Spring 5-16-2014

Measure of a Man: A Grounded Theory Approach to Understanding Gay/Queer College Men's Self Identified Masculinity

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A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
Education Administration

by

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May 2014

Dedication

To all of those GQ men out there who shared their stories with me and were brave enough to be honest with who they are, I hope that I was able to give your story the care, attention and justice that it deserves.

Acknowledgements

There are so many people who have helped me through this process and who have had such an amazing impact not only on who I am as a researcher, but on who I am as a man in the world. Without each of you, I could not have gotten to this point. Thank you for helping to get this far.

To my selfless dissertation committee members, Drs. Bonis, Castillo Clark, Gleckler and Beabout, you all have been a stupendous help to me by providing your unique perspectives to my research. Your shared experiences have not only enriched my classroom experiences, but also molded me into the researcher that I never expected I could be. To Dr. Cambre, my major advisor, you took me on and probably had no idea what you were getting into. You helped me to find my path, and provided guidance and assistance in a way that was meaningful and supportive. I know I could not have gotten to this point in my academic career without your help. I will always be grateful. I am so honored to finally be able to stand among you all as a peer and colleague. But, I will always look up to you. And to Dr. D, thank you for taking a chance on me. Wherever you are, I hope that I have made you proud.

To my professional mentors, Rameen, Kathi, David, Brenda, Evette, Carolyn and Dawn, than you for the care and patience you have provided me over the years. You have all guided me to this place in my professional life and I know that this is where I was meant to be. In some way, I hope to be more like each of you when I grow up.

To the members of my doctoral program, I am a better for having known you. Rachel, Lindsey, Desiree and Adrianne—I appreciated the way you challenged me to know my stuff, and then encouraged me to keep going. To Kaitlin-thank you so much

for the proofing! To my family (the Henne's, Anders', Smiths', Ushers', and Ward's) and friends (Liz, Patrick, Nina, Melanie, Dell, AP, Kris, Chris, Erica, Kari, Trini, Papi, Gingi, Free Martin, Alec, Ryan, Scott, Spot, Fatou, and Megan), I am so grateful for times you challenged me, and for your love and support. Thank you for always pushing me to do my best! To all of the students, past, present and future, that I have the privilege of working with, thank you for making me think outside of the box and always reminding me to always look for the best in people. I have learned from you more than you have learned from me.

To my father and mother, GySgt. Ralph A. Henne and Theresa Henne Hartke. You have always pushed me to follow my heart, and be the man that I was meant to be. I know that your love and confidence was really the only reason I was able to make it this far. You knew I could do it before I knew I could and, for that, I will always be grateful. You always say that you are proud of me, but I am proud to have had such amazing people to look up to my entire life.

And, lastly, to Justin. You know more than anyone else what is had taken to complete this doctorate. I am aware of how much you have scarified to support me, every step along this journey. From proofing paper after paper to poking me to get back to writing my dissertation to making sure that I ate when I was "on a roll", you were (and are) the rock in my life. I could not have done this without you. Thank you for your never-ending love and support, for your patience when I was reading or writing instead of paying attention to you, for always making me smile, and doing whatever it took to make sure I was taken care of. I love you more than I can put into words. Thank you for believing in me.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to develop a better understanding of the role masculinity plays in identity development among self-identified Gay/Queer (GQ) collegiate men. The goal of this study was to develop a theory that explains how traditional college-aged GQ men view masculinity within the context of their performance as men on a college campus. The subjects of this study were 16 college-aged GQ men attending a four-year, private liberal arts institution in the southeastern United States: two first-year students, three sophomores, two juniors, eights seniors, and one individual who had graduated from college six weeks prior to his interview. Individuals who identified as woman or transgender were not included in this study.

Four themes were identified from the study: Creating Identity & Exploring Sexuality; Reliance of Stereotypes; Performance & Presence; and Community Expectations & Acceptance. The overarching concept that emerged from the study was that the qualities the participant valued or found to be personally attractive were the same traits that he found to be the most masculine. Limitations and recommendations for the study are also provided.

Keywords: Queer Theory, College Men, Masculinity, Gay Students, Identity Development

CHAPTER ONE

Overview of the Study

Researchers over the past 30 years have documented a considerable amount of empirical support connecting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) populations with diagnoses such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and suicidality (Lee, 2013; Meyer, 2003; Nel, 2013). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2007, 2.72% of college aged (17 to 23 years old) men completed suicide in the United States (CDC Archive Online, 2012). LGBTQ identified students are almost five times more likely to attempt or complete suicide than their heterosexual peers are (Hatzenbuehler, 2011).

There are recent accounts of college students who were harassed, bullied or intimidated due to their (sometimes perceived) sexual orientation. According to Peeters, Cilleseen and Scholte (2009), bullies often have a high level of social intelligence which allows them to harass victims who often do not know how to access support or services established to protect them. According to Farringtom (1993), about half of the student population consists of bullies, and half are the bullied.

Nelson and Padilla-Walker (2013) found that some students floundered due to internalized challenges related to depression and anxiety. Additionally, other studies found that male students had increased issues that relate to alcohol, drug abuse/misuse, and even risky sexual behaviors, (Crothers, 2007, Eisenberg & Resnick, 2006; Meyer, 2003; Nelson & Padilla-Walker, 2013; Schulenberg & Maggs, 2001). In one study by Ard and Makadon (2011), queer identified individuals were just as likely as heterosexual individuals to experience domestic violence, but they did have the

additional barrier of “outing” by his or her partner as a barrier to seeking help. If that individual is not “out”, there is the potential of instilling a fear of discrimination, social judgment or an impact on family/social support. Ard and Makadon (2011) conclude that queer individuals often have past physical or psychological trauma (bullying, family interactions, hate crimes), which makes them less likely to access support services due to a lack of cultural sensitivity. Meyer (2003) posits that this stress is created due to discrimination, prejudice and stigma that LGB people deal with as a result of a lack of understanding and support in hostile or aggressively heterosexual environments.

According to McFarland and Dupuis (2003), queer students do not feel they have equal access to safe schools or spaces on campus. Thus, when a student does not feel safe, he or she will often transfer or drop out. In general, Courtenay and Keeling (2000) found that men are less likely to seek help than are their female peers. According to McCusker and Galupo (2011), men who seek help are seen as “unmanly” and “weak.” According to their research, help-seeking behavior and sexual identity have an impact upon gay men’s perceptions of their masculine and feminine traits. GQ students are likely to drop out of school or have problems with learning when they are faced with continual or consistent stress as it relates to harassment and discrimination (Meany-Walen & Davis-Gage, 2009). Having a better understanding of gay and queer (GQ) male students is vital to providing them support and resources. Research shows that gender and sexuality assumptions appear more often negative and are more intense in men than in women (Lehavot & Lambert, 2007).

One of the major functions of an institution of higher education is to assist in the development and growth of individual students, helping them mold their sense of self

(Chickering, 1993). Within the discipline of student affairs, the topic of marginalized (identity) groups is often highlighted as an area in which professionals strive to support and cultivate a welcoming space. One set of students who can be identified as a marginalized group is that made up of students who are LGBTQ (Taywaditep, 2014).

College students enter their institutions with a variety of life experiences and expectations. Attempting to manage a progressively diverse range of students in regard to age, educational purposes, background and preparation, socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation and ethnicity is a major challenge for institutions of higher education. Diversity brings a variety of strengths and understanding to the educational experience of students and provides role models for individuals in an increasingly varied student body. Members of marginalized groups have struggled with having their voices heard (Taywaditep, 2014). Expectation for modern college students goes beyond the traditional classroom requirements. The student role as solely a classroom learner evolved to include peer educator, counselor, leader, resume builder, and service provider (Chickering, 1993). Instead of an educational environment founded in a perspective that the student is an empty vessel waiting to be filled with the imparted knowledge of the instructor, the student is now the consumer who is vocal with regard to his/her expectations from the classroom, (Freire, 1970).

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to develop an understanding of the role masculinity has in identity development among self-identified GQ collegiate men. The goal of this study is to develop a theory that explains how men of traditional college age view masculinity within the context of their performance as men on a college campus.

Through this study, the researcher investigated whether there is a relationship among an individual's collegiate identity development, sexual identity development, and how s/he makes meaning of his/her identity as in navigating performance between the straight world and the queer world.

Higher education administrators' concept of GQ student identity development comes from models that do not incorporate gender identity with regard to an individual's sexuality (Cass, 1979; D'Augelli, 1994; Erikson, 1980; Fassinger, 1998). The literature provides many different perspectives on the various types of masculinity: embodiment (Fausto-Sterling, 1985), gender (Wilchins, 2004), performance (Hennen, 2008, Lucal, 2012), sociality (Reeser, 2010), and gay masculinities (Butler, 1993, Heasley, 2005).

Context

For the purpose of this study, masculinity is defined as the attitudes and beliefs associated with behaving in a way that is considered typical for men. According to Warren (1972), the concept of gay identity contains the concepts of same-sex attraction, same-sex sexual activities, self-identification as being homosexual, engagement with the gay subculture and same-sex romantic relationships. Queer is an umbrella term often used for sexual and gender minorities who are not heterosexual, heteronormative or gender-binary (Wilchins, 2004). Additionally, the term "self-identified gay/queer man" will be defined as an individual who is aware of his sexual orientation and openly shares an attraction to persons of the same gender (i.e, one who is "out").

"Cisgender and cissexual gender identities are two related types of gender identity where an individual's self-perception and presentation of their gender matches the behaviors and roles considered appropriate for one's sex," (Crethar & Vargas, 2008;

61). Without realizing it, most students perform their visual identity in a cisgender modality. Cisgender presentations (physical and visual) are congruent with and match what social norms are expected for a specific gender. For example, a cisgender male would not wear a dress because that behavior would most often be identified as something a cisgender woman would wear.

One way to better understand GQ students is to conduct much needed research into the values placed on the various aspects of one's GQ-ness. The purpose of this study was to ground the concept of masculinity in identity development among self-identified GQ collegiate men. The goal of this study was to develop a theory that explains how traditional, college-aged men view masculinity within the context of their performance as men.

Heteronormativity is the body of norms that posits that people fall into distinct and complementary genders (man and woman) with natural roles in life (Lovaas & Jenkins, 2006). They conclude that heterosexuality is viewed as the normal sexual orientation. Consequently, heteronormative views are ones that involve the alignment of biological sex, sexuality, gender identity, and gender roles. While the current range of students who are GQ on campus is 1% to 21% (Gates, 2011; Kinsey, 1959; Savin-Williams, 2006), this population does not receive the same quantity of resources as heterosexual students do.

Problem Statement

This grounded theory study examined how GQ male students explore their identity and its relationship to their understanding of their masculinity at a private, non-profit four-year institution of higher education in the southeastern United States.

Through focus groups and interviews with “out” students, insight was sought regarding how this population makes meaning of their masculine identity while enrolled as full-time undergraduates in their various social groups. The intent of a grounded theory study is to move beyond description in order to generate a theory (Creswell, 2013).

Research Questions

- How do out gay/queer collegiate men describe their identity in relationship to their masculinity?
    - How do gay/queer men identify what is masculine?
    - How important is masculinity as a gay college student?

Significance of the Study

Nelson and Kriegar (1997) found that male college students had more negative attitudes toward gay men both before and after an intervention strategy than did female college students. GQ college students do not feel comfortable acknowledging their sexual orientation in class (Yeskel, 1985), let alone discussing issues of masculinity and performance. While exploring issues related to racial and ethnic identity within the queer community, 15% of male students at one historically black college or university (HBCU) were men who had sex with men; this number represents an 11% increase in queer students on that campus, (Randolph, 2013). Nationally, the first Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) was formed in San Francisco during the 1998-1999 school year (GSA Network, 2013). Since that time, the number of clubs has grown from approximately 40 to more than 900 individual organizations in 37 states.

There is a need for student affairs professionals to have an understanding of how today’s GQ college male students recognize their identity and masculinity and the

impact this may have on their well-being. The overall goal of this research was to provide information that can be used to educate and advocate for additional resources for this population and to educate counselors and administrators. It is essential to understand this marginalized population of gay male college students, and resources should be available to educate these students and to advocate for realistic systems and structures of support. There have been studies in the past ten to 15 years involving GQ men and their identity development in various forms (Butler, 1993; Cass, 1979; D'Augelli, 1994; Erikson, 1980; Fassinger, 1998; Fausto-Sterling, 1985; Heasley, 2005; Hennen, 2008; Lucal, 2012; Reeser, 2010; and Wilchins, 2004), but none that speak to the understanding or lived experiences of today's student. None of these studies used students as the primary subjects of inquiry nor did they use the traditional college age range of 18 to 23. Moreover, the current body of knowledge does not speak to how GQ college men understand masculinity. This study fills the gap in the literature.

The findings from this study can highlight the lived experience of GQ college men. The information discovered will affect the way that student affairs and academic professionals engage the necessary resources for this student population. Furthermore, there is a need to discuss how masculinity affects the well-being of gay male college students. The existing research in these areas is limited, providing little guidance to student affairs professionals who wish to better serve this population.

GQ Student Identity & Experiences

Educators must have a foundation in the various aspects of GQ identity that students negotiate as they evolve during the undergraduate experience: the college environment, social identity development, sexual identity development, presentation of

self, masculinity (and femininity), meaning making, mattering, and subculture values. The researcher explains each aspect of these students' creation and evolution of self from the perspective of a member within the GQ community.

College Environments & Identity Development

Stevens (2004) examined how critical influences and incidents affected gay men's sexual identity development in college and determined the importance of environmental influences such as relationships with peers, family members, and friends; (created) safe spaces on and off campus; and an on-campus community that affirms identity, and battles stereotypes and discrimination. The study established that trust and safety were associated with security a student felt within his environment in reference to his sexual orientation. Kimmel (2008) found that, while in college, some gay men experience feelings of exclusion and isolation, as well as fear of discrimination because they do not always adhere to traditional expectations and gender norms.

As discussed in chapter two, according to Chickering's Seven Vectors of Student Development (1993), college students travel through various stages during their undergraduate years. For gay students, sexual identity development often takes precedence to individual developmental. A significant limitation of traditional student developmental theories is that most models are linear, but, in terms of social identities and sexual orientation development, these processes are not always completed in a linear path. When looking at.

Social Identities

Higher education practitioners need to have a foundation in the various aspects of social identity development from a Critical Theory paradigm. Social Identities include

an individual's group memberships based on their ability, ethnicity, gender, race, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and spirituality/faith, (McEwen, 2003). This basis of understanding allows us to illuminate how an individual makes meaning of those aspects. According to McEwen (2003), these models helped launch and support the idea that social groups are more than individuals who identify as "White, heterosexual, male, able-bodied, and of the privileged class" (p. 205).

One asset of social identity theory is that it explains how oppression and privilege influence the ways people make meaning of their identity. McIntosh (2003) concluded the concept of "conferred dominance" for those who hold membership within dominant groups, and asserted those individuals continue to be entitled to certain privileges that those from marginalized groups are not. This idea generates a possible of understanding how an individual comes to understand himself, how he thinks about his identities, individually and collectively, and how one is situated within larger systems of power and oppression (Weber, 1998).

One limitation is our understanding of how gay men navigate the established tensions present in being in a dominant group by nature of their male privilege and a marginalized group due to their sexual orientation, (Kimmel, 1994). For this reason, there is a strong need to review the literature on gay identity development, male identity development, and multiple identity development to further develop knowledge regarding GQ men in college.

Sexual Identity Development (Coming Out)

In this study, the researcher used Fassinger's Model of Homosexual Identity Development (1998). The rationale for selecting this model over others (Cass, 1979;

D'Augelli, 1994; Erikson, 1980) is that it allows for a person to have both an individual (internal) and group (external) presentation of his sexual identity. Because being GQ is not always as obvious as race or ethnicity, it allows for an individual to choose his level of outness based on the situation or context.

Defined in the past as a dimensional process, Sexual Orientation Development is not without deficiencies. One identified limitation is that every individual will travel through his coming out process at his own pace and in his own way. While Fassinger's model (1998) provides space for a public and private presentation, it does not afford the opportunity for a student to express his level of outness based on the context of a specific situation, such as small groups, one individual, and campus vs. home tensions. According to research conducted over the past 65 years, approximately 1% to 21% of the population identify as LGBTQ, (Gates, 2011; Kinsey, 1959; Savin-Williams, 2006).

Masculine Presentation

Few studies examined the evolution of the ideal for the male body and its effects on undergraduate men. Among the findings are that men's magazines published significantly more advertisements and articles about changing body shape than about losing weight and that men's fashion magazines printed more articles on men's weight and health concerns (Nemeroff, Stein, Diehl, & Smilack, 1994). There is also greater use of young male bodies in fashion magazines and in marketing a variety of products (Davis, Shapiro, Elliot, & Dionne, 1993). Pope (2001) examined the evolution of boys' action toys. In addition, figures such as GI Joe have become increasingly muscular over time (Olivardia, Gruber, & Borowiecki, 1999).

Among men, ideals within male culture of muscularity may contribute to lower self-esteem about the body (Blouin & Goldfield, 1995; Leit, 1998; Pope, Gruber, Choi, Olivardia, & Phillips, 1997;) and possibly to misuse and abuse of anabolic-androgenic steroids (Pope & Katz, 1994). These factors play a role in the identity development of an undergraduate man trying to discover who he is. Wilchins (2004) argues that the visual language of bodies is not transparent, but "[w]e learn to see things in a certain way, and by seeing them that way, we rely on our belief in that vision to inform us about what is ultimately real and out there," (p.84).

Kaminski, Chapman, Haynes, and Own (2005) found that gay men scored higher on their desire for muscularity and on desire for thinness than did straight men. If appearance holds more significance and is essential to the self-concepts of gay men (Meany-Walen & Davis-Gage (2009), the same logic would forecast that body dissatisfaction should have a stronger relationship with self-esteem for them than for straight men. Yelland and Tiggemann (2003) found that self-esteem was positively correlated with body dissatisfaction for both gay and straight college-aged men. However, for gay men, self-esteem was negatively related to the importance of muscularity, physical appearance, and weight.

With the gay male culture emphasizing appearance and excessive pressures on its members to conform, then it can be understood that greater involvement with the gay culture would be associated with greater body dissatisfaction (Beren, Hayden, Wilfley, & Grilo, 1996). Additionally, Williamson and Hartley (1998) concluded that gay men who had increased satisfaction with their sexual orientation felt less body dissatisfaction than those who expressed less satisfaction with being gay. Levesque and Vichesky (2006)

found that a gay man who is engaged, involved and integrated within the gay community had decreased body dissatisfaction. They concluded that feeling accepted may shield gay men from pressure to look a specific way.

According to Tiggemann, Martins and Kirkbride (2007), youthfulness is one dimension of the gay male ideal that has not been adequately studied. The images that appear in modern mainstream media, in addition to those in specific gay markets, present young, hairless bodies. In addition, there is the belief that being young is just as important as being muscular and thin (Mann, 1998). The effects of growing older might have a more negative impact on gay men than on straight men.

Halkitis (2001) found that the majority of men who participated in his study associated masculinity among gay men with physical appearance and sexual adventurism. Physical features included a big frame, muscularity, tattoos, and body piercings. Sexual adventurism consisting of an increased interest in casual sex and or with multiple partners was also discovered in this study.

Meaning Making and Mattering

One limitation of the current research is that GQ men's identity as individuals with multiple social identities has been almost completely ignored. The concept of intersectionality (Museus & Griffin, 2011), a concept stemming from CRT, offers a lens for understanding the composition of multiple identities for undergraduate men. Intersectionality refers to the interplay between multiple aspects of identity and how those components play into the power dynamics within the larger societal context (Crenshaw, 1995). Feminist Theory scholars conducted research on intersectionality through a CRT and gender lens to understand the power structures that influence

women (Crenshaw, 1995). However, there is little work on intersectionality or understanding of multiple identities within student development theory, another limitation. One exception to this is the Model of Multiple Dimensions of Identity (Abes, Jones & McEwen, 2007). This model provides a framework through which to understand the meeting of multiple identities through a filter of meaning-making on the individual, community, and systemic levels (Abes, Jones & McEwen, 2007).

Schlossberg's Theory of the Marginality and Mattering (1989) explains the five aspects of mattering: attention, importance, ego extension, dependence and appreciation. The theory explain why students feel alienated or unsupported due to a space being too homogenous, conformity of marginalized students, and the institution's being unaware of a minority group member's experiences. While Schlossberg's (1989) theory was specific to ethnic minorities, the same characteristics are present for sexual minorities as well.

Masculinity vs. Femininity

A man who shows any trait associated with women is perceived as being weak or lesser in the eyes of society, (Sanchez, et al., 2010). Gender roles are created for boys and girls early in their development; these roles are created, in part, by family, media, environment and role models. The observations of children define how members of their gender are supposed to act. Men are taught to be the hunter and provider, competitive, strong and the family protector. On the other end of the spectrum, women are to believe they are the gatherer, caregiver and nurturer. According to Connell (2005), the dominant group typically defines what the appropriate behaviors are for a given gender, and, therefore, forces individuals who do not conform

to violate these concepts. The divide within a college campus can be illustrated by having separate systems for male and female fraternities and sorority members. Kalof and Cargill (1991) found that those they surveyed stated that fraternities held and projected a more masculine, “male dominance,” and aggressive image.

Masculinity and femininity are words used in everyday language. The images these terms reference pertain to physical and biological differences between women and men. Lupton (2006) stated that masculinity and femininity are inclusive of sexuality and gender expectations. For example, men who possess stereotypically feminine characteristics (men who are emotional, caring, compassionate, understanding or overly affectionate) are often stereotyped as being gay (Madon, 1997; Levant & Pollack, 1995). Within modern society, men who are gay are often stereotyped as portraying a feminine or hyperfeminine persona (Linneman, 2008). When looking at modern perceptions, a man who is not White, middle class, and heterosexual automatically has reduced social power (Alvesson & Billing, 2009). By default, a gay man, regardless of his other identities, will have lower social (personal) capital than his straight male peer, (Schimel et al.,1999). The researchers found that gay men whose behaviors were stereotypically feminine (i.e., men who go shopping, dance, etc.) were evaluated less favorably than gay men whose behaviors were counter stereotypical and more masculine (i.e. plays/watches sports, works out, etc.). Some gay men feel pressured to behave in hypermasculine ways or feel like they have to “butch it up” in order to be accepted in modern culture (Sanchez et al., 2009).

