility and, arguably, have more acceptance as welcome campus community members, there is still a need to share experiences and perceptions of gay men to diffuse the higher levels of stigma this subpopulation endures, either directly or as example of the non-masculinity measurement. (Cotton-Huston & Waite, 2000; Engstrom & Sedlacek, 1997; Kimmel, 2010). Gay men may not have the chance to be "normal" by campus gender performance standards, but may also not fit with the typecasts of marginalization; where does that leave them? This narrative study illuminates examples of contemporary experiences of gay undergraduate men to support a greater sense of inclusion for them and their diversity of masculinity performance on campus. There are more queer men on college campuses (both homosexual and heterosexual) than ever, and with that, this investigation of men and masculinities is necessary to capture an understanding of identity intersections that engender situational feelings of marginalization. A study where experiences of gay undergraduate men, who may also identify as disabled, working class, or of a variety of races, ethnicities, religions or other backgrounds, are included, and not simply as an afterthought, is important work that needs to be done to support a real inclusivity on campuses (Harris & Barone, 2011).

Although gay undergraduate men are not the only subgroup of men on campus that experience gender role conflict, gay undergraduate men are the ones who have historically become easy targets for critique of gender performance in a variety of

campus spaces. More than the potential gender role conflict, Catherine Engstrom and William Sedlacek (1997) also highlight the stigma that gay undergraduate men endure in relation to lesbian peers in their article, "Attitudes of Heterosexual Students Toward their Gay Male and Lesbian Peers". While the challenge to perform within the frame of femininity can be a problem for lesbian students on campus, Engstrom and Sedlacek (1997) found the stigma lesbian students experience on campus is often of lesser intensity than that of their gay male peers.

Within the last thirty years, queer masculinities of gay men have become more prominently visible on many campuses throughout the United States. One example, along with the rise of "GAUs" like D'Emilio's (1992), is the 1986 founding and growth of the visible and active Delta Lambda Phi (DLP) National Social Fraternity, a fraternity of men that is comprised of gay, bisexual, and progressive men. DLP now has over thirty chapters on campuses across the United States and continues to grow exponentially with a brotherhood very active and engaged in various campus and community events (Delta Lambda Phi, 2016). Beyond the DLP example, there are countless other clubs, organizations, and social gatherings, both formal and transient, of LGBTQ people and their allies on campus where queer masculinities are not only visible, but celebrated (Sanlo, Rankin, & Schoenberg, 2002). In addition, there are formal resource centers and offices that exist to serve and assist lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) populations of students on some campuses. Even on many campuses where formal services and support for LGBTQ populations are not present, there is currently working discussions and debates about providing those resources to all campus community members who identify as LGBTQ or allies. The need for continued work in

assessment, expansion of services and supports, and education related to LGBTQ populations was the primary impetus for *Our Place on Campus: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Services and Programs in Higher Education*, a 2002 collaborative text authored by an array of scholars and practitioners and edited by Ronni Sanlo, Sue Rankin, and Robert Schoenberg.

While visibility and acknowledgement of gay male culture has grown exponentially throughout the United States in media and popular culture, diversity of gender is accepted on some college campuses more than others. An exploration into the lives and experiences of current gay undergraduate men unveiled narratives that included supposed prerequisites of specific body ideals and rigid standards for emotional expression and habits, among other factors, driven by masculinity norms on campus as detailed in Chapter Four and corroborated by a host of scholarship (Davis, 2010; Kimmel, 2010; O'Neil, et. al, 2010; Kimmel and Davis, 2011). These ideas and ideals of masculinity performance on college campuses are not novel, but a more contemporary investigation can be pivotal in the development of training of higher education professionals and supporting men on campus. Gay men struggling to navigate the dissonance of uncomfortable calls for conformity and their personal desires for the "other" when it comes to the social norms of masculinity performance has been an issue that spans several decades of campus culture and student experiences (Dilley, 2002). Even with many undergraduate men not living up to the strict standards of what is considered masculine at their particular institution, the expectations remain reinforced by a history written as institutional tradition and culture.

Organizational Culture

The larger size and diversity of an institution, like the one used as setting for this study, can make pinpointing a singular, completely accurate definition for "organizational culture" an incredible task. However, more generally conceptualizing organizational culture in higher education and what it might look like in terms of the campus policies, events, and experiences of many people and places, past and present, is feasible and necessary. When the many characteristics that come together to mold a cultural identity for an institution are teased apart and examined more closely, scholars who devote their work to researching in higher education begin to illuminate why colleges and universities exist as they did historically and as they do today. Considering the diversity of American higher education has led to many scholars developing an array of thoughts and theorizations about cultural markers of institutional difference. While some take more of a relational view of organizational culture in higher education and place a great amount of emphasis on the people involved, others place greater significance on the policies, events, and everyday occurrences that are part of a campus and rely on those items to "tell the story". By taking the fragmented considerations of many scholars and bringing them together, it is possible to envision the cultural mosaic of higher education in the United States as an interdependent collective of both people and policy.

There are a variety of perspectives on organizational culture that address how an organization's (campus') culture develops, is maintained, and how that culture might be influenced to change. One of the most respected and published scholars with longevity in the area of organizational theory in higher education is William Tierney, Professor of Higher Education Policy at the University of Southern California. Tierney wrote about

his framework for what is meant by "organizational culture", arguing that the concept is "interpretive" and that respective organizations carry "webs of significance [and] strong forces that emanate within". (Tierney, 1988) It is not clear from Tierney's 1988 article how transparent markers of culture are supposed to be to outsiders of the organization, but there are other scholars, namely Bolman and Deal (2008), who have published about the connections between societal conditions and the culture of a college or university. Tierney (1988) equates culture of a campus to specific ceremonies, rites, and traditions on campuses. Some markers are more formal, such as convocations and commencements, while others are more informal, such as those events and traditions related to campus sports teams. Although Tierney (1988) names ceremony and tradition to match the "cultural symbols" of Bolman and Deal's (2008) text, they have a common thread of the power-laden and hegemonic normative cultural influence; authors like Connell (2005, 2013) and Kimmel (2010) insist societal grandeur is shrouded with marginalization and select personal identity exploitation, making personal orientations to campus negative for some more than others. Tierney (1988) adds that some higher order sort of general framework for an institution's culture is almost always in play (i.e., systems like a board of regents, accrediting bodies, administration, or governing boards). The general campus community can participate in and contribute to the culture of the institution, but it is clear the college or university is not in a vacuum and much of a campus' influence is disseminated from a "power tower".

There are also entities and facets of the more general society outside the sphere of the campus community that shape its organizational culture as well. John Meyer, Francisco Ramirez, David John Frank, and Evan Schofer contributed a chapter entitled

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"Higher Education as an Institution" in Patricia Gumport's *Sociology of Higher Education* anthology (2007) that introduced sociological institutional theory to frame their argument that local organizations, in this case a college or university campus, are influenced, and albeit manipulated, by the wider purviews of our society. Those specific purviews are specifically the social, economic, and political conditions of the time. Most simply, having a social geography more or less conservative or liberal ideologically will have an impact on a college or university campus within that society. Meyer, et al. (2007) claim the meanings, definitions, rules, and models of operation found within a singular organization would not exist without the wider social environment. That surrounding environment provides a frame for what a college or university should look, act, and operate like in socio-geographic context.

According to Meyer, et al. (2007), the broader social landscape decides what is seen as legitimate. This set of scholars even goes so far as to assert campuses act only in tandem with the decisions and happenings outside of the institutions themselves. If that is so, what is it that the various constituencies are vying for control over? R.W. Connell (2013) might argue the struggle is for perceived power in a patriarchal system where men are easily motivated when the concept of power and influence are introduced to a setting. Another pair of scholars, Lee Bolman and Terrence Deal, discusses what artifacts cultivate culture on a college campus more specifically. Like Tierney (1988), Bolman and Deal (2008) take an explorative view of organizational culture, but they put a specific face on what culture looks like on a campus and where we people can find those markers. The authors focus on the elements of culture that instill meaning, such as: events, historical facts and symbols, and the actual physical spaces rather than the

intangible and abstract aspects that Tierney (1988) relies on in his argument of what

constitutes organizational culture. The more tangible and visible aspects of culture are

salient markers for the men in this narrative study as well; most of the men use visuals of

athletics, fraternity symbolism in fashion and crest, and general campus population

fashion trends to paint a mental image of not only validated campus masculinities, but

campus culture as a whole.

Bolman and Deal (2008) put more weight on the visual illustrations of culture that

a campus community member would come in contact with as they experience the

institution. They place special importance on a student being able to read symbols,

whether ritual and ceremony or posted policies and statements of inclusion. They

continue by explaining symbols found on a campus all have special meaning and a

connection to understanding the inadvertently hidden culture of a campus. With those

symbols and frames, a campus community has the chance to foster and maintain an

incomparable product of organizational culture. With the idea in mind that culture is

embedded in the symbols, events, and policies of a campus, how do students read those

artifacts in a way that they are able to connect with their meanings and feel linked to a

community that they can call their own?

Campus Culture

Definitions. Practices that feel ritualistic and sacred, fortified by institutional

leadership, are combined with campus symbols, artifacts, and history to create an

undeniable "culture" (Schein, 2010). Consulting a myriad of modern studies of

organization culture and the influence of leaders, Edgar Schein emphasizes the

importance and authority of leaders and organization (campus) members to drive a

"culture" that meets specific goals and objectives in his 2010 book, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (4th edition). The scripts of masculinity that shape local gender norms are rooted in campus and community "cultures", and the gender ideologies present on campus and in the local community did not simply develop spontaneously. However, the highlighted assertions from Schein's 2010 text are not to say campuses are completely overrun by narrowly defined masculinities and these gay undergraduate men are prisoners of a cemented institutional culture either. The many aspects of institutional culture (i.e., practices, symbols, policies, etc.), couched in the reverence of what is considered "tradition", can be and are sometimes changed. Policies and strategic growth and development over time ensure that many facets of a campus community, including gender performativity, are not static, but consistently in flux, a claim also supported by Connell (2005) and D'Emilio (1992). Even without traditions of institutional culture pressuring individual men, campus men still seem to find ways to create pressure for themselves to conform to idyllic standards that are challenging to attain, but even more unlikely to maintain.

In defining "campus culture", I look to researchers who have studied gay college men and campus environments in the past; "campus culture" can be prominent physical spaces, symbols, events, policies, programs, services and ways of being (i.e., how members of the campus community interact and perform roles and functions) (Cotton-Huston & Waite, 2000; D'Emilio, 1992; Engstrom & Sedlacek, 1997; Cintron, 2000; Dilley, 2002; Bolman & Deal, 2008; Schein, 2010; Laker & Davis, 2011). The college men in this study pulled from a wide array of campus cultural frames to inform their masculinity performance; as illustrated in the narrative contributions from study

participants included in Chapter Four, what was a salient aspect of campus culture for one student, was not necessarily integral for another.

Even defining what is considered "campus" can be a challenge. Bolman and Deal (2008) and Kimmel (2010) explain how abstract an organization's sphere of influence can be, expanding far beyond the tangible and visual representations to include even psychological orientations that help establish purpose and meaning for those who are a part of and interact with the organization. With the development of technology to include various forms of online social media and learning spaces where the campus community interacts, the campus of the past where interactions occurred only in physical, face-to-face spaces is no longer a reality. The men in my study share how online versus face-to-face interactions can be perplexing when negotiating a personal masculinity. Students experience campus and student life from a variety of platforms. However, for the purposes of my inquiry, I kept my primary focus on the interpersonal interactions that happen on the physical campus spaces. In interviews, some students shared and expanded the conversation to include online forums (i.e., social media) due to how the individuals experience campus culture. I actively worked to keep the focus of the interview on physical campus interactions and experiences of face-to-face campus culture, but online spaces of "culture" are something that could be explored in future research.

Operationalizing. One might assume students who ascribe to minority or oppressed identity groups are generally more welcoming and educated or informed about the invisible and silenced subpopulations of both campus and general society. That assumption of ubiquitous care and knowledge would be wrong. Even though students

identify as members of disadvantaged groups, they are typically no more likely to be inclusive and welcoming (Fox, 2010; Washington & Wall, 2010). Within subgroups, there is an air of the "normal" that is internalized and perpetuated in "safe spaces" that do not end up being safe spaces for one and all. Even within marginalized spaces and groups on campuses, there is a tendency for individuals to experience discrimination and alienation based on further microcosms of normalcy that permeate the organizational culture. A new normal is negotiated and bolstered in "safe spaces" leaving select individuals to fend for themselves in an environment of where they experience hostility and ridicule. Jimmy's narrative, in Chapter Four, provides a clear example of Fox's (2010) perspective by his explaining how he attended gay alliance organization meetings on campus that seemed welcoming and he was met with smiling faces and warm approaches, but the social connections were hollow. Jimmy's attempts to follow-up and establish stronger interpersonal connections with other gay people on campus are unrequited. Rob, another man in the study, corroborated Jimmy's assessment of the student group, adding how the group is quite transient with regular attendance from a small subset of people who set the norm and establish the clandestine guidelines for belonging.

Another example from the study narratives, Jace's critical view of other gay men in the fine arts discipline for their "queeny" displays and labeling them as "unprofessional", is particularly problematic when considering the reach of "safe space". Rob and Tim also explained a self-policing of masculinity performance and conscious effort to "not be too flamboyant", claiming how it is off-putting to some other gay men. With such a magnitude of internalized homophobia experienced by multiple men in this

study, the idea of a "safe space" on campus has to be revised for some. Organizations and spaces meant to provide a sanctuary for the policing of gender expression and performance can provide a chilly environment that further isolates and excludes in certain situations.

Fox's (2010) work emphasizes just how fragile a sense of social integration can be for individual students on college and university campuses. When certain students are not seeing faculty who look or act like them, faculty who value identity difference, or peers who welcome and solidify one's place in the community, there is a multi-faceted ecology of exclusion that leaves some students disillusioned and jaded (Strayhorn, DeVita, & Blakewood, 2010; Washington & Wall, 2010). Students are in need of a curriculum and faculty that bring all of the socio-political complications of general society into the campus and classroom for review, contemplation, and planning. Students need examples of injustice and inequality, chances to discover potential solutions, and opportunities to plan for the future. It seems feasible that all of that could be done if the necessary academic environment were provided by an engaged and committed campus organizational culture. Changes within the academy are not the only necessary agent, but reinforcement via public policies and statements of inclusion from those few who are shaping campus culture would be instrumental as a catalyst for social change on campus as well. Changing societal perspectives and open-mindedness to fluidity of identity expression are necessary for real change in patriarchal-power oppressions (Connell, 2013). The academic, coupled with the social, have promise to create a transformative environment for students who attend respective campuses. Subtle changes that begin with

simple inclusion of more perspectives would go far in shifting many institutions' cultures positively.

      A student having the chance to build and foster relationships with faculty and staff on campus, whether they are gay identified or not, is a vital piece of diminishing negativity that a student might experience in academic or social spaces. As managers of the power balance on campus, faculty members have the ability to connect with student in positive ways that role model a social justice and appreciation for diversity (Cress, 2008). Positively reinforcing the need for diversity and calling for equity go far in the effort to extinguish negative encounters. Since college is a critical time in personal and professional development for students, it would be helpful to have faculty that call for inclusivity and establish mentor type relationships with students. It is clear that faculty have purview over what happens in the academic spaces on campus; investing in the student as a whole person, and not just a developing scholar, will set an expectation that the student might emulate the faculty member. For this reason, Park and Denson's (2009) findings from "Attitudes and Advocacy: Understanding Faculty Views on Racial/Ethnic Diversity" that attitudes and advocacy efforts with diversity create a level of discourse between faculty and others are ever important. I am not sure if the faculty, and even staff, on college and university campuses are completely aware about their powers of persuasion and influence on both individuals and the organizational culture as a whole. Faculty and staff members are essential in the development of a campus culture that delivers best practice in the area of diversity and inclusion. I will discuss this point more in-depth in the final chapter when reviewing implications this narrative study and related literature have for higher education professional staff, faculty, and administrators.

After exploring gay undergraduate men's use of campus culture for their personal masculinity performance, my findings prepared me to expound upon the knowledge supplied by past researchers of gay undergraduate men and understand experiences that bring fractures in the literature (i.e., race, religion, social class, etc.) together for individuals. I was able to acquire interviews across areas of study, race, ethnicity, social class, and religion to incorporate many perspectives. Including a variety of backgrounds and identity perspectives, I was able to better highlight the complications of gay undergraduate men making a place for themselves in collegiate success despite the stigma a gay male identity can make for them (Berila, 2011; Cintron, 2000; Dilley, 2002; Strayhorn, et al., 2010; Washington & Wall, 2010).

Based on interview data from the study, I also address potential for enhancing support already in place for students and fashioning of new supports in Chapter Six. Change has occurred historically by campuses crafting more inclusive policies, programs, and services for all undergraduate students like the ones highlighted through a variety of LGBTQ-related higher education literature (Sanlo, Rankin & Schoenberg, 2002; Strayhorn, DeVita & Blakewood, 2010; Laker & Davis, 2011). From the narratives shared, there are some needs for change or additional support of the gay undergraduate male population that surface. Large-scale change has occurred in the past, and so it can today as well.

Significance of Place.

As organized communities with a culture, college campuses develop individual mosaics of meaning that signal norms of behavior to community members and newcomers alike. Those same norms call an individual to perform in specific ways to

establish a sense of belonging and avoid the sting of exclusion. Dilley's (2002) work highlights a variation of "masking" done by many men included in his national, historic study of queer men on college campuses. Dilley juxtaposes the discreet parties of queer men in Mississippi that only insiders were aware of with the lesser secretive group meetings advertised on campuses in the Chicago metro area, even in the 1930s. While meetings in urban areas with a critical mass of queer men happening that early were still advertised with a richly-coded set of "hairpins" to alert only the intended attendees, they were far more "public" than the secret parties of a less-forgiving southeast. Also cited by Dilley (2002), I provide a more in-depth look at the developing gay male social worlds of urban areas that sprouted exponentially in the early 20th century with the Bérubé (2010), Chauncey (1995), D'Emilio (1992), and Marcus (2002) texts. Even with some comparisons of the urban and rural, Dilley (2002) claims his focus remains largely more on *how* it is like and not *what* it is like to be queer; being queer (or in this study, gay) is the constant, but how the queer identity is operationalized is highly dependent on location and the individual man's reading of what would be considered appropriate behavior in the way of gender performance and authoring masculinity.

The dependent performance is also a central theme outlined by Barton's (2012) book, *Pray The Gay Away: The Extraordinary Lives of Bible Belt Gays*. Barton takes the dependence a step further by naming it a "panoptic prison", specifically citing the experience of more isolated gay men and women in a variety of rural communities of the southeastern U.S. Barton's (2012) findings and assertions about the importance of place to *how* one experiences a gay social life are also corroborated by some of the men's narratives in this study, including Jimmy, George, and Marshall. Marshall's detailed

account of extreme perspective isolation and lack of support for any variation from a specific masculinity performance is a prime example of characterization for the "prison" Barton (2012) alludes to in her work. The isolating experiences of gay men in the rural southeastern U.S. is in some opposition to some of the same men's tales in Chapter Four of this study when they are able to move away from their rural communities to go to college and establish a more authentic representation of their personal masculinity.

Even still, geography can be a challenge to navigate, and is for some of the men who shared struggles in their narratives for this study. In particular, Jimmy and George shared their unease with settling into their more urban community from their rural childhood homes. In their urban lives, George and Jimmy were struggling to establish a set of social network connections and a true sense of belonging, but there was not a strong need to remain closeted to the level they were in their respective Appalachian communities. However, their rural lives were not all bad; in their Appalachian hometowns, Jimmy and George were able to feel a part of a community, even though that community membership came at the cost of subduing their gay identity by altering their masculinity performance. Significance of place can mean physical geography, but it also means social location and sociability complications for gay identity many times highlighted as religiously problematic and political. Many authors (D'Emilio, 1992; Chauncey, 1995; Dilley, 2002; Marcus, 2002; Connell, 2005; Kimmel, 2005a; Bérubé, 2010; Barton, 2012) provide a myriad of intersecting details about social location of gay male identity from spaces all across the U.S. and its diversity of communities. Scholars have shared a rich history for gay male identities, sometimes as aggregate community tales and sometimes individual narratives. In some way, this study provides another

window into that rich history, culminated in eleven individual men's narratives of masculinity self-authorship.

Theoretical Perspectives

The conceptual motivators for this study both limit and expand theoretical perspectives about masculinity and gender performance. Some scholars (Rotundo, 1994; Kimmel, 2005a, 2005b, 2011& 2012) present materials that limit the vision and scope of masculinity in American culture to thematic, historically driven performances (e.g., genteel patriarch, heroic artisan, and self-made man). Focusing on time periods from the earliest development of the United States to the 20th century, Rotundo (1994) and Kimmel (2005b) claim the social norms of masculinity in America are tied to sociopolitical and economic factors. For example, the "genteel patriarch" was characterized as the affluent leader, the "heroic artisan" as the physically strong provider, and the "self-made man" as the opportunistic merchant of industry. As the country moved from being an infant son of its former colonial master to an independent and economically sound stand-alone, the norms of masculinity shifted with it.

Another particular scholar who has devoted an entire research agenda to issues of gender performance, R.W. Connell (2005, 2013), expands the concept of what constitutes masculinity and takes it to a place where almost any degree of gender performance (i.e., forms of dress, emotion, feats of strength, personal and professional conquests, etc.) could be included and considered. Connell (2005) portrays a world where the barriers of gender dualism are truly tested; many of the "rules" written from the historically significant norms of masculinity come under scrutiny as up for reevaluation, not to be affirmed or discarded, but maximally explored. Rather than limit masculinity with

specific themes derived from common occurrence, the goal becomes understanding that society should think more critically to account for differences in gender performance due to an array of social contexts.

Based on social context, there may be a need to present one's masculinity in alternate ways in the interest of fitting in and belonging (Goffman, 1959). In this study, I use the works of authors like Rotundo (1994) and Kimmel (2011) to assist in an understanding of predominant and normative scripts of masculinity performance in U.S. society that have led up to the contemporary. In the same vein, I employ interview questions for this study that embrace the possibilities of a boundless inclusion for masculinities that is presented by Connell (2005, 2013) and align closely with the theoretical perspective of self-authorship. Conceptualizing multiple masculinities allows agency for individual men to craft gender performance that works for them. There is a balance that can be achieved between the constructivists, like Rotundo (1994), Dilley (2002), and Kimmel (2011) who make an effort to provide typological masculinity frames, and deconstructionists, like Connell (2005, 2013) who insists gender is far too complicated and political to be so reductionist as to introduce some scaffolding of typology for masculinities. Within the details of men's narratives and lived experience, cognizance of both the normative and queer are necessary to begin to understand how the men in this study "make meaning" of manhood and perform a personal set of masculinities. Commonality emerges from analysis of varied, individualized social experiences rather than a narrowly defined vision of reality (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 1988). Each man's unique vantage point to social experiences that contends everyone is different is what also makes everyone similar; while no two

men will experience masculinities in the exact same way, the fact each man has to interpret the codes of masculinities in society is a common experience.

Exploring the flexibility of minimizing and exaggerating difference in masculinity performances, a principle feature of queer theoretical concepts, is where useful findings surface to present higher education officials with tools to support gay undergraduate men on campus.

There are examples in the narratives of men in this study where they sometimes work actively to minimize their differences with other men in a social setting, while in other instances they lean into the differences and enliven them. Accepting there are normative scripts in different social settings and spaces within organizations and community, the men in this study took their turns with placating others with a more palatable masculinity performance and then sometimes confronting those expectations by performing gender in less culturally customary ways. Queer theory, taken holistically to act as another tool for sharpening my lens for analyzing narratives, is about understanding the power and knowledge of the genders, sexes, and sexualities in terms of social institutions and relations (Dilley, 2002). Rather than my goal of understanding being to pin down identity and pick it apart in some exploratory surgery of narratives, my goal was to understand the utility of interviewees power and knowledge, or lack thereof, in their meaning-making for self-authoring gender performance. That power of efficacy is highlighted in the "distinctive discernments" in Chapter Five. In that chapter, I explain how the men in this study make use of activities such as "masking" to wield their own moments of power in various settings. The men make their way developmentally through the self-authorship theory framework, the primary theoretical tool used to analyze their

narratives, by engaging power in their knowledge of gendered scripts and normative cultures to their benefit to self-author a personal set of masculinities.

In this narrative study considering data from personal interviews of gay undergraduate men, I also had a goal of a feminist approach, stressing the importance of individual voices and experiences of the participants in the study to bring about agency and efficacy, also critical with a queer theory perspective (Craven & Davis, 2013). That approach allows for the findings from this study to act as an authentic catalyst for empowerment of gay men on college and university campuses, as well as a directed source of information for improvement to available campus support services. Not over-analyzing accumulated data and findings detailed in Chapters Four and Five, I report the organic voices of personal experiences and honor the inherent humanity that qualitative research is intended to add to a body of knowledge. In this next chapter section, "Queer Theory", I explore theorizations of gender, sex, and sexuality that offer expansive perspective about those identities to embrace an openness to identity fluidity and expression that is highly malleable by the individual when mustering agency via courage. The expansion of ideas about what constitutes gender, sex, and sexualities that comes from queer theoretical frames is important for a narrative analysis like this one; scholars like Connell (2005, 2013) adopt queer theory approaches and grow the parameters of what can (or could) be considered masculine. Much like how men who took passive roles sexually were ludicrously stripped of their abstract masculinity historically, the abject experience of encountering a rigid set of codes for masculinity is felt by many of the men in this narrative study contemporarily. Queer theory suggests that a most authentic self-authorship of gender would surface in the "unbecoming", or genuine

representation of one's gender in spite of the immediate pressures to conform to some other customary performance.

Queer Theory

Theorizations for gender, sexuality, and queer life expand the researcher lens far beyond the binaries and restrictive views of normative popular scripts of American society. Nikki Sullivan (2003) explains Queer Theory offers space to consider the "multifarious" and "multivalent" conceptualizations of gender, sex, and sexualities without vain attempts to label and categorize experience to a fault. Some of the men in this study also balk at the thought of labels and categories of sexuality or gender, specifically defining "masculinity". As George shares in Chapter Four, he does not like labels because of the unsettling exclusivity they suggest; he, and others in the study as well, ascribed to a level of fluidity in identity labels and liminality in considerations of "masculinity" to include many intangible qualities (e.g., honesty, work ethic) that imply their personal characterizations and performances resulted in their being identified as "masculine".

For best organization and clarity, it would be nice if I were able to delineate each concept of gender, sexuality, and queer life and provide clean, neat definitions that are widely agreed upon in the literature and in society; however, that is not the case. Ideas transcend any singular meaning or understanding, molding into one another to create a gender and sexuality mosaic of sorts. At any rate, I am able to unpack some of the terminology and concepts related to gender and sexuality in order to better understand the restraining social rules that govern our society, and more specifically, the implications those rules have for my research with gay undergraduate men. As a starting point, I will

explore terms such as gender, sex and sexuality, all eligibility constraints for inclusion in this study, and reflect on the limits those terms have in defining individuals.

      Definitions. The difference between gender and sex as identities and concepts are blurred. When someone is asked his or her sex, s/he may say s/he is a woman or a man, not male or female. Conversely, if someone is asked his or her gender, s/he may reply s/he is a male or female and not woman or man. For the purposes of theoretical lens in this study, gender is a continuum-type scale of masculine and feminine characteristics that are socially constructed, leading a person to identify as a woman or a man. For instance, if someone identifies as a man, societal norms suggest he would make choices prescribed for gendered men in the United States, such as clothing, personal hygiene products, etc. marketed for those who identify as a man. However, other than social pressures to conform, there is no law or regulation to keep a person identifying as a man from purchasing a piece of clothing specifically designed for and marketed to people identifying as women. For sexuality specifically, I write with the definition that is socially dominant and posits sexuality refers to the sexual preferences a person has in terms of attraction to others (i.e., males who identify as men being attracted to one another being labeled as homosexual or gay). Addressing these points of clarification for researcher positionality was a critical point to consider when preparing to interview men for the study.

      Stevi Jackson, author and feminist scholar, starts articles and books by defining her own understanding and limits of meaning for the terms gender, sex and sexuality. Jackson (2006) explains when she is writing about gender, sex, and sexuality, she conceptualizes gender as everything from women and men, male and female—

anything to signify how someone is identifying in relation to gender and sex. She also states when she discusses sex she refers to the term in the erotic sense and sexuality is reserved for the "erotically significant aspects of social life and social being". While I adopt Jackson's (2006) conceptualization of sexuality, I feel the need to further delineate her conceptualization of gender and sex; for the purposes of this study, I qualify gender as a concept more socially driven, while sex is a more biological concept. Even still, my understanding and definitions are my own and many individuals in society operationalize the terms based on their own understanding. In feminist scholarship, it is critical that a researcher outlines social location and understanding to avoid slanted views and reduce the chance of forcing personal viewpoint or bias. For that reason, it was important to ensure the terms and concepts were agreed upon in a research setting, by way of member checking, probing for clarity and agreed understanding. I attuned myself to contracted definitions with study participants to accurately analyze each of their narratives as detailed in Chapters Four and Five.

After understanding terms conceptually, there was also the need to consider not only how I see gender, sex, and sexuality structured in society, but also how study participants make meaning of the structure as well. It is not so much important I agreed with participants on the structure, but more so that I understood how they see that structure and relate it to their personal identity locations. As individuals, there is assumed agency in how we define our identities, no matter if personal definitions are not congruent with dominant social views. To explore and ground my research perspective with regard to gender, sex, and sexuality, I critically review some of the frames and ideas

of contributing scholars. I begin with an analysis of gender, followed by a review of sex, and finish by exploring the intersections of sexuality with other identities.

Gender Operationalized. In her review of postmodern perspectives on gender in "Chapter 10: Theorizing Gender and Sexuality" of *Contemporary Feminist Theories*, Stevi Jackson (1998) employs a Marxist analysis and compares her view of gender to Marx's stance on social class structure. She argues, "For Marxists classes only exist in relation to one another: conceptually and empirically there can be no bourgeoisie without the proletariat and vice-versa. Similarly 'men' and 'women' exist as social significant categories because of the exploitative relationship which binds them together and sets them apart from each other" (Jackson, 1998, p.135). Jackson's position is easily understood and validated in the patriarchal system of the United States where women are still scantily represented in positions of power in both the private and public sectors, lack wage parity, and have only gained rights such as the vote within the past century. It is clear masculinity and identifying as a "man" naturally offers more value in American society, even today, without those men having to *prove* anything to anyone to be handed opportunity and privilege that they are never really forced to earn. The disparate valuations of the masculine and feminine are historically-rooted, but they also have effect on the men in this narrative study because of their queer masculinities; by virtue of not identifying as heterosexual, the men included in this study are starting behind in the race of power and status among other men. Reinforcement of gender binary ideals on campus leave many of the men in the study at variable odds with ability to wield power and status within their respective social locations.

One might be hard pressed to find any significant number of people who are not left with feelings of inadequacy when considering their ability to live up to the gender binary expectations. Even when it comes to simple household chores, American society leaves little agency for what is appropriate for a man to do and what should be left for women to complete, a point brought up by Owen when considering his own masculinity and what he and his partner did in splitting the household chores in their home. In "Gender, Sexuality, and Heterosexuality: The Complexity (and limits) of Heteronormativity", Stevi Jackson (2006) claims heterosexuality, as defined in the United States, has went far beyond a sexual orientation and has made itself inseparable with gender. If someone is to conform to the expectations and standards set by society with regard to gender and sexuality in the domestic arena, a woman would always wash dishes and a man would always mow the lawn. So what happens when a same sex couple lives together? In a male same sex couple does one man have to decide to forfeit his masculinity entirely so the inside of their home does not become unlivable? As men like Owen, Marshall, and Nate specifically discuss when considering their intimate relationships with other men, the strict regulations of the gender binary are problematic and do not work in an operable way for gay male couples.

For gay men, they are forced to decide whether they should do their very best to offer a faith effort at assimilating to the norm or deal with the consequences of being "radical and subversive" (Berila, 2011; Connell, 2005; Kimmel, 2010; Sullivan, 2003). Nikki Sullivan (2003) details the rational choices queer people consider as they decide whether to assimilate to or liberate themselves from the gender and sexuality shackles of American society's binary in chapter two of her book, *A Critical Introduction*

to Queer Theory. Due to queer people having unlikely chances of perfect assimilation based on their identity and not being able to completely liberate due to the need to participate and survive in their environment, difficult choices have to be made as some decide how to proceed in owning a queer identity. Left to live in a liminal space between the two contrasting models of assimilation and liberation, queer people perform gender roles in the best way they see fit.

Gender Performance. Another social constructionist, Judith Butler, has contributed to the literature on the problems of the gender binary for over twenty years. In her book, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, Butler (1990) introduces the concept of gender performativity. The idea gender is a performance and not a static identity has been foundational for feminist and queer theorists alike (Berila, 2011; Sullivan, 2003). If gender is in fact performed and not predetermined, that idea strongly supports Butler's (1990) notion the oppression experienced in a gendered society is but a "regulatory fiction" meant to feed the patriarchy and dominance of masculinity that oppresses anyone who does not identify as a heterosexual male. There are many examples of those experiences that have caused men in this study like Rob, Marshall, Jace, and Jimmy to perform multiple masculinities based on social settings and those in the room. The social construction of gender is driven by the performance that fosters the dominant norm of gender governance. Even in the case of the heterosexual male, those who do not perform to the utmost ideals of a heterosexual masculinity are often ridiculed.

Gender scholars R.W. Connell (2005, 2013) and Kimmel (2005b, 2011) also do careful work to consider the complications of masculinity more specifically. Both

Connell (2013) and Kimmel (2011) contribute work that highlights examples of men having to perform in the ways of machismo and bravado throughout history and cited by Rob, a man who interviewed for this study, on campus as "macho bullshit" that he sees permeating campus spaces as well. Congruent with the dominance and power theorization of Butler (1990, 2004), Connell (2005) adds a number of examples how men of minority races and ethnicities and homosexual-identifying men are used as juxtaposition to reinforce power and privilege of men who better align with normative masculinity scripts. Simply by virtue of not being (or passing) as Caucasian or heterosexual in contemporary society, a male is stripped of many masculinity privileges as a means for other men reinforcing their place of authority and prestige. Kimmel (2011) shares examples of men losing status within groups of men due to everything from a lack of physical strength to not engaging with processes that are many times touted as tradition. Without education capital going into a situation or event, or being informed by another about how to perform, it seems exclusion can occur from what seems like sheer happenstance.

Due to unrealistic ideals, discourse and interactions become competitive to decide which men most closely resemble the ideal masculinity, sometimes based on sheer, brute strength and bullying. This type of masculinity policing starts early in life, most times in grade school. One example specific to education highlighting those type of interactions, albeit in high schools, is that of C.J. Pascoe's 2005 article in *Sexualities*, "Dude, You're a Fag: Adolescent Masculinity and the Fag Discourse". In her article, Pascoe details the lives of young men in high school who are belittled and branded "fags" due to the fact their gender performance or physical features are effeminate in some way. However,

lack of masculinity on the part of those being bullied and labeled "fag" is not always the root cause of ridicule. The bully often picks on the weaker males in the group, or even females in a few cases, as a mechanism to compensate for his own lack of masculinity or fear, without being "top dog", he himself will be a target for branding.

In addition to overall gender performance, Pascoe (2005) also introduces the identity dimensions of race and social class that highly affect how males of color or the working class are treated as well. For being a racial minority or having less class capital, a young person can be labeled negatively even without any overt markers of lesser masculinity in relation to his most visually masculine peers. I revisit the complications race and class present with regard to the theorizations of gender, sex, and sexuality in a later section. Pascoe's article (2005) and her later, more revealing, book, *Dude You're a Fag: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School* (2011), exposed a masculinity discourse that has been largely ignored in society since the earliest days of the twentieth century.

The types of experiences like those shared by Pascoe (2011) institute a paranoia of sorts that leads to young men internalizing the formulas of a successful masculinity expression and work begins to self-regulate and align oneself with the standard as close as possible, or make an argument for fluidity or expanded qualifiers of masculinity. The expansive masculinity approach is one argued by many of the men whose narratives are shared in Chapter Four. The more intangible qualities of the "gentleman", often rooted in assumptions of social class status, are cited by some of the men in the study who do not exhibit brute strength or visible qualities of the masculine archetypes in their spheres of influence. The "heroic artisan" and "genteel patriarch" were both viewed as masculinity standards in decades and centuries past in American manhood (Kimmel, 2011; Rotundo,

1994). Many of the men in the study grapple for scraps of validation related to affirming

their place as at least somewhat masculine. Even Rob, the eldest man interviewed,

awkwardly and anxiously laughed when replying to a question of "how masculine do you

consider yourself" and stating "not very masculine".

One place on college campuses specifically using much of the same fag discourse

Pascoe (2005) shared is fraternities. In an effort to exhibit the most heightened levels of

masculinity in the face of a brotherhood, fraternity men employ fag discourse and hazing

activities to display dominance over others in his organization. Stereotypes of social

fraternities are corroborated in the narratives of study participants in Chapter Four. Gay

undergraduate men, who have been interested in fraternity for years, have been met with

environments of a rigid gender structure in fraternity life. Even a prominent national

social fraternity for gay, bisexual and progressive men, Delta Lambda Phi, has a difficult

time negotiating when to ascribe to traditional hegemonic displays of masculinity and

when to give in to relaxed gender expression. Traditional ideals of masculinity can be

seen in their symbols of fraternal crest and photo composites available to public

audiences, while reserving activities that would be considered less masculine, everything

things from women's clothing and drag to photos of more effeminate looking men, for

more private social spaces (Yeung, Stombler, & Wharton, 2006). Less masculine and

gay-identifying men may be the feature of more contemporary literature, but they have

also been present in open society and actively oppressed and marginalized throughout

history.

Judith Butler (1990) explains how the concept of heterosexuality was created

based on social class and sexuality dominance in the days of prohibition (approximately

1920-1933 in the United States) in a late chapter of *Gender Trouble*. Butler's (1990)

explanation of the creation of heterosexuality is confirmed in Chauncey (1995) and

Bérubé (2010). Chauncey (1995) and Bérubé (2010) write about more specific

geographies and social locations, but confirm Butler's (1990) rendition of American

social history. Chauncey (1995) details the class struggles born out of an industrial

revolution and a gay male world that lay on the periphery of mainstream society in the

1920s and early 1930s to support establishing of norms for a middle class and

heterosexuality.

