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EXAMINING STAGE THEORIES AND THE PREDISPOSITION TO LEAD
WITHIN THE HOMOSEXUAL COMMUNITY

By

David Robert Blair

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education

University of San Diego

May 2007

Dissertation Committee

Fred Galloway, Ed.D., Chair
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Abstract

An application of homosexual stage-based self-integration theory suggests that until gay individuals have become fully self-integrated, their capacity for leadership within the community is diminished. Unfortunately, now more than ever before, leadership is needed in dealing with such pressing community issues as the disproportionately high suicide rate among gay teens, the ongoing struggle for gays to become fully self-integrated individuals, bringing equal rights to the gay population, and of course, developing a base of strong gay leaders to meet the ongoing challenges facing this population.

To test the self-integration-leadership hypothesis, this study surveyed 150 men in gay internet chat rooms across the United States in an effort to measure the extent of their identity development as well as their propensity for leadership within the community. This was accomplished through the construction of a 26 question survey, based on the homosexual stage development models of Cass (1984), Griffin (1992), and D'Augelli (1994), and consisted of 18 Likert-scale questions designed to measure identity development and leadership propensity, five open-ended questions to help triangulate the final stage assessment, and three demographic questions. This information was then used to produce a final stage assignment for each of the respondents, which, together with the demographic information, was used in regression analyses designed to explain variation in the leadership propensity of community members.

Results suggest that the final stage assignment for each individual, which reflects the extent to which they have become self-integrated, was a powerful factor in explaining an individual's propensity for community leadership. For example, the results of the

regression analysis show an almost one-to-one correspondence between the stages of identity development and an increasing propensity for leadership; specifically, a movement of one stage in identity development is associated with an almost one-point increase (.96) in the likelihood of displaying leadership (on a five-point Likert scale). Interestingly, none of the demographic measures used were significant predictors of leadership behavior, suggesting that age, race/ethnicity, and religious affiliation may work in less direct ways in influencing the practice of leadership, something that can be explored by future researchers in the area of gay/queer studies.

DEDICATION

To my partner, Doug

And my mother, Blossom...

I love you, Doug

And, mother, I will miss you forever!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

When I was twelve years old, my mother and I would take weekend drives along the North Shore and suburbs of Chicago. I can remember hearing the same statement from my mother repeatedly as we approached Northwestern University, "If you apply yourself in school now, you may have the chance of going to a school like this someday." Graduating in the upper few percent from high school, and in just three years, certainly helped my chances with a fine school, and I wish to thank Northwestern University for providing me with an outstanding undergraduate education. Coming from a Jewish household, those most respected are Rabbis. The English translation of Rabbi is a teacher. And although I did not return to graduate school for another couple decades, I never lost sight nor forgot the importance of a fine education.

As the founder and chief executive officer of an educational non-profit organization, I quickly recognized the importance of returning to school. My good fortunes led me to the doors of the University of San Diego (USD). I framed my letters of acceptance into the Master's and Doctoral programs from USD. I want to thank Mary Meiners and Carole Sussman for encouraging me to go back to school. I also want to thank them for their love and support as Board members of the organization. We did great work together!

Shortly before the commencement of my Masters program, I began dating my now, domestic partner, Doug Cristofa. Doug knew from the start that school came before all else. He supported me through my seven years of study by reading and editing my many papers, and I can always count on him to provide me with an excellent sounding-board. Doug is one of my biggest supporters and I love him dearly. I will never be able

to let him know how much I appreciate him.

I will never forget how anxious I was coming back to school after decades. I will never forget my first semester. It was during this semester that I had the great fortune of meeting Jennifer Jeffries, and Robert (Bob) Donmoyer. I remember how I so looked forward to my Ethics course each week because of Jennifer. We seemed to become friends quickly, and I appreciated Jennifer as someone who has just the right thing to say at just the right time. Jennifer is responsible for the choice of my dissertation topic, and I thank her for her guidance, support and friendship all these years. Thank you Jennifer!

Bob Donmoyer was my adviser during my Masters studies. Bob put me at ease during our first meeting, and he is another wonderful person I came to know over the years at USD. I could hardly wait to take my first class with Bob, and the experience is one I will never forget. Bob's teaching skills are wonderful, his creativity is unparalleled and his insight seems always correct. Bob was always ready with a compassionate answer to the most challenging of issues. I want to thank you Bob, for being there for me!

A warm thank you to Mary Scherr. I think I took most of the courses taught by Mary. Mary taught my first Qualitative Research course, Leadership and Spirituality, and Adult Development. Mary introduced me to the theories of Adult Development, which underpin this dissertation. Thank you Mary for pointing me in the right direction!

Last, but certainly not least is my mentor, guide and friend, Fred Galloway. I remember meeting Fred during a graduate greeting on campus before my first semester. Someone at the party told me that Fred was from Harvard and he teaches quantitative statistics courses. I was immediately intimidated. My thinking changed when I enrolled in Fred's Policy Making course. Fred was engaging from the start, I devoured his

assigned readings and could not wait for his next class. As a history buff, I was excited to learn that a majority of this course focused on the Cuban missile crisis and the Kennedy administration. Fred supported me from the start. As we began to come to know each other in class, he put me at ease, and I enjoyed our weekly conversations between the breaks. During my first meeting with Fred in his office, I wanted to ask if he would serve as a member of my dissertation committee. Instead, he offered to chair my dissertation committee! Fred has been my guide throughout the dissertation process. He led me through the many issues surrounding doing gay research at a Catholic university. Fred taught me more about quantitative research than I learned during the semester-long course. He is able to bring understanding from various perspectives. Fred taught me what being student-focused means. I will always remember our many conversations over the past few years, and I consider Fred my mentor and wonderful friend. Fred is brilliant, he is responsible for the improvement in my writing skills, and he has my vote as the Leadership program's greatest asset! Thank you Fred!

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CHAPTER I: OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The history of homosexuality in the U.S. is replete with discrimination and outright hatred. Historically, homosexuals have been persecuted by virtually every segment of American society, including the government, all segments of the military, the medical profession, faith-based organizations, schools, families and friends. Unfortunately, romance, intimacy, and personal feelings have played a very small part in this story of social oppression and intolerance for this population (Kertzner, Foreman, Diaz, Ryan, Belkin, & Young, 2004).

However, by the second half of the twentieth century, aggressive social movements promoted the rights and well being of members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered community (LGBT). A paradigm shift occurred during the 1960s as part of the change in sexual attitudes that occurred across many parts of the country, and the birth of the gay liberation movement began. From the founding of the first Gay Academic Union in 1973 at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, groups of activist scholars have worked to achieve recognition, to call attention to the problem of discrimination and win resolutions condemning it, and as a direct result, beachheads have been established on numerous school campuses across the United States (Sears, 2002).

Together with this rise in social activism, the declassification of homosexuality in 1973 by the American Psychiatric Association has resulted in vast numbers of gay and lesbian youth coming out during their adolescence, allowing for greater self-integration at

a younger age. However, this increase in coming out among youth has had the unfortunate consequence of discrimination and victimization, which, in turn, has increased the likelihood of serious mental health issues and the suicide rates of gay teens, as reported in the 2004 report by the California Safe Schools Coalition (Diaz, 2004). While Stanford University took the lead 40 years ago in eradicating discrimination against blacks, women, and Jews in admission, hiring, and memberships, etc., it was not until 1992 that Stanford finally passed a bill to include sexual orientation as a protected class of individuals (O'Hanlon, 1999).

These achievements were, in part, the result of the struggles that followed the AIDS pandemic to seek a more diverse and just society (Trickett, Watts, & Birman, 1994). As a result of this activism, a significant number of leadership issues and challenges are currently facing the LGBT community in the United States, including the advancement of fully self-integrated persons; bringing equal rights and marital privileges to the LGBT population, developing a base of strong leaders to meet the ongoing challenges facing this population, and combating the previously mentioned disproportionately high suicide rates among gay teens. For the purpose of this study, leadership is defined as the ability to influence others in the community to face its problems through noncoercive means (Heifetz, 2001).

Background of the Problem

It wasn't until the summer of 1969 that a group of gay men in New York City took an active stance against ongoing police harassment. It was a somber evening at The Stonewall, a local bar in the city's Greenwich Village neighborhood known for attracting homosexual cross-dressers. However, the immediate days that followed were to prove to be different than all others. When the city's police entered the bar and announced their

intention to shut the establishment down, police officers were met with angry and violent resistance by homosexuals mourning the passing of the renowned actress, singer, and gay icon, Judy Garland. The clash that ensued between the police and the patrons lasted several days and has since been hailed as the beginning of the modern gay rights movement in America (Bernstein, 1997).

Despite the significant progress that has been made by the LGBT community in the decades since the summer of 1969, more work needs to be done. This is evidenced by those who speak out against same-sex marriage in particular and homosexuals in general, often framing their argument by citing scripture from the Judeo-Christian bible; in addition they view the granting of equal rights to homosexuals through secular governmental actions as providing homosexuals with special rights.

As expected, however, regardless of one's position, the battle over framing the issue remains heated with significant consequences for the losers. The LGBT community disagrees, and sees the issue framed in terms of civil rights and equal treatment under the law; supporters often point to the decision in 2004 by Massachusetts to allow same-sex marriage as evidence of enlightened progress.

Recently, despite the fact that a fairly large segment of the U.S. population support gay rights, political leaders have stepped up their attack on gay rights through such measures as conservative religious and civil leaders, including President Bush, who urged the passage of the proposed Protection of Marriage Amendment (PMA) to the United States Constitution Amendment. Proponents prefer to allow each state to determine the recognition they deem suitable to same-sex couples under the "Remainder Clause" of the 10th Amendment to the US Constitution. Proponents of the PMA frame

the debate as one over semantics and prefer the granting of domestic partnership certificates instead of issuing marriage licenses.

However, opponents to the PMA see the issue as one equivalent to the old “separate but equal” laws enacted by racial segregationists which were subsequently struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1954. The Court ruled that separate is inherently un-equal, based on real life experience, having previously sustained “separate but equal”, in Plessy v. Ferguson in 1896.

In 1967, the United States Supreme Court struck down all laws prohibiting interracial marriage following the action taken nearly 20 years before by the California Supreme Court. In their decisions, both courts held that marriage is something more than a civil contract subject to regulation by the state; it is a fundamental right of free men. The California court continued by stating that legislation infringing such rights must be based upon more than prejudice and must be free from oppressive discrimination to comply with the constitutional requirements of due process and equal protection of the laws (California Supreme Court, 1948). This ruling has significant consequences to the civil rights issues currently facing the LGBT community, as the court recognized the discrimination occurred among a class of individuals.

These continuous and contentious published attacks against the LGBT population have serious and dangerous consequences for members of this disenfranchised group of individuals. For example, some members of the public are likely to interpret these hateful statements as further fuel and encouragement to act out in the form of hate crimes against LGBT individuals. Discriminatory remarks have the psychological effect of diminishing the perceived worth of same-sex individuals, and are interpreted as confirmations that homosexuals are to be viewed as threats to public decency.

Members of the same-sex population typically fear rejection at home, at work and in social settings, which further prohibits many gay individuals from coming out and candidly sharing with others. Additionally, the U.S. Government is seen as a supporter of discrimination against the LGBT population; U.S. military policies led to the creation and implementation of the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy which confirms the blatant discrimination against LGBT service members (Service Members Legal Defense Network, 1999).

Epidemiological studies show that LGBT populations have higher rates of stress-related psychiatric disorders. Meyer (2003) provides evidence that within LGBT populations those who felt stigmatized or discriminated against because of their sexual orientation were less likely to affiliate with other LGBT individuals and reported more frequent psychological and psychiatric concerns. The violence associated with hate crimes places LGBT individuals at risk for physical harm to themselves, their families and their property (D’Augelli, 1998; Herek, Gillis & Cojan, 1999). Taken together, the evidence supports the position that social stigmas, prejudice, discrimination and violence associated with having an alternate sexual orientation, coupled with the often hostile and stressful social environments, adversely affect the psychological, physical, social, and economic well being of LGBT individuals (APA, 2004).

As a result of continuing discrimination, disenfranchised group members are also significantly and disproportionately impacted by life-threatening health-related issues and mental health conditions. Typical of these disorders include: sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV/AIDS, drug abuse, isolation caused by depression and anxiety. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention supports the contention that

members of disenfranchised communities disproportionately engage in high-risk taking behaviors out of fear of further rejection (CDC, 1999).

Throughout the early twentieth century, diversity has meant deviance from the norm, and deviance, in turn, meant inferiority as compared to the accepted heterosexual norm. Even in the later years, the dominant white heterosexual mainstream has been used as a model for which all other psychologies were compared (Trickett, et al., 1994). The struggle of diverse groups has been highlighted by the development in the social sciences of identity theory. Identity theory has become part of the evolution of each of these minority groups as these groups have incorporated their disenfranchisement as 'diversity as deficit' (Dilley, 2002). The contribution of culture to the human experience has become the positive result of the recognition that diversity adds to the culture instead of taking away from the American society (Trickett et al., 1994).

Homosexual identity development and identity theories are derived from experiences of individuals' as they progress; and are descriptive, rather than being predictive. The 1970s saw the development of various theories regarding homosexuality, including identity formation, the causes of internal conflict concerning same-sex attraction and finally, the 'coming-out' process. This examination led to researchers developing stage models of identity (Renn & Bilodeau, 2002), which can be used to understand issues and challenges faced by LGBT populations, to develop effective programming for diverse sub-populations, to create better informed policies, and to provide sensitive support to a population which is often and otherwise ignored upon a singular model of development and identities. Despite the shortcomings of each of the theories of homosexual development, the notion of stage theories remains the primary

sources for most teaching and learning about how homosexuals develop sexual orientation identity (Dilley, 2002).

The similarities between the stage theories currently under examination lead to the general conclusion that basic stages of identity development exist for members of the LGBT community. Interesting, age appears to be of little consequence to the development of individuals as they progress to further acceptance of being different from the heterosexually accepted norm. The recognition that the current stage theories are not prescriptive in nature is significant in the sense that further exploration is suggested and essential. However, additional work is necessary to continue and expand the body of knowledge in the field of homosexuality and to explore how gays and lesbians react and respond to harassment and discrimination. The challenge exists to develop an understanding of how the effect of negative stimuli and victimization affects the LGBT individual's stagnation or progression along the continuum of identity development and stage theories (Bieschke, Eberz & Wilson (2000).

Heterosexuals are taught what it means to be heterosexual by their families, religious institutions, and neighborhood communities and at school sites (Levine & Love, 2000); however, LGBT development is hindered by prejudice from families, schools and religion. It is through the use of developmental models that an opportunity through which informed professionals can use the knowledge gained through research to reinforce the values of inclusion, equality and just treatment for all people (DuMontier, 2000). LGBT identity formation is dependent on knowledge gathered by the research community which supports the need as essential in development of all people regardless of gender, race, nationality, religious affiliation, age or sexual orientation.

An application of stage-based self-integration theory suggests that until community members have become fully self-integrated, their capacity for leadership is diminished. Unfortunately, leadership within the LGBT community seems to be lacking at an especially critical time for a number of reasons, which include health concerns and the overall lack of identity development in this community. As a result, now more than ever before, real leadership is needed in the community; however, it takes a great deal of self-confidence and self-assuredness for any person to take on a leadership task. For members of the LGBT community, taking on a leadership task requires all of the same skills that a heterosexual person will draw upon, plus the honesty and integrity that comes from a substantially fully integrated individual. Many closeted members of our society simply lack the confidence to lead, while at the same moment fearing potential events might out the individual; after all gay leaders clearly understand that issues of sexual orientation will, and often times do become public.

As such, to see to what extent identity development is linked to potential leadership activities, this study will solicit members of the gay community to assess how the participants' level of self-integration may potentially lead to taking up leadership roles in the community.

Statement of the Problem

Psychological and psychiatric experts have agreed since the mid 1970s that homosexuality is neither a form nor a symptom of mental illness (Conger, 1975). Researchers use the term "minority stress" to refer to the negative effects associated with the adverse social conditions experienced by individuals who belong to a stigmatized and disenfranchised social group (DiPlacido, 1998; Meyer, 2003). Epidemiological studies show LGBT populations have higher rates of stress related psychiatric disorders. The

violence associated with hate crimes places LGBT individuals at risk for physical harm to themselves, their families and their property (D'Augelli, 1998; Herek, Gillis & Cojan, 1999). The evidence supports the position that social stigma, prejudice, discrimination and violence associated with having an alternative sexual orientation, and the hostile and stressful social environments created thereby adversely affect the psychological, physical, social, and economic well being of LGBT individuals (APA, 2004).

The literature indicates that little research has been published on the benefits of conducting interventions surrounding identity formation (Renn & Bilodeau, 2002; Dilley, 2002a, 2002b; Evans & Broido, 1999; Rhoads, 1994, 1997a, 1998; Wall & Evans, 2000; Bieschke, Eberz & Wilson, 2000). Furthermore, no research exists at all that attempts to link movement through the various stages of identity development of homosexuals with any changes in their propensity for leadership. As such, this study will begin to fill the knowledge gap that currently exists in the literature.

Purpose of the Study

The overwhelming discrimination which exists against gay individuals supports the conclusion that the performance of leadership is severely impacted within the gay population. Therefore, the need exists to conduct a research project which investigates the value of stage-based self-integration theories as a means to promote the understanding and movement of closeted individuals to become fully integrated individuals who are willing to come out to others and accept leadership responsibilities to promote pressing issues of the LGBT community.

Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that as individuals move along the continuum of self-integration and demonstrate higher levels of self-integration, they will be more likely to assume

leadership roles in the community. If this hypothesis is correct, members of the gay community who are furthest along the continuum and who also express greater levels of self esteem and support will be those most likely to assume leadership roles in the community.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Fully-integrated individuals bring benefit to themselves, their families and friends, and their communities (Griffin, 1992). Identity development has the potential to benefit individuals and communities through the enhancement of diversity (Griffin, 1992). Significant progress has been realized toward the reduction in discrimination, condemnation and mistreatment of homosexuals since the Stonewall revolt in 1969 (Bernstein, 1997). Yet, to bring further and measurable accomplishments toward reducing the stigma levied against this community, continual and rigorous efforts are necessary (Renn & Bilodeau, 2002), and much needs to be accomplished to bring fair and equitable treatment to the homosexual population. Educational researchers recognize these challenging problems and suggest that promoting education, compassionate understanding and effective leadership can help to combat homophobia across the country (D'Augelli, 1994a). It takes the commitment from progressive and enlightened individuals, institutions and policymakers to advance the development of fully integrated persons (Griffin, 1992). These issues need to be addressed by almost every segment of U. S. society, as well as the homosexual community itself (Dilley, 2002). For the lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgendered (LGBT) community to advance its causes, leaders must recognize the need to promote the development of fully integrated individuals.