Smiler (2006) conducted a quantitative study focused on trying to explain the various dominant forms and presentations of masculinity and on how those images limit

our knowledge of masculinity. Most of the research conducted in the area of male/masculine identity has been qualitative. This study provided a unique opportunity to explore issues of identity within the context of a quantitative approach. The study combined various social identities (ten typical male identities) and connected their gender norms and traits. Starting in 1936, Terman and Miles' MF Test provided the first study that measured perspectives on masculinity. Through a review of much research (David & Brannon, 1976; Connell, 1995; Edwards, 1992), ten specific masculine identities were selected for this study: Average Joe, Businessman, Family Guy, Jock, Nerd, Player, Rebel, Sensitive/New Aged Guy, Don Juan and Tough Guy. According to the research, these ten subgroups describe stereotypes across these domains, which include appearance, personality attributes, recreational/vocational activities, attitudes, and demographic characteristics. In a study by Blazina and Watkins (1996), college men exhibited more aggressive behavior (tough guy image), had an increased likelihood of alcohol use (non-conformist/rebel), and were less likely to ask for help.

Overview of Methodology

Currently within the academy, there is no research discovering how out gay college men make meaning of their concept of masculinity, nor about the impact, if any, of their group membership. As a marginalized group with its own set of barriers as outlined in the literature review, it is clear that having research in this area would be of great use to student affairs practitioners. In order to be able to explain this experience, grounded theory is a viable research option due to the complex nature of identity and the impact of meaning-making in the lives of these men. In a Grounded Theory, the researcher focuses on moving past the description to discover or generate a theory.

Central to the nature of this study is a description and interpretation of the patterns of values, both shared and learned, behaviors, beliefs and language of this cultural sharing group (Creswell, 2007).

Because the coming out process does not occur within a specific timeframe, and because each man will have his own experiences, grounded theory is the most suited method by which to capture those experiences. Additionally, part of the rationale for this approach is the limited number of male students who are ready to self-identify as gay and interested in participating in a study of this type.

In this study, the researcher used a critical and postmodern paradigm to frame the work. Additionally, open and snowball sampling were used. Potential participants were identified through an established rubric to ensure viability. Basic demographic information was collected from each of the participants and each man was interviewed using an approved interview protocol. Data was collected and stored confidentially until it is analyzed and coded.

Chapter Summary

In chapter one, the case for the marginalization of GQ students on our college campuses was posited. As each man tries to understand who he is, or comes to understand his identity, he must take an inventory of what it means to be a man in terms of social experiences, sexuality, and masculinity. Men are less likely to seek out help or support services (Courtenay & Keeling (2000) and have an increased likelihood participating in more risky behaviors and decision making than women. We also know that LGBTQ individuals are more likely to be bullied (Farrington, 1993), attempt or complete suicide (CDC, 2007) and fall victim to domestic violence (Ard & Makadon,

2011). Randolph (2013) suggests that more queer men are attending college than ever before and the number of queer-based clubs has gone from 40 to over 900 since 1989, (GSA, 2013).

Qualitative (ethnographic and case study) research yielded results regarding individuals' attempts to achieve "masculine" bodies in an effort to distinguish themselves from women (Beagan & Saunders, 2005). Gay men feel pressure to increase their muscle mass to be seen as more masculine (Mills & D'Alfonso, 2007). And lastly, current literature does not include any studies in which the primary subjects are GQ college men, or GQ men aged 18 to 23.

CHAPTER TWO

Study Purpose

Through this study exploring how GQ college men come to understand their masculinity, the researcher explored how self-identified GQ collegiate men describe their identity in relationship to their masculinity. This study may assist college administrators develop strategies to support this student population and enable them to be greater contributors to their campus community and society as a whole.

Research Questions

While conducting this study, the researcher analyzed how out GQ collegiate men describe their identity in relationship to their masculinity, how GQ college men identify what is masculine and discover how important, if at all, masculinity is as a GQ college student. This study was conducted in an effort to legitimize the issue of masculinity within the self-identified GQ community and in order to increase awareness of this population for college and university student affairs practitioners. It is possible that the findings of this study may assist in the retention rate of future GQ college students who explore masculinity during their time in college.

Review of the Literature

This review of literature explores major themes in the body of literature pertaining to this population of college students: current and established leadership theories that relate to college students, defining college environments, exploring the many facets of identity development, defining what is masculinity, understanding meaning making, and exploring in-community expectations. This review of literature includes an illumination of the in the research. For the purpose of this literature review, male identified students

are the focus, it but also includes those who identify as female only when contemporary research focusing on males is not available.

Queer Theory

Queer Theory was originally termed by Teresa de Lauretis in 1991. It grew out of a combination of LGBTQ and feminist studies.. Queer Theory was originally associated with gay politics and encouraged out leaders to embrace their identity and “wear the label.” Queer theory emerged as a critique against normalizing established critical theories and distanced itself from political affiliations or use as an all-inclusive term for LGBTQ people (de Lauretis, 1994). Additionally, Queer Theorists continue to explore the complex constructs of identity and how that identity reproduces and performs in society, (Creswell, 2007).

Originally in Queer Theory, only gay and lesbian identities were examined (Wilchins, 2010). Over time, additional identity groups were included to incorporate bisexual people, then transgender people, and now questioning and queer as separate identities (Wilchins, 2010). Currently, no research exists that illustrates the understanding of the day-to-day experiences of this population . These ideas can be examined by exploring the relationship between an individual's understanding of his sexual orientation (gay/bi/queer), his perceived masculinity and how navigates and makes meaning as he travels through his undergraduate experience.

In order to better comprehend masculinity (and male identity), there is a need to recognize the notion of identity itself. Identity is difficult to define, as there are many terms and components with regard to identity based on a broad scope of cultures, concepts and communities. Deaux (1993) defined identity as “a rich tradition [that]

offers a multiplicity of possible meanings" (p. 4). McEwen (2003) described identity development as "how one views oneself in relation to one's own gender group, that is, as a woman or a man, and how these views evolve and become more complex over time" (p. 218). The research illustrates that one's group membership and, by and large, society has an impact on every individual's gender identity, gender role, perspective of masculinity/femininity and body image.

The male gender role is culturally constructed beginning at birth when a baby is dressed in blue for boys. According to Thompson and Pleck (1986), male gender role ideas subscribe to a variety of specific social norms: (a) "Status," which reflects the belief that men must gain the respect of others; (b) "Toughness," which is the expectation that men are physically tough/strong and willing to be aggressive; and (c) "Antifemininity," which reflects the belief that men should not engage in any action or activity that could be perceived as feminine.

Thompson and Pleck (1995) discovered that there is no one type of masculinity. Instead, masculinity is presented differently and veritably within different cultures and ethnic groups in the United States. Also, different groups may perceive masculinity differently and hold different standards based on the men who hold membership within those groups. Some researchers argue that masculinity is normative. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) posit that masculinity embodies the most honored way of being a man; it requires all other men to position themselves in relationship to the ideologically legitimated global subordination of women and men (p. 832).

There are four specific criticisms of Connell and Messerschmidt's (2005) position. The first is that the concept of masculinity itself is contested in that masculinities are

multiple, not singular. Secondly, it is difficult to locate representatives of (hegemonic) masculinity that are not contradictory. For example, powerful men do not necessarily present as particularly athletic. Masculinity is applied inconsistently, as, at times, sometimes a fixed masculinity type and, at other times, as a particular manifestation of one kind of masculinity; Third, the concept of masculinity is criticized as personifying negative aspects of masculinity, such as violence, aggression and criminal activity. However, that men's behavior is reified in a performance of masculinity is a circular argument because it becomes the explanation (and the cause) for the behavior (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 840). Fourth, masculinity is a theory that carries many issues without clear embodiments of masculinity, i.e. how are men supposed to confirming or resist an "ideal" masculinity?

The purpose of this literature review is to outline several of the key components needed to understand this population of gay/queer male students. The author initially used a theoretical framework to guide his research, and found that, through his grounded theory dissertation research, a conceptual framework was developed. The literature review that follows illuminates key concepts and terms in order to examine past research from several studies.

Leadership Theories

Critical theory is a social theory that critiques and attempts to change society as a whole. In contrast, traditional theory is oriented only to understanding or explaining it. A critical framework lens was used to examine a group of GQ students at a four-year University in the southeastern United States. These theories were developed as representations and analysis of leadership that were empowering and created social

change for this specific population. Specifically, Queer Theory (1991) and Fassinger's Model of Homosexual Identity Development (1991) are used to increase understanding of gay/bi/queer identities and transitions over time. For many gay identified men, their identity development begins during their undergraduate experience.

Critical Research Paradigm

Critical paradigm perspective frames gender identity, for both men and women, as socially created in a patriarchal context (hooks, 2000). This paradigm intersects with other social systems that advantage some and disadvantage others on the basis of social group identity such as class, race, sexual orientation (Bell, 1997. Queer Theory was originally defined in 1981 (de Lauretis) after it evolved out of a combination of LGBTQ and feminist studies. The usage of the term "queer" as defined within Queer Theory is less of an identity than an embodied critique of identity. At its inception, Queer Theory was associated with gay politics and encouraged out leaders to "wear the label". Two decades later, Queer Theory is used more often to explain everything that is not heterosexual within academic discourse or is used as an all-inclusive term for LGBTQ people and distanced itself from political affiliations (de Lauretis, 1994). At its root, Queer Theory continues to explore the complex constructs of identity and how that identity reproduces and performs in society, (Creswell, 2007).

Queer Theory evolved out of Critical Race Theory (CRT). Queer theorist Wilchins (2004) said that strict adherence to gender and various expression binaries is "a prison that restricts everyone in our culture to a very narrow range of expression," (p.54). Wilchins (2004) went on to say that any behavior outside traditional masculine presentation (for men) was stigmatized and targeted, often with violence. Simply put,

Queer Theory identifies the relationship between the homosexual and heterosexual binary and its related opposition (Fuss, 1991). The critical paradigm posits a need for support and continued movement towards further analysis of the social inequalities established through current research (ASHE, 2006 and Creswell, 2007).

Postmodern Paradigm

The postmodern paradigm states that leadership is more complicated than simple expression of leadership as a means to power (ASHE, 2006). The Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE, 2006) goes states that leadership is contingent on the experiences of individuals and of the unique components of identity that they hold. Understanding each man's coming out process and their interactions among group members in both straight and gay contexts is at the center of the researcher's study. According to Creswell (2007), postmodern theories take into consideration an individual's class, gender, race, and other group affiliations (i.e. sexual orientation). Borgatta and Boratta (1993) concluded that postmodernist studies explore the turning points in the experiences of individuals who find themselves at transitional periods in their lives. Having an understanding of the language used in this student-centered study would be consistent with exploring the postmodern paradigm of leadership.

Gay/bi/queer adolescents and young adults in our society struggle more frequently with serious issues than their heterosexual contemporaries. They have higher than average instances of suicidality, substance abuse, sexual abuse, homelessness, parental rejection, emotional isolation, drop-out risk, low self-esteem, prostitution, physical and verbal abuse, and sexually transmitted diseases (Uribe and

Harbeck, 1992). Uribe and Harbeck went on to say that students who participate in affirming environments reported higher levels of self-esteem, academic success, social acceptance, interpersonal connections and safer sexual practices.

College Environments

"Helping students develop the integrity and strength of character that prepare them for leadership may be one of the most challenging and important goals of higher education" (King, 1997, p. 87). The past several decades saw a shift in demographics of students attending institutions of higher education. From the research, an increase of attention paid to underrepresented students and their development is evident, specifically in terms of their social identities, including gender (Gilligan, 1982), race (Cross, 1971, 1991; Helms 1990), and sexual orientation (Cass, 1979; D'Augelli, 1994; Fassinger, 1998). However, many theories compartmentalized aspects of one's overall identity with little understanding of how one's social identity may influence the development of other identities.

Stevens (2004) examined how critical influences and incidents affected gay men's sexual identity development in college and established the importance of environmental influences such as relationships with peers, family members, friends and (created) safe spaces on and off campus, as well an on-campus community that affirms identity and battles stereotypes and discrimination. The study established that trust and safety were associated with the level of security a student felt within his environment in reference to his sexual orientation. Kimmel (2008) found that, while in college, some gay men experience feelings of exclusion and isolation, as well as fear of discrimination because they do not always adhere to traditional expectations and gender norms.

Chickering's Seven Vectors of Student Development (1993) explain how college students travel through various stages during their undergraduate lives: (a) developing competence, (b) managing emotions, (c) moving through autonomy toward interdependence, (d) developing mature interpersonal relationships, (e) establishing identity, (f) developing purpose, and (g) developing integrity. For GQ students, sexual identity development often takes priority over individual development. A significant limitation of traditional student developmental theories is that most models are linear; once a student reaches one stage and moves on to the next, he usually does not return to a previous stage. However, sexual orientation and social identity s do not always develop in a linear path.

Identity Development

Understanding and accepting that one is homosexual is a process men have to go through in order to understand exactly what that means. As a young man goes off to college, this is often the first time he will explore who he is as a person and start to create his own identity, which may have some dissidence with the identity he was exposed to as a youth (Baxter-Magolda, 1992).

For practitioners in higher education to understand male identity requires, first, foundational knowledge of that identity. Identity itself is hard to define because it has multiple interpretations depending upon the theoretical framework through which it is viewed or explained. Minolli (2004) posits that identity is complex and difficult to understand because there is not an "untainted" manner by which identity is not affected by historical or philosophical undertones. Specifically, Minolli states that "identity is a sort of conglomeration of a number of other concepts and this makes it hard to unravel

its different levels of meaning" (p. 237). Likewise, Deaux (1993) suggests that identity is a construct with a rich tradition and offers many meanings and interpretations.

Social Identities

Social Identity Theory was developed by Tajfel and Turner (1979) as a means to understand the psychological basis of discrimination within groups and subgroups. This framework explains the idea that an individual's self-concept is derived from (his) perceived membership within social or reference groups (Wade, 1998). Diverse social contexts may prompt an individual to feel, think, and act on the basis of his personal, family or reference group's "level of self." Deaux (1993) further defined this concept by noting that social identities are roles or membership categories that an individual claims as characteristics. A man's role in society, such as student, friend, or leader, can have an impact and influence his identity. Additionally, "one's self-esteem is enhanced through favorable comparison between one's own group and an out-groups" (Deaux, 1993, p. 8). Tajfel and Turner (1979) state that the view of an individual is not a "personal identity," but, actually, several identities that correspond to that person's membership within his/her social circles (Kimmel, 1994).

Freire (1970) spoke of a "culture of silence" and schemes that are sanctioned in order for the oppression of people to be maintained. "Manipulation, sloganizing, depositing, regimentation, and prescription cannot be components of revolutionary praxis, precisely because they are the components of the praxis of domination" (p. 10). While he referred to marginalized classes of people, there is a connection to college men. For men, showing weakness or vulnerability is not an option, especially when he is with his reference group (Kimmel, 1994).

The concept of social identity with regard to perceptions and development of individual identity (among and outside of social groups) served as a springboard for many student development theories. McEwen et al. (2003) stated that theories and models of social identity development evolved from the majority population and sociopolitical climate of the United States. They state these identities are almost always White, heterosexual, male, able-bodied, and of the privileged class who have not been oppressed. Researchers like Cass (1984), Cross (1971, 1987), D'Augelli (1994), Gilligan (1982), Helms (1990) and several others observed the shared interpersonal and internal reactions of individuals within historically oppressed groups such as gay/lesbian/transgendered, persons of color, and women, and translated those observations into models of identity development for these groups.

It is important for higher education practitioners to have a foundation in the various aspects of social identity development from a Critical Theory paradigm. Social Identities include an individual's group membership based on his ability, ethnicity, gender, race, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and spirituality/faith (McEwen, 2003). This basis of understanding allows us to illuminate how an individual makes meaning of those aspects of his uniqueness. According to McEwen (2003), these models have helped to launch and support the idea that social groups are more than individuals who identify as "White, heterosexual, male, able-bodied, and of the privileged class" (p. 205).

One asset of social identity theory is that it explains how oppression and privilege influence the ways people make meaning of their identity. McIntosh (2003) coined the term "conferred dominance" for those who hold membership within dominant groups,

and how stated these individuals continue to be entitled to certain privileges while those from marginalized groups are not. This idea aids in understanding how an individual comes to understand himself, how he thinks about his identities, individually and collectively, and how he is situated within larger systems of power and oppression (Weber, 1998).

One limitation of Social Identity theories is the understanding of how gay men navigate the established tensions present in being in a dominant group by nature of their male privilege and a marginalized group due to their sexual orientation (Kimmel, 1994). For this reason, to study GQ men in college, it is essential to have a foundation in the literature on gay identity development, male identity development, and multiple identity development. Identity development for GQ men in college is often significant for each of the individual men (Rhoads, 1997).

Sexual Orientation Identity Development

Over the past 40 years, several developmental models garnered attention in higher education, including Cass (1979, 1984), D'Augelli (1994), Fassinger and Miller (1996), Fassinger (1998), McCarn and Fassinger (1996), Minton and McDonald (1984), and Troiden (1988, 1989). Within the field of higher education, there are two theories of practice that are most often consulted with regard to the stages of gay identity development: Cass's Model of Homosexual Development (1979) and Fassinger's Model of Homosexual Identity Development (1998).

Cass created a stage-model of homosexual identity development. The six stages assume a movement in self-perception from heterosexual to homosexual. The first stage is identity confusion. In stage one, the individual first identifies his/her thoughts,

feelings and attractions to others of the same gender. Stage two, identity comparison, is when the individual perceives and must deal with social stigmatization and alienation. Third is identity tolerance. In this stage, individuals, having acknowledged their homosexuality, begin to seek out other homosexuals. Identity acceptance defines stage four, which brings positive connotations about being homosexual and encompasses the fostering of further contacts and friendships with other gay men and lesbians. During stage five, identity pride, the individual minimizes contact with heterosexual peers in order to focus on issues and activities related to his/her identity/sexual orientation. Cass's final stage is identity synthesis. In this stage, the individual has a lesser need for a dichotomous lifestyle; the individual sees little difference between the heterosexual and non-heterosexual communities or aspects of the individual's life. The individual judges himself not based solely on his sexual identity, but on a range of personal qualities.

Other stage-based psychosocial gay identity development models after Cass, including Fassinger (1998), deviate little from the specifics of the actions or events that comprised each individual stage. However, this theory did not stray from the assumption that the events, as a general process, reflect the experience. The final stage, for Cass and the later stage theorists, was the desired outcome. Synthesis is something achieved in one's own coming out. Coyle and Rafalin (2000) concluded that this coming out process affects not just social identities, but also a man's faith and spirituality.

Fassinger's (1998) work, though lesser known than that of Cass by student affairs professionals, developed an inclusive model of lesbian/gay identity formation that is also stage-based. However, Fassinger's theory of homosexual development is dual-

leveled, reflecting multiple aspects of development, the individual sexual identity, and group membership identity. The first of Fassinger's four stages is awareness. Within this framework, from the individual viewpoint, there is a feeling of being different from heterosexual peers; from the group perspective, there is the acknowledgement of the existence of differing sexual orientations among people. Stage two is referred to as the exploration stage. On an individual level, this stage brings emotions and erotic desires for people of the same gender and, on the group level, there is exploration regarding how one might fit into the gay lifestyle as a member of the social group. The third level represents a deepening commitment to this changing idea of the individual and identity and a tailoring of the knowledge and beliefs about same-sex sexuality. On the group front, there is personal involvement with a non-heterosexual reference group, understanding and accepting of oppression and the consequences of choosing to socialize and be vocally involved with other homosexuals. The last stage of Fassinger's model, internalization/synthesis, represents an integration of homosexuality into the individual's overall identity; from the group perspective, there is expression of one's identity as a member of a minority group across social contexts.

The Ecological Model of Gay Male Identity (EMGMI) describes the various influences gay men experience holistically. As a man travels through the stages of this model, the framework provides an understanding for how gay men evolve in terms of their gay male identity. Additionally, the EMGMI illuminates the impact this evolution has on their unique behaviors and decision-making practices as a component of the gay male culture. According to the EMGMI, most gay men travel through the four main stages over the course of their development. However, the EMGMI combines stages

one and two, describing these combined phases as the time before coming out and the last two stages are referred to as the time during coming out and after coming out (Alderson, 2003).

While traversing the model, the stages and their associated processes are tracked. Cognitive dissonance is identified as the driving force where each of the stages interconnects (Alderson, 2003). According to Alderson (2003), the influential conditions are global/societal as well as environmental factors such as parental/familial, cultural/spiritual, and peer influences. Each of the environmental factors has an influence throughout the stages and the development of each gay man's identity achievement.

Unlike the previously mentioned gay theoretical development models (Cass, 1979; D'Augelli, 1994; Fassinger, 1998, McCarn & Fassinger; 1996; Minton & McDonald, 1984; and Troiden, 1989), EMGMI provides insight into how people who are gay come to understand their sexuality. There are multiple and often interconnecting phases that one may experience in coming to terms with their identity. These models provide a framework with which to understand gay male college students.

Gender Roles

One way to describe male identity is to examine gender roles. Behavior is directly attributed to norms dictated by society according to gender role theory. For most college students, these concepts were introduced to them at home. O'Neil (1981) characterized gender roles as "behaviors, expectations, and role sets defined by society as masculine or feminine which are embodied in the behavior of the individual man or woman and culturally regarded as appropriate to males or females" (p. 203).

Parrott (2009) explored the impact that perceived masculine gender roles, stress, and sexual prejudice have on the relationship with maleness, norms, anger and aggression towards gay men. Parrott (2009) posits that, from the observations of the participants, straight men feel anger and frustration towards gay men because of their sexual prejudice and the appearance that gay men do not conform to traditional gender role norms.

College men who distance themselves from traditional definitions of masculinity do not feel liberated, but, inversely, experience strain and dissidence. When some men think about how their conformity to gender roles had negative consequences for themselves and others, they experience depression and a loss of self (Good & Wood, 1995). In application of the previously identified theories on masculinity, Kimmel and Messner (2004) concluded that masculinity not only varies from culture to culture, but also within each culture as well. There are intersections of identity that are also factors in identity development.

Other areas, or reference groups, to be included are socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, age, and sexual orientation. When working with men, it is significant to account for variations in identity development as these relate to the above factors, (Wade, 1998). Wade states these male reference groups specifically address the way in which men conceptualize and manage the various definitions of masculinity. Using 16 cultural standards and personal values, Wade described men's definitions of masculinity and explored the processes that create these definitions. O'Neil (1981) created the term *masculine mystique*—a developmental process undergone when boys acquire gender role characteristics that can lead to psychological distress if used in situations that

require less gender-typed behaviors. Wade (1998) came to believe that masculinity was directly related to the development of each man's ego. Men with a stronger sense of self are more likely to break away from traditional gender roles than males with a lesser-developed ego.

According to Mahalik (2005), a gay man's experience reflects being both gay and a man. For this reason, gay men are required to conform to popular masculine norms that are expected of them in childhood. According to Kimmel and Mahalik (2004), traditionally masculine gay men are more likely to overtly conform to traditional masculine presentation forms in order to be perceived as powerful (physically). This concept gives way to the notion that a masculine body equates to a masculine man. Fingerhut and Peplau (2006) agreed with this idea in their study that showed that gay men who perform in stereotypical masculine social roles (truck driver or single man) are perceived as more masculine than those who were seen as a father or hairdresser. Bailey et al. (1997) conducted one investigation and found that gay men typically choose to use gender specific descriptors based on stereotypically masculine traits when placing personal ads seeking a partner. Some examples of the stereotypes are: "straight acting," jock, dominant, muscular, and athletic. The results indicate that, even among gay men, masculinity is a desirable trait, while femininity is less desirable.