There is a long and storied history in the United States of race, social class, and

gendered oppression. Without a lengthy revisiting of the historical underpinnings of

gender, sex and sexuality, it is critical to understand the introduction of gender

performativity and masculinity hierarchies shed light on topics of concern for feminist

and queer theorists that were born out of modernity, not postmodernity. While the

dominating class of governance in the early twentieth century tried to make sense of

social diversity with presumed facts and logic, scholars of a postmodern era of theorists

(Berila, 2011; Butler, 1990, 2004; Connell, 2005, 2013; Kimmel & Davis, 2011; Pascoe,

2005, 2011; Sullivan, 2003) understand those presumed facts and logic sit on a

foundation of assumption. That assumption is what feminist and queer theorists have

been challenging for years. Instead of finite facts and set logic, some feminist and queer

theorists, including those reviewed, provide a pragmatic understanding of society as a

production. So what if someone's gender lines are less definitive?

Dissonance. In the 2006 documentary *Gender Rebel*, Director Elaine Epstein

introduces viewers to three individuals who are gender queer and transcend the labels of

the dominant societal binary to create a life of liminal existence. Female sex identifying Kim, Jill, and Lauren share unique journeys of self-discovery that lead them to make important decisions about how they operationalize not only gender performance practices and methods, but sex and sexuality as well. Kim is a female who is in the process of transition from female to male, but her situation is complicated by the fact that she has been in a lesbian relationship for years. The simple practices of doing male or masculine activities does not alleviate Kim from needing to address how her self-authoring of gender affects her entire life and the lives of her social world. Also keen to the intersection of gender performance and sex identity in her book, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"*, Judith Butler (1993) asserts sex and gender are interlocked at birth because sex is materialized by naming it (i.e., "it's a [boy or girl]"). The implications of agency related to gender, sex, and sexuality are extremely limiting in a society regulated by binary juxtaposition.

Different from Kim's situation, Jill and Lauren are not transgendered, but they have committed to living life outside of the binary completely and embrace "gender queer" identity. Jill makes choices that "feel right" instead of being regulated by choosing methods and practices of expression based on masculine or feminine tags. Lauren is a lesbian who has presentations of the masculine such as painting facial hair and wearing clothing that does not wholly ascribe either gender. Of course, these are only three individual cases on nonconformity; there are many who struggle with the conscription of gender, sex and sexuality binaries. Gender is an identity that does not operate in a vacuum; sex and sexuality identities are also an important part of a person's collective identity.

Embracing the gendered dissonance and fluidity is important for considering the men whose narratives are included in this study as well. Nate, one of the men in the study, cites his fashion as a point of being a gender rebel of his own. Nate chooses dress that does not align with the "external formulas" of the local community, but he makes the conscious choice to wear clothing that he enjoys and is comfortable for him in defiance of the formulaic standards of gendered expression for clothing and dress in his locale. Similarly, Rob is subversive of expression standards for the masculine scripts of physical visual aesthetic in his locale; Rob's eyebrows, hairstyle, and overt mannerisms are not aligned with the characteristically masculine where he lives, works, and learns, but he admits little need for self-regulation and policing his expressions any longer. While there are certainly examples from other men's narratives about worry related to their crossroads (i.e., understanding and desiring the "other", but feeling the need to ascribe to formulaic standard for comfort in the familiar), the men in that psychosocial space, namely Matt and Kent, are shackled by fears and worry of social isolation or exclusion with friends, family, or both.

There is a need to move beyond labels and offer individuals the agency of molding their own identities in every respect. As idealistic as that may be, society is far from ready to embrace anything in the way of a post-structural environment related to identity dimensions. The question of whether gender, sex, and sexuality identities are driven by *being* or *doing* seems just as restrictive and impractical as the binaries that regulate them. Is there reason to necessarily require some either/or explanation? Acknowledgement of life outside of the binary may be far from a reality in society, but acceptance of the possibility of more difference than similarity is growing in

popularity in the literature (Connell, 2005; Epstein, 2006; Pascoe, 2005; Sullivan, 2003). Difference is a reality, but the dominant scripts of society may not be ready to acknowledge and support the degree of difference feminist and queer theorists call for in writing.

Sexual identity is interwoven with gender performance and biological sex, based somewhat on biology, but even more so by social construction of what is approved and accepted as the norm (Fausto-Sterling, 2000). Even with much greater exposure in the last twenty years and fresh legal and political actions, identifying as gay, lesbian, or bisexual is still a recipe for marginalization and oppression in society. Particularly misunderstood and most often referred to with humor, bisexuality has a large identity population marginalized even by fellow oppressed sexualities of gay men and lesbian women. Leah Robin and Karl Hammer's book chapter, "Bisexuality: Identities and Community", in *Toward Acceptance: Sexual Orientation Issues on Campus* (2000) details how difficult it is for a young adult student to express a sexual identity accepted and understood by peers and campus staff, much less build a community of bisexual people who are able to come together in solidarity. Robin and Hammer (2000) even cite celebrity references to bisexual humor by sharing Anne Heche's response on "Oprah" regarding her sexuality and relationship with Ellen DeGeneres, joking she "wasn't gay until [she] met her" (Robin & Hammer, 2000). Jabs like the one Heche shared to get a reaction is just one example of many that politicize and trivialize an entire sexual identity group. With one statement simply meant to incite a rousing response of laughter, Heche shares an uninformative, essentialist view of bisexual orientation and identity. Gay men and lesbian women may feel out of place on campus, but their experiences pale in

comparison to the isolation and invisibility bisexual identifying people experience on campus. However, that is not to say that gay and lesbian people have an easy integration into campus life and culture.

Gays, lesbians, and bisexuals alike experience intolerance, isolation, conflict, and internalized homophobia threats on campus. According to Natalie Eldridge and David Barnett (1991) in their book chapter, "Counseling Gay and Lesbian Students", in *Beyond Tolerance: Gays, Lesbians, and Bisexuals on Campus*, minority sexual identities are stripped from or avoided entirely in the course materials of college academic departments that have the greatest outreach such as: "history, mathematics and science, politics, literature, and the arts". The major problem here is there are vast and varied role models in academic disciplines who have a gay, lesbian, or bisexual identity. Those people were major contributors to their fields, or to history itself. Instead of incorporating and sharing that piece of their identity, it is stripped from them and possibly considered unimportant? In any case, it leaves young gays, lesbians, and bisexuals (LGB) without the same role models in their reading that heterosexual identifying students are naturally privileged to have without effort.

In addition, Eldridge and Barnett (1991) go on to share that campus programming almost exclusively targets heterosexuality. A significant number of LGB students even report feeling "lonely, worried, depressed, or tense" so often they frequently consider suicide or alcohol and drug dependence a viable option for escaping those emotions (Eldridge & Barnett, 1991, p. 158). Sometimes considered a mainstay of liberation in our society, college and university campuses are not as welcoming and comfortable for all as one might assume. Enduring domestic violence in intimate relationships to avoid the

shame of emasculation in gay men's relationships, and masking of violence issues in general, is another problem prevalent in LGB social circles on campus and beyond (Eldridge & Barnett, 1991). Since Eldridge and Barnett's book chapter was written many campuses now boast LGBTQ resource centers and support staff. However, it is uncertain if campus members and center staff are aware of just how pervasive difference is and how unaware they may be considering not all difference is easily noticed or understood visually. I review more implications for this study and their applicability in discussion of practical considerations in Chapter Six.

Intersecting Identities. Individuals form a personal identity made of many dimensions, many of the ones reviewed in detail earlier in this chapter. With that said, it is vital that all of those dimensions of identity formation and substance are taken in tandem and given the amount of weight that person decides is important; in my interviewing of the men for this study, I did not impress salience of aspects of identity, but allowed the man being interviewed to disclose and focus on them in a way that was organic and comfortable for him. While social regulations present stereotypes and ideals of identity related to everything from social class and race to gender and sexual roles, none of those identities are mutually exclusive and occur all at once with one individual. While one person may be led by sexuality, another person may be led by sex and gender identity. No matter the identity recipe, no one person is made up of a single, static dimension. "Feminist scholarship unquestionably stands to gain—already has gained—from the reminder that essence talk masks difference and that this masking is destructive" (Martin, 1994, p. 636). As an example, all men are not on the same level playing field when it comes to privileges and influence. Gay and bisexual men, Black

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men and working-poor men, each of those subgroups has their own lens of oppression and marginalization.

Whether sexuality, race and ethnicity, class, or any other element of identity frays the lines to a collective sense of manhood, there are variations of many identity combinations that exist in society. "[…] gender (and sex) is inherently interwoven with the politics, structures, and epistemologies of race, sexuality, social class, disability, and nation" (May, 2011, p.168). In my study, it was vital I worked actively to remain as objective as possible and allow interviewees the agency to define which dimensions of identity are most salient regarding the self-authorship of gender and offer the agency to express themselves in any ways they wish. It is my goal to understanding their personal lens of identity, but not influence or alter it.

LGBTQ intersections. In this study, I recognize how diverse and profound gender performance and identity construct are for individuals in relation to the dominant societal norming parameters. For that reason, I focused on gay undergraduate men exclusively. The mosaic of identity characteristics that make up the LGBTQ community is entirely too vast for the scope of a dissertation project. There are a couple of intersecting identities with the gay male identity that were most salient in my research. Class bias is one factor that affects viewpoint of respondents and restricts agency within the LGBTQ community. Another, maybe even more restrictive, is race. Class bias is particularly important because of how rigid a standard it sets for approval within gay community. "In an environment that privileges transcendence to the middle class as proof of arrival, the politics of class bias inscribe schizophrenic mandates" (Adair, 2005, p.588). Some young LGBTQ people are estranged with family

and thus lack financial support and are suddenly forced to live completely

independently. Those same people are desperately seeking approval from a material-

driven gay community. Poor and working class LGBTQ individuals experience the

paradox of having interest in being connected while remaining pariahs due to lack of

resources and social capital. Scholarly literature on LGBTQ college students' struggle

with class bias is an area of the literature in its infancy.

In addition to the intersection of sexuality with social class, is the intersection of

race with sexuality. Racial minorities are often forced to choose whether they are going

to identify with their race or with their sexuality (Eldridge & Barnett, 1991; Collins,

2005; Strayhorn, DeVita, & Blakewood, 2010; Washington & Wall, 2010). As an

example, Black men are completely disowned from families and communities of their

own race if they choose to "come out of the closet". For this reason, there is a pervasive

issue of disease and deception that plagues the Black race in America due to Black men

feeling the need to embrace their sexuality "on the down low" (Collins, 2005). In her

book, *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism*, Patricia

Hill Collins challenges the Black community to come together and face there is sexuality

diversity within the race and create an environment where these men do not feel the need

to hide their sexuality; systemically, it is doing a great harm to the racial community and

affecting more than the respective men who are actively working to conceal traces of

their true sexuality. Gay Black men are also making some critical decisions to protect

their secret sexualities. College-going gay Black and Latino men are choosing colleges

and staying at colleges large enough to provide a separation between racial and sexual

cultures that allow them to embrace both facets of their collective identity (Strayhorn,

DeVita, & Blakewood, 2008; Cintron, 2000). African American, Latino, and other minority, community-driven races from non-Western backgrounds, namely Asian and Filipino study participants, whose narratives are also shared in Chapter Four, continue to experience the challenge of intersections in race and sexuality.

There is a tremendous diversity of identity constructs to consider related to gender, sex, and sexuality concepts in feminist and queer theory. In addition, there are the horizontal influences of politics, social environment, and geography that must also be mediated. While it is important to be aware of the collective representation of identities and place, the uncovering of gay undergraduate men's self-authorship was paramount as the purpose for this study. It was essential I uncover how each man makes meaning of and understands his series of identities, how those identities interplay, and explore his sense of reality for his masculinity self-authorship. I did that by undergoing significant probing in interviews to understand each man's lens, however disparate from my own. With a study population identifying as gay men, a fusion of perspectives from queer theory with the frame of self-authorship theory provides a useful approach for greatest understanding of their lived experiences and how they make meaning from their backgrounds and exposures to author a personal masculinity.

Self-Authorship Theory

A cornerstone of indulging the self-authorship perspective of Marcia Baxter Magolda (2008) is to understand in the process of self-authorship, an individual makes meaning of lived experiences and exposure to piece together a personal identity that will be as cohesive as possible. There have been examples in the literature reviewed earlier where multiple dimensions of an individual's personal identity are at odds with one

another (Cintron, 2000; Collins, 2005; Strayhorn, et al., 2008, 2010; Barton, 2012). Even when racial or religious identity seem paradoxical when melded with a gay identity, if that is a combination of personal identity one chooses to self-author, the individual has a consequence of deciding what that combination looks like for him. Krauss (2005) presents a definition of meaning-making as personal action directed by incorporation of many structures that contribute to an individual's personal vantage point from lived experiences. Most simply, a person will act and perform in situations based on personal meaning made from what he has seen, heard, and knows from personal experience. Meaning-making here can be understood as a cognitive roadmap of sorts that helps the individual discern how he will go about making life decisions, not the least of which is negotiating a complete personal identity. In turn, Baxter Magolda (2009b) asserts meaning-making serves to inform and influence how an individual experiences the world around him.

Epistemological Reflection. Before arriving to her own conclusions about self-authorship principles and how college students make a meaning from their world experience, Baxter Magolda (2001) began a more general theoretical perspective of knowledge with college students and *how* they come to know. In her longitudinal study of over 100 college students in their first year of post-secondary education, Baxter Magolda completed interviews where she explored how learning occurs, the assumptions students made about the process of learning, the roles of many constituencies in the learning process, and how students made decisions about their own learning (Baxter Magolda, 2001, 2009b). After acquiring a flurry of data regarding college students' construction of knowledge, Baxter Magolda developed the Epistemological Reflection

Model, a model delineating four stages of knowing: absolute, transitional, independent, and contextual (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, and Renn, 2010).

In absolute knowing, the earliest stage of Baxter Magolda's model, a student takes a dualistic approach to their experiences of learning and building a base of knowledge. In essence, the student receives disseminated knowledge as "absolute" and does not do work to question the received knowledge to critically analyze the merits and grounds for validity of the knowledge. The student has a lens of knowledge coming from an expert source, course instructors (also student services professionals teaching related life skills outside of the formal classroom), to whom referent power is willingly given in the face of socialized respect for authority. Through time, a transitional knowing begins to develop where a student is able to identity ambiguity and seek to understand principles of knowing a concept or idea in context of situations of lived experience.

As the student continues to develop a sense of self-efficacy with learning and knowledge, he moves into the independent stage, a perspective where he is no longer a simple vessel for receipt of knowledge as a given. In this new stage of epistemological reflection, he is an active participant in the learning and knowledge acquisition process where he is responsible for interpreting open-ended and uncertain principles for which complete roadmaps for operationalizing in lived experience is not given. At this point in time, the course instructor is viewed as a provider of content and encourager of context. While some students experience learning environment earlier in life that make students active contributors through discussion and debate of classroom topics, many students do not develop a keen sense of their capability for contribution in debate of knowledge principles in various disciplines in earlier life (Evans, et al., 2010). Contextual knowing,

the final stage detailed by Baxter Magolda (2001) in the Epistemological Reflection

Model, is the point where the individual not only considers his perspective and

contribution in relation to the information provider, but also considers vantage points

from a multitude of individuals' lived experiences, creating a more prismatic approach to

reflection on learning process and acquired knowledge.

     Constructivism. Given the model of reflection Baxter Magolda presents (2001,

2009b), individual perspective can be and is impacted not only by how knowledge is

acquired, but also who is delivering the knowledge and what the individual makes of the

learned knowledge. However, before making the transition to what epistemological

reflection means for self-authorship, it is important to acknowledge scholars' work that

included evolution of the self in human development and how an individual presents an

evolving self to the world around him. As early as 1959, sociologist Erving Goffman

expanded the conversation of human interaction as a "performance" and acknowledged

the conscious decisions individuals make in the self they present to others in their daily

lives in his book, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959). Goffman (1959)

explained his perspective by using the metaphor of theatre, stating that we all have a

"stage" others can see and a "backstage" only we, as individuals, and those we allow can

see. On the stage, individuals have the agency to present the self as they hope to be seen

and interpreted or received by those around them. Select aspects of a multifaceted

identity may stay hidden "backstage", only surfacing in another situational context where

deemed a necessary disclosure by the individual in his interactions with those around him

in the moment.

Not building directly upon Goffman (1959) but certainly related, Robert Kegan presented his work related to human development and evolution of self through the lifespan in his 1982 book, *The Evolving Self: Problem and Process in Human Development*. Kegan (1982) shared another facet critical in meaning making and the work of Marcia Baxter Magolda (2001, 2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2010). In order for the claims of Baxter Magolda to come to life, the assumption that evolution of the self occurs is paramount. Kegan (1982) not only focused on how the individual evolves, but in what way evolution of self drives the *how* of meaning-making and allows for a scaffolding of fluid sense of knowing to exist. As discussed in Baxter Magolda's (2001) epistemological reflection work, it is important to understand an evolving self determines meaning-making and sense of knowing as malleable and changes through time, additional lived experience, and exposure.

Indeed, experience changes our perspective and that principle is the foundation for the associated work of Victor Turner and Edward Bruner's *The Anthropology of Experience* (1986) as well. In Turner and Bruner's 1986 work, the authors dissect human experience from an anthropological angle where the human experience is seen as "reflexive", but only so much as it is informed by the lived experiences that drive the structure of meaning-making Kegan (1982) posits. Fundamentally, Turner and Bruner (1986) explain, through copious examples of context, life is experienced from both conscious and subconscious levels of thought and personal intervention. While individuals do the work of deciphering acquired knowledge to make a meaning and operationalize that meaning in lived experience, a certain amount of assumption and more salient experiences drive subconscious decision making as well. It would be

inconceivable for individuals to consistently be doing the work of conscious meaning-making for all situational decisions. With the work of deliberate contemplation in most salient life experiences behind an individual, there are contexts for which a strong preference of reflexivity to "do what comes naturally" takes hold. This is not to say individuals will not reassess or back out of a decision or path already explored, but the work of Turner and Bruner (1986) is a chance to consider the lived experiences that occur without an air of complete intention.

Developing a self-construct that is a respective integration of personal cognition about the relationship an individual has to himself and others is essential. That resulting heightened awareness of self is a critical tool for successfully understanding how to bring together multiple personal identities to work in tandem (Abes, Jones, and McEwen, 2007). With a complete sense of self and comfort in merged personal identities, it becomes more realistic for an individual to embody a workable self-authorship. Baxter Magolda (2009a) insists integration of developmental identity silos allows for greater chances for a successful and holistic student development.

Baxter Magolda and Self-Authorship Theory. There are three particular dimensions encapsulating the theory of self-authorship: epistemological, intrapersonal, and interpersonal (Baxter Magolda, 2008). The respective aspects of the self-authorship framework are guided by the overarching questions: "How do I know?", "Who am I?", and "What goals do I have for interpersonal relationships?" The first of the three questions, "How do I know", represents the epistemological element and details how the individual constructs a body of knowledge and how assumptions related to that knowledge impact the learning process (Boes, Baxter Magolda, & Buckley, 2010).

Second, the individual uses the answers from the epistemological to generate a grounded sense of the intrapersonal, answering "Who am I?" The fundamental principle of the intrapersonal element is one of self-efficacy and a sense of self an individual claims ownership over in his own development. Last, the interpersonal element highlights the agency of the individual; with a strong sense of self, the individual who is ready to tackle the interpersonal element of self-authorship has shifted from an external locus of identity to one constructed on a basis of his own sense of values, beliefs, and articulated personal goals. In the final, interpersonal element, the individual is able to communicate reasoning for how and why interpersonal relationships are initiated and a connection maintained.

Framework fluidity. An individual does not need to realize some end goal sense of awareness and achievement of self-authorship to wrestle with the meaning-making that is such a crucial part of the self-authorship theoretical perspective. Simply sharing the narrative of personal experience and viewpoints are enough to analyze interview findings of where an individual is in negotiating awareness (epistemology element), understanding (intrapersonal element), and utility (interpersonal element) within the scope of intersecting personal identities. What the Baxter Magolda (2008) framework really provides is a guide for interpreting interview findings in a more holistic way (Baxter Magolda, 2009a). Rather than using some rigid model of student development theory related to a single dimension of personal identity (i.e., race, religion, sexual orientation, etc.), the self-authorship perspective is a higher order orientation to personal growth that respects the uniquely individual experience of cognitive identity development (Boes, Baxter Magolda, & Buckley, 2010). Lived experiences from multiple dimensions of

identity have varying salience, and some even shake the foundation of what (or how) an individual believes he knows. If such an experience occurs, the cycles and elements of self-authorship can change without the narrow lines of phases and stages; the elements do build, but are not static in nature.

In presentation form, and for clarity to the reader, the self-authorship framework is presented in a progression style to suggest epistemology comes first, then considerations of the intrapersonal, followed by interpersonal application. However, scholar application of the framework illustrates the developmental journey related to self-authorship of narrative and identity are a cyclical one (Baxter Magolda, 2010; Pizzolato, 2003, 2004). Baxter Magolda (2010) describes the personal processing as a "weaving back and forth, rather than a straightforward path to securing internal commitments". Within the essential elements of epistemology, intrapersonal sensibility, and interpersonal relationships, Baxter Magolda (2001, 2009a, 2009b) shares three additional sub-elements at play in processing and development of self-authorship: following external formulas, crossroads, and self-authorship. The foundations of self-authorship in the literature (Baxter Magolda, 2001, 2009a, 2009b; Boes, et al., 2010) highlight that even with an aptitude for "complex" personal epistemology, individuals can flounder until securing complexity in how they see themselves and relationships with others. Also not static, external formulas, crossroads, and practice of self-authorship are interwoven through the overall lived experience of self-authorship in a multifaceted personal identity.

Sub-elements. The following of external formulas is a practice that can seem almost innate, being taught by authorities from the earliest ages to follow examples and identify specific role model people. In this way, individuals develop a sense that

following social norms is necessary (Baxter Magolda, 2001, 2009a, 2009b). Authority

provides information, accumulated as "knowledge", which goes largely unexamined and

accepted as given with the individual. With a goal of fitting into groups to not only

establish identity, but also develop a sense of belonging, the individual makes quick work

of masking and performing what "should" happen to create connection and acceptance

with respective groups. External formulas are present in everything related to a values

and belief system (politically, religiously, etc.) and presentation of self. With building set

of personally lived experiences and exposure, increasing complexity of thought and

interaction drives a dissonance that leads to an individual contemplating validity and

application of external formulas (Baxter Magolda, 2009b). As internal voice strengthens,

the individual reaches "crossroads" in the self-authorship pathway.

Prompted by exposure and psychological interplay of lived experience,

"crossroads" is an activity of both listening to and refining internal voice (Baxter

Magolda, 2009a). The experience of being in the crossroads element of self-authorship

framework is an exercise of grappling with scripted formulas of action and performance.

Developing, trusting, and committing to internal voice can be a frustrating and lonely

practice. In the face of external voices and events' salience in our prior understanding, or

voice of others being overbearing on self-efficacy, honing internal voice is, at the very

least, complicated. Difficulties are exacerbated by the consideration of self-authorship

and construction of a complete personal identity in the face of dimensions of identity

considered minority or marginalized (Abes, et al., 2007). As individuals move from

passive to active roles in the authorship of their lives, stereotypes, labels, and general

misinformation related to individual social location can be even more frustrating and

derailing on the path to a comfortable personal authenticity and practice of self-authorship.

To practice self-authorship is to take ownership of and be able to acutely express personal beliefs, whole personal identity, and operation of relationship with others (Baxter Magolda 2001, 2008, 2009a, 2009b). True self-authorship involves a combination of trusting intrapersonal perspective enough to build a foundation of identity and using the intrapersonal to feel a real sense of commitment (authenticity) to self (Baxter Magolda, 2009b). Baxter Magolda (2009a) refers to the moment of that personal feeling as, "the difference between having the commitments in their heads versus in their hearts". To trust one's intrapersonal perspective ("internal voice"), there is a need to understand not all aspects of what is real can be controlled, but there is agency in personal reaction to the reality of a situation or social location. Beyond trusting one's own voice, an individual also needs to set a foundation for internal perspective related to intersectionality in personal identity; that is, knowing what lived experience and exposure has taught the individual. What does the individual know to be true about personal identities (e.g., race, sexual orientation, etc.)? A grounded, internal foundation allows the individual to have scaffolding in place to build a collective unity of personal identity that breeds authentic personhood he can commit to in order to live with a positive self-image, prioritizing, establishing, and growing affirmative interpersonal relationships.

The gay undergraduate men included in this study, whose narratives are detailed in Chapter Four, highlight highly individualized life experiences, occasionally crossing paths of personhood and self-authorship work; however, with the nature of qualitative inquiry and examination of narratives from the queer theory and self-authorship

theoretical perspectives, generalization is not a primary goal. More so, the goal in this

study is to understand how the included men construct and make meaning of masculinity

(epistemology), use those masculinity perspectives to establish an internal sense of self

(intrapersonal), and use internal sense of self to foster meaningful interpersonal

relationships (interpersonal). As shared in Chapter Four, the interviews with men

illuminate a kaleidoscope of lived experience related to personal masculinity and self-

authorship of gender. Without static stages, phases, or clean linear progression from

theoretical perspectives, also outlining of methodological perspectives and considering

benefits and challenges related to the researcher lens is necessary.

   With a rich and diverse set of individual lived experiences, it is possible to, as

feminist theorists and researchers argue, "make the personal political" and have a true

impact on individuals and communities that brings agency to the marginalized and

oppressed by offering myself as a vessel for their voice (Gluck & Patai, 1991). As a

person who is not solely a researcher, but also a student services administrator who hopes

to reciprocate positive, empowering energies, I want to build a research agenda that is

supportive of individuals and groups who are lost in the fray of higher education politics

and priorities. I am starting that agenda with this project by pursuing a research study

that investigates the lives of gay undergraduate men. I explore the journeys of the men

included in this study in a way that will hopefully help them, and their allies on campus,

to make social progress and transform campuses. In order to bring that to fruition, it was

critical I ground my research aspirations in a collaborative methodology, primarily

focused on offering people the chance to tell their stories. I do not want to be driven by

some ornate research plan that simply takes information from someone with no plans of

giving back just as much or more. To be as intentional as possible with my efforts, I

grounded my work in feminist methodological practices that I will detail in the next

chapter.

Chapter Three: Research Design

In this chapter, I will provide greater detail regarding the design and process of this narrative inquiry. More specifically, this chapter includes a brief synthesis of information regarding epistemology and theoretical framework used in conceptualizing the study, methodology and process, as well as divulging of potential for researcher bias and measures taken to ensure interview data authenticity. Epistemology guiding the study is a compilation of the summary arguments that were detailed in Chapter Two, covering broad areas of literature related to gender as a social construction informed by multiple dimensions of personal identity. In addition to acceptance of gender as a social construction, this chapter provides insight into the positionality for participants and the researcher for the reader to more accurately interpret context from which study findings were collected and analyzed.

Study Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this investigation is to explore how undergraduate gay men construct, experience, and make-meaning of masculinity using an interpretive lens of self-authorship as a guide. Self-authorship is a conceptual framework that was first posited by Robert Kegan in 1982 in *The Evolving Self: Problem and Process in Human Development*. In his book, Kegan (1982) details self-authorship is about "meaning-making", incorporating epistemology, intrapersonal perspective, and interpersonal experiences to inform habits, actions, and performances throughout the progression of life. With new knowledge from life experiences and intrapersonal deliberations, an individual makes both conscious and unconscious choices about psychosocial life interactions, one example being gender performance. The concept of self-authorship, as

applied to college student development, has been a primary research agenda for Marcia Baxter-Magolda.

Baxter-Magolda teases apart the three elements of self-authorship (epistemology, intrapersonal perspectives, and interpersonal interactions) elaborately by applying the concept to the total lived experience of college students, everything from academic progress to co-curricular involvement (Baxter-Magolda 2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2010). For this narrative inquiry, I have specifically focused on personal development, and more precisely how interactions in a variety of campus spaces from the classroom to student organization meetings work to inform each of the study participants' judgments of masculinity. Baxter-Magolda (2008) argues self-authorship is a holistic developmental process that occurs when one makes a critical shift away from blindly accepting the values, beliefs, relationships, and identities that have been constructed by others. In place of external prescriptions, the individual moves to a more independent state in which he begins to critically examine these various life dimensions on a intrapersonal level and aims to construct his own perspective.

Three questions guide my purpose and interest in this study: 1) How do gay undergraduate men construct and interpret masculinity (epistemology)? 2) How do gay undergraduate men's internal senses of self inform their masculinity performance (intrapersonal)? 3) How do relationships and interactions with other campus community members inform gay undergraduate men's masculinity performance (interpersonal)? In my interview protocol (Appendix A), I detail the line of questioning used for interviews to guide inquiry and conversations with study participants.

Questions that explore self-authorship presuppose a participant's internal capacity to define personal beliefs, identity, and relationships in order for the interview to focus more exclusively on meaning-making and not decisions about identity (Pizzolato 2003, 2004). For that reason, I targeted participants who already identify as "gay" or "homosexual". Undergraduate men who are still exploring sexual orientation in a "questioning" phase of personal development are actively contemplating identity and not yet prepared to self-author lives as gay men. While I restricted the study population with regard to sexual orientation, I hoped for a spectrum of perspectives with inclusion of participants representative of racial, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic diversity.

Research Paradigm

My choice to limit my study population to gay-identifying men is in direct relation to Catherine Engstrom and William Sedlacek's (1997) claim gay-identifying men are met with more social stigma than their other male peers on campus. When juxtaposed with the top-quality and comprehensive study Patrick Dilley presented in his book, *Queer Man on Campus: A History of Non-Heterosexual College Men, 1945-2000* (2002), my study has a few similarities in questions driving inquiry and interest in populations with same-sex sexual experiences; however, there are also key differences that make my proposed study a unique research venture as well.

Dilley and I share identities as gay men and, when compared to when he orchestrated his study in 1998, as developing scholars in the field of higher education. Those shared perspectives are partially responsible as motivating focus on the experiences of non-heterosexual men, specifically men who pursue college degrees. Conceptually, Dilley (2002) started with broad questions akin to my own, such as "how

do non-heterosexual men make sense of their lives in college", "what impact [do] post-secondary experiences have on their understandings of who they are and how they identify", and "what elements of higher education contribute to those understandings" (Dilley, 2002, p.4). Also, both my study and his published study employ narrative inquiry to procure a rich set of data that cannot be achieved via methods such as surveys or secondary analysis of existing data.

Although I interviewed individuals as well, I focused more exclusively on gender performance and not on sexual activities or how those sexual activities are rationalized. Dilley (2002) did have participants, linked to his "normal, closeted, parallel and denying" typologies, who discussed gender performance as a means for masking homosexual activity; however, the inclusion of gender performance-related narrative seemed unintentional, a way to set the stage for sharing about more targeted information regarding their homosexual activities and their motivations for those activities. Without targeted questions related to gender performance, Dilley (2002) leaves that aspect of personal experience open for new inquiry. Similar to Dilley (2002), I interviewed participants who shared about sexual preferences and activities they connected to self-authorship of their masculinity, but that information was not specifically solicited in my questions for them as part of the interview protocol. I was able to assess the contributing factors the men use in their self-authorship by probing responses to interview questions and analyzing their narratives. That analysis of findings is detailed in Chapter Five.

In comparing my own ambitions for this study with the work of Dilley (2002), there were also significant differences in the temporal goals, participant identity restrictions, and theoretical frame used to approach narrative analysis. Dilley's (2002)

study consisted of data from interviews with 57 "non-heterosexual men" from 1998-1999, seeking information about respective campus experiences across the U.S. during a lengthy historical period, 1945-2000. Not only is a population representative of a span of several decades unnecessary to meet the goals of my inquiry, but that length of time also presents significant challenges in positioning my study in a specific sociopolitical climate. Limiting my participants to currently enrolled undergraduate men allowed me to capture the pulse of gender on campus in present day and make specific recommendations for forward-thinking, directed thought that should be considered by current higher education professionals.

The gay historiographical works of authors John D'Emilio (1992) and Eric Marcus (2002) detail the flurry of both underground and public liberationist and activist movement that was ongoing in the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) communities for much of the timespan addressed in Dilley's (2002) study. Appropriately acknowledging the impact of so many events on individual participants, even as only a subset of analysis, would prove too cumbersome for the scope of my project. My study acts not only as a means for answering Engstrom and Sedlacek's (1997) call for more work to understand and curb gay undergraduate men's social stigma on campus, but also to consider if that social stigma is present in a new generation of college students. Engstrom and Sedlacek (1997) shared some significant findings regarding identity perceptions of heterosexual students projected onto their non-heterosexual peers in the late 1990's, but has the climate changed to become more progressive and accepting or is the climate different in some other way today? As discussed in later chapters, the answer is both yes and no. My contemporary study of gay undergraduate male narratives

illuminates some positive change that has occurred. Participants also highlighted social stigma that is still a salient issue for them, what that stigma looks like in modern collegiate culture, and how they have developed coping mechanisms for managing the stresses of stigma.

On another front, my study also serves as a contemporary update for some of Dilley's (2002) study findings from nearly two decades ago in a previous generation; since I worked to restrict the range of the involved population in my study to only gay-identifying men rather than all "non-heterosexual men", my study is not a complete update of Dilley (2002). The analytical findings of Dilley (2002) allowed him to introduce a typology of non-heterosexual male experience that spanned from men who identified as "homosexual, gay, or queer" to other men who had same-sex sexual experiences but socially fit a typological description of "normal, closeted, parallel, or denying". The only delimiting factor for inclusion in Dilley's (2002) study is that a man who attended college between 1945 and 2000 had some same-sex sexual experience(s) to share.

My participant identification parameters were far more restrictive in that I expected the participant to not only be currently enrolled in college as an undergraduate, but also self-identify as "gay (homosexual)". There were several men included in Dilley's (2002) study who had an array of same-sex sexual experiences, yet they denied the "gay (homosexual)" identity label or insisted their "explorations" that occurred were normal and nearly ubiquitous in the culture of male student sexual lives. Limiting the identity factors for inclusion in my study allowed me to focus squarely on the gendered experiences of gay undergraduate men who ascribe to the "gay (homosexual)" label,

notwithstanding the complicating narratives of Matt and George included in Chapter Four. While my scope of participants was highly restrictive, future study of student experiences with self-authorship of gender performance could also be applied to other segments (identity groups) of the campus student population.

Conceptually, I approached interviews with my study participants using a line of inquiry that infers agency in gender performance labeled "self-authorship" and first used in application to college-going populations by Marcia Baxter-Magolda (2008). Baxter-Magolda's (2008) self-authorship framework assumes students' agency in writing their own rules for identity and social engagement based on what they've seen, what they've heard, and what they know (have come to "know" from life experiences). Dilley (2002) takes the approach of tying interviewees' experiences to a specific typology driven by theories of student development prominent in student affairs practice, limited by their reliance on rigid "stages" and "phases" (e.g., Cass' 1979 Model of Homosexual Identity Formation and D'Augelli's 1994 Model of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Identity Development). Adopting a self-authorship framework approach with my sample population aided me in steering away from encapsulating student experiences by "type". Instead, I uncovered crossroads of experiences for connections and disparities that result in themes discussed in Chapter Five. Rather than fitting participants' experiences into one of seven "types" as Dilley (2002) worked to do, I explored themes of experience more permeable or malleable, not rigid or myopic. In a specific example, Dilley (2002) did not address possibilities for transition of individuals in his population from one type to another. Baxter-Magolda's (2008) self-authorship approach better supported an evolution of identity that I share about in my findings and presentation of themes in the

fifth chapter. Overall, the contemporary nature of my inquiry, paired with the use of self-

authorship framework and restricting eligibility for participation in my interviews, make

my study a distinctive inquiry informed by strengths and shortcomings of previously

published literature.

Methodology

Narrative Inquiry

I interviewed each man to have him provide perspectives on where he sees

masculinity in his life, including aspects from personal background, society at-large, and

campus policies, organizations, symbols, events, activities, and people (Bolman & Deal,

2008; Schein, 2010). However, no experience or occasion was off limits in the personal

interviews. One of the signature benefits of qualitative studies is their ability to produce

unexpected themes in data collection and analysis. The interview was an opportunity for

individual participants to share their vantage point and perceptions of all aspects of their

lives (see Appendix A for interview protocol and questions). Rather than being a means

for affirming my own interpretation of campus cultural values and priorities based on the

sociopolitical profile I understand, the interview protocol is meant to allow individual

narratives to generate ideas without my analytical bias. It is not my role to qualify or

disqualify a person's experience, but to use the knowledge from related literature to

spawn questions that lead to richer findings. In my experience as a developing scholar

and administrator, I have found storytelling and people sharing their personal narratives

have some of the greatest potential to make lasting impact on those with whom their

stories are shared.

When research findings are connected to specific individuals, they seem to carry more weight with their audience; it is sort of like when a film or a book starts by sharing that it is "based on a true story". Qualitative research retains the humanity of the research process and findings. Relationships, whether they are with people or things, leave a significant impact on our lives and we are forever changed. Some may argue good qualitative data could also be achieved via open-ended surveys or shorter interviews that focus on a more rigid agenda, but that would be misguided. Although these more open-ended interviews proved to be a strenuous process, the rich data that resulted is incomparable; the chance for me to ask strategic, probing questions as a tool for clarification and deeper understanding, is unmatched in other methodologies.

In addition to narrative inquiry as the research methodology and guide for interacting with study participants, I also remained mindful of power and agency of the participants by adhering to perspectives highlighted through queer theory and feminist (activist) research orientations detailed at the end of Chapter Two. A cornerstone of queer theory is "deconstruction: a social analysis of who, why, and what produce a text" that "if not within the marginalized then at least outside the margins of 'normality'" (Dilley, 2002; Marshall & Rossman, 2015). Juxtaposing each participant's experiences with what he envisions on campus as "normal" provided context to develop an accurate lens for his awareness and understanding of his own self-authorship of gender, however shallow or deep that self-authorship may have been. Then, with knowledge of his awareness and understanding, we explored how he employs his gender sense to distinguish if he is simply a consumer of an aggressive "text" or if he uses his awareness and understanding to build agency and produce some "text" of his own. Also in regard to

masculinity performance on campus, were participants ascribing to the "normal", "marginalized", or are they in a liminal space?