The chapter commences with a background section that provides an extensive overview of the challenges and obstacles facing the practice of leadership in the diverse homosexual community. Following this discussion, the chapter presents a brief history surrounding homosexuality in the United States. An extensive section is devoted to homosexual identity development and stage-based self-integration theories which lays the foundation and rationale for conducting this inquiry. The religious point of view is then presented as a means to provide an historic appreciation of why religious communities maintain their positions against homosexuals and any efforts made to advance the equal treatment of this population. A section is also included that discusses the homosexual perspective as a means to explore how members of the subculture respond and react to the overwhelming and continual discrimination. The chapter concludes with a summary focusing on the methods of developing leaders from within the LGBT community. Developing community leadership requires an emphasis on developing self-integrated individuals.

Background of the Problem

Based upon cultural beliefs about homosexuality, it is not surprising that gays and lesbians are commonly judged negatively because their “lifestyle” defies moral “standards.” As Hetrick and Martin (1987) stated, homosexuality is often viewed as a “sin” or a “crime against nature” (Armesto & Weisman, 2001). Culturally, homophobia is a belief system that justifies discrimination based upon sexual orientation. This, in turn, leads to the internal and natural tendency among homosexuals to adopt and accept the negative cultural attitudes against homosexuality (Margolies, Becker & Jackson-Brewer, 1987). The groups’ victimization leads minority group members towards obsessive concern with the group stigma, denial of membership, withdrawal, passivity,

aggression against one's own group, and identification with the dominant group. This self-hatred becomes the oppressor within. The uniqueness of homosexuality as compared to ethnic minorities is that other minorities often have social institutions that offer them protection. Most homosexuals are viewed by mainstream society as sexual perverts, criminals, and a danger to children and psychologically disturbed. The consequences of labeling will cause the same internalization whether the individual is out of the closet or not (Armesto & Weisman, 2001).

Homophobia is experienced at least three levels: (1) institutional, which is causing the denial of full access for LGBT persons to jobs and positions, which causes individuals to hide their true sexual identities, (2) interpersonal interactions, through attitudes of prejudice and discrimination, (3) the internalized level, when the LGBT community sees its members and personal self with the eyes of the oppressor, acting and viewing ourselves in the very way that others who reject us see us (Diaz, 2004). There has not been a reduction in the experiences of harassment by peers and the victimization particularly in school settings (Kertzner, Foreman, Diaz, Ryan, Belkin & Young, 2004).

Institutionally, the U.S. military is the largest employer in the country, and a decision it makes has a significant impact on how others within the American society view sexual minorities (Belkin, 2004). In an effort to disprove U.S. military leadership regarding this issue, Belkin and Levitt (2001) showed that homosexuality in the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) did not undermine operational effectiveness, combat readiness, unit cohesion, or morale of any units. The key ingredients which led the successful integration of gays and lesbians within the Israel forces were identified as effective and supportive leadership (Belkin and Levitt, 2001). While the U.S. government has allowed its citizens to define their own identities, the military does not, and sodomy continues to

carry a five-year jail sentence for each act, regardless of sexual orientation. The National Defense Research Institute (1993) shows that 70 to 80 percent of people in the military engage in private consensual sodomy, and thus the military has been engaged in the grossest form of discrimination (Kertzner et al., 2004).

Interpersonally, those with negative attitudes towards homosexuality typically have less contact with a gay person, are generally more conservative and religious, older, male and less well educated than those expressing more positive views (Herek, 1984). Those who discriminate against homosexuals typically discriminate against other minorities as well. Positive attitudes are more likely to be exhibited by the young, more educated, city dwellers, and people from the northeast and Pacific coastal regions of the U.S. (Herek, 1984). Herek (1984) suggests the existence of a positive correlation between heterosexual ego-development and tolerance for homosexuality. Anti-gay males are more punitive towards a gay man especially if the gay man is identified as similar to the subject, and similarity would imply that he may resemble the subject (Herek, 1984). This reaction is confirmed when individuals feel that their values are violated, when they view actions to promote equality are as illegitimate demands to change the status quo, and especially when heterosexuals are fundamentalist Christians (Herek, 1984). Contrary to Christian fundamentalist beliefs concerning promiscuity of homosexuals, Leppo, Boden and Stenta (2000) report same-sex partners' average committed relationship averages about 8.9 years as compared with the average heterosexual marriage length of 7.1 years.

The American Psychological Association (2005) concludes that sexual orientation is not a choice, and that the cause of sexual orientation is currently unknown.

Homosexual role models have no more of a deleterious or favorable impact upon the

lives of children than do heterosexual role models, and a gay role model does not encourage homosexuality any more than does a heterosexual setting. Additionally, gays and lesbians possess no common characteristic that would lead others to discriminate against this group of individuals at the workplace. Gays are as psychologically 'healthy' as are heterosexuals as evidenced by the American Psychiatric Association ruled in 1973. The American Psychological Association passed a similar resolution in 1975. In spite of these rulings, 14% of homosexuals interviewed had cited discrimination in the past year (American Psychological Association, 2005).

The American Psychological Association (2005) cites that 44% of gays reported employment related sexual discrimination. Additionally, gays and bisexuals are likely to earn 27 % less than their heterosexual counterparts. Moreover, 27% of employers interviewed stated they would not hire a known homosexual, 18% stated that they would fire a gay employee, and 26% would refuse to promote a known homosexual. The American Psychological Association research concludes that employment discrimination is commonplace at the workplace, and as such suggests that eliminating discrimination based upon sexual orientation would have a beneficial impact upon all workers. Discrimination and violence against gay community members creates psychological distress, and the resulting victimization is more severe than victims of crime *not* based upon sexual orientation (American Psychological Association, 2005).

For gay and lesbian youth, adolescence is a period of turmoil that may be intensified by having to deal with the social and practical effects of living with a socially stigmatized identity (Hetrick & Martin, 1987). Society delineates clear boundaries for what is considered "normal" and "acceptable" behavior (Blummenfeld, 1992). American society often views homosexuality as a "lifestyle" outside of the boundaries of

acceptability, which leaves many gay and lesbian youth feeling marginalized and with limited social support (Radkowsky & Siegel, 1997). Thus, although it may be developmentally crucial for adolescents to receive support from common or natural social networks such as family members, however, gay youth may experience the opposite: rejection by their parents and other close relatives (D'Augelli & Hershberger, 1993; Hammelman, 1993; Remafedi, 1994).

Mounting evidence indicates that parental rejection is a major health-risk factor for sexual minority youth (Hammelman, 1993; Hetrick & Martin, 1987; Savin-Williams & Dube, 1998). In particular, Radkowsky and Siegel (1997) reported gay and lesbian youth who are rejected by their parents experience an array of emotional, psychosocial, and health-related problems. Some of the most widely cited problems include increased levels of isolation, loneliness, depression, suicide, homelessness, prostitution, and sexually transmitted infections (Gibson, 1989; Hammelman, 1993; Hetrick & Martin, 1987; Radkowsky & Siegel, 1997; Remafedi, 1994). Several studies indicate that isolation resulting from parental rejection is one of the greatest problems facing gay and lesbian youth (D'Augelli & Hershberger, 1993; Feldman, 1989; Hetrick & Martin, 1987; Savin-Williams, 1989). Hetrick and Martin (1987) found that, in addition to rejection from parents and peers, many gay and lesbian youths are "kicked out" after disclosing their homosexual identity to parents (Armesto & Weisman, 2001).

Gay youth comprise a disproportionate 30-35% of completed suicides annually. Several studies found that gay youth represent 20% to 42% of attempted suicides (Remafedi, French, Story, Resnick & Blum, 1998; Remafedi, 1999; Gibson, 1989). Hershberger and D'Augelli (1995) report that lesbian, gay and bisexual youth between the ages of 15-24 stated that 80% had been victims of verbal insults; 44% had received

threats of attacks; 30% had been chased or followed; 17% were victims of physical attack and 10% had been assaulted with a weapon.

Suicide is the leading cause of death among gay youth, and surveys conducted in Minnesota and Massachusetts found a significant association between gays and suicidality in males. In particular, these studies suggest that suicide attempts were attributed to sexual “non-conformity”. Nonconformity is seen as particularly detrimental to boys (Remafedi, French, Story, Resnick & Blum, 1998; Remafedi, 1999). In many state, gays lack equal rights in employment, lack the right to take time off to attend to the illness or funeral of a partner, and the right to attend worship services of one’s choosing (Hershberger & D’Augelli, 1995).

The recognition that homosexuality is no longer considered as a mental disorder has relieved many people of an enormous psychological burden knowing that their most intimate feelings and desires were no longer viewed as mental illness. The decision to remove homosexuality from the American Psychiatric Association (1973) and the American Psychological Association’s (1975) list of disorders removed a significant roadblock in advancing the civil rights of sexual minorities. Advances have also come from the understanding that homosexual clients present with many of the same concerns and disorders as do their heterosexual counterparts (Kertzner et al., 2004). Many older gays and lesbians continue their distrust of the mental health community as a result of the discrimination experienced at the hands of the mental health community, both prior to the 1973 and 1975 decisions as well as since by numerous ‘unenlightened’ practicing professionals (Kertzner et al., 2004).

Diversity within the LGBT Culture

Homosexuality occurs in every culture, and labels such as lesbian, gay and

bisexual are socially constructed yet, these constructs are unique to a particular culture. Scholarly literature has typically been conducted by white middle-class individuals, and as a result, the impact of race and ethnicity has been that little has been written about these issues (Cintron, 2000). People of color are themselves culturally diverse, while current literature and scholarship generally lumps all cultural minorities into one group. This act diminishes the significant differences between cultures and does not allow for meaningful assumptions for otherwise distinct ethnic minorities. Lumping minority cultures together misses the complexity and confusing reality which frequently describes human behavior (Citron, 2000). As Citron (2000) argues, ethnicity is more than race, national origin and geographical origin; it patterns our thinking, feeling and behavior in obvious and subtle ways (Cintron, 2000). As such, the African American and Latino community cannot be seen as two large communities, but instead should be more properly seen as consisting of many multiple communities, whereby individual identity is connected to community (Young, 2000).

Understanding is achieved through a world view or sociocultural perspective (Citron, 2000). In Latin cultures, a man is not considered gay unless he exhibits socially constructed behaviors consistent with and imitates feminine traits (Citron, 2000). Latin men who engage in homosexual behavior in their teens through their 20s typically consider themselves as heterosexual. This occurrence is typical for the Latin culture, as defining terms of sexuality is based upon masculinity instead of sexual behavior (Citron, 2000). Under the Napoleonic Code, Latin America permitted any and all sexual acts between consenting adults as lawful; seen as the Latin tradition of tolerance (Citron, 2000). However, in Mexico, Columbia and Argentina gay men have been met with arbitrary arrest, torture and assassination (Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in

Latin America, 1996; Cintron, 2000).

Within American Latino and African American communities, homophobia, discrimination, poverty, gender ideologies and gender-scripted behavior, all take on an element where American Latino and African American male homosexuals are confronted with issues relating to their masculinity and manhood. This condition leads to Latin and Black LGBT individuals as being viewed as effeminate and shameful (Diaz, 2000). These individuals are likely seen to exhibit hyper-masculine roles as a compensatory action that lessens discrimination from others within their communities. An increased visibility of Latino gay men has resulted in an increase of negative responses within the Latino communities surrounding the issue of homosexuality, and the notion of sexual orientation is absent within the same communities (Diaz, 2000).

Gay African Americans are often forced to learn coping skills against racism and discrimination before they identify themselves as gays and lesbians (Young, 2000; Kertzner, et al., 2004). Sexual identity is often diminished as compared with cultural identity (Cintron, 2000). An important first step when working with parents of various ethnic and cultural backgrounds is to first gain an understanding of their beliefs about homosexuality (Armesto & Weisman, 2001).

School Settings

There is evidence that gay and lesbian youth who perceive their parents as accepting of their homosexuality exhibit far fewer of the self-deprecating behaviors discussed above, and report higher levels of self-esteem than gay and lesbian youth who perceive their parents as less accepting (Savin-Williams, 1989). Helping parents understand that homosexuality is most likely rooted in a combination of biological and environmental factors that are outside of their own and of their child's personal control is

an important first step in reducing blaming and critical attributions about the cause of their child's homosexuality (Armesto & Weisman, 2001).

Sexuality spills over into the classroom and is one of the factors involved in the interchange between teachers and pupils. On the other hand, these issues are largely ignored in schools (Wolpe 1998; Myers, 1999). In school settings, harassment, violence and verbal attacks occur on campus as they do off campus for lesbian and gay and individuals, and these certain types of violence were on the rise from 1987-1997 (Kaplan & Colbs, 2000). The typical classroom perpetuates the same homophobic prejudices and heterosexual attitudes as the campus and the larger context of society. One might assume that traditional classrooms are value-neutral, yet in recent decades it has become known that the classroom setting is anything but value-neutral. Instead, the classroom is an environment which is a manifestation of particular cultural beliefs. The atmosphere is more akin to more than two centuries of Western European culture as the typical classroom excludes members of social target groups, such as women, persons of color, people with disabilities, gays, lesbians, and bisexuals (Myers, 1999).

It is the dominant culture that presides in traditional classrooms, contradictorily to what is most needed to exist for multicultural students (Connolly, 2000). Typically, issues of sexual orientation are glossed over, if not completely ignored (Connolly, 2000). Educators lack the sensitivity, knowledge and skills to effectively address the needs of gay students (Sears, 1992). Surveys have documented that many admissions officers and residency directors are less enthusiastic about gay and lesbian candidates than heterosexual candidates (Connolly, 2000). Furthermore, physicians who disclose a gay orientation to colleagues face the potential loss of referrals and privileges (Yom, 1999). Schools located in Midwestern and southern rural areas are far more likely to be

homophobic than are other areas of the country (Sears, 1992). A full 80% of *prospective* teachers surveyed expressed negative feeling towards gays. Prospective teachers who plan to enter teaching at the elementary school level are likely to be more homophobic than are their high school counterparts. Whites expressed less negative attitudes than did Blacks (Sears, 1992). Furthermore, a full 66% of guidance counselors expressed fear of personal contact and expressed negative attitudes and feelings towards homosexuality. Counselors who are white, male and possess education beyond a master's degree have more positive attitudes toward homosexuality. Just as with other segments of the population studied, racial minorities and those with less education expressed more negative feeling and attitudes about the person or homosexuality in general (Sears, 1992).

Unwillingness to assume a positive role in the schools means that the special needs of gay students will remain unmet (Sears, 1992). Lacking special education classes that dispel myths about homosexuality, educators become and remain silent conspirators in the sexual repression of gays, and this lack of support translates into the message for all that heterosexuality is the norm. Silence creates a less hospitable setting among gay adolescents, and the result of silence leads to feelings of isolation, guilt and fear (Sears, 1992). The fear these homosexual students feel concerning entering into discussions concerning homosexuality further limits efforts to openly discuss concerns. LGBT students feel uncomfortable sharing their concerns with guidance counselors, teachers and administrators. All sides in this school-focused debate lack the candor to inspire open discussions in the classroom as well as outside the educational community. The lack of communication contributes to the splintering of educational efforts. Youth need direction and support concerning personal issues as they do with their studies regardless of their sexual orientation (Sears, 1992).

LGBT individuals in school settings see the order of the classroom as a reflection of the power and privilege held by heterosexuals. It is easy to recognize that LGBT students appear as minority individuals living in a heterosexual world (Connolly, 2000). While college is typically a time for youth to construct and define identity, many LGBT students struggle with issues of safety and support. Classrooms are an example where minority students should feel safe; however, LGBT students do not find safety or support to develop one's sense of identity. Connolly (2000) is of the opinion that unless one views the environment as safe and supportive the LGBT student will not come out. Tierney (1992) explains that many classrooms actually promote bigotry, and ignorance through silence. This experience is commonplace when no one speaks up, out of fear and retribution from the instructor, and no one challenges what is said in the classroom. This experience promotes homophobia among heterosexual students when instructors select materials that denigrate members of the LGBT community (Tierney, 1992). While these examples are not commonplace, the underlying message remains consistently bleak for LGBT students (Connolly, 2000).

Acceptance by peers at the college level is generally lacking when dealing with issues of homosexuality (Eddy & Forney, 2000). Implicit marginalization is a more subtle form of discrimination that arises when heterosexual norms are promoted at the expense of homosexual students through indifference, ignorance and supposed 'good' intentions (Connolly, 2000). LGBT issues are typically ignored or not acknowledged at all, in classes of religion, biology, and education. Homosexuality is continually undermined and diminished, and efforts are made to maintain consensus and to avoid conflict at any cost (Connolly, 2000). Unless LGBT students speak openly about their sexual orientation, instructors who might otherwise be open to being inclusive are left

with thoughts that their classrooms are wholly heterosexual. When LGBT students do speak up, they do so knowing, or quickly learning, the potential downfall of having spoken out in class in the first place (Connolly, 2000). LGBT students are often torn between subject material and issues of self-worth, and may struggle with school work as a result (Connolly, 2000). The issue for school leaders involves the difficult task of discovering how they can change this sort of destructive culture when it is embedded in an institution and accepted by most of the male stakeholders. For example, a kiss between two teachers may get very different reactions from students, staff, parents and administrators, depending on whether the couple is gay or heterosexual. Attitudes towards what is considered 'proper' are different in different communities and they change over time, posing an ongoing dilemma (Myers, 1999). Sears (1992) found most educators are unwilling to meet with, to advise and/or counsel a homosexual student, let alone initiate a discussion in the classroom. Sears (1992) shows that the topic of homosexuality was simply avoided by most teachers, counselors and administrators in their school.

Cultural Transformation

On a more promising note, the gay community is seen as making greater strides in the 36 years since the Stonewall rebellion in New York City, and the 32 years since the American Psychiatric Association's decision in 1973 to remove homosexuality from its list of disorders than any other civil rights movement in the world. Still, much more work needs to be done to bring parity to sexual minorities with their heterosexual counterparts (Foreman, 2004). The enhancement of diversity and inclusion has since replaced the past model of difference as deficit. This new model incorporates the enhanced view of diversity, while also recognizing that a more comprehensive view of

diversity is required. This comprehensive view looks at individuals in their sociocultural contexts for examination in terms of varied opportunities and constraints which operate in them. Affirmative action has been replaced by affirmative diversity, which recognizes the fundamental value of diversity in our American culture (Jones, 1990). The result has been a shift in attitudes that acknowledges the benefits of diversity as opposed to the previous concept of diversity seen as deviance, inferiority and disenfranchisement.