Pleck (2005) believed that men's stress can be seen when encountering conflict when dealing with one of the three different types of gender role strain: (a) beliefs that one failed to live up to internalized the masculinity; (b) the tendency to exhibit persistent and dysfunctional behavior because of traditional masculine ideals; and (c) trauma

experienced during early gender role socialization. Summarily, Pleck (2005) revealed that most stress was due to the adherence to rigid social masculine ideals.

Masculinity is a social construct that assumes that male gender roles have been primarily shaped by cultural expectations for how men “should” act, behave and feel (Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Sanchez, Greenberg, Liu, & Vilain, 2009). Ideal masculine performance places a very high significance on the pursuit of power and the use of competition as means of establishing status. Traditionally, these concepts restrict men from exposing any sort of emotion or showing affection towards other men, off the sports field (O'Neil, 2008). Research established that “*manhood*” involves a very rigid collection of characteristics dictated by society; being a “real” man means exhibiting hypermasculine behavior (de Visser, 2009). Hypermasculinity is characterized by an exaggerated conformity to male gender roles (Barron, Struckman-Johnson, Quevillon, & Banka, 2008). Additionally, societal expectations of manhood place restrictions on men’s behaviors, such as avoiding feminine domains and roles (O'Neil, 2008). Herek (1986) said that being gay is a negotiation of masculinity and that, in order to be gay in modern American society, you have to be homophobic. On college campuses, these concepts manifest through conduct violations and acts of intolerance that occur within the boundaries of the university.

Created by family, media, environment and role models, gender roles are created for boys early in their development. Connell’s (2005) observations of children help him define how members of his gender are supposed to act. Normally, men are taught to be hunters and providers, competitive, strong and family protectors (Connell, 2005). When a man shows any trait associated with women, he is perceived as weak in the eyes of

society (Sanchez, et al., 2010). According to Connell (2005), the dominant group defines what the appropriate behaviors are for a given gender and forces individuals who do not conform to these expectations to violate these concepts. This idea is illuminated in the fraternity and sorority systems on college campuses. Kalof and Cargill (1991) found that fraternities held and projected a more masculine, “male dominance,” and aggressive image.

Allied to social theory, one way in which to view the male identity is by examining gender roles. According to gender role theory, behavior is directly attributed to the socially determined norms dictated by society (Kimmel, 1994). Individuals, like actors in a movie, take on roles assigned to them and act accordingly. O’Neil (1981) characterized gender roles as those behaviors, expectations, and roles defined by society as masculine (or feminine) which personify the behavior of the individual man (or woman) and are culturally determined as suitable for men or women.

Kimmel (1994) breaks down the American male’s experience into three themes: homophobia as a cause of discrimination towards marginalized populations, power (and powerlessness), and performance of masculinity. He outlined how men of the modern age are forced to inherit standards of social expectation in order to survive and be perceived as men. From this research, within the United States, there are set gender standards (and binaries) that these individuals have to abide by. According to Wilkinson (1986), as cited by Kimmel (1994), a “‘true American [man] was vigorous, manly, and direct, not effete...plain... rugged...’” (p. 120).

In labeling gender identity development, McEwen (2003) described this process as the means by which an individual views himself in relationship to his gender group,

and how these viewpoints evolve and become more complex as time passes. Each of these researchers stresses the influence of society on creating one's gender identity and gender role. Connell (1995) termed the concept of hegemonic masculinity, which refers to the prescribed standards of masculinity that men have learned and have been conditioned to adhere to throughout life.

In research conducted in the area of masculinity, Wade (1998) alludes to the concept that masculinity has only one real form that is the ideal and that all men aspire to be masculine. He goes on identify that the only view of masculinity comes from the White, heterosexual, middle class, American male perspective. Tangential to this perspective, Kimmel and Messner (2004) explained that masculinity differs not only from culture to culture, but also within each culture as well. They discuss the importance of age, class culture, ethnicity, race, and sexual orientation as part of the creation of male identity. Wade (1998) interprets these factors as reference groups.

External factors such as environment, family, media, and role models all define for young people how they are supposed to act in order to be accepted within their reference group. Men are taught to be independent, strong, competitive, providers, protectors, and any stereotypical characteristics associated with women are perceived to be weak in the eyes of society. David and Brannon (1976) identified four ideas that characterized the male gender role. In their research, traditional male or masculine characteristics had to include no sissy stuff, a complete rejection of femininity; the big wheel, a constant pursuit of success and fame; the sturdy oak, a tough, sturdy, confident, levelheaded demeanor; and a "give 'em hell," aggression, competitiveness, and violence. To further justify this ideology, Kimmel (1994) stated boys and men are

given permission to perpetuate these stereotypes due to accepted social attitudes of "boys will be boys" (p. 119).

Racial & Ethnic Male Identity

The seminal work on racial identity development comes from Cross (1971,1991) and Helms (1990,1995). Cross' model explores black identity development, while Helms' looks at white identity development. According to Robinson and Howard-Hamilton (2000), the advantage of exploring identity models is that they provide an explanation of the differences within and among ethnics groups. Phinney (1996) states that it is important to understand the psychology of minorities because it is critical to understand the differences and distinctiveness of each individual.

Men of Color

The first ethnic identity development model that focused on Black identity was introduced by Cross in 1971. Cross' (1971) Black Racial Identity model describes the process of accepting and affirming an individual's Black identity within the context of the United States by progressing from Black self-hatred to Black self-acceptance. In his original model, there were five identity stages that characterized their process: (a) Pre-Encounter; (b) Encounter, (c) Immersion-Emersion, (d) Internalization, and (e) Internalization-Commitment. Cross's (1971) work was later revised in 1991 and 1995 and, ultimately, had an impact on the development of a variety of other cultural identity theories and models: minority identity development (Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1989), racial identity development (Arce, 1981; Helms, 1990; Kim, 1981; Ponterotto, 1988), and ethnic identity development (Phinney, 1989, 1992) and even sexual orientation, (Cass, 1979; D'Augelli, 1994; Erikson, 1980, Fassinger, 1998; and Stevens, 2004).

While Cross (1971) created the first ethnic and racial identity development model for Black and African American individuals, additional racial models were created to describe other ethnic groups over time. Kim (1981) explored Asian-American identity development and Torres (2003) and Torres (2003) worked to develop a model to understand Latino students. Ponterotto (1988) explored biracial individuals in an attempt articulate the development of multi-ethnic individuals' lives.

White Men

Helm's (1990) White Male Identity and the Key Model for White Male Identity Development (Scott & Robinson, 2001) explain the various differences between an individual's race, the (socially) constructed attitudes about ethnicity and race, and, finally, racial identity development. Ultimately, these identity development models help gain an understanding of how people travel from limited awareness regarding their ethnic and racial selves to a more erudite understanding of themselves and others (Helms, 1984).

Masculinity vs. Femininity

According to Davis and Laker (2004), college men continue to experience the same pressures to measure up to the traditional definition of masculinity they felt as boys. According to research, masculinity and femininity are inclusive of sexuality and gender expectations (Lupton, 2006). Capraro (2004) posits that masculinity is complex and explains that college men experience stress as a result of the expectations and pressure to live up to the traditional definition of masculinity.

For example, men who possess stereotypically feminine characteristics (emotional, caring, compassionate, understanding or overly affectionate) are often

stereotyped as being gay (Madon, 1997; Levant & Pollack, 1995). Within modern society, men who are gay are often stereotyped as portraying a feminine or hyperfeminine persona (Linneman, 2008). Additionally, a man who is not White, middle class, and heterosexual has reduced social power (Alvesson & Billing, 2009). By default, a gay man, regardless of his other identities, will have less social capital than his straight male peers. Schimel et al. (1999) found that gay men whose behaviors were stereotypically feminine were evaluated less favorably than gay men whose behaviors were counter stereotypical and more masculine.

Masculine (Behavior) Presentation

According to O'Neil (1982), the fear of femininity is at the center of identity conflict. This fear is instilled into boys during early childhood and is reiterated in the socialization that occurs throughout men's lives (O'Neil, 1982; Hartley, 1976). Males quickly learn to exhibit all things masculine while being discouraged from revealing any hint of femininity (David and Brannon, 1976; Hartley, 1976; LaFollette, 1992; Meth, 1990;). The ultimate insult is to be called names associated with femininity, such as "sissy" or "wimp" (David and Brannon, 1976). For many men, there is a rooted fear of femininity caused when men struggle with other issues such as emotional and affectionate inexpressiveness, homophobia, and a need for power and control (O'Neil, 1982).

Smiler (2006) conducted a quantitative study focused on trying to explain the various dominant forms and presentations of masculinity and how those images limit our knowledge of masculinity. Most of the research conducted in the area of male/masculine identity is qualitative. This study provided a unique opportunity to

explore issues of identity within the context of a quantitative approach. The study combined various social identities (ten typical male identities) and connected their gender norms and traits. Smiler (2006) established that men perceived to be masculine possessed more traits that were perceived to not be feminine. Starting in 1936, Terman and Miles' Masculinity/Femininity (MF) Test provided the first study that measured perspectives on masculinity. Over the years, social identity research relied on stereotypes derived from theoretical principles.

Physical Presentation

The study of body image has traditionally been classified as a women's issue. While women may have dissatisfaction with their body shape and size (Grogan, 2007), many men also have dissatisfaction when it comes to the perception of their physiques, resulting in a decreased level of fulfillment regarding their masculinity. Pope, Phillips and Olivardia (2000) cited that issues regarding men's body image concerns are now documented in academic publications and stated that men are susceptible to body image concerns such as eating disorders, exercise obsession, and muscle dysmorphia. They state that the pursuit of the perfect male body "is created by biological and psychological forces that combine with modern society's and the media's powerful and unrealistic messages emphasizing an ever-more muscular, ever-more fit, and often unattainable male body ideal" (pp. 104). In the book, *Looking Queer: Body Image and Identity in Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, and Transgender Communities*, Atkins spoke about "the culture of desire" within gay men's communities that emphasizes looks above everything else (1998).

Much research has been conducted in a variety of areas related to the physical presentations of GQ men in relation to masculinity. Some of those themes are self-objectification (Martins, Tiggemann & Kirkbride, 2007), socio-cultural influences such as the media (Duggan & McCreary, 2004), developmental "immaturity" (Williamson, 1999), gay community values (Atkins, 1998; Stevens, 2004), and internalized homophobia (Kimmel, 1994, Kimmel & Mahalik, 2004).

Gay Values

A number of researchers, (Atkins, 1998; Meany-Walen & Davis-Gage, 2009, Hennen, 2008) make the case that gay men are particularly vulnerable because they hold membership within a subculture that places a strong emphasis on physical appearance. According to Morrison, Morrison and Sager (2004), the gay male culture places a premium on attractiveness. Gay men (like straight women) seeking to attract and please men, many viewing and using their bodies as sexual objects (Siever, 1994). Siever went on to say that, in general, men are more concerned about the physical attractiveness of their partners than are women. As a result, gay men report greater peer pressure to look good (Hospers & Jansen, 2005; Meany-Walen & Davis-Gage, 2009; Pope et al., 1999) and be youthful, and that their physical appearance is more important to their gay peers. According to Morrison et al.'s (2004) research on sexual orientation and body image, there is a real difference between straight and gay men in that gay men are more vulnerable to body dissatisfaction than are heterosexual men.

Few studies examined the evolution of society's ideal for the male body and how that affects undergraduate men. One study found that men's magazines published significantly more advertisements and articles about changing body shape than about

losing weight, suggesting that men might be more concerned with overall physique than with fat (Thompson, Pleck & Ferrera, 1992). Another study found that, between 1980 and 1991, men's fashion magazines printed an increasing number of articles on men's weight and health concerns (Nemeroff, Stein, Diehl, & Smilack, 1994). A third study cited a trend for the greater use of young male bodies in fashion magazines and in marketing a variety of products (Davis, Shapiro, Elliot, & Dionne, 1993). Boys' action figures, such as GI Joe, have become increasingly muscular over time, with many contemporary figures having physiques more muscular than is humanly possible, (Pope, Olivardia, Gruber, and Borowiecki, 1999). Among men, ideals within male culture of muscularity may contribute to lower self-esteem about the body (Blouin & Goldfield, 1995; Leit, 1998; Pope, Gruber, Choi, Olivardia, & Phillips, 1997;) and, possibly, to abuse of anabolic-androgenic steroids (Pope & Katz, 1994). For an undergraduate man trying to discover who he is, these factors from outside of the campus boundaries play into his identity development.

Lakkis, Ricciardelli and Williams' (1999), study was designed to examine the role of sexual orientation and gender-related personality traits in persons with eating disorders along with their attitudes and behavior; this included body dissatisfaction. Self-reported measures assessing negative and positive gender traits, such as body dissatisfaction, drive for thinness, dietary restraint, and bulimic symptoms, were administered to participants. According to their research, gay men scored significantly higher than heterosexual men on body dissatisfaction and dietary restraint. For men, the additional amount of variance accounted for by the gender traits was significantly

higher than that accounted for by sexual orientation. They stated that overall, the amount of variance accounted for by sexual orientation was contradictory.

Male body image research increased in recent years. In recent studies, sexual orientation (particularly for men) was identified as a risk factor contributing to the development of disordered eating attitudes and behavior, including body dissatisfaction (Heffernan, 1994; Schneider, O'Leary, & Jenkins, 1995; Siever, 1994). Studies consistently found that gay undergraduate men are more concerned with shape and weight than heterosexual men (O'Dea & Abraham, 2002). Gay men also report higher levels of body dissatisfaction, higher levels of dieting, and greater bulimic symptoms than do heterosexual men (Siever, 1994). The findings have been attributed to the male gay subculture which places great emphasis on the lean and muscular body ideal, appearance, and fashion (Heffernan, 1994).

Sexuality is a cornerstone in the research regarding men's body image (Pope et al., 2000; Siever, 1994). It has been found that gay men experience a greater degree of body image dissatisfaction than do heterosexual men (Pope, et al., 2000) and are at an increased risk for eating disorders. Several themes emerged through the various studies focused on gay male students and their body perceptions: self-objectification (Martins, Tiggemann & Kirkbride, 2007), socio-cultural influences such as the media (Duggan & McCreary, 2004), developmental 'immaturity' (Williamson, 1999), gay community value's dissidence (Atkins, 1998), and internalized homophobia (Kimmel & Mahalik, 2004; Meany-Walen and Davis-Gage, 2009).

One critique of current student developmental theory is that men have never been asked to understand themselves as men in reference to their growth and

development as men (Harper & Harris, 2010). In an attempt to respond to this gap, two new models of men's identity development have emerged. These two models focus specifically on male college students. Harris (2006; Harris & Edwards, 2010) and Edwards (2007) each explored college men and (what) factors influenced men's identity development using grounded theory.

Edwards' (2007) study engaged ten men attending one large, public, four-year, non-profit university in the mid-Atlantic. The demographics of the men represented a diverse background and varied interests which included social identities such as class, race, and sexual orientation, and campus involvement in terms of athletics, fraternity life, residential life, student staff, and campus organization officers (Harris & Edwards, 2010). Students in Edwards' (2007) study were interviewed three times in order to explore what it meant for each them to be a man, how each understood what it was to be a man, how that idea changed over time, and what the influences were that caused these changes (Harris & Edwards, 2010). Harris' (2008) study was completed in two separates phases. In the first phase, Harris interviewed 12 men and used the findings of those interviews to identify major themes and categories. From there, he used the themes to create questions for the focus groups that involved 56 additional students. Harris had a total of 68 participants attending a private, four-year, non-profit university on the West Coast of the United States. Similar to Edwards' (2007) study, Harris' (2008) student population represented a diverse background as well as a variety of student involvement levels.

Meaning Making & Mattering

For many men, reason replaces emotion, and feelings are rationalized and intellectualized instead of being outwardly displayed (Meth, 1990; Balswick, 1982). The

expression of any emotion, intimacy, or suggestion of vulnerability by men is socially unacceptable (Balswick, 1982; David and Brannon, 1976; Meth, 1990). Even within their peer group, males, unlike females, are discouraged from expressing affection for same sex friends (Meth, 1990). At the heart of men's emotional and intimate inexpressiveness is the knowledge this expressiveness is considered to be a feminine trait and can result in insults, as stated previously, like "sissy" (David and Brannon, 1976; Balswick, 1982) or, more disheartening for the male ego, in being labeled as a “homosexual” or “fag" (Lehne, 1976).

The concept of intersectionality (Museus & Griffin, 2011) offers a lens for understanding the composition of an undergraduate male individual’s multiple identities. Intersectionality refers to the interplay among multiple aspects of his identity and how those components of identity play into the power dynamics of the larger societal context (Crenshaw, 1995). Feminist theorists and scholars conducted research on intersectionality through a lens made up of Critical Race Theory (CRT) and gender to understand the power structures that influence women (Crenshaw, 1995). However, there is little work on intersectionality or understanding of multiple identities within student development theory, another limitation. One exception to this is the Model of Multiple Dimensions of Identity (Abes, Jones & McEwen, 2007). This model provides a framework through which an individual can understand the meeting of his multiple identities through a filter of meaning making on the individual, community, and systemic levels (Abes, Jones & McEwen, 2007).

Schlossberg’s Theory of Marginality and Mattering (1989) explains the five aspects of mattering: (a) attention, (b) importance, (c) ego extension, (d) dependence

and (e) appreciation. She explained students felt alienated or unsupported due to the environment's being too homogenous, the conformity of marginalized students, and the institution's being unaware of a minority group member(s) experiences. While Schlossberg's (1989) theory was specifically tooled for ethnic minorities, the same theory can be applied to sexual minorities as well. Jones and McEwen's (2000) study explained how multiple social group memberships and intersections of identity were informed by the intersections of race, class, sexual orientation and other identities on men's gender identity development (Jones & McEwen, 2000).

Gays have a lower level of self-worth because gay youth feel different from their peers, confused about their identity, and they internalize that they do not belong. Gay men, more so than those of other sexual orientations, are more likely to experience this form of stress and base their self-value on the opinions of their peers (Yeung & Stombler, 2000). Yeung and Stombler (2000) interviewed 42 students, members of Delta Lambda Phi Fraternity, an organization for gay, bisexual and progressive men. From their study, it was established that gay men in the fraternity did not have to "play up" their machismo or prove their masculinity in a specific way (p.140). This is important to note when considering the impact of social identities on the contextual experiences of GQ men.

According to Bosson, Haymovitz and Pinel (2004), gay men exhibit anxiety and underperform when sexuality is made relevant to a stereotype-related task. Smart and Wegner (2000) proposed that gay men suffer their own "private hell" when trying to suppress their sexuality in day-to-day interactions. Being gay can result in negative consequences, either directly or indirectly. Heterosexual men worry about being

perceived as gay (Bosson et al., 2004; Evans, 2002; Simpson, 2004). For obvious reasons, gay men maintain the same fears, wanting nothing more than to be members of the majority group. Being, or being perceived as, feminine is an undesirable quality according to American male gender norms (Madon, 1997). A man, straight or gay, violating his gender role by engaging in a feminine domain may be seen as weak or as having role incongruence (Bosson, Prewitt-Freilino, & Taylor, 2005; Eagly & Diekman, 2005). According to McCreary (1994), gay male stereotypes are rigid and usually defined by female/feminine gender stereotypes. Additionally, the gender difference could also be interpreted as a status difference. This concept illuminates the possibility that gay men have more to lose than lesbian women because men are regarded as higher status than are women (Bem, 1993). According to McCusker and Galupo (2011), men who seek help are seen as “unmanly” and “weak.” According to their research, help-seeking behavior and sexual identity has an impact on gay men’s perceptions of their masculine and feminine traits. In order to be accepted on campus, members of the aforementioned fraternity had to “defeminize” their presentation on their campus (Yeung and Stombler, 2000). The fraternity created a program called The True Gentleman in order to lessen the degree to which they were perceived as “flaming queens” on campus, (p.141). By combating stereotypes, this organization helped these men positively assimilate into the perceived predetermined gender stereotypical roles.

Meth (1990) and O’Neil (1982) suggest that power and control are essential to men's self-identity. According to Meth, "male power, especially over females, appears to be central to many men's definitions of themselves. With power they are men; without it they are not better than women" (1990, p. 238). The idea of dominance of men over the

submissiveness of women was noted in Kalof and Cargill's (1991) study of fraternity men and sorority women. Power is seen as something ethereal and external, something that has to be taken from someone else (O'Neil, 1982).

Through the use of various research (David & Brannon, 1976; Connell, 1995; Edwards, 1992), ten specific masculine identities were selected for Smiler's (2006) study. Those identities were: Average Joe, Businessman, Family Guy, Jock, Nerd, Player, Rebel, Sensitive/New Aged Guy, Don Juan and Tough Guy. According to the research, these ten male archetypes describe the stereotypes across these domains including appearance, personality attributes, recreational/vocational activities, attitudes, and demographic characteristics. In a study by Blazina and Watkins (1996), it was discovered that college men exhibited more aggressive behavior (tough guy image), had an increased likelihood of alcohol use (non-conformist/rebel), and were less likely to ask for help. While Smiler's (2006) study included groups of men and women, this study did not specifically cover the experiences of gay men on a college campus.

A study conducted by Macapagal, Rupp and Heiman (2011), found that men and women (with no connection to sexuality) preferred more feminine male faces because they were perceived as more attractive, friendly and trustworthy. Conversely, their study also found that the individuals in the study who were identified with higher hypermasculinity scores were linked to increased attractiveness and trustworthiness ratings of the male faces. Ultimately, the researchers suggest that masculinized faces were regarded as more aggressive than feminized faces.

Glick et al. (2007) stated that Americans perceive gay men as gentle, passive, effeminate, and well dressed and believe that gay men violate acceptable male gender

roles. This author's study focused on 53 undergraduate men who were given false personality outcomes as being either masculine or feminine. The outcome was that those who were given an effeminate outcome reacted defensively and targeted groups who possessed the traits they received, or perceived, as referenced to themselves. The outcome was that, if a man's masculinity was challenged or threatened, then he would pose a danger to men who were perceived to be effeminate (Glick et al., 2007).

According to several studies (Mahalik, 2005; Pope, Philips & Olivardia, 2000), a gay man's desire to have a powerful masculine physique is often a defensive reaction to the dominant opinion that all men must be manly. Qualitative (ethnographic and case study) research suggests that individuals attempt to achieve "masculine" bodies in an effort to distinguish themselves from women (Beagan & Saunders, 2005). According to Siever (1994), society dictates that gay men must be attractive, slender, and muscular. Halkitis, Moeller and DeRaleau (2008) posit that many gay men use steroids in order to increase their muscle mass and appear more masculine. Harris' (2006) work was significant because it was the first study that attempted to understand a young man's making meaning of his masculinity within the context of college.