Considering the implications of employing such intensive interviewing methods for research, I realized this study is an opportunity to surrender the power of knowledge and understanding to the interviewees by illuminating their voices. That shift of power is what makes this research study truly activist in nature (Craven & Davis, 2013). As an individual who understands what it feels like to have my own voice and story muffled by marginalization, I was eager to employ methods that hand the narrative power over to the participants in my study and allow them to take me on a journey into their experiences that ultimately led to mutual discovery. There was a certain level of excitement about not knowing what these men would bare to me along the way, both purposively and inadvertently. The interview sessions were also a chance to ensure participants did not feel invaded, painfully exposed, or uncomfortable; participants were able to decide for themselves how much to share, when to share it, and where to end the story. The participant was the leader in his own personal narrative and reflections.

Shared Authority

Collaborative method. As a researcher, I have a protocol. However, as a feminist researcher specifically, I did not want to impose some strict guidelines of process and procedure on my interactions with interviewees to restrict their voice in their own story. After all, the stories are theirs and I hope to accurately portray and illuminate those stories. This project is a mosaic of stories that come together as a rich tapestry that displays community and a specific demographic still less visible and partly silenced. With that, I wanted to respect the vantage point of each interviewee while also

understanding that specific individuals have disparate social locations from the collective.

Using qualitative methodology, the findings from this inquiry are not highly generalizable, but provide a very specific set of data with a window into individual experiences that we would not otherwise have exposure to by any other means. Alistair Thomson (2003), a longstanding and well-respected oral historian, insists that efforts to be collaborative with interviewees are not always a neat and pretty process, but give a researcher the potential to "stretch understanding". How a person remembers may be at odds with how an event is recalled collectively. That does not validate or invalidate the perspective of an interviewee, but provides a fuller window into events and experiences that are filled with emotions and sentiments that could very easily change over time. Distance from an event or experience expands an individual's perspective and allows for reflection that has influence on that person.

In Sherna Berger Gluck and Daphne Patai's *Women's Words: The feminist Practice of Oral History* (1991), Katherine Borland contributes a chapter on interpretive conflict where one of her interviewees feels that she was misrepresented in Borland's analysis of her interview transcript. The balance of interpersonal collaboration and creative authorship that reflects a broader community beyond that individual is a delicate one. In order to create an environment where both the researcher and interviewee feel collaboration is happening in a positive and meaningful way, there has to be a mutual respect and sense of sharing developed. Collaboration and true shared authority take time for trust to be built and rulemaking to occur. When there are disparate social locations or uncertain power dynamics driving communication and collaboration between an

interviewer and interviewee, no amount of direct communication will bridge that gap. Time and effort to connect personally and break down the barriers to shared ownership in the project is the only means for fostering that ideal collaborative relationship.

Without the time spent to allow the dyad to develop into a comfortable and trusting relationship between interviewer and interviewee, there is a good chance that certain telling information would be withheld due to the interviewee's skepticism or personal division between public and private information. However, in Nan Boyd and Horacio Ramirez's *Bodies of Evidence: The Practice of Queer Oral History* (2012), Boyd discusses her experiences in interviewing gay men, explaining that she found gay men were much more willing to share the details of their sexual experiences and claims that her interviews with gay men focused on personal and communal sexual activities. I experienced a similar high self-disclosure type of interview with most of the men I interviewed.

Collaborative theory. My own orientation to oral history is crossed with a feminist theoretical methodology to build a project that is empowering and does everything possible to retain the interviewee's voice and not have it get lost in the fray of my inquiry goals. As I am working to make sure that my own lines of inquiry are not completely selfish, I am reminded, by a couple of scholars, that I should also be attentive to what is not being said as much as what is being said. In his article, "Shame, Guilt, and Anguish in Holocaust Survivor Testimony", Michael Nutkiewicz (2003) shares that, in some cases, there is a need for marginalized or oppressed people to mask pain while also being active in honoring community and identity. Working class and poor people in the

queer community, and beyond, actively work to mask the undesirable and present a middle class lifestyle and identity (Olson & Shopes, 1991; Boyd & Ramirez, 2012). Examples of Asian men preferring "rice queens" (i.e., white queer men) for dating, minority queer people feeling the sting and loneliness of living on the boundaries of the LGBT community, and marginalizing working class and poor members of the queer community are all salient topics when considering Boyd and Ramirez's *Bodies of Evidence: The practice of Queer Oral History* (2012) as an entire published work.

Exposing injustices of marginalization and oppression not only from outside, but also within queer populations will hopefully continue to give a voice to those queer people who live outside the most visible gay lifestyles and ideals with escalating volume and acknowledgement. As Martin Meeker insists in his chapter of Boyd and Ramirez's (2012) collection entitled, "You Could Argue that They Control Power: Politics and Interviewing Across Sexualities", those who are living outside the frame of the mainstream queer culture are supplying "heroic narratives" and living heroic lives every day. Even the average queer person is living a heroic existence by having such a highly politicized and contested identity, but that is more so the case for those who are marginalized within the queer community itself.

Implications. *Benefits***.** There are a few key benefits to using my methodological lens that is rooted in feminist theoretical perspectives. First and foremost, a research agenda that focuses on a demographic that is filled with untold stories and invisible lives has the potential of further fueling queer liberation movements and providing a quality depth that exposes reality to combat stereotypes and misconceptions (Boyd & Ramirez, 2012). Choosing a fragile methodology, with a necessary attention to detail that can

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provide as much or as little quality information as the researcher allows, was a cumbersome task to take on as a young, developing scholar. However, the important work that needs to be done to fuel social progress from the academic sphere of influence is a driving and motivating reason for insisting on this methodological approach.

In Gluck & Patai (1991), Judith Stacey contributes her own chapter, "Can There Be a Feminist Ethnography?", that challenges the very idea that the feminist approach can realistically be accomplished. Stacey's reasoning is a persuasive one, insisting that research at its core is an exploitive endeavor. However, she also acknowledges the desire the researcher has to empower and elevate the marginalized and oppressed demographic groups. Due to the competing balance of inquiry and feminist initiative, there may not be a chance to complete a totally feminist research project simply because that are fruits of a researcher's labor that are, in essence, exploitive in nature. However, there may be many motivational factors for undertaking a research project of this kind, but exploitation is not a primary factor and is severely diminished by some level of selfless ambition for how the product of the research is employed to catalyze social change in some way. Frisch (2003) claims that using collaboration and shared authority ensures that individuals' stories and worlds come to life and have the potential to empower positive change in "reflective and instructive" ways. With appropriate priorities and motivations for undertaking a research project, it is perfectly feasible to complete the process without it being primarily driven by a selfish, exploitive agenda.

Feminist methodology is not only about the sociology or politics. This research method is not only about geography and understanding individual and communal psychology either. An enriching quality of this culmination of method and theoretical

perspective is that it transcends a single academic discipline or set of ideas (Gluck &

Patai, 1991). In order to cultivate the methodology in its most true, real form, it is

necessary for the researcher to consider a wide variety of academic disciplines and lines

of inquiry to provide satisfactory analysis and quality of interpretation with findings. On

my own journey as a developing scholar, I have recognized how critical it is to

understand the anthropological, feminist, historical, sociological, and psychological

dimensions in order to offer an adequately perceptive approach.

My own social location and perspective was helpful as I completed a project that

includes gay undergraduate men. As a gay man myself, there are dimensions of culture

and language that an outsider would not fully understand. For that reason, I am at a

natural advantage to study a demographic of which I am a part. Gluck and Patai (1991)

offer their own example of women working with women in an oral history

methodological context fostering a unique atmosphere that naturally encourages comfort

and understanding. During interviewing, this dimension of the "benefits" became more

certain, as there was comfort for the interviewees in sharing with a fellow member of the

queer community that may be more forced and seem extraordinarily awkward between an

interviewer and interviewee with more disparate sexuality and gender identity locations.

Challenges. Related to personal relationships and connections, my social location

was both a benefit and challenge to using this methodological approach. While there

were commonalities among me and my interviewees, there were also differences that put

distance in understanding and shared meanings between us. It was crucial that I stayed

alert to what an interviewee was sharing to clarify and come to agreement on everything

from language to how an event or experience was portrayed along the way.   Meta-

narratives and analyses had to be unpacked so I clearly and accurately interpreted how interviewees make meaning of everything they mentioned.

At times the challenges also came in the form of fear of saying too much. Due to the sociopolitical climate in geography, queer life is highly politicized, marginalized, and oppressed in ways that make transformative social change difficult at any scale (Sitzia, 2003; Gluck & Patai, 1991). Interviewing a marginalized and oppressed population of people, another challenge I became aware of was internalized stigma. Some stereotypes of certain demographics within the parameters of hegemonic social norms and mores project prejudice so far and deep that those stereotypes even infiltrate the minds of the people they are working to marginalize. Wildly strong stereotypes that become internalized with some individuals had to be teased apart and explored via interview probing.

Outside of emotions, the interview experience is fragile in general when considering a collaborative and shared authority approach to the feminist oral history methodology. To return to Katherine Borland's experiences from Gluck & Patai (1991), Borland writes a couple statements that are particularly powerful. Borland states, "feminist theory provides a powerful critique of our society, and, as feminists, we presumably are dedicated to making that critique as forceful and direct as possible" (Borland, 1991, p.64). As feminists, we may have the intention of being "direct" and "forceful", but that does not mean our interpretive goals match those of our interviewees, so we must strike a collaborative balance as much as possible to accurately represent our interviewees' perspectives. To assist the feminist researcher, Borland continues later in her chapter by stating, "[…] fieldwork exchange had become, in the end, a true exchange

[…] achieved through the process of interpretive conflict and discussion, emerging as each of us granted the other interpretive space and stretched to understand the other's perspective" (Borland, 1991, p.74). Collaborative and shared authority is no easy task, but it is essential to offer the very best version of ourselves to our interviewees and offer them the agency in the telling of their stories. As Linda Shopes (2003) details in her commentary on shared authority, "collaborative work is personally and intellectually demanding, requiring an ability—even the courage—to deal with people and situations that can be difficult; a certain tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty about how a project will work out; willingness to take risks, not follow established protocols, and make decision based on the logic of the work itself" (Shopes, 2003, p.106). I could not agree more.

I have learned to embrace and make good use of a qualitative methodology means to be okay with the unknown and make peace with it as a researcher. In her final thoughts, Shopes adds, "collaboration is a responsible, challenging, and deeply humane ideal for some oral history work, but in certain kinds of projects, beyond a basic respect for the dignity of all persons, it seems not an appropriate goal" (Shopes, 2003, p.109). I set high goals and standards for my work as a researcher and feminist scholar, but I also understand the call Shopes (2003) makes to be realistic as well. Considering all elements of methodology in relation to time-space demands, both in terms of resources and timeline, I had a goal of balance.

Sample

Regarding construction of sample, Dilley (2002) and Barton (2012) took a similar approach to one another by employing convenience and "snowball sampling". In order to

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build their samples initially, both researchers used personal contacts (e.g., community leaders, college and university administrators and professionals, personal partner, gay clubs and bars, campus gay organizations and group leaders, etc.) in addition to reaching out to a variety of other local gay organizations and groups with which Dilley (2002) and Barton (2012) had no personal connection. Once both researchers had their initial interviewees, they both asked interviewees if they would share news of their study with their personal contacts to inquire if they would be interested in being interviewed. I used a somewhat similar approach to constructing the sample for my study, but did not benefit from attempts at snowball sampling. Rather than focusing on a single source for names or people, I made initial contacts by reaching out to personal-professional contacts on campus, seeking out gay student organizations and groups, and advertising the opportunity to interview on posting boards in buildings across campus (see Appendix C).

In order to conduct a successful research study, I built a purposive sample. Purposive sampling is the most used sampling technique in qualitative studies (Marshall & Rossman, 2015). I employed an openly advertised sampling method that encouraged eligible participants from every corner and space on campus to make contact for participation in the study. The study invitation (Appendix C) I prepared was shared with prospective participants by requesting only men identifying as gay (homosexual) and currently enrolled as undergraduates attending university to be included in the study. This type of sampling is considered purposeful because the researcher intentionally selects a particular sample based upon specific traits or characteristics; in this case, status as current gay male undergraduates (Marshall & Rossman, 2015).

All men I targeted as study participants verified, via telephone or e-mail, they met

the following criteria at minimum: currently enrolled undergraduates, identify

biologically as male (this had specific intention to exclude individuals who are

transitioning or have completely transitioned from female to male), and identify as gay

(defined in this case as being one who is sexually intimate exclusively with others of the

same sex, i.e., homosexual). I wanted to avoid essentializing the complicated experience

of transgender individuals and other men, who may be more aptly identified as bisexual,

by limiting the scope of the study population and excluding their eligibility. Even still,

one of the interviewees came out as bisexual in his interview response and the details of

his interview are shared in depth in Chapter Four. Along with the eligibility criteria, all

participants included in the study verified they were above the age to consent for

participation. Other personal status parameters of participants (i.e., age, race, religion,

employment, location of residence, marital status, socioeconomics, etc.) had no bearing

on selection in this study. See Table 1 for an outline of the participants.

Table 1

Study Participants

Name	Age/Year	Race/Ethnicity	Major Area of Study	U.S. Region of Origin
Rob	30/senior	White	Social Work	Midwest
Matt	18/freshman	White	Biosystems Engineering	Southeast
Owen	26/junior	Latino (Mexico)	Electrical Engineering	West Coast
Jace	23/senior	Black	Music Education	Southeast
Kent	21/senior	Asian (China)	Biochemistry	West Coast/Midwest
Nate	20/junior	Latino (Cuba)	Communication/ Spanish	Southeast
Cori	21/senior	Hispanic (Mexico)	Public Health	
Jimmy	21/junior	White	Animal Science	Southeast/ Appalachia
George	22/senior	White	Psychology	Great Lakes/Appalachia
Marshall	25/junior	White	Philosophy/Economics	Southeast/ Appalachia
Tim	23/senior	Latino (Mexico) /Pacific Islander- Filipino	Communication	West Coast/Southeast

*Owen came out as "bisexual" during his interview. Additional parameters of personal identity (e.g., socioeconomic status, religious affiliations, etc.) are introduced in participant narrative synopses in Chapter Four.

Undergraduate men who identify as Black or Latino have expressed unique challenges in their gay male experience that are rooted in racial and ethnic backgrounds (Cintron, 2000; Strayhorn, DeVita & Blakewood, 2010). Black and Latino gay undergraduate men are more likely to keep their identity as a gay male hidden from others and, therefore, contribute some distinctive and enriching information as members of the study population. Black and Latino men are the prevalent underrepresented minority racial and ethnic groups represented in the literature, but the recruitment of participants did not preclude other racial or ethnic groups from being incorporated into the collected narratives. Race and ethnic diversity in the sample yielded unique perspectives of self-authorship that are discussed in more depth in Chapters Four and

Five, but there were not any specific or directed questions leading a participant to make race or ethnicity a salient part of the narrative. Any focus on race or ethnicity from the participant came to light in an unprovoked way.

In addition, the participants who elected to be interviewed were from some different religious backgrounds that added value to the analysis of the men's lived experiences as shared in Chapter Four. Yielding religious diversity in the sample was ideal and necessary for a richer understanding of masculinity perspectives. In Bernadette Barton's 2012 book, *Pray the Gay Away: The Extraordinary Lives of Bible Belt Gays*, she interviews gay men from a portion of the United States (i.e., the southeastern U.S.) "known for fervent religious observances and practices". While Barton's (2012) book includes some tales of heartache and pain in merging one's identity as gay with personal religious beliefs and beliefs of their families, some of the interviewees share stories of how things worked out well for them when they began to effectively self-author with an incorporated religious ideology. With Barton's (2012) findings, it is clear religion can be as challenging as ethnic and racial backgrounds when introducing one's sexual orientation to the mix of personal identity scaffolding. Again, like the intentions that were expressed with regard to questions directing participants to discuss impact of race or ethnicity on self-authorship of masculinity, no questions explicitly encouraged participants to evoke salience of religion.

Socioeconomic status was also a relevant part of interviewee responses, but no questions consciously created connections of the participants' socioeconomic status to his self-authorship. In *Masculinities* (2005), Raewyn Connell argues masculinity and the variations of masculinity performance are highly political in a gender-driven struggle for

power and privilege where men perform [self-author] gender for specific gains. Connell's (2005) claims tie gender performance as a means to attain certain status in society; that status is not motivated by a desire to achieve a hegemonic ideal, but rather a desired position within society. Gay men are significantly more likely to have higher incomes, be college educated, graduate with higher academic grade point averages, and be more actively involved on campus than heterosexual men (Hewitt, 1995; Carpenter, 2009). Could gay undergraduate men's self-authorship of gender be a contributing factor in Hewitt (1995) and Carpenter's (2009) findings? Are gay undergraduate men self-authoring a masculinity performance that enables them to make specific gains within society? The answers, explored further in Chapters Four and Five, are partially yes and no. Dilley's (2002) collected narratives from "non-heterosexual" men are suggestive of men, from 1945-2000, leading "parallel lives" and cognitively normalizing their same-sex sexual activities to establish a sense of belonging and fit in with male peer groups in colleges and universities. My findings support Dilley's assertions to an extent, but my participants' stories support an argument of a lived authenticity and agency that may not have been present for the men of Dilley's book. Focusing specifically on narratives from gay-identifying undergraduate men, from a diverse set of backgrounds (i.e., race/ethnicity, religion, social class), ultimately enriched the quality of my narrative inquiry. Targeting interviews with gay-identifying men also strategically built upon and redirected past research to more squarely investigate masculinity within a specific sexual orientation identity.

Setting

In order to fully consider the responses provided by the interview participants, it is vital to acknowledge the fact that narrative inquiry is not only the focused tale of individuals and the experiences of their lives, but also a production guided and influenced, to a degree, by the sociocultural context wherein those experiences take place (Marshall & Rossman, 2015). The surrounding community of the Public Research University, where the interviewees are students, has a smaller, but vibrant LGBTQ population. Even with less of a wide, public presence, the local community boasts an active agenda with multiple volunteer, social, and rights-centered organizations. Public Research University is located in an urban setting with a population of nearly 300,000 residents and is the second largest city in the state. LGBTQ-identifying students have access to a young LGBTQ resource center on campus that supplies the subpopulation with resource education, services, and support through programming and awareness activities.

The study was conducted at a large, public research university located in the southeastern area of the United States. The institution is a Carnegie research 1, predominantly white (PWI) university campus that was home to over 20,000 undergraduate students at the time advertisement for the study was placed on campus (fall 2015), just over 10,000 of whom identified as male. The total student population on campus was approximately 33,000. Students are enrolled from all states in the U.S. and dozens of other countries. Also, while the men in this study range in age from eighteen to thirty, the vast majority of undergraduate students enrolled at the university are between the ages of eighteen and twenty-two years old. Throughout, the university is

referred to as Public Research University. The research site was selected based on the

active, relatively open, gay male population in a comparatively conservative state, as well

as the closer proximity to the researcher to avoid incurring large costs in the connection

with participants and arranging space and travel for private interviews. Due to the project

being personally funded by the researcher, travel costs, both financial and temporal, had

to be taken into consideration.

Public Research University does provide a robust setting for building a diverse set

of narratives with gay undergraduate men. The institution has over two hundred

undergraduate major programs of study, more than six hundred registered student

organizations, and a variety of population resource centers (e.g., LGBTQ resource

center). The men in this narrative study came from an array of undergraduate majors,

engaged with campus in different ways via involvement in different student organizations

(e.g., service fraternities, student government, arts organizations, student chapters of

professional associations related to their majors, and gay alliance and activism). The

campus does have an active and visible presence of social Greek letter organizations and

intercollegiate athletics teams, mentioned by all men interviewed for the study in at least

one instance during each interview. While the men in the study have specific student

populations, organizations, areas of study, and spaces they regularly inhabit on campus as

most salient for them, the men are involved with and connected to only a small fraction

of possible social locations available to them.

Even within the subset of gender and sexuality-focused chances for involvement,

there are multiple options for students to be engaged through campus and the local

community, including organizations for LGBTQ students of color, LGBTQ law students,

and LGBTQ students, faculty and staff on the university's medical portion of campus. There are gender and sexuality-related writing groups, student organizations, a LGBTQ resource center, and programming specifically highlighting gender and sexualities that is sponsored by committees and offices on the campus. Organization of gender and sexuality involvement opportunities is fragmented, partially due to different social groups hosting independent organizations instead of a collaborative. At the time of this study, the resource center for LGBTQ populations that exists on the campus was in its infancy. The university had just begun formal funding for personnel support and active programming related to LGBTQ identities. However, Public Research University, has had LGBTQ campus community members and allies organized formally for decades, dating back to fall of 1972 with the founding of the campus' "Gay Liberation Front", an organization similar to the one founded by D'Emilio (1992) at Columbia University shortly after the Stonewall riots of 1969.

Data Collection & Analysis

As customary with much of qualitative research, data collection, and analysis of findings, I chose to digitally record and selectively transcribe interviews with participants that ranged from a half hour to two hours (Marshall & Rossman, 2015). The uninterrupted length of interviews was essential in generating a flurry of specific examples of applied self-authorship of masculinity. The detailed interviews were scheduled over the course of a fall semester, spanning a period of six weeks. During the time of active interviewing, I continued to refine approach to asking interview questions and was able to develop better comfort with the interview process with participants in each newly completed interview session. In addition to personal reflection and process

thought, I also continued reading and maintained a general awareness of social activism and gay-related news in the media. This is particularly important because interviews occurred mere months after the U.S. Supreme Court decision regarding same-sex marriage. Specifically detailed in Chapter Four, current events and news surrounding gay men's sociopolitical issues had an effect on the perspectives of interviewees, some more than others. Interviews for the study were also recorded in a single session in an effort to maintain trust and comfort with the study participants and have them share thoughts and perspectives from a single stream of consciousness.

With regard to interview questions, some follow-up and probing developed as the participants responded, but only for points of clarification and to ensure understanding. The interview protocol served as the fundamental guide, not to create rigid lines for flow of interviews, but to ensure similar and relevant progress was achieved by the conclusion of time with each interview participant. There were some critical questions originally laid out in the interview protocol I addressed in all interviews to build rapport, create a comfortable environment for greater personal disclosure, and remain fairly consistent with information gathered from each interview experience.

Per Institutional Review Board (IRB) regulated standards, I also attained informed consent and reviewed pertinent information with all interviewees before beginning any questions or recording (see Appendix B). Participants were given ample time to review the informed consent document, ask any clarifying questions or have concerns addressed, and then asked to sign the informed consent document before beginning to record interview sessions. Once I obtained their signed consent, I began recording the interview, diligently taking notes as well to capture information from

interview responses. During review of interviews and analysis of findings, each interviewee was also assigned and is referred to under pseudonym, rather than their actual name. In order to protect participants from potential backlash, or negative impact for participation in general, the pseudonyms assigned do not remotely resemble actual names. Care was also taken to provide general descriptions of groups and names of those the participants' are connected or involved with on campus. Additionally, geography is purposively described in a regional way to make a concerted effort at protecting anonymity of men in the study.

To build rapport at the beginning of each interview, I began by asking each man to tell me a little bit about himself. Knowing that interviewees would share different amounts and quality of information, I also asked follow-up questions about the structure of their family, where they grew up, and why they chose to attend university (see Appendix A for "Opening Question"). In particular, I was interested in learning how each interviewee became aware of university as part of his lead-in to my questions about his gendered experiences at the university. I started with questions that illuminated each man's life before university and progressed to spend the bulk of interview time on his present perceptions of masculinity conceptually, as defined by society, and on campus. The more superficial line of questioning regarding personal background allowed interviewees to share personal information that established a supportive atmosphere of trust and comfort, while also providing me with useful demographic data about each participant to be used in analysis of findings. Not only did open line of questions for the session seem more superficial and safe to share, but it helped me to gauge aspects of his

identity (i.e., class, race, religion, etc.) that he emphasized as more salient in his narrative and thereby considered priority for him.

Specific to masculinity perspective, I asked each man to share a definition of masculinity once we moved beyond the "getting to know" stages of the session. The interviewees specific responses in defining "masculinity", as a term and concept, allowed me to probe for greater understanding of his vantage point in relation to three primary areas of interest in my line of inquiry: awareness (how he knows), understanding (internal conclusions) and utility (use of the definition in interactions with others). Depending on the level of detail he provided when asked how he and others perceive masculinity, I probed further by asking why he believed those certain perceptions and judgments of masculinity exist in the way he described.

With respect to awareness, I worked to gauge any heightened sense participants had of their difference from social norms regarding gender performance and masculinity displays. My examination of their feelings of dissonance, with established norms on campus and in their spheres of exposure, was accomplished by asking how they perceived their own masculinity after responding to how society and campus perceives masculinity. I explored his understanding of not only his own masculinity performance, but also his understanding of the institutional masculinity landscape, both in society at-large and on campus. Once able to present a set of masculinity frames (personal, campus, and societal), I asked him how those frames influence his employing a gendered perspective in his own life, how he expresses his masculinity in the variety of spaces, and how he believes his involvement informs his masculinity. Only after I had a bearing on his awareness and understanding of his masculinity in relation to environments did I shift

my attention in the interview to discussion of his personal usefulness and effectiveness for performing his masculinity. In my interview with Matt, that sense of personal awareness and understanding related to personal masculinity and authorship of gender was not grounded, so it dramatically shortened the interview session; greater detail is provided in Matt's vignette in the next chapter.

The texts (i.e., written and spoken word, behaviors, social institutions and relations) of campus are "constructed by constructed people" (Dilley, 2002). The men I interviewed did not develop a masculinity performance spontaneously; their performances were calculated by some level of awareness and understanding, conscious and unconscious, of the scripts for societal and campus masculinity performance. With that, I investigated the extent of these men's power, agency, and ability to use epistemology of campus masculinity norms for a self-authorship of gender. A couple critical questions to evoke those ideas were my asking about impact college attendance and experiences have had on each man's masculinity. Those questions uncovered the details of what made some men's gender-related power, agency, and specific brand of masculinity come to life on campus. It was important for me to understand the learned cues for what is an appropriate self-authorship of masculinity each man took from his own lived experiences and exposure to alternatives of masculinity performance. Awareness, understanding, and utility had a clear significance to perceptions of self-authorship of masculinity and personal gender performance. Those salient codes of significance are detailed in Chapter Four when comparing the participant vignettes.

Process of Analysis. I employed thematic analysis of narratives that included deductive (top-down) reasoning from theoretical inference and explanation of narratives

as aligned with aspects of the self-authorship model in the application section of Chapter Five. In addition, analytical induction (bottom-to-top) was used to surface four themes of experience (i.e., masking, agency, costs, and policing) from narrative data and those themes are discussed in detail in the discernments section of Chapter Five. I began the coding process with a series of open-coding sessions where I listened to interviews and took notes for keywords, phrases, and made notation of experiences emphasized by participants by way of copious time spent in interviews explaining and detailing particular life events (e.g., Marshall's detailed account of his relationship with his parents and Owen's recounting his coming out process with his fellow Corpsmen in the Marines). The open-coding was completed before coding sessions began with the frame of the theoretical model intentionally. The initial open-coding served as my effort for me to have a more raw lens for identifying codes in the narratives as unaffected as possible by the theoretical perspective and its accompanying verbiage.

After listening to all interviews through open-coding, I listened to each interview session once more with a paper copy of the self-authorship model, noting keywords, phrases, and described experiences that aligned with the aspects of Baxter Magolda's model. My application of the model to the narratives in this study are deduced from the theorists' explanations and previously published studies' examples of unique personal viewpoints of studied individuals that marks alignment along the parameters of the model. In anticipation of challenges to code data, align narratives of the eleven gay undergraduate men along the self-authorship model, and generate additional inductive themes, I preemptively asked participants to define terms and explain contexts central to their experience and vantage point related to anything from student organizations to

interviewee perceptions (e.g., masculinity, what about specific subgroups of men on campus said "masculine to them" when most all of the interviewees used specific subgroups as examples, and providing greater detail related to perspective on how inflection in academic papers or interpersonal interactions was salient for Marshall). Interviewees were also regularly member-checked through follow-up and probing questions of the each man; I employed the additional questions outlined in the interview protocol (Appendix A) as needed to clarify context or perspective with interview participants.

After noting initial codes from both inductive and deductive processes, codes from each narrative were indexed separately and then connected to other men's narrative code lists. Inductive codes were connected and used broadly to generate the "discerning" themes in Chapter Five that inform the self-authorship journey of each man. The codes generated from deductive analysis and reasoning were used in tandem, as comparative analysis of the narratives (axial coding) to deduce each man's progress toward grounded self-authorship. As a final means of validity, I worked with three peers to perform peer debriefing throughout the coding analysis, alignment of narratives to the self-authorship model, and cultivation of inductive themes that inform each man's self-authorship path. Peer debriefing provided objective review to ensure trustworthiness and logic in both deductive and inductive analyses of narratives included in the study.

Trustworthiness

With any research study, addressing issues surrounding quality and trustworthiness of data, and the collection of that data, is essential. Establishing trustworthiness in a study takes a process of communicating data and explaining what

that data mean; findings and analysis can be considered credible if an explanation aligns with the communicated data in a plausible way. Multiple interpretations of a study's findings can exist. However, to declare research and findings trustworthy, it is necessary to sample appropriately. Appropriate sample acknowledges the myriad of possible population characteristics, while also ensuring the aggregate sample addresses relevant variables presented by the research questions (Marshall & Rossman, 2015). Having recognized the many facets of personal identity intersections that can, and do, influence self-authorship of masculinity, it was crucial I incorporate thought and analysis of a multitude of identity factors in Chapter Four.

As a measure of credibility, it was critical for me to confirm an accurate representation of participants' contributions to the body of data being analyzed in the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2015). I accomplished that goal by adhering to the exact verbiage used by participants, not filtering the data with an initial interpretation on my own part. In any case where terminology or details were unclear, clarifying questions were asked to ensure a complete understanding of what the participant shared and context for provided examples or stories was understood as well. Also, while whole data is not presented in the findings and analysis, all data necessary for inferring context and meaning are included when excerpts and examples are presented for findings analysis.

As a qualitative project, there was never an intention that the findings and analysis of data will be generalizable with a larger population, but that a reader may find sufficient detail necessary to determine possible transference for further and new directions. Essentially, could this project be catalytic for expansive study (Marshall & Rossman, 2015)? By providing clearly laid out research techniques and methods, as well as

detailed information regarding researcher perspective and angle for the narrative analysis, it is possible for the project to not only be mirror replicated, but also assure the reader of value and suitability of the inquiry process for this type of study. With the details of setting and basic demographics of participating interviewees, readers can also make a determination if elements of this study would be transferable to their own campuses or circumstances.

Researcher Positionality

Marshall and Rossman (2015) explain a researcher's voice, in the way of values, experiences, and identity positionality, can hinder the elucidation of findings and opens potential for selective inclusion and exclusion of data. In an attempt to mitigate that negative impact on findings, I divulge specific information shared by each study participant in their respective vignettes in Chapter Four. In addition, I shared details about my background and privilege that inform my lens in research analysis, among other things. Acknowledging my place of privilege as a white, middle-class, college-educated, cis-gender, Christian male, I actively worked in my analysis of interview data with study participants to remain aware of my position and lens. This allowed me to maintain integrity of analysis and ensure assertions related to findings and data analysis were explicitly grounded in unadulterated interview responses. Even as I began to review interview data and explore findings, I continued to think about my own self-authorship of masculinity and how fluid my gender, sexual orientation, and religious observance can become in different spaces. I find I am not placated being reduced to a static identity check box on a form; so too, I cannot expect to compartmentalize the experiences of the interview participants in this study. Due to that understanding, it was critical the

vignettes for each participant be included in Chapter Four to accurately present findings and provide perspective for the data analysis in Chapter Five.

In this narrative inquiry, the participants were the ones who made the meaning of what is influential or a factor that influences their masculinity. There are clear examples of campus experiences, including interpersonal interactions, being significant factors in how the men I interviewed self-author their gender performance. However, interviews also yielded information elucidating how campus experiences do not always overtake choices the interviewed men make about their masculinity self-authorship. Gender is not constructed or understood in a classified way; while a primary goal of this narrative analysis is to understand how campus exposure and experiences inform gay undergraduate men's self-authorship of masculinity, invariably there is likely an array of influencing factors, of which campus (i.e., experiences and people) may be one. For this reason, identifying the specific campus was inconsequential, as it was simply a point of entry to connect with a population where status as an enrolled college undergraduate is a qualifying factor for inclusion in the study. The study findings of masculinity meaning-making for gay undergraduate men are the focal point, not the geography where the meaning-making takes place.

Additionally, reflecting upon my own life experiences and voyage to a destination of self-authorship in my personal masculinity served as a constant reminder, throughout the interview sessions and study, that identities and authorship of identities are exceedingly personal understandings. The volatile process of negotiating my own intersection of personal identities was and continues to be a barrage of mixed emotions. I know full well the challenge of answering questions of "how do I know", "who and why

am I", and "how am I" the collection of humanity I have become and am still becoming. With that, I carried the perspective into interviews and throughout analysis of findings that it was unreasonable for me to impress on my participants critical expectations of pinpointing personhood and identities as stationary understanding.

Limitations

As conceptualized, this study was originally focused on garnering perspectives of traditional-age college students, ages 18-22. Considering all eleven participants, the age range was actually 18 to 30 years old. Also, experiences shared include multiple campus transfers, students who took breaks between enrollments, and even interviewing a student who identifies as bisexual. While ranges of experience and age were outside of original expectations, an unintended positive consequence was a richer data set. There were interview responses that accumulated contributions from many academic disciplines, age-related perspectives, and varying levels of connection to the campus, Public Research University.

In addition, the study is limited by geography and only incorporating student perspectives from a single institution. However, George, Marshall and Rob all have added value to the compilation of data in the study by sharing viewpoints they have of other campuses and post-secondary experiences outside of Public Research University. The setting was described to provide some context for the reader and help in understanding information provided in participant vignettes in the next chapter.

My own position of privilege and risk of ignorance related to the significance of privilege is also a potential limitation. As the primary collection tool, it was necessary for me to scrutinize my privilege and acknowledge the possible impact that has on analysis

of findings. I also had the privilege of deciding the questions to ask, how to analyze the interview responses, and the way in which the data would be organized and presented to the reader. My presentation of research and decisions throughout the research process was influenced by my understanding of literature relevant to the study and qualitative research methods. With my goal of faithfully representing the experiences and perspectives of the study participants, I interviewed men, analyzed findings, and underwent discussion through the lens of my own experience.

Chapter Four: Summary of Personal Narratives

This chapter is a collection of the lived personal experiences and mere snapshots of eleven men's remarkable tales of courage, humility, and varying levels of power to self-author a set of identities. The information study participants provided allowed for themes to emerge that were affected by prisms of race, religion, class, sexuality, and geographies. With the reader keeping Baxter Magolda's (2008) elements of self-authorship introduced in chapter two and the methodological approach from Chapter Three in mind, this chapter commences with salient details from each man's interview session. The narratives provide the reader with a chance to contemplate the many unique vantage points of personal identities that exist for gay undergraduate men included in the study. This chapter allows the reader to become acquainted with each man's narrative through detailed summaries of experiences and thoughts each man shared in his personal interview. To conclude Chapter Four and set the reader for a more detailed analysis and application of self-authorship to the men's accounts, a general observation of salient narrative details, some that connect the participants' experiences and others distinct, is provided at the end of each narrative summary shared.

Participant Narratives

This narrative study explored the lives of eleven undergraduate men who identify as gay or bisexual. While the advertisement call for interview participants called for men to identify as gay, one interviewee came out as bisexual after meeting to be interviewed. Participants were solicited for this study on a southeastern, Carnegie research 1 university campus that was home to over 20,000 undergraduate students at the time advertisement for the study was placed on campus, just over 10,000 of whom identified as male.

Advertisement occurred via posting of flyers on many bulletin boards in campus buildings and sharing the flyer via electronic mail with student affairs professionals. In this chapter, biographical sketches and salient responses from each man's interview are outlined to provide context for the analysis of interview data from which a review of recurrent experiences of masculinity self-authorship were taken and are discussed later in this chapter. Narratives are introduced in chronological order, all completed in the fall 2015 term on Public Research University campus. Neutral space on campus was identified to meet with study participants.

Rob: "Masks of Manhood"

Rob is a 30 year old undergraduate senior majoring in social work and he identifies as gay, White, and male. Originally from the Midwest where he completed an associate's degree at a junior college, he moved away from home at age 23 and began working full-time and going to school part-time to complete his bachelor's degree. As a student, Rob is not a member of any student clubs or organizations on his campus and defines himself as a "non-traditional student." However, he did share that he has attended some programs and events hosted on campus by a LGBTQ student group and the campus cultural center such as movie nights and talks where everyone is "very liberal leaning" and there is "no macho bullshit."

Rob grew up in a Catholic household and has two younger siblings, a sister and brother. His parents are married. Rob moved away from his family at age 23 after coming out to them as gay and characterized the experience as "not fun" with laughter. Rob said he started his coming out process by writing his mother a letter and her response was a tearful acceptance and affirmation of her love for him. However, the following day

after his mother told his father, Rob's father confronted him with his mother in the room. Rob's father told him his being gay would not be accepted in the house, was not a part of Rob's life they wanted to be a part of, and exclaimed it was a sin and Rob was "going to hell" and "doing the devil's work". Rob asserts the turnaround from his mom was the worst part, but he expected that reaction from his father, characterizing his father as "very prejudice".