Cultural pluralism has since been deemed as a positivistic approach and it has significantly replaced the view of difference as inferior (Trickett et al., 1994). Bonds are seldom created based upon differences. Instead, the focus on differences splits and diminishes bonds. Bonds that are created based upon similarities are more easily formed (Gitlin, 1995). The lesbian and gay movement has abandoned its emphasis on *difference* from the heterosexual majority. The newer emphasis favors moderate politics that highlights *similarities* to the heterosexual majority (Seidman, 1993). Consequently, the gay movement has since been altered from a movement of cultural transformation through sexual liberation to one that seeks achievement of political rights through a narrow, ethnic-like interest-group politics (Seidman 1993). Bernstein (1997) uses the experiences and differences in approaches taken by gay movements in New York City, Vermont, Colorado and Oregon to illustrate her claim that change is more successful when those seeking change create cooperative alliances with those who are in a position to further their cause. Duyvendak and Giugni (1995) argue that the real difference is the one between movements pursuing goals in the outside world, for which the action is instrumental for goal realization, and those pursuing identity-oriented movements that realize their goals, at least partly, in their activities" (Bernstein, 1997). Bernstein (1997) defines *identity for empowerment* to mean the creation of collective identity and the

feeling that political action is feasible.

Examining Homophobia

Weiner (1980) presents a well-developed model which predicts that perceptions of one's ability to control the causes of an event will mediate the affective responses associated with that event. Weiner (1980) and Weisman et al. (1993) found that participants who were told that the event was caused by a controllable factor were more likely to report rejection and negative feelings, less sympathy, and less willingness to help. The process of judging an interpersonal event is partly mediated by emotional experiences, which Tangney (1991) refers to as "moral affect." Specifically, moral affect includes personality characteristics such as proneness to experience shame and proneness to experience guilt. Tangney (1991) postulates that these affective states directly influence our interpretations of interpersonal events and serve to motivate us to take reparative actions, or in other words, to react unfavorably in response to interpersonal events perceived as negative (Armesto & Weisman, 2001).

Armesto and Weisman (2001) hypothesized that an increased willingness to offer help to an imagined homosexual child will be associated with the following factors: (1) a greater tendency to perceive homosexuality as outside a child's personal control, (2) a lessened proneness to experience shame, (3) a greater proneness to experience guilt, (4) a decreased tendency to report unfavorable emotional reactions, and (5) an increased tendency to report favorable emotional reactions toward the imagined child.

As hypothesized, Armesto and Weisman's (2001) results indicate that decreasing attributions of controllability, and unfavorable emotions, while increasing proneness to experience guilt and affection, all significantly predicted a greater willingness to offer help to an imagined homosexual child. People who believed that homosexuality was

biologically determined, and outside the individual's control, held less negative attitudes toward gay people than those who believed that homosexuality was a personal choice under the individual's control (Aguero, Block & Byrne 1984; Armesto & Weisman, 2001). Contrary to expectations, shame proneness and compassionate emotional reactions were not significant predictors of help-giving behavior (Armesto & Weisman, 2001).

Males have a greater tendency to attribute the cause of homosexuality to be under an imagined child's control than do females (Aguero, Block & Byrne 1984; Armesto & Weisman, 2001). Males had a greater tendency to report unfavorable emotions toward an imagined son's disclosure of a homosexual identity. In contrast, females reported significantly greater affection toward an imagined homosexual child than did males. Females also reported a greater proneness to experience shame. African-Americans and Asian-Americans reported greater attributions of causality, greater negative emotional reactions, and a lessened willingness to help an imagined homosexual child than did whites. African-Americans and Asian-Americans were more likely to believe that homosexuality was under an imagined child's control, and therefore, reacted more negatively to disclosure, and were less willing to offer help. Surprisingly, no significant differences were found between Latino and Caucasian participants (Armesto & Weisman, 2001).

The intensity of unfavorable emotional reactions is greater when the homosexual child's behavior is perceived as something he could control. Also in line with expectations and with Weiner's (1980) theory, participants who had a lessened tendency to view their imagined child as responsible for his homosexuality reported greater affection. Consistent with Tangney's (1991) theory, shame-prone participants were more

likely to experience unfavorable emotions toward their imagined gay son than did guilt-prone participants. When compared to guilt-prone participants, shame-prone participants reported feeling greater fury, anger, hatred, and frustration toward their imagined child. Specifically, feelings of shame appear to diminish parents' capacity for empathy and may motivate an avoidance response to the shame-eliciting situation. This shame-eliciting situation takes the form of negative emotional reactions (Tangney, 1995). Parents' attributions about the cause of homosexuality and their proneness to experience guilt may mediate their ability and/or willingness to offer help to a gay child. Females reported greater affection toward their imagined homosexual child and were more likely to report willingness to offer him help. Men were more likely than women to report that homosexuality was within their imagined child's personal control. According to Furnham (1984), this finding is consistent with most of the existing psychological literature, and suggests that males are more internal in their attributions of control than are females. Males also had a greater tendency than females to have negative emotional reactions to the identity disclosure of an imagined gay child. Morin and Gartinkle (1978) proposed that heterosexual men's extreme negative attitudes toward gay men might be due to greater sex-role investment. As such, having a gay child may pose a threat to heterosexual men's sense of masculinity. This might be interpreted in light of Freud's (1926) view of homophobia which was described as a consequence of a repressed sense of danger in men out of fear that they might qualify as the object of the homosexual's target. In other words, men more than women, may have difficulty separating the perceived from themselves (Armesto & Weisman, 2001).

When one of the key players belongs to a minority ethnic group, racial stereotypes compound the sexual ones, and such individuals are vulnerable to being a target of both

sexual and racial discrimination (Myers, 1999). African-Americans and Asian-Americans were more likely to attribute the cause of homosexuality to be under their imagined child's personal control, had greater unfavorable emotional reactions, and reported less willingness to offer him help (Monteiro & Fuqua, 1993). This may be partly due to the fact that the gay movement is more public in the Caucasian culture than in ethnic minority cultures (Monteiro & Fuqua, 1993). Helping parents understand that homosexuality is likely rooted in a combination of biological and environmental factors that are outside of their own and of their child's personal control may be a first step in reducing blaming and critical attributions about the cause of their child's homosexuality (Armesto & Weisman, 2001). Encouraging fathers to discuss their views about gender roles, gender identity, and sexual orientation, may be useful in helping to decrease some of the negative emotions and blaming attributions that heterosexual fathers are prone to feel about having a gay son (Armesto & Weisman, 2001).

Latino homosexuals, when dealing with others of their same culture, typically relate as either Latino or gay, but the combination of both is seldom an option due to lack of correct information accessible (Cintron, 2000). A critical difference exists between American and Latino values regarding the centrality of family. Latinos view family as *famillismo* which facilitates a cultural functioning of interaction kinship network of cooperation, respect, interpersonal involvement of cooperation and discouragement of confrontation and competition, yet hierarchy is clearly defined (Cintron, 2000). Adults are usually highly respected, while children are not, and friendship between adults and children is generally discouraged (Cintron, 2000). Famillismo is based upon the psychosocial dynamic of family members, and particularly public behavior. It also guides the fact that unmarried members remain in the household until marriage. Those

who leave the household before marriage indicated to others in the community that the family does not get along; one of the most dangerous possibilities when neighbors speak ill of another family (Cintron, 2000).

This practice is barely apparent in American society. Latino families are typically close, and when an unmarried youth leaves the family they are typically considered as being expelled by the family. LGBT Latinos are often forced into leading double lives. This strong family bond creates a deep psychological burden for the LGBT Latino when he/she is dismissed by the family. Mainstream rejection does not carry the same weight (Cintron, 2000). Loss of social contact with family and community will result in lack of support for their identity as an Hispanic. The same-sex 'insertor' is not considered as homosexual in most Latino cultures, and women as well as men insertors are seen as following their natural desires to receive immediate release (Cintron, 2000). This distinction is important since the same-sex insertor is seen as masculine, while the 'insertee' is seen as gay. Family acceptance of homosexuality is achieved only through silence, and silence indicates that coping strategies are not occurring (Cintron, 2000). Overcompensation of masculinity and heterosexual contact with prostitutes is admired which projects a heterosexual orientation. A great deal of energy is expended whistling at girls, which has the effect of diminishing a homosexual identity (Cintron, 2000). American born and educated Latino homosexuals may identify with American cultural beliefs as compared with customs related to Latino customs. HIV/AIDS is yet another important issue. Members of the Latino community exist as dually high risk categories as Men who have Sex with Men (MSM), and Latino bisexuals. These Latinos are infected with sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, disproportionately as compared with the general Latin population (Cintron, 2000).

Sears (1992) suggests that attitude, seen as cognitive beliefs, and feelings, seen as a deep-rooted emotive reaction to gay situations and people, must be treated as separate constructs. Sears' 1992 study showed that fewer than 20 % of prospective teachers cited having known a gay person in high school. Those who knew a homosexual friend cited more positive feelings towards homosexuality than those who stated they did not know a gay person in high school. Seventy-five percent of prospective teachers felt the information provided to them in high school about homosexuality was accurate or adequate, and 40% felt it was appropriate to transfer a gay student to another's class (Sears, 1992). Those with a more positive attitude towards homosexuality expressed a willingness to treat homosexual students with respect, yet few were willing to involve themselves in community activities to lessen public discrimination of homosexuality (Sears, 1992). There appears to be an inverse relationship between knowledge and attitudes among those educators. The more knowledgeable the individual is on issues of homosexuality, the greater that negative attitudes will be diminished, yet few seem willing to get involved (Sears, 1992). The more knowledgeable the student, the less negative attitudes and feelings towards homosexuality and homosexuals, yet few had experience with discussions surrounding homosexuality at the high school level (Sears, 1992).

Defining the Reality

No longer are individuals considered as victims of environmental circumstance, but instead are seen as individuals who are creators and definers of their realities (Trickett, Watts, & Birman, 1994). The term diversity is seen as positive and inclusive as compared to terms of minority, oppressed and disadvantaged (Trickett et al., 1994). The following is a partial list of internalized homophobic expressions to the victimization by

social and cultural homophobia (Margolies, Becker & Jackson-Brewer, 1989): (1) fear of discovery which is expressed by underlying defense mechanisms of projection and rationalization; (2) discomfort with obvious homosexuals, which leads to the defense mechanism of identification with the aggressor; (3) rejection/denigration of all heterosexuals; which leads to the defense mechanism of projection; (4) feeling superior to heterosexuals, which is exhibited by the defense mechanisms of rationalization and reaction formation; (5) belief that lesbians are not different from heterosexual women, which is exhibited by the defense mechanisms of rationalization and denial; (6) an uneasy feeling with the idea of children being raised in a lesbian home, which employs the defense mechanism of identification with the aggressor; (7) restricting attractions to unavailable women which leads to the defense mechanism of denial; (8) short-term relationships which leads to the defense mechanisms of rationalization and denial.

Margolies et al. (1989) describes erotophobia as the fear or discomfort with one's own sexuality which is typified as an outright discomfort with forthright sexual expression, while xenophobia is defined as the fear of differentness from perceived expectations which is typified with the pervasive sexual imagery and the deep-seated sexual repression. These two fears always operate in tandem (Margolies et al., 1989). During the coming out process, love and romance take a back seat to the sexual aspects of the relationship. People with highly negative attitudes towards homosexuality will lead to greater rigidity and guilt toward their own sexual impulses (Margolies et al., 1989). While consciousness-raising and political action groups have a major impact on social and institutional homophobia, the result of these actions has led to increasing positive self-images. These improved self-images have been shown to help members gain a more positive self-image, placing the oppressor outside of self, validating feelings

and experiences, breaking down self-isolation, and supporting an alternative lifestyle.

The subculture becomes one of family.

Members must have the opportunity to question, doubt and explore all aspects of being a gay or lesbian in the American culture. It is anxiety that sets defense mechanisms in motion. Group members need to discover and share discomfort, doubt, mourning, and fear as well as pride and enjoyment (Margolies et al., 1989). When self-directed anger, shame and identification with the oppressor are shared and let go, group members are more capable of seeing the cultural expression of homophobia which may lead to feelings of anger and indignation (Margolies et al., 1989). The most significant role of the LGBT community is to provide its members with validation and self-esteem. Participation in LGBT grouping is beneficial in reducing guilt and shame (Margolies et al., 1989).

Male homosexuals are rarely assaulted by strangers because they are men. Instead, they are assaulted because they are viewed as sexual transgressors from masculine roles. Being gay or straight seems not to affect the victimizer's attacks (Kaplan & Colbs, 2000). Some studies indicate that sentiments may be linked to suppressed homoerotic feelings within the aggressor. Their acting out is linked to the concept of punishing someone else for their internalized contempt for self (Herek, 1995; Kaplan & Colbs, 2000).

Sexual orientation should be understood as a social construct instead of innate or fixed by nature (Herek, 1984). As such, attitudes must be understood with reference to American cultural institutions. Those groups that exhibit particularly violent reactions against homosexuality include Jewish, Christian and Zoroastrian religions (Herek, 1984). Even Freud (1905/1961) insisted that heterosexual orientation occurs as a result of biological causes and by being influenced by societal prohibitions against homosexuality

(Herek, 1984). Persons with negative attitudes are: (1) less likely to have personal contact with homosexuals; (2) less likely to report having engaged in a homosexual act; (3) more likely to perceive their peers as having negative attitudes towards homosexuality; (4) more likely to have resided as adolescents in the Midwest or South, rural or small towns; (5) more likely to be older and less well-educated; (6) more likely to be religious; (7) more likely to express traditional and restrictive attitudes about sexual roles; (8) less permissive or manifest more guilt or negativity about sexuality; and (9) more likely to manifest high levels of authoritarianism related to sexual characteristics (Herek, 1984).

Individuals with positive experiences are more likely to report more favorable attitudes toward homosexuality. Heterosexuals who are secure within their sexual orientation exhibit more positive attitudes than do less secure heterosexuals, and attitudes are likely to serve as a defense mechanism for these less secure individuals. Unconscious conflict about one's sexual orientation is a significant factor leading to negative attitudes towards gays through the defense mechanism of projection (Herek, 1984). In order to change attitudes from negative to positive, action must occur to bring the values of the homophobe's group affiliation more consistent with the self-concept of individuals. This action needs to be supported by their important reference groups, and, positive interactions with various homosexuals under conditions of equal status, common goals, cooperation and moderate intimacy (Herek, 1984).

Satinover (1995) suggests that environmental influences are multi-factorial and affect each other as pertinent and determining genes are also multiple. There are few circumstances where free will plays little or no role in what we do, and this is also true of homosexuality as is the case with all other dimensions of human behavior. Individuals

report that homosexual behavior may exist for a limited period of time, such as those who engage in homosexual behavior in prisons, or during their youth, or it may last a life time (Satinover, 1995).

Institutions that do not provide same-sex couples with the same benefits afforded to married heterosexuals do so at the financial and emotional detriment of the same-sex individuals (Leppo, Boden & Stenta, 2000). Institutions that do provide domestic partnership benefits typically are rewarded with increased productivity, loyalty, retention, improved access to the best of candidates for employment, and perhaps most importantly, protecting same-sex individuals provides a role-model for other employees while establishing policies which protects all employees. As of 1992, the cost associated with domestic partnership benefits remained quite low since participation in these programs remained at about a two to three percent. One reason cited is that numerous gay and lesbian employees choose not to disclose their sexual orientation with employers for fear of discrimination (Leppo, et al., 2000).

History of the Gay Movement

The history of homosexuality in the United States is riddled with struggle, confusion, and injustice. In the early modern period, homosexuality was treated as a moral flaw. By the nineteenth century, homosexuality was increasingly regarded as a disease, with procreation as the norm, and anyone who deviated from the norm was punished. Unfortunately, romance, intimacy, and personal feelings played very little part in this story of social oppression and intolerance (Kertzner, Foreman, Diaz, Ryan, Belkin & Young, 2004).

The word *gay* carries no single meaning, and the earliest origins of the word can be traced to the Old French word *gai*, an adjective used to describe someone or something as "brightly colored, brilliant, showy, and finely or showily dressed" (Leach, 2001). *Gay* entered the English language in the seventeenth century, and the use of the word has been used in a similar manner to the present day. The word has also historically been used to describe someone's mood as happy. However, according to linguist Gary Simes, of the University of Sydney, in the early part of the seventeenth century, the word *gay* began to acquire negative connotations. The word described those, "addicted to social pleasures and dissipations," and it was applied to males and females of loose and immoral character. Late in the eighteenth century, the word *gay* was applied to upper-class prostitutes and the houses in which they worked; *gay house* was a term used for a brothel (Leach, 2001).

In the late nineteenth century, the term acquired a highly negative meaning due to the strict and conservative morals of the Victorian era. A dictionary of the period defined the adjective as one who was, "flirtatious, fresh, making unwelcome advances" (Leach, 2001). The English journalist Philip Howard, in *New Words for Old*, mentions a court case in 1889 during which a male prostitute, testifying in court, described himself as *gay*. Gertrude Stein initiated the widespread use of the term *gay* to mean "homosexual" during the period surrounding WW II (Leach, 2001). The word *gay* being attributed to "homosexuals" re-emerged in the 1960s in the United States, and this time the adjective was being used to define homosexuality in an open and proud sense, as men and women began to use the term to define themselves. The term *gay* came to be viewed in a positive sense and spread throughout the English-speaking world in the 1970s. Today, *gay* it is chiefly applied to males (Leach, 2001).

By the second half of the twentieth century, aggressive social movements promoted the rights and well being of LGBT people. A paradigm shift occurred during the 1960s as part of the change in sexual attitudes that occurred across many parts of the country, and the birth of the gay liberation movement began. The historical shift changed treating homosexuality as a sin and disease, to viewing the homosexual community as a social movement and an emerging human right. It was not until the early 1970s that organized efforts were made to begin looking at various other cultures from the view point and experience of members of these cultures. The term "homophobia" was first coined by Weinberg in 1972, and it originally meant an irrational fear of homosexuals, but the term has since been expanded over the years to include disgust, anxiety and anger towards homosexuals and homosexuality (Sears, 1992).

From the founding of the first of the Gay Academic Union in 1973 at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, groups of activist scholars have worked to achieve recognition, to call attention to the problem of discrimination, and to win resolutions condemning it. Beachheads have since been established on numerous school campuses across the United States (Sears, 2002). The official declassification of homosexuality in 1973 by the American Psychiatric Association has had the positive effect of encouraging vast numbers of gay and lesbian youth to come out during their adolescence and as a result, individuals have become self-integrated at a younger age. However, this increase in coming out among youth has the unfortunate consequence of discrimination and victimization, which, in turn, increases the likelihood of serious mental health issues and an increase in the suicide rates of gay teens, as reported in the 2004 report by the California Safe Schools Coalition (Diaz, 2004).