Community and Expectations

Within modern pop culture, the media has an impact on social norms and interpretation of attractiveness, gender roles, and sexuality (Gauntlett, p.1). Being involved and engaged in the environment is one factor in how a college student transitions into institution (Astin, 1984). Halkitis (2001) found that the majority of men who participated in his study associated masculinity among gay men with physical appearance and sexual adventurism. Physical features include a big frame, muscularity,

tattoos, and body piercings. Sexual adventurism consisting of an increased interest in casual sex and or with multiple partners was also discovered in this study.

It stands to reason that self-prescribed standards of masculinity that men have been conditioned to adhere to throughout life are learned and adopted through acceptance into the gender role. Much research tries to explain what behaviors a man should perform in American society. David and Brannon (1976) stated that masculine ideology is defined by conforming to the following: (a) Men should not be effeminate; (b) Men should be respected and admired; (c) Men should never show fear; and (d) Men seek adventure and risk. O'Neil (1981) discovered that men tend to struggle with four specific factors of behaviors classified traditionally as masculine: (1) Men should be successful, (2) Men should restrict their affectionate behavior with other men, (3) Men should restrict their emotions, and (4) Men should be work- and career-driven.

Another result is the increased competitive nature of men, as failure to assume power over others is seen as defeat or "emasculation" (LaFollette, 1992; O'Neil, 1982). This feeds directly into men's obsession with success and achievement. In 1993, Steinberg stated that men "aspire to attain higher status, and they are perceived by themselves as more masculine when they succeed" (p. 98). Success is often measured by income, but can also be measured in terms of occupational prestige, fame, physical aesthetics and power (David and Brannon, 1976; O'Neil, 1982). David and Brannon (1979) stated that "really massive doses of success at almost anything, in fact, seem so inherently masculine that the 'World's Greatest' artist, pianist, chef, hair-dresser, or tiddlywinks player is to some extent protected from the taint of unmasculine activity which surrounds less successful members of his profession" (p. 19). Due to the fact that

success is normally measured based on work, and work performance, men tend to become obsessed with work, spending a lot of their time working, planning for work, or worrying about work (O'Neil, 1982).

Wade and Donis (2007) conducted a study that measured male identity, masculine ideology and the quality of relationships among this group of men (gay and straight). The goal of this study was to examine the perception of men and the quality of their romantic relationships and to gain a better understanding as to the extent that masculine ideology and male identity were related to the quality of their relationships. The findings posited that the more traditional the individual's masculinity presentation was, the lower the score for their intimate relationship quality (regardless of their sexual orientation).

Bailey et al. (1997) stated that gay men are "on average" effeminate and lesbians are "on average" more masculine. The "average" was based off of observed mannerisms, interest and occupation. They state that, as children, gay men were more effeminate and lesbians were more masculine than their straight peers. During their study, the question of what happens when a member of these two communities does not conform to "the average" was raised. Among men, fear related to being considered feminine is being labeled "homosexual" (Lehne, 1976). O'Neil (1982), Lehne (1976) and others suggest that this fear is employed by men to enforce social conformity to masculine roles and to maintain social power and control. They put homosexuality at the bottom of the male identity hierarchy, giving heterosexual men more power and privilege than homosexual men (Pleck, 1980; Connell, 1995). Males, not wanting to lose

their power and privilege, learn not to exhibit behaviors which may cause them to be labeled "homosexual," including physical contact with other men (Meth, 1990).

When looking at Yelland and Tiggemann's (2003) quantitative research study, self-esteem seemed to be positively correlated with body dissatisfaction for both gay and straight college-aged men. However, for gay men, self-esteem was negatively related to the importance muscularity, physical appearance, and weight. From within the gay community, there is an increased pressure to be physically attractive and to conform to non-stereotypical ideals, which are counterproductive to ones self-esteem (Kimmel & Mahalik, 2009). Levesque and Vichesky (2006) realized that a gay man who is engaged, involved and integrated within the gay community has decreased body dissatisfaction. They concluded that feeling accepted may shield gay men from pressure to look a specific way to fit in.

According to Pope et al. (2001), there is evidence that men's physical bodies are progressively being objectified through the use of youthful, hairless, bare-chested, lean, and muscular male bodies in media and advertising. Men (and boys) are increasingly subjected to media images that elicit a visual standard. With regard to men, the required aesthetic is a v-shaped body, broad shoulders, well-developed upper body, and flat stomach (Pope et al., 2000). These concepts usually portray a certain level of muscularity that is almost impossible for the average man to achieve by diet and exercise alone (Leit, Pope, & Gray, 2001).

Tiggemann, Martins and Kirkbride (2007) found that youthfulness is one aspect of the gay male ideal. The images that appear in mainstream media present young,

hairless bodies, and many gay writers have commented that being young is just as important as being muscular and thin (Mann, 1998).

In 2008, Brown and Graham compared 80 straight and gay male students on their self-determined levels of masculinity, femininity, body satisfaction, rationale behind the desire to exercise, and narcissism. One highlighted discovery was that self-identified straight men were more satisfied with their physical bodies than were their gay peers. Additionally, straight men prioritize fun as their reason for working out while gay men explained that they worked out to improve their appearance. In this study, the greatest finding was that straight men who scored highest within the defined criteria determined as “masculine” were the most happy with their bodies, while gay men who scored the lowest in terms of “masculinity” were least happy. Meany-Walen and Davis-Gage (2009) surmised that physical attractiveness and a lean/muscular body aesthetic helps to achieve a feeling of belonging and acceptance within the gay male community.

One common theme shared by all was that that gay men have been oppressed from an early age, more so than their heterosexual peers. This paints the picture that the pressure to kowtow to the elevated standards for physical attractiveness within the gay men’s community is a driving factor in acceptance, and a value or desire to find a romantic partner.

Hennen (2008) expressed a concern for the stigmatization of gay men who are perceived to be effeminate, referred to as the *effeminacy effect*. Hennen speaks about three specific subcultures within the gay men’s community: faeries, bears and leathermen. Faeries are defined as those men who embrace their femininity by wearing

form-fitting jeans and tight shirts to reveal their muscular bodies. Youth is an asset for this community.

Bears desire to be perceived as just regular guys. They conform to traditional gender roles and are perceived to be straight (heterosexual) by the casual observer. However, unlike Faeries, their body type is known as “girth and mirth” in that they are larger men with average to heavy build and tend to be older.

Known for their hypermasculine selves, Leathermen perceive the male body through eroticism and specific clothing. Additionally, they perceive themselves as more masculine than heterosexual men. Leathermen identify first as men and then, often, by their sexual orientation. This is different from Faeries who identify first as gay, then male. These three subgroups experience perks of masculinity while trying to, sometimes, avoid the pitfalls of femininity (Hennen, 2008). Within the gay community, college-aged men are referred to as “Twinks”, creating another subpopulation within the queer community.

According to Sanchez et al. (2010), there has not been much research in the area of gay men and the impact that masculinity has on them. According to the authors, gay men desire to be and appear masculine, just like their straight counterparts. Part of the conversation concluded that important components of the gay identity include: Caucasian, youthful, middle-class, athletic, professional, middle class and “straight acting.” The authors also concluded that gay men hate other gay men who are “too girly, showy or gay”—anything that could be seen from outside of the masculine/macho perspective. Additionally, gay men who appear to present as weak, emotional, or feminine get highly frustrated with gay men who spend a lot of time covering up their

sexual orientation and pretending to be straight. The four discoveries from the survey were that (a) masculinity is an important construct for many gay men, (b) many gay men desire romantic partners who appear masculine, (c) on average, gay men wished to be more masculine than they perceived themselves to be, (d) gay men who place an importance on masculinity (e) have trouble being affectionate with other men and (f) are immersed in school/work activities and may feel negatively about being gay (p.108-109). Bailey et al. (1997) concluded that gay men and lesbians declare their masculine/feminine presentation while heterosexual people do not.

In another study conducted by Sanchez et al. (2009), the researchers looked at how gay men associate their ideal self-image and how this is affected by their perspective of masculinity and femininity as well as how this idea affects their intimate relationships. They found that gay men assign gender roles in their intimate relationships based on feminine and masculine stereotypes. Additional findings included pressure to be physically attractive, pressure to appear masculine in order to be accepted by society, pressure to be emotionally detached, and the longing to be desired by other gay men. The article concluded with the author suggesting that there is a need for additional research in the area of how masculine norms and ideals affect gay men.

Ridge et al. (2006) speaks about how commercialized gay spaces (like bars, nightclubs and circuit parties) affect coping, social competence and masculine constructs among gay men. The authors examined how coming out is a rite of passage into a new sense of one's gay self-identity and social world. Gay men have anxiety when they cross the threshold of what is known to them (their heterosexual life) into their newly identified life (gay life) (Ridge et al., 2006). Often, newly out men

immediately immerse themselves into the “gay life”. One of the subjects in Ridge et al.’s study specifically mentioned that he was aware of his “gayness” and did what he could to present a masculine presence. None of the survey participants identified homophobia as a concern directly, but, based on their evaluations, the researchers surmised that homophobia was an issue. Ridge et al. (2006) concluded with the idea that personal coping was as unique as the individual.

In several studies (Halkitis, 2001; Halkitis et al., 2004; Hennen, 2008; Kite & Deaux, 1987; Sanchez et al., 2009), the notion of casual sex, promiscuity, and the seeking out of multiple partners was a value shared by the gay community. Because most men, whether straight or gay, often objectify subjects of their desire, it is easy to conclude that the self-esteem of those individuals being objectified will be affected (Mahalik et al., 2003). In the gay community, members often prioritize physical intimacy when connecting with a partner in lieu of interpersonal intimacy, (Haldeman, 2001).

Understanding how male students develop in college and identifying how these men recognize the influence of their environment while in college is important when researchers explore emerging identity development. Harris’ (2006) study addressed three principal variables: how college men made meaning of masculinity and acted on those meanings through their attitudes and behaviors, contextual influences that exist within the campus environment that continued to affect, reinforce, or challenge his understanding of masculinity, and that gender expectations and norms are a result of both meanings of masculinity within the context of the collegiate environment (Harris, 2006). Kimmel’s (2008) research confirms these ideas with regard to the behaviors performed by undergraduate male students. Harris’ (2006) and Kimmel’s (2008)

research is supported by additional research on the topics of athletics (Anderson, 2008) and fraternity life (Anderson, 2007; Rhoads, 2010).

Theoretical Framework

In order to incorporate all of the informing theories, the author used two frameworks: Fassinger's (1998) theoretical framework on the coming out processes and Abes et al.'s (2007) theory of multiple dimensions of identity development. The author used these two frameworks in conjunction with interviews to develop a conceptual framework that explains each student's understanding and experience of his perceived masculinity based in the context of his environment. As an administrator within student affairs, the researcher has had several conversations with students regarding the impact their masculinity has had in gaining access to different social groups. For his dissertation, the researcher accessed students on one campus, and attempted to access students from one or more of the other colleges/universities in the southeastern United States. To participate in this study, the author sought students who were at least 18 years old, male, reared as a gendered boy/man, enrolled full time at an accredited 4-year institution of higher education, and who considered themselves as "out."

	INDIVIDUAL	GROUP
STAGE 1: Awareness	Individual has an awareness of feelings of being different	Individual becomes aware of the existence of difference sexual orientations in people
STAGE 2: Exploration	Individual begins to explore strong/erotic feelings for same sex people or a particular same sex person.	Individual begins to explore their position regarding gay people as a group, in terms of both attitudes and possible membership
STAGE 3: Deepening Commitment	Individual feels a deepening commitment to self-knowledge, self-fulfillment, and crystallization of choices about sexuality	Individual becomes committed to personal involvement with the reference group, including awareness of oppression and consequences of choices.
STAGE 4: Internalization/Synthesis	Individual synthesis their love for same sex people and sexual choices into over identity	Individual identifies her/himself as part the community.

Figure 1. *Fassinger's Model of Homosexual Identity Development*. From "Lesbian, gay and bisexual identity and student development theory." In R.L. Sanlo (ed.), 1998, *Working with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender college students: A handbook for faculty and administrators*, p. 14. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

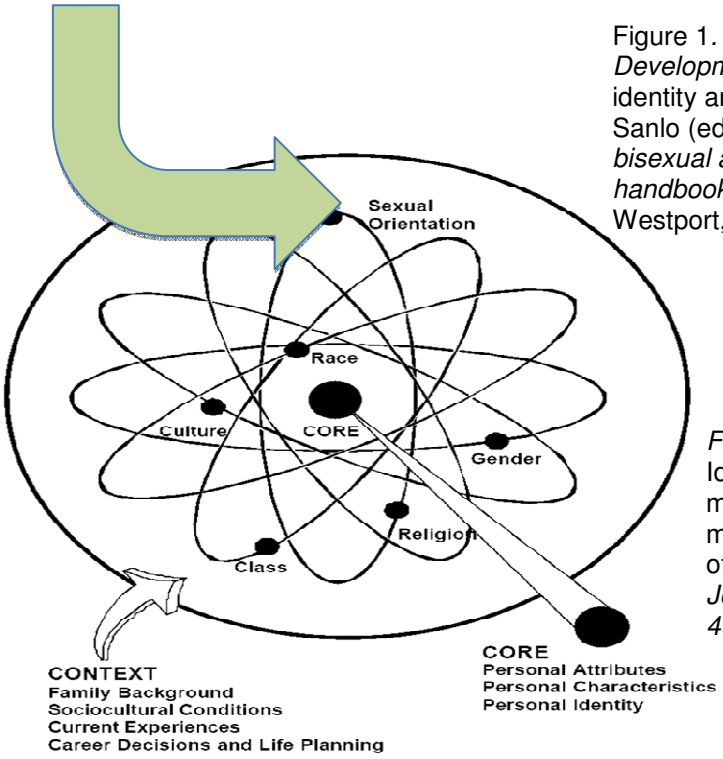

Figure 2. Model of Multiple Dimensions of Identity. From "Reconceptualizing the model of multiple dimensions of identity: The role of meaning-making capacity in the construction of multiple identities," by E. Abes et al, 2003, *Journal of College Student Development, 48(1),* p. 18.

Chapter Summary

Research found several themes that have emerged from the various studies on gay men and their perceived selves. Some of those themes are college environments (Chickering, 1993; Kimmel, 2008, and Stevens, 2004), social identities (Kimmel, 1994; McEwen, 2003; McIntosh, 2003; and Weber, 1998), sexual identity development (Cass, 1979; D'Augelli, 1994; Erikson, 1980; and Fassinger, 1998), masculine presentation of behaviors and physical appearance (Blouin & Goldfield, 1995; Davis, Shapiro, Elliot, & Dionne, 1993; Leit, 1998; Grogan, 2007; Hennen, 2008; Pope, Gruber, Choi, Olivardia, & Phillips, 1997; and Pope, Olivardia, Gruber, & Borowiecki, 1999), and meaning making and mattering (Abes, Jones & McEwens, 2007; Crenshaw, 1995; Halkitis, 2001; and Museus & Griffin, 2011).

According to Rottman (2006), homophobia is embedded in the educational system. In a study conducted by Lopez and Gormley (2002), it was established that students who were insecure and lived in an environment in which their gender identity and social groups changed or were questioned were less confident socially, had more frequent instances of depression, and reported more problems in general than their secure peers.

Because gay people are not always as easily identifiable as other marginalized groups, like women or persons of color, there is a different set of challenges that these group members must face. As Meany-Walen and Davis-Gage (2009) stated, gays and lesbians face various forms of oppression over their lifetime, more often than their heterosexual peers. Getz and Kirkley (2006) states that one of the issues they approach in their study is heteronormativity. Heteronormativity is a term used in the discussion

of gender and society and within the realm of critical theory. It is used to describe and criticize how many social institutions and social policies are seen to reinforce beliefs about heterosexuality as the norm (wordid.com, 2010). There is a need for researchers and educators to have a better understanding of heteronormativity and how it affects these communities in order to understand the special needs of sexual minorities.

The literature review found several gaps in the literature that this dissertation's research addressed. In looking at how GQ students make meaning of their identity, it is important to understand who they are as individuals, with multiple facets, and see these men as a population worth study and support.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explain the role that masculinity has in identity development among self-identified GQ collegiate men. The goal of this study was to develop a theory that explains how traditional college-age men view masculinity within the context of their performance as men. Through this study, the researcher investigated the relationship among an individual's collegiate identity development, sexual identity development, and how he makes meaning of his identity as he navigates his performance between the straight world and the queer world. The information from this study was collected and analyzed so that administrators at the college level can begin to develop strategies to support this student population and enable them to be greater contributors to the campus community and society as a whole.

Grounded Theory

Several studies have explored the various aspects of sexual identity development of gay men (Cass, 1979; D'Augelli, 1994; Erikson, 1980, Fassinger, 1998; Stevens, 2004), but there have not been any that look specifically at college-aged men and their exploration of masculinity. This grounded theory dissertation examines how GQ male students explore their identity and its relationship to their understanding of their masculinity at a private, non-profit four-year institution of higher education in the southeast of the United States. Through focus groups and interviews with "out" students, insight was gained to discover how this population of students makes meaning of masculine identity while enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student in

their various social groups.

Grounded Theory “is an inductive, theory discovery methodology that allows the researcher to develop a theoretical account of the general features of a topic while simultaneously grounding the account in empirical observations or data,” (Martin & Turner, 1986, p. 141). According to Martin and Turner (1986), Grounded Theory offers a comprehensive, rigorous, and systematic method of analysis. Grounded Theory provides the researcher with more freedom to explore the research area and allow themes to surface, (Bryant, 2002). This study was approached using a grounded theory design. Because the coming out process does not occur within a specific timeframe, and because each man will have his own experiences, grounded theory was the only way that the researcher could capture those experiences. Additionally, part of the rationale for this approach was the limited number of male students who are ready to self-identify as gay and interested in participating in a study of this type. It was difficult to obtain a large sample size to complete a quantitative research project.

Grounded theory was initially developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). In 1998, Strauss and Corbin (1998) adapted the theory and posited the following assumptions:

1. There is a need to gain firsthand information taken from its source, i.e. the field.
2. The relevance of theory, grounded in observed data, to the development of a discipline and as a basis for social action.
3. There is complexity and variability of phenomena being observed and in human action.
4. There is a belief that persons are actors who take an active role in responding to problematic situations.
5. Persons act on the basis of meaning.
6. The understanding that meaning is defined through interaction.
7. There is sensitivity to the evolving and unfolding nature of events.
8. There is awareness to the interrelationships among condition (structure), action (process), and consequences.

(Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 9-10)

The researcher selected grounded theory not only because of its theoretical end product, but also to simultaneously ground the account of these GQ college students in empirical observations and data (Martin & Turner, 1986).

By using grounded theory, the researcher recognized that *meaning* comes from the experiences the students share with the researcher. For this reason, the relationship between the researcher and the students are valued rather than avoided (Charmaz, 2000). The researcher ultimately decided upon grounded theory methodology because the goal of the research is to ground a theory in the data and observations in order to "offer insight, enhance understanding, and provide a meaningful guide to action" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 12). Additionally, grounded theory concedes that "combining methods may be done for supplementary, complementary, informational, developmental, and other reasons," (p. 28).

Sampling

Grounded Theory requires the researcher to use intentional sampling techniques as a means of identifying participants who have substantial awareness and experience with the topic being studied (Patton, 2002). The purpose of sampling was to allow the researcher to obtain rich data in order to examine a great number of topics relevant to the purpose of the study (Patton, 2002). According to Maxwell (2005), the four most important motivations for purposeful sampling are (a) to seek out representativeness or typicality of the settings, individuals, or activities selected; (b) sufficiently capture the heterogeneity in the population in order to ensure that the outcomes sufficiently represent a range of the experiences; (c) intentionally examining cases that are crucial for the theories that are used at the beginning of the study; and (d) establishing a

comparison that highlights the reasons for differences between the selected settings or individuals in the study. For this dissertation, the researcher used open and snowball sampling as needed.

With the lack of research committed to establishing a link between understanding identity while in college and the perception of masculinity in social groups, this research begins to address that gap. The researcher participated by using personal and professional networks to reach out and find a diverse student sample population. Additionally, he discussed with the dissertation chair his views and values regarding masculinity, identity development and group membership in order to keep his beliefs, perceptions and feelings regarding the topic out of the research process.

Open sampling

Strauss and Corbin (1998) stated that sampling in grounded theory research is done in order to select participants with great first-hand knowledge in order to explore the topic of the study. Open sampling was used as an initial technique to obtain participants. Open sampling allows the researcher to gain access to "those persons, places, situations that will provide the greatest opportunity to gather the most relevant data about the phenomenon under investigation" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The researcher used open sampling by providing Olive University students the opportunity to complete the demographic questionnaire survey, which included questions about their personal contact information, and basic demographics. Based upon the number of possible participants, the researcher expanded the study to men on additional campuses within the southern region of the United States, but the individuals who submitted the demographic survey did not match the required demographics.

Snowball Sampling

Vogt (1999) stated that snowball sampling is a technique for finding research subjects by which one study participant gives the researcher the name of another possible participant, who, in turn, provides the name of a third and so on. Often, this type of sampling is seen as a process to overcome sampling a small or isolated population (Faugier and Sargeant, 1997). Berg (1988) concluded that snowball sampling is a process based on the assumption that there is a "bond" or "link" that exists between the initial study participant and others in the same target population.

Throughout his study, the researcher observed analytical interpretations of the data to focus further data collection, which he used to inform and refine the development of the theoretical analyses (Charmaz, 2000). It was the researcher's intention to let the themes emerge from the data collection and analysis. After themes emerged from the data collected from initial participants, additional men were selected for the prospect of demonstrating dimensional variation of a lived experiences and the relationship among those experiences (Strauss & Corbin).

In order to ensure that a rich, thick description is collected, the researcher used discriminant sampling as necessary to explore the experiences of those who may not have fit the emerging theory as a means of verification. As needed, this sampling strategy was used until theoretical saturation is reached. Saturation is accomplished when no new/relevant data emerges, the categories are developed in terms of properties and dimensions demonstrating variations, and the relationship among themes are well established and validated (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Moreover, Strauss and Corbin (1998) explain that saturation is a "matter of degree" (p. 136).

Criteria for Involvement

In order to participate in the study, each of the students had to meet specific criteria. He had to be over 18 years old but under 23, born male and reared as a man, identify as gay or queer, and enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student. Individuals who graduated within the past semester were encouraged to take part in this study. Men who are transgender or nonconforming cisgender individuals were not included in the study because the development of those identities does not fit within the confines of this topic of study. Additionally, while the study was exclusively directed at male-identified individuals, the researcher asked two female identified people to fill out the survey. The importance of these two submissions is presented in chapter five. The researcher conducted one-on-one interviews, and a focus group interview with a population of self-identified GQ undergraduate men. The researcher sought consistent themes among these men and to understand the obstacles these individuals face. The sample included individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds as well as with varying social identities (McEwen, 2007).