In defining masculinity as a term, Rob framed it as "being honest"—being honest about who you are, an honest, good person. He said terms like "butch" and "fem" are thrown around in the gay community, but said to him masculinity is "being secure and honest". Going on to share how society defines masculinity, Rob claimed it is "being macho or butch—strictly men" and that society's view of masculinity is a "sign of power, machismo, and being better than anything related to women or female". On campus, Rob perceives masculinity visually as seeing "a lot of fraternities" and says the campus has young people, 18, 19, 20 years old, who have not grown out of the mindset of high school. He asserts, "masculinity is an act to hide vulnerability" and he sees it as a "peacockery" where the men are putting on show—puffing their chest. He notices boys think they have to be tough, loudest in the room, most knowledgeable, and if he is asked a question, it is something for which he needs to provide an answer.

Conversely, he places his perception of masculinity on campus in opposition to what he feels is expected of females. He explains that females are expected to "play dumb or provide emotional reaction". Rob also cites the campus' athletics department and their larger amount of support for male athletes, explaining, "the women do well [performance in win-loss records], but there is not as much support". He went on to

share his experience in the classroom, stating that there is a lot of heterosexism and sexism and that males in his classes are "not very mature for the most part", clarifying by saying he is "not sure if it is how they are raised or how society has conditioned them". Rob claims seeing teachers who let male athletes "get away with a lot", explaining that he hears offensive things that are not reprimanded.

When asked to describe his masculinity, Rob shares he does not think he is very masculine in the societal sense, but claims his masculinity with his personal traits of honesty and being straight-forward. He went on to say, "I think confidence is something that is attractive in both genders". If he were to place himself on a scale of masculine or feminine, he is "somewhere in between". Rob claimed that he has "calmed it down" from when he was young, citing that he was "very flamboyant, dainty, and feminine" as a child. He explained that others assumed he did not like to get dirty or was weaker. He went on to share memories of playing with his younger sister's dolls and toys and putting on his mother's pearls. When he came out as gay he remembers one of his aunts saying "we have all been waiting for you to begin your transition", guessing that many of his family members assumed he was trans.

Growing up, Rob was scolded for being "girly" and was encouraged to be more masculine by doing "butch" things that are characteristic boy activities, such as being made to play sports. He cites being active in boy scouts for ten years, but claims to have enjoyed his time in boy scouts and playing soccer, going camping, making fires—he enjoyed getting dirty, contrary to what those around him assumed. Even though he enjoyed the boy-related activities, he shared he was usually made to cook or water fetch, taking on traditional mothering traits that they thought he was best suited for. Knowing

the value of being considered masculine, or in his terms "butch", Rob asserted that he doesn't always feel comfortable being his true self with the straight world and society at large. He referenced a monologue by a drag performer from Ireland that had gone viral online about oppression of gay men for being feminine and holding hands with their same sex partner, made to feel that they are feminine simply due to the fact they identify as gay. Rob believes society molds and forces the way he acts in public spaces.

Rob has had experiences in college that has shaped how he authors his gender performance and admits to wearing "masks" in certain situations where he does not feel comfortable sharing a more authentic version of his gender expression. He cites interacting with straight people and the general public in his job and how it matches his gender authorship in his classes on campus where he does not want interactions to be awkward or have men feel like he is hitting on them. He claims he does not "butch it up", but also does not act overtly flamboyant or feminine, "queeny", like he is more inclined to be when surrounded by other gay men and comfortable "taking off the mask". In class meetings, Rob states he is a "more calm version of myself" because he already stands out as an older student in his work uniform, due to his not normally having time to change after work and before class. "Gay, employee, older—I try to fly under the radar".

After going to his first gay bar at age 23, Rob found out he was not alone and there was an entire gay community and culture. He claims that exposure empowered him to be himself and own that part of who he is, affirming he has a right to be himself. Since realizing he was gay, Rob says he sees masculinity more as confidence and being honest—more honest with himself. He shared he has always struggled with self-esteem, claiming it came from his mother who was never self-confident and she leaned on his

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father. He said he has to come to terms with and accept who he is, be open and honest about who he is and stop trying to hide things and come into his own as a person; something he laughingly says is "not easy to do when you are in your 20s". He admits he makes a more conscious decision to be himself because he was "so tired of pretending to be something he wasn't and repressing myself". As a more authentic authorship of his gender, occasionally that means "being queeny and enjoying that with friends", while other times being himself is "being dirty and doing [characteristically] manly things".

Rob claims his college experience has given him opportunities to observe others' portrayal of masculinity and femininity and that having had courses on topics of sexuality and gender in his major has helped shape his feminist views and, in some cases, strengthening them—confirming masculinity is a show, performance, and a result of societal pressure to act in a certain way. He also shared he is impressed with the generation of college students younger than him and how they seem less rigid in their gender stereotyping, citing assumption of more kindness. He affirms he still sees the "show" being put on, but that it appears people are able to "tow the line closer to who they are than when I was growing up". Rob's summative thoughts were gay men are comfortable to be queeny with other gay men, but masculinity in the gay world is ridiculous, understanding the difference between gender roles and sex itself, because stereotypes of gay men are that they are feminine, so some overcompensate by "butching" and some are more comfortable being "hyper-fem" with gay men. He shares romantically, it makes dating difficult because most gay men are still attracted to more masculine/butch men.

Rob's interview was a powerful one to begin the study collection. Due to his cognitive development as a non-traditional, thirty year old undergraduate who also works full-time, he shared a critical understanding of masculinity that relies on his reading of environmental context to perform with appropriate "masks". Rob has used his "masks" as a means for establishing more positive comfort levels in a variety of settings. Rob's personal sense of masculinity surfaces in his effort to approach situations and people with an air of candor. His work to be honest and live with integrity drive his desire the "be straight-forward" with others. While his act of masking in certain social contexts imply he is not as straight-forward with people as he claims, Rob's masking is more for establishing comfort in settings so his flamboyant tendencies do not make interactions awkward for him or others. This in opposition to Matt, who employs learned formulas of masculinity in his daily life.

Matt: "Navigating Ambiguity"

Matt is an 18 year old undergraduate freshman majoring in engineering and he identifies as bisexual, White, and male. He is originally from the southeast and has lived in a few other areas of his home state before starting college. Matt is currently living with his grandparents while he attends college. He was raised in a reformed Jewish household, but the rest of his family identifies as Christian. He was raised in a single-mother home and is also the youngest of three children, having two older sisters; his father was "out of the picture". Matt has been involved early on campus by playing video games with new friends, participating in the student branch for his specific field of engineering, and an organization for Jewish campus community members.

When asked about awareness of his sexual identity, bisexual, Matt did not recall a first realization, but asserted, "I like people". Regarding intimate partners, he shared that his first was a boyfriend and then a girlfriend. It was in high school when he realized it was a "relevant thing". He has come out to his mother as bisexual and his sisters and their husbands know as well, but the rest of his family does not know and operates on a "don't ask, don't tell" sort of approach. Matt assumes that most all of his family knows about his sexual preferences due to the posting of photos of his male Military Ball date on social media.

Matt credits his grandfather's role model influence and his own involvement with JROTC in high school, "to some degree", with the guiding impact on his masculinity and how he defines it personally. He shared in JROTC that the cadets are trained to exercise control, keep grooming standards, use salutations such as "Sir" and "Ma'am", and hold doors for others. Although he struggled a bit to define masculinity because he had "never tried", he said, "if you identify as male, then you are male". After some initial thought, he unpacks the idea by asserting that if one is masculine, he is to "be a gentleman" and defines it as opening doors, pulling out chairs, politeness, respect and not the "traditional 'err, grr'" view of masculinity. Matt acknowledged that his definition is driven by his grandfather, his major male influence, who has 22 years' experience in military service.

Regarding his perceptions of masculinity on broader scales of society and campus, Matt shared that society sees masculinity in athletic players, exercise, testosterone, and "other wonderful, obnoxious things". He then asserted there are masculine guys, but they are not athletic; their masculinity is due more to their state of being, knowing when to fight and when not to, "not flying off the handle" and protecting

those they care about and understanding that physical force is not always the best means to resolve a situation. Matt claims his own masculinity through how he carries himself personally, trying best to embody qualities of a gentleman such as being polite, controlling himself, and having character—"being a decent human being". He claims he has never been an athletic person and never saw why athletes were labeled masculine and others were not. In his few weeks on campus at the time, Matt saw his own masculinity displayed in others' politeness and how people predominantly held doors for others, including male professors and authority figures on campus. He claims he had not seen shows of masculinity and femininity in the society-defined terms he shared outside of Greek life, fraternities and sororities, but he was not able to articulate the gender roles displays related to those organizations on campus. Matt's only other articulation of gender role awareness was regarding his dating men; he noticed that when dating men, he tends to select men to date who are more dominant and Matt takes on more characteristically effeminate traits, but he did not share what those traits were or how they were operationalized in his same-sex relationships.

Matt provided extremely concise answers to questions posed about masculinity; his answers were concise due to critical perspective, not because any heightened awareness of masculinity performance in the various spaces he inhabits. He follows formulas of what it means to be masculine as projected by his grandfather as a main male role model. Although Matt has started the work of acknowledging how his sexuality and relationship dynamics with men impact his masculinity perspective, he seemed to shrug off the chance for a critical examination in favor of an "it is what it is" mentality. Matt's overarching personal masculinity performance is driven by stoicism. His narrative places

particular importance on a need for controlling emotionality and desires that get in the way of establishing his character as a "gentleman". Matt relied on his grandfather as a shining example for his own gender performance. He read his grandfather's masculinity presence as a set of qualities worthy of being bestowed the "gentleman" label—things like being polite and "being a decent human being" (i.e., respecting others well and how he wants to be respected). Adopting a familial male role model perspective masculinity and working so diligently to uphold that perceived standard is a primary marker of Matt's personal challenge to adopt self-authorship behavior of shaping his own standards in conjunction with the gendered scripts he was offered as a youth. Owen uses formulaic viewpoints for masculinity he learned in the Marine Corps, but adopts the formulas as a piece of his melded personal perspective and not simply adopting an external masculinity ideology as his own.

Owen: "A Marine's Code"

Owen is a 26 year old undergraduate junior majoring in engineering and he identifies as gay, Latino, and male. He is originally from the U.S. west coast, growing up there in a Catholic family until he left to join the Marine Corps shortly after his brother died. He attended a regional college and a community college before transferring to the research university to pursue his bachelor's degree in engineering. At the time of his interview for the study, he was in his first semester of coursework at the research university. Owen was raised in a single-mother home and referred to his father as "sperm donor". He grew up with an older brother and sister, also sharing that his father had also fathered seven or eight half-siblings whom he had not met. When his mom was working, Owen's older sister was the caretaker of him and his brother. His brother was physically

disabled and Owen also helped care for his brother when Owen was a teenager. After his

brother died, Owen said he joined the Marine Corps because it gave him direction and a

sense of purpose.

First realizing his attraction to men at age 15, Owen claims that is when he

noticed that the male physique and it turned him on mentally and physically. He also

shared he had a crush on an old time friend, but believes he loved the friendship so much

that he confused that with intimate, attraction type love. At age 18, Owen begin to

"experiment" shortly after his brother's death and had already started to share news of his

sexual orientation with family and friends in phases. He first came out to his sister at age

17 and it was a positive experience, stating, "she was very understanding and did not

seem to care". However, he continued to label himself as "bisexual" based on his friend-

crush experience. It was not until he was age 21 that he accepted that he did not like

women the same as men. Owen stated when he came out to his mom at 18, she reacted

"like a typical Mexican woman would". He said she told him, "mijo, this is a phase",

pointing out an "effeminate" gay man on the street side while they were in the car and

saying, "please tell me you don't like *them*". He chuckled and told her that man was too

feminine for him. He said she is now supports his sexual orientation.

During his time in the Marine Corps, Owen says he kept silent about his sexual

orientation because "don't ask, don't tell" (DADT) was the policy and law at the time

when he entered the service. As he was finishing his contract with the Marine Corps and

just after DADT was repealed, Owen began to come out to his "shop". First, he came out

to about one-third of them when having drinks casually and the men were supportive,

saying "it's about fucking time". A month later, he came out to another third of them on

an even more informal, individual basis, and then, finally, to the last third, mostly officers and staffers, when they confronted him with their confusion about "what they had been hearing around the shop". The remainder of Owen's family became aware of his being gay when he brought a partner home for the first time over a holiday weekend.

A self-proclaimed "foodie" and "huge gamer", Owen is not involved in student organizations or clubs on campus, but spends most of his free time with his partner exploring and trying new things and doing activities outside. Outside of going to classes, the one space Owen does spend an amount of time in is the LGBT Center, a place on campus he says is comfortable and one where the "stigma and hyper-awareness of gay identity becomes relaxed". He claims that his attending college has not overtly changed how he thinks about his masculinity as a whole, but he does feel more responsible. He does not see college as a time for show of gender performance, but more so as a simple chance to get an education, a career, and give himself a better life financially.

He contrives a personal approach to college with a narrow view on creating a better life and had only been at the research university for a few weeks at the time he interviewed for the study. Even still, Owen acknowledged he initially saw masculinity on campus boasted in athletics and being on a sports team. He asserted that being a sports team member on campus somehow made others automatically assume one's masculinity. Aside from his comments about athletics, he also cited things like going to the campus gym—if a man is at the gym a lot, he is portrayed as masculine. He mentioned how some students on campus dress, such as dressing in gym gear regularly or being a "sharp-looking man", with a suit, blazer, khaki pants, button-down shirt and tie, affirms a man's masculinity. Owen shared if a man was "sharp-looking", he is assumed

to be in a fraternity and while fraternities "do some really gay things"—he cites homoerotic activity of stripping men naked, use of paddles, sexual innuendo, and some men dominating other men—that they somehow have their manhood stamp of approval on campus. When asked where he referenced those ideas, he cited exposure of movies, books, and a male in one of his classes pledging a fraternity telling him stories about the pledge experience.

In response to a request for him to define masculinity, Owen said that it is doing "manly things" and cited watching football, being good with technology, killing bugs, not cooking or cleaning, but in general being reliable and willing to do things others are unwilling to do. Encouraging him to think more broadly about societal definitions of masculinity, he said that a man isn't supposed to show emotion, be the rock in society, fearless, determinant, passionate, but cold. He goes on to say, in society, masculinity means not showing weakness, being the family supporter, but not nurturing the family—comparing to a primal hunter and gatherer role of man and being health of household, opposite of women in all things. As he gathered his thoughts, Owen asserted a "real man" is a male adult who supports family, is reliable and dependable, gets things done, but is not afraid to ask if he does not know. He claimed most males in his own generation are not men anymore, but characterized them more as adult boys who depend on women and do nothing at all to care for or support others financially or emotionally.

Regarding his own masculinity, Owen claimed he does not feel feminine or masculine alone, but a healthy mix of both and considers himself a "normal man", not overly aggressive, but not portrayed as a feminine gay—a "normal person who happens to love men". As he explained in more detail, he shared his masculinity perspective is

supported on campus by a general support for who he is and asserted people do not realize he is gay until he lets them know or refers to his partner; he says he gets the "you don't look, act or dress gay" response and he believes it is because he is not a "flamer". He explained it could also be a regional attribution since on the west coast he was assumed gay by others whereas in the south, people assume he is heterosexual. Owen said the way he was raised in a loving, supporting family guides and impacts his personal approach to masculinity, citing, "there was always love" and "I'm just being a guy— doing guy things like eating messy food, getting dirty, watching sports". He continues by admitting as a boy he was viewed as scrawny and treated girly, but that it changed dramatically when he joined the Marine Corps because "no one treats Marines that way"; Marine Corps taught him to "not take shit from people".

Owen says he does not think he decided he would have this masculinity, but it is who he is. As a teen, he started to think about how he wanted to be. He got into philosophy through the church and Jesus' "Golden Rule" and decided to follow that one rule to treat others kindly, courteously, and respectfully. He says his masculinity does change somewhat depending on who he is around, being himself more around friends and his partner, because if he is not the ideal, masculine man around his friends and partner, it is okay. At work, he works to be the reliable, dependable guy, so he claims he is viewed as masculine. He admits to watching musicals and gay cinema, laughing and stating he "becomes more stereotypical [gay] and I'm not sure why".

Owen continues to do the work of grounding his masculinity performance as personal and not attributed more to outside influences. However, he certainly has come to terms with blending his more "stereotypical [gay or effeminate]" interests and comfort

of confidence in the Marine-driven "don't take [people's] shit" as perspective he appreciates. Owen shares personal observations he has made over the years, and recently on campus, to illustrate he has a discerning eye for a show of masculinity versus what he believes masculinity to truly be: responsible and accountable care for others and pride in self-worth. Owen's specific orientation to masculinity is one of a balancing act that feels comfortable for him. A marker for his commitment to self-author his gender in a symbiotic way, Owen has done work to fuse the gendered scripts observed through his lived experiences to date with priorities for his own that creates comfort in his relationship and daily life. He calls on past connections like the "Golden Rule" from his Catholic faith background and the confrontational approach of his experience in the Marine Corps to standup and advocate for himself when people "give him shit". However, Owen also cited activities with his partner for an illustration of how he weaves scripts of his past into the present by his leaning into performing home roles and activities more stereotypically feminine. Unapologetic about his approach, Owen does not draw hard lines between the masculine and feminine, but operates based on personal comfort and utility for what works well in his own life and does not allow himself to be driven as much by others. Creating balance, as Owen's narrative alludes to, is something Jace is negotiating as well.

Jace: "Professionalism and Performance"

Jace is a 23 year old undergraduate senior, in his sixth year at university, majoring in music education and he identifies as gay, Black and male. He is originally from the rural southeast and lived with grandparents until leaving for university in 2010, but was born on a military base due to his father being an active service member at the time of

Jace's birth. He has one younger sister. Jace was raised by his grandparents and remembers experiencing "small mindedness" from them, particularly butting heads with his grandfather, a leader in their family church. Even though Jace characterized his relationship with his grandparents as contentious, he cites that his love for music and being led to music as his profession is due to his involvement in church growing up and taking on a music leadership role in his church as a high school student. He explained his relationship with his grandparents has gotten better since his leaving home for university, but continues to struggle in his relationship with his grandfather.

The contentious relationship Jace has with his grandfather is directly related to Jace's coming out as gay to his family as a freshman in high school. He said he knew from a young age, citing photos of him as early as age three in pantyhose, lipstick, dressed in a robe. He shared his first crush on a guy was in fifth or sixth grade at church and he continued to struggle with his orientation throughout middle school, finally accepting it for himself in eighth grade and coming out to friends and family as gay in the start of his high school years. Jace remembers that coming out was not easy, but it was not as hard as he has heard others' experiences have been or he imagined it would be for himself. Close friends claimed they knew in middle school. His family was "shocked" and "didn't expect it"; his mom's side of the family took it worse than his dad's side of the family. A particular turning point for Jace was age 16 when he was coming home with his grandfather from a Christmas play at church. His grandfather confronted him, saying "you deserve to die for being gay" and Jace explained he cut off communication with his grandfather for the most part and his grandmother would take turns on whose

side she took, Jace's or his grandfather's. Even now, Jace said that his relationship with his grandfather is not much better and they continue to not really talk.

Involvement on campus and in the community has been important for Jace during his time at university, being very active in new student programs as a student group leader, taking on more responsibility in the marching band, acting as a leader for his college on campus, and participating in a local church as a member and staff singer. However, he also relishes time spent with his partner, newly engaged at the time of his interview for the study, where they relax together at home, watching movies and making dinners together. With his heavy involvement in campus life, Jace had many things to say about his perceptions of masculinity on campus and how it played a role in shaping climate and culture. He said from where he is in the fine arts area, everyone thinks they know who the gay people are, assuming those they think are masculine are straight and gays in the college are like "prissy girls who like to wear makeup".

His strong reaction to questions of masculinity on campus continued with his asserting, "no, I'm a guy and I like to act like a guy". Thinking more broadly, Jace shared masculinity on campus is sports and fraternities. "Outside of those areas", he explains, "you're like a nerd". He claims those who play sports are in "a whole other league" and Greek life is second in line; "everyone else is peasants". He could not pin down what exactly it was about fraternity that affirmed masculinity, but he shared clothing and association with others meant something. He asserted association with fraternity was a means for proving oneself to others that you are a masculine man and reinforce it by dressing in certain items, citing the fact the fraternity men on campus wears blazers and khaki pants every Monday, t-shirts and gym shorts or other athletic

wear on other days. He went on to say there is a validation of one's masculinity with invitation to inclusion in a frat. The men are expected to fall in line with the mode of getting drunk every night and picking up tons of girls—they "want to be a bro". He also claimed that mentality is reinforced when some gay men dress in more effeminate ways that are an antithesis of sorts to the bro culture and sports presence on campus.

When asked to discuss a definition of masculinity in general, he expressed difficulty in articulating it because he claimed it is "not how manly you are", but rather, one is masculine because he is a man. He continued, saying some are more masculine than others and explaining there is a spectrum and a guy "can't not be masculine". He clarified, "masculine traits will outweigh the feminine traits" and "what's masculine for everyone looks different". As he shared about a societal definition of masculinity, he characterized the societal perception with a listing of terms such as: rough, rugged, looks like a lumberjack, football, watching sports, drinking beer in underwear, rough heads, physical labor—fields, barn—be in charge of your household. When comparing his set standard to his own masculinity, Jace claimed, "I'm pretty masculine. I do things that aren't masculine, but overall I feel like a masculine guy". He feels his dislike of beer cuts into his masculinity, stating masculine me love to drink beer and he does not, so it makes him feel he is not masculine when he is with friends watching football and they are drinking beer. From that example he shares, "I felt like less of a bro because I don't like beer and I understand football basics because they are important for band, like when to be ready to go on the field for the halftime show, but I don't really understand the game the way they [other male friends] do".

Jace also likes to do household chores like cooking and cleaning that he feels others would view as feminine, but explained it's just because he like to look nice and wants his home to look nice as he sees it as a judgment on himself. He decided on his representation of masculinity in his comparison of himself to peers, more specifically with other gay men in the fine arts majors and his conscious choice to act in a manner he considers more professional and less flamboyant. He does not want to be perceived as a "girly man", especially professionally, and compares himself to other gay men in music education. With the explanation it is like a switch where he can "turn it off in front of students [and] with friends, turn it on", Jace said his leadership roles on campus puts him in a professional mindset and keeps him consistently thinking of how he acts and what he does by way of the impact his performance will have on him professionally.

When he first arrived at university, he said he lived up to the stereotypes and expectations of gay men on campus and would walk differently and put a swish in his walk to let people know he was gay. He sees it with fine arts gay people being "catty" and "queeny", but explained when coming to college, it is the first time some people can be who they are—be gay, not who they are. Junior year was Jace's turning point and he said to himself, "this is not who I am". Admitting when he was younger he felt he needed to show everyone he was gay and felt being gay defined who he was as a person, Jace shared, "Now, I'm Jace and I'm also gay. It's part of me, but not who I am. It doesn't define me. I'm more professionally driven, more comfortable as myself and as a gay man".

He said a big shift happened at a professional conference when he saw gay men, also conference participants, who were teachers and carried themselves poorly.

Providing an example, he shared he was in a reading session and could see that a man sitting near him had an application active on his phone and looking at the photos. Obviously disgusted by the lack of professional decorum, he explained, "I understand Grindr is awesome, but you don't look at pictures in a reading session with other people around—don't do that in the middle of a session". Even with a few unsavory experiences like that one, Jace claims feeling more masculine in settings like the professional conferences and competitions because he is "representing something bigger than myself". His experience in his profession makes him more cognizant of how he acts and he does not make his gay identity the most salient aspect of how others judge him; Jace wants people to see him first and not his sexuality.

His teaching profession and involvement on campus have segmented Jace's masculinity performance, with him descriptively separating the performances into "Jay" and "Mr. Smith". He shared his partner calls "Mr. Smith" his "white woman voice", a performance that takes over when he is in front of kids or another professional or involvement setting such as his work in marching band or leading a group of new students through a campus orientation. Jace admitted sometimes "Jay" comes through in the classroom or with the marching band when he is excited about making music or one of his kids takes a positive development turn in their musical education, saying when a student masters a musical skill, "I'm like *YAS*!" He explained it lets the kids know he is a real person and they can let their guard down and trust him—open up to making music.

Similar to the "masks" that Rob employs, Jace is also farther along in his development of an articulate and comfortable self-authorship of masculinity. He is able to judge professional and private spaces for greater comfort in enacting more

stereotypically gay [effeminate] mannerisms and displays. Jace has even begun to ground his self-authorship by introducing tinges of his stereotypical "Jay" personality in the classroom with his students. Somewhat like Owen, Jace has created a balance of strategically leaning into the binary stereotypes of the masculine and feminine. However, Jace's authorship journey challenge is balancing the personal and the professional. Driven by a desire to be successful professional, Jace places importance on a steady character and gender performance that is less flamboyant or characteristically feminine. Without belittling his personal instances where a more "queeny" performance is comfortable, he allows himself to enjoy a relaxing atmosphere with his partner and escape his "White woman voice". Jace places so much emphasis on an upward professional trajectory that he purposefully alters his gender performance to present what he perceives as a more appropriate, normative masculinity perspective. Rather than feeling slighted by masking his gender performance in a strategic way, Jace sees the performative alterations as a means to an end of professional success. Having experienced the pains of misalignment with gender performativity in his home life as a youth, Jace has found his own sense of stability in becoming more adept at self-policing and beveling his gender expressions contextually. The "masks" of performance work for men like Rob and Jace, but for a man like Kent, his time and involvement are directed by inhabiting spaces that allow Kent to establish a sense of belonging with a consistent personal masculinity.

Kent: "Strength for Service"

Kent is a 21 year old undergraduate senior majoring in a subspecialty of chemistry and he identifies as gay, Asian American, and male. He is originally from the

U.S. west coast, where he spent his first thirteen years growing up as a child before moving to the southeast U.S. A first generation American, his parents emigrated from Asia and raised him and his two sisters in what he terms a "traditional patriarchal family" with "Eastern ways of thinking". Kent believes he always knew he was gay in retrospect, but it was specifically as a junior and senior in high school when he began "honing in" on the idea he is gay. He has come out as gay to his friends, but he has not told his family. Claiming he is hesitant due to the Eastern way of thinking and mindset of his parents, he is not as anxious about telling his sisters since they grew up with a Western way of thinking that he considers more open and understanding.

He explained the Western philosophy of individualism and having a network of people, but in the end decisions seen as impacting that person solely, makes him more optimistic about coming out to his sisters. However, the Asian orientation of his parents, what he detailed as a collective society where the impact of decisions weigh on the family as a whole and reflect on a nationalistic system, has him anticipating a reaction much like "..but what about the grandchildren?" He went on to share Eastern thinking allows for less agency from career and milestones that will occur during someone's life course. His trepidation is a primary influence for his hesitance to come out to family, but he believes it is an even more complex issue, citing his parents' agreement with his older cousins' disgusted and contemptuous reaction to pop culture and media current events such as "Prop 8 decision" [2008 ruling of same-sex marriage as legal in California] being televised when they lived on the U.S. west coast.

When asked about his time on campus, Kent shared most of his friends are Asian or Hispanic, a few White friends. He said he spends a predominant amount of his time

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for student clubs and organizations connecting with international communities, such as traveling to Central America to build schools and orphanages with a student organization on campus and doing a variety of service activities with his co-ed service fraternity. He explained it is a frat, but more of a "pseudo-frat". Encouraged to share more detail, he expounded on campus, masculinity is perceived as "douche frat boy, forceful and dick-like" and said he assumed most students would "line up with what I have to say". Kent believes the university community encourages men to be "insensitive and subjugate others" in an effort to "always be alpha".

More broadly, Kent shared his thoughts of defining masculinity as: heavily influenced by media, television, movies and film, advertisements for clothing and cologne illustrating macho men who are cut, muscular, shirtless and ripped, kind of forceful and have a presence that dominates the room, and have no sense of humor. He believes society's definition would mirror those ideas based on what is "ingrained by the media as masculine" where there can be little deviation. Kent characterized himself as laid back, funny and sensitive toward everyone, adding, "personally, I would say I'm not masculine in general". As a means of clarifying, he shared his idea of a spectrum for gender and claimed he is "geared toward effeminate", but asserts his friends are supportive regardless of where each other is on the spectrum. Kent aligned himself with masculinity by explaining he participates in boxing activities, lifting weights, and exercising in general. He added his work in Central America, where he was made to lift cinder blocks and pour concrete—do physical labor, impacted his drive to take on more masculine qualities like gaining strength from weight lifting. However, the motivation to get stronger wasn't to establish belonging socially, but more a drive to be better at

performing physical labor duties and be a better contributor on service trips, elaborating it "softens the harsh view of masculinity [to] use strength to build community and help kids".

Even still, Kent's masculinity continues to be guided and impacted by the strong images of media. He also said he sees masculine, macho men in movies and televised events like the summer Olympics and notices how they are always built. He shared he want to "be part of that culture" and "be as buff [as fit]". Kent acknowledged being physically fit, chiseled, and tall contribute to an overall arching norm of attractiveness that are socially accepted and assist a man in being validated as masculine. He explained college has offered opportunities to be masculine—having a gym to use and clubs geared toward masculinity. Although the opportunities exist, Kent prioritizes his service fraternity and his involvement there because there both spectrums, more effeminate and more masculine men as brothers in the service fraternity. That involvement, he explains, has opened his mind to new ideas of what can be used to be perceived as masculine or effeminate, a mix of physical attributes and social interaction. As an example, he shared about men in his service fraternity who fit the "meat head" stereotype of alpha masculinity, but those men are "still nice to effeminate men". As a senior, that experience has helped him get to a mental and emotional state where he chooses to "never be fake and always be who I am—be genuine and real" and he considers that his motto.

With a commitment to "never be fake", rather be "genuine and real", Kent specifically has sought out spaces that do not have overt masculinity displays for the purposes of establishing an "alpha male". In his connections to service-minded

organizations on campus, he grounds his understanding of stereotypically masculine traits such as strength for a utility of being able to better help those impacted by the service he is doing. Kent has found belonging in groups that call more for a collaborative than the masculinity-driven competitiveness that feeds the "alpha" perspective. Unlike Jace who effectively changes his gender performance to match his setting, Kent establishes comfort by restricting his social contexts to spaces where his respective personal masculinity is considered palatable. Kent takes pride in his consistency with masculinity performance and does not do the ornate work to mask gender expression in order to establish fit with groups or settings. While he is not out as a gay man with his family, he also made no reference to masking gender expressions that may come off as more effeminate while he is at home with family. Kent's claim of personal masculinity rests in his ability to be consistent, provide help to those in need as he is capable, and focus on developing his body in stereotypically masculine ways (i.e., build muscle mass) in an effort to be more capable in his service activities and not just for the sake of gaining approval of other men. Like Kent, Nate is committed to being "genuine and real", but in a more confrontational and defensive way regarding masculinity performance.

Nate: "Juxtaposing Pop Culture"

Nate is a 20 year old undergraduate junior pursuing dual degrees in communication and Spanish and he identifies as gay, Latino, and male. His parents immigrated and Nate was born in the southeastern U.S. Growing up speaking Spanish at home, Nate learned English watching television and in school. His father is a truck driver and his mother worked as a housekeeper early in his life, transitioning to work in education as a teacher assistant at his school. He does not speak with his dad much and

does not really have a relationship with him. In 2011, Nate's parents divorced. Nate grew up in a home that was not devoutly religious, but identifies with a mix of Catholic and Yoruba faiths. He has two sisters, one from the same parents and one with whom he shares a mother.

In his teen years, Nate started working in the evening after school cleaning offices with his mother. He has continued working part-time consistently since then, currently working in retail. When asked about his first awareness he identified as gay, he claimed he always knew that he was attracted to guys. He specifically referred to *Twilight* movies, saying he was "really attracted to Taylor Lautner. When he was fourteen, Nate accepted his gay identity and told his best friend; a month later he told his friend group, but explained he did not come out fully to everyone until he was sixteen. That was also the time he started dating another man and he described a whirlwind outing of his gay identity, exclaiming, "everyone at school and my family knew within 48 hours. My mom freaked out and outed me to my dad". Nate's father told him he suspected since Nate was eight years old. Nate's dad had some gay friends when Nate was growing up.

After initial dramatic reactions from his mother, Nate said she is not "freaking out" about his gay identity. His mom has met and likes his current partner with whom he is living now. Nate has found his place in involvement with his campus political and arts groups, the art group being a non-profit that works to bring arts and appreciation of diversity to community members. He explained his involvement with the arts group is directly linked to his hobby of following music, claiming one of his music accounts shared he was one of the first people to listen to the music of some artists. Nate also

wants to take his passion for music and turn it into a career in the recording industry and being connected to pop culture in general.

When considering masculinity defined in his own terms and thoughts, Nate asserted he thought of it as "standing up for yourself and not taking crap". However, he presented a caveat that his sister that he shares both parents with "also does that", so that characteristic and qualifier is not exclusive of men. At the time of his interview, Nate claimed to be struggling with his own ideas about masculinity, detailing he does not consider masculinity to be exclusive to one gender and "it's stupid to try and encapsulate things into a gender binary". Overall, he went on to say masculinity is "acting tough, not emotional—detached from emotions—I'm trying to think of a typical frat guy". He said a typical portrayal of a man, a guy who drinks beer with friends, a womanizer, not in touch with emotions, or at least does not let it show, watches sports, is the way most people see it. For Nate specifically, he is conflicted, claiming he is "in a dilemma of what it is; it's up in the air for me".

He found masculinity easier to talk about when asked how society and the college campus community defined it. Societally, Nate asserted masculinity is being in touch with other men, not sexually, but someone who can be around guys and "do bro things"—on television, everywhere in the media. He continues, adding that societal masculinity means "not dressing well, attracting ladies, saying stupid things—I mean, as a socially ingrained concept—not always true". Nate explained his perspective by clarifying if someone says he is a man, then he is a man. He then provided several examples from television shows, delineating the hyper masculine characters from the "regular, everyday guy" and "effeminate" such that viewers see Barnie (idyllically

masculine) versus Ted (everyday guy) and Marshall (effeminate) from *How I Met Your Mother*, Joey (idyllically masculine) versus Chandler (everyday guy) and Ross (effeminate) from *Friends*.

Describing how masculinity is perceived on campus, Nate pointed to the "womanizing frat guy" and athlete as prime examples and said, "you don't mess with them". He explained he feels his personal masculinity is supported to a degree due to his purposefully surrounding himself with those who support him. He believes most see him as "the sassy gay guy". He claims he does not let himself "get messed around with" and labels himself "pretty confrontational". He explained he thinks it is his inner Latino coming out, but in general, people do not see him as masculine. Regarding dress patterns, he said that he will sometimes wear scarves and those around him will claim he dresses more European, which he pegs as "a nice way of saying you don't dress masculine". He juxtaposes his dress with more masculine dress by campus community members who dress in "weird patterns, not plain clothes, tacky clothing". Nate claims those are the guy to whom women are attracted. He clarifies by acknowledging he is making generalizations and that attraction is not always true, but in the south nice dress emulates and impresses success.

Nate describes his own masculinity by qualifying that he perceives himself as more masculine than he really is. He claims he is "in touch with my feminine side"—providing examples like dressing nice, having style, enjoying decorating, HGTV (home and garden television), but at the same time enjoying sports like soccer, joking, "that's the Hispanic in me". He goes on to say he is not afraid to get his hands dirty and do tough work. He shared he and his partner are neither overtly masculine nor feminine, but

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in the middle. He attempted to qualify by stating he owns a toolbox, but then confesses, "but my mom has a nice toolbox, the one everyone borrows". He listed, "toolbox, soccer, beer—nice beer, not cheap beer". Nate then shared when he is attempting to show he is masculine, he will not mention he likes HGTV or Britney Spears, things he claims are stereotypically feminine. He said when he is trying to impress his level of masculinity, he will openly admit to liking beer and watching sports, "things women are not supposed to like". Nate asserted, "I never wanted to be the masculine guy who sleeps around and plays sports. I am pretty comfortable with who I am. I'm smart, dress nice, and am professional. Whether people see that as masculine or feminine, I don't care, but if I'm trying to impress people I'll play my masculinity up a little bit".

Nate shared that people have a preconceived notion he is effeminate, so he does not typically mask his gender performance in order to appear more masculine. He believes he is expected to like and ascribe to more effeminate things, so he does not hide his feminine qualities and interests—"I do what I want and get away with it because I'm gay, but we don't all do drag and wear eyeliner". He shared his personal masculinity is influenced by his growing up around women who adhere to both male and female qualities in gender performance. In high school, he professed he was *the* gay guy, but in college he is now one of many. Even still, some see him as *the* gay guy. He feels more comfortable being effeminate with friends "because it's expected".

One particular experience Nate had midway through his freshman year in the dorm empowered his sense of personal masculinity. He described his freshman roommate as "the typical straight, masculine guy". His roommate knew Nate was gay, but Nate also did not wish to be known as *the* gay guy in college. The guys in the dorm

had been drinking and the atmosphere got "playful" and one of the men called Nate "faggot". Nate turned and confronted the man and threatened to "bash [his] skull in and drag [him] across the hallway". He described everyone in the room as shocked and said in that moment, he started to develop into someone who would engage in conflict and have a sense of confidence and conviction, not being submissive to others or being told what to do.

Nate admits his masculinity changes with certain people and groups. When he is with close friends in college or friends from high school, he will let his guard down and be more "fun and sassy" and not care what perception is given off from his gender performance. With his freshman roommate whom he remains acquainted, Nate claims "being a bro and more masculine", talking about sex, girls, outlandish things each of them had done recently. Conversely, with his female friends he talks about boys and gives boy advice to them. While Nate is open about his gay identity, he acknowledges he acts more masculine and dress differently around fraternity-type guys on campus so he will not be treated as a clear outsider. However, with recent developments of more visibility of LGBT issues and people in the media, Nate claims he is becoming even more comfortable and confident about being more authentic in his gender performance and gay identity.

Nate deeply connects with pop culture, both in television and music, and calls on many examples to illustrate points about a personal perspective regarding masculinity. He has taken ownership over his masculinity on the continuum of gender performance, but not necessarily in a peaceful, utilitarian way like Kent, but in an unapologetic way that has caused friction for him with some other students where he engaged in direct and

heated confrontation. Even though Nate is willing to get confrontational, he does offer

details in his interview that suggest he prioritizes involvement and effort in connecting to

spaces and groups that are places of symbiosis for him. Nate cites connection with a

variety of people in social contexts, but with some receiving his personal gender

expressions better than others. Men like Jace and Rob actively work to alter their

perceived masculinity in ways that allow then to fit different social spaces; others, like

Owen and Kent, strategically seek out spaces where their typical gender performance is

better received by people in respective settings. Nate has actively worked to connect

with social settings that feel more comfortable with his flair for the artistic, but he also

was quick to juxtapose his "flare" with the stereotype of not performing in drag or

wearing eyeliner. He leans into his perception that certain spaces are less comfortable for

his personal masculinity, but does not completely remove himself, instead choosing to

stand his ground and defend his manhood when challenged by other men.