The concept of diversity was first thought of as groups of people who were seen as being inferior to the predominant group, and being inferior meant being oppressed by the majority (Trickett et al., 1994). In an attempt to deal with the notion of diversity, Stanford University took the lead 40 years ago in eradicating discrimination against blacks, women, and Jews in admission, hiring, and memberships, etc., but it was not until 1992 that the university passed a bill to include sexual orientation to its list of diverse and protected classes of individuals (O'Hanlon, 1999). At the time, being gay or lesbian was perceived to be a choice or a lifestyle by many in society, and the 1990s saw the advent of increasing rights and protections under the law for gay men and lesbians. These achievements were, in part, the result from the struggles that followed the AIDS pandemic in a concerted effort to seek a more diverse and just society (Trickett, Watts & Birman, 1994).

Even today, while homosexuality is legal and protected in many places in Europe, and same-sex legal unions are increasingly becoming the norm, it was not until the landmark US Supreme Court case *Lawrence v. Texas* in 2003 that anti-sodomy statutes were finally and effectively nullified in America (Leach, 2001). Change is inevitable, and Massachusetts recently has permitted gays to marry, and Hawaii and Vermont permit civil unions for same-sex couples. Anglicans in the US recently endorsed an openly gay Bishop in New Hampshire. These actions have been considered schismatic by the larger Anglican community, and the church's acceptance of a gay Bishop have led to widespread condemnation, withholding of dues, refusal of donations from North American churches by African Anglicans, and the rejection of bishops by individual congregations (Kempling, 2004).

Sexual orientation influences all segments in American society including health care delivery, and it was not until 1993 that sexual orientation was included in the laundry list of treatment delivery for all patients (Yom, 1999). In 1999, a nondiscrimination clause was added to protect medical students from discrimination by all American medical schools (Schneider, 1999). However, the U.S. military is the largest employer of the nation and has a history replete with desperate policies in search of a rationale to continue the discrimination of the LGBT community. In the 1950's, gay and lesbians were dismissed for concerns of a possible security risk. In the 60s and 70s, the military's concerns of gays and lesbians were more prone to alcoholism and mental illnesses. When the American Psychiatric Association declassified homosexuality as a mental illness in 1973, the US military then reframed their homophobic stance by stating their imagined concerns that allowing gays to serve would be detrimental to their unit's cohesion as a fighting force. The military's stance has held strong in spite of scholarly efforts to sway the military leadership to the contrary (Belkin & Levitt, 2001; Belkin, 2004).

By 1991, the US Bureau of the Census reported that nearly 1.5 million individuals were living as same-sex domestic partners (Leppo, Boden & Stenta, 2000). By 1999, 141 colleges and universities, 87 cities and counties and some 570 companies provided domestic partnership benefits to their gay employees (O'Hanlon, 1999). Anti-gay discrimination is still legal in 36 states, and the federal government is non-responsive to the needs of the LGBT community as no legislation is currently on the congressional horizon. The LGBT community institutions are poor, unorganized and face huge opposition from the conservative right who actively raises millions of dollars to confront the advances made by leadership within the gay communities (Trickett et al., 1994).

Throughout most of the twentieth century, diversity has continuously meant deviance from the norm, and deviance, meant being inferior as compared to the accepted heterosexual norm. Even in the later years, the dominantly white heterosexual mainstream majority has been used as a model for which all other psychologies were compared (Trickett, et al., 1994). However, within the past decade or so, a number of homosexual identity theories have been developed which will be discussed and summarized in the next section.

Identity Formation and Stage Theories of Homosexual Development

The struggle among diverse groups has been highlighted by the development in the social sciences of *identity theory*, which has become part of the evolution of each of these minority groups. These theories can be employed to understand issues and challenges faced by student populations, for the development of effective programming for diverse sub-populations, to create better informed policies, and to provide sensitive support to a population of students often otherwise ignored upon a singular model of student development and identities (Renn & Bilodeau, 2002).

The sexuality of college students became a central focus to the work of pioneering student development theorists through identity theories (Dilley, 2002). However, most researchers completely ignored gay and lesbian populations in their work (Dilley, 2002), and researchers such as Astin (1977, 1993) made no reference to how gay and lesbian students might change through campus involvement. Furthermore, Chickering (1969) failed to discuss how homosexual students dealt with their particular forms of identity challenges (Dilley, 2002). However, Chickering and Reisser (1993), and Thomas and Chickering (1984), updated Chickering's initial model to include examples of the challenges and processes of gay students, and their thoughts appear to be shaped by the

work of early homosexual identity theorists (Dilley, 2002).

Erikson (1950) developed a framework for understanding how individuals are linked to ethnic groups and society by defining identity as a process located at the core of the individual and his/her communal culture (Cintron, 2000). Identity formation usually occurs at the age when many adolescents are attending college, and it is essential that high schools and colleges provide all students with the opportunity for safe environments in which to develop (Eddy & Forney, 2000). The developmental process for the LGBT student is more complex and challenging than the heterosexual student, because, as Levine and Evans (1991) describe, the LGBT student must begin the process of developing identity by shifting psychological focus from being a member of the majority to recognizing themselves as a member of a minority group. For mobilization of any social movement, a shared collective identity is a necessary first step (Morris 1992). Identity can be a goal of social movement activism (Calhoun 1994), either gaining acceptance for an otherwise stigmatized identity or deconstructing categories of identities such as “man,” “woman,” “gay,” “straight” (Gamson, 1995), “black,” or “white” (Bernstein, 1997). As Dilley (2002) suggests, most of the theories of sexual orientation development were created from research conducted with men. The few theorists who have published on the topic note differences between the developmental patterns of homosexual men and women, in terms of sequence and age of developmental experiences (Burhke & Stabb, 1995; Kahn, 1991; Dilley, 2002). D'Augelli (1994) summarized the need for change as a revision of the operational definition of sexual orientation. The change allows for the study of continuities and discontinuities, the flexibilities and cohesiveness, of sexual and affectional feelings across the life span, in diverse contexts, and in relationship to culture and history (D'Augelli, 2004). Despite their shortcomings,

the stage theories remain the primary sources for most teaching and learning about how homosexual college students develop sexual orientation identity (Dilley, 2002). Evans and Levine (1990) suggest that we should use homosexual student development theories to better understand issues and challenges faced by our student populations, to plan for appropriate programming for diverse sub-populations, to craft informed policies that are neither ignorantly inclusive nor exclusive, to provide sensitive service that are not presumed upon a singular model of student development and identities, and to watch for students who might need personal interventions. The knowledge that is achieved through the following research is an important step toward empowerment, overcoming invisibility and isolation, taking risks to come out to others, greater control over their lives, a sense of self-efficacy, and an improved sense of the ability to share with others inside and outside the gay community (Griffin, 1992).

Despite the shortcomings of each of the following theories of homosexual development, the notion of stage theories remains the primary sources for most teaching and learning about how homosexuals develop sexual orientation identity (Dilley, 2002). These theories will now be discussed in the next section.

Stage Theories

Cass (1984) developed a model based upon the premise that homosexuals progress through a series of stages that involve the increasing acceptance of the label of homosexual, the development of a positive attitude towards being gay, a growing desire to disclose to gay and heterosexuals, and through more personalized and frequent social contacts with gays.

- Stage 1: Identity Confusion is the stage where individuals begin to question their sexuality.

- Stage 2: Identity Comparison is the stage where the individual accepts the possibility of being gay.
- Stage 3: Identity Tolerance; is the stage where individuals seek out the company of other gays to fulfill social, sexual and emotional needs.
- Stage 4: Identity Acceptance; is the stage where increased contact within the gay community encourages a more positive view of being gay and the gradual development of gay friends.
- Stage 5: Identity Pride; is where pride and loyalty to one's sexual orientation leads to anger with society for the devaluation of homosexuality.
- Stage 6: Identity Synthesis; where anger and pride from stage five are less emotional, but the gay lifestyle is no longer hidden, and feelings of peace and stability are established.

Cass postulates that should an individual "foreclose" on or at one stage the individual is not likely to progress to future stages (Cass, 1984). The common conclusion of Cass (1984) is that being involved in leadership activities related to some facet of identity (gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation) promotes a positive development of leadership or activism and personal identity. Homosexual involvement and empowerment increases through the participation of its members.

D'Augelli (1994) presented a 6 stage developmental process through which:

- Stage 1 is where the individual exits the heterosexual identity and begins to come out to others.

- Stage 2 is where the homosexual develops a personal gay identity and where one begins the process of developing and learning how to be gay. This stage provides the individual with the tools and functionality to make contact with other gays.
- Stage 3 is where the individual develops a gay social identity and where the individual shares his/her sexual orientation and becomes willing to provide support.
- Stage 4 is the stage where the individual becomes a gay offspring and comes out to family members, often leading to disrupted family relationship, and the individual looks at healing those relationships.
- Stage 5 is where the individual develops and enters intimate relationships where both physical and intimate relationships are formed.
- Stage 6 is where the individual enters the LGBT community; committed to political and social action and where the individual enters the process of challenging social barriers. D'Augelli's model requires individuals to make a concerted effort to work through each process (Renn, 2005).

Falco (1991) examined 5 models of lesbian identity development and developed 5 stages similar to those found for gay men: awareness of difference, acknowledgement and disclosure of homosexual feelings, sexual experimentation, establishment of a same-sex relationship, and integration of private and social identities.

Savin-Williams (1998) outlined 8 chronological stages in which the trajectories reflect identity development, tied to specific phenomenological and/or cognitive responses at the turning points: awareness of same-sex attractions; occurrence of first gay sexual experience; occurrence of first heterosexual sexual experience; labeling one's self

as gay or bisexual; disclosing one's sexuality to others (but not family members); experience of first gay romantic relationship; disclosing one's sexuality to family members; and fostering a positive identity (Dilley, 2002).

Ruth Fassinger (1998) developed an inclusive model of lesbian/gay identity formation which is also stage-based, but Fassinger's model is also multi-faceted, reflecting dual aspects of development, both individual sexual identity and group membership identity. The first of Fassinger's 4 stages is awareness of being different from heterosexual peers, and from a group perspective, it becomes the recognition and existence of differing sexual orientations among people. The second stage is one of exploration: on an individual level, it is where emotions and erotic desires for people of the same gender are experienced; and on the group level, how one might fit into a gay social class. The third level represents a broadening and deepening commitment to changing one's notion of identity; individually, the stage is where a personalization of the knowledge and beliefs about same-sex sexuality occurs; on the group level, personal involvement with a homosexual reference group takes place, realizing oppression and consequences of choices of vocalizing and socially participating with homosexuals. The final stage, internalization/synthesis, represents an integration of same-sex sexuality into one's overall identity; from the collective perspective, it conveys one's identity as a member of a minority group, across social contexts (Dilley, 2002).

Rhoads (1994, 1997) contends that students create and maintain a homosexual contraculture, gay communities comprised of specific structuring elements (i.e., rallies, dances, parties, social and political events, involvement in campus government and activities). Students typically enter postsecondary institutions and either become involved in the homosexual contraculture and consequently adopt a homosexual identity;

become involved in the gay contraculture but resist the identity; or reject the contraculture entirely. Rhoads (1994, 1997) uniquely considered the population and its identity as an ethnicity: the conceptualization of a gay ethnicity is largely based upon the need to organize a diverse group of people whose strongest bond is being different from heterosexuality (Rhoads, 1994). According to Dilley (2002) youth, in this model, are better understood as cultural workers where they are actively creating aspects of culture in response to and in defiance of dominant, heterosexual cultural norms (Dilley, 2002).

A three stage step model of development is presented by Minton and McDonald (1983/1984) which leads gay men to personal acceptance of a positive gay self-image and identity. These stages are: Stage 1: egocentric, involves the individual's early experiences in childhood and adolescence of an erotic, emotional, and social nature that provides the basis for self-perception as a gay individual; Stage 2 sociocentric, involves an increased awareness of homosexual desires accompanied by feelings of identity confusion. It is this stage where individuals explore and internalize numerous facets of the homosexual lifestyle and is typified by the individual developing their gay identity; Stage 3: universalistic, occurs when the gay individual realizes that societal views can be evaluated critically. This is the stage where the gay male identity is accepted and where individuals are less affected by homophobia as individuals become far more accepting of themselves and are less affected by what others outside the gay community feel or verbalize. Gay men at this stage are open to coming out and sharing their sexual orientation with family and friends (Gumaer, 1987).

Dilley (2002) presents still another way of conceptualizing the identities of homosexual college students which is an historical, typological approach. Through intensive qualitative interviews with men who attended colleges and universities across

the country from 1945 to 2000, Dilley (2002) discovered seven patterns of homosexual male identity: closeted, homosexual, gay, queer, normal, parallel, and denying. These identities were consequently personally and socially constructed against the norm of heterosexual identity.

Group Counseling

Perez, DeBord and Brock (2000) found that group counseling of LGBT persons can be seen as an effective and efficient way to address concerns for this population, as the LGBT individuals find a safe and nurturing environment with like-orientation members further along the self-integrated phase process. The level of psychosocial skill development of LGBT persons is affected by the amount of societal and individual levels of oppression and homophobia experienced. It was not until the beginning of the 1990s that researchers began to study the effects of societal oppression and heterosexual domination on the LGBT individual. Group counseling is particularly beneficial for those who wish to involve themselves with change, open to learning about themselves, have little support, and provides the opportunity for individuals to experience sharing of concerns with others. Group experiences provide a therapeutic setting to explore various aspects of problems and issues relating to coming out and providing the support necessary to engage in the processes for improved self-identity development (Perez et al., 2000). Group therapy can provide participants with: the installation of hope, universality of knowing that LGBT group members are not alone in experiencing their issues, sharing information, altruism where group members develop a sense of confidence, an environment where individuals find safety and support for family issues, developing socialization skills in response to outside homophobic settings, group cohesion, catharsis where all members recognize the safety in the group setting to share openly without

criticism, and the raising of group awareness of issues and members' experiences.

Griffin (1992) established a group of 13 educators, who as a result of a 15 month longitudinal research and group process, became increasingly: empowered, self-integrated, connected to themselves, felt support from others in the group, and became more active at their schools sites; all attributed their changes in self as a direct result of participation in the research project. Participants were asked to listen to and read their own interviews, and write up their own profiles that were subsequently provided to the group. The experience of self-disclosure provided members with a first glance of how their lives were before the research and intervention occurred. Participants found that self-disclosure was an exercise in which all participants experienced an improved sense of self-worth and the beginning step of improved self-integration and empowerment (Griffin, 1992). The experience brought forward fears, feelings of being isolated and lacking any sort of a support system. Each participant shared their dismay of having to hide their sexual orientation and felt hiding led to concealment as each participant explained that they spent as much energy concealing their being gay as they did planning lessons.

Previous to their participation in the research conducted by Griffin (1992), each educator had spent time rehearsing appropriate responses to being 'outed'. Early on in the project, educators' responses led to creating four categories to the continuum of self-disclosure and management strategies: stage one involves passing, as though the individual was heterosexual, stage two involves covering, no longer lying or intentionally deceiving others, stage three surrounds being implicitly out, honestly sharing one's personal life without labeling oneself as being gay or lesbian and, stage four involves being explicitly out, which involved the highest risks, yet this stage also included no

retreat to covering or passing (Griffin, 1992). The more individuals shared their experiences, the greater their sense of group support increased, and their sense of integration significantly increased as well. Most participants shared their use of more than one management strategy. The intervention provided participants with the ability to express their private beliefs in a safe and re-affirming environment (Griffin, 1992). The empowerment process involved the engenderment of positive feelings about themselves and other group members, the development of improved understanding of themselves as gay and lesbians, and the creation of an opportunity for participants to take action to change their situation (Griffin, 1992). Participants stated that as a result of their participation in the project they became more visible, felt safer, validated and supported. These educators eventually came out to colleagues and as a result, they became more active as gays and lesbians in their communities, and they became more active in speaking out against homophobia. As a direct result of participation in this action research, group members subsequently created an organization for support for other gay and lesbian educators (Griffin, 1992).

Through the process of speaking out, LGBT members develop a greater sense of self-worth, while, at the same time, they provide other students with the knowledge that diverse differences are commonplace. (Connolly, 2000) This process involves self-esteem issues and feelings of isolation are intensified when youth recognize they are LGBT (Eddy & Forney, 2000). Gender, age, cultural background and experience are four factors that can produce very distinctive sexual identities (Eddy & Forney, 2000). Miranda and Storm (1989) found a relationship between sexual identity and psychological adjustment. Psychological adjustment can be slowed as a result of adverse environmental factors such as fear, harassment, and violence (Eddy & Forney, 2000).

There were five elements that were identified as necessary in an environment for identity resolution (development) to occur: (1), freedom from excessive anxiety; (2), time for reflection and introspection; (3), the experiencing of choice; (4), experimentation with varied roles; and (5), meaningful achievement (Eddy & Forney, 2000, p. 138).

Erickson's (1968) psychosocial theory of development was employed as the most useful in its attempt to explain interaction of the individual and the environment in its most simplistic form, however, caution must be applied since most stage theories of development have been developed using white males and may not be readily applied to minority populations (Eddy & Forney, 2000).

The primary goals for LGBT groups may include: (1), identity clarification and coming out; (2), increased self-esteem and pride of oneself; (3) increased coping skills; (4) decreased isolation and increased support; (5) community building, and; (6), relationship enhancement; (7), the provision of resources for further support, and; (8), providing social relationships beyond the group (Perez et al., 2000).

Religion

Faith is based upon trust in another and a loyalty to a transcendent center of value and power, and a collective understanding of how individuals act with one another irrelevant of a commitment to God or a higher power (DuMontier, 2000). The role of faith development of a LGBT identity is misunderstood and understudied particularly among Jewish and Christian traditions (DuMontier, 2000). As Fowler (1981) suggests, we all require meaning, and we need purpose and to set priorities to obtain a grasp of the bigger picture. LGBT members who have religious upbringings most likely will have a fear of faith (DuMontier, 2000). Most religious organizations are not supportive of, and are quite hostile to LGBT identified members (DuMontier, 2000). The loss and grief is

associated with one's affirmation of being LGBT.