Institutional Demographic

Olive University. Founded in the early 1800's, Olive University (OU) is a private institution and has a Carnegie status of RU/H Research University – High Research Activity. It is a highly regarded and selective independent research university in the United States. There are various undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees offered in the liberal arts, science and engineering, architecture, business, law, social work, medicine and public health and tropical medicine. OU is home to more than 8,000 undergraduate students on its main campus, and has four additional satellite

campuses around the country. OU is situated at the heart of metropolitan area of more than half a million people. OU has a 27% admission rate as of 2012, and its incoming first year class has an SAT score ranging from 1950 to 2150. As of 2012, the student demographic was 0.38% American Indian, 3.93% Asian, 9.93% African American/Black, 72.78% Caucasian, 5.77% Hispanic, 0.05% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 2.77% multi-ethnic and 4.39% "other" backgrounds. Additionally, the undergraduate population is made up of 43% male identified and 58% female identified students.

Participants

As advisor to the Queer Student Association (QSA) at Olive University, the researcher had access to the group's various social media sites and posted a short description on the group's Facebook page stating that he was looking for volunteers to be interviewed for his dissertation research. QSA membership was not limited to Olive University students. Additionally, serving as a leader within a national association that supports GQ students provided an opportunity to recruit additional subjects if needed. For the purpose of this dissertation, the students and the institutions were given pseudonyms to protect their identity.

Sample Size

For this study, the researcher planned to select and interview 12 to 20 student participants as well as to conduct semi-structured focus groups. The researcher ultimately completed interviews with 16 men. According to grounded theory research (Creswell, 2007; McEwen, 2007; Patton, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1998), this range of subjects is a reasonable range to ensure saturation of the topic. The students were primarily from Olive University, but, due to the limited numbers of students, snowball

sampling (Creswell, 2007) was employed to attain additional participants. According to Creswell (2007), through grounded theory, the researcher must use interviews to discover the core phenomenon, conditions, strategies and consequences of the topics being studied.

Interviews & Instrumentation

All students were asked the same questions, with the second to last question being, “Can you think of any additional questions that you think I should ask other subjects?” (Appendix B). This question gave the researcher the opportunity to involve the participants in helping to explore the topic together. The researcher’s last question was, “Was there any question that you thought that I was going to ask you but did not?” This question provided unforeseen beneficial responses that the researcher missed from the semi-structured interview approach. With adequate time and planning, the researcher conducted a focus group conversation, and used field observations and the online surveys as additional means of collecting information.

Data Collection

Procedure

The researcher obtained approval from the University of New Orleans Institutional Review Board (IRB). Through the IRB process, researcher submitted an update and memo with his application explaining the different protocols to be used for the individual interviews and the focus group interviews. Each of the men interviewed agreed to a verbal version of an informed consent statement to be included in the study and to grant permission to use interviews. Participants were also required to sign two copies of the statement before the interview began, one for the participant and one for

the researcher. Interviews were conducted in a private setting, recorded, and transcribed by the researcher or a confidential transcription service. For the purposes of consistency, the same procedure was followed for follow-up interviews. After all of the data was collected, the researcher provided the findings to the participants to ensure appropriate interpretation of the information collected, and in order to provide clarification of misrepresented ideas in a process known as member checking, (Creswell, 2007).

Interview questions were designed in order to obtain as much detail about each individual's perspective as possible. The researcher also collected demographic information from each participant (Appendix A). Some demographic examples are geographic home (urban or rural setting), race/ethnicity, level of "out-ness," school type (public or private) and religious rearing (if any). The interview questions were not provided in advance, but each interviewee was provided, in writing, the topics to be covered. For interviews, the participants were allowed to speak freely regarding each question asked. The interviewer asked clarifying questions as needed.

As discussed previously, Smiler (2006) conducted a quantitative study regarding the perception of masculinity using ten stereotypical male presentations within a co-educational environment. The researcher obtained permission to use one piece of Smiler's study for his dissertation. Each participant was asked to put in order the ten previously described traditional male archetypes, based on their perceptions of images and descriptions, from most masculine to least masculine, basing their ordering on the short description of each image.

There were three instruments used to assist the researcher in conducting his research. First, was the Demographic Intake Survey (Appendix A), the second was Interview Protocol (Appendix B). The third instrument was a semi-structured list of interview questions for the focus groups (Appendix C). The Demographic Intake Survey included approximately 16 pieces of basic demographic information used to collect enough information to explore whether or not each individual met the requirements set by the IRB and the specific items needed for the researcher. The second instrument was used during the individual interviews to collect information from each of the men participating in the study. The third instrument was used in the focus group to guide the direction of the group interview. All of the information collected from these three tools was used to develop themes and identify common traits or shared experiences of the group of students.

Data Analysis & Coding

The researcher used Strauss and Corbin's (1998) method of grounded theory data analysis as described in Creswell (2007). According to Strauss and Corbin, the researcher must use detailed procedures for analysis in order to present a grounded theory study. Creswell (2013) also posits that grounded theory would be the correct design to use when the literature has provided a variety of theoretical models, but the models were tested on populations other than those that are to be the subject of a qualitative researcher's study.

The researcher used three phases of coding: open, axial and selective (Creswell, 2013). In the first phase, open coding, information is categorized into segments, and then one category forms the focus of the emerging theory. In the second phase, axial

coding, categories that informed the theoretical model are identified. Next, a coding paradigm is produced to identify a central phenomenon, explore causal conditions, specify strategies, identify context and intervening conditions, and delineate consequences related to the phenomenon. In the last phase, selective coding, a storyline is created where categories intersect and substantive-level theory is developed as an outcome of the coding process.

The researcher read and organized the data into themes in order to collect outcomes. Additionally, the researcher included his field notes to look for other themes to emerge from the interviews. Upon request, he reviewed his field notes and interview and focus group transcripts with his advisor to receive an objective perspective.

Timeline

The researcher started the data collection at the beginning of the summer semester of 2013. The researcher continued to use the previously mentioned sampling methods to increase the pool of possible participants to the desired number in order to conduct a true, grounded theory study. The collection of data (including interviews and focus groups) was completed by the end of the Fall 2013 semester.

Credibility

One key concept of validity in quantitative research is credibility. Credibility addresses whether or not the perception of the researcher's portrayal of him/herself matches the perception of the participants (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2008), there are several ways in which researchers can ensure credibility: by clarifying any bias up front, discussing repeatedly and substantive engagement in the field, checking continuously whether interpretation of the processes

and interactions in the settings are valid, ensuring triangulation of all data, ensuring presentation of any discrepancies in the study, ensuring that the researcher member checked the collected transcripts, and ensuring the researcher conduct peer briefing. All of these steps are incorporated into the previously identified research outline.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness of the research is completely reliant upon the researcher (Patton, 2002). The researcher used different methods to ensure trustworthiness of the study's outcomes. After all of the information was collected, a copy of the themes and outcomes was provided to the participants for fact checking and triangulation purposes. Through the use of interviews, field notes, and member checking, the researcher worked to be completely transparent with the study's subjects. The participants were also allowed to clarify and validate transcripts. This approach was used to incorporate the students' ideas into the study in order to provide additional insight on the topic being studied (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

Assumptions

Some of the factors which potentially influenced the researcher's study include the varying percentages of the number of GQ students there are on a college campus. While the current range of students who are GQ on campus range from 1% to 21% (Gates, 2011; Kinsey, 1959; Savin-Williams, 2006), these numbers would still classify this group as a minority. The researcher also assumed that there would be 12 to 20 GQ students interested and available to participate in his research. As an administrator within student affairs, the researcher assumed that all higher education professionals would be interested in supporting students. The researcher assumed that, even though

he would know some of the participants through his professional position as an administrator and advisor on the campus featured in this study, students would be completely forthcoming with honest answers without fear of consequences. Through this study, the researcher sought answers regarding many of these assumptions.

Limitations

As discussed through this framework proposal, each of the theories selected has its own limitations. After creating a framework, it is clear to the researcher that this study is much larger than originally conceived. However, that is the nature of identity development and, to a certain extent, qualitative research. Additionally, because identity development, by definition, is always evolving, the men who participated in this study were really only able to provide a snapshot of what their experiences were to date.

Participants were allowed to select an alias in order to protect their anonymity, making their story that much more personal. The participants were informed of the purpose of this study prior to their involvement and given the informed consent statement before they participated. Any information obtained during the interviews, discussions or surveys was included in the data analysis process unless specifically requested by the participant. The researcher provided the participants with information regarding the researcher's professional background and bias upon request. All data was stored under a password-protected computer and program. Physical files were held in a locked room when not actively being used for the data analysis. Each of the participants were sent a copy of his part of the formal write-up of the study before it was submitted to the dissertation committee to ensure that the interviewee felt the information provided

was accurate and presented correctly.

A set of questions was predetermined for the interviews. For consistency, the same questions were asked of each student. The researcher consulted with his advisor and his methodologist to help to determine whether the questions being asked would provide the right type of information the researcher was looking for, or whether the outcomes would be repetitive. Being a gatekeeper for his campus, the researcher had access to students from a minimum of two different campuses. The researcher understands that, while this could prove to be political and an ethical concern in accessing student advisees, he believed that the GQ students were interested in participating in this research study and eager to share their experiences.

Role of the Researcher

Ethical Considerations

The researcher shared his personal motivation and experience with the topic as a former GQ undergraduate man. As a former undergraduate and a self-identified gay man, the researcher struggled with his own definition of masculinity as it relates to social interactions and discovered the lack of research published regarding masculinity and its connection to identity development of GQ men in college. Because the gay men's community has its own set of ethos, one way to gain a real understanding of this group is to be a member of it. The researcher acknowledges his insider status as part of this community. According to Schwandt (2007), insider/outsider status is described as an individual who maintains knowledge of a specific social world, uses social cues and context, in order to provide the insider's perspective and define what social life means. For a researcher (or individual) to know the world of human action is to make meaning

of the subjective meanings of that action to the individuals.

With the lack of research committed to establishing a link between success and the perception of masculinity in social groups, this research begins to address that gap. The researcher participated by using personal and professional networks in order to find a diverse student sample population. Again, he discussed with the dissertation chair and methodologist his views and values regarding masculinity, identity development and group membership in order to keep his beliefs, perceptions and feelings regarding the topic regulated.

Implications

Research established that "*manhood*" involves a very rigid collection of characteristics dictated by society; being a "real" man means exhibiting hypermasculine behavior (de Visser, 2009). Numerous studies explored the experiences of college students, yet none have explored the relationship between GQ collegiate men and masculinity. As indicated by Museus and Griffin (2011), the existing literature rarely distinguishes between meaning making and all aspects of identity for college students. Yet, what is evident through review of available literature is that the experience of GQ college men and their relationships with and to masculinity has yet to be explored.

This study is significant because it begins to shed light on the lives of this population of students. While studies examining men's experiences, college experiences, GQ experiences and masculinity exist, this study is unique because it is the first to explore this population of students paired with an exploration of masculinity. Furthermore, there are no other studies on this topic that occur at a college or university in the southeast. This study identified and explored the understanding that GQ college

men have regarding their masculinity. Further, with this information, this ever-growing population of students (GSA, 2013) may be additionally supported as a result of a deeper understanding of the identity development of GQ college men. No previous study has examined GQ college men's identity development paired with an understanding or exploration of these unique characteristics.

As stated in the second chapter, there were still several gaps in the literature that this research addressed. When considering identity development of GQ students, exploring who these students are as individuals, with multiple facets of identity, and seeing these men as a population worthy of study and support is essential. One of the primary goals of this research was to provide information that can be used in educating and advocating for additional resources for this population of students. These resources should be available to educate GQ male college students and to advocate for reasonable expectations with regard to how they interact with others, ultimately decreasing misunderstanding, bias and the lack of understanding that often occurs.

The findings from this study can be used to educate student affairs administrators and to advocate for the resources needed by this population of students, such as mental health support services, relationship building, increased self-esteem, health education, safer sex education and body image education. Highlighting how GQ college students come to understand who they are will affect the way that student affairs and academic professionals engage the resources crucial for this student population. The existing research in these areas is limited, providing little guidance to student affairs professionals who wish to serve this population of students better. On a personal note, the researcher currently works in Student Affairs with the GQ student community and

having this firsthand information allowed him to be more informed and a better practitioner.

Chapter Summary

Within this chapter, the researcher outlined the research design and the implementation of this study investigating how GQ men make meaning of their masculinity while in college. Using the grounded theory method (Strauss & Corbin, 1989), this qualitative research study incorporated data from interviews and a focus group from 16 college-aged gay men attending a four-year, private liberal arts institution in the southeastern United States. A qualitative research approach to this study best aligned with the goals of this study. This research approach, aimed at illuminating the experience of participants, provides a detailed description of that experience (Moustakas, 1994).

The researcher employed open and snowball sampling techniques. Interviews with the participants were transcribed and used as data. The researcher used the established open, and axial coding process to develop a theory grounded in the experiences of the targeted student population. The researcher established trustworthiness, maintained ethical research standards, and balanced his personal bias throughout the study. As a result, the researcher hoped to ground a theory in the lived experiences of his research subjects. The researcher's findings are explored in chapter four, having been primed by the findings in his literature review and methodology.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

Through this study exploring how GQ college men come to understand their masculinity, the researcher attempted to explore how self-identified GQ collegiate men defined their identity in relationship to their masculinity. Chapter four has five sections. Section one provides an introduction while section two describes the student demographics of those who participated. The third section provides an outline of the methodology. Section four provides the results and section five delivers a summary of the chapter.

Student Demographics

The researcher used a demographic survey approved by the UNO IRB office (Appendix A). The criteria for involvement was how publicly an individual student was about his sexual orientation on campus, that he was enrolled full time as an undergraduate student (or graduated within one semester at the time of the interview), that he was reared male, and that he was 18 to 23 years old. A total of 16 male students were interviewed from one university in the southeastern United States. The number of participants was in line with past research, (Morse, 2000, 2001; Stark & Brown Trinidad, 2007; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998). For the purpose of this study, one's level of outness was on a scale of "none," "some" and "all." "None" meant no one on campus knew he was GQ. "Some" meant out to some individuals off campus, but not out on campus. "All" meant out to everyone, both on and off campus.

Table 1. Table of participant demographics

Participant ID	Student Pseudonym	Age	Major	Class	Sexual Orientation	Race/Ethnicity	Level of Outness on Campus
P1	Bill	21	Public Health	Senior	Gay	Caucasian/ White	Some
P2	Bradyn	21	Biology	Senior	Gay	Caucasian/ White	Some
P3	Jed	20	Visual Arts	Junior	Gay	Caucasian/ White	All
P4	Ben	20	Liberal Arts	Grad <1	Gay	Caucasian/ White	All
P5	Scott	21	Architecture	Senior	Gay	Caucasian/ White	All
P6	Sebastian Black	18	Communication and Gender & Sexuality	Sophomore	Gay	Caucasian/ White	Some
P7	Twitter	21	Economics	Senior	Gay	Multi-Ethnic Latino	Some
P8	Brad	20	Sociology/ International Development	Senior	Gay	Caucasian/ White	All
P9	Ray	21	Finance	Senior	Gay	Caucasian/ White	All
P10	Feifer	22	Public Health	Grad <1	Gay	Caucasian/ White	All
P11	Ezra	21	Marketing/ Management Consulting	Senior	Gay	Caucasian/ White	All
P12	Derrick Parker	19	English/African Diasporas	Sophomore	Gay	African American	Some

P13	Yellow	19	Biology	Junior	Gay	Caucasian/ White	Some
P14	Peter Pan	19	Pre Med	Sophomore	Gay	Multi-Ethnic, Asian/ Caucasian	Some
P15	ChemE	18	Engineering	First Year	Gay	African American	Some
P16	Hayes	18	Musical Theater	First Year	Gay	Multi-Ethnic, African American/ Latino	All

Participant 1 – Bill, 21 years old, Senior, Public Health Major, Caucasian/White. Bill first realized that he was gay at the beginning of puberty. He attended Catholic school in the southern United States and did not find the space one in which he could be open and share his sexual orientation. He always felt like he accepted himself, but he did have concerns regarding being an openly gay person in his conservative town. Once he got to college, he began to understand that there was a queer culture and community that existed. Bill was very aware of gender stereotypes, and, while he struggled, he used those stereotypes as the key indicators in describing what masculinity was. Bill reflected on how different men were from each other and how men were defined based on where they were from. Being from the rural southeastern United States, Bill felt that the ways in which men were expected to perform were different than those expected of men from other locations around the country.

Participant 2 – Bradyn, 21 years old, Senior, Biology, Caucasian/White. Bradyn never really thought about the fact that he was gay, but realized that, when he was looking at pictures online, he spent more time looking at men, and then, later, the first time that he watched pornography, he was more attracted to the men in images. He never had interests in the female body. Bradyn was not out in high school, but came out when he first arrived at college. Bradyn is from the West Coast and attended a private high school. Bradyn's original ideas about what was masculine came from the media and his family, but as he's been in college, he came to believe that he has learned to think for himself and about what it means to be a man.

Participant 3 – Jed, 20 years old, Senior, Visual Arts, Caucasian/White. Jed is from the southeastern United States and first realized he was gay when he was 12.

He went through what he referred do as his “explosive” phase when he started to learn about his culture and identity and then came to incorporate his sexual identity into the rest of his identities when being gay was “no big deal.” For Jed, masculinity comes from a place of physical performance and education. Jed believes that gay men are attracted to men who are manly in the traditional sense, as in hairy, athletic, loud, and willing to get dirty in terms of performing in the world and sexually.

Participant 4 – Ben, 20 years old, Graduated <1 year, Liberal Arts, Caucasian/White. Ben had just graduated from college two months prior to his interview. Since childhood, Ben was more interested in what the girls in his classes were doing, rather than the boys. He was not interested in sports in any way, which, he noted, was “hard being from a Midwest town.” He was reared in a conservative, Catholic home and tried to ignore his attraction to men until he "was old enough to not ignore it anymore." Ben thought that a masculine man would look like a lumberjack, complete in blue jeans, plaid shirt, broad shoulders and a beard. Ben first realized he was gay when he was 17, and started his coming out process while in high school.

Participant 5 – Scott, 21 years old, 5th year student, Architecture, Caucasian/White. Scott is a fifth-year student from New England and hopes to go back to the area after graduation. Scott first started his coming out process in 7th grade because he had an older sister with whom he greatly identified. When he was a freshman attending his Catholic high school, he shared with his mom that he was gay. After being sent to “corrective therapy,” he was distant with his family until he started college and has since started reconnecting with them. Beyond the biological pieces, Scott’s perception of masculinity could be summarized in the television character Don

Draper from Mad Men[1]. Specifically, characteristics that are not tied to gender, such as being strong, confident and able, are more masculine and are the antithesis of femininity.

Participant 6 – Sebastian Black, 18 years old, Sophomore, Communication/ Gender & Sexual Studies, Caucasian/White. Sebastian is from a small town in the Midwest. His coming out process could not be tied to a specific event, but, rather, can be seen as a process. Sebastian was reared as the son of an evangelical preacher, in a home in which being gay was not accepted. Because of that background, his understanding of his sexual identity took a little longer for him to realize. Sebastian still struggles at times with his sexuality and acknowledges that his religious upbringing has had some impact on his ideology even though he does not practice a faith currently. Sebastian believes that there is a difference between being a man and being a gay man. As he grew up, Sebastian did not see himself identifying with the men around him, but identified more ideologically, emotionally, and intellectually with women. Sebastian maintains more relationships with women than men because he believes that men are less understanding and accepting than women.

Participant 7 – Twitter, 21 years old, Senior, Economics, Latino/Multi-Ethnic, International Student. Twitter identifies as gay, and believes that he always knew that he was gay. He had his first realization that he was different from his peers when he was in 8th grade, but did admit to having had homoerotic experiences as a child. He is out on campus, but is not out in his home country for safety reasons. Twitter never came out, but waited for people to ask him. Twitter posits that being gay

[1] Mad Men is a TV drama about a New York advertising agency during the 1960s.

affects the way others interact with him. He is from Latin America and acknowledges that, until recently, every time he went home for breaks and holidays, he had a personal crisis and worried about what would happen in anyone found out. However, now, Twitter says he does not care if anyone finds out he is gay because he is mostly financially independent from his family.

Participant 8 – Brad, 20 years old, Senior, Sociology/International Development, Caucasian/White. Brad is from the northeast and took a lot of time trying to determine where he wanted to go to college. When he was in 7th grade and at the start of puberty, he referred to himself as "a stereotypical gay guy" because he was in the drama club. He came out to himself in 9th/10th grade, even though he acknowledges that he was attracted to men before that time. As he told more people he was gay, he felt more comfortable with himself and felt even more comfortable after he had his first intimate male experience. Brad says that his understanding of sexuality is more fluid than it was prior to arriving at college. Brad says that he is a man because he dresses like a stereotypical man would but acknowledges that he has several feminine qualities like his interest in fashion. He does not consider himself very macho.

Participant 9 – Ray, 21 years old, Senior, Finance, Caucasian/White. Ray is from the southwest and plans on staying in the southeast after he graduates from college. He identifies as gay and noted that, at different points of his life, he knew he was different. Ray stated that he was called gay by fellow students as early as elementary school and just knew that being gay was "bad." Ray stated that he had a lot of internal struggles with his attraction to men at first, but realized he had no attraction to women. Since he has come out, he stated that he is much more comfortable with

himself, has had relationships with men, and has grown immensely. For Ray, being a man is different for every person depending on the expression each individual has as well as how he is viewed by others.

Participant 10 – Feifer, 22 years old, Graduated<1 year, Public Health, Caucasian/ White. Feifer does not usually like to use the term gay, mostly because he does not like labels and believes that people should be allowed to just be people. Over the course of the interview, he did acknowledge that he would currently identify as gay and is in a gay relationship. Specifically, he is in an intimate relationship and engaged to be married to another man. He was outted while attending his New England high school and studied abroad as a way to run away from everything. He was not able to figure himself out because so many people told him who he was while he was growing up. When he got to college, he decided to explore who he was on his own terms. Feifer stated that his family always knew he was different, but he never really came out to them. They just knew. Feifer believes that men are more masculine when they can be emotionally available, more so than individuals who obsess over their physical appearance.

Participant 11 – Ezra, 21 years old, Senior, Marketing/Management Consulting, Caucasian/White. Ezra is a gay male from an urban area in the Southwest and plans to going into the business field upon his graduation. Ezra stated that he did not realize he was gay until later, compared to what he described as the "typical coming out process". He played sports and hung out with guys, and began to realize he was different when his peers began to vocalize their attraction to women, and he did not share in that attraction. At that point, he realized he was different and started

putting the pieces together for himself. He is comfortable with his sexual orientation now, and is comfortable with the “gay” label and the social stereotypes that come with it. Ezra stated he has been out since high school, that his coming out process has been very positive, and that he is out in every aspect of his life: school, home and work. For Ezra, masculinity comes with the term man and is associated with strength, and being aggressive with regard to initiative and “leaning in” to every situation.