Nate fuses examples of his willingness to "get dirty", carry a bravado of

confrontation, and "be handy" with his affinity for fashion and the arts. He

acknowledges that some have responded to his personal gender representations with less

approval, but does not allow the lack of approval from some to derail what he considers a

comfortable personal gender expression. Nate grounds himself in his personal

intersection of confrontational and willingness to "get dirty" with pop culture in a

completely unrepentant way that gives him individual comfort, and even if others balk,

he insists his performance is enough to satisfy him. Nate's involvement may provide

some semblance of peace and belonging, but he does not possess the peaceful calm of

men like Kent and Cori.

Cori: "A Living Gentleman"

Cori is a 21 year old undergraduate senior major in health and he identifies as Hispanic. His parents immigrated, moving to a suburban area of a city in the Midwest where Cori grew up. He shared that his dad has been in the United States for forty years, immigrating after finishing high school. Cori's father met his mother on a trip home to his native country to visit family and she moved with him to the States. He described his family as "somewhat Catholic", not regularly attending church services and events. He also shared he had a modest and strict upbringing, but also understanding with no consistent struggles. Cori has a brother and two sisters.

Cori first realized he was gay with questioning his sexuality in the sixth grade. He reminisces he was very involved in sports and while somewhat attracted to girls, more curious about boys. He claims he was surer of his homosexuality as a junior in high school after having a couple failed relationships with girls. Cori was hesitant about telling his family because he was not sure of his sexual identity himself, not out of fear of their reaction to the news about him. However, he first came out to close friends during the end of his time in high school. As he transitioned to college, Cori has openly told all of his friends and siblings, but has yet to come out to his parents directly. Still, he believes and senses they know, but "does not want to add burden to them", explaining he believes they would fear jeopardy of his safety and well-being.

In response to being asked how he defines masculinity, Cori claims it is an "expressions of what society paints a man to be—macho, fit, confident-acting guy". Expanding the definition to how society perceives masculinity, Cori added masculinity in U.S. culture portrays the masculine as confidence, stability, and carrying oneself well—

being chivalrous and a gentleman. Personally, Cori acknowledges he is not very macho. He explained he does not necessarily believe he should be "macho", but asserted society prefers men who are that way. While he may not be "macho", he shared his traits he ascribes to the masculine as his high sense of self-efficacy, politeness, and gentlemanly nature. Cori said he tries to be a "good man" with "good values and beliefs". Probing more into what Cori meant by "good values and beliefs", he shared it is a philosophy of what his upbringing taught him from a Catholic household; he believes men should take care of women, people present themselves as equals in providing for one another, and while the man is protective, the two in a relationship are seen as equal partners. Outside of his Catholic upbringing, Cori feels his friendships and the media influence his personal masculinity.

Actively involved in a student organization providing service missions to Central America, a co-ed service fraternity, and a student organization from students who identify as Latino, Cori claims his involvement on campus is kept professional. All of those involved are viewed as equal contributors with no overt masculinity or femininity directing the atmosphere. From his perspective, Cori sees masculinity on campus displayed in the same ways he views societal masculinity portrayals. He said fraternities have a strong presence on campus and he sees the members of those organizations as confident men who carry themselves well, meaning in a gentlemanly way by "taking care of their women". Continuing to clarify, he admitted he has noticed regional differences such that in the south men seem to be a bit flirty and ascribe to the "southern gentleman" stereotype, while Midwestern men seem calmer, quieter and more composed. He claims

women appear more attracted to the confident, polite, and courteous men who offer to take care of them.

Identifying with the conservative values exuded by fraternity men on campus, Cori claims his personal masculinity is supported because he also considers himself a gentleman, polite and courteous. However, he also considers campus culture heterosexist by aligning with the conservative, gentlemanly standard stereotype. Cori decided upon his personal masculinity based on personal confidence. He claims people will either like it or not, but he is committed to carrying himself confidently, being defensive or speaking up if necessary. He is comfortable with those characteristics because those are ones that come naturally to him and feel most authentic. He added, "being a man is being proud of who you are. If you are not macho, you make up for it in other ways".

Since realizing his gay identity, Cori does not believe his personal masculinity has changed and does not think being gay has a direct influence because he sees gay as sexuality only, not a major influence on gender performance. He asserts he is comfortable with the marriage of his personal masculinity in relation to his gay identity. He also believes college has strengthened his masculinity because he does not want to be someone perceived as "a bad man". He has learned to adapt himself to different people and groups, explaining when he is meeting strangers or is at work, he actively works to be more polite and courteous. With friends, he stated he can be more "lenient" with himself, "chill and less censored", by putting his guard down a bit more.

Cori thrives in his personal masculinity as defined by more intangible qualities enveloped in his definition of what it means to be a "gentleman"—kind, polite, and poised. Cori possesses some similar involvements, keeps his sexuality a secret from his

parents, and has a positive orientation to the less tangible qualities of masculinity performance that Kent also does. However, Cori does not have a desire to grow his physical strength specifically, even as a means to better help people. Cori is also contextual with his gender performance, much like Rob, Jace, and Nate, who all claim contextual masculinities based on who they are interacting with, where they are interacting, and how they are being called on to interact with others.

Cori's work to be good to people and "be a good man" is a result of his taking the teachings of his Catholic faith and building a personal gender representation where he puts the values of his formative faith into practice in his daily life. He acknowledges the hegemonic scripts of masculinity present in certain campus spaces, but allows the intangible qualities of poise and kindness to take priority in his orientation to other people and social contexts. While Cori's approach to a personal masculinity perspective might not establish buy-in with highlighted platforms of campus masculinity related to fraternity, athletics, fitness, and the like, his personal sense of manhood is grounded in his steadiness in making positive impact with service as a resource of servant leadership and Christian character. Like Cori, Jimmy has a politeness about him, but Jimmy's politeness is less about intention of being a "gentleman" and more about a passiveness and detachment that protects authenticity.

Jimmy: "Authenticity and Detachment"

Jimmy is a 21 year old, White, undergraduate junior earning his degree in an agricultural science. Before moving to attend college, he grew up in a rural Appalachian town. Although his major is in science, he has professional interest in the music industry based on his love for listening to all varieties of music. Jimmy's father died in a car

accident when Jimmy was thirteen years old and his mom continued to raise him as a single mother. His mom is supportive of him and his gay identity, as is his grandparents. Before his death, Jimmy's dad was addicted to prescription medication and was chronically unemployed. Jimmy's father was never consistently present in Jimmy's life, but Jimmy's mom has been a supportive parent and role model, working professionally as an administrator at the community college in his hometown. Jimmy has one half-brother, from a different mother, with whom he has never been acquainted.

First realizing his attraction to men at eight or nine years old, Jimmy noticed through his video game play and now understands physical arousal was the feeling he was having when his interest piqued around the "muscle guy" in the games. In fifth and sixth grade, he had a crush on his closest male friend, but waited until he left for college to widely come out to friends and family as gay. After Jimmy's father died, he "went crazy for a while", playing host to "bad friends" who influenced him to make some poor decisions. After leaving for college, he decided it was time to take control of life and be honest about who he is, influenced somewhat by a close female friend from high school who identifies as bisexual. Jimmy explained his mom responded to his coming out to her by saying she "always knew" and his grandma got emotional. He claims his mom is more like a friend than a parent most of the time. Even though he was not completely sure of his sexuality at the time, he acknowledged he had feelings for men and came out to his mother through casual conversation in a car ride together. Jimmy's grandmother was emotional because she did not want life to be more difficult for him than it had to be; she wanted him to be able to fit in with others. Overall, Jimmy comes from a family

supportive of him and only wishing him the best with decisions they give him the agency to make.

Jimmy defines masculinity by explaining, "being a man is about being able to be an adult, looking at yourself and problems in life and change it, make good decisions, and be there for people". As an antithesis, he also said, "be a good dad", referencing how he feels his father's neglect was not masculine. When encouraged to share a societal definition of masculinity, Jimmy shared it means not crying, easily staying strong, and being able to be big, rough and tough. As an example, he claims those idolized standards were impetus for his taking recent work at a campus poultry lab, "[I was] cleaning shit to prove I'm not just some gay guy with fairy dust and rainbows". Jimmy said while he "can be masculine", he has body image issues where his "man boobs" make him feel less like a man. He claims he has always been around women, so it is who his personality is—stuck in the middle of everything and pretty much like a woman. He asserts he is strong emotionally, able to make decisions and "get over things and move on". He considers his emotional strength and ability to work in "dirty situations" qualifiers that make him "pretty masculine".

Although Jimmy considers himself "pretty masculine", he does not feel his personal masculinity is supported on campus. He explained he's never gotten close enough to people on campus interpersonally to have a support system around masculinity; he claims he gets most of his gender support from social media and his favorite musical artist, Lady Gaga. Jimmy went on to detail he does not really have any gay friends, feels shunned from the gay community, and finds it difficult to related to other gay people on campus and in the local community surrounding campus. He

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clarified, "a lot of people have already found their cliques and groups; nobody reaches out—they talk about it, but no one actually hangs out outside of meetings or the bars". Jimmy's involvement on campus includes plant club, LGBTQ advocacy student organization, and science club. He also works part-time for an animal shelter, loves music, and tries to be involved with a variety of community service and do activities outdoors like hiking, recreational sports, and kayaking.

Even with his heavy involvement in an array of activities and organizations, Jimmy still claims he is still in the process of figuring out who he is. His claims of uncertainty were in direct to response to a question of how he decided on his personal masculinity performance. He says it is still developing, but he did definitively decide to be out as gay when coming to college, exclaiming, "this is your life. Start living it now". Since coming out, Jimmy has let his "wall" down and has stopped caring so much what others think of him, whereas before coming out he had more friends he felt he had to mold to and be less expressive to avoid seeming gay. He still changes his tone when talking to certain people, particularly with straight people, but college has been positive for understanding his own masculinity because college has "helped [him] explore what [his] masculinity could be". He recognizes there are certain spaces on campus and majors that are more open (to variety in sexuality and gender performance).

Campus seems to be "very frat-oriented" to Jimmy; he explained there are a lot of guys who look and act the same way, working to "conquer women [and] sleep with as many as they can […] typical douchebag frat people". He went on to describe in more detail, saying they are usually loud, obnoxious and can do or say whatever they want, having a sense of self-entitlement and treating women and others however they want.

Jimmy believes the campus members "play into stereotypical gender roles" and he provides the example of many men on campus "wearing the typical frat costume—khakis and Sperry's". Although his outlook for most of campus was a ubiquitous view of fraternity, he does acknowledge different spaces on campus that are stereotypical in alternative ways.

Jimmy explains there is a difference in him being an animal science major instead of something in art or vocal performance. He provided an example, sharing in a class that he emotionally identified with a cow and felt bad for the cow, but when he said that to the class he was ridiculed by the faculty instructor. He lamented, "[that] kind of does affect your masculinity—am I less of a man or less masculine since I identify with this animal"? He was silenced from the shame and he explained he has differences in external and internal development; outwardly he can be hard-shelled like a man, but inwardly he is still has the insecurity of a child. His ridicule came at the hands of the instructor, but was reinforced by the laughter of peer classmates. Jimmy's major encourages a personal strength through activities like dissections, extractions and "gross stuff".

Overall, Jimmy is still exploring his personal masculinity and interpersonal connections. He claims television helps him question how he defines gender. He also is surprised by the inclusivity of some campus spaces he assumed would be intolerant of his gay identity; he went on a hike with a Christian group on campus and was not made to feel lesser than anyone there. He says the hike was a positive experience that made him think differently of people on campus and not be so quick to judge. He admits that his

masculinity performance does changes in certain spaces, but it is often "a subconscious thing". "You don't want to make other people feel uncomfortable with your gayness".

Sometimes Jimmy is also surprised in negative ways, such as his assessment of the LGBTQ advocacy student organization as "too politically correct and people get combative about comments". However, the advocacy organization has not been a completely negative involvement for him, adding, "[…] I can be more myself and not masc it up". Jimmy feels empowered in his personal masculinity, realizing that "being masculine can change. You can be with a man, be gay, and still be masculine. People can appear masculine, but they're still broken people. They hit their partner—they're children on the inside. Your masculinity can be what you want it to be". Jimmy continues to explore and make sense of his interpersonal connections, but he is self-aware enough to be transcendent of a gender performance binary.

Unlike Nate who is more confrontational with those who challenge his personal masculinity, Jimmy becomes defeated and detached from the spaces and people that challenge his assumed lack of masculinity. There is a certain conviction to Jimmy refusing to be less than completely authentic with his personal masculinity portrayal, but at a cost to interpersonal connection that is, in time spent with him in interview, clearly problematic for his psychosocial wellbeing. Jimmy is living a paradoxical experience. On one hand, he has a sense of his personal manhood and being personally satisfied with his gender expression, other than his lamentation surrounding his negative body image. Alternatively, he also feeling pains of exclusion and disconnection due to his adoption of a gender representation that makes him comfortable and at peace on a personal level.

As satisfying as owning and acknowledging the softer side of his manhood, such as emotionality and openly expressing feelings, has been for Jimmy, it becomes problematic for him in other contexts like the classroom and is part-time work. At the time of his interview, Jimmy had not exactly come to any resolution about how to bring all the social contexts and his consistent gender performativity to a symbiotic place for him. He was deeply unsettled psychosocially and other than knowing he had done too much work on stabilizing his self-authorship of gender to revert to a masked or closeted existence, Jimmy was at odds with what might happen regarding his social engagement and belonging on campus moving forward from our time together. While Jimmy is avoidant and detached with people and spaces, another interviewee, George, is avoidant with labels that challenge him to confront his thoughts on a personal masculinity perspective. George lacks a commitment to lean into the labels of sexuality is something he attributes to a fluidity of sexuality, but he is in a different mental space about sexuality than Matt, who was introduced earlier in the chapter.

George: "Escaping the Labels"

Originally from the Great Lakes area, George moved with his family to a rural Appalachian town at age six. George is a 22 year old undergraduate senior majoring in social science with plans to apply to become a health care provider. He is also a transfer student who was a similar major at his former institution closer to his home in Appalachia. He is an only child of a non-religious family and identifies as a White, gay male. George's family is compact, including his mother, father and maternal grandmother. George's father does not communicate with family because his father was molested by a brother's friend and the family on George's father's side has been verbally

abusive. George's mother has been a community worker, but has not worked recently, and his father is in the legal field. While George's family does not practice religion, he remembers attending a church near his home for bible school in the summer for fun.

Regarding his first awareness of his gay identity, George recalled, in fifth grade, being told by his parents his Godfather was gay and George's reaction was "what's so wrong with that"? As a primary schooler, George admitted to flirting with girls because it was "what boys were supposed to do", but George said he simply likes to flirt regardless. In seventh grade year, he discovered pornography while doing personal internet search about two men having sex, realizing at that time he liked men some. In his comparison of gay and straight pornography, George claimed trying to watch straight porn but did not enjoy it like he enjoyed gay versions. In eighth grade, he remembered having a sex dream about one of his male friends, but continued to try dating girls early in high school because he knew that was expected of boys. Finally, as a high school senior, George began to accept his gay identity himself, first ascribing to bisexuality and dating a young man for the first time who was a freshman in college.

The first person George told he was attracted to men was the girl he was dating in his senior year of high school. They were close friends all through school and came close to being physically intimate a few times, but he would not let it progress past heavy petting and kissing. Then George came out to his mom while she was driving him to what was originally explained to be a sleepover with a male friend in college, but admitted to his mom in route it was actually a Valentine's Day rendezvous and the male friend was his lover. The following day, both of his parents arrived to pick him up and he said it was clear that neither of them were okay with the news about his sexuality.

George's father specifically explained that he "did not want the family to have to deal with bullshit", but they also made clear the news did not mean they would stop loving him and while they were not happy, they also did not forbid it. George and his parents do not talk about his sexual orientation and George continues to struggle with complete acceptance of a gay identity, saying, "I don't like labels. I think of sexuality as more fluid. I'm not closed to women, but I clearly prefer men".

George's dad completely avoids talk about sexual orientation with him, so it can be awkward but he does not view it as a major problem for their relationship. George decided to tell his friends before going to college so they did not find out from a third party and get surprised by the news, but in general, he keeps his sexuality to himself, trying to not be "showy" while also not actively hiding it from others. George admits some self-loathing, partially instigated by his mother's tone in talk about sexual orientation and her impressing a desire for George to have a "normal life" that will not necessarily happen due to a "lack of opportunities for gay men". He explained the news of his sexual orientation is further complicated by their living in a "really religious town". Even still, George's friends praised him for his confidence after his coming out declaration posted to social media through Facebook.

As a first semester transfer to a new campus, George connected with the LGBTQ advocacy student organization, but not any other groups. He was not part of a LGBTQ advocacy student group at his former campus, but admitted being more comfortable on his new campus and confident in making friends with other gay men. At his former, smaller campus, George said he would typically only interact with other gay men in order to sleep with them. Outside of classes and advocacy student group meeting attendance

and involvement, he spends copious amounts of time playing video games, reading articles about his professional interest, neuro drugs and toxins, and going to bars to meet people and do some social drinking. As George has been meeting new people on campus, he explained people have been surprised to learn he is gay; he clarified he tends to mask his sexuality based on his physical appearance in tandem with mannerisms. He is attracted to archetypal male attributes, detailing, "[…] it is not because they are male; I just like them". He uses his masking of overtly gay gestures to meet men who present masculine traits to which he is attracted.

When asked to define masculinity, the first thing that came to mind for George was "dirt biking" because he claimed he could not pin down another idea to describe masculinity impromptu. He went on to share that masculinity is being true to self and not caring what other people think, but he believes he "stole that [idea] from someone". Societally, he explained masculinity is characterized by being shut off to the world, not caring, sleeping with many women, doing "rough" things, and being attracted to "darker" things. George didn't have any specific comments for perception of masculinity on campus since he had only experienced campus life at his new college for a few weeks. However, he shared some of his interpersonal experiences at his former campus have impacted his viewpoint regarding masculinity.

Regarding his third year at his first college, George said his roommates at the time were assertive about illustrating their masculinity by avoiding talk of emotions and feelings, calling him names like "bitch, fag, pussy" and taunting him by saying things like, "wah, wah, wah, I'm a little bitch". He recognized it was not an attack on his sexuality or because he identified as gay, but more to attack and degrade his personal

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masculinity. George believes he is "very masculine" and continued by saying, " […] if someone attacks my masculinity, it doesn't bother me. It tells me more about the other person's lack of masculinity and security of self". He asserted his personal masculinity performance did not waver with his roommates, or anyone else, because he "stopped caring what roommates thought and said" and as much as the roommates pretended to not care, it was obvious to him they cared deeply what others thought of their masculinity. The contentious exchanges with George's roommates at his former college solidified his masculinity performance. A peer has also pointed out to him after his social media post to Facebook coming out as gay, George was more confident and George asserted he is now more conscious of his gender performance and feels a strengthened view of his personal masculinity construct.

Moving to his new campus, George said people at the new college do not appear to have strong reactions to his personal masculinity positively or negatively, noticing his outgoing, opinionated, and confident personality more than anything. He explained he is now more focused on "not being a know it all asshole". He does acknowledge he is more "walled off" and careful when opening up to people, is selective about investing time in someone, and will not open up to "someone who doesn't mean shit" after having the roommates verbally attack him at his former college. George has had bouts of "acting stereotypically gay" as his confidence in his sexuality has grown, but declares his exploring his gender performance has had the greatest effect on his perspective of how society defines masculinity. He explained he "hate[s] the idea that tasks, activities, and items have to be labeled masculine or feminine unless there is a physiological need to define it that way". George continues to evade gender and sexuality labels to a degree.

George seems almost haunted by the perceptions of his masculinity and what negative impact that might incur on his family, who reside in a small town in rural Appalachia. Although he grew up in a regional area the same as Jimmy, the two men have largely disparate experiences with comfort in coming out as a gay man in the small hometown community and mulling over the impact of family. Due to the high-profile, conservative nature of George's father's work, there is a possibility that community social status could have an impact on George's orientation to his own sexuality and gender performance perspectives. George points to his confidence and resolve in standing his ground in defense of his personal gender expression to validate his personal sense of manhood, a set of personal qualities that are operable for him on campus and in the home community of his youth.

Without pointing to any specific qualifier, George asserts he is "very masculine", but did not juxtapose his characteristics with others. George's sense of confidence and resolve manifest, in a way, like a coping mechanism to manage the uncertainties and unsettling feeling about labels of gender and sexuality he owns. Unlike Marshall's narrative that is shared next or Rob's previously reviewed and analyzed narrative, George's dismissiveness about the labels of sexuality and gender are not couched as calling out masculinity and the concept of some rugged machismo for its facade. Rather, George generally holds contempt for contest of his personal gender expression as anything other than "very masculine"; with regard to the labels, he seems to have no issue with being in a liminal space devoid of pinpoints for sexuality and gender. George remains somewhat uncertain about sexuality and labels of gendered experience, but

Marshall blends the need for "masking", ambiguity, and authenticity of identity in a way that makes sense and is advantageous for him.

Marshall: "Philosopher's Approach"

Marshall is a 25 year old undergraduate junior with three majors in humanities and social science. Ultimately, he has an interest in the legal profession. Marshall identifies as a non-traditional undergraduate student, conservative, religious, cis-gender, White, and gay male. He grew up in rural Appalachia as well. Marshall is reformed Catholic, converting to Catholicism in 2010 from a Methodist background. He started reading at a young age, selecting more advanced texts from authors such as Plato, Aristotle, and various religious texts. He described his upbringing as "humble", being raised an only child by a single mother who is a recovering drug addict and survivor of domestic abuse. Marshall was forced to navigate maturity and coming of age early on through establishing a work ethic and "trial and error". His stepfather was extremely abusive and with building evidence of Marshall being gay by his stepfather and mother doing things like searching internet history on the home computer, his stepfather would "punish" him by locking him in his room or, at times, the dog cage.

In his early teen years, Marshall came out and finally admitted to himself he was gay, partially perpetuated by his family's suspicions and eventually finding out he was talking with a guy from the Midwest on MySpace social media who was two years older than Marhsall. Marshall said he thought what initially attracted him to the young man was the "hope of self-efficacy", but the allure was also strong because the Indiana boy shared links to gay pornography. Marshall's parents had an extremely hostile reaction to his internet activity, saying, "We don't want a faggot in the house". His mom also

contacted the Indiana boy to stop communication between him and Marshall and she kept

Marshall from school before eventually forcing him to leave the home and beg his

biological father, who he had few interactions with, to take him in. Although his father

agreed to have Marshall live with him, Marshall was convinced his father only wanted

out of paying child support to his mother. Once his mother realized the child support was

coming to a halt, she had police escort Marshall home because she "wanted what he was

worth—gas and cigarettes". That first night back home, Marshall step-father got drunk in

his typical fashion, beating Marshall physically and raping his mother. Marshall was

fifteen years old.

Marshall's mother had her own strong, negative verbal responses to his being gay,

threatening him by insinuating he would end up exactly like the locally known gay man

in their small community who was aligned to the "boogeyman". When his mother was

finally arrested for use, sell and intent to manufacture drugs, Marshall changed high

schools and began living with his maternal grandmother. Even in his new high school,

Marshall was known as a "weird kid who sounded like a faggot" and subsequently stayed

isolated and remained friends only with people older than him. He credits an easier

understanding of the gay identity for some in his high school and at his part-time job at a

restaurant with the fact he came of age in the first years of support for equal marriage and

public outcry for support of gay rights. Marshall was out to everyone at work, some

coworkers even working to set him up with hikers passing through the area. He said it

also eased being out at work by there being an assistant park manager who identified as

lesbian and another coworker who was not out, but "obvious".

While coworkers and some high school classmates were support of Marshall, his family remained verbally abusive. Eventually, his incarcerated mother outed him to the grandmother he was living with while attending school. Just shy of his high school graduation date, Marshall moved out on his own. His positive interpersonal experiences came with friends and coworkers; he asserted, "[…] without those, I would have committed suicide". Even with all the trouble owning his homosexuality publically had caused, he did not hide his sexuality, but also did not want the gay identity to be his most salient. Marshall somehow found means to move forward from the good, bad and horrid experiences of his childhood. He worked in retail for five years after finishing high school and worked his way up to co-store manager, but was fired for being gay and took that as his sign to return to school. He had been taking Ivy League university open courses while working full-time in retail and those courses led him to his majors and the professional interest in legal systems.

With the compelling story of his childhood, it did not come as a surprise when Marshall had a unique response in being prompted to define masculinity. Marshall declared, "I don't [define masculinity]. There's no such thing. It's media's perception. It's bullshit—a definition for insecure people to create something to make themselves feel stronger". Directing Marshall to think broadly about a societal definition of masculinity, he chuckled and said, "Chuck Norris, muscular, beefy, low-voice, huge penis, abs, backward caps, Ralph Lauren, frat boy, Brawny man, strong—strength". He also shared his notice that newer media portrays masculinity as more thin and toned bodies, but still good-looking. He explained those same media images of masculinity mirror how masculinity is perceived and perpetuated on campus as well.

On campus, Marshall claims social fraternities are idolized and drive the masculinity standard. He mocked, "Come on, Brah, let's go to the bar and hit up some bitches", "Do I look masculine in this shirt"? He explained he believes the "womanizing" atmosphere is characteristic of southern schools, where men are expected to not "act gay or fem", ideally have strong facial features—cheek bone, chin, hair, play sports like basketball and football, drink beer, and join a fraternity. He added being a member of a social fraternity was a means for confirming one's masculinity and "frat" was synonymous with "masc", an all boys' club with an excessive use of words "bro" and "dude". Even if a man is gay, Marshall asserted getting into a frat would confirm he is still a guy. For him, a gay fraternity man was a sort of enigma because he shared, "to be gay is to not be a man". Although Marshall remembers his first weeks on campus as being bombarded with a barrage of fraternity recruitment "set standards propaganda that idolizes Greek life and the image of southern gentlemen", he looked in another direction for his campus involvement.

During his time on campus, Marshall has consistently been a member of an organization for LGBTQ identifying students and served as the director at one point. He has also been involved with student government and philosophy club, serving in a leadership role for during a portion of his involvement. Through his variety of involvement and interactions with campus community members, Marshall has noticed that lacking a deep voice and using more feminine inflections has been impetus for his and others' being discredited or having their opinions and contributions of ideas dismissed. Marshall admits to consciously talking in a deeper voice, perpetuating what

he "should be". He also claims he is grateful for a "stronger writing tone" to win favor with those in power and privilege of authority.

This is also in the face of his feeling tokenized as *the* gay student on campus who is regularly sought out as the "voice of the gay community" at his institution. Marshall believes he is sought out partly due to people being comfortable with him because he is a white, cis gender male. However, the traditional age college students, 18-22 year olds, "do not see [him] as a guy". He asserted, "it's all about presentation, not rhetoric. I lower my voice and it separates me from the gay community to win favor with administration". He said the gay community equality groups are guilty of perpetuating masculine stereotypes to have "a real man" represent the cause, not a "twink". The gay equality groups realize the stoic, "real man" visual is more palatable to a wider audience who are needed to advance equality and rights agendas for the gay community.

Marshall's personal masculinity has been a "parable of wanting to be hyper-masculine to calling bullshit on the standard and owning [his] place on the gender spectrum". What began for him as an audacious display of bravado for the sake of others has been personally subdued over time to arrive at where he is now, "a more comfortable place". Attending college has made Marshall "hate the concept of masculinity and the embedded foundation of value placed in the masculinity construct". The rigid standards he has encountered related to gender performance on campus has fueled a self-criticism of his voice, a general sense of trepidation, and he feels alienated at times; people separate themselves from him so as to not negatively impact the perceptions of their own masculinity.

In just 25 years, Marshall has experienced a remarkable, and some may label "tragic", childhood and tenuous young adult life. However, Marshall is also able to use a keen personal awareness and insight to use normative sexuality and gender perspectives to his advantage. He realizes he can use identity statuses that are less malleable and privileged characteristics to his advantage. Marshall claims power and agency by using the myopic normative standard of those in positions of authority on campus to almost manipulate for the purpose of progressiveness. Abstractly, Marshall has enough reverence for the customs of masculinity on display in academia that he is willing to "play along" to placate the establishment of power. Specifically, Marshall's performance of a gendered masking comes to life with interactions with institutional administration and writing and rhetoric in the classroom and student governance through his narrative vignette. However, inference from his interview narrative makes it clear Marshall is acutely aware what his "home" gender expression is authentically vis-à-vis what performances are for the purposes of gaining buy-in with select campus stakeholders and social contexts. Rather than being more trustful in others to be innately good at core like Tim does, Marshall uses awareness and a rapier wit to wield a level of control with his performance of the masculinity "bullshit".

Tim: "Action Speaks"

A 23 year old undergraduate senior earning a degree in communication, Tim identifies as a Pacific Islander and Latino, gay male. He is originally from the U.S. west coast and moved to the rural southeast at age five. Like George, Tim also transferred colleges, but Tim spent three years at his first institution and has been at his new college for a year and a half. Tim is an only child and grew up living with his mother and

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maternal grandmother, the Pacific Islander side of his family. His mother is a diagnosed with mental illness. He is not in touch with his father and the Latino side of his family.

Tim attributes his easier time with people knowing he identifies as gay to being good at sports; he said he has not been labeled as "girly or queer". He went on to share being athletic and involved took away any potential feeling of not fitting in because he tried to fit in with everyone. Remembering first or second grade, Tim explained he realized his feelings were different from other boys. He had an intense desire to be "cubby partners" with another specific boy and, later on in middle school, he said he felt depressed when his favorite guy friend moved away.

Although Tim played sports in high school, he was not deeply rooted in a specific social group in high school. He claims he was more reserved in high school than he is currently, but continues to declare himself as introverted in most social situations in school. Through middle school and early years of high school, Tim kept girlfriends, but there was never physical intimacy, only emotional attachment. In his junior year, he shared about his gay identity with a good friend in the color guard who said she "already knew". Before being widely out about his gay identity, Tim decided to tell his mother. He decided to tell her early and directly due mostly to her mental state and his desire to make sure it was clear and understood completely by her. He still has not told his grandmother, and when they see one another, she continues to ask when he is going to get a girlfriend. Tim's grandmother's questions and insinuations do not bother him much because overall, he said he has "never had a hard time" interpersonally with others and their knowing he is gay.

When moving on to college, Tim went to a school where as early as orientation, the college professed to students the environment was expected to be an "open, welcoming and diverse" space. With such positive affirmation as he was entering, he claims he felt being open about his gay identity there was "fine". Tim spent a lot of time on campus at his first college. He was a competition athlete, worked for campus housing, and was visible in many aspects of campus life. After transferring to his new school, he has been more directly involved in men's club sports, also competing on a more recreational level. However, he declared he does not spend a lot of time on campus at his new school since he does not live in the dorms, work on campus, or have consistent ties to any specific organization outside of the club sports group. He was also recovering from an injury and had stopped playing sports with the men's club when interviewed.

When playing club sports, Tim proclaimed he is personable and strong on the court, so no one gives him a hard time by ridiculing his masculinity or making him feels lesser based on a gay identity. He shared when a freshman comes in and does not mold with the group because he is quiet or lacks confidence, he sees them having a more difficult time fitting in at first. Due to his approachable personality and skillful play on the court, Tim said he is able to fit in without sacrificing integrity. He also claims the outlook of gay men on the club sports team is better due to his involvement; he is able to set a positive example of tolerance and acceptance from any background different from those already on the team. It comes naturally to Tim to try and be strong, explaining to his teammates, "I have your back—let me do my job". Tim wants to be strong on the court and let his skillful play speak for itself.

Asked to think about how he would define masculinity, Tim shared he was taking a sexuality course and that course has helped shape his thinking about gender and sexuality with a more critical lens. He said hegemonic masculinity sets a bar for what masculinity is and anything below that bar is feminine and not masculine. However, Tim explained he believes strength, confidence and power are masculinity, but he also admits those ideas are shaped by his coursework as well. He went on to share the qualities of strength, confidence and power could be applied to anyone, but those labels are mostly reserved for straight men; he expounded, "if straight and gay guys are powerful, the straight guy would be considered more powerful because he is straight". Tim said society defines masculinity through "traditional values" that can be different in different places. Growing up in the rural southeast, Tim explained those values are personified in "[…] a guy who hunts and is not afraid to get dirty, doesn't show emotion. He presents a hard front, lashes out in anger because he doesn't know how to channel fear or sadness, [and] sees marriage as man and woman". Emotionality and mental fortitude are specific qualifiers of Tim's own masculinity as well.

Sharing about his personal masculinity, Tim shared he is stronger mentally than physically and he has a strong awareness of how others are judging his physical appearance. Even though he did not grow up with a father, his grandmother raised him with a firm demeanor, never showing emotion. As such, Tim explained he is not comfortable feeling vulnerable or asking for help, traits he considers masculine. Conversely, he believes he does not portray masculinity when he has a tendency to look down and overt eye contact when speaking to others. He asserted, "I might not have a strong look, but I have a strong mind. If someone asks, I would say I'm semi-masculine,

half and half". When he first meets people, he conscious deepens his voice, testing his comfort with people before opening up to them.

Tim shared he is vigilant about his masculinity when first meeting new people, maintaining his composure and noting things like what people are wearing and assessing their non-verbal cues. He can walk in a fast pace, with a "swish" or "broken wrist", but typically he would only be confronted about it if a heterosexual male was uncomfortable and brings it up. On his new campus, he has had a couple of negative interactions, but claimed the interactions were indirect and things were said to him in passing. Providing an example, Tim said he was wearing shorter khaki shorts one day and was called a fag. He believes it was because of what he was wearing, but excused it as misconstrued perception and his assertion people are uncomfortable with the less familiar. He declared girls would say he has good style, but not guys; "guys aren't supposed to compliment other guys", he explained. He continued, saying, "Guys can say 'good game' and give you a pat on the butt, but not give large compliments".

Only on campus for class, Tim stated his understanding of how the campus community judges masculinity is limited. However, he shared he sees masculinity judged by who people are spending their time with, such as "a group of jocks on a sports team" appearing more masculine than a "friendly, smiling guy with a group of girls". He also believes masculinity on campus is displayed through "testosterone-driven groups" that do not allow for outsiders to penetrate that boundary. Considering his interactions on campus and what he's perceived, Tim declared the LGBTQ advocacy student organization as "important on campus" and said it is good to have growing alliances, an

expanding LGBTQ advocacy student organization, and a LGBT Center on campus, explaining, "sometimes being gay has a lot to do with being scared".

The gay community, including allies, can be supportive, but Tim shared, "[…] for some, growing up in gay culture can be bad on self-esteem because you have to worry about how you look. I'm working on positive self-image every day. I want to be a part of something and not exiled; if you're always trying to shape into something others want, you're not able to be yourself. Positive thinking equals positive outcomes". That mentality has helped Tim not feel pressure to conform and make him more comfortable with who he is. In high school, his masculinity was assumed due to his heavy involvement in sport. He was not a fighter and it got him "beat up a couple times", but he maintained a non-conflict approach with interpersonal interactions and he believes it made him stronger. Now, he wears and does what he wants and he is guided by his own self-worth and not his gender performance. Tim declared the people who are important invest their time in him not because of what he wears, but because they understand the treasure of him sharing his authentic self with them and being more open with them. He said he continues to carry his quietness from high school, but his transition to college made him aware he was acknowledged and people notice him for more than his athletic ability.

"The less you reveal, the more they wonder", Tim suggested about his interactions with people on campus. In his exchanges with gay men on campus and in the surrounding area, he asserted being "masculine" and strong are a desirable set of traits, detailing how men on the social media app, *Grindr*, claim to be seeking "discreet, down low, muscular, [and] dominant guys". Those who are submissive or passive are

seeking specifically dominant and strong partners. Men who desire to remain "discreet",

or "down low" "can only hide it for so long", Tim explained. He said he can speak with

a deeper voice and adhere to the presumed look of a heterosexual male, but the

performance and looks are superficial; eventually, people get to know the person and

quickly learn the performance is incongruent with reality of who that person is.

Tim's experience informs his perspective that "public and private faces" exist;

seeing people on campus he hooked up with or met in person off campus reinforce his

understanding that many times men are not as masculine as they pretend to be. Tim

admits his masculinity changes as well, depending with whom he is having

conversations. In a professional setting or speaking with his instructors, he forces

himself to not be animated in order to be seen as a professional, direct person. He insists

he tones down expressions he has learned are characterized as effeminate, but was not

certain, and could not articulate, why he feels so compelled to police himself in that way.

As Tim understands professional spaces, "the more confident and powerful, the higher up

you can make it". After sharing his thoughts and perspectives, he ended by saying, "The

faster you come to terms with your sexuality and yourself, the easier [life] will be. Take

into consideration your life goals and not what people want you to be".

Tim appears to believe in the innate goodness of people and presents a belief that

putting faith in his skills as an athlete and an open-minded and approachable person will

afford him a respect from other regarding his personal masculinity. He certainly has

more of a unique perspective, but not so far from Jace's idea that his professionalism

speaks volumes when compared to the men who check hookup and dating applications

like *Grindr* at professional conferences. Tim and Jace put weight into the integrity of

focusing on true objectives of why a person is in a location or with a group of people; it is not about the show of masculinity, but more so competing well at sport or, in Jace's case, being an upstanding professional at a conference. It is also related to Kent and Cori's desire to be "genuine and real".

Tim's claim to a personal masculinity comes in the form of his steadfast poise and his distance from the dramatic. Tim presents a calm and stoic demeanor that infers he is actively contemplating how he is perceived by others and getting a read on the social context before fully engaging a person or group. With his calculated style for entering into interpersonal exposures, Tim exemplifies the opposition to emotional flair presented by Jimmy, where Jimmy openly and unapologetically exposes his feelings and mentality to most all people. Tim seems to have a regard for decorum and being protective with his levels of personal disclosure to avoid exposure and being opened to judgments like those Jimmy laments in his classroom and part-time work experiences.