The Bible is seen as an historical document which identifies the faithful journey toward an understanding of God. However, the translation from one language to another, and the evolution of word meanings are fundamentally important factors in understanding scripture (Boswell, 1981). Religion is a live process and, as changes occur in language, so too do changes occur in religious settings. People of faith have been constantly reassessing their values and changing their positions on moral issues. For many, just like earlier communities of faith at different times in its history, are now faced with having to determine what God wills of us in our time and how the fundamental guidelines work out in specifics today (Miller, 1996).

Bible passages on homosexuality do not speak to the issue of homosexuality in the way that many Christians believe they do (Barrett, 2002). A typical exegetical approach will begin by assigning the Bible texts to various historical periods in the community's life in an attempt to explain motivations that prompted the production of a text as it came to be found. The use of tradition and historical methodology places the emphasis on community priorities in the production of a text rather than on the text itself (Barrett, 2002). Bailey (1955, 1975) argues that the verb *yadah* in Genesis 19:5 should appropriately be translated according to its more common meaning, such as to get acquainted with another. Bailey explains that what was happening in Genesis 19:5 was that the men of Sodom solely wanted to become acquainted with the men in Lot's house. These men insisted on inconveniencing these visitors, which was a serious breach of the code of hospitality. The men of Sodom were guilty of inhospitality, and consequently, this story was not intended to reflect the condemnation of homosexual conduct. The point of the story was to condemn inhospitality, not homosexuality.

Barrett (2002) suggests that religious scholars opposed to Bailey's opinion imply that the word *yadah* in Genesis 19:5 refers to sexual activity and not hospitality, but they claim that there remains a bigger issue in the writer's mind. Bartlett (2000) is convinced that the use of the word *yadah* means that the men of Sodom wanted to rape Lot's visitors. However, he does not deny that inhospitality was an issue of concern (Barrett, 2002). However, DuMontier (2000) agrees with Bartlett (2000) and suggests that the story of the fall of Sodom and Gomorrah can be interpreted as the result of inhospitality of male visitors. The actual sin is one of abuse and neglect of strangers. In this view and interpretation of the story, no mention of homosexuality exists and the cities fall as a direct result of being inhospitable to male visitors (DuMontier, 2000). McNeill (1988) suggests that for centuries, Christians have been inhospitable to gays because of a mistaken understanding of the true crime of Sodom and Gomorrah, and this inhospitality, discrimination and abusiveness has been allowed to continue to our current time. Further, it was not until the early twentieth century translations of the Bible that the word homosexual was used (McNeill, 1988).

DuMontier (2000) suggests that one should consult Mathew 10:5-15, Isaiah 1:10-17 and 3:0, Jeremiah 23:14, and Zephaniah 2:8-11 as sources that detail oppression and injustice as Sodom's sin. Rudy (1997) proposes two novel categories for the structural framework of the Christian ethic – unitivity and hospitality. The Sodom story contributes to her argument, as the behavior of the men of Sodom violated these two principles: they were certainly not hospitable, and they were also insensitive to the needs of others. Rudy (1997) suggests that unitivity means that we begin our moral reflection not in the individual human subjects, but instead, with the whole, the community, and the Body of Christ. The argument made is: an ethic of hospitality will enable us to invite others into

the grace and power of God; to welcome them into this wonderfully transformative power which realigns the world; to see each others as the faithful rather than as men or women, homosexual or heterosexual, rich or poor. And, by being hospitable, we have no way of condemning homosexuality. This is because the very notion of same or different sex would disappear in favor of the identification of being Christian.

In the New Testament, Jesus refers to the sin of Sodom as hostility to God's messengers and nothing is mentioned by Jesus about homosexuality (DuMontier, 2000). Gomes (1996) suggests that to base the church's principled objections of homosexuality on the basis of Paul's imperfect knowledge is unfortunate, unprincipled, and quite beside the numerous heroic points that Paul intends to make in Romans 1. The notion of homosexual love is found in Bible stories from the New and Old Testaments. Evidence of this opinion is suggested by the relationships of Jesus and his chosen disciple, John, the companionships of Ruth and Naomi, Jonathan and David, and Saul and David (Gomes, 1996). According to Sehested (1999), Jesus denounces the towns that do not welcome his disciples as an abuse of power. The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorra had the power to help strangers who visited them, but withheld any help or hospitality from the disciples.

Fredrickson (2000) traces the use and meaning of Paul's term *physika chasis* as natural use from various extra-biblical sources and concludes that Paul does not condemn homosexual activity. Paul is, instead, condemning sexual activity that is driven by passion. Frederickson (2000) summarizes his position that unnatural use has less to do with the gender of the persons having sex and more with the loss of self-control experienced by the user of another's body. Additionally, many writers point to the dominance of cultic language in Romans 1:26-27 to shift the emphasis in the passage.

Bartlett (2000) maintains that Paul's use of the word *allasso* translates as exchange, and reveals the association that Paul makes between idolatry and homosexuality. Barrett (2002) sees linguistic exercises as McNeill's (1993) as having assisted numerous pro-homosexual writers who insist the Bible nowhere condemns loving, committed, homosexual relationships.

Scroggs (1983) compares Paul's use of *arsenokoitai* to early rabbinic legal discussions. The term referred to the active participant in sexual encounters. He then interpreted the meaning of the word in conjunction with the word *malakos* in 1 Corinthians 6:9, and concluded, that if the *malakos* points to the effeminate call-boy, then the *arsenokoitais* in this context has to be the active partner who keeps the *malakos* as a mistress, and who similarly hires him on occasion to satisfy his sexual desires. Given this analysis, Scroggs (1983) makes the argument that Paul was only condemning pedophilia.

Countryman (1988) rejects Scroggs' attempt to read these two words together. Instead, he attempts to understand Paul's use of *arsenokoitai* by analyzing the use of the word in Timothy 1:10. Through a comparison of Timothy 1:8-11 to the pattern of the Ten Commandments, he concludes that the term "could refer to the male, slave or free, who used his sexual attractiveness to ingratiate himself with a rich and elderly lover in the hope of receiving a substantial legacy, thereby replacing more legitimate heirs. Spong (1999) takes this redefinition even further. He imagines that the three words in 1 Timothy 1:10, *pornois*, *arsenokoitais*, and *andrapodistais*, translates as adulterers, perverts, and slave traders. Piazza (2000) looks to Nehemiah to give direction to the homosexual community. Piazza points to Nehemiah's example of servant leadership, and stresses that this is the type of leader homosexuals need to be in order to further their quest for acceptance and the granting of equal rights in the face of opposition. McClain-Taylor

(1996) argues that if one judges a practice or orientation like homosexuality to be sinful, then one must show how same-sex practice violates or moves against the good, or it is somehow contrary to the event of grace.

Unfortunately, there remains an implacable gulf between homosexuals who wish to be portrayed as normal and those who practice orthodox Christianity and other mainstream religions. Homosexuals look for acceptance and blessing of their relationships, and they may be able to convince all the jurists and legislators in the land to grant them full social rights, including marriage (Kempling, 2004), but orthodox Christians will never accept or affirm sexual relationships clearly designated as sinful by the revealed word of God (Barrett, 2002). Scholarly arguments made to bring a clearer understanding of the intent of the writers of the Bible have swayed few within the religious community to alter their views about homosexuality. Instead, Barrett (2002) explains that the sole issue of homosexuality that religious leaders will have to agree to disagree about is the moral acceptability of homosexuality with compassion, and without rancor.

Barrett (2002) acknowledges that the vast majority of homosexual people simply want to live happy, fulfilled lives without harassment. The devotedly religious see no room for allowing promiscuity practiced by many gays to be portrayed as acceptable moral (Barrett, 2002). A religiously informed conscience should not be accorded any privilege, but neither should religious and social leaders have an obligation to ensure that the homosexual minority is treated with decency, nor to restrain or confront those who would promote intolerance or hatred.

However, Kempling (2004) sees this as a nearly impossible challenge, since it requires a change in attitudes of people whose religious beliefs will not allow them to

accept homosexual behavior as morally honorable. Homosexuals know how distressing intolerance, stereotyping, and narrow minded prejudice can be, yet the only true barrier to a more just society lies in the hardness of hearts and minds of the religious communities (Kempling, 2004).

Research is quite scarce, and because there is little data to draw upon makes it difficult to speak with a degree of authority about the consideration of LGBT individuals at religiously affiliated institutions (Levine & Love, 2000). Numerous religiously affiliated institutions base their social policies on their religious foundations, particularly when dealing with homosexuality. This discriminatory practice is seen as an open door policy of harassment and discrimination against gays and lesbians attending religiously affiliated institutions. Others who offer support to gays and lesbians are often thought to be gay or lesbian which has the effect of diminishing influence and reducing effectiveness among change agents (Levine & Love, 2000). Political discussions concerning the fair treatment and access to equal benefits for homosexual students challenges religious beliefs, values and attitudes of the religious organization's culture. There is no data to answer the question why LGBT students choose to attend private and religiously affiliated institutions, and it is suggested that these students prefer not to address questions concerning their sexual orientation (Levine & Love, 2000). Some may choose to attend these institutions before they address their sexual orientation. As a result, these same individuals are often less prepared to address these concerns (Levine & Love, 2000). Additionally, Levine and Love (2000) suggest that individuals working at religious institutions need to press change incrementally and to remain within the constructs of the institution's culture.

The institutions resources should be pooled to develop allies who have the same

beliefs, and it is important to find potential allies who are members of the clergy and/or from religious study departments who are seen as defenders of the faith (Levine & Love, 2000). The more closely allies are perceived as tied to the institution, the less likely they will be perceived as countercultural or discounted as allies. Student development committees of the board of trustees should be seen as potentially strong allies. Previously silent members of the institution are more likely to speak out as others join the base promoting change (Levine & Love, 2000).

The Homosexual Experience

Gay youth share their dislike of school because so few adults are willing to address their particular needs, and these youth typically do not share their feelings with these adults out of fear of losing the friendship of their teachers, as well as a lack of trust in confidentiality and embarrassment (Renn, 2000). Gay students do not see the classroom as a refuge from their chronic fear of being victimized. Fear of being exposed, ridiculed, or harassed is more likely to interfere with a gay student's learning, and gay students' interpret their academic surroundings differently from their heterosexual peers. Studying lesbian and gay topics provides a connection to an authentic self for LGBT students, and these gay students find an outlet to explore their status as the "outsider within" (Hill & Collins, 1991). These studies may also have the effect of helping heterosexual students to understand the talents, abilities and the normal nature of homosexual individuals. Professors can confront incorrect assumptions and lead students to alter their internal models, opening up the possibility not only of pointing gay students on the path toward self-acceptance, but can also reduce homophobic harassment (Renn, 2000).

The observation that homosexuals are more supportive of other homosexuals

suggests that special effort can be undertaken to put gay and lesbian youth into contact with adults of same-sex orientation. This action can especially be helpful given the increased psychosocial risks for isolation from and rejection by parents and peers. Organizations such as Big Brothers and Big Sisters might develop programs to offer special mentor relationships pairing gay and lesbian youth with older gay brothers and lesbian sisters (Armesto & Weisman, 2001; Armesto, 2001).

D'Augelli (1992) asserts that LGBT people are provoked by their socialization patterns, life experiences, and family histories into achieving high developmental statuses. He further asserts that that exceptionality brings with it a general sense of difference and a heightened awareness of self vis-à-vis others, and further, D'Augelli (1992) states that the choice of hiding or disclosing a generally stigmatized minority sexual orientation demands considerable ego strength, which is another aspect of exceptionality. Students' participation in gay student groups, campus activism, or educational programs that linked them to other students and faculty claiming a gay identity has the potential of unleashing new energies on campus and in the classroom. Motivation is influenced by what students believe is important, and what they believe they can accomplish (Renn, 2000).

Sears (2002) provides a current perspective from gay and lesbian educators relating to the perceived climate at their school sites. While a variety of public and private schools have enacted statements of non-discrimination, homosexual faculty generally feel that they are still a marginalized group. Little movement or leadership has come from schools despite intervention from professional teacher's organizations (Sears, 2002). Homosexual faculty members who judge their institutional climate more positively will view their work environments as more positively supportive. Gay men

responded more favorably than did lesbian women concerning their perceptions of supportive practices in their institutions (Sears, 2002). Faculties who view their institutions more favorably also feel their institution will respond more favorably should a gay educator be outted or choose to out themselves. These same institutions will tend to view research projects of a homosexual nature more favorably (Sears, 2002).

As Sears (2002) suggests, faculty who experienced discrimination in their professional lives tended to view their work environment as less gay supportive. Ironically, private institutions appear to be more supportive than do public schools with issues pertaining to sexual orientation, and Sears (2002) has shown, activists seem to be more sensitive to campus homophobia than non-activists. The most powerful predictor of faculty attitudes about their own school was the perceived level of institutional protections available should a faculty member disclose one's homosexual or bisexual orientation (Sears, 2002).

When college teachers address issues of sexual orientation in and out of classrooms, this action has a significant impact on the learning environment for all students, especially for those who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual. Renn (2000) reports that her surveys indicate that 66 percent of LGBT students feared harassment or discrimination by classmates; 40 percent feared harassment or discrimination by professors; 60 percent did not feel safe being open about their sexual orientation in class; and 53 percent censored their academic speech, writing, or actions in order to avoid anti-gay harassment or discrimination. Sexual minority students encounter other harassment, not from conscious acts of aggression, but rather from the passive stance of the faculty. Because LGBT students' needs are unknown, unmet, or ignored even by those who are well meaning, being knowledgeable or supportive has a positive impact on gay students

(Renn, 2000). LGBT students can increasingly have positive experiences that result from active support or encouragement from faculty and peers. Academic programs, individual courses, or projects which promote inclusiveness within existing courses and curricula have a significant and positive impact on all students' attitudes (Chesler & Zuniga, 1991; Crumpacker & Vander Haegen 1987; D'Augelli 1992; Tierney 1992; Renn, 2000).

Qualitative research findings from a pilot project conducted earlier this year using two homosexual male partners, provides additional insight as to perceptions of continuing discrimination and fear of retribution for being gay (Blair, 2005). The responses during the interviews from both participants were remarkably similar in nature. When questioned about the issues most pressing to each of them, the first partner responded by stating he was concerned about his relationship, the health of members of the gay population, his desire for societal acceptance of his and others' relationships, and his desire to see LGBT rights equal to those of heterosexuals. His partner responded by saying that he wanted to be accepted by family and the larger community, he wants to be able to express his relationship openly and freely in public and without a fear of retaliation, he feared the likely possibility of hostility occurring due to his being homosexual, and he expressed concern for becoming a victim of a hate crime and retaliation as a result of any attempt at any public display of affection for his partner. Both men were troubled by the media's portrayal and lack of acceptance of homosexuality. The first man stated feeling troubled by having to live a double-life; having to hide and change his behavior depending upon the setting. His partner man stated that he was disturbed by feelings of inability to marry a same-sex partner when he was younger.

When questioned about the potential issues, barriers and costs preventing

participation in a leadership capacity, both men responded by saying they felt that leadership is seen as diminished, impaired and lacking within the LGBT community. Both gay men emphatically stated that they believed it was the *costs* associated with performing a leadership role while being gay that prevented them from being interested in any form of leadership; whether the setting is within the gay community, at work, and most especially, they lacked any participatory public leadership role. The *costs* and potential *consequences* to being gay and taking up a leadership role were simply too great to chance. These feelings precluded both men from taking any leadership role in the political arena as well as in the participation in any form of religion. Both cited annoyance because of the lack of main-stream acceptance of homosexuality, feelings of not belonging, fears of controversy of being outted, the perceived lack of respect for gays, fear of physical harm, the disruption of family life, lack of privacy, the loss of each other's comfort level, the lack of self-worth, the loss of other's positive regard should they be outted, a general sense of insecurity, having to hide their sexual orientation, and both men expressed their concern that should either decide to assume a leadership role that they would be forced to couple with members of the opposite sex to 'cover-up' their sexual orientation for safety sake. Both men stated that they lacked interest in becoming a leader at work because of their sexual orientation. Neither expressed interest in taking up the flag for others due to being completely disengaged with the community as a result of the perceived costs involved. During subsequent interviews, the first partner shared that his company was downsizing, and he expressed concerned and feeling anxious about potential employers even thinking that he is gay. These comments indicate the impact and severity of discrimination perceived by this participant and is a likely response by many individuals of the disenfranchised LGBT community.

Concerning the issue of religion, the first partner responded by saying, "Religion is a joke, and it is because of religion that so few gays would be interested in leadership." He continued by saying, "Religion is a direct cause for increased and continued discrimination against the LGBT community. Maybe future generations will have more acceptances." He explained that he had a brother who is a practicing Christian, and that brother had not told his wife or five children that his brother was gay. His Christian brother prohibits his partner from participating in any of his family's events. It is because of his Christian brother's response to his sexual orientation that he feels disconnected and not worthy of an open and honest family relationship. This same man's mother told his gay brother and him that as far as she was concerned that both boys are dead. Religion seemingly gets in the way of self acceptance, and religious prejudice is based upon benign behavior. The strongest adversarial group against the gay community is religious right wing, leading to the comment, "I never want to go back to that dark place." "Religion looks at gays as an abomination and (gays will experience) ions in a dark and fiery place with no chance of redemption. Homosexuality is God's way of controlling population. Religious people will not accept a gay leader."

Both partners recognized the issue of discrimination against the LGBT community as a valid civil rights issue, saying, "This is the religious right's issue of separate but equal, but the courts ruled in the 1960s that separate is not equal, and it's not equal now. I think it's unconstitutional. It's a lack of equality for those who are separate. It's about the same thing as the 'don't ask, don't tell' stigma in the military. There's a strong link between past decisions of judges' rulings regarding civil rights. Civil rights are not based by popular opinion. No one else is standing up for civil rights of gays. It's the same issue as the black's plight of the 1960s. Gays pay their taxes, we're working

citizens, we are part of this country as American citizens and we should have equal rights. Leadership is highly visible and one must be very comfortable or an extraordinary person. One learns from a very young age that being gay is an unacceptable lifestyle. Gays are more likely to chose a low profile lifestyle as opposed to a leadership role, and we're not likely (to take up a leadership role) if one is trying to hide something. It is easy to see how being oppressed might lead someone into a leadership role as an act of empowerment after reaching a breaking point and wanting to take a stand. Coming out becomes an act of becoming empowered."

These statements show the severity of the problem facing leaders in government, business, education and religion. Whether the statements and assumptions made by these gay men are accurate or not, the problems remain one of addressing their concerns and issues calmly, openly and forthrightly. Unfortunately, many in the current administration argue for the values inherent in liberty, democracy and equal treatment for all people in other places of the world, yet considerable efforts need to take place here at home and on every front in order to improve the rights and fair treatment of homosexuals here in the U.S. Hiding from the issues and shirking responsibility for action does little to promote a fair society. Promoting the wealth of diversity should be inclusive of all groups that comprise a diverse society, including the often invisible LGBT community.