Participant 12 – Derrick Parker, 19 years old, Sophomore, English/African Diasporas, African American. Derrick is from a small rural town in the southeastern United States. He is an only child and does not like labels but recognizes that he is more comfortable with the term gay. Derrick states that he has always known he was different and remembers being a child, seeing grown men, and thinking he wanted to look like that. He realizes now that this was his same gender attraction at work. Derrick was never into sports, was always well groomed and had more female friends than male friends. As a child, he quit dance because he was constantly being picked on but now he can go out to gay establishments and does not feel the need to explain his actions to anyone.

Participant 13 – Yellow, 19 years old, Junior, Biology, Caucasian/White. Yellow is from a small town on the West Coast and moved to the southeast for college because he loves southern hospitality. He stated that the summer after his junior year of high school is when he realized he was gay, but remembered a few situations in which he had a crush on a boy while growing up. His outlook on his gay identity has gotten better since he came to college, and he has been out since his arrival to campus.

According to Yellow, being a man is being a part of a spectrum and includes anyone who identifies as a man.

Participant 14 – Peter Pan, 19 years old, Sophomore, Pre-Med, Asian American/Multi-Ethnic. Peter first questioned his sexuality in elementary school but did not realize he was gay until middle school. There was no specific event, but he just realized he was not attracted to girls the way other guys were. He came out to his first friend during his junior year of high school. Peter lived abroad and was reared in a traditional Asian household with a culturally traditional father abroad. He was shy at first about his sexuality but has come to see it as something that he is not ashamed to be and is comfortable within himself. While he is out on campus, he is not out at home. Peter's sexuality is just one piece of his identity, but not necessarily the part that he leads with in a conversation.

Participant 15 – ChemE, 18 years old, 1st Year Student, Engineering, African American. ChemE is from a suburban area in the southeastern United States and identifies as gay. In elementary school, he knew he was not into girls and referred to himself as asexual, someone who has no sexual attraction. As he grew older, he realized he was attracted to men but struggled in his deeply religious and structured military home life. He did not want to be the black sheep in his family but wanted to be who he was supposed to be. ChemE's understanding of his sexuality is something that he shares openly now, and he realizes that he often has clarified that he is gay for those with whom he interacts. ChemE is out at school, but his sexuality is not something that is greatly discussed at home.

Participant 16 – Hayes, 18 years old, 1st Year Student, Musical Theater, Multi-Ethnic/African American/Latino. Hayes is from the southwest and first came to understand he was gay when he was in 7th grade, but noted that he kind of always knew he was gay. Hayes' thoughts on his sexuality have evolved from ideas in his youth that gay men wore makeup and were very feminine, to when he got to high school and met gay individuals and realized that people were just themselves and did not need to conform to any stereotypes. Hayes believes that a man is someone who is strong, knows who he is as a person and is aware of what he believes in. Additionally, a man is someone who listens, is a good person, has self-respect and respects others.

Data Analysis

Strauss and Corbin's (1998) method of grounded theory data analysis as described in Creswell (2007) was utilized for this study. The researcher read the transcripts and organized the data into themes in order to identify outcomes. Additionally, the researcher looked through his field notes to search for any other possible themes that might have developed from the interviews. Upon request, he reviewed his field notes, interviews and focus group transcripts with his advisor and methodologist to receive an objective perspective.

Coding, Findings & Themes

As the researcher explored the data, through listening to the recordings of the individual experiences, reading the transcripts, and looking at field notes, he made notes for possible coding to be used later in the analysis process. Initially, the researcher, while reading through the transcripts, took notes and color coded quotes and ideas that were similar in either concept or specific words. Words and phrases like

“strong jaw line, an older guy, plays sports” were used to describe how a man presents. Through the coding process, four themes emerged. Through this process of comparison and analysis, the researcher was able to compile groups of statements that overlap and appear to cover the same theme. This process was not completely sequential, but was helpful in creating the conceptual model.

Below, the findings of this study are presented. The overarching conclusion was that whatever physical traits, behaviors, or personality types a GQ college man valued or found to be attractive, were the same physical traits, behaviors or personality types which he found to be most masculine. There were four additional themes that emerged from the study: (a) Creating Identity and Exploring Sexuality, (b) Reliance on Stereotypes, (c) Performance and Presence, and (d) Community Expectations and Acceptance. In each of these four components, there were additional topics that round out each of the themes as a way to provide examples and additional analysis.

Creating Identity & Exploring Sexuality

Pre-College. All of the students had different ways of articulating their coming out process (Cass, 1979; D’Augelli, 1994; Erikson, 1980, and Fassinger, 1998). The majority of the participants were out in high school, and the rest all came out while attending the University. Eleven of the twelve men who are out both at home and college cited that they had positive coming out processes prior to their attending college. Scott noted that he was forced to attend “Corrective Therapy” as a means to make him no longer gay. The four other men stated that they believed that their families would have a hard time with being told their son/brother/nephew/grandson was gay, noting concerns of loss of financial and emotional support as a result of their news.

Both Bill and ChemE stated that they did not know they were gay, but, rather, identified as asexual. They both stated that they did not know at first why they were not attracted to women.

Jed said that he always felt comfortable with who he was, and at the age of 12, he said he started going through his “explosive phase:”

> *I think everyone goes through this because it's just, it's so new when you come out and also when you realize that if you kind of fall into the stereotypical gay guy, I guess, to some extent. And you learn new things about the culture and the identity. And then, over time, you mellow out and I feel I followed that path mostly and it just becomes an integral part of you. It's not the excluded part of you, that's the odd part. It's just another facet of your personality/person.*

Bradyn said that he did not really understand that he was gay until he was in high school and first started searching for pornography on the internet. He said:

> *I was like looking for porn for women or something like that, so I was like “wow…” that took me a while to realize what I was doing and what I was attracted to and what that meant.*

Bradyn shared a story of visiting his father at an in-patient rehabilitation facility:

> *There was this guy. He walked up the stairs, and he had just come from the beach, sand on his feet, beads of water all over his body, just, blonde hair, dripping wet, perfect, tan. I remember it being that movie-like moment, scanning him from the feet up, and realizing, my God, you are the perfect specimen of a the human body. This is a real person. It’s no*

longer an internet image or porn. It's like, I'm really attracted to you, and, yup, I'm definitely into men. That was freshman year of high school.

The idea of knowing that he was gay since middle school/puberty, if not sooner, was a common theme for all of the participants, but all of the participants did not come out until they were on campus.

At College. All of the men were out on campus. Their individual level of outness did vary from Brad and Ezra, the current and past president of the largest queer-based social organization on campus, to Bill, Peter Pan and ChemE who only share their sexual orientation with individuals when they are directly asked. This modality of the model is consistent with Fassinger's (1998) idea of both a public and private identity. The overall concept presented here was that being out on campus was relatively easy. Brad stated, "As an out gay man, a college environment is fantastic. It's very inclusive. Campus is very accepting."

Like the men in this study, college is seen as an opportunity to come out and be open about their sexual identity rather than being closeted. The men's early awareness of their GQ identity served as a first step in their exploration of who they were, their authentic selves; this meant that they realized that they were unlike other straight boys and men.

Several of the students mentioned that several small groups exist on a college campus within the GQ community. While those subgroups range in physical characteristics and behaviors, the biggest two groups were those that were engaged in LGBTQ life on campus and those that were not. For those students who were involved on campus, the majority held elected positions, most commonly within identity-based

organizations such as those associated with race, gender, ethnicity, and not strictly sexual orientation-based organizations.

Ezra alluded to the idea that those who are “in the know” are more likely to say that their campus community is involved and supportive, whereas those who were not connected to campus or research felt disengaged (Schimel et al.,1999; Stevens, 2004). For Derrick, he chose not to be involved with queer-based groups on campus because he already had a support network in his ethnicity-based organization and did not see a need to connect with individuals based solely on their shared sexual orientation. That said, all of the students of color did note that there was a big difference between what they were interested in, with regard to group engagement, and what the white/Caucasian students were interested in (McIntosh, 2003).

Playing in both worlds. Sebastian, Twitter, and Peter all shared the idea that they often had to lead two separate lives: one at school and one at home. All three men alluded to the idea that, as they were going to eventually come out to everyone, and that he realized that he eventually needed to consolidate those separate identities and present himself as his true self. Bradyn, Derrick, Peter, Sebastian, Twitter, and Yellow are not out at home.

For the study’s participants, the importance of society’s definitions of masculinity became apparent at a young age and they all discussed their awareness of this. They discussed the tensions and subscriptions to gender roles that they have received from others about what it means to be a boy or a man.

It should also be noted that several of the participants did not know there was a difference between gay and queer or gay and lesbian until they got to college, for no

other reason than the fact that they had never been exposed to another gay or queer person. Bill stated that once he got to college:

> *I learned that there's more to the social, sexual orientation and identity spectrum. Besides gay/straight. Everyone knew about gay, straight, bi, and I was never exposed to the identity spectrum at all. Your sexual orientation was it. You didn't have the queer identities spectrum. Transgender life was just not a thing discussed ever. I knew it was there, I knew one existed, but I never had any experiences with it. Coming to Olive, I got exposure to that. I met people who identified as queer, which, to me, I always lumped that word in with homosexuals. It was never a life or culture thing, it was strictly sexual orientation. Learning the nuances of addressing that person by the gender that they choose to be, not what they appear to be.*

The men also engaged in reinforcing gender stereotypes and roles that followed traditional ideals of masculinity as young boys. For instance, Ben acknowledged that his family stressed involvement in athletics as a norm for young boys. He felt that involvement in sports was the way in which you expressed your masculinity as a child, not knowing any other way. For others, things like art, theater and writing were not encouraged. Kimmel (2008) affirmed that the rules of masculinity are not written down, yet they are universally understood.

Faith/Religion. Ben, Brad, ChemE, Scott, and Sebastian also cited the impact, both positive and negative, that their religions or faiths had on their performance as men, and, thereby, their masculinity. Religion or faith practice often differs in the degree

to which the individual accepts and acknowledges his faith. Sebastian may have been reared in a faithful home, but he does not practice a faith currently or believe in God. However, he does acknowledge that:

> *There are lessons that can be learned from a lot of religions, a lot of principles that can be learned. Historically, we know that religion has been created to serve the purpose of the cultures in which it's present. Religion does have value.*

He does go on to explain that:

> *There's a reconciliation for me in that I do not believe in a God itself, but I believe in the power of a religion. I'm drawn to Unitarian/Universalism in particular because the aspects of it, and I would argue the most important aspects of it, is the recognition of acceptance of everyone and the recognition of the inherent dignity and worth of every human being. In many ways, I felt that these ideas were lacking in the ideology and religion that I grew up in, particularly towards me as a gay man.*

Sebastian's experience had several parallels with Ben, Brad, ChemE, and Scott's experiences. However, these four did not articulate a loss in their faith. They did all communicate individual dilemmas when trying to balance their faith and what it says about being gay. GQ persons experience various pressures to remain closeted while at home and from within their church. Essentially, all five of the students acknowledged some separation from their faith practices because they found that their faith was not easily reconciled with their own personal identities, or, like Sebastian, disaffiliated from his church altogether. Ben, Brad, ChemE, Scott and Sebastian's experiences are

consistent with past research (Crapo, 2005; Severson, Muñoz-Laboy, & Kaufman, 2014).

Media. According to Kimmel and Messner (2004), no man can realistically reach the physiques of the cartoon version of Tarzan or G.I. Joe. They posit that a man often feels like he fails the test of physical manhood. Hayes agreed with Kimmel and Messner's (2004) assessment that men are constantly "seeing" masculinity in the movies, in commercials, in pornography, etc. Any effort to understand, let alone transform, masculinity must take into account the ways in which we see ourselves reflected through the lenses that record our fantasy lives. Feifer agreed with this thought. He said:

> *Seeing men in the media probably has a large affect. It's funny, what guys think girls or guys want. Guys feeling like they have to be very masculine probably pushes you, makes [masculinity] more than it is, you know, that strict definition [of masculinity].*

Feifer's ideas are consistent with VanderWat and Louw's (2012) conclusions that media content acts as an extremely influential source of society's social meaning. Media is at the center of the social construction of our reality and society; media gives us pieces of our understanding of masculinity.

Culture. In research presented by Strayhorn and Tillman-Kelly (2013), it was established that students of color construct and understand their masculine identities in one of three ways: accepting, adhering to, and performing traditionally masculine norms; intentionally, or subconsciously, challenging hegemonic notions of ethnic

masculinity through their behaviors and self-beliefs; and recognizing that their masculine identity is influenced by other social factors and locations.

Derrick thought that his culture had the biggest impact on him. As an African American man, he stated that there was a specific language used to describe stereotypical gay behavior, like a man who "twists…the swaying or twisting when you when you walk," in a flamboyant way. He went on to say:

> *Especially in African culture, there are certain behaviors associated with masculinity, and then there are things that are not. The cultural standards by which they live, the way [men] are raised and socialized. You have to be muscular, athletic, date women. Be aggressive, to be a defender, protector, have a deep voice. To not only play but watch sports. Yet, at the same time, it could mean to being professional, being assertive. It's not only one view, in my opinion, of the black man on the basketball court, that's like black masculinity. Then there's this other form, more recently emergent, the black man in business attire, making money, doing his thing. Professional. Could range from a Kobe Bryant to a Barack Obama. You should not say that one is more masculine than the other, even though in many ways, they differ.*

All of the participants who identify as men of color (ChemE, Derrick, Hayes, Peter and Twitter) all alluded to the idea that there were different rules for them than for their perceived white/Caucasian contemporaries, (Jackson, & Wingfield, 2013; Staples, 1982; Strayhorn & Tillman-Kelly, 2013.

As an international student, Twitter thought that the American college culture was scary at first due to not understanding how things work. “I did not know of the resources, or what resources that I’d need,” Twitter said. Even though he was not involved in the GQ community on his campus, he did not know how to meet GQ people. With tears in his eyes, he said that when he got to college:

> *I didn’t know how to make gay friends. I always felt like I was going to be rejected. They wouldn’t understand me because of my accent. When I came to campus, I didn’t know how to talk to gay people. You can’t say, “oh I’m gay, you’re gay too, let’s be friends.” It just doesn’t happen like that.*

Twitter’s understanding of American gay-college culture affected his understanding of masculinity.

Reliance on Stereotypes

The phrase “be a man” is common. What many college students do not completely understand are the implications of this phrase. When individuals refer to a “real man”, they are reference four specific characteristics: biological sex, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation, (Pezzote, 2008). When these four classifications are combined, this ideology creates the perception that a biological male who is heterosexual, masculine, and identifies as a man is the norm to which all other types of men should aspire.

Archetypes. During the interviews, the participants were provided 10 male classic examples of cisgender male performing presentations. Smiler’s (2006) study on images of masculinity revealed that there was a greater compliance to male norms with

men who endorsed the Businessman, Jock, and Tough guy archetypes. In looking at the 16 GQ men in this study, only one participant, Ezra, found those three to be the most masculine, "I think the title more so the image that I pictured while looking at it." However, the three most common archetypes perceived to be most masculine in this study were the Family Man, Average Joe, Jock, and Tough Guy (Appendix H). According to Ben, his top choice was:

> *Tough Guy because of this authoritative vibe that I got from the description. I mean it says this is someone that you do not want to pick a fight with or don't want to boss around. And, for some reason, that really struck me as this needs to go first.*

He went concluded that the Average Joe and Family Man reminded him a lot of his father, whom he perceived as the pinnacle of masculinity:

> *I think those are the traits that are very important. The Average Joe is the one that I'm really looking at. Strong, simple, honest, solid, direct, hard-working. Those are very positive, uplifting adjectives that I think present this very well-rounded Average Joe image that I want masculinity to mean.*

Jed referred to the Tough Guy as the "rough and rugged, primal man." Seven of the other participants also identified the Average Joe and Family Man as having the behaviors and presentation that they most identified as masculine.

In contrast, this study identified the Effeminate, Nerd, and Non-Conformist/Rebel as the least masculine images versus Smiler's (2006) results of the Average Joe, Family Man, Non-Conformist/Rebel and Player. The differences in these masculine endorsements do give some credence to the ideas that GQ culture is different from that

of the straight world. However, it should be noted that personally identifying with one of the images that is perceived to be less masculine is not necessarily a bad thing. Ezra said:

> *I've, and this is actually, this is sort of a newer development just separate from the gay thing but I've sort of been owning the nerd thing a little bit more. So when we think of nerd, we think of like kind of passive and as was just mentioning, physically weak, unattractive, poorly dressed -- those are not particularly positive traits. But I like the brain side of things, and I think that can go hand in hand. Just because you have the brains doesn't mean you can't be assertive or powerful or any of that.*

In the focus group, when this theme was reported, all of the participants agreed with these results.

Fraternity Guy/"Straight Acting." Several of the participants brought up the notion of the stereotypical "guy" on campus being that of the classic fraternity man. Peter said, "You see all those frat guys who are really stupid, really tall, buff. The guys that are always fooling around and just kind of not really thinking about much anything else." ChemE and Yellow both agreed and went on to say that men who are into sports, both playing and watching, are "bro'y." Brad said:

> *To be gay on this campus, you have really to step up to certain gay stereotypes. In my own experience, I felt the need to try to befriend lots of gays. I felt the need to have a gay community to be part of because I would only be friends with random people around campus because I do not believe that I could be accepted into the Greek Life, and that is so big*

on this campus. It's harder to get into [Greek Life] if you're perceived to be gay when you're just trying to fit in.

Several of the participants referenced this idea of a man needing to be "straight acting," (Fingerhut and Peplau, 2006; Kimmel & Mahalik, 2004; and Linneman, 2008). When asked to explain what this meant, those asked referenced individuals who did not "act gay," meaning not "acting gay." The participants had a really hard time explaining this idea without using the same terms to explain itself, creating a circular definition. More often, they used examples like speaking with a deep voice, no "swish" or "twist" in the walk, and on campus, resembled the stereotypical fraternity guy. Peter thought that a masculine man was someone who did not have many, if any, feminine qualities.

Embracing the Label. None of the 16 participants in this study rated themselves as a 10 on a masculinity scale ranging from one to 10. When asked why, all of the participants said that they did not perform in a "hypermasculine" way. Bradyn stated that, since he has grown up, more of his peers have adopted a "hypermasculine" presentation that goes beyond the traditional masculine presentations. Twitter and ChemE both spoke about how they rely on stereotypes differently based on the situation they are in. "I act differently when I'm with my friends than I do when I'm with my family or teachers," Twitter said. When it comes to dealing with the description of being a gay college student, Ezra said:

I'm fine with the label. [Being gay] obviously carries some stereotypes with it but as do all of the labels that we wear, right? So, part of it is navigating that and learning to accept there's negative things that come with any label. But, other than that, I think I'm pretty good with where I am

now -- out. I've been out at work, I've been out at home with friends, so, overall, a very positive experience.

ChemE stated that, sometimes, when he is around different groups of people, he knows when and how to "turn up the rainbow" to present the way that he needs to present in order to gain the level of social capital that he needs.

As argued above, there are social repercussions for not fitting into this norm, (Bailey et al., 1997; Fingerhut and Peplau, 2006; Kimmel & Mahalik, 2004, and Linneman, 2008). The idea of a social standard that all men are expected to abide by makes it challenging for those who do not necessarily conform to all aspects of this ideal.

Performance & Presence

As far as the aesthetic of what a man should look like, all of the participants agreed that there was a specific presentation. While they could not agree on what it was for sure, they all agreed to what it was not. It could not be anything feminine. Specific characteristics listed were a strong jaw line, older, facial hair, deep voice or even a "lumberjack." Several of the participants stated that a man was an individual born with a penis, and several others stated that a man was someone who identified as a man. Others stated that a man was born male and their gender expression matches those social and other requirements of being masculine.

Appearance. The most common physical characteristic, stated first in 14 of the 16 interviews, that the men in the study identified as masculine in others was height. After needing to be tall to be considered masculine, a man also needed to be muscular, athletic/sporty looking, well dressed and have a penis. There was a big divide between

the participants' thoughts on hair. Facial hair and body hair were topics that were spoken about passionately by the men, but for different reasons. Jed said that hair, specifically body hair was sexy, and that, "it is very unmasculine to shave all of that [hair]. It's there for a reason. It looks terrible when you get rid of it. It baffles me. They must keep the hair." Ezra affirmed this idea, with a caveat. He found that masculine men should be:

> *Clean shaven. No body hair. But I think I should also say that when I think masculine men, I think very like clean cut, very like strong facial features. But when some people think masculine, [they] think like beard, body hair, more rugged types.*

These ideas are consistent with previous research, (Kimmel & Mahalik, 2009 and Wilchins, 2004). Several of the participants also noted that there was a difference between the men they found to be masculine on campus and those they found to be masculine off campus. Lumberjacks, biker guy, Kobe Bryant, and Barack Obama were all identified as masculine in different ways.

From this study, it was established that, after being tall, masculine men needed to be muscular. A muscular man can appear athletic or even intimidating, but Bill, Brad, Ezra, Ray, Sebastian, Twitter and Yellow all thought that individuals who were muscular and athletes represented what they believed to be among the most masculine of qualities. Two previous studies that included college student participants, regardless of sexual orientation, found that the individuals who strongly conformed to masculine norms had a stronger drive to be muscular (McCreary, Saucier, & Courtenay, 2005; Steinfeldt, Gilchrist, Halterman, Gomory, & Steinfeldt, 2011). When combining the

findings from all three studies, it can be deduced that GQ students perceive that individuals are more positively viewed when they were more muscular. The idea that the gay subculture puts a premium on physical attractiveness is well documented in the research (Hennen, 2008; Morrison et al., 2004; Siever, 2004). One underlying theme for all of these participants was that the men also needed to be attractive, though attractiveness was determined individually and no universal aesthetic was defined.

Jed and Scott went revealed that being promiscuous (Halkitis, 2001) was the price of being accepted into the subculture of "gaydom." Unlike the societal masculine idea, gay men need to be more attractive, whereas the mainstream idea is that a straight man is attractive, but they do not have to work at it.

Behavior. Several of the participants spoke about the idea of risk-taking behavior. They cited incidents of competing with peers, though, in attempting to play the tough masculine role, a man must physically look the part.

Hayes said that a masculine man is someone who is:

> *Strong in who you are as a person and being a good person, listening. Having self-respect, and respect for others. That's all you really need. He does grounded things, athletics things like the outdoors, tends to care less about what they consume. Care less about what they look like appearance wise. When you go to eat in the [dining hall], you see dudes coming in having just worked out, so they are not dressed up, eating four or five plates of food.*

Yellow agreed by saying that “most gay men are only interested in guys that are in shape and muscly.” Likewise, Brad said that you needed to be “fit and pretty” to be accepted.