Summary of Narrative Patterns

Each of the narratives shared in Chapter Four serves as a reminder how deeply personal the concept of something like self-authorship is for someone. When operationalizing their personal gender expression in a variety of campus spaces and social contexts, each of the men shared varying levels of approval, disillusionment, and unique ventures in performing gender as a means to establish fit or belonging in spaces and groups. While some particular hardships arose in interpersonal interactions and experiences, many of the gripping tales of courage started within each man's own psyche. Primarily a negotiation of an epistemological and intrapersonal nature, each of the men who chose to be interviewed courageously disclosed unique challenges of making sense

of personal background, interpersonal relationships, comfort and confidence in personal identities, among other complications. There was quite an array of settlement with gender performance, expression, representations. In certain examples, such as Marshall and Tim's narratives, there was an artistry to how gender was manifest in their daily lived experiences. The alterations of gender performance for those two men specifically were described as so subtle that without acute examination, the augmented gender expressions for the men could easily be overlooked. Indeed, that is also part of the point; the need to have a finesse in gender performance is what allows the more adept gender performers in this study to be chameleon and adapt to different settings without "making a scene". An onlooker may assume that the performances are effortless and take little intention to pull off, but the tales of the men throughout this study illustrate the deep levels of thought and intent that come along with the work to bevel impact of gender on their individual social location.

Some of the men, like George and Matt, are grappling with the difficult work of figuring out how to even articulate a personal perspective about their own masculinity. In cases where a pinpointed personal masculinity perspective was missing, some like George's were explained as purposeful, although not clearly articulated; others like Matt's were even less developed and Matt was living out the formulaic scripts role modeled for him by his grandfather and examples of manhood in his family he observed as a youth. Others in the study, like Rob and Marshall, have contemplated the very foundations of what gender means and how it becomes operational, allowing them to articulate an understanding that evolved into shares of a philosophical nature. Even for many of the other men in the study, they were able to share descriptive characterization

of their personal masculinity and present how manhood showed up for them in their daily lives.

Namely Jace and Tim, but others as well, shared their finesse of acculturation in the face of hegemonic platforms for masculinity on campus. Many of the men avoided presenting their most authentic self with regard to masculinity concept. However, some men in the study were able to showcase how they were adept at flexing their gender performance to avoid stigma, establish legitimacy personally and professionally as campus men, and even bevel their gendered representations to wield a positive image manipulation. While authenticity was lost from time to time in the face of navigating palatable masculinities, many of the men illustrated the power of active authorship to make positive strides with gaining access to spaces of perceived exclusion (e.g., Jace's journey of professional development in conference with choral music educators, Tim's acceptance in club sports based on his focusing on athletic skills and performance on the court, and Kent's leadership role in service where he puts intentional work into strength training).

Overall, it was clear that some of the younger men included in the study have many questions about why items, actions, and people are branded masculine in society. They are spending more time mentally unpacking masculinity performance implications for fit and belonging on campus before settling on a personal perspective comfortable for them. Older men in the study provided more examples of their chances to practice with integrating the gendered scripts of their youth with personally authentic representations of masculinity. Age of the men did not absolutely determine whether or not they had the acumen to perform gender effectively to establish fit and avoid stigmatization, but in

general, age of the man was fairly correlative with ability to navigate gendered campus experiences.

A specific juxtaposition that illustrates the efficacy of men to perform gender in a calculated way that did not correlate with aging development was a comparison of Owen and Marshall specifically. Owen, 26 years old, avoided spaces where his most authentic masculinity representations were perceived as unwelcome, while Marshall, 25 years old, took an active approach in manipulating things as specific as his writing and rhetoric tones to gain access to campus spaces with high stakes politics at play (e.g., committee meetings with institutional administrative leadership and student governance). Additionally, who masking and policing of masculinity served was at odds when comparing some narratives. Considering Rob, 30 years old, is willing to placate classmates and coworkers on campus by minimizing his flamboyancy, Rob offers over his power of authenticity on a platter; this is compared with Marshall, 25 years old, who minimizes his traits he considers stereotypically effeminate as an agentic tool for political subversion and wielding of campus power.

The men in the study who are more successfully avoiding stigmatization and living daily as social pariah are those who resign to the comforts of the hegemonic, normative scripts for masculinity on campus. Many of the men (i.e., Rob, Marshall, Jace, Cori, Kent, Owen, Matt, and to some extent, Tim) share a flurry of personal experiences where they've performed gender in ways more socially palatable for the majority in respective campus spaces. They use their masking and policing of their gender, both by self and others, to massage fit and belonging. Most of the men narrative's included here illustrate reverence for the sociopolitical power of certain masculinity performances on

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campus that are respected and honor the gender identity binary. The few men who "go

off script" (i.e., Jimmy, George, Nate, and in some ways, Tim) find particular hardship

with identifying campus spaces that are open to and celebrate their personal perspective

of a less binary-driven personal masculinity representation. Jimmy's specific tales of

exclusion about being ridiculed in front of many people publically in the classroom and

his miserable working atmosphere are difficult to hear about or fully empathize. Nate,

Tim, and George all disclosed adverse experiences with others policing their mannerisms,

clothing, and activities in calculated ways. Embracing the restrictions of binary-driven

gender performances on campus seemed inevitable or risk being vocally proclaimed

"faggot", as some men specifically disclosed during their interviews. While

acknowledging and performing to campus gender expression standards was deemed

important, there was still flexibility and personal adaptability for each of the men in the

study deciding how the standards are made operational in their campus life. Chapter five

unpacks the men's narratives in critical ways that employ the self-authorship framework

and highlight themes of experience that were salient when the study sample was

considered as one cohort.

Chapter Five: Narrative and Framework Analysis

Chapter Five is a dual approach to analysis of the study participants' narratives. This chapter begins with a review participants' viewpoints as they are relevant through the lens of self-authorship theory and presenting overall benefits and challenges to application of Baxter Magolda's (2008) framework. Working through the framework, markers of each man's masculinity self-authorship development are highlighted where they are most applicable and best fit into the framework. However, there are also several motivating and effective personal perspectives these narratives bring up regarding the gay male experience in masculinity self-authorship and performativity that cannot be wholly explained or attributed to the lens of the Baxter-Magolda theoretical perspective. Those major thematic areas (masks, costs, confidence in, and policing of authorship) are each discussed in detail in the latter half of Chapter Five.

Self-Authorship Application

When first applying the self-authorship framework to analyze the narratives of study participants, it quickly became clear the experiences of younger gay men in the coming out process drives them to move to "crossroads", where they see a need for their own perspective, vision, and definitions at an early age (Baxter Magolda, 2009a, 2010). Jace, Marshall, Nate, and Jimmy all came out as gay men in high school. Their tales of coming out initiated a myriad of exposures that ranged from support that left Nate feeling like coming out was anticlimactic to the more confrontational experience of Jace with his grandfather. The coming out process for gay men is often thought to be fraught with emotions running high, a concept Connell (2005) may argue is made even more complicated by anxieties of expectations revolving around normative masculinity

performance and expressions. The perspective of being a young gay man who comes out

to family catalyzes the self-authorship journey for these men at an earlier age than

originally posited by study of the population from which the self-authorship framework is

based.

Baxter Magolda explored the self-authorship concept with higher-socioeconomic

status, Caucasian men (Baxter Magolda, 2001). In her interviews (2001), some men had

moved past a life regulated by external formulas of authorship and identity performance.

However, most first-year men in her study were still authoring their lives from the

formulas of authority from their background and lived experiences, not their own

perspectives and internally grounded value system. Not only are the gay men introduced

in Chapter Four of this study different based on their sexual orientation, but social class

differences also exist, making resources necessary to mask undesired scripts of

masculinity difficult. While financial resources cannot purchase certain idyllic masculine

qualities such as strength and bravado, the resources do make it easier to purchase the

"right" clothing, a marker of masculinity on campus mentioned by multiple men,

including Cori, who insists a marker of masculinity for campus is being a "sharp dressed

man". Additionally, lacking social and education capital that come along with higher

socioeconomic status were particular battles for Marshall and Jimmy, both lamenting

their mutual statuses as social pariah in different physical spaces on campus. It is clear

the historical underpinnings of class-related privileges, referred a "parallel" or "normal"

set of gender expressions in Chauncey (1995) and Dilley (2002), continue to be evocative

in some gay men's lived experiences.

Living the stigmatized experience of identifying as gay men appears to have a catalytic effect in pushing the participants from this study into a crossroads of questioning and seeing the need for their own masculinity values and definitions from a relatively early age. The push into the crossroads of experience for the men's narratives shared in Chapter Four were typically exacerbated by the "coming out process". Even the least authored and youngest individual from those interviewed, Matt, was epistemologically and intrapersonally at a crossroads for authorship of masculinity. All of the men, including Matt, juxtaposed their experiences with normative masculinity in society, marking their place of crossroads, or even beginnings of self-authorship.

Epistemology

As an investigation of personal epistemology related to masculinity, each interviewee was asked to "Tell me a little about yourself", being probed further to share about his family background and influence of family members, any religious affiliation, and a path toward higher education. In addition, the participants were asked to supply a definition of masculinity, a societal definition of masculinity, and a personal masculinity. With that data in mind, it is possible to interpret the "external formulas" present from each man's history and development over time to ground myself in their starting place on the road to self-authorship of masculinity for each of them. Based on sociopolitical geography, family structure and influence, and in some cases, religious background, some men's external formulas were more rigidly ascribed to the gender binary than others. As mentioned, the men included in this study had all already at least partially come out as gay, and in Matt 's case, bisexual; having experienced the dissonance of the coming out process to some extent, all men shared how they acknowledged a minority

sexual orientation and how that gave them a broader perspective on the parameters of masculinity. Those broader perspectives helped each man to realize the rigid definitions of masculinity surrounding them and see the necessity in commencing a journey toward malleable masculinity standards.

Crossroads. Matt is the study participant who remains in the "crossroads" category epistemologically, sharing he identifies as bisexual, while also still adhering to the scripts of masculinity provided by his grandfather's role modeling in a convicted way. Matt was clear about the distinct influence of his grandfather and the stronghold that paternal presence has had on his masculinity perspective and definitions. However, it is also clear Matt is at a crossroads location for how he *knows* masculinity by his characterization of the hegemonic norms of masculinity scripts on campus as "obnoxious". Even with the particular reverence for his grandfather's social teachings, he views similar traits in peers as an annoyance. Having the incongruence of personal prescriptions for what is masculine is what places Matt in a crossroads of decision making related to what is considered masculine. He specifically calls on describing the patriarchal nature of his grandfather's presence as an alpha male archetype as his primary example of masculinity, but also claims to be "pretty masculine" himself, even though he admits he has more of a passive presence. A lack of detail in responses, coupled with the indecisiveness and dissonance in his masculinity definitions illustrates Matt's understanding of masculinity is in transition and unsettled.

Agency. Also referred to by Baxter Magolda (2009a, 2009b) as an established internal voice where an individual "chooses own beliefs" related to how one knows (masculinity), the three interviews that best fit this location in their understanding of

masculinity are Jimmy, Tim and George. Jimmy is the man out of the three who is most anchored in this place of epistemological understandings of masculinity. Jimmy has acknowledged and engages a sense of pride in his own authenticity, but recent poor experiences with work supervisors and course instructors, both males in authority, rattled him enough to cause a significant psychological impact. He recognizes he is "somewhere in the middle, [having] both masculine and feminine qualities", but he does not have a secured commitment about how he knows masculinity as a concept with recent encounters with male authority figures that left him questioning what *real* masculinity looks like. He said he does not believe ridiculing and belittling others is a quality that evokes masculinity, but he seemed to initially respect the positionality of the supervisor and faculty member enough to remain in a liminal mental state about masculinity months after the malicious exposures. The confrontation with his supervisor and the faculty member, receiving negative feedback in multiple distinct locations, keeps Jimmy from a grounded commitment to his chosen personal masculinity perspective and he questions if he should flex gender performance situationally. In addition, Jimmy claims struggle with positive body image and is still reading visual representations of masculine body image on campus and in wider media sources in search of peace about and loving his own body.

Tim articulates his own beliefs about what he reads as masculine and insists that coursework in gender studies has given him a more critical lens that makes him hyper-aware. Having exposure to educational discourse and literature around the concept of masculinity and gender performance is a catalyst for fine tuning development of "knowing" masculinity and recognizing, or reaffirming, one's place on the gender performance continuum. However, Tim is also still being challenged by the new

knowledge his coursework and uncertainty in interactions with single-occasion intimate

partners that keeps him from a secured commitment about knowing masculinity and the

fluidity masculinity entails. As confident as Tim claims to be about masculinity, there is

an insecurity and lack of commitment to his gender performance when he has had

negative experiences with intimate partners based on his inability to be masculine enough

to meet expectations of others. Tim 's exposure to new knowledge also makes me

question the possibility a grounded and "committed" sense of self-authorship is

realistically accomplished. Part of the "commitment" in self-authoring masculinity is

establishing some level of comfort in acknowledgment and understanding that not all

people are going to receive a selected personal masculinity authorship in a positive way.

I will discuss the particular benefits and challenges of self-authorship framework

application at the end of this chapter.

A specific experience George has had that illustrates his "agency" in knowing

masculinity well is his confrontation with apartment mates at his first university he

attended. In that experience, he was consistently verbally attacked by male roommates

and called "fag". George shared he read their attacks as more of an attack on his

masculinity than an attempt to tear him down based on sexual orientation. This

perspective highlights George's resolve to maintain his footing with his personal

masculinity performance and not let even the most direct confrontations and challenges

fixated on him sway his comfort with his place on the gender continuum. Even with the

attacks becoming heated at times, George was not only committed to his understanding of

masculinity, but also declared, "it told me more about their insecurity about their

masculinity". George claims he is "very masculine" and shared he does not like labels.

Even though he does not prefer to ascribe to specific labels, he clearly has an articulate understanding of masculinity and has grounded himself in the social location of his own gender representation. However, George also placates intimate partners by performing his gender in ways that garner affection and attention. There is an insecurity about intimacy and lack of understanding in gay male relationships George shared that keeps him from a true commitment epistemologically. George also has a specific apprehension about articulating identity labels that certainly meets the developmental wherewithal to establish agency. However, he provides no alternative articulation to allow for exposure of a "grounded internal belief system" about masculinity that is found in narratives of men who are able to be apportioned to the "commitment" phase of epistemology for self-authorship of masculinity.

Commitment. Cognitive development and the epistemology surrounding personal identity can naturally become refined with age, but the men who were poised with a committed epistemology relative to how they know masculinity ranged in age from 20 to 30, quite a difference in years of lived experiences. Although Kent is only 21 years old, he is mostly firm in his commitment to an understanding of masculinity guided by utility. Kent does not exhibit confidence in his knowledge of masculinity through an unapologetic ownership of gay male identity. However, he does display more comfort in his definitions of masculinity by not only embracing fluidity of gender performance, but also providing refined context for how his place on the gender continuum, his personal authorship of masculinity, fits into societal terms for the masculine. Claiming to not be overtly masculine by appearance or characteristics, he critically reads media messages to overlook an external call for muscles and machismo. Rather, Kent is interested in weight

lifting and building body muscle, but for the purpose of his service work and knowing it will help him to more easily perform the physical tasks of home building on his mission trips with Students Helping Honduras. The signature aspect of his interview narrative that illustrates he is in a grounded state of knowing and critically reading masculinity is his ability to see even segmented scripts of masculinity tied to body image and physical strength, but rejecting media calls for him to accept that definition and instead assigning the need to meet definitions on his own terms. He has a deep sense of awareness about scripts of masculinity on campus and in larger society, and even shares his comparison of masculinity in Eastern versus Western culture, explaining that his own sense of knowing about masculinity is a collection of scripts from both cultural mentalities.

Also "grounded in an internal belief system", Cori, 21, and Nate, 20, have an air of self-efficacy and direct definitions of how they know masculinity. More than that, the two men also differentiate themselves from the men who are developmentally in earlier epistemological areas regarding masculinity knowing by not only critically reading masculinity in various spaces, but offering their uniquely crafted viewpoints. Cori focuses his attention on the personal qualities of confidence, politeness, and being a "gentleman", while Nate hones in specifically on the confidence factor, sharing his belief that overall masculinity means, "standing up for yourself and not taking crap from anyone". Nate's definition may seem trite, but it is developed out of his own personal experience and confrontations. Nate also describes the scripts of masculinity employed in social fraternities and how externally, friend groups expect him to ascribe to the stereotypical effeminate qualities of the "gay friend". However, he also explains while he

understands the expectations he chooses to strike a balance that is a more authentic representation of himself.

Providing the most specific examples related to cognitive development and articulation of masculinity concept, Jace, Marshall and Rob all highlighted individual and enlightening perspectives as well. Jace mentions the "macho" scripts of "frat guys", but grounds his internal beliefs about masculinity concept in his interactions in his college major, Choral Music Education, and his professional development activities. Jace describes the "typical arts majors gay [expectation to be] queeny" and gay men at professional conference meetings who are "checking Grindr and Growlr [gay male sex and social phone apps]" and uses those examples to strike balance of gay identity and masculinity for himself. He shares, "I'm a guy and I like to act like a guy", but also admits he can have moments when he embraces other spaces on the spectrum of gender self-authorship that are considered less masculine by broader social standards. There is a calm for Jace in knowing he can assign many models of masculinity performance to the masculine definitions without it necessarily becoming problematic for him or the many different individuals and groups, personal and professional, with whom he interacts.

Marshall called the concept of masculinity "bullshit", explaining, "it's about presentation, not rhetoric". His view of gender as a continuum and freeing himself from the expectations and rigid standards of binary gender performance are comparable with Rob, who is five years older than Marshall, but started the coming out process six years later in life than Marshall. Marshall's advanced understanding of gender fluidity in relation to social location and different audiences would be considered advanced in development for a person of any age. He critically reads an array of environments and

relationships throughout his interview and expresses how he uses his agency to make connections with his gender authorship without losing his sense of self and his psychological and emotional comfort. In other words, Marshall realizes masculinity, as a concept of gender identity, is performance and it does not mean he is more or less of a man; he realizes it so much that he is willing to alter his own performances to strategically build rapport and approach with groups and people more rigid in their expectations for performance.

Much like Marshall, Rob labels masculinity performances on a broad scale as "peacockery [and] an act to hide vulnerability". Rob not only shares his own beliefs about what masculine is and means to him, but also juxtaposes his beliefs with liberationist peers and details heightened awareness of masculinity acts in the classroom and in work, understanding the utility of the acts, and calls them for the "masks" of performance they are. Also, reading the "masks" during his time in the United States Marine Corps (USMC), Owen also has his own beliefs about masculinity that he has committed to through his qualities of dependability and altruism as he helped to care for a sibling with spina bifida. Rather than ascribing to assumed rigid, hegemonic masculinity standards of the USMC, Owen cultivated strong, sibling-like relationships with fellow Corpsmen where he was able to stay committed to his beliefs of what is masculine without letting anxiety about his being gay act as a roadblock. Owen was able to come out to fellow Corpsmen and maintain his masculinity perspective; an experience that only strengthened his understanding masculinity is not whole or nothing, but a scale of proportion.

Some of the men (i.e., Kent, Cori, and Nate) have realized their gay identity at a young age and have started the work of meaning making related to their masculinity in a more accelerated pace that allows them to reach a grounded belief system for masculinity at earlier ages. With wider public exposure to gay male identity and a variety of masculinity performances, young gay men may, as a whole, more easily navigate the epistemology of personal masculinity to generate authenticated self-authorship of gender at earlier ages. Once men reach the age and lived experience of men like Owen, Marshall, and Rob, they become keenly aware of what is and what is not masculinity; from their perspectives, masculinity can be many things, but at its root, is a performance that really does little to "make the man". Owen and Marshall are about five years younger than Rob, but they not only came out as gay men at earlier ages, but also had some exposure experiences through the Marine Corps and a tenuous upbringing respectively, that acted to catalyze masculinity epistemology earlier in life.

Intrapersonal Development

Akin to the epistemology (cognitive development) dimensions of self-authorship application, the coming out process for the gay men included in this study served as a catalyst in advancing intrapersonal development as well. As a part of establishing meaning-making capacity, intersections of personal identities have the ability to serve as an accelerator or decelerator when developing and experiencing identity-impacted exposures (Abes, et al., 2007). A positive or negative exposure related to sexual orientation can impact personal development related to identities across gender, race or ethnicity, religion, among others. As a window into the intrapersonal development for the study participants and investigating their answers for "who am I", I included a series

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of questions, sometimes probing for greater detail. Specifically, I asked each man to do the work of describing his own masculinity and how he would describe it to others. Also, I asked what influences (guides, impacts) their personal representation of masculinity, and how he arrived to a decision to be that masculinity. Near the end of each interview, I also asked each man if he had experiences that empowered his sense of masculinity. Along the way, I continued asking "why" in many cases to assess intentionality of choices and perspectives to understand how much choices and perspectives were authentically his own values of personal identity and know how coherent his sense of masculinity was for him.

Crossroads. Still in a whirlwind of understanding his place and social location, Matt is in the heart of the crossroads development of personal masculinity. He certainly acknowledges a need to define masculinity on terms that are outside of the bounds others have placed on him with expectations of masculinity, but he is also not ready to give up on his grandfather's perspectives and hold those ideals of masculinity close. As a prime example of his crossroads mentality, Matt questions why athletes are considered masculine while others are not. He also understands that his bisexuality has an impact on his self-authorship of masculinity, explaining his perspective on taking passive roles in same-sex relationships of the past, but could not seem to articulate any further beyond, "I like people". Largely still avoidant and concise to a fault, Matt's perspective of answering the "who am I" questions is clouded by a lack of grounding and personal development related to epistemology of masculinity. Considering intersections of personal identity and the myriad of chances for developmental exposure experiences, epistemology and the intrapersonal development facets of self-authorship are not

completely in tandem. However, more progression toward a grounded internal belief system (epistemological development) has the potential to catalyze intrapersonal development as well.

Agency. Moving out of a crossroads perspective of not only seeing the need for defining himself, but also starting to ascribe to a certain set of personal values for self-authoring masculinity, Cori is committed to "being a good man". Cori 's "good man" philosophy not only allows him to comfortably own his gay identity, but also incorporate the religious value principles of his Catholic background. His masculinity is grounded in altruism and care over others, as a leader and stable role model. The specific thing holding Cori back from truly owning the authorship of his life from an intrapersonal standpoint is his holding back on coming out to parents to avoid "burdening them". Rather, he lives a double (parallel) life where personal identity characteristics are omitted with family in Chicago and are more overt when away at college. With an experience like Cori's, it is possible to see how the use of parallel living constructions by interpersonal means is not necessarily repressive of intrapersonal development progress. Cori knows "who he is" and can articulate that in interview response quite clearly. However, a comfort in who one is does not require exposing that authentic identity to others.

Tim, as another example of agency, has more fully developed a sense of who he is in regard to his masculinity. Not only is he more open about his gay identity, a fear Cori has about robbing him of some masculinity with family, but he pinpoints ways in which he has chosen a set of values aligned with his personal masculinity. Tim shared his perceived value of sports in helping him assimilate with masculinity scripts, while also

stating he does not let gay slurs affect and does not change mannerisms to appease others. Tim describes a grounded sense of who he is in relation to his masculinity and how exposures have done little to make that intrapersonal viewpoint waver. Still, Tim is kept from a grounded commitment to personal masculinity due to his "working on positive self-image" and a lack of peace about his personal identity that was palpable as he responded to questions in the interview. Being honest, he shared about how he does not have everything figured out personally and it was clear he was bothered by that self-assessment. Specifically related to masculinity, Tim shared insecurities stemmed from intimate encounters with other gay men. While he has not let those encounters alter "who he is" as far as personal masculinity is concerned, he continues to grapple with the impact of negative experiences and reception of his personal gender performance.

Also somewhat uncomfortable with conversation that developed as he describes his own masculinity, Kent is authoring a personal masculinity where he is choosing life actions (e.g., in his narrative of "beefing up") he is prioritizing for him and not for the sake of others' judgments of him. Kent struggles with self-efficacy and still challenged with completely owning his personal identity and authentic social location. His struggles are specifically marked by his inability to share with his parents he identifies as gay since he believes it would significantly taint their vision of his identity and what that means for the future of their family and Eastern, collectivist perspectives. Kent has a sense of acceptance about who he is as a man and where his place of comfort in gender performance lies, but cannot seem to experience a more grounded and committed approach to who he is because of trepidation related to interpersonal relationship. Indeed, I mentioned that the facets of the self-authorship framework, epistemology,

intrapersonal, and interpersonal development can progress independent of one another with a person, but can also be connected in some ways and affect change, or lack thereof, for some individuals.

George is also like Kent in that he can understand the value of fluidity for a continuum view in gender self-authorship. However, he is kept from a secured commitment to his personal masculinity due to self-loathing exacerbated by his fragile relationship with his mother. George displays comfort and calm in explaining who he is as a man, but has specific challenges in making that understanding operational in his life because power influence rooted in respect for his parents. In addition, his "internal voice" is troubled by the interactions he has with gay men in intimate and general social encounters. George claims manhood on the periphery of labels, not describing his masculinity in relation to either a binary or continuum and not ascribing to a sexual orientation type of label. Even still, he uses the lack of labels as a tool in relationship to trouble connecting with gay men, intimately and socially, and maintaining positive connections with parents.

A study participant with a higher sense of agency in self-authorship of masculinity, who is more open with others in presentation of who he is, is Nate. Nate prides himself on clothing choices, involvement, and performance of gender and self-presentation that are completely his decision. He claims clothing, involvement, and self-presentation as a choice by him and for him, not others. Nate is aware and comfortable with who he is intrapersonally enough to allow that perspective to play a role in authorship of personal masculinity interpersonally as well. However, he also holds a uneasy feeling when confronted with hyper masculine presentations and has a level of

anxiety around scripted masculinities of "guys you don't mess with". For the most part, Nate appears to have an efficacious orientation to performing a comfortable personal masculinity in most all settings. However, it also seems an "alpha male" type still an affect on him in a negative way, forcing him to question his authorship just enough that he remains short of a grounded commitment his choices. It is quite interesting how much of an effect hegemonic norms of masculinity can have on a man who seems otherwise unaffected. It is possible the root cause of such an effect is Nate's high positive regard for pop culture and societal trends.

Commitment. The majority of the study participants have a strongly committed sense of self, describing perspectives of masculinity self-authorship in a convicted and unapologetic way. Jimmy specifically used a flurry of expletives to share that he does not waver or let his intense negative interactions with faculty, supervisors, and other students move him to perform as more masculine. Also, calling "bullshit" on hyper masculine performances, Marshall realizes his place of marginalization and the lesser view he gets from authority figures with his decision to authentically self-author his personal masculinity. However, Marshall, like Jimmy, also owns his place of comfort with an authentic gender performance. Even more, Marshall displays a great deal of pride in his unique masculinity as a proverbial badge of courage, knowing full well how politicized and contentious individual forms of gender and sexuality self-authorship are when outside of the confines of approved distance from binary ideals.

Jimmy has an intense presentation of confidence about "who he is" as a man; the presentation could be a performance, but his detailed descriptions of negative experiences with male authority figures (e.g., faculty and supervisors) and how he maintained his

personally prescribed masculinity standards suggest it is not performance. More so, Jimmy's narrative provides evidence of an authentic description of his self-concept and authorship of masculinity. I propose there are degrees of grounded commitment to intrapersonal self-authoring of masculinity. This is due to the fact Jimmy and Marshall's orientation to maintaining like intrapersonal perspectives are equivalent, but Marshall's self-authorship has more finesse. Marshall provides a comprehensive description of a need for using his awareness and understanding to manipulate how others receive him to make personal progress and gain buy-in for his campus initiatives in student involvement. As mentioned in analysis of Marshall's narrative for epistemology of the masculine, he acts on changing his personal masculinity without losing a sense of self, profoundly cognizant of all that is transpiring intrapersonally and interpersonally.

While less intense in their reactions to questions related to intrapersonal development of personal masculinity, Jace, Owen, and Rob all have a strong sense of self and a commitment to a personal masculinity that is both comfortable and works well for them in daily life. Jace has a strong vision for his masculinity as contextual based on location; if he is in a more personal space, he claims he and others are more comfortable with his being less overtly masculine and dropping the bravado of the stoic, serious professional tone. In professional spaces, he gathers confidence and strength in his presentation of self as a definitive leader, reserved emotionally and focus on goals and objectives of the task before him. Much like Jace, Rob also chooses from a series of masculinity presentations depending on his setting. Rob not only openly commits to the value of an authorship of masculinity "between feminine and masculine", but wholeheartedly accepts that positionality and is poised and at peace with his personal

presentation of self in a variety of places, professional and otherwise. The intriguing difference in the emotional space of Jace and Rob in comparison to Marshall and Jimmy related to intrapersonal self-authorship of masculinity ("who they are") is Jace and Rob do not claim to be anymore masculine than do Marshall and Jimmy.

In comparison, a variable that could possibly be driving the negative, or contemptuous, struggles for Marshall and Jimmy is their inhabiting more archetypal masculine spaces on campus. Jace is in the arts and participates in softer skills involvement such as giving campus tours and working with orientation and ambassador programs. Rob is a social work major and works in an administrative support role in his professional role. Meanwhile, Marshall inhabits spaces like major areas of philosophy and economics and active involvement in student government. Jimmy is an animal science major and has worked recently in agriculture and farms roles. The spaces Marshall and Jimmy inhabit on and around campus present more rigid standards for belonging when considering norms of gender performance. All men are challenged to live an authentic self-authorship of personal masculinity, but some men will may have more volatile exposure experiences based on campus-related gender role conflict.

Finally, as a newer member of the campus community and non-traditional student, Owen also displays a high sense of self-confidence in his personal masculinity, but the personal masculinity he describes also seems to rest in the values of the United States Marine Corps (USMC). Owen purposefully chooses spaces to spend time on campus, but admittedly spend little time on campus outside of class. His personal masculinity has not been challenged in recent years, citing his most salient development experiences for his sense of manhood happening in his time with the USMC. While his

responses to interview questions lead a belief of an efficacious self-authorship of masculinity as he juxtaposes his stability with that of his terrible father figure, his masculinity character values align closely to his affiliation with the USMC. That said, he can be considered more grounded due to his sharing he also sees his masculinity as a less overt set of masculine character qualities than what is typical from a Corpsman. Owen does not simply follow the letter of the USMC with regard to ideals for a self-authorship of masculinity, but admitted to positive experiences with the USMC values and guiding principles as a general roadmap for how to make sense of what his masculinity could be. Ultimately, Owen expressed not only agency in an independent divulgence of who he is as a man from USMC and family, but a grounded commitment to his perspective because it feels good and works to his benefit with the mixture of relationships in his life— faculty, friends, partner, and family.

The development that occurs in the epistemological (how do I know?) and intrapersonal (who am I?) of masculinity self-authorship is a personal analysis that helps an individual comprehend the world around him and then turn the scope of mindfulness inward to begin to understand internal sense of self. Beyond those dimensions, an individual also must consider interpersonal interactions. Constructing relationships with a positive impact on personal development can assist an individual in moving forward with his life in a more peaceful state, focusing on secondary and tertiary complications presented throughout adult life. A key principle throughout the self-authorship framework is the consideration that at each level, epistemological, intrapersonal, and interpersonal, a process of meaning-making and unpacking the dense mental and social interactions of a life is necessary.

Interpersonal development

The study participants all expressed a range of cognitive awareness and intrapersonal understanding related to masculinity. The myriad of development with regard to interpersonal utility of personal masculinity performance has no less of a range. To gauge interpersonal development and the utility of self-authorship of masculinity in construction and maintaining of relationships, I asked another series of deliberate questions. In particular, I asked about each man's involvement on campus and how he generally spent his time. I also asked how he feels his personal masculinity is supported on campus and what experiences in college have impacted his masculinity. Finally, I inquired about whether his masculinity and self-presentation changed in different spaces. The youngest participant, Matt, displayed the least authenticated masculinity concepts epistemologically and intrapersonally. Without much revelation, Matt is also the least far along interpersonally in his construction of relationships as a tool for authentic masculinity self-authorship.

Formulas. Matt's guiding principle is simply "be polite", a standard of character in interpersonal interactions instilled through his upbringing. As a new freshman, he was beginning to see a need for defecting from "external formulas" for building relationships, but had not sought out relationships on campus, or involvement in general, that were not in place before arriving to campus. Matt's relationships were still connected to high school friendships, family, and campus members whom he knew before arriving to campus. He had not explored his positionality as a bisexual man or what that meant for relationships with peers and others on campus related to an augmented self-authorship.

Crossroads. At the latter end of a crossroads in developing healthy interpersonal relationships where he authentically self-authors his masculinity, Kent went beyond seeing the need for authenticity and had almost committed to a true sense of self. He specifically sought out a social circle that supported his self-presentation without having to author gender in an uncomfortable way. However, Kent was held back from ascribing to a truly comfortable masculinity concept in interpersonal relationships due to his hiding a true sense of his personhood from his parents. Considering the dependence on development in the interpersonal dimension relying heavily on quality of interactions with others, Kent remains in a crossroads of relationship building.

In friendships, Kent has a more developed sense of self, but leads a bit of a double life by masking facets of his personal identity with family. In the intrapersonal dimension of self-authorship, it is possible to make greater developmental strides with self-authorship because the development is reliant more on a settlement on himself as a man in conversation happening in his own headspace. With the interpersonal dimension, the agency comes when openness about personal masculinity, and the veins of personal identities connected (i.e., in this case gay and Asian being most salient). It is difficult to self-author masculinity in a truly authentic way without settling on an outward expression that embraces the true sense of self that one has worked to build and maintain intrapersonally.

Agency. George, Jimmy, Tim, and Nate have all not only identified spaces that are comfortable for their positionality of masculinity, but also allow them to present their full, multifaceted identity in an uninhibited way. George has a confidence in his interpersonal relationships and being true to self that almost makes him seem to hold a

"secured commitment". However, a recent upheaval in moving college campuses had him doing new work to ground himself in a new campus geography where he was successfully identifying groups and individuals that allowed him to achieve mutually beneficial interpersonal connections. Another aspect of interpersonal connection that has been a challenge for George is the parallel life he leads when he visits home in Appalachia, protecting the social status of his family. However, unlike Kent, George is authentic in his openness about personal identity to family, just not general population in his hometown. On the grand scale of relationships that matter, he is staying closeted to townspeople about his identity as a gay man not as a repression of self-authorship, but as a protection of family social status. In the relationships George works to maintain and foster, he is open and authentic in his representation of self-authorship of masculinity. Kent, on the other hand, has respect and admiration for his parents, but chooses to remain closeted to them.

In a developmental step between Kent's experience of crossroads in self-authorship interpersonal development and George's work in ascertaining agency within interpersonal relationships, Cori has qualities from his narrative that match the cusp of crossroads and agency. While Cori is still secretive about his sexual orientation with a core group, his parents, he also navigates campus interpersonal relationships with cleverness. As Cori described, "I go where I fit". In some ways, Cori has more agency in his interpersonal relationships than a man like George who is in upheaval on campus interpersonally from a campus transfer. In other ways, Cori is still lacking agency over his own authorship principles because of his parallel dissonance of disclosure between what those on campus know about him and what his parents know about him. The living

of parallel disclosures is a personal development complication that many students, regardless of personal identity, learn to navigate at some point.

Disclosure of identity characteristics that impact personal masculinity and establishing a sense of security is an issue for Tim as well. However, Tim does not have the barrier of disclosure with parents; his is with intimate partners. Somewhat like George, Tim is kept from security in interpersonal relationships due to high level of exploration in what feels right, particularly with peers whom he has intimate encounters. Tim claims commitment to investing in people who are uplifting in the face of his self-authorship and respect his gender performance. Outside of friendship, Tim struggles with single occasion intimate partners who belittle his authorship of masculinity and cause him to question his own authorship of gender. To those who have a consistent and important presence in the life of Tim, he is candid in his gender performance and sincerity of sharing the intersections of his personal identities. Even doing the difficult work of telling about his gay identity to his mother, who struggles with mental illness, Tim displays a sense of agency in interpersonal connections that allows him to live an authentic self-authorship of masculinity in concert with his relationship to others. The lingering insecurities that keep Tim placating prospective intimate partnerships with an aloofness that is not really true to his our self-authorship of masculinity with other interpersonal relationships may dissipate at some point. Until that time, Tim will live an agency that is not quite a grounded commitment to self-authorship of his personal masculinity in *all* interpersonal connections.

Navigating the constructs of interpersonal relationships can prove to be overwhelming with challenge, and that is something Jimmy is experiencing as well.

Jimmy is committed to his own brand of masculinity, but he calls his masculinity to question when he has less than stellar reactions and encounters with others. Jimmy only needs a consistent groups of validating individuals who support his perspective of personal value to become grounded in his self-authorship of masculinity. He is finding social connection with others, specifically those in the local gay community, to be quite challenging and perplexing. While some of the men in this study struggle with connecting to even the closest family and friends in an authenticated self-authorship of masculinity, Jimmy has been open and direct about his perspectives for quite a while. Jimmy's unique place of agency with interpersonal connections is an intriguing one to navigate. With his no nonsense approach to masculinity, like Marshall and Rob, Jimmy will find establishing interpersonal connections with friend groups to be an active working problem to some extent. There is an admirable quality in the pride Jimmy, Marshall, and Rob display in their self-authorship of masculinity when interacting with others. However, the direct approach and non-normative masculinity scripts Jimmy ascribes to will make building an appreciative friend base difficult. Nate's narrative, a story of a direct and confrontational young man building a reliable base of social friendships and connections both on and off campus, is a reassurance for a man like Jimmy to know that the authentic self-authorship of masculinity and establishing interpersonal relationships with others who appreciate a boisterous approach is possible.