Chapter Summary

Significant progress has been made in the past decade with reference to addressing LGBT concerns. Institutions are more keenly aware of these issues and concerns and have begun to address them. However, much more needs to be done for LGBT members to be included and treated equitably. Increasing campus diversity brings with it new types of classroom discussion. These discussions can be highly informative

and rewarding, but they also can bring heightened tension between students and between teachers and students (UNC-CH, 1997). On campuses, curricular integration is a major ingredient for increasing LGBT visibility and enhances the opportunities to promote the development of self-integrated individuals (Evans & Wall, 2000). LGBT history, literature, psychology and sociology should be considered along with heterosexual and nondominant cultures. Evans and Wall (2000) believe that the power of individual knowledge and experience outweighs the ranting of vitriolic fanatics, yet when thoughts and ideals are the result of misinformation and unsubstantiated beliefs, little is gained by sitting by and not correcting faulty information.

The legitimacy of issues relative to the gay community are relevant and can come to be seen as legitimate, and institutions should include services for the LGBT population along side services targeting all other groups of people. The process of coming out to others, and achieving an integrated state, helps others to see an opportunity to witness the fact that gays and homosexuality are normal (D'Augelli & Rose, 1990; Herek & Glunt, 1993; Malaney, Williams & Geller, 1997; Simoni, 1996; Wells & Franken, 1987). Researchers show how working along side with and knowing an LGBT individual, positively affects heterosexuals to be more supportive of LGBT rights of individuals (Evans & Wall, 2000). Visible support from others helps to facilitate the coming out process. Providing information in a calm, rational, and persistent manner may eventually help to convince those who are less invested in their own ideologies (Evans & Wall, 2000). Efforts must continue to garner support for constructive change. Setting fair and equitable policies shows others on campus that administration, faculty and staffers will not tolerate discrimination against any class of people. Supporting LGBT dances, coffee houses or receptions on campus provides environments for LGBT individuals to meet

others and socialize with other LGBT individuals. These practices provide supportive environments other than gay and lesbian bars and dance clubs. Programs that support LGBT identity development can be offered regularly and publicly to help instill a more normative culture. Opening up LGBT events beyond the gay community encourages heterosexuals with the opportunity to learn and participate in these activities not otherwise available in typical classrooms (Evans & Wall, 2000).

Unfortunately, those who lack the most information about LGBT issues are seldom the people who attend these programs. Staff in-service meetings can include information and messages that are supportive of LGBT individuals on campus and all promotional materials for student affairs should include statements of the values of the organization as well as the characteristics sought in potential employees (Evans & Wall, 2000).

Personally knowing LGBT people is an important factor in breaking down stereotypes, including the provision of opportunities for staff to meet and interact with LGBT students. The positive aspect of diversity can be discussed in interactions and programming efforts in every setting. LGBT individuals who are members of racial, ethnic, and religious minorities seek recognition from the LGBT community as well as the nondominant groups of which they are a part. This form of discrimination and lack of sensitivity often has the effect of pushing racial, religious and ethnic minorities further back into the closet (Evans & Wall, 2000). Many LGBT individuals end up totally rejecting religion and spirituality, and this action has the further effect of creating additional measures of divisiveness among LGBT community members. Efforts to engage LGBT students in an exploration of their commonalities and ways to develop strong internal support systems within the community are vital to individuals' and the

community's well-being. Providing a safe and supportive group to share with others who have similar experiences provides the opportunity for much needed personal growth and a nurturing environment. Supportive environments enable individuals to come back into the larger community stronger and more energized in efforts to address common issues. Focusing on commonalities helps to build and nurture a stronger community (Evans & Wall, 2000).

Existing stage theories differ between the numbers of steps necessary for achieving a homosexual self-integration; yet each theory is more similar than different. The value of understanding the processes necessary to build healthier individuals cannot be understated. As our society advances, we must do so with a clear knowledge that all individuals in a free and democratic culture are equal, and every member should have the same opportunity to develop regardless of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion or disability. To develop leaders from the LGBT community, emphasis should be placed on developing self-integrated individuals who have the ability, support and self-confidence to speak out against all forms of perceived and actual discrimination.

The responsibility of promoting the concept of self-integrated individuals falls on the shoulders of all who possess the authority to instill change. A dilemma exists where dependence is placed on knowing and interacting with homosexual individuals for them to become accepted and normalized in the eyes of heterosexuals, yet many gays fear coming out to others out of fear of being rejected, ridiculed and harassed. Until gays become more comfortable with sharing their sexual orientation with others, the dilemma will continue. The problem provides a unique opportunity for researchers to explore measures that will help to promote self-actualization and self-integration of homosexual members of our society.

According to Renn and Bilodeau (2003), researchers have established a modest body of research on LGBT individuals (Dilley, 2002a, 2002b; Evans & Broido, 1999; Rhoads, 1994, 1997a, 1998; Wall & Evans, 2000). LGBT students have transformed the landscape of postsecondary institutions through student organizations, campus activism, and demands for access to homosexual theory and subjects in the curriculum (Dilley, 2002a, 2002b; Rhoads, 1998; Tierney, 1997). Although the literature on these students has grown, it remains limited in significant ways. Bieschke, Eberz, and Wilson (2000) reviewed published research pertaining to LGBT students and concluded it sparse and methodologically flawed, and among the refereed publications, only nine studies have been found that directly address the experiences of LGBT college students. However, only two studies (D'Augelli, 1994; Rhoads, 1994) address involvement in campus life and LGBT identity development. Even adding Dilley's more recent work on homosexual college men (Dilley, 2002a, 2002b); the question of how involvement in identity-based activities may influence LGBT students' development remains largely unexplored.

A substantial body of theory and research supports the premise that involvement in a campus activity leads to student development and learning, including the development of leadership skills and abilities (Astin, 1993; Komives, Lucas & McMahon, 1998; Kuh, Hu & Vesper, 2000; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). There is increasing evidence that involvement in campus activities related to a specific element of identity – such as race, sexual orientation, or gender – supports exploration of identity construction (Arminio, Carter, Jones, Kruger, Lucas, Washington, Young, & Scott, 2000; D'Augelli, 1994; Kezar & Moriarty, 2000; Liang, Lee & Ting, 2002; Porter, 1998; Renn, 2000, 2003; Rhoads, 1994, 1998; Sutton & Terrell, 1997). What has been less well explored is what, if any, influence identity-based activism and involvement has on the

development of students as *leaders* (Renn & Bilodeau, 2003), and secondly, do identity-based leadership experiences contribute to the development of student leadership among members of historically marginalized groups? The current literature does not answer the question as to how age affects the coming out and self-integration process. As a result of these findings, the need exists to conduct further research in an attempt to answer and unpack these issues most urgent and pressing to the individuals that make up the LGBT community.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The history of homosexuality in the U.S. is replete with discrimination and outright hatred. Historically, homosexuals have been persecuted by virtually every segment of American society, including the government, all segments of the military, the medical profession, faith-based organizations, schools, families and friends. Unfortunately, romance, intimacy, and personal feelings have played a very small part in this story of social oppression and intolerance (Kertzner, Foreman, Diaz, Ryan, Belkin & Young, 2004). However, a paradigm shift occurred during the 1960s as part of the change in sexual attitudes that occurred across many parts of the country, and the birth of the gay liberation movement began (Bernstein, 1977).

With this rise in social activism, the gay community also faces such current leadership challenges as: the advancement of fully self-integrated persons; bringing equal rights and marital privileges to all of the gay population throughout the 50 states, developing a base of strong gay leaders to meet the ongoing challenges facing this population, and combating the previously mentioned high suicide rates among gay teens. Many authorities assert that the gay community suffers from diminished leadership due to a lack of a recognizable support system that acknowledges one's difference while at the same time, affirming one's worth (Bernstein, M., 1977; Citron, R., 2000; D'Augelli, 1994a; Renn & Bilodeau, 2002; Rossman & Rallis, 1998). Unfortunately, gay individuals often feel isolated with no one and nowhere to turn, and while positive

change is occurring within the U.S., it is slow and uneven. Being invisible does not provide gay members of the community with a sense of support as no mirror exists to develop this support. Essentially, it takes a great deal of self-confidence and self-assuredness for any person to take on a leadership task. Gay leaders clearly understand that issues of sexual orientation will and do become public, and these individuals face the public and show unique characteristics that most numbers of gay members currently and unfortunately do not possess (Renn & Bilodeau, 2002).

In an effort to test the integration/leadership hypothesis, this study used a quantitative instrument determined to assess individuals' level of self integration along a developmental stage-based continuum developed by Griffin (1992), Cass (1984) and D'Augelli (1994) and qualitative analysis through participants' written answers to open-ended questions with a sampling of respondents who are at various stages of self-integration as a means to assess and examine the predisposition and propensity to assume a leadership role in the community. For the purpose of this study, leadership was defined as the ability to influence others in the community to face its problems through non-coercive means (Heifetz, 2001).

Research Design and Methods

This dissertation employed a mixed methodology using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Renn & Bilodeau, 2002; Manning 1992; Rossman & Rallis, 1998), and consisted of two phases: Phase 1 of the inquiry was a quantitative research instrument (which can be found in Appendix A) and was used to measure participants' level of self integration along the developmental stage-based continuum developed by Griffin (1992), Cass (1984) and D'Augelli (1994). This instrument was developed by the researcher and consists of 18, five-point Likert scale rated questions as an initial

assessment of respondents' levels of self integration. Included in the instrument were 5 open-answer probes to confirm the quantitative findings by assessing self-esteem, support systems, and propensity to take up leadership. Non-randomized selection of participants during Phase 1 was performed by sending a standardized message (which can be found in Appendix C) to various chat rooms in numerous cities across the US. The websites function on a confidential, e-mail list basis where individuals, when setting up their profiles, assign their own "public" screen names, and the researcher did not ask participants to identify themselves beyond their pseudonyms. Prospective participants who responded to the posting in each chat room were directed to review the profile created for this research and found a direct link to the consent form. As individuals completed the consent form, they were automatically directed to the survey instrument. As individual surveys were collected, data was entered into statistical software by the researcher and double-checked for accuracy. In the second phase of the analysis, each of the responses to the 18 Likert-scale questions was then translated into one of the six stages of development and these 18 questions were averaged to produce an overall stage assignment.

After signing the consent form, then participants received the following instructions:

"Please complete the instrument to the best of your ability, and return the instrument back to me, again as a separate attachment via the Adam4Adam or America On Line (AOL) web site. The survey instrument has been designed to allow you to respond to each question by inserting your response to each question in the blank underlined spaces next to each numbered response. Also, please type out your response to questions S through W. When finished, please forward your

survey back to me via the AOL and Adam4Adam.com web sites. Thank you for your time and effort!” (Appendix A)

Hypothesis

It was hypothesized that as individuals move along the continuum of self-integration and demonstrate higher levels of self-integration, they would be more likely to assume leadership roles in the community. If this hypothesis was correct, members of the gay community who were furthest along the continuum should be those most likely to assume leadership roles in the community.

Measures of Analysis

The quantitative data gathered during phase 1 were analyzed using measures of both central tendency and variability, while the open-ended responses were sorted and coded into representative categories. Together, this information was used to identify the most likely stage or level of self integration for each individual. In addition, the responses to question Q was used to quantitatively measure an individual's propensity for leadership. In the final part of stage one analysis, the relationship between level of self integration and the propensity for leadership was explored using correlational techniques.

Following the analysis of stage data, categorizing individual responses into final stages was performed through the use of the scoring matrix found in Appendix E. The scoring matrix reassigned the responses provided by participants by averaging the recoded stages assigned to each participant's responses to the 18 Likert-style questions that appeared in the survey. This procedure was repeated for each of the 150 participants until each respondent was assigned a final stage. To further assure accuracy of the findings, the original categorization of stages for each particular respondent and each of the 18 questions was conducted on three separate occasions. A full description

surrounding this process is provided in chapter 4. Interpretation of the correlation coefficient of each of the quantitative questions followed the recommendations by Hinkle, Weismann and Jurs (2003, pp. 108-110). Bivariate correlations were run for each question, with the purpose of comparing respondents' recoded stages as a means to measure the relationship between responses to each of the 18 questions and the final stage assignment.

Human Subjects

Because the proposed inquiry surrounded the issue and subject of leadership and homosexuality, the justification of including same-sex individuals was essential to the research. The decision was made to restrict access to the study to gay men for the sole purpose of limiting the dimension of this project. While it would have been desirable to provide results that encompass all age groups in the population, to prevent potential delays and problems with parents or guardians who might not be aware that their youth was homosexual, participation in the study was limited to individuals 18 and older. An additional limitation associated with the participant group in the study was that it would not involve active-duty members of the armed services. This exclusion was the result of the military's "Don't Ask Don't Tell" policy. To guarantee that individuals in both of these populations were not selected, these two exclusions were made explicit in the agreement of informed consent that each participant was be required to sign.

Additionally, since ethnicity and religious affiliation can play an important role in one's ability to come out and subsequently become fully integrated (Young, 2000), every effort was undertaken to include individuals who represented African American, Latino, Asian, and Native Americans, as well as religiously affiliated and disabled men spanning a wide range of age groups.

Limitations

The following four limitations applied to this inquiry. First limitation, this study had an extremely limited sample; only 150 gay men participants took part in the inquiry. Yet, while this number may be small in size, participants in this inquiry came from a variety of regions of the US, and represent views from small, middle, and large size communities. Of course, larger numbers would be desirous for the purpose of drawing inferences or making projections for other instances and applications; however because the inquiry focused solely upon gay men, little can be inferred to other members of the LGBT communities.

An additional limitation relating to the sample of participants had to do with ethnicity. As had been the case in previous studies, most research in this field had been conducted by white, middle-class researchers, and this research was conducted by a white, middle-class doctoral candidate (D'Augelli, A. R., 1994a.; Citron, R., 2000; Renn, K. & Bilodeau, B., 2002). Even though every attempt was made to remove any hint of bias from this largely quantitative study, the researcher understands that subconscious biases do exist, and for this reason the study would have benefited had a second researcher also examined the coding scheme.

The use of the internet to solicit participants was yet another limitation to this inquiry. The goal was to seek ethnically diverse participants, and it was thought that the use of the Internet would draw upon the diverse populations represented in the US. This proved not to be the case. The overwhelming majorities of participants, or nearly 87 percent, were Caucasian. Every attempt was made by the researcher to include as many diverse individuals as possible, by inserting a predetermined solicitation (see Appendix C) into gay chat rooms on AOL, yet few replies occurred from non-Caucasians. This

does little to help understand the rich diversity of feelings, actions and consequences of being gay and from populations other than whites. As a result, little can be said about other gay minority populations.

And finally, no attempt was made to randomize the sample. Those who participated self-selected into the study. As a result, the researcher cannot draw upon data to make inferential predictions beyond the sample collected from this population. Also, no publicly known gay leaders were included in this inquiry, and as a result, the sample may be skewed away from such high visibility gay leaders.

CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Introduction

The main objective of the study was to test the predictive value of stage assignment and select demographic measures with the propensity to perform leadership activities. As mentioned earlier, the study's main hypothesis was that as individuals move along the continuum of self-integration (Griffin 1992; Cass 1984; & D'Augelli, 1994) and demonstrate higher levels of self-integration, they will be more likely to assume leadership roles in the community. As such, this chapter contains: the presentation and discussion surrounding the survey procedures used in the study; the development and use of the scoring matrix; how missing variables were addressed and resolved; a review of the sample demographics, the display and discussion surrounding the final stage distribution of participants, and finally, the findings from the multiple regression analysis are presented and discussed.

Survey Procedures

The surveys were completed by 150 gay male participants who varied based upon age, stage of self-integration, religion (or no religious affiliation) and locale. The solicitation of participants was conducted in gay chat rooms across the country. Specifically, two online service providers, Adam4Adam.com (A4A), and America On Line.com (AOL), were utilized for data collection. Ultimately, about 85% of participants came from the AOL website, and the balance of participants (15%) came from the A4A website. The participant sample represents gay men from cities such as San Diego, Los

Angeles, San Francisco, Denver, Austin, Atlanta, Chicago, New York, Boston, Miami, as well as from small towns in the South and Midwest.

As data was initially collected, it quickly became apparent that certain members of the gay male population were going to present unexpected issues and with on-going difficulties. For example, emotional outrage from more than a few suspicious *non*-participants was experienced in the form of personal attacks, threatening instant messages, emails and a few complaining calls to the Dissertation Chair. Significant difficulty was experienced early on in the study as a result of the original format of the consent form and survey instrument. This continued until one helpful participant with advanced computer skills agreed to create a web-worthy packet of the forms in a more user-friendly format. This new format eased the challenge of participation significantly, and increased data collection soon followed. Another lesson was quickly learned about the use of the proposed website, Adam4Adam.com. The web-masters proved to be unwilling to assist with data collection for this inquiry, as they saw the inquiry as an unwelcomed intrusion to the basic sexual premise of their service. Having experienced the denial of access to the Adam4Adam web site, data collection moved to gay chat rooms on America Online (AOL), where the majority of the data was ultimately collected.

As this data was collected, participants' responses to each question were entered into the statistical software package for data analysis. The data collected from each of the 150 participants were in the form of Likert-scale responses, and these responses could not directly assign participants into a stage assignment. Therefore, the scoring matrix was developed as a means of providing a consistent and valid participant placement along the

developmental stage-based continuum (Griffin 1992; Cass 1984; & D'Augelli, 1994). A discussion surrounding the scoring matrix follows.

The Scoring Matrix

It was hypothesized that as individuals move along the continuum of self-integration and demonstrate higher levels of self-integration, they would be more likely to assume leadership roles in the community. In an effort to develop a final stage assignment for each survey respondent, the scoring matrix was constructed with the use of the three models for stage-based self-integration process of identity management by Griffin (1992), Cass (1984), and D'Augelli, (1994). The scoring matrix can be found in Appendix E.

As described above, the purpose of the scoring matrix was to provide a means of translating the responses to the original 18 Likert-style questions into a meaningful final stage assignment for each respondent. This was done by first mapping each of the possible responses to the 18 questions into a stage-based format, so that a unique stage was associated with each possible response. To see an example of how this was done, Table 1 displays 2 of the 18 questions (A and J) as well as their corresponding stage placements. For example, this table shows that for question A, which was reverse-scored, a participant response of "1" translates into a stage 6 response, a response of "2" corresponds to a stage 5 response, a "3" corresponds to stage 3.5 response, a "4" to a stage 2 response, and finally, a "5" corresponds to a stage 1 response. In a similar manner, the responses to question J (which was not reverse-scored) and their associated stages of development are also displayed in this table.