Qualities that the study’s subjects identified as masculine outside of going to the gym and risk taking behavior included confidence with themselves and who they are, leaders, goal oriented, in control, grounded in personality, a commanding presence, promiscuousness, assertiveness to the point of stubbornness, opinionated, honest, respectful, and being willing to help other people. Yellow made special note to say that not all masculine qualities are positive.

Each of these tenets, behavior and appearance, clearly weaves into the other, (Kimmel & Mahalik, 2009; Wilchins, 2004). In striving to meet masculine norms, the GQ men in this study concluded that their desire to find a partner involved seeking individuals who possessed a drive to build more muscle. Attraction of sexual partners allows for more opportunities to engage in intimate relations, thus proving masculinity and virility-even without the possibility of procreation. Muscularity allows men to be more competitive and engage in risky behaviors, and, with success, comes the attraction of intimate partners, which is discussed in the following section.

Community Expectations & Acceptance

Within the GQ community, there are many unwritten expectations. There are motivations for promiscuity, multiple subgroups/subcultures, and shared language. As a GQ college man moves through his day on campus, he must navigate the sometimes-choppy waters and choose to fit in or buck the system. Brad said that there was a

pressure to conform to these “gay standards” in order to gain access to this group, especially when first coming out on campus.

Hook-Up Culture. Scott shared that it was common, among his gay friends, who all have “slept together.” He went on to say many GQ men have similar experiences or behaviors. Ben, Jed and Feifer also described that the GQ community was relatively small on campus, and Hayes said “everyone just knows each other.”

The hook-up culture, which all of the participants agreed did exist, was not without its struggles for individuals trying to deal with this stereotype and feeling the need to rebuke it with their heterosexual peers. Peter thought:

> *There are, of course, lots of hook ups in heterosexual relationships and you see -- I feel like that’s more obviously seen. But in a more general sense, I feel like people don’t see it all the time. But when they think of gay people, that’s all they think about—guys hooking up, rather than actual relationships. They don’t [see] intimate relationships between a man and a man, it’s like they don’t see beyond like the sex part of it. They don’t see how they can go on like nice dates, go for a walk together, hold hands. They don’t really think about that when they think of a gay couple. They just think about the intimate sex part. People kind of have that image. All they do is have sex. All they do is hook up. And that’s like all they do, rather than like they have a life together.*

Brad and Ray spoke about finding a GQ community when they arrived on campus. They also both acknowledged that the importance of sex and promiscuity was the same as what was expected for their straight peers. Jed pointed out that the only difference

between gay and straight men is that, “when you have two men, you’re always going to find more sex, it’s genetics.” This is also consistent with previous research (Halktis, 2001; Halkitis et al., 2004; Hennen, 2008; Kite & Deaux, 1987; Sanchez et al., 2009).

Shared Language. With regard to the hook-up culture within the GQ community on campus, Scott said:

> *I think in the sense of a top is viewed as masculine, and the bottom is viewed as feminine. So there's sort of that like dichotomy within the gay hook-up culture that people don't want to be viewed in the passive role of being a bottom but, rather, the active masculine role of being a top.*

Brad agreed by stating that, “bottoms are seen as more femme and more stereotypically gay. Tops are always more masculine.” The term top and bottom refers to the sexual position that an individual would maintain during intimate relationships with a sexual partner. This language of “tops” and “bottoms” is one that only exists in queer culture. Other examples of queer language used on a college campus are terms like “twist in the wall”, “drama queen” or “drag queen.”

Some of the participants spoke to the idea of their own scale of masculinity. According to Brad, among his friends, they judge a man’s masculinity on a scale from “flamboyant to the All State man.” When asked what he meant, Brad explained:

> *I guess flamboyant would mean someone who is very loud and out there, not afraid to show his true characteristics. Many times, this would be someone who has qualities that are perceived to be feminine, such as wearing very tight clothing and speaking in a high-pitched voice. On the other hand, the “All State” man represents the most masculine one could*

get, such as someone who is more reserved and not as out there. Very low-pitched voice with a bigger/muscular body.

Subgroups. From these interviews, the researcher learned of many subgroups that exist within the confines of the college campus. Gaymers are individuals who are gay and really into video games or science. Indy-kids are those who are anti-establishment/anti-college administration. Gay activists/engaged students are individuals involved with GLBTQ organizations. Twinks are young, slender men with little to no body hair. Gaysians are gay Asian individuals, and Cubs are young, large men who have body hair and/or facial hair. On campus, there were also subgroups based on race and ethnicity. The idea that race and ethnicity come into play with sexual orientation is consistent with previously established research, (Arce, 1981; Helms, 1990; Kim, 1981; Ponterotto, 1988). The subgroups that the students identified are important to understanding and describing how the students make meaning of their own intersections of identity and (sub) group affiliations. As described by the participants in this study, they were drawn to individuals they connect with due to common interests or affiliations who, in turn, provide them with the ethos by which they judge themselves. The subgroup names and terms were established as commonly used terms spoken among GQ men on this college campus. The subgroups each man belongs to helps him to understand how the subgroup acts and for what they hold value.

As stated previously, some individuals chose not to be involved with queer-based groups on campus because they already had a connection with an ethnicity-based organization. All of the students of color stated that there was a big disparity between

what they were interested in, with regard to group engagement, and what the white/Caucasian students were interested.

Presentation of Theoretical Model

The selective phase is completed when, after viewing the paradigm, a theory or hypothesis that interrelates the categories in the paradigm can be determined. In this study, the researcher was able to establish a central concept; that being that masculinity is the eye of the beholder, no two men had the exact same definition. That stated, the consistent measure was that what each man identified as most attractive to himself was also what he described as most masculine. As this information was collected, the four themes and the central concept, it was organized into a visual paradigm to show relationship and connectivity to the central concept. This paradigm will exhibit the causal effects as well.

Through the researcher's data analysis, a theoretical model was produced to represent the process by which GQ men in college came to understand and describe masculinity. This model can be used as a visual aid in explaining how the previously described principles are connected and interact. Additionally, how this model could be used in support of GQ college students is discussed in chapter five.

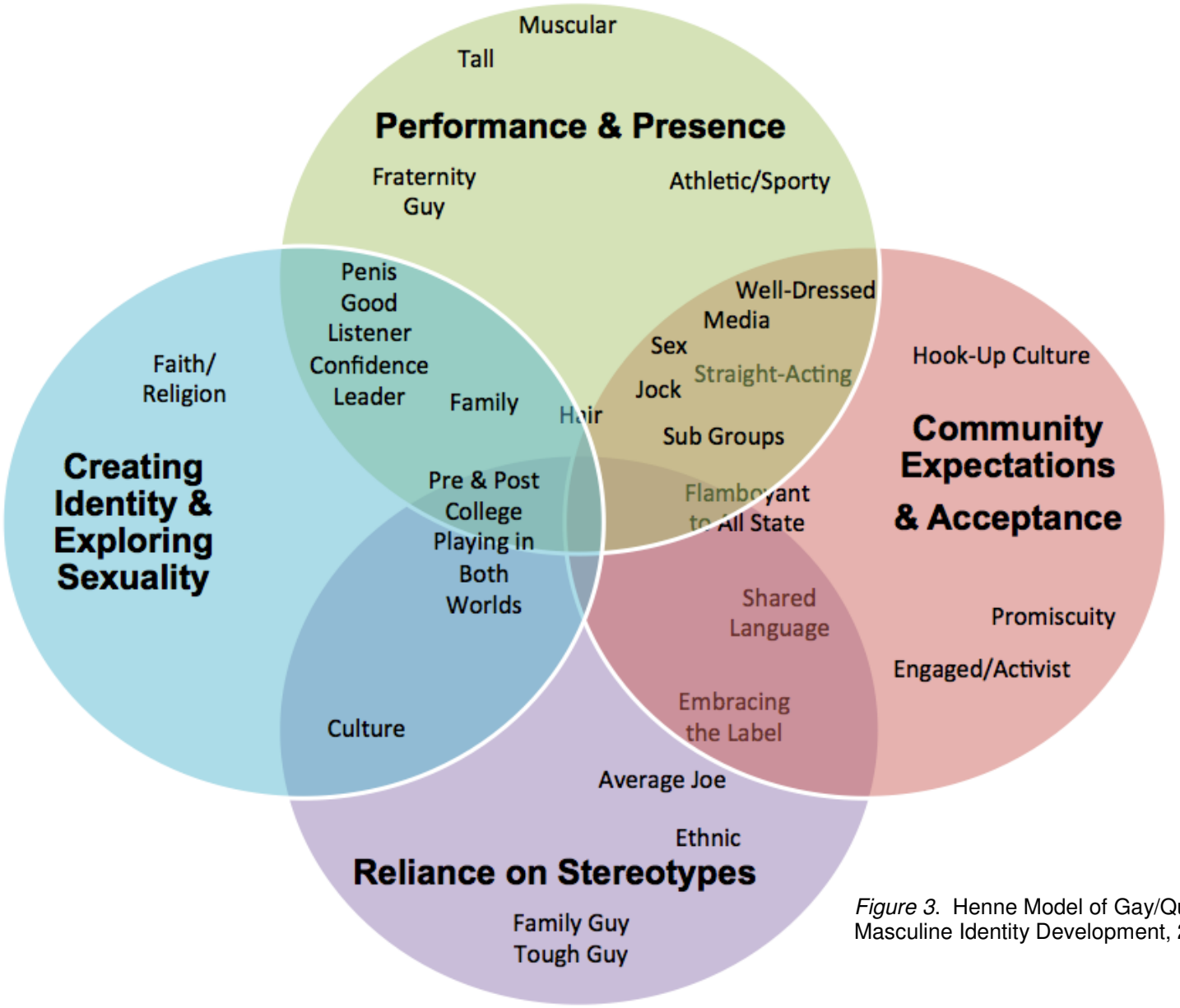

Figure 3. Henne Model of Gay/Queer Masculine Identity Development, 2014.

While it may be possible for an individual to identify masculinity in one, two, three or four of the themes, it is more likely that the pieces bleed together, as in the idea of GQ men performing on a scale from “Flamboyant to the All State man.” The idea that this scale represents exists from multiple perspectives. When looking at the statement from the idea of Performance and Presence, it appears as a measure by which GQ men are judged in either meeting or not meeting how a man is supposed to act, indicating whether he achieves the measures he is expected to make. Analyzing the concept through a Reliance on Stereotypes perspective allows for understanding how each of the men use stereotypes to determine whether or not a GQ man is performing in a way that is congruent with how a man is stereotypically expected to act.

Finally, examining this idea through a Community Expectations and Acceptance standpoint, demonstrates that a GQ student’s thoughts are informed by his community, and that individual’s community allegiance affects his idea regarding what is acceptable and unacceptable.

In terms of Playing in Both Worlds, there are obvious overlaps among three of the themes based on this study’s interviews. Creating Identity and Exploring Sexuality speaks to each man’s youth and exploring his identity before he arrives at college. These experiences prior to college inform his understanding and acceptance as to what stereotypes are commonly used and what is accepted socially with regard to performance and presentation as a man. The idea of pre and post-college likewise follows the same course of understanding.

As the model demonstrates, all of the subthemes do not need to appear in every theme. But, it should be noted that each of four main themes are present in some way

for each of the participants in this study. The model is reflexive for each individual in that it allows each man to have his own story, set of experiences and space to interpret his understanding in his own way.

GQ collegiate men describe their identity in relationship to their masculinity. For each of the men in this study, his understanding of his masculinity is informed and affected in some way by each of the four themes. Whether it is how he dresses or wears his hair or plays sports or the sexual activity he participates in, he chooses to see his masculinity as an important piece of his identity.

How a GQ man identifies what is masculine is completely subjected. This idea is illuminated by this study's central finding: what a man finds to be attractive is what he defines as masculine. For this reason, the importance a GQ college man places on masculinity is based on his experience (Creating Identity and Exploring Sexuality), comfort level (Reliance on Stereotypes), awareness (Performance and Presence) and how much of an impact he allows his peers to have on his beliefs (Community Expectations and Acceptance).

Chapter Summary

Three research questions operated as the focus of this study:

- How do out gay/queer collegiate men describe their identity in relationship to their masculinity?
    - How do gay/queer men identify what is masculine?

How important is masculinity as a gay college student?

There were 16 GQ college men who participated in this study, exploring what they thought masculinity was, how they understood it, and how they applied it to

themselves and their peers.

Prior to their arrival at college, these men came to understand what they thought masculinity meant from their families, friends, culture, places of worship and the media. When these ideas are combined with their sexual orientation, they noted some struggle with finding a middle ground between what they thought to be true and what they were coming to understand. Their pre-college understanding of their identity was just a launching platform for who they were going to grow to be.

Once they arrived at college, noting a sense of freedom from their families, those who were not out at home, quickly made their sexual orientation known to their peers. This identity cultivation mixed with the collegiate environment created an opportunity to continue their identity evolution. The stereotypes that they had come to know as youths were based on both fact and fiction.

When the men were presented with classic masculine images, they found the Family Man, Average Joe, Jock and Tough Guy were the descriptions they identified most as masculine while the Nerd, Non-Conformist/Rebel and Effeminate man were identified as least masculine, (Smiler, 2006). On campus, they looked to whom they perceived to be the straight fraternity men to set the tone and performance markers as to what a masculine man on campus should conform to. They acknowledged that the concept of “straight acting” only meant a gay man who did not act in a feminine or stereotypically “gay way”. The value placed on those who desire “straight acting” men is a sign that those who are perceived to fit this ideal may possess more social capital or power within the community than those who might not. Several of the men also recognized that not all labels assigned to GQ men were bad, or wrong.

For this population of GQ college students, masculinity was identified in two specific themes: the appearance of masculinity and the behavior of masculinity. Appearance traits were items like muscularity and visual presentation while behavior involved playing or an interest in sports and risk-taking behavior. Overall, the most salient theme that emerged in this study was that whatever qualities the individual man found to be personally attractive were also the same qualities that he found to be most masculine, in both behavior and appearance.

From within the GQ college community, all of the participants were aware of a promiscuous hook-up culture that many felt they needed to conform to in order to gain access to that space. It was also established that, within the GQ population, there were several subgroups and a shared language that was only used within that specific community. Balancing all four of these themes takes time and practice, and all of these men are still coming to understand how they make meaning of the tenets of masculinity.

The theoretical model is in place to help to illustrate how each of these principles interact and show connectivity with each other. These men were unable to separate their gay identity from their masculine identity because they overlap and weave together. In chapter five, the discussion and recommendations for what can be done with this information are presented and described in detail with the ultimate goal to create a dialog for student affairs practitioners to work more seamlessly with GQ students. All of the findings from this study were presented during a focus group consisting of the participants. All present agreed to the findings established through the coding process.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to develop an understanding of the role that masculinity has in identity development among self-identified Gay and Queer collegiate men. The goal of this study was to develop a theory that explains how traditional college-aged men view masculinity within the context of their performance as men on a college campus. Through this study, the researcher investigated the relationship among an individual's collegiate identity development, sexual identity development, and how he makes meaning of their identities as he navigates his performance on campus.

This chapter presents a discussion of the study's findings. First, the emergent theoretical model will be reviewed. Secondly, it provides a discussion of the findings in conjunction with relevant research and literature as it relates to the study's research questions. The third section is an overview of the study's limitations and the following discusses the possible implications to arise from this study regarding theoretical development and future research. Lastly, recommendations are offered for professional practice stemming from the findings.

Current research on masculinity and college students focuses on heterosexual students, whereas there is very little research focusing on GQ college students. Furthermore, there have been several studies focused on understanding the various aspects of sexuality and how they relate to college students. However, the current research does not specifically focus on how GQ college men describe their identity in relationship to their masculinity. There is a need to address masculinity and men on campus as the enrollment of men continues to decrease across the country. Where

men were once the majority on college and university campuses, they are now enrolling in decreased numbers, which is creating new obstacles for everyone. As explained in the literature review, there are many aspects of an individual's identity, and masculinity with regard to college men that are rarely discussed.

The 16 GQ men who participated in this study used their life experiences to answer three questions:

- How do out gay/queer collegiate men describe their identity in relationship to their masculinity?
    - How do gay/queer men identify what is masculine?
    - How important is masculinity as a gay college student?

Overview of Study

In chapter three, the researcher outlined the research design and the implementation of this study. Grounded Theory was used to interview (Strauss & Corbin, 1989), 16 college-aged GQ men attending a four-year, private, liberal arts institution in the southeastern United States. This approach was selected because it is best aligned with the goals of this study. This research approach is intended to illuminate the experiences of the persons interviewed and provide a detailed description of those experiences (Moustakas, 1994). The participants were two first-year students, three sophomores, two juniors, eights seniors, and one individual who had graduated from college six weeks prior to his interview. Individuals who identified as woman, or transgender were eliminated from this study.

The researcher used open and snowball sampling techniques. With the transcripts of the interviews of the participants as data, the researcher used the open

and then axial coding to develop an emergent theory grounded in the lived experiences GQ college students. The researcher established trustworthiness with the participants, maintained ethical research standards, and attempted at every step to balance his personal bias throughout the study. As a result, the researcher grounded a theory in the experiences of his research subjects.

One overarching concept that emerged from the interviews was that whatever qualities the individual GQ man held a value in or found to be personally attractive were also the same qualities that they found to be most masculine both in behavior and appearance. Four additional principles emerged from these interviews, which are discussed in this chapter. The themes established from the individuals and via the theoretical model were confirmed by the participants from the focus group conducted after all interviews had been completed.

Summary of Findings

All of the men interviewed came to realize that their original concepts of what masculinity was came from their culture, families, friends, media and places of worship. The men also could not separate their sexual orientation from their ideas of masculinity because those two pieces of their identity were interwoven. After enrolling in college, all of the men stated that their out college identity was affected by the environment they were now a part of. Several of the participants stated that, within the gay community on campus, there were stereotypes that were partially based in reality and partially based in fantasy.

When exploring how this group of men responded to the pre-established masculine images in Smiler's (2006) study, only two archetypes, the Jock and the

Tough Guy, overlapped among the majority of the participants in this study. Whereas the Family Man and Average Joe were also identified as very masculine with this group of GQ college men, they were identified among the least masculine in Smiler's (2006) study. The men admitted that the concept of "straight acting" only referred to a gay man who did not act in a stereotypically gay or feminine way. The idea and value of "straight acting" is an indication that those who are perceived to heterosexual may possess more power within the community than those who are not. Several of the men also recognized that not all labels assigned to GQ men were bad or wrong.

The individuals who participated in this study concluded that masculinity could be divided into two specific themes: appearance and behavior. Appearance traits were elements such as muscularity and visual presentation while behavior included playing or an interest in sports and risk-taking behavior.

Promiscuity within the gay community, also known as a hook-up culture, was a commonly established concept within this group of students. Additionally, it is known that, within the GQ population, some subgroups and shared language exist only within this specific community. In order to gain access to this this community, it is essential that these men balance all of these themes. Because they all were at different stages in their own identity development, they acknowledged that they do not yet have a definitive answer to the question "what is masculinity?"

Emergent Theoretical Model

The theoretical model that was developed was used to illuminate how each of these principles interacts with the rest and to visualize how each plays off of the other. Again, for a group of college students, it was not possible to separate their gay identity

from their masculine identity because these two intersected and often merged together. The components of the model show the consistent themes derived from the researcher's interviews.

The results of this study conflict, support, and provide new insight when looking at prior research. The conflict arises when examining what previous research identifies as traditional images of masculinity through established archetypes as well as specific images and behaviors of what a masculine man is supposed to exhibit. This study supports past research when we look at specific presentations of masculinity such as muscularity, the impact that subgroups have on behavior and athletic engagement. New insights are provided when we realize there is no one standard of masculinity for GQ college men. The remainder of this chapter is divided into three sections. The first section will discuss limitations as they relate to the study itself and the factors that participants identified as being vital in their understanding of masculinity. The second section will provide implications for college and university administrators. The third section will discuss recommendations for future research and conclusion.

Limitations

As with any study, this study had various limitations due to the nature and sensitivity of this topic. There are a total of seven limitations identified for this study. First, with grounded theory, it can sometimes be difficult to determine when a complete saturation is reached. In a topic like this one, the number of participants could have increased indefinitely. The 16 participants provided a great amount of data to review and summarize. One recommendation for additional research would be to conduct this study with a research team to check for additional themes within a larger number of

participants. The richness of the data collected in a larger study could be significant.

The second limitation involved the concern of the recruitment process for participants. Obtaining participants for this study proved to be more difficult than expected because sexual orientation is an identity that is often hidden. The researcher relied on his own professional networks and peers to initially recruit participants and later used snowball sampling. However, the number of students of color, or students who were first-years, sophomores, or juniors could have been more balanced in the overall collected pool. An announcement about this study was distributed using campus listservs, Facebook pages, and gay-oriented student organizations. In addition, the use of snowball sampling was crucial in recruiting participants. Due to the sensitivity of the research topic, a majority of research conducted with gay participants uses purposeful recruitment methods.

The third limitation was the information submitted by the participants. Each participant was asked to answer basic demographic questions about their identity, age and gender. That stated, there were about ten individuals who filled out the demographic survey and were disqualified from the study because they did not fit the primary criteria: being born male, reared as a boy/man, and identified as a man. The researcher received surveys from female identified individuals and a transgender man. This limitation also considers the extent to which the participants were fully aware in their responses and in telling their stories. There were times when the researcher asked questions and observed or sensed trepidation from the participants. This hesitation may have led to responses in which participants may have not fully disclosed their complete thoughts or beliefs due to lack of experience or understanding of the question.

Additionally, the researcher knew several of the participants professionally. At times, it was startling how candid many of the responses from these men were. There was no reason to question their sincerity in those moments.

The last limitation was that this study only engaged GQ college men. The sample design allowed for the surveying of a specific population: college males (Kumar, 2005). Therefore, the information provided cannot be generalized to all gay men or lesbian women college students or the experiences of transgender individuals. The lived experiences of these other groups could be different based on a series of different challenges or concerns. Moreover, this study does not include any of the lived experiences of straight college men and women or of the challenges and concerns that those individuals are faced with every day.

Implications for Practice

There are nine identified implications for collegiate counseling and academic and student affairs practices. To tackle the needs of this often-neglected population, it is important to consider a multidimensional approach that addresses the holistic identities of these students as well as the context in which these recommendations are made. These suggestions are not universal when we consider that each college and university is unique, has varying regional differences, and has a different set of priorities, charges, and levels of support.

Education

Most importantly, additional education on GQ identity development, masculinity and the combination of these two topics is needed, especially when considering the student in totality. The research done on this topic is somewhat dated and does not

consistently address the needs of modern students.