Unlike Jimmy, Nate has a dependable social group that is affirming of his gender self-authorship, but he claims to not receive enough positive affirmation and directly claimed still becoming comfortable with his place in social groups and who he is as a man. Even still, Nate is well on his way to grounding himself in a self-authorship of

masculinity authentic for him, being a particularly confrontational individual. He highlighted and emphasized a dorm experience where he had to defend his masculinity to a group of heckling male peers in his dorm suite. He said after the confrontation happened, he did not have to address it again and there was an air of respect for him that was not felt before he confronted the other men. When Nate feels that the affirmation he gets from others is enough, he will, theoretically, be in more of a grounded commitment to his self-authorship in interpersonal connections.

Commitment. Considered more committed and grounded in their self-authorship of masculinity when taking interpersonal connections into account, Jace, Rob, and Marshall are well on their way to an internalized commitment. Jace, Rob, and Marshall all have core groups of friends and loved ones who affirm their gender self-authorship, but a true commitment to self-authorship is sometimes lost in their masking a true sense of self in specific spaces. In some cases the masking is to preserve the comfort of others because Jace, Rob, and Marshall all claim they are keenly aware of instances where peers and authority figures were uncomfortable with their authentic masculinity authorship. In those cases, the masking of their gender self-authorship does not necessarily imply they have any less of a grounded commitment to interacting with others from an authentic place. Due to the sociopolitical landscapes in which each of the three men are working, there is a progressive and resourceful intent to masking gender performance to move forward and not stifle progress, most specifically from a professional standpoint. Candidly, the masking that occurs in Jace, Marshall, and Rob's narratives allow them to garner more influence and shift power balances in their favor with the use of masking.

The awareness and utility displaying by employing such techniques is sophisticated in its own way.

On the other hand, all three men, Jace, Marshall, and Rob, also cite situations where the masking of their true gender performance was meant to preserve their own comfort. The sociopolitical geography of the institution and the state they live in were pinpointed as an impetus for augmenting gender performance to a minor degree. When considering the rigid standards of a grounded or committed self-authorship for interpersonal relationships as introduced in the theoretical framework, masking to protect one's own peace of mind would back an argument of agency in authorship, but not a grounded commitment. Even still, I argue the men included in this short list, Jace, Marshall, and Rob, have all experienced intense confrontation at one point or another in their lived experiences and interaction with others. Rather than this masking simply being used to avoid conflict, these three men seem to use masking in their situations to only avoid initial gender role conflict to embrace and face potential for conflict on secondary or tertiary levels. For example, Marshall was instrumental in policy change on his campus. With that, policy level changes at a university can be quite contentious. Rather than fighting two "battles" in gender role conflict and then argumentative discourse actually related to policy debate, Marshall made a conscious decision to mask self-authorship of an authentic personal masculinity in an effort to build initial rapport with campus administrators and preserve the "battle" for policy debate. In an example, Marshall's masking regarding gender performance illustrated a more refined self-authorship perspective, not less developed.

Finally, Owen is selective about where he connects and spends time on campus. Instead of masking self-authorship of personal masculinity to appease others or make him comfortable in specific locations, he is more discriminatory about whom he spends his time with and where he spends time on campus. Owen acknowledged spaces on campus where various fashioning of personal masculinity is different from his own, namely social fraternities, and he stated simply he chooses not to engage the men from those social locations in ways that constructed sustained interpersonal connection beyond something like course group work. Owen is completely grounded in his commitment to disclosing a self-authorship of personal masculinity that entirely authentic. With the anxiety of coming out to fellow Corpsmen in the USMC, there are few places or groups that could seem more overtly masculine to defend a self-authorship of gender not ascribing to normative standards. With a successful and mostly positive experience in that setting, Owen is a confident young man who claims to have an open mind and willingness to self-author his personal masculinity with any group without distress or dishonor.

Benefits & Challenges of Self-Authorship Application

While Baxter Magolda's (2008) elements of self-authorship are introduced in a structured way, the theoretical framework is particularly useful because of the way she describes it as "cyclical" (Baxter Magolda, 2010). Intersecting identities such as race and ethnicity, social class status, religion, and the myriad of exposure experiences that come along with interpersonal interactions based in conversation around those identities, can change and develop an individual's perspectives for self-authorship. Self-authorship is not a simple destination of personal development, but work that is continually being done to meet challenges to personal viewpoints on operationalizing personal identities. When

new events in these men's lives transpire, they may prove to be such affective experiences that they effect change in masculinity self-authorship motivated by new information processed from any facet of their convergence of personal identities.

Although I pinned the men's experiences into the framework, it was done in a single time capture. Taken at a different point in time, the men could have lived experiences that would place them at different places on the journey of self-authorship. Even as a single time capture, the use of self-authorship to examine the narratives of the included study participants framed their perspectives well and allowed for meaningful comparison and contrast. The framework, presented in different sections in the early portion of this chapter, provides an appropriate impetus for highlighting social location for gay undergraduate men in their journey of masculinity self-authorship. While the narrative information included in this study should not be used as a tool for the reader to make generalizations and tokenize the experience of gay undergraduate men, it should be used as a means for having conversation and taking action to assist a stigmatized population find comfort in their search for a personally comfortable manhood.

Also, the multiple levels of the framework, epistemological, intrapersonal, and interpersonal, allowed for a multi-dimensional view of the men's experiences and meaning-making skill. Some of the men in the study have experienced challenges to personal masculinity in a more grand or intense way than others; the men who have not had the challenge of a more confrontational experience like those of Marshall, George, and Nate do not necessarily need the confrontation to develop symbiotic personal masculinities. The information from the narratives can be more useful as a window into experience and intrapersonal contemplation, a means for providing assistance where and

when clearly needed to make personal progress. To assume a framework, even one as complex and nuanced as self-authorship, has capability to encapsulate personal experience in a packaged fashion is impractical.

While the self-authorship frame proved to be helpful in many ways, there are also a couple of items considered particularly challenging in the application of the theoretical perspective to a living narrative. My population sample came from a highly diverse set of backgrounds. Different men were uniquely challenged by salient parameters of personal identity such as race and ethnicity, social class status, age, and geography that complicated personal perspectives. As a challenge of understanding that was not the focus of this specific study, those identity perspectives are explored more in-depth in Chapter Six as future directions for further research.

Additional challenge of the application of self-authorship framework to the narratives came in making sense of thematic experiences and ways of navigating masculinity self-authorship that could not be neatly assigned to the phases and stages in the model. In some ways, the additional themes act as vehicles for the journey of self-authorship, but the themes of experience from the narrative transcend the Baxter Magolda model and need to be unpacked more independently. An independent discussion of narrative themes offers a richer understanding of communal and dissonant perspectives from what the men shared in their interviews. In the remainder of this chapter, principal narrative themes are discussed to provide more insight into successes and setbacks gay undergraduate men in this study have and continue to experience in their self-authorship journey as members of a campus community.

Distinctive Discernments

In this latter section of Chapter Five, I will introduce the themes that evolved from considering the men's interviews as a whole. Through the process of comparison and contrast, it becomes clear there are varying levels and degrees to which gender performance is used as a tool to achieve desired personal perspectives and interpersonal connections. The narrative data support not only the conceptual framework of self-authorship theory, which was discussed in greater depth earlier in this chapter, but also the concept of gender role conflict. O'Neil and Crapser's (2011) gender role conflict concept surfaces in the men's stories included in this study through experiences and situations of discomfort that motivate alterations of gender performance or the men being drawn to certain groups and spaces to enjoy a more authentic personal masculinity. The overarching themes that emerged were: masking in authorship, confidence and ownership in authorship, costs of authorship, and authorship policing. These themes of narrative, resembling self-authorship side-effects, are couched in the concept of gender role conflict, as a means of mitigating personal negative impact both preemptively and after a negative exposure experience. The assumed or actual negative experiences are results of exploring the limits for self-authorship of personal masculinity in a variety of spaces and with different groups and individuals encountered. I will provide a connection of narratives here and discuss them in greater depth as distinct from self-authorship, acting as effects in the development toward a grounded masculinity self-authorship journey for each man.

Masking in Authorship

Rob and Marshall's narratives stand out among the eleven men as particularly compelling in their heightened awareness and articulation of masculinity observations, both on campus and in the general community. They also provide a greater detail about how masculinity insecurities and exploration in the gay male population encourages "masking", or situational gender performance, but a few other men described that theme of observation in less articulate ways as well. Jace is the third man who speaks most closely to this concept of local time-space gender performance, couching his representation of it in the purposiveness of his profession and how professionalism calls for him to alter his actions and mannerisms for the benefit of tone and approach with respective populations of people, most notably students. Other men in the study (i.e., Kent, George, Matt, Tim, and Cori) all allude to "masking", but in what Dilley (2002) might refer to as "parallel", using their situational performance to develop a persona that allows them to protect sexuality identity (Kent, Matt, and Cori) or family social status (George and Kent).

With Rob and Marshall's narratives driving this idea of masking, the utility of masking is different for each man. Rob uses his masks of masculinity to blend in socially. He provided examples in his interview of a desire to "fly under the radar" in class and "not make waves". He insisted being a non-traditional aged student who worked full-time and attended classes in a work uniform was stigmatizing and difficult enough to manage in class peer interactions without adding a certain flamboyancy he enjoys with more personal friend groups. He also briefly discussed the more austere clinical professional environment he navigates at work and how he wears a professional

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mask of sorts, somewhat similar to the professionalism mask of Jace. Meanwhile, Marshall primarily describes using the masking of most authentic masculinity by strengthening his tone and presence with those in authority to manipulate positioning at the proverbial table where impactful conversations and decisions occur on campus with administrators and leaders. Marshall also mentions his desire to fit in with peers and his use of masking to make interpersonal connections stronger with other undergraduates, but explains that type of masking is futile for him, to a degree, due to his mixture of philosophical, traditional, and progressive perspectives dependent on topics at hand.

Other men in the study, namely Tim and Nate, are more discriminating in what they reveal to those with whom they interact. For them, masking is not so much about performances of grandeur or subtlety, but more so being gatekeepers of who they will establish levels of comfort with in various settings. Tim expressively shared "the less you reveal, the more they wonder", perfectly characterizing how both he and Nate will withhold personal details or true mannerisms from people to either stay guarded or to avoid the annoyance that Nate describes in being the "gay friend" for heterosexual women on campus. When first contemplating Tim and Nate's mask, it could be assumed they are masking out of fear. However, both men are open about their sexuality with anyone who inquires and exude a comfortability that is reassuring that the masking via withholding personality or personal details can be attributed more to a discerning approach to interpersonal connection.

The seemingly pragmatic parallelism used in Kent, George, Cori, and Matt's masking is more of a coping mechanism, specifically with family relationships. Out of this subgroup of four men, only George is out to his family. Even still, George has not

made his sexual orientation more widely known to his hometown community out of

assumed negative impact that could be experienced for his parents. Kent's masking is

seeded in his assumption his parents and other family elders will not receive the news

well. Kent's assumption is partially founded in his observation of family reactions to

progressive developments related to gay marriage initiatives in California. Kent also

detailed the Eastern ways of approaching family as a collective, an interestingly familiar

mindset evocative of the small town community mentality that keeps George in a parallel

state of masking.

Throughout all of the men's stories, it becomes clear that each man has a use for

masking to achieve positive outcomes. The way the men make use of masking in their

daily lives looks quite different depending on where he is on the journey of self-

authorship in the epistemological, intrapersonal, and interpersonal frames. Those who

are farther along in their self-authorship development are using masking to build a set of

interactions that are positive and allow for positive progress, in the classroom, conference

room, or the workplace. Other men who are in the early stages of negotiating self-

authorship paths for personal masculinity are more simplistically using masks as a tool

for escaping assumed disconnection from the families and communities that raised them

from boyhood. At any rate, making use of masking, in whatever way deemed personally

appropriate, helps ease the pains and progress of a tumultuous passage toward self-

authorship.

Confidence and Ownership in Authorship

Mustering the confidence and courage to practice self-authorship, especially with

the highly scrutinized concept of a personal masculinity, is something that every man

interviewed as a part of this study shared about in some level of detail. Although each of the men in the study claim a confidence in their personal masculinity, the origination of the confidence and the amount of confidence varies greatly. As a beginning example, Matt provided the most concise and seemingly direct responses to questions in his interview. However, when considering the content of the answers provided by Matt, the assumed wall of confidence is exposed for the airs that it is. By Baxter Magolda's model standards, Matt is still largely following "external formulas" and has had some experiences, such as his dating some men and attending a military ball as a man's date, that place him at a "crossroads" of how to make sense of the dissonance separating the formulas he ascribes to from family and more recent experiences of taking passive roles in same-sex male relationships. Matt's confidence in his personal masculinity is still grounded in the principles role modeled by his grandfather and reinforced by the approval of that standard from his mother and extended family. In a way, Matt is using his lack of detail, or conciseness, to present confidence in his masculinity perspective. However, his lack of details, coupled with an inarticulate and non-coherent set of responses to questions about masculinity, expose his lack of development for personal masculinity, much less authorship.

A different kind of confidence and ownership in the authorship journey is one that men like Marshall, Jimmy, Kent, Cori, and Nate all share in one way or another. These five men in particular have resigned to the fact that they may not be considered the most masculine man in the room, or in general when compared to normative standards. Although some may see resigning to this reality as some kind of surrender and relinquishing of power due to lack of confidence, I offer the contrary. Accepting a self-

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authorship of masculinity that is comfortable in the face of normative masculinity ideals

is a way of usurping confidence and taking back their personal agency. There is a calm

and happiness in the demeanor of all of these men in interview because they are able to

confidently assume their rightful place in the continuum of American masculinities.

Taking ownership for their place not only allows the men to connect (or not) in a more

authentic way, but also know quickly if a space is somewhere they will find a sense of

belonging.

Jimmy has such negative experiences with campus people and spaces that he

almost becomes a characterized pariah. Hearing Jimmy's struggles to establish

interpersonal connections on campus, both individually and in a variety of group settings,

makes the loneliness he describes palpable. Although he has not found much of a

positive interpersonal life during his time at the university, he reads machismo and the

almost theatrical masculinity performances on campus and in the local gay community

with a sharp eye and a masterful articulation. Granted, his descriptions employ a range of

expletives to emphasize impact, but he is able to provide the detail and address follow-up

questions about his perceptions with precision that seemingly validate personal

confidence. He claims such confidence that he insists he has shown people who he is and

that he is "an open book" and that it intimidates most people away or they will not

commit to spend time together.

While Kent, Cori, and Nate have claimed their confidence through a certain

resignation, but these men have really leaned into involvement on campus that downplays

normative scripts of masculinity in favor of focus on service or creativity. These men

"go where [they] fit", as Cori explained in his interview. They notice the normative

masculinity scripts that are common on campus through things like behavior and clothing choices, but look past those with a narrow eye on becoming exemplary servant leaders and creatives. All of them men have some realization that there is a dispersal of power to many campus locations and groups, and while they may not be "big man on campus", they are respected, admired, and celebrated for their mastery of skill in service and creativity. Their perspective is somewhat similar to Marshall, Tim, and Jace, who also found their own share of personal masculinity validation on campus, but more in line with traditionally masculine involvements.

Jace used his talents in the creative ways of music to secure a leadership role on the marching band. Seen as a spotlight leadership figure at a hyper-masculine event on campus, competitive intercollegiate football games, and taking on role model leadership roles like orientation leader for incoming freshmen and ambassador for his college on campus, he garners the respect of both students and campus authority figures. Similar, but in spaces of student government and leadership of specific student organizations that value mathematical and philosophy skills, Marshall uses his wit, wide vocabulary, and intellectual nature to reap the confidence factor in the face of his non-traditional student status and refusal to play into the "macho bullshit". Finally, Tim engages and exploits his mastery of athletic skill in the traditional space of club sports on campus. While Tim refuses to dress within the confines of safe choices for men on campus and has been called "fag" more than once, he takes on a particular pride, and confidence, knowing with the right people his skills on the court allow him to claim his masculinity in some space. All three men, Tim, Marshall, and Jace, have a segment of campus culture that validates

and grows their confidence in personal masculinity and is also considered at least somewhat masculine in the traditions of campus culture.

Two men, Owen and John, have a confidence, potentially coming somewhat from development of being older students at ages 26 and 30, respectively. However, the aspect of their confidence in personal masculinity is not specifically tied to campus populations or culture. Owen's source of confidence in his masculinity is his "don't take shit" mentality he retained from time spent in the Marine Corps. John, on the other hand, has a pride of personal masculinity in his integrity, his word, and his honesty and candor. John does not necessarily work actively to make those qualities known by others on the forefront of meeting, but has a calm and patience that leaves him passively connecting to those who appreciate his brand of personal masculinity and do not stigmatize.

Costs of Authorship

Stigma and despair, either actual or assumed, are perceived costs of authorship of an authenticated personal masculinity for the men in this study. When considering the disconnection some of these men have experienced or the taxing nature of living a parallel life of gender performances, the costs are heavy on the cognitive and psychosocial wellbeing of these students. Some of the most notable narratives that illustrate the disconnection resulting from authenticity are those of Jimmy, Rob, Jace, and Nate. For those who endure the cost of an inauthentic self, the most conspicuous narratives from interviews are those of Kent and George.

While Nate and Rob's disconnections experienced due to authenticity are less dramatic than those that will be shared from the stories of Jace and Jimmy, they exist. Nate was the one who detailed the highly confrontational experience in the dorms where

he was ridiculed by a group of male peers who lived in the same suite as him. While

Nate did take a stand and confront the young men, the confrontation left a scar of the

event that prevented stronger connection and left him suspicious of male peers'

perceptions of him and the validity of his personal masculinity given his sexual

orientation. Rob maintains cautious optimism about his relationship with parents due to

the confrontation he experienced with them in his coming out as a gay man to them.

Even with time having somewhat healed that relationship for Rob, he also shared his

struggle to make meaningful connections and initiate an intimate relationship due to his

refusal to "butch it up".

Some of the men in this study shared about their great courage of coming out as

gay men to their families and close friends as early as high school. To take such a leap of

faith in self-disclosure at such an early age seems reckless, but the men in this study did

so hoping to live more authentically, a signature ingredient in the self-authorship of one's

masculinity. Jimmy and Jace both came out to their families as high school students.

While Jimmy had a reasonably pleasant, however awkward, experience with the event,

Jace was not so fortunate to receive the same reaction. Jimmy explained how supportive

his mother was and how it helped him become more comfortable in owning his identity

as a gay man. Conversely, Jace's grandfather reacted in such a negative way that Jace

and he did not speak to one another for a length of time. Even at the time of his

interview, years after that encounter with his grandfather, he still describes his

relationship with his grandparents as tenuous.

Jace's reality of disconnection came early, with the thick air of separation

looming between him and his family. Jace already experienced a non-traditional

upbringing, being raised by his paternal grandparents, and he is now living a real "you can't go home again" life. Although the latter portions of his interview highlight a happily engaged and involved developing professional man who is confident in his personal masculinity, it is clear Jace's relationship with family, grandparents in particular, is bothersome for him. In opposite fashion, Jimmy's cost of leaning into self-authorship came later when he left home to attend university.

As previously mentioned, Jimmy has experienced combative supervisors, unfortunate faculty interactions, and a lack of committed social engagement with peers while at university. He attributes much of that negative interaction and reception to his authenticity in both his openness about his sexual orientation and ownership of his comfortable place on the continuum of gender identity. Claiming to have body image issues of his own and to ascribe to many personal qualities and characteristics that are typically deemed less than masculine, he remains unapologetic. However, Jimmy's unapologetic nature does not protect him for the loneliness of disconnection with peers both on campus and in the local gay community. Even the few peers who are initially receptive to Jimmy's offers to "hang out" never seem to follow through and it is visible how frustrating that is for him. Jace and Jimmy have paid the price for authenticity in their journey toward a grounded self-authorship, but others from the study population are paying their dues without resolution, only assuming the outcome of full disclosure.

Due to a lack of comfort in the labels of both sexual orientation and gender, George inhabits a deeply unsettled liminal space where he is not able to move forward with self-authoring because he seems at a loss. Deconstructionists and queer theorists alike have argued, and convincingly, labels are not necessary to make a comfortably

authentic and self-authored life for oneself (Sullivan, 2003; Connell, 2005; Epstein, 2006). However, the difference between the examples deconstructionists and queer theorists provide and George is that the former are able to articulate and defend the liminality of their own sexuality and gender respectively. George is tortured by being caught between a desire to not negatively impact his family's social stature in his small hometown in Appalachia and a desire to settle on a self-authorship and set of personal identity he can describe with relative ease.

Like the battle between home and adult life George is having, Kent is experiencing a battle that is similar and difference all at once. Kent's problematic cost of authorship is having and wanting to maintain a strong connection to the collectivist mentality of his Eastern-influenced Asian upbringing and family. While Kent does not express hang ups about labels and is quite coherent in his explanation of comfort with not being the most masculine man in a room typically, the fear of a massive negative impact on his familial relationships hold him back from the authenticity of a grounded self-authorship of personal masculinity. Men like Kent and George are policed heavily by their own internal apprehension toward adopting a grounded self-authorship, but even the most confident and self-authoring men included in the study population have their authorship policed, only sometimes the policing comes from external forces.

Authorship Policing

Behaviors and choices made by the men in this study regarding self-authorship of masculinity are guided, or policed, by many factors. In some cases, the policing happens internally; the trepidation Cori, George, Kent, and Matt feel about coming out to their family and how that event may negatively impact not only themselves and their own self-

concept, but their families and those relationships. In other cases, the men in the study were highly critical of their own masculinity. Rob and Jimmy, specifically, had an uneasy laugh when they responded to being questions with how they would describe their own masculinity, saying through their nervous laughter, "not that masculine". Remember, Rob and Jimmy are both relatively far along in their journey toward self-authorship of a personal masculinity and they are both still policing themselves, not even relying on others to be the critics.

While internal policing is an issue for many of the men in the study, those factors that illustrate internal policing of authorship are present in the "masking", "confidence", and "costs" sections of this chapter. This section, "authorship policing" will focus more squarely on the external forces that police the masculinity self-authorship journeys of the men in this study. A vast majority of the men interviewed mentioned Greek life and fraternities, specifically clothing and then sometimes mention of social behaviors, as a campus standard used to measure masculinity and police the men of campus. Jace explained that being in a fraternity is a badge of masculinity validation. Cori and Owen commented about how fraternity men wore blazers and ties, boat shoes, khaki pants, and something about a "sharp dressed man" said masculinity and validates masculinity concept in their minds. Others like Kent and Jimmy, characterized campus masculinity perceptions through the fraternity lens, but were not as kind with their comments, Kent labeling the men "douche frat boy[s], dick like" and Jimmy calling them "douchebag frat people". At any rate, they acknowledge that fraternity membership is one means for validating masculinity and it provides external pressures to conform to secure masculinity. Marshall even went so far as to mock fraternity comraderies with a "Come

on, Brah, let's go hit up some bitches" comment. Even the men in the study who mock and disparage the fraternities on campus are acknowledging those student organizations and individuals are setting some standards by which masculinity is often measured on campus, no matter how much they may believe it is obnoxious or annoying.

Another subpopulation that is mentioned by Rob, Matt, and Nate as having influence as a bastion of masculinity for campus is male athletes. Rob detailed how not only male athletes are masculinity role models for men on campus, but went so far as to make claims male athletes receive more funding and recognition for the athletics department and administration for their efforts than the female athletics teams. Matt and Nate do not mention male athletes as much as Rob, but simply use them as an example of how campus perceives (measures) masculinity. Also, while Tim did not mention athletics as a source of campus perceptions for masculinity, he places a high value on athleticism for his own validation of masculinity with other men on campus.

From a more intellectual perspective of masculinity policing on campus, Marshall shares about his specific experience with feedback from faculty members on how everything from voice inflection to tone of academic writing has an impact on perspectives of masculinity in campus academics and student government involvement. Having witnessed the detriment of an interrogative voice inflection from female peers, Marshall mentioned how he will consciously police his own voice inflection. He is awareness that more effeminate speaking tones open up the chances for him to be interrupted or ignored in classrooms or at student government meetings. As mentioned, Marshall also pays close attention to the tone of his writing due to admission of a faculty

member in the academic department of one of his majors assuming someone with a more effeminate presence like his would not have written in such a strong tone.

Tim and Nate discussed authorship policing based on their clothing choices. In a couple instances, Tim cites have been called "fag" on campus in passing and claims he is receives derogatory stares for personal clothing choices such as shorts that may show more thigh than a typical board or cargo shorts. In his own observation, Nate added in his interview that he dresses more effeminately and realizes it is less masculine to wear patterns, scarves, and tighter clothing. Neither Nate nor Tim changed their dress to suit the tastes and comfortability of those around campus, but readily notice the reactions their clothing choices get from others. Tim explains, "I might not have a strong look, but I have a strong mind."

Finally, Jimmy had strong negative experiences with a campus supervisor and a faculty member in his major where his masculinity was called to question or his perspective ridiculed. In the experience with a campus supervisor, he was harshly judged on his mannerisms and the way he presented himself (his look). Based on those characteristics and not his ability to perform work in dirty conditions, his supervisor excused the possibility he would consider Jimmy masculine. In a separate occasion in class, Jimmy's empathy for an animal that was harmed was ridiculed by the instructor and met with laughter from class peers. Jimmy felt it was a more or less direct attack on his personal masculinity.

Sometimes simple clothing choices and dress impact the ability to self-author gender. Other times interactions with faculty or supervisors, peers in influential student organizations, or representatives of an institutional culture in athletics create impact.

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Although their tales are unsubstantiated, all men interviewed for this study feel their masculinity and ability to self-author their gender is policed by a variety of people and in multiple distinct spaces on campus. Even the men who have overcome struggles internally and with their families to self-author a comfortable masculinity are met with policing and role modeling of gender performance expectations in campus spaces and with groups.

Final Thoughts on Narrative and Framework Analysis

The development of and maintenance associated with a self-authorship of personal masculinity is complex to be sure. While the Baxter Magolda theoretical framework assists in an understanding of these men's narratives, there are details from these men's lived experiences that are not easily explained in the space of a theoretical or conceptual development model. The variability with which men operationalized performative concepts such as "masking" and the policing of their performances within the parameters of normative culture is far reaching. Some of the men's examples of living parallel lives, working through bouts of volatile interpersonal confrontation, and ultimately enduring varying degrees of disconnection, illustrates the personal strength and resolve of each man to attempt living an authentic personhood beyond scripts and stereotypes of gender role expectations. Through the lens of the Self-Authorship theoretical perspective, the discussion of each man's interview highlights how identity markers (e.g., age, religious affiliation, being "out" as a gay man, race ethnicity, etc.) are sometimes able to provide context clues for understanding. Even with "context clues", it continues to be necessary to provide the opportunity for students to share the unique and nuanced facts of their journey of personal growth to best support them through their lens

of processing interactions and experiences related to identity development. This call for

resources and service to students in the way of more time and effort from campus

personnel is discussed in the "Implications" section of Chapter Six. Providing physical

spaces and financial resources are not enough to create appropriate resolution for the

needs of marginalized student populations. What is needed most is the time and attention

of faculty, staff, administrators, and student peers on campus to provide opportunities for

focused listening to occur so voices are heard and conviction for progressive action is

engaged.

Chapter Six: Impact and Progression

With the information from this study and current social conditions of American higher education, this chapter introduces implications for professionals across colleges and universities to include a wide variety of stakeholders in the post-secondary education process. Suggestions for continued development of student services and support that embrace multiple masculinities are included for faculty, administrators, and staff. The chapter concludes with a detailed discussion of potential for future research to build upon the work of this narrative analysis of eleven undergraduate gay men. With new directions and further development in mind, approaches and foci for new research projects that would build on the information from this study are explored.

Implications

With all of the relevant literature from Chapter Two and participant details of Chapters Four and Five in mind, one can begin to understand what is at stake for undergraduate gay men in higher education as cultures of specific institutions are fostered, maintained, or changed. Particular aspects of an institution's culture, however inadvertent, proved to be an open invitation or a hindrance to the men of this study. A man like Tim shared how he was able to showcase his athletic ability and gain acceptance in club sports' circles fairly easily, while a man like Jimmy found significant challenges in connecting socially—even with groups of gay-straight alliance that boast their priority of inclusion. When viewed as a single case, any institution chosen throughout the United States presents an organizational culture that is more welcoming to some than others; some institutions fit and feel like home while other campuses do not. For the purpose of this project, I examined how one specific subgroup, gay undergraduate men, can be

impacted by organizational culture, people and policy in the self-authorship of their masculinity. In Chapter Five, I discussed some implications of those experiences gay undergraduate male identifying members of a campus community shared regarding their efforts in gendered self-authorship.

Gay undergraduate men need support in resources and services on campus. Several authors' work introduced in Chapter Two (Cotton-Huston & Waite, 2000; D'Emilio, 1992; Engstrom & Sedlacek, 1997; Harper & Harris, 2010) highlight the stigmatization of gay undergraduate men in the rigid performance and expression standards of normative campus masculinity standards. This project was a chance to illuminate that unique stigmatization surrounding gender performance standards and the challenges gay undergraduate men face in their work to establish fit and belonging with a variety of campus academic disciplines, student organizations, and broad interpersonal interactions. Specifically, this project shows gay undergraduate men are in an array of social locations with respect to their gender performance and a more inclusive and open campus community that accepts multiple masculinities in a less restrictive continuum would alleviate many social stressors and problematic interactions.

With more knowledge of what gay undergraduate men notice as masculine and how they attach masculine tags or meaning to events, behaviors and the many aspects of campus culture, higher education stakeholders will be better equipped to foster positive change for this subpopulation of students on campus. Men in this study like Jace and Marshall employ ornate techniques of gender expression such as vocal tones, mannerisms, and rhetoric to mask any recognition of flamboyancy that could have them labeled "queeny" or "faggot". That knowledge is important for professionals to be aware

of as they consider their resource support for this student subpopulation. With the catalyzing foundational work of Ronni Sanlo, Sue Rankin, and Robert Schoenberg's *Our Place on Campus: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Services and Programs in Higher Education* (2002) in mind, it is my hope my research study will supply professionals with new information specifically related to how gay undergraduate men are developing as men. Sanlo, et al. (2002) use their book as a guide for best practice on what works well on a variety of campuses to bring about a sense of inclusivity, safety and respect. While the work of Sanlo, et al. (2002) is of high-quality as an evidence-based success manual, it also collectively addressed many different groups. Out of the groups of gay men, lesbian women, bisexual individuals, and transgendered people who the outlined services are intended to positively impact, each of the four groups have unique challenges, needs and require specific scaffolding of support. The findings from the narratives of men in this study will allow additional insight for higher education professionals to understand how multiple masculinities, specifically those of gay undergraduate men, need to be kept in mind as the larger work toward inclusivity is being addressed.

Not only is Sanlo, et. al's (2002) grouping problematic due to different sexuality, biological sex, and gender identities being lumped together, but also due to the fact that it forces whole groups of people to compartmentalize aspects of their whole personhood (i.e., race, religion, class, etc.) in order to receive services and support. Shaun Harper, Cameron Wardell and Keon McGuire's chapter entitled "Man of Multiple Identities: Complex Individuality and Identity Intersectionality among College Men" in Jason Laker and Tracy Davis' *Masculinities in Higher Education: Theoretical and Practical*

Considerations (2011) challenges campus professionals, faculty, staff and administrators alike, as having a "professional responsibility to aid women and men alike in productively resolving identity conflicts and transitioning into a version of adulthood where patriarchy, sexism, homophobia, misogyny, misandry, sexual harassment, and all forms of abuse and oppression ends with them". In order to meet that challenge posed by Harper, et al. (2011), we must begin viewing identity constructs from a multidimensional perspective.

There is a great deal of research and intentional conversation that needs to be completed to learn how multiple dimensions of identity are being operationalized on campuses. Continuing the work of understanding identity intersectionality is critical; some of the men in this study made their religious identity salient, some their class identity, and others their ethnicity. Individual experiences along each of the men's life courses made different identities prominent for each of them. My project provides a small window into the masculinity constructs and work of gender expressions for some men in the subgroup of gay undergraduate men on a campus. Equipped with a new lens of understanding from my study where intersectionality of identity is honored and heard as well, professionals in higher education can hopefully ask questions and listen to understand. That prospective higher level of understanding could assist professionals to better serve and assist gay undergraduate men with gender identity development and successful social integration on campus. I also hope my study paves the way for investigation into and work with other groups of students with this critical eye of self-authorship and identity role conflict, particularly groups that feel profoundly stigmatized by authentic expression and performance of their identities.

Critical Considerations of Self-Authorship

In many ways, application of Baxter Magolda's (2001) theoretical model of self-authorship here is helpful in comprehending the magnitude of impact of outsiders on an individual's gender performance perspective and choices; insights were also gained for how each of the men conceptualize and make use of masculinity scripts from their life as a youth and more contemporarily as an adult. Working through the lens of Baxter Magolda's framework uncovered how some men from the study, like Matt and Owen as an example, make use of masculinity codes and formulas learned at earlier ages to make sense of their own place of gender performance. Matt places emphasis on the role modeling of masculinity traits he observed from his grandfather, while Owen used his experience with the Marine Corps to help direct his making sense of his personal social location for a gendered life. Other men, like Nate, who places importance on his love for applying pop culture trends in his gender expression, or Jace, who pinpoints codes of professionalism to guide him, show just how diverse the "external formulas" of Baxter Magolda's can flex to include individual narratives of undergraduate gay male masculinity perspectives.

When contemplating the array of performativity the men in this study employ when building personal gender performance and expression for their daily lives, the specific way this study carries the conversations of the Baxter Magolda model to new scholarly landscape is by illuminating how the men operate through attempts to self-authorship in respective contexts. Baxter Magolda's (2001) original work focused more squarely on White, affluent men. This study not only places emphasis on men from a more stigmatized sexual orientation, but also includes men of color, men from low

socioeconomic and affluent familial backgrounds, and men living a more contemporary

manhood. Additionally, the work for this project has examined authorship specific to

gender performance and expression unlike Baxter Magolda, who entered authorship with

a more general, broad-base lens related to life experiences of men. Baxter Magolda

(2001) set a foundation for new ways to approach individual life narratives through this

lens of "self-authorship", but a number of scholars (Abes, et al., 2007; Pizzolato, 2003;

Pizzolato, 2004) have made efforts to further complicate understandings of individuals'

acts of self-authorship from a wider variety of personal backgrounds and identities. Even

Baxter Magolda has continued to bevel and refine her orientation to the framework by

offering new ways to assess individuals' progress of self-authorship and the work they do

to make meaning out of their life experiences (Baxter Magolda, 2007, 2008, 2009a,

2009b, 2010). The narratives of the eleven men in this project have continued to add to

that conversation by offering yet another set of perspective to consider that center

authorship related to masculinity and overall gender expression.

Furthermore, this study not only carries forward the conversations that were

introduced by Baxter Magolda nearly twenty years ago, but this work also highlights

complications the eleven men in this study experience as they attempt the self-authorship

journey. The self-authorship framework does not necessarily offer a clean-cut way to

move from a life of living by the standards of others to a life where authenticity of

identity performance is free flowing. However, the model is presented in a way that does

not highlight the costs experienced and shared by the men in this narrative analysis. A

particular finding that was problematic for the concept of self-authorship was the amount

of "masking" and self-policing that the men used to establish fit and avoid stigmatization

on campus. Multiple men in the study (e.g., Rob, Marshall, and Jace) claimed their place of self-authorship of masculinity by relying on augmenting the representations and expressions in different social contexts. As they self-police their gender to avoid stigmatization, I would not consider that a true self-authorship as Baxter Magolda posits it in her framework explanations. Rather than living by their own gender standards and displaying a truly authentic, comfortable gender representation, they "mask" their actions and voice to ensure they are not labeled "queeny", "faggot", or "flamer", as they cited being called when some of them relaxed their sense of conformity around campus.

Rob claims trying to not stand out in the classroom by remaining quiet and controlling his mannerisms, Marshall admits to changing his vocal and writing tones to make progress with policy change in committee and student governance spaces, and Jace performs with his "White woman voice", as his partner calls it. With a stifled presentation of self-authorship, the men have to be selective when they disclose their most comfortable personal expressions of masculinity that challenge more normative gender binary scripts. In some way, the hegemonic, heteronormative gender platforms celebrated on campus funnel non-binary gender representations to specific spaces on campus. Living in a metaphorical panoptic gendered prison, the men in this study were made to wait for more private or "safe" spaces to relax and display truest gender self-authorship. Some of the men in the study who refuse to comply to more standardized norms are resigned to more liminal space where they either experience critical pains of exclusion or are embattled in interpersonal conflict on a more consistent basis.

The three men who better fit the self-authorship concept Baxter Magolda celebrates in her framework are Owen, Nate, and Jimmy. However, self-authoring their

more "true" gendered lives is still restrictive and does not fully live up to the freedoms

the framework places on a pedestal. Owen restricts himself to spaces that are more

comfortable with his personal gender expression, but the only space that feels "safe" is

the LGBT Resource Center community room; how could limiting your comfort zone to

one room on a large university campus be considered self-authorship? Nate and Jimmy

both refuse to placate the standards of celebrated campus masculinity that does little to

embrace multiple masculinity. In their refusal to comply, Nate shared about heated

confrontations with men on more than one occasion where he was prepared to defend his

social location on the gender continuum by physically fighting; Jimmy detailed his

heightened social detachment and challenges to identify a social group for belonging on

campus. Additionally, Jimmy recalled contentious relationships with instructors in the

classroom and his work supervisor when you refused to performance some fallacious

machismo for the purposes of social acceptance and palatability. Like Nate, George also

cited challenging interpersonal experiences with peers when attempting to defend his

personal presentation of masculinity.

Considered as a cohort, no man in the study was able to present a free and clear

self-authorship of gender with complete authenticity. While their performative acumen

was strong in many cases, they disclosed their abilities to finesse perceived authorship of

gender with tools of masking expressions and making use of self-policing and policing

from others to nudge fit and belonging. There are certainly challenges with the

application of self-authorship and ways the narratives of the men in this study cannot be

made to fit perfectly. However, the tales of their experiences and operationalized

masculinity performances can be used to strengthen understanding of less known

perspectives of multiple masculinities as campuses move forward with their idealistic

plans for inclusivity.