Taken together, this means that for each participant, their responses to the 18 questions were first translated into the appropriate stages so that each question produced

an identifiable stage of development for each individual. These stages were then averaged over all 18 questions until a final stage was produced with one important analytical caveat – that being the requirement that each question be significantly correlated with the overall average. In other words, when the final stage average was calculated, the individual correlations between each question and the final average were examined and if a question was not significantly correlated with the final average at the $p = .05$ level, then the question was dropped and the final stage computed without it. When this procedure was implemented, a total of 3 questions dropped out of the analysis so that the final stage assignment was computed as an average of the 15 remaining questions. These dropped questions were, G, “I feel comfortable about having sex with other men,” P, “When I see discrimination against gays, I speak out only if I feel safe,” and R, “I would speak out publicly, but only with support,”

Table 1

Scoring Matrix Sample Showing Stage-based Assignment of Scores

Question A, "I am totally closeted about my sexual orientation,"	Participant Answer	Corresponding Stage Placement
	1	6
	2	5
	3	3.5
	4	2
	5	1
Question J, "Others see me as gay."	Participant Answer	Corresponding Stage Placement
	1	1
	2	2
	3	3.5
	4	5
	5	6

Following this quantitative assignment procedure, the qualitative information provided to the five open-ended questions was used as a means of triangulating and confirming the final stage assignment. These questions were: S, "Please describe yourself in terms of your sexual orientation," and T, "Please list those people who know about your sexual orientation," and U, "Please describe how your relationship with people listed in question T has been affected since you came out to them," and V, "Please explain how you feel about the following statements: (1) It is not *my* problem how others

feel about my having sex with other men and, (2) It is my problem because I engage in sexual practices with other men,” and W, “Please tell me anything you wish to share with me,”

Qualitative review of the five open-ended questions followed the procedures and methods established by Wolcott (2001), Merriam (1998) and Patton (1998) and began as surveys were returned by participants. Participant responses were direct, to-the-point, and the tone of the responses indicated a sincere interest in the research. A second review of responses was performed by the researcher and confirmed by another researcher searching for repeating themes relative to stage assignment (Griffin 1992; Cass 1984; & D’Augelli, 1994). Following the final stage assignment for each participant, surveys were separated and reassembled based upon the quantitative numerical order of final stage assignment. Developmental stages were constructed using whole numbers, for example, 1.00 to 1.99 representing stage 1 participants, and the same method was used for participants’ placement into stages 2 through 5.

For the 142 participants, or 95 percent, who provided responses to the qualitative questions, basically there were no changes made with reference to stage assignment. When reviewing each participant’s quantitative and qualitative stage assignment, 1 individual’s quantitative score was 5.62. This participant’s answer to question W, “Please tell me anything you wish to share with me,” provided responses which indicated the performance of leadership in the gay community; this particular participant might have otherwise been placed into stage 6. Yet, upon closer examination of this participant’s quantitative responses, the individual’s scores to questions J, “Others see me as gay,” and P, “When I see discrimination against gays, I speak out only if I feel safe” indicate the individual is engaged in *censoring* activities. Griffin (1992) suggested that

individuals who involve themselves in *censoring* issues relative to their sexual orientation are considered as stage three participants. Therefore, the stage assignment did not change for this sole participant.

The results of the qualitative analysis indicted a strong relationship between quantitative and qualitative methods. In fact, the results indicated that participants were properly categorized and placed into appropriate stage assignments. A full examination of the qualitative analysis can be found in Appendix G.

Missing Responses

After the data was collected, it was discovered that 12 surveys were returned incomplete; specifically, 1 respondent failed to answer 3 of the Likert-scale questions, while the other 11 incomplete surveys were just missing the response to 1 Likert-scale question. The single participant who failed to answer 3 of the quantitative questions received a final score based upon the number of answers that were returned by the participant. Surveys that were lacking a single answer were subsequently averaged by the number of responses provided. Final stage assignment was originally based upon the averaging of all responses received through the use of the scoring matrix which is discussed earlier in this chapter. Statistical confirmation of final stage assignment was based upon averaging the total number of responses received from each participant and then tabulated by the statistical software packet.

Sample Demographics

Participants provided responses regarding their age, ethnicity and religious affiliation as preliminary questions of the survey instrument. The literature suggested that little research existed surrounding gay ethnic minority populations (Citron, 2000), and repeated efforts were undertaken to include as many minority participants as possible; in

fact, solicitations were inserted into gay chat rooms identified as African Americans and Latinos. Unfortunately, and in spite of the repeated efforts to include as many minority participants as possible, few minority members responded to the repeated solicitations. The results, surrounding ethnicity, age and religious affiliation follow below.

As identified in Table 2, age-related data were collected from 150 online participants who self identified as gay men. Of these participants, 149 responded to the question asking their age. The minimum age of participants was 19 while the maximum age of a participant was 71. The mean age reported was 43 years with a standard deviation of 11.8 years.

Table 2

Distribution of Participant's Age

Range	N	Percentage
19 - 24	9	6
25 - 30	21	14
31 - 35	13	9
36 - 40	19	13
41 - 45	25	17
46 - 50	22	15
51 - 55	19	13
56 - 60	10	7
61 - 65	6	4
66+	5	3
Missing	1	1

* Total fails to equal 100% due to the rounding.

As displayed in Table 3, the ethnicity of the overwhelming majority of 130 participants, or 87%, were Caucasian and the rest divided between Hispanic, African American, Asian, and Native Americans. A single participant failed to answer this question.

Table 3

Ethnicity of Participants

Ethnicity	N	Percentage
Caucasian	130	87
Hispanic	11	7
African American	3	2
Asian	3	2
Native American	2	1
Missing	1	1

* Total fails to equal 100% due to rounding.

As displayed in Table 4, Christian respondents totaled 73, or 49%, of the sample, while 62 participants, or 41%, indicated a lack of any religious affiliation, with the rest divided between Jewish and those who were religiously affiliated with non-Judeo-Christian religions. A single participant failed to respond to this question.

Table 4

Religious Affiliation of Participants

Religion	N	Percentage
Christian	73	49
None	62	41
Jewish	5	3
Other	9	6
Missing	1	1

* Total fails to equal 100% due to rounding.

Final Stage Assignment

As described in the previous chapter, a scoring matrix was used to provide a crosswalk between the responses to the 18 Likert-style questions and the final stage assignment for each individual. This procedure involved four distinct steps, beginning with the creation of an index that averaged the stage assignments from each of the 18 questions to provide a preliminary stage assignment. To ensure the accuracy of this index, bivariate correlations were then run between each of the individual questions and the overall index and any questions not statistically linked (at the $p=.05$ level) to the assignment index were dropped from the analysis. These correlations are shown in Table 5 and resulted in questions G, P, and R being eliminated; as such, the final stage assignment index was formed from 15 of the original 18 questions. In the next step, this index was used to provide a final stage assignment for each of the 150 individuals, and in the final step of the process, these stage assignments were then compared to the qualitative information provided by respondents to the three open-ended questions for

purposes of triangulation; results suggested that all of the final stage assignments were correct and no changes were made based on the qualitative information provided. The resulting correlations are provided in Table 5.

Table 5

Bivariate Correlations between Survey Questions and Final Stage Assignment

Survey Questions	N	Final Stage Assignment
A: I am totally closeted about my sexual orientation.	150	0.70 ^a
B: I think others see me as heterosexual.	150	0.65 ^a
C: If questioned about my sexual orientation, I do not tell others the truth.	150	0.56 ^a
D: I am not out to anyone about my sexual orientation.	147	0.61 ^a
E: I assume no one thinks I am gay.	150	0.61 ^a
F: When dealing with others, I censor and edit my comments about my sexual orientation.	150	0.62 ^a
G: I feel comfortable about having sex with other men.	149	0.23 ^a
H: I do not label myself as gay when speaking to others.	149	0.60 ^a
I: I assume others know I am gay, but I am not sure.	150	0.42 ^a
J: Others see me as gay.	150	0.55 ^a
K: I am proud about the fact that I am gay.	150	0.66 ^a

Survey Questions	N	Final Stage Assignment
L: I openly share that I am gay with others.	150	0.74 ^a
M: I have no concern whether others see me as gay.	150	0.62 ^a
N: I assume others know that I am gay.	149	0.67 ^a
O: I feel comfortable about speaking out about gay issues regardless who hears me.	149	0.62 ^a
P: When I see discrimination against gays, I speak out only if I feel safe.	148	0.20 ^b
Q: I participate in a leadership role as a gay man.	147	0.61 ^a
R: I would speak out publicly, but only with support.	149	0.03

^a $p \leq 0.01$

^b $p \leq 0.05$

Table 6 was constructed to show the final distribution of participant placement. This distribution shows each stage, the numbers of participants who were placed into each stage, and the percentage of participants at each stage. The mean placement level of participants was 3.9, while the standard deviation was 1. Table 6 also shows that the greatest number of participants were within the middle three stages with the middle stage containing a full third, or 50 of the participants. The second highest level of was stage 4 with 30%, or 46 participants. And finally, the third largest category was stage 2 with 25%, or 37 participants.

Table 6

Distribution of Participant Placement into Developmental Stages

Stage	N	Percentage*
1	4	3
2	37	25
3	50	33
4	46	30
5	13	7
6	0	0

* Total fails to equal 100% due to rounding.

The Relationship between Final Stage Assessment and the
Propensity to Perform Leadership

In an attempt to establish whether a relationship between final stage assignment and the propensity to perform leadership existed, regression analysis was used as shown in Table 7. This analysis revealed a significant association between the final stage assignment for each individual and their propensity to perform leadership ($R^2 = 0.40$; $p \leq 0.01$). Specifically, the estimated coefficient for this variable was .96, suggesting that there is almost a one-to-one correspondence between advancement through the stages of identity development and the propensity to exhibit leadership in the community. In other words, an individual in stage 4 is almost one point (.96) on a five point Likert-scale to exhibit leadership than someone in stage 3. However, when the demographic information collected—age, ethnicity, and religious affiliation—were also used as independent

variables in the regression analysis, none of these measures proved to be a significant predictor of leadership behavior. In other words, only the final stage assignment was significant in explaining variation in leadership behavior among those in the sample. A full discussion of the implications of this finding can be found in chapter 5.

Table 7

The Relationship between Final Stage Assessment and the Propensity to Perform Leadership

Variables	Estimated Coefficients	Standard Error	t
Constant	-0.71	0.41	-1.71 ^a
Final Stage	0.96	0.10	9.47 ^b

Dependent Variable: I participate in leadership roles as a gay man.

^ap ≤ .09

^bp ≤ .01

Summary

The triangulated findings of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, as discussed in this chapter, and as found in Appendices F and G, support the stated hypothesis, that for every one-unit gain along Griffin's (1992) continuum of self-integration, this movement translates to an almost one unit gain (0.96) in the propensity to perform leadership roles in the community.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

Review of the Study's Purpose and Methods

This inquiry sought to test the hypothesis that as gay individuals move along the continuum of self-integration and demonstrate higher levels of self-esteem and self-integration, they will be more likely to assume leadership roles in the community (Cass, 1984; D'Augelli 1994; Griffin 1992). This final chapter briefly reviews the purpose, methodology, and the findings of the inquiry. The chapter then concludes with policy recommendations as well as implications for future research in the fields of leadership studies fields of leadership studies and gay/queer studies.

Methodology

In the first phase of this study, a quantitative research instrument (which can be found in Appendix A) was used to measure participants' level of self integration along the developmental stage-based continuum developed by Griffin (1992). The instrument was developed by the researcher and consists of 18, five-point Likert scale rated questions as an initial assessment of respondents' levels of self integration. Included in the instrument were three demographic related questions and five open-ended questions which provided probes to assess self-esteem, support systems, and the propensity to take up leadership.

In the second phase, the researcher employed qualitative methods to code and analyze data obtained from the five open-ended questions that followed the 18 Likert-scale questions in the survey. Coding schemes focused on the demonstrated levels of

self-integration at each of the six possible stages. The triangulated findings of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, as discussed in chapter 4, as well as in Appendices F and G, were then used in the regression analysis to estimate the relationship between final stage assignment and the propensity to take up leadership.

Quantitative Findings

The Likert-scale measurement of the 18 quantitative survey questions produced significant findings, including evidence supporting the hypothesis that as individuals become more highly integrated they are more likely to perform leadership in the community. Specifically, the results of the regression analysis revealed that for every one-unit gain along Griffin's (1992) continuum of self-integration, this movement translates to an almost one unit gain (0.96) in the propensity to perform leadership roles in the community. In other words, an individual in stage 4 is almost one point (.96) on a five point Likert-scale to exhibit leadership than someone in stage 3.

Of course, for those individuals attempting to move further along the continuum, the support of those in positions of authority can be critical; in fact the involvement and empowerment of gay men increases through participation of its members (Cass, 1984). The results of this inquiry suggest that participation can only occur when individuals are willing to acknowledge to themselves and others that they are gay. As gay men find a stable level of support, and come out to themselves and others, they typically no longer feel the compulsion to hide and deceive issues attendant to their sexual orientation. As the results of the regression analyses have revealed, it is precisely these individuals within the gay community who are most likely to perform some sort of leadership in their community.

Discussion of Stage-based Findings

As a means of triangulating and confirming the results from the quantitative aspect of the study, five qualitative open-ended questions were included to further establish a stage assignment of the participants. After the responses to these questions had been sorted and coded, the results confirmed the original stage assignment which came from the quantitative findings.

The 4 participants who were assigned into stage 1 proved to be the least integrated, and in spite of the fact that these men were found in gay chat rooms, these participants did not see themselves as gay and were totally closeted. There was 1 participant who stated, "I like to please men and find it rewarding," yet he failed to acknowledge that he was in fact engaging in homosexual oriented behavior. Clearly, individuals at stage 1 are considered as dysfunctional with respect to their sexual orientation.

The 37 individuals who were categorized at stage 2 of development were clearly more open to the fact that they are gay. However, their responses clearly indicated they were passing and/or lying (Griffin, 1992). Individuals at this stage, while at the early stage of development no longer question whether they are gay; they are at the fringe of knowing how to be gay in a heterosexual world. As 1 respondent stated, "Still closeted to majority of my family and friends." While another stated, "I never had the need to proclaim my homosexuality to the world." These examples clearly show stage 2 participants experience a sense of separation from others. They lack the candor and honesty to share with others, often times acting out of fear of being exposed, and who continue to hide their differentiation from the heterosexual norm.

Stage 3 participants were comprised of a third, or 50 of all participants of the inquiry. 34 of the 50 individuals, or 68 percent of stage 3 participants self-categorized themselves with a gay social identity which compares favorably to the stated characteristics of individuals who are categorized at a stage 3 of development (Cass, 1994; D'Augelli, 1994; Griffin 1992). Typical responses from stage 3 participants included self labeling such as: "I am totally out," "Gay man," or, "Homosexual". Some participants categorized at stage 3 classified themselves as "Bisexual" and 1 individual stated, "Strong religious background, married with children". Stage 3 is also characteristic of the individuals simply developing the process or learning how to be gay. An interesting aspect of individuals at this stage of development has to do with greater self integration and the willingness to provide support to others, as indicated by the following two examples: "Being gay has made me more compassionate towards others' needs and feelings, not only towards other gay people but towards people who are different in other ways as well," and, "I always knew I had an attraction for guys, but only recently actually began investigating and making gay friends." An example taken from Griffin (1992), typical of stage 3 participants is the fact that individuals cover and sensor their sexual orientation while assuming that others do not know and cannot sense that the individual is gay. Typical responses which confirmed this assessment include: "I consider myself as a gay man. I have always been gay, but I hid the fact from others including family," and, "I have been gay since early childhood. I was deep in the closet most of my life. I was married for 33 years, but came out in 2001 at the age of 59. I am now separated," and, "Well, I am an openly gay man, but it depends on who you say I'm open to... my mother knows I am gay but she thinks I went straight so I keep it that way so I can get my inheritance." Individuals at stage 3 remain guarded with respect to their

sexual orientation and who knows about it. It is due to the underlying fear and separation from others that prevents individuals at a stage 3 from being fully functional within our society.

Unfortunately, this fear and separation is confounded by individuals who experience harsh responses such as, "My Southern Baptist family knows, but will have nothing to do with me and I am not allowed to be in some other people's homes." Individuals who undergo such experiences may remain in the closet as a means of being accepted and supported by others. When questioned how their relationship with people has been affected since they came out to them, those individuals at the beginning of stage 3 provided clear and convincing evidence of a proper stage assignment with comments such as: "My mom suspects that I am gay, but I have never been able to bring myself to actually tell her;" and, "It hasn't changed any, I never told them;" and, "No problems because I am not out;" and, "My mother told me that I am going to get AIDS and die of it, and I am going to hell." Individuals who scored higher on the stage based continuum provided responses such as: "If anything, it has strengthened me;" and, "I feel like I can be myself around them;" and, "We have become closer;" and, "It is totally irrelevant to them;" and finally, "Very cold at first, then gradually, over the years accepted."

Interesting, nearly 84% of stage 3 participants overwhelmingly rejected the notion that their sexual orientation and having sex with other men was in any way their problem. This may be in part due to further development along the stage based continuum.

Stage 4 is where individuals become gay off springs and where individuals come out to family members often leading to disrupted family membership. However, stage 4 is also where these individuals seek to heal those relationships (D'Augelli, 1994).

Clearly, these individuals have reconciled their sexual orientation as these individuals

clearly state that they are gay. Comments include, "I've always been gay and I knew this when I was a small boy as early as five years old. I've always been attracted to other men," or "Being gay does not run my life, but it is something I am not ashamed of."

Most participants stated that they are out to nearly every one, which confirms the expected results that these individuals are implicitly out while telling the truth without using labels (Griffin, 1992). Typical responses which confirm this conclusion include, "I am out to my mom and dad, all my family, all my friends, most people that I work with, and everyone that knows me beyond the acquaintance and even perhaps them. All my neighbors, and probably people that I don't know, know I'm probably gay," and, "My whole family and everyone I know." Additionally, the responses collected from question U concerning how relationships have been affected since coming out, 76%, or 35 participants at stage 4, stated that their relationships were not affected at all. Typical responses included: "It really doesn't matter to them at all," and, "Not at all," and, "It took a while to accept the fact that I was gay. I came out when I was in my late teens and it was even harder in my 20s when I found out that I had the AIDS virus but I have wonderful support for the most part except that my mother will not discuss my sexual orientation with her family;" and, "I have to say it's improved, after all I no longer feel the need to make up stories to hide my orientation. I just feel I am who I am," and finally, "Others have learned to accept me, primarily because I have learned to accept myself."