Secondly, further education and support of GQ students' self-awareness and self-acceptance is needed for this population of students. In addition to the students, we should consider how student affairs professionals are trained, and possibly examine their level of education and support of the self-awareness and self-acceptance of GQ students. Only when student affairs practitioners are educated policy makers and leaders will we begin to see change on our campuses across the country. Likewise, there is a need for further sensitivity training for members of the academy, both faculty and staff members, in order to better work with GQ students. Topical examples of training topics could include the power of language, theoretical models of the coming out process, and basic identity development.

The third implication is that further education can be provided at similar institutions. The support of key administrators and the development of a systematic and institutionalized support structure for marginalized students that fall within the LGBTQ spectrum are essential. Like other aspects of diversity such as race, ethnicity, and gender, the creation of an LGBTQ center could visually show that an institution puts a priority on queer-identified students. How institutions look intersections of the pieces of identity is another opportunity for exploration and support of students.

The fourth implication would be that further education could be done regarding how to implement supportive practices and policies for GQ students. When considering that every institution is unique and operates in distinctive ways, these practices and policies could take into account factors such as the institutional size, religious and faith affiliation, levels of selectivity, public verses private, levels of institutional support and

gender break down of the institution.

The fifth implication is that educational modules could be created to learn how to identify and collaborate with institutional stakeholders, consisting of administrators, staff, and faculty, on campuses where there may or may not be advocates present for this population of students. If an institution were to utilize the skills and expertise of the professionals, it is possible that this momentum could be used to initiate changes in policies and procedures that are needed.

Resources

Sixth, further resources are needed for this population of students to engage and meet others in a safe and welcoming environment on their college campuses. As these students continue to develop their own understandings of their identity, having both a physical space in addition to institutional space will be needed in order to continue the work in supporting and engaging this population of students.

Next, colleges and universities need to create a system that focuses on the issues of GQ college students and their well-being. This initiative could be done through an academic course that is offered to students. With support from college and university faculty and staff, this class could be part of a living/learning community within residence life. The course could include many of the issues discussed in chapter two, such as sexuality, body image, gender identity, masculinity, personal safety, sex practices and intersections of identity.

The eighth implication is that, according to Patton (2002), grounded theory is not intended to be generalized. This study only collected information from 16 individuals on one campus in the southeastern United States. Had this study been conducted at a

similar university in the northeast or west coast, the results would have most likely been different. While the data for this study was collected in the summer and fall terms of 2013, the results could have been different, even with the same subjects, if collected at an earlier or later point in time. Each of these men was at a different developmental stage (Fassinger, 1998). Regional differences and timing may have an impact on the findings of similar studies.

Finally, this study could be retooled to include additional questions regarding specific spotlights on the topics of race and ethnicity as well as faith/religion and gender. Over half of the participants referenced these topics, and in the original data collection instruments only one these three items were accounted for or included. Because these three topics came up so frequently in interviews, it is possible that they could have an additional impact on GQ student's ideas of masculinity. Additionally, the topic of sexual activity and sexual practices could be examined to gain additional insights.

Recommendations for Future Research

First, there is an opportunity to facilitate this study using a quantitative approach. In quantitative analysis, with a larger and more representative sample of GQ students, new insights could be reached. Integrating the established quantitative research and assessment tools that assess masculinity (Bem, 1974, Helmreich, Spence & Wilhelm, 1981) would be one way to further illuminate issues involving masculinity, gender roles and intersections of identity. When considering the opportunities available in this area of research, connecting with GQ students, in and outside of the classroom, may lead to better and more inclusive ways to enhance and serve this group of students.

Secondly, future research on other aspects of masculinity could be explored. For

example, racially or ethnically diverse students may have different standards by which the judge masculinity. From this study, it was established that the men of color had more specific language for GQ men of their ethnicity than their white peers possessed. Additionally, recreating this study using straight students may prove to explore both masculinity and the impact a GQ identity may have on their peer interactions. This study presented findings that were informative, and it is important to gain multiple insights into the cultural impact that masculinity has on different identities.

Another topic for future research could focus on what differences exist within the subgroups of the GQ community. What themes could emerge when we explore masculinity from just the “Gaymer,” “Activist” or “Jock” prospective? Within a subgroup of athletes who are also GQ, does masculinity look differently from the “Bear” community? What differences exist? Also, when looking at regional differences within these same subgroups, are the outcomes consistent? The use of language and ideology that describes what a masculine man looks like and how he performs may be different based on where an individual is from or the subgroup in which he holds membership. An individual’s location may affect development of his/her ideals of masculinity or the lack thereof.

New research that focuses on masculinity within the lesbian, bisexual or transgender community could be another research opportunity. This study did not include lesbian, bisexual or transgender students, yet their lived experiences are just as valid. This body of research is also needed to provide a perspective on lesbian, bisexual and transgender students in an effort to better support these students. Specifically, transgender students who are moving through their various stages of identity are not

moving from being male to female or female to male. As Bill put it:

> *I met a transgender student, the first and only. So, learning the nuances of addressing that person by the gender that they choose to be, not what they appear to be. I never had a trouble doing it, but it was just the social tact of knowing how to do it, was something that I never had to do. Recently, [a transgender celebrity] came to school and I wanted to go to his presentation because I remember learning, or just reading his interviews that he had done and hearing my family's very negative, narrow minded viewpoints on his story. I said, "Well, I don't want to be like that. I want to go to this and see what this is about." And I was really glad that I did because I always viewed transgender people as moving from one gender to the next, never that they always identified with the gender that they physically transitioned to. So, it was interesting, someone asked him, "Have you ever felt, or how was the transition from going from female to male?" And he said, "I was never a woman in my mind. I was always a man." So, that was something I never thought about before that night.*

Even though a student is born a certain gender, and influenced by heteronormative culture, that individual has to figure out for themselves what their masculinity (or femininity) looks like and how they are going to perform.

An added opportunity as a result of this study would be to obtain a sample of GQ men from other colleges/universities across the country. In order to have a broader discussion about GQ men and their ideas about masculinity, additional study could inclusive of other regions and campuses and involve more participants from those

communities who meet the criteria for this study.

Another prospect would be to look to see if the idea of masculinity is different for those who are not out on campus. The researcher only looked at out GQ men, enrolled full time at a college or university in the United States. Most of the data collected was highly reflective, heartfelt and honest. Had this study included individuals who met all of the criteria except being out, the results may have been different.

Fifth, an additional topic for future research could be straight students and their understanding of masculinity. Although much research already exists on straight individuals, there are very few that focus intentionally on their understanding of masculinity. This area of research is also necessary to gaining a more complete picture of how masculinity is perceived on a college campus.

Lastly, additional research could be done to explore the differences, if any, of students' perspectives on masculinity comparing those who come out before they enter into college versus those who come out after they enter college. It is established that individuals get many of their ideals of masculinity from the media (Tiggemann, Martins & Kirkbride (2007), culture (Kimmel, 2008), community (Levesque & Vichesky, 2006; Schimel et al.,1999; and Stevens, 2004), and established stereotypes (Bailey et al., 1997; Fingerhut & Peplau, 2006; Kimmel & Mahalik, 2004; and Linneman, 2008).

Researcher's Role and Reflexivity

The researcher recognizes that he is part of the GQ community and is aware of the complexities that sexual orientation, masculinity and group membership have on a college campus. The researcher saw many aspects of himself in many of the conversations with participants. Over time, he has witnessed an evolution in the ideas

and social norms of what is and is not acceptable behavior for GQ men, which was partly the reason for this study. Additionally, he has many personal and professional connections to individuals who share an interest in figuring out what masculinity is and how it influences our culture. The researcher has always been fascinated with GQ culture, and all of the ethos of that community. Group membership does not always equate to group ownership.

The researcher has seen the performance of masculinity within the GQ community, both on and off campus. From GQ-based academic groups to GQ-based athletics teams, there has never been a consistent message of what masculinity was or what it looked like. Masculinity is a social construct, and, when looking at this study, it is possible that this research only offers more questions than answers.

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APPENDIX A

Demographic Intake Survey

Informed Consent Letter

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey. The purpose of this survey is to gather basic demographic information regarding your status and eligibility to participate in this research study. The research topic is exploring how out GQ collegiate men describe their identity in relationship to their masculinity.

Gay, Masculinity and College Student

Name:
Email regularly used:
Cell phone number:
Birthdate (including day, month, and year):
Major(s):
Minor(s):
Cumulative college GPA:

Check which most closely applies to you:

I am/was an undergraduate student at:
UNO, Tulane, Xavier, Loyola, SUNO, Dillard, Other (please provide)

I am currently:
A first year/freshman
A sophomore
A junior
A senior
A recent graduate (0 – 1 year out of undergrad)
A recent graduate (1 – 3 years out of undergrad)

I identify my sexual orientation as:
Gay
Bisexual
Fluid/pansexual
Heterosexual
Queer
Other: (text box)

I identify racially as:
African American/Black
Asian Pacific Islander
Latino/Hispanic/Chicano
Biracial/Multiethnic
Native American/American Indian
White/Caucasian

Other: (text box)

I am “out” to:
All of my friends and family
Some of my friends and family
None of my friends and family

I am involved on campus
No
Yes, and spend approximately ____ hours in co-curricular activities (ResLife, Intramurals, Greek Life, Ethnic-Based organization, other leadership activities).

In the text boxes below, please answer the following questions with as much detail as possible.

Please list any involvement in any college extra-curricular activities, including leadership positions held (if applicable).

Please list any honors, awards, or achievements received during college, including the year(s) received (if applicable).

APPENDIX B

Gay/Queer, Masculinity, and College Students
Interview Protocol

Time of Interview:
Date:
Interview Location:
Interviewer:
Interviewee:
Position of Interviewee:
Introduction and briefly describe the project to the interviewee: **MAY I START THE RECORDER NOW** *INFORMED CONSENT:* I appreciate you taking the time to meet with me on my research project. This interview will help me with the data collection portion of my dissertation. For this study, I am examining how gay/queer men in college perceive their masculinity. This study will be published in the form of a dissertation, and possibly edited for conference presentation or journal submission. You will be provided complete anonymity by participating. For participation in this study, you should not be at any risk or feel discomfort. If you chose not to answer any question, please feel free to say, "pass." All information from your participation will be kept on a password-protected computer and will be destroyed once the data is no longer needed. There are approximately 10 questions and should not take longer than 30 minutes. This interview will not have any impact on our (personal/professional) relationship. At the end of our interview, I will provide you with a card for my Major Advisor, Dr. Belinda Cambre, and her contact information, as well as my contact information. I have completed the National Institutes for Health's human subjects certification. Your participation in this interview is voluntary. For the purpose of our interview, and with your permission, I will record our conversation for my notes. Do you have any questions before we begin?
ICE BREAKER as needed
QUESTIONS:
Please select a pseudonym:_____ *Why are you here?*
Can you share with me your experiences of when and how you came to understand that you were gay/queer? *How do you think that you've changed or evolved since you first realized you were gay/queer?*
What does it mean to be a man?

In your own words, what comes to mind for you when you hear the word: Masculine? i.e. what Does it mean? *Where did this idea come from?* *Can you define it?*
If you had to describe being gay on a college campus, how would you explain it? (3-5 bullet points) *Social groups gave you those definitions, how do you reconcile that with the straight world? Your family?*
Within the gay community, how important/non-important is being/presenting/acting masculine?
What do you believe a masculine man looks like? Describe him, figuratively and literally. *What does an attractive man look like?* *How do you believe that it is it different from the straight world vs. the gay world?*
On a scale from one to ten, with ten being the most masculine and 1 being the least masculine, where would you rate yourself? Why? *Smiler Scale of 10 Male archetypes* *(Review the last scores so see where he fits)*
How important are intimate relationships within the gay community as it relates to masculinity?
Tell me something about yourself that you have never told anyone else
Anything else that you think of that you'd like to tell me?
Where there any questions that you thought I would ask and didn't?

Observations:	
Locale	
Mood	
Physical Setting	
Others in Room	
Interruptions/ Distractions	
Idea not in interview	

APPENDIX C

Informed Consent – Individual Interviews

THE UNIVERSITY of
NEW ORLEANS

Informed Consent

1. You are invited to participate in a research study. This study will use to help to develop an understanding of how GQ collegiate men describe their identity in relationship to their masculinity. You are being asked to participate in the study because you identify as an out gay/queer man who is enrolled full time as an undergraduate students, or recent graduate.

2. If you volunteer to participate, data from this interview or focus group may be included in a future presentation or publication. No identifying information will be included in any published results and participation in the study is strictly voluntary. You will even be able to select a pseudonym for yourself.

3. There may be no direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. This knowledge has the potential to better inform student affairs professionals with regard to supporting and understanding GQ college men. There is minimal risk involved in this study.

4. There will not be financial cost to you to participate in this study.

5. You may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study at any time. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice. You are encouraged to ask questions about this study at the beginning or any time during the research study. All information gathered in this study will be kept completely confidential. No reference will be made in written or oral materials that could link you to this study.

6. Researchers' Contact Information:

   If you have any questions or concerns about the study, you may contact

Ryan Jasen Henne, rhenne@uno.edu and/or Dr. Belinda Cambre, at bmcambre@uno.edu.

7. For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted, you may contact the Office of Human Subjects at unoirb@uno.edu.

8. This form explains the nature, demands, benefits and any risk of the project. By signing this form you agree knowingly to assume any risks involved. Remember, your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefit. In signing this consent form, you are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies. A copy of this consent form will be offered to you.

Your signature below indicates that you consent to participate in the above study.

_____	_____	_____
Subject's Signature	Printed Name	Date

9. I certify that I have explained to the above individual the nature and purpose, the potential benefits and possible risks associated with participation in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature.

10. These elements of Informed Consent conform to the Assurance given by the University of New Orleans to the Department of Health & Human Services to protect the rights of human subjects.

11. I have offered the participant a copy of this signed consent document.

Signature of Investigator_____ Date_____

APPENDIX D

Informed Consent-Focus Group

I, (participant's name)_____, agree to participate in the research entitled "Measure of a Man: A Grounded Theory Approach to Understanding Gay/Queer College Men's Self-Identified Masculinity," which is being conducted by Ryan Jasen Henne, graduate student from the University of New Orleans. I understand that this participation is entirely voluntary; I can withdraw my consent at any time before or during the focus group session. After the focus group session, I can request that my comments be excluded from the transcript that will be prepared from the audio tape. The following points have been explained to me:

1. This study will use to help to develop an understanding of how GQ collegiate men describe their identity in relationship to their masculinity. I am being asked to participate in the study because I identify as an out gay/queer man who is enrolled full time as an undergraduate students, or recent graduate.
2. The procedures are as follows:

   I will take part in a facilitated discussion of open-ended questions related to being a gay/queer fulltime student on a college campus. The discussion will be audio taped. A transcript will be prepared. Audio recordings will be kept in a secure area in a locked cabinet. At the completion of the study, recordings will be destroyed.
3. I may choose not to answer any discussion question and I can stop my participation in the focus group at any time. I understand that are no perceived risks, discomforts or stresses that may be faced during this research beyond any normally associated with participating in small-group discussion. The researcher promises confidentiality, but that there is no enforceable promise of confidentiality from other focus group participants. All focus group members are asked to respect the privacy of other group members. I may tell others that I was part of a focus group and the general topic of the discussion, but actual names and stories of other participants should not be repeated.

4. The interviewer will have a list of local agencies that can provide me with additional information or support if I are interested.
5. The results of this participation will not be released in any individually identifiable form except as outlined above, unless required by law.

_____

Signature of Investigator

_____ Date: _____

Signature of Participant

PLEASE SIGN BOTH COPIES. KEEP ONE AND RETURN THE OTHER TO THE INVESTIGATOR.

APPENDIX E

Focus Group Protocol

Questions

Icebreaker (as needed)

1. Why are you here?
2. What do you believe are the biggest issues that gay men face on your campus?
3. Are these issues that you face or are concerned with?
4. If you had to sum up the 3-5 characteristics of gay men on a college campus, what would they be?
5. Here are some of the themes that were compiled from my interviews, what do you think about these findings?
    a. True?
    b. False?

Missing/gaps?

6. *Possible Question*. During your interview, you assigned yourself a number, 1-10, rating your own masculinity. If you had to assign a value to each of the people in this room, 10 being Most Masculine and 1 being Least Masculine, based solely on your interactions here today/tonight, what number would you assign each group member, and why? (On notecards)
7. Open to be determined based on the interviews.

APPENDIX F

Male Archetypes

adapted from Smiler's (2006) Study, Living the Image

Average Joe

Described as: strong, simple working man as honest, solid, direct, and hard-working. Also, described as hardworking, possessing a high school education, and working for others.

Known for: having a family for whom he cared, was budget conscious, and being hardworking in the service of others (family, employers).

Businessman

Described as: the big-shot businessman, as someone who was a traveling salesman, Rotary Club, booster type of expansive back-slapper.

Known for: an aggressive pursuit of success, financial gain, power, status, self-promotion and persistence.

Effeminate

Described as: being associated with traditional feminine nature, behavior, mannerisms, style or gender rather than masculine nature, behavior, mannerisms, style or roles.

Known as: weak, sensitive, gentle, fashion conscious and talkative

Family Man

Described as: kindly, caring fathers is common in our society.

Known as: dedicated and devoted to their families, and serve as breadwinners by working full time to support their family, establishes his place in the community and his changing relationships with friends, parents and extended family.

Jock

Described as: big, tough and rugged, though not precisely towering in intellect.

Known as: large, physically fit, and competitive, and have indicated that they regularly engage in conversations about sports, strong social orientation and a fairly low academic orientation.

Nerd

Described as: physically weak and unattractive, be poorly dressed, have poor posture and is not particularly engaged in the social scene.

Known for: having an academic focus, low rates of alcohol consumption, minimal involvement in the social scene, and prefer routine over risk.

Player/Don Juan

Described as: someone who is usually sighted in expensive restaurants or fast convertibles, accompanied by a beautiful woman (whom he's ignoring), sometimes referred to as a playboy or ladies man. Someone who preferred more refined activities such as jazz and literature.

Known for: being attractive, flattering, flirty, and self-centered. They are also expected to be well groomed and well dressed in a casual style that is slightly less formal than business attire. Also: smooth, smoldering, and totally irresistible to women; a super-stud on the prowl.

Nonconformist/Rebel

Described as: focused on flouting social expectations and unconventionality, and individuals tended to emphasize their autonomy. Example group membership might include: alcoholic, gang member, druggie, metal head, burnout, punker, stoner, loser.

Known for: perceived alcohol use and relatively low scores for perceived academic focus. Also, low self-esteem, unhappiness, poor social skills, most likely to skip school, possessed low GPSs, had the lowest rate of college attendance, and limited campus involvement. They are also presumed to be promiscuous, brawled, commit a crime, and have intentional disregard for social systems.

Sensitive New-Age Guy

Described as: attempting to reform their own masculinity in response to the feminist movement. This type of man practices and believes in an ideology of equality, collectivity, solidarity and personal growth and had chosen to renounce masculine privilege.

Known for: having a positive attitude toward both women and feminism, tended to be somewhat passive in their romantic and sexual relationships, and attempted to be emotionally expressive, sensitive, caring, honest and rejections of power.

Tough Guy

Described as: the blue-collar, working class brawler, and as having a quick temper with fists to match; nobody better try to push him around, who is ready and willing to fight.

Known for: working class, enjoyed drinking, but were not particularly social and were not academically oriented. Often perceived to have the characteristics of comic book super heroes (unemotional, individualistic, and rarely have romantic or sexual relationship), suggests and impoverished emotional life. Also, has a reliance on physical violence (as a means of problem solving), relatively little interaction or connection with others with a

specific emphasis on strength, violent sports, and being macho.

APPENDIX G

Facebook Invitation Posting

APPENDIX H

Table 2: Male Archetype Participant Scale

Participant	Most Masculine	Second Most Masculine	Third Most Masculine	Third Least Masculine	Second Least Masculine	Least Masculine
Bill	Jock	Tough Guy	Player/Don Juan	Sensitive New Aged Guy	Nerd	Effeminate
Bradyn	Family Man	Player/Don Juan	Sensitive New Aged Guy	Tough Guy	Nonconformist Rebel	Effeminate
Jed	Sensitive New Aged Guy	Average Joe	Family Man	Nerd	Jock	Effeminate
Ben	Tough Guy	Average Joe	Family Man	Nerd	Sensitive New Aged Guy	Effeminate
Scott	Sensitive New Aged Guy	Average Joe	Family Man	Nonconformist Rebel	Tough Guy	Player/Don Juan
Sebastian Black	Tough Guy	Average Joe	Jock	Nonconformist Rebel	Player/Don Juan	Effeminate
Twitter	Jock	Business Man	Player/Don Juan	Nerd	Nonconformist Rebel	Effeminate
Brad	Tough Guy	Jock	Family Man	Player/Don Juan	Nonconformist Rebel	Effeminate
Ray	Business Man	Jock	Player/Don Juan	Sensitive New Aged Guy	Nonconformist Rebel	Effeminate
Feifer	Tough Guy	Business Man	Jock	Nerd	Sensitive New Aged Guy	Player/Don Juan
Ezra	Business Man	Jock	Tough Guy	Nerd	Nonconformist Rebel	Effeminate
Derrick Parker	Jock	Tough Guy	Family Man	Nerd	Sensitive New Aged Guy	Effeminate
Yellow	Average Joe	Family Man	Jock	Tough Guy	Nerd	Effeminate
Peter Pan	Sensitive New Aged Guy	Family Man	Average Joe	Effeminate	Nerd	Nonconformist Rebel

ChemE	Family Man	Average Joe	Business Man	Nonconformist Rebel	Tough Guy	Player/Don Juan
Hayes	Family Man	Sensitive New Aged Guy	Average Joe	Nerd	Player/Don Juan	Effeminate

University Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research University of New Orleans

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Campus Correspondence

Principal Investigator: Belinda Cambre

Co-Investigator: Ryan Jasen Henne

Date: July 5, 2013

Protocol Title: "Measure of a Man: A Grounded Theory Approach to Understanding Gay/Queer College Men's Self Identified Masculinity"

IRB#: 02Aug13

The IRB has deemed that the research and procedures are compliant with the University of Ne w Orleans and federal guidelines. The above referenced human subjects protocol has been reviewed and approved using expedited procedures (under 45 CFR 46.116(a) category (7).

Approval is only valid for one year from the approval date. Any changes to the procedures or protocols must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to implementation. Use the IRB number listed on this letter in all future correspondence regarding this proposal.

If an adverse, unforeseen event occurs (e.g., physical, social, or emotional harm), you are required to inform the IRB as soon as possible after the event.

Best wishes on your project!

Sincerely,

Robert D. Laird, Ph.D., Chair
UNO Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research

VITA

The author was born in Camp LeJeune, NC. He obtained his Bachelor's degree in Communication from East Carolina University in 1999. He completed his Master of Education degree from Grand Valley State University. He joined the University of New Orleans School of Human Development's graduate program to pursue a PhD in educational leadership.