Practice Considerations

As higher education continues to expand in diversity and scope and the demand

for college enrollment rises, each college or university loses some of its agency to foster

and maintain a unique sense of campus culture. Due to the competition to acquire and

grow enrollments, American higher education institutions engage in mimetic activities

influenced by capitalistic pressures today's society (Schulz & Lucido, 2011). Colleges

and universities are offering greater diversity of services, resources, and support

structures in an effort to win over prospective students so a student chooses to

attend. Surviving as an organization in a setting where financial resources are scarce

forces some colleges and universities to make difficult choices about how to best cater to

a more diverse and discerning class of students. Limited resources make strategic

choices about changes on campus all the more important.

As vital as it is to cater to the masses in order to gain the necessary enrollment to

remain fiscally viable, organizational leaders are also forced to think about how their

decisions about changes will alter campus culture. While the need to offer the best fit

and home-like feeling to students is clear, are some colleges and universities choosing to

give in to capitalistic pressures at the cost of stripping an existing campus culture?

Embracing multiple masculinities and doing the work to have an array of identity

expressions on campus does not come without challenges; the work of change to make

students like the men in this study more comfortable in their academic home is

sometimes in direct opposition to the celebrated campus culture. Without providing

some easy and sweeping solution, I encourage higher education professionals to use the findings from this study to information conversations about gender inclusivity on campuses. However, the chances for change that would positively impact the experience of men like the ones included in this study may be far more difficult for some campuses than others.

In a more contemporary contribution to the conversation, Tierney (2012) suggests that creativity on the part of colleges and universities will be a key to holding onto organizational culture in the face of institutions copying the efforts of their competitors. Academic capitalism threatens the agency of creativity and how far an institution can go to maintain its sense of unique culture, but also has the potential to create a bridge of sorts to accommodate necessity for change. If a campus can realize the chances for positive impact of creating respect for wider ranges of gender expression to include multiple masculinities, that does not necessarily imply the complete institutional culture will be transformed. Tierney (2012) insists the goal should be to breathe new life into the campus, not a completely different and unfamiliar one. With his suggestions, Tierney (2012) makes it seem completely reasonable that a college or university can make changes to attract students while maintaining the culture and sense of unique identity that a campus boasts. It is a significant challenge to make one's campus relevant and competitive in the face of a realm ruled by rankings, rapidly unfolding technology, and greater demographic diversity. At the same time, campus leaders must also work to preserve an identity steeped in history, tradition, and distinctive character. At times, the task of making both objectives, honoring history and tradition while embracing and welcoming change, a reality seems daunting and almost paradoxical.

Issues of LGBTQ students, faculty, and staff on college and university campuses are an exponentially growing area within scholarly research and literature. There are many relevant studies (Park & Denson, 2009; Fox, 2010; Renn, 2000; Jenning, 2010a; Jennings, 2010b) that have begun the necessary investigation of how LGBTQ identities are understood and made operational as part of a living, changing campus culture. Aside from an altruistic perspective of embracing difference for the sake of those who identify outside of the hetero-normative, Cress (2008) and Messinger (2009) point to the benefits of LGBTQ inclusion even for those who do not identify as LGBTQ in an effort to move campus cultures in a positive direction. That blanket inclusion called for by so many scholars includes the specific focus of this project, an illumination of the myriad of gender performances of gay undergraduate men; while many have highlighted the need for inclusion of the sweeping gendered perspectives of "LGBTQ", this study has contributed a window into the microcosm of considering variability in gender performativity for undergraduate gay men.

Educational experiences, understanding, and preparedness all increase dramatically when students, regardless of identity, background, or prior experience, are exposed to vantage points different from their own (Schoorman & Bogotch, 2010). For identities that have been afforded a history and have had years to infiltrate the academy, one could easily look around her/his respective campus and find examples of inclusion based on programming, visibility, topical course offerings, and leadership. Even though some of these groups, African Americans and women in particular, have a longstanding history with visibility in American higher education when compared to LGBTQ issues and concerns, difference as a whole is still largely cornered into pockets of

campuses. There is little sense of free-flowing ideas, honoring of humanity, or appreciation for difference when one stops and looks around higher education institutions.

History is an important cornerstone that needs to be developed when thinking about LGBTQ identities in the classroom. Largely considered a more contemporary, problematic concern, LGBTQ identities do in fact have their own rich and diverse history (Graves, 2012). Just like other identities and cultures, LGBTQ people have a story rooted in history from every possible angle. LGBTQ identities did not simply spring out of thin air. Every nation, culture, and race/ethnicity has a LGBTQ history that has recently and is currently being uncovered exponentially. With time and energy that has already been offered by faculty in a variety of disciplines and partnership with non-campus community initiatives, some might be very surprised to find out just how much knowledge and publication value the LGBTQ identities have produced.

In addition, faculty should think about how highly politicized and visible LGBTQ identities are becoming in greater society outside of college and university campuses. With more sustained, prolonged exposure to the general population, there is interest in learning about and understanding the LGBTQ perspective. Park and Denson (2009) detailed how many STEM faculty make excuses for how LGBTQ identities, and multiculturalism in general, are difficult to include and fold into the curriculum for their disciplines. However, Meyer, et al. (2007) explained that campus organizational culture has been influenced greatly by general society; it is a matter of time before the greater presence and visibility of LGBTQ people on college campuses must be addressed in a positive and constructive way.

For administrators, there is a dollar value in challenging faculty and staff to be more inclusive with their research, teaching, programming and policies as well. LGBTQ students are making strategic choices and decisions around college attendance and basing which campuses they apply to on how "open" the community appears to be, both socially and academically (Burleson, 2010; Messinger, 2009). LGBTQ students are flocking to campuses that are willing to give them a voice, visibility, and a legitimate place on campus. Having services and education that are inclusive of all groups, including a wider continuum of gender performativity, has potential of powerful impact on applicant pools and ultimate enrollments. In addition, gay men have been particularly successful as college graduates, a marker of successful practices for campuses (Carpenter, 2009). Anything to increase enrollments and richness of diversity in population and perspective should be a priority goal for administrators on campuses.

Chris Morphew (2009) argues that there is an epidemic in higher education, specifically for state-sponsored colleges and universities like the setting for this study, Public Research University, where developing scholars are lost to other regional geographies that are attractive for any number of reasons. While Morphew does not detail LGBTQ identity specifically, he claims there is a "brain drain" and loss of potential scholarship to campuses in other geographies. While there is no detail of the demographics of difference provided by Morphew, there is diversity in the segment of high achieving scholars entering college today. The opportunities to work with some outstanding, developing students is lost to campuses' inability, or more likely unwillingness, to envelope difference and embrace all populations of people. Unless there is a paradigmatic shift in how diversity and multiculturalism is incorporated in

respective colleges and universities, to include LGBTQ people and their individual identity expressions like multiple masculinities, potential for greatness is lost to other campuses that are willing to make necessary changes.

There are far more positive effects from inclusion of LGBTQ issues and concerns on college and university campuses than negative. There is copious literature to exhibit why a more inclusive campus culture, both academically and socially, would benefit all campus constituencies. Developments in recent history illustrate LGBTQ people are growing more visible and finding their voice among the general population. With that, inclusion of LGBTQ perspectives in the academy and social spaces on campus seem inevitable if campuses are to thrive in the future.

More than anything, the positive shift of inclusivity with faculty starts within the faculty body itself. A starting point that is crucial is embracing contentious research agendas in the search for truth and uncovering hidden identities and points of view. The rigid critiques of faculty research interests and narrow evaluations of their work in consideration for tenure are problematic. I am not asserting that faculty should not be challenged to perform at levels befitting membership in the academy, but I am critical of the bias of what is considered valuable and necessary research in the academy.

Freedom to own one's interests and multiple facets of personal identity are the first step in bringing the productivity and innovation of the academy back to life. Antiquated policies and traditions that are driving organizational culture need to shift to embrace the rich, inventive and forward-looking nature a contemporary campus demographic landscapes. Campuses should commit to a pursuit of all new knowledge and continue to be places that welcome difference in order to be a change agent for the

rest of society. Will colleges and universities wait for society to drive their respective

organizational cultures or will campuses take control of the direction of their institutional

culture and serve as shining examples and laboratories for how society should progress?

Study findings were riddled with information about how tenuous masculinity

performance is, and Catherine Engstrom and William Sedlacek's 1997 article, "Attitudes

of Heterosexual Students Toward their Gay Male and Lesbian Peers", in *Journal of

College Student Development* delineates the treatment of gay men and lesbian women's

experiences on campus. Engstrom and Sadlacek (1997) found males were far more

stigmatized by being "out" than lesbian women. Even with interventions in place on a

programmatic or curricular basis, problems for all LGB students persist. Without

sustained and staid exposure experiences, social transformation on college campuses, and

in general society, are not likely to happen. Annie Cotton-Huston and Bradley Waite

(2000) present their findings from a survey with psychology students exposed to guest

lectures and speakers related to LGB identity in an article in the *Journal of

Homosexuality*. Cotton-Huston and Waite (2000) concluded there is a need for better

integration of LGB identity exposure and education outreach in place of simple,

fragmented exposure experiences. Breaking down walls and barriers to achieve a truly

integrated social climate is necessary to invoke real change and foster an environment

that promotes a healthy, authentic self-authorship. In a specific example, that means

actively working to end experiences like Jimmy's where he detailed being ridiculed by an

instructor in front of over 100 peers for his emotional response to an inhumane treatment

of animals in a science course lecture.

Taking the financial and academic quality stakes Burleson (2010) and Morphew (2009) shared into consideration, the need to promote campuses as spaces of respectful inquiry where people from an array of backgrounds and lived experiences converge should be of paramount concern. The ferocity of competition between institutions to reach enrollment and retention goals and reach financial solvency, in many cases tied to government funding, alumni giving, and awarding of grants, should be reason enough to at least consider the perspectives should in the men's narratives within this study. If financial concerns were not enough, there is a richness added to the academic spaces by including a more diverse set of perspectives and lived experiences that shape the institution's culture (Meyer, et al., 2007; Morphew, 2009). With the great diversity of majors for the eleven men included in this study, there can be widespread positive impact for a flurry of academic disciplines and classroom discussions if open mindedness to multiple masculinities was given more priority and respect.

Over time and with or without particular action, how an institution is situated financially and culturally can shift in positive or negative direction. With steps taken to work toward better inclusivity, there are anticipated challenges culturally and politically, especially in the case of incorporating inclusion of what has become a political identity. Even Marshall understands the significance of aligning personal gender performance with hegemonic masculinity norms on campus. Marshall shared his heightened awareness of how his masculinity expressions were received and intentional work to augment his gender expression to gain acceptance with campus administrative governance and influence policy change on campus. However, I argue the benefit of including a population that has proven themselves successful in achieving academic goals and

contributing to campus communities in positive ways despite campus politics of exclusion outweighs encountered challenges and stifling of non-normative masculinities. (Carpenter, 2009) In this section, I outline possible practice applications for consideration with student affairs professionals, faculty, and institutional administrators on campuses. No matter the campus size or location, these considerations could be introduced to scale depending on the specific culture and political challenges a campus is facing.

 Faculty and Administrators. In order to make strides with a campus community, introducing the concepts of identity intersections and salience to campus leaders and employees is a good first step (Abes, et al., 2007). Those leading and doing the work of a campus have the chance to lead by example, challenge assumptions related to identity, and incorporate the concept of intersectionality into classroom and campus programming offering. To make the angle of intersectionality and salience related to identities even more palatable, this cognitive perspective is one applicable to everyone with some introspection work. Everyone ascribes to a mix of identities and each of those identities become salient contextually. This idea is significant because of the importance that was placed on challenges of having masculinity policed and feeling the need to "mask" in the narratives of Rob, Jimmy, Marshall, and Jace. All shared their perceived need to approach classroom environments with an inauthentic masculinity. Conversations about underrepresentation of a specific sex in male or female dominated professions such as engineering and nursing have happened for years, but the talk can be taken further by discussing what the experience of a male nursing student or female engineering student must be like and how we can afford peer colleagues of other sex identities a more

welcoming environment. A soft introduction to these conversations everyone can relate to encourages buy-in and makes the work necessary for the benefit of all classroom or community members.

Another respect for implementing positive change is in the pedagogy itself. No matter the academic discipline or profession, there is a much richer history of past professionals and accomplishments that is not be widely shared or touched upon in curricula. This particular consideration is brought to light most specifically by Karen Graves (2012) and the dedicated work of so many in recent decades to uncover queer histories and the impact individuals from a myriad of queer backgrounds have had on many fields of study. The issue of omissions of histories and impact of individual professionals is problematic on a larger scale; however, O'Neil and Crapser (2011) focus on the implications for absolving lack of efficacy with respect to service of college men experiencing gender role conflict via rigid masculinity performance standards and expectations with peer college men. In this case, a prime example being Jimmy feeling ridiculed in his science classroom by his instructor, who was then joined in laughter from the class, for his display of emotion in "feeling sorry" for a slaughtered calf. While it does not relate to histories, Jimmy's example was a missed opportunity for the instructor to lean into the softer lens of livestock processing for foods and ethical discussion of humane treatment of livestock. In some cases, the need to incorporate inclusivity from the perspective of gender role conflict comes in the form of challenges an audience to adopt alternative vantage points, even if only temporarily as an exercise for education.

Institutionally, a central issue is practicing patience and consistency when considering policy and campus practice changes in pedagogy and interpersonal

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interactions. Policy change and implementation of new pedagogic philosophies is made complicated by the diversity of academic and professional disciplines represented on any one campus, the social and political geography that skew individual and community perspectives, and real, lasting change takes time. Remembering the decades needed to make progress shared in the gay social histories from Chapter Two, there is no switch to activate inclusivity with a single wave. The call for changes and sharing the importance for doing so is time intensive, but certainly worth the effort to ensure all campus community members feel a sense of respect and belonging that encourages the very growth and development a campus promises to provide as its mission. Until such a time that large-scale changes do occur, the critical role of student service professionals should also be discussed.

Student Service Professionals. Complementing the formal education happening in the classrooms, student service professionals provide opportunities to apply new knowledge and make sense of the flurry of new encounters college students are having as young adults. As institutional leaders set an expectation of behavior and refine standards for education, student service professionals provide translation for life application and developing amicable working relationships across identity divides. Even without grand changes in policy and regulation, professionals in college student affairs have the capacity to support students in their successful navigation of current campus climates and develop means for integrating themselves into the campus community effectively. Two primary professional exercises for supporting a more inclusive campus environment for students is programming and individual advocacy and support.

Programming on a college campus can include anything from formal student organizations to single occasion programs meant to supplement formal education. Student involvement and occasions to apply developing knowledge and experience provide solid scaffolding for personal and professional competencies. Many of the eleven men whose narratives are included in this study cite a variety of student organizations and involvement opportunities that have supported their authentic self-authorship of personal masculinity. Cultivating environments for students to make an impact and be involved in meaningful ways is central to the professional responsibilities of college student affairs officers. From Jace's involvement with leadership in his academic college or Tim's active participation in club sports to Kent's primary association with service-oriented organizations, the many ways the men in this study are involved on campus is overseen by a variety of student service professionals with distinct job responsibilities tied together by a larger campus mission and objectives. While the men have had unique involvement and connection to their campus, they can be served effectively because of the inclusivity provided by a diverse set of opportunities to connect. Extending our professional commitment to respect agency of self-authorship every student can also positively compound the sense of inclusivity delivered by already having unique chances for involvement on campus.

Even with the positive strides made in building diverse means for involvement, there are undoubtedly situations that arise with individual students who make choices to self-author identities in ways incongruent with the list of available options for connection on a campus. In those instances, advocacy and support from student service professionals should be available to validate unique sensibilities for self-authorship where

students are not conforming to gender normative standards. Instead of being validated in authentic representation of self, queer men are often devalued and made to feel lesser (Berila, 2011). Opportunities to educate individual students and groups about prismatic identity expressions need to be a more common occurrence on college campuses in order to normalize differences between people. If difference is normalized through discussion about it, which mitigates internalized phobias that combat authenticity as well as reliance on unhealthy displays sourced from places like marketing, media, or pornography (O'Neil and Crapser, 2011). Marshall and Tim specifically cite the *Grindr* application for mobile phone as a more salacious source for developing a critical eye for masculinity performance. Programming and interpersonal conversations that widen frames of acceptable masculinity performance will allow college men to self-author a personal masculinity both healthy and authentic. This study of narratives of eleven gay undergraduate men illuminates some of the challenges and triumphs in masculinity self-authorship, but evoking new perspectives from continued research of different lived experiences will allow for continued and strengthened advocacy and support for every student.

Future Directions

This final section introduces potential for future research with augmented population or study focus parameters. This study illuminated many meaning-making experiences related to masculinity self-authorship of undergraduate gay men from a variety of backgrounds. However, the findings from this study are best used in conjunction with other narrative research and as an in-depth inquiry to work with studies that have used survey-level and quantitative databases. Taken together, a more complete

vision for the experiences of gay undergraduate men can be inferred and used to support new positive developments on college and university campuses. Although there are compelling narratives of eleven men included in this study, the findings also provide perspective for new directions and findings future research could uncover in the story of American higher education.

Disparity of Lived Experience

The findings from this narrative inquiry call for a more in-depth exploration of gay undergraduate men from a variety of aligned lived experience. From the respect of age, the participants in this study ranged in age from 18 to 30 years old. With that disparity, it became clear there were dramatically different vantage points. While some of the older men included in this study had some lengthy contributions to provide in their narratives, the longest being Marshall's two hour interview, the youngest participant, Matt felt he had little to contribute in details about masculinity perspective and his own self-authorship of gender. Even with a much less time spent interviewing, Matt was able to provide some useful details about how an 18 year old man thinks about and critically reads life sources for gender performance and expectations for living a specific gender authorship. While Matt is still in the early stages of his self-authorship journey for gender performance, his exploration of sexual identity and negotiating that with his grandfather's values principles is interesting. With a new set of questions tailored toward more specific subsections of self-authorship framework, new studies to investigate age-specific struggles and how to support men at different ages and developmental checkpoints could be helpful.

Another peculiar disparity in the lived experiences of participants is geography of origination. The men included in this study were from all over the U.S., west coast, Midwest, and southeastern. The men from the west coast area all appeared to come from family background that were more readily accepting of difference and dissonance with regard to gender and sexualities than the participants from southeast; the men from the Midwest experienced a variety of acceptance and exclusion. As discussed in Chapter Two, there is a significance of place that has been evoked throughout gay social history and in the personal narratives authors have shared, but focused comparative research could illuminate more concrete findings about the significance of locale. More depth of study stratifying the sample for physical geography themes of experience provides the ability for professionals in education to pinpoint where more work could be done to support students on their self-authorship journeys, for gender and otherwise.

Different Identities

Whole personal identity is a crossroads of many fragments of identity groups in a single individual. Yes, those can include age and geography of origination, but also so many other factors from race and ethnicity and religion to the less explored social class status. It was interesting to hear about the great influence of families led by a matriarch, from both Latino and Caucasian backgrounds. In a study that focused so squarely on self-authorship of masculinity, the absence of a father figure for some of the men did not have as much of a negative impact and consequence in the development of personal masculinity as once assumed. The structure of a family has a degree of influence on the personal development of students and developing self-authorship study with populations delineated by family structure could prove useful.

Also, six of the eleven men who took part in this study were from underrepresented racial and ethnic backgrounds in the literature, especially literature on self-authorship. Outside of the perspective Kent provided regarding a comparison of Eastern and Western philosophies of family and orientations to the collective versus individualistic existence, race and ethnicity did not become as salient in the narratives as I would have imagined. Considering the importance scholars like Collins (2005) and Cintron (2000) placed on social location for gay men from Black and Latino backgrounds, it was assumed race and ethnicity would be more salient in the narratives of men from those backgrounds in this study. More directed study specifically looking to highlight the lived experiences and self-authorship of men from underrepresented and marginalized racial and ethnic backgrounds also have a high value to the development of scholarship. In addition to the development of scholarship, there is an even more critical value for creating the most inclusive and welcoming spaces possible on higher education campuses across the country. The current racial climate in the United States is hostile and more attention offered to study and support populations from minority racial and ethnic backgrounds will be helpful in cultivating spaces for healthy growth and development for young adults from all races and ethnicities.

There were nuances of religious influence in the self-authorship of masculinity with this study population, but in no narrative did religious backgrounds drive the interview in such a way that allowed me to infer religion directed self-authorship. A deeper understanding of how religion directs meaning-making at early ages would be helpful as future literature. Interviews like Rob's illustrate that students come from rigid backgrounds like his Catholic upbringing, but it remains unclear how religion interplays

with other sources read for context clues for the work of self-authorship. Religious undertones in personal development are particularly interesting given the work of scholars like Barton (2012) and her interviews with "Bible belt gays".

Class status and the role of the many forms of capital used in self-authorship work by individuals in this study were also downplayed. The narrative that showed the effects of class status most was the harrowing tale of Marshall's survival and development from a dismal childhood. Even still, Marshall focused more on secondary factors like drug use and abuse in his family more so than the lack of resources and that effect on his personal development. The experiences Marshall shared as part of his story and the impressive awareness state he has alludes to the potential that lower class status is catalytic in nature, like the coming out process, in speeding the path to practice of self-authorship.

Additionally, Marshall, Jimmy, and George shared briefly about their growing up in Appalachia and make shallow attempts to juxtapose the lived experiences of their youth with their daily life in a more urban area. Future study with a specific focus on undergraduate gay men's class status and the experience multiple masculinities in rural life could make use of the tangential published materials on broader LGBTQ populations from rural areas. Some of those works are Barton's *Pray The Gay Away: The Extraordinary Lives of Bible Belt Gays* (2012), Mary Gray's *Out in the Country: Youth, Media, and Queer Visibility in Rural America* (2009), and Mary Gray, Brian Gilley, and Colin Johnson's *Queering the Countryside: New Frontiers in Rural Queer Studies* (2016). However, the few details provided in the eleven narratives from men in this study leave effects of class status and rural life on self-authorship of gay male undergraduate masculinity, and other identities, relatively unknown.

Depth of Identity Intersection

Intersections of identity can also be better separated in a future study. Specific questions that take a path of having the participants cognitively separate gender identity and sexuality could be helpful as masculinity research and literature continues to develop. In this study, the eleven men thought of their masculinity in tandem with sexuality and their orientation as gay, and in Matt's case bisexual. The narratives are not consistently clear about the separation of gender and sexuality for the men. In addition, other intersections and how the respective facets of personal identity (race, religion, class status, etc.) interweave and grow or hinder self-authorship of the different parts of the whole are an interesting concept. As Baxter Magolda (2010) and Boes, Baxter Magolda, and Buckley (2010) suggest, there are woven cycles of self-authorship that occur simultaneously. As gender self-authorship is developing, so too are self-authorship journeys for race, religion, sexuality, class status, ability, etc. The fractured approaches to self-authorship, as theorized, opens many prospects for future study of a plethora of populations.

Group Interaction Study

Another means for growing or redirecting study from this project is to consider self-authorship through a group interaction study, either focus groups or as an anthropological observation study. The men who shared their lived experiences here were all involved in many different types of student organizations, working environments, major areas of study, and community involvement. With each of those interactive silos, some participants, Rob and Marshall, discussed their "masking" and the idea they performed and self-authored gender in disparate ways based on the context of

the situation and people with whom they were interacting. The findings from interviews in this study illuminated epistemological and intrapersonal dimensions of self-authorship quite well. However, the interpersonal dimension was understood from their vantage point only. Having the opportunity to assess group interactions first-hand would provide an interesting new avenue of assessment regarding the men's self-authorship of masculinity. The interactions would be helpful not only from what the men understand and how they are interpreting activities, but also what the interactions look like and take in the pieces the men are not aware of or may be subconsciously or consciously omitting from the individual interview.

Longitudinal Change

Time has a way of changing perspective as well. Just as Baxter Magolda (2001) interviewed a group of Caucasian, higher-socioeconomic background men in a longitudinal way to develop the self-authorship theoretical perspective, it could be fruitful to study individuals from other backgrounds and identity fractures as well. As higher education claims to be committed to being an entity for all backgrounds and experiences, it is important that work be done to be more inclusive in research practices; that inclusivity means stratifying sample to be inclusive of many different lived experiences and background paths. While a qualitative study like this one has a population that does not necessarily prove helpful in generalization for implementing change on its own, the findings do show difference matters and should be explored with greater purpose and focus. Making a qualitative study like the narratives of these eleven men a longitudinal project would illustrate how self-authorship progression works for underrepresented male populations. Longitudinal study would also provide additional insight to what effect

exposure experiences related to respective aspects of personal identity (race, religion, class status, sexuality, gender, etc.) have on the cycles and overall journey of self-authorship in intersecting identities and personal vantage points.

Final Thoughts

This study has provided insight into eleven personal viewpoints of the gay undergraduate male experience and perspective. Without the intent or ability to apply as a broad generalization, the included narratives and findings provide detail for critical thought about how gay undergraduate men practice meaning-making related to self-authorship of masculinity. The process of individuals building agency to influence and impact their own lived experiences is crucial to not only the individuals, but also to the directed development of American higher education. That is not to say there is not a copious list of priorities for ensuring colleges and universities thrive well into the future, but that our individual journeys of self-authorship, taken collectively, have a massive impact on the progress of education. From the way we know and acquire knowledge to how we use that knowledge for the advancement of any number of fields of study, understanding and continuing to study self-authorship of college populations will allow leaders to direct inclusive and welcoming spaces that foster the best in teaching, research, and service to others.

Appendices

Appendix A

Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol

Self-Authoring Gender Performance: A Narrative Analysis of Gay Undergraduate Men

Participant Pseudonym: **Interview Time**:

Location: **Date**:

Interviewer: Casey Shadix   **Start**:____ **End**:____

Introduction: Thank you for meeting with me today. Before we get started I would like to review a few essential components of the interview process. We'll be talking today about your gender experiences and impact gender has on your campus experience. You have the option to have your recorded interview added to the university's ▮▮▮▮▮ archive. If you decide to not have your information added to the oral history archive, all information shared today will be kept confidential and will be linked to your self-selected pseudonym, not your actual name. We'll review the consent form together and I will have you sign it before I begin asking you questions. You may choose to skip any question that you would prefer not to answer; participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may choose to remove yourself from the study at any time. There are no right or wrong answers and you can take as much time as needed to answer the questions.

Opening Question

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself.
    a. Make sure to get information about:
        i. structure of his family
        ii. when he first knew he was gay and about his coming out process
        iii. why he chose to attend university
            a. how he became aware of university
            b. what is his major and why he selected that major
        iv. What are his hobbies and interests

Questions about Masculinity

2. How do you define masculinity?
    a. How do you think society defines masculinity?
    b. How do you think masculinity is perceived on campus?
    c. How do you feel your masculinity is supported on campus?

3. How do you perceive your own masculinity?
   a. How would you describe your masculinity to someone else?
      i. What are things that you think influence (guide, impact) your masculinity?
      ii. How did you decide this would be your masculinity?
      iii. How do you think your masculinity has changed since you realized you are gay?

4. Has attending college impacted your masculinity? Why or why not?
   a. Have you had experiences while in college that have changed how you perceive your masculinity? If so, what examples are your comfortable sharing?
      i. Do you feel your masculinity changes in certain places or with certain groups?
   b. What experiences related to your masculinity have been empowering since becoming a college student?
      i. How have your relationships on campus changed since those experiences?

Closing Question

5. Is there anything I haven't asked you about masculinity that you would like to add?

Potential Probes

Could you please describe that in more detail?

Tell me more.
Could you define that word for me?

What does that mean to you?

What did you do/say next?

What happened?
Please give me an example.
Walk me through the experience.

How did that make you feel?

Informed Consent

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Self-Authoring Gender Performance: A Narrative Analysis of Gay Undergraduate Men

WHY ARE YOU BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH?

You are being invited to take part in a research study about your gender-related experiences as a student on campus. You are being invited to take part in this research study because you have contacted the researcher with interest in participating. If you volunteer to take part in this study, you will be one of about twenty people to do so.

WHO IS DOING THE STUDY?

The person in charge of this study is **Casey Shadix, M.Ed., PhD Candidate** of ███████ ███. He is being guided in this research by **Dr.** ███████████████**.D, and Dr.** ██████████ ██**D.**. There may be other people on the research team assisting at different times during the study.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

By doing this study, we hope to learn how gay undergraduate men define and understand their gender, both personally and as a larger concept.

ARE THERE REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

You should not participate in this study if you are under 18 years of age, are not currently enrolled as an undergraduate student, and/or do not identify as a gay (homosexual) male.

WHERE IS THE STUDY GOING TO TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?

The research procedures (interview) will be conducted at a location mutually agreed upon by the participant and interviewer. You will need to come to the mutually agreed upon location only one time during the study. This single visit will take about 90 minutes.

WHAT WILL YOU BE ASKED TO DO?

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to sign a consent form and be asked a series of questions regarding your gender experiences on campus. Also, by agreeing to participate in the study the information you provide to the interviewer may be used for research purposes, oral history purposes, or both. Before beginning the interview, you will be given the opportunity to select a pseudonym (fake name) if you wish for your answers to remain confidential. Once the interview has been completed and the interview recording has been transcribed into a word document, you will receive a copy of your interview to review and make changes, if necessary. If you choose to be identified, you will also have the choice of whether or not to have your recorded interview to be added to the ██████████████████████████████████ archive.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS?

To the best of our knowledge, the things you will be doing have no more risk of harm than you would experience in everyday life.

You may find some questions we ask you to be upsetting or stressful. If so, we can tell you about some people who may be able to help you with these feelings.

In addition to the risks listed above, you may experience a previously unknown risk or side effect.

WILL YOU BENEFIT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

You will not get any personal benefit from taking part in this study.

DO YOU HAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY?

If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. You can stop at any time during the study and still keep the benefits and rights you had before volunteering.

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY, ARE THERE OTHER CHOICES?

If you do not want to be in the study, there are no other choices except not to take part in the study.

WHAT WILL IT COST YOU TO PARTICIPATE?

There are no costs associated with taking part in the study.

WILL YOU RECEIVE ANY REWARDS FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

You will receive a $10.00 gift card to the retail location of your choice for taking part in this study. If you choose to end the interview session for any reason before it is completed, you will still receive the $10.00 gift card for your time and participation.

WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT YOU GIVE?

If you choose to not have your recorded interview be included in the oral history archive, we will make every effort to keep confidential all research records that identify you to the extent allowed by law.

Your information will be combined with information from other people taking part in the study. When we write about the study to share it with other researchers, we will write about the combined information we have gathered. You will not be personally identified in these written materials. We may publish the results of this study; however, we will keep your name and other identifying information private if you choose to not have them included as a record in the oral history archive.

If you choose to not have your recorded interview be included in the oral history archive, we will make every effort to prevent anyone who is not on the research team from knowing that you gave us information, or what that information is. All records from the interview session will be kept on a personal technology device that is password protected.

We will keep private all research records that identify you to the extent allowed by law. However, there are some circumstances in which we may have to show your information to other people. For example, the law may require us to show your information to a court or to tell authorities if you report information about a child being abused or if you pose a danger to yourself or someone else. Also, we may be required to show information which identifies you to people who need to be sure we have done the research correctly; these would be people from ████████████████

CAN YOUR TAKING PART IN THE STUDY END EARLY?

If you decide to take part in the study you still have the right to decide at any time that you no longer want to continue. You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study.

The individuals conducting the study may need to withdraw you from the study. This may occur if you are not able to follow the directions they give you or if they find that your being in the study is more risk than benefit to you.

WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

There is a possibility that the data collected from you may be shared with other investigators in the future. If that is the case the data will not contain information that can identify you unless you give your consent or the ██ Institutional Review Board

(IRB) approves the research. The IRB is a committee that reviews ethical issues, according to federal, state and local regulations on research with human subjects, to make sure the study complies with these before approval of a research study is issued.

WHAT IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS, CONCERNS, OR COMPLAINTS?

Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the study, please ask any questions that might come to mind now. Later, if you have questions, suggestions, concerns, or complaints about the study, you can contact the investigator, Casey Shadix, M.Ed., PhD Candidate at ███████ @ ███ edu or ████████ 73. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the staff in the Office of Research Integrity at the ████████████████ between the business hours of 8am and 5pm EST, Mon-Fri. at ████████ 8 or toll free at 1-█████████. We will give you a signed copy of this consent form to take with you.

_____   _____
Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study   Date

_____
Printed name of person agreeing to take part in the study

_____   _____
Name of (authorized) person obtaining informed consent   Date

Appendix C

Participant Recruitment Advertisement

Volunteers Needed For Research Study

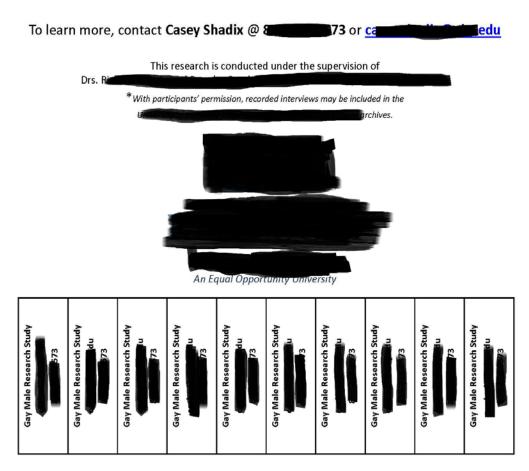## What is it like to be an undergraduate gay man on ▮ campus?

This study explores how undergraduate gay men define and understand
their gender as a member of the campus community in a
one-time individual interview to share about your experiences.

To participate:

You must be a currently enrolled undergraduate at ▮
be at least 18 years old, and identify as a gay (homosexual) male.

Participants will receive a $10.00 gift card to the local retail location of their choice

To learn more, contact **Casey Shadix** @ 8▮73 or [ca▮edu]

This research is conducted under the supervision of
Drs. Ri▮

*With participants' permission, recorded interviews may be included in the
▮archives.

An Equal Opportunity University

Gay Male Research Study	Gay Male Research Study	Gay Male Research Study	Gay Male Research Study	Gay Male Research Study	Gay Male Research Study	Gay Male Research Study	Gay Male Research Study	Gay Male Research Study	Gay Male Research Study

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Education

Graduate Certificate in Gender & Women's Studies
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May 2012

Master of Education in Higher Education Administration-Student Affairs
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May 2009

Bachelor of Arts in Sociology
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North Carolina State University
May 2007

Work Experience

Academic Advisor, College of Health Sciences
University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky
November 2016-Present

Director of Recruiting, College of Health Sciences
University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky
October 2013-November 2016

Area Coordinator, Department of Housing and Residence Life
University of Central Florida, Orlando, Florida
July 2013-October 2013

Academic Advisor, Gatton College of Business & Economics
University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky
July 2009-July 2013

Residence Director, Department of University Housing
North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina
July 2008-June 2009

Graduate Research Assistant, Department of New Student Orientation
North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina
May 2007-June 2008

Awards and Honors

University of Kentucky Five Year Service Pin, 2015
Nominee for University of Kentucky Ken Freedman Outstanding Advisor Award, 2013
NACADA Outstanding New Advisor-Primary Role Certificate of Merit, 2012
Finalist for University of Kentucky Ken Freedman Outstanding Advisor Award, 2012
Nominee for University of Kentucky Ken Freedman Outstanding Advisor Award, 2011
NC State University Department of University Housing "Essential Piece" Award, 2009
North Carolina Housing Officers Graduate Student Scholar Award, 2008

Presentations and Workshops

Shadix, C. & Remer-Eskridge, R. (2016, July). *High Touch Experience: Creating Strong Connections with Students from Recruitment to Graduation*. Presented at Ruffalo Noel-Levitz National Conference on Student Recruitment, Dallas, Texas.

Shadix, C. (2013, May). *Signs of Progress: Simple Foundations that Lead to Success in Selective Majors*. Pre-conference workshop presented at NACADA Region 3 Conference, Greenville, South Carolina

Shadix, C. (2012, March). *Hybrid Spaces, Hybrid Lives: Gender Performance in Student Organizations*. Presented at American College Personnel Association (ACPA) National Conference, Louisville, Kentucky

Shadix, C. & Young, M. (2011, May). *It Takes a Team to Achieve the Dream: Remedial and Developmental Education Advising*. Pre-conference workshop presented at NACADA Region 3 Conference, 2011 Knoxville, Tennessee

Miller, C., Shields, C., & Shadix, C. (2009, March). *Honoring Humanity, Appreciating Differences: Multicultural Programming in University Apartments*. Presented at American College Personnel Association (ACPA) National Conference, Washington, District of Columbia.

Miller, C., Shields, C., & Shadix, C. (2008, October). *Honoring Humanity, Appreciating Differences: Multicultural Programming in University Apartments*. Presented at North Carolina Housing Officers State Conference Meeting, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Training and Development

Humanity Academy Graduate, University of Kentucky, October 2011
Advisor Development Institute Graduate, North Carolina State University, May 2008

Service

The Graduate School Diversity Advisory Council, University of Kentucky, 2015-Present
College of Health Sciences Scholarship Committee, University of Kentucky, 2015-Present

College of Health Sciences Retention Committee, University of Kentucky, 2014-Present
College of Health Sciences Student Affairs Committee, University of Kentucky, 2013-Present
Professional Staff Training and Development Committee, University of Central Florida, 2013
Anti-Hazing Committee, University of Central Florida, 2013
Education Abroad Scholarship Review Committee, University of Kentucky, 2012-Present
Robinson Scholars Appeal Committee, University of Kentucky, 2011-Present
Women Business Leaders Scholarship Review Committee, University of Kentucky, 2012-2013
Gatton Undergraduate Advising Committee (Chair), University of Kentucky, 2010-2011
Gatton Welcome Planning Committee, University of Kentucky, 2009-2013
Gatton Retroactive Withdrawal Advisory Group, University of Kentucky, 2009-2013
Graduate Student Representative, North Carolina Housing Officers Executive Board, 2008-2009
Graduate Assistant Selection Committee, North Carolina State University, 2008-2009
Graduate Professionalism Summit 2009 Planning Committee, North Carolina State University, 2008-2009
Academic Advisor Selection Committee, North Carolina State University, 2007
GLBT Subcommittee of the University Diversity Advisory Council, North Carolina State University, 2005-2007

Professional Affiliations

American College Personnel Association (ACPA)
National Academic Advising Association (NACADA)
College Personnel Association of Kentucky (CPAK)
Kentucky Academic Advising Association (KACADA)