When stage 4 participants provided answers to whether or not they see their sexual orientation as a problem, 99% or 45 participants stated that they do not see their sexual orientation as a problem or anyone else's business. Clearly, these participants have

reconciled their sexual orientation and are far more functioning than other individuals at early stages of development.

Stage 5 is considered the period where individuals develop and enter intimate relationships, where pride and loyalty to one's sexual orientation increases, where individuals are explicitly out affirming their gay identity and individuals are at near complete self integration (Cass, 1984; D'Augelli, 1994; Griffin 1992). Individuals' scores who were classified at a stage 5 of development along the stage based continuum range from 5.0 to 5.65 according to quantitative measurements. Qualitatively, all 13 participants stated that they are gay, and further, these same individuals unequivocally stated that they were out to family and friends coworkers and added "And anyone else that asks me." Responses to question U indicate that their relationships with others, to whom these individuals have come out to, offered responses that indicate that there relationships have: "Grown a lot closer," and, "Haven't been affected at all," and, "The transition was easy".

Relationships at stage 5 are wholly improved as evidenced by the following comments: "I've grown a lot closer with some of my family," and, "The more open I became with my life, the more they came around to seeing that I wasn't any different than I was before," and, "I have been extremely supportive group of friends and family." With respect to the issue of guilt about one's sexual orientation, all but 1 participant stated that their sexual orientation is not their problem.

The performance of leadership is the primary ingredient which differentiates stages 5 from 6 (Cass, 1984). Challenging borders is the nature of leaders, and stage 6 individuals also are characterized by this expanded sense of self. For gay men, the challenging of social barriers can be compared with toddlers. Toddlers gain a sense of

self-empowerment and control over their young bodies while they focus their waking hours testing boundaries and establishing new limits as a sign of growth and development. Fully functioning gay men reach a sense of peace and stability (D'Augelli 1994), with reduced levels of fear and a full sense of whom they are as gay men (Griffin, 1992), and fully functioning within an often times hostile environment. Individuals functioning at a stage 6 have gathered the tools and skills necessary to maneuver through difficulties by reaching out to those most supportive. Stage 6 individuals can rely on support from their family, friends and, often times, bosses and coworkers, because these individuals are typically out to all (Griffin 1992).

Discussion of Findings

Despite the explosive growth in the field of queer studies over the past decade, most of the literature of the field has been conducted by white middle-class individuals, and as a result, the impact of race and ethnicity has been that little has been written about these issues (Cintron, 2000). Unfortunately, while attempts were continuously made to include ethnic minorities in the study, the poor response of minority participants to this study confirm the problems of inclusion experienced by former researchers; for example, almost 87% of the respondents in this study were White. As a result, conclusions can not be drawn from this study concerning the impact of race, religious affiliation and ethnicity with issues surrounding homosexuality.

The limited sample of minorities in this sample tends to support the views expressed in the literature with respect to gaining an understanding surrounding race and ethnicity. Often times, ethnic and racial minorities have unique and attendant issues which reflect the standards and moral values of their communities. As such, values and standards differ between Latino, African American, Asian and Native American

communities and these differences have led to the fracturing of the gay communities across the US. For example, within the Latino communities, gay Latinos are often forced into leading double lives. A strong family bond creates a deep psychological burden for the gay Latino when he is dismissed by the family (Cintron, 2000). Loss of social contact with family and community will result in lack of support for their identity as a Hispanic, and this may partially explain the low participation rate among gay Latinos. As mentioned earlier, only 3 African American and 3 Asian participants responded, representing only 2% of all participants. Similarly, gay African Americans are often forced to learn coping skills against racism and discrimination before they identify themselves as gays (Young, 2000; Kertzner, et al., 2004). This finding may provide a perspective as to why so few African Americans took part in this inquiry.

Another important consideration as to why so few minorities took part in the inquiry may be due to socioeconomic factors. For example, participation in this study was limited to those with internet access, and certain members of the gay minority communities may lack the financial ability to own a computer, and they may also lack access to the internet. Another reason for the low participation rate of certain minorities may be due to the fact that the gay movement is more public in the Caucasian culture than in ethnic minority cultures (Monteiro and Fuqua, 1993/1994).

Religion is another issue of significant importance when dealing with any issue surrounding the gay community and its members. Faith is based upon trust in another and a loyalty to a transcendent center of value and power, and a collective understanding of how individuals act with one another irrelevant of a commitment to God or a higher power (DuMontier, 2000). Unfortunately, there remains an implacable gulf between homosexuals who wish to be portrayed as normal and those who practice orthodox

Christianity and other mainstream religions. The research showed that 62 out of 150 participants, or 41.3%, indicated a lack of religious affiliation. This number is hardly surprising given the positions often taken by those in the religious community concerning homosexuals (Bernstein, M., 1977; Boswell, J. 1981; Citron, R. 2000; DuMontier, V. L., 2000; Levin, H. & Love, P. 2000). Christian respondents totaled 73 participants, or 48.7% of the sample; there were only 5 Jewish participants representing 3.3%, and 9 individuals who were affiliated with other religious categories.

Gay men look for acceptance and blessing of their relationships, but orthodox Christians, Jews and Muslims may never accept or affirm sexual relationships clearly designated as sinful by the revealed word of God (Barrett, 2002). Gay men clearly are affected by these decisions, and this may have manifested itself in this study by the lack of religious affiliation shown by many of the gay man who participated.

Policy Implications

Identity formation usually occurs when many adolescents are attending college, and it is essential that schools provide all of its students with the opportunity for safe environments in which to develop (Eddy & Forney, 2000). Due to the challenge and complexity surrounding homosexual identity formation, these youth need to begin the process of developing identity by shifting their psychological focus to recognize themselves as members of a new minority group. Evans and Levine (1990) suggest that we should use homosexual student development theories to better understand issues and challenges faced by student populations, to plan for appropriate programming for diverse sub-populations, to craft informed policies that are neither ignorantly inclusive nor exclusive, to provide sensitive service that are not presumed upon a singular model of

student development and identities, and of course to watch for students who might need personal interventions.

The literature is replete with suggestions of how to promote support and how to encourage and sponsor a safe environment for learning and growing (Bernstein, M., 1977; Citron, R., 2000; D'Augelli, 1994a; Renn & Bilodeau, 2002; Rossman & Rallis, 1998). Because sexuality spills over into the classroom and is one of the factors involved in the interchange between students and their teachers, educators need to find ways of providing a safe and supportive environment for all learners. Until gay class members feel safe to speak their minds about their sexual attractions, dating and other issues relative to human development, the development of gay class members will continue to be slow. One way to address this problem is through increased training and professional development. For example, Boards of Trustees, provosts, department heads, instructors and all staff members at educational institutions would benefit from a forum to ask questions, learn about homosexuality, and even the opportunity to meet with and experience fully-functioning gay men to put a face to homosexuality, while reducing ignorance-based homophobia. Until heterosexual individuals have the opportunity to meet homosexuals in a safe and supportive settings, heterosexuals are likely to continue to maintain unfavorable views of gays (D'Augelli, 1994a; Renn & Bilodeau, 2002), and gays will continue to hide and cover their true and honest identities. This continuing dilemma does little to advance fully functioning and wholly integrated gay individuals.

Those in leadership positions within the field of education need to take on the burden of examining their own environments for ways of fighting discrimination against all minorities, including members from the gay community. Until educational leadership takes on this task of being inclusive of *all* minorities, members of the gay community will

be forced to seek other means of support and safety. Until these leaders understand that they are not truly tackling the issue of discrimination until all members of discriminated classes have been emancipated, they fool themselves into thinking that they have completed their task of fighting against discrimination. This false sense of accomplishment does little to truly advance the notion that all individuals are and should be treated with dignity and respect.

Furthermore, until administrators, educators and school staff members fully embrace all communities of diversity, those outside of protected classes based upon race, religion and other identifiers protected by federal, state and local governments will continue to feel the discrimination that these other protected groups felt prior to their emancipation. The continued discrimination against homosexuality does little to reduce the overrepresentation of teen suicides among the gay population, and because support for these developing youth is often difficult to find, these teens will continue to commit suicide out of sheer desperation from their feelings of being different and less-than their heterosexual counterparts. Until those who are in a leadership position take corrective actions, the difficult process of coming out will continue to cause struggle, upset and suicide among youth who simply and desperately want to belong. Homosexual involvement and empowerment increases through the participation of its members (Cass, 1984).

In order to promote the leadership practices of all education based stakeholders, including its gay members, current leaders need to recognize that discrimination against members of the gay community have the effect of discouraging gay youth from self disclosure. The findings suggest that it is through self disclosure that members of the gay community experience an improved sense of self-worth. The development of self worth

is the beginning step of developing an improved sense of self integration and empowerment (Griffin, 1992).

When an individual states that they are not out to anyone about their sexual orientation, then according to the findings of this inquiry, an individual is less likely to take up the performance of leadership in the community. Additionally, an individual who is not telling the truth about ones' sexual orientation, according to Griffin (1992), is in essence, an individual who would be categorized at early stages of development.

D'Augelli (1994) states that the choice of hiding or disclosing as a member of a generally stigmatized minority, such as sexual orientation, demands considerable ego strength. Therefore, the performance or practice of leadership is significantly diminished at beginning stages of development. Because the findings of this study have far-reaching effects, leaders within the gay community need to understand that change occurs incrementally, and that support beyond and outside of gay bars and gay pride events needs to be promoted and provided.

In other words, the goal among gay leaders should be to help move gay men through the developmental stage-based continuum and join in the efforts being made to bring equality to all of the community's members. As greater numbers of gay men make themselves known, the result will be a diminished interest level by the general public, acceptance levels will gradually increase. While the goal is to increase visibility, efforts which promote a 'coming-out' day should be discontinued and avoided since these events are not well thought out, they provide its participants without lasting support, and as a result, they may be more hazardous than helpful. The findings of this study indicate that support is the most essential aspect in the *process* of coming-out. Because change is a process and *not* an event, providing early and ready support to individuals struggling with

real and imagined discrimination is essential. Organizations, such as PTAs, the Boy's Clubs, Cub and Boy Scouts, are in a position to provide assistance to these youth. These organizations should take leadership positions to help bring remedies to the current dilemma of open discrimination against young gays, instead of taking cues from those who promote discrimination. Counseling and educational curricula can be provided within these organizations to help all youth understand that differences between others are commonplace, and that everyone deserves to be treated with respect.

Again, the findings of this inquiry indicate that it is support which is a primary indicator of the propensity to perform leadership. As such, gay leaders need to organize grassroots campaigns which promote favorable perceptions of average gay individuals. For example, Gay Pride events should not only promote equality, but leaders should provide constant reminders that organizations within the community exist to promote their health and development. If organizations do not exist to provide support and development of healthy and integrated individuals, leaders need to work at creating a safe and supportive place beyond bars and dance clubs, which prohibit under-age inclusion. These organizations could then help facilitate the transition of gay youth from a life with no direction, family rejection, suicide ideation, homelessness, substance abuse and possibly self preservation through a life of prostitution, to a life of self-integration.

Recommendations for Future Research in the Field of Gay Queer Studies

This section contains suggestions for future research in the fields of educational leadership and gay/queer studies. The purposes of these recommendations are to advance the health and well-being of members of the gay population as well as advancing the leadership activities which have an effect of improving lives within the gay population. The findings of the study indicate that leadership performance among gay men is affected

and enhanced through the process of self-integration. Yet, until greater numbers of gay men involve themselves in the process of development along the continuum of self-integration and involve themselves in leadership activities, the current lack of leadership will likely continue.

As discussed in chapter 2, Perez, DeBord, and Brock (2000) found that group counseling of gay persons can be seen as an effective and efficient way to address concerns of gay individuals. Group counseling may provide the support needed to encourage the self-integration, development and the leadership skills of individuals needed to meet the needs of the community. Additional research which explores the potential benefits of group counseling for members of the gay community should be expanded.

Since little is currently understood regarding gay minority ethnicities, further research should be undertaken (Citron, 2000). Due to the complexity of this issue, the goal of this research should be to gain a clearer understanding of the barriers and obstacles which prevent larger numbers of minority members from involving themselves in self-integration and leadership activities. Although this research may be difficult to conduct in the United States, researchers may want to consider such countries as Spain, which has legalized same-sex marriage, to gain an understanding of the Hispanic gay culture. Exploration into the effects of the country's acceptance of homosexuality and its gay population may provide researchers in the US with a clearer understanding of the perplexing issues which face American researchers interested in the Hispanic-American gay population.

Within the field of educational leadership, more research needs to be done into why schools and other youth orientated service providers are failing to meet the on-going

needs of their gay members (Herrick & Martin, 1987). This conclusion is drawn from the disproportionate numbers of gay youth who take their own lives in an attempt to bring a permanent solution to a preventable and temporary problem. These suicides are often the result of a lack of support and compassion, and many times perpetrated by those closest to these troubled youth. When these youth are confronted by homophobic authority figures, whether they are their religious leaders, teachers or parents, they often lack the access to the available support that might otherwise prevent the taking of their own young lives (Herrick & Martin, 1987). Some communities simply lack any provision for support for gay youth. As a means of addressing this unfortunate problem, continuing research needs to be conducted which addresses the lack of understanding and compassion by all stakeholders, with particular attention paid to unenlightened, yet influential adults. While education and support seems to be the key in developing wholly integrated gay individuals, further research is needed to help find ways of addressing those in authority to provide compassion and support to gay youth who are desperate for their acceptance.

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APPENDIX A

Research Instrument

Participant Instructions: "Please complete the instrument to the best of your ability, and return the instrument back to me, as a separate attachment via the Adam4Adam web site. The survey instrument has been designed to allow you to respond to each question by inserting your response to each question in the blank underlined spaces next to each numbered response that represents your feelings about how you feel about yourself today.

Selecting the number 1 means you strongly disagree, selecting the number 3 means you feel neutral about the statement, and selecting the number 5 means you strongly agree. Also, please type out your response to questions S through W in the space provided. When finished, please forward your completed survey back to me via the Adam4Adam.com web site. Thank you for your time and effort!"

Your ethnicity _____ Religious affiliation (if any) _____

Your age _____

Questions:**Answer:**

A. I am totally closeted about my sexual orientation.	1	2	3	4	5	_____
B. I think others see me as heterosexual.	1	2	3	4	5	_____
C. If questioned about my sexual orientation,
I do not tell others the truth.	1	2	3	4	5	_____
D. I am not out to anyone about my sexual orientation.	1	2	3	4	5	_____
E. I assume no one thinks I am gay.	1	2	3	4	5	_____
F. When dealing with others, I censor and edit my
comments about my sexual orientation.	1	2	3	4	5	_____
G. I feel comfortable about having sex with other men.	1	2	3	4	5	_____
H. I do not label myself as gay when speaking to
others.	1	2	3	4	5	_____
I. I assume others know I am gay, but I am not sure.	1	2	3	4	5	_____
J. Others see me as gay.	1	2	3	4	5	_____

- K. I am proud about the fact that I am gay. 1 2 3 4 5 _____
- L. I openly share that I am gay with others. 1 2 3 4 5 _____
- M. I have no concern whether others see me as gay. 1 2 3 4 5 _____
- N. I assume others know that I am gay. 1 2 3 4 5 _____
- O. I feel comfortable about speaking out on gay issues regardless who hears me. 1 2 3 4 5 _____
- P. When I see discrimination against gays, I speak out only if I feel safe. 1 2 3 4 5 _____
- Q. I participate in a leadership role as a gay man. 1 2 3 4 5 _____
- R. I would speak out publicly, but only with support. 1 2 3 4 5 _____

Please answer the questions.

S. Please describe yourself in terms of your sexual orientation. _____

T. Please list those people who know about your sexual orientation.

USE ONLY DESCRIPTORS (EXAMPLES: "MY MOM", "MY BOSS") AND DO NOT USE NAMES.

U. Please describe how your relationship with people listed in question 'T' has been affected since you came out to them.

V. Please explain how you feel about the following statements:

(1) "It is not *my* problem how others feel about my having sex with other men."

(2) "It is my problem because I engage in sexual practices with other men."

W. Please tell me anything you wish to share with me. _____

Thank you for your time and participation.

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent Form

The following is a representation of the form to be used for the process of obtaining informed consent from each participant in this inquiry. For Stage 1 of this inquiry, individuals will be emailed this form and asked to reply via email that they have read, understand and agree to participate by signifying their agreement by emailing me the statement, "I have read, understand and agree to participate in this research." Stage 2 participants will again be asked to sign this form in my presence before the one-on-one interview will commence.

University of San Diego

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study

David Robert Blair, a doctoral student in the Leadership Studies program in the School of Leadership and Education Sciences, is conducting research towards developing an understanding of the predisposition to lead within the homosexual community. For the purpose of this research, leadership is defined as the ability to influence others in the community to face its problems through non-coercive means. This research project will explore current scientific and developmental theories relating to the coming out process among men who have sex with other men, and the likeliness of taking up leadership within the community. These theories suggest that as individuals become more open about their sexual orientation, with themselves and others, that they will also be more likely to take part in leadership activities in the community. Your participation in this research is completely voluntary, and you may discontinue your participation at any point of this research.

1. You will be asked to participate in the proposed research by completing an online research questionnaire that may take a period of between 45 and 60 minutes to complete. The questionnaire asks you to rate how much you agree/disagree on issues about sexual orientation. An example of a statement on the questionnaire is, "I am totally closeted about my sexual orientation."
2. At the conclusion of data analysis of the emailed questionnaire, you may be selected and asked to participate in a one-on-one, open-ended interview that will last 45 to 90 minutes in length. The researcher will e-mail you if you are selected. If you are selected for this interview, it will be held in a private location convenient to you. The interview will be recorded. Your real name will never be used in the interview, and a pseudonym (fake name) will be used instead. Following the interview, the researcher will contact you via e-mail and give you an opportunity to review and edit your interview transcripts. This follow-up will take about 30 minutes.
3. Every effort will be undertaken to ensure confidentiality by keeping all data in a locked cabinet at the researcher's residence, or by password protected computer until it is destroyed five years following the completion of this research. Your name will never be used and all data will be coded using numbers and pseudonyms.

4. It is possible that you may experience fatigue while filling out the questionnaire or participating in the interview. If this happens, please take time out to rest. If you become fatigued during the interview, please tell the interviewer right away. You can either take time to rest or re-schedule the interview at another time. It is also possible that you might experience feelings like sadness or anxiety while filling out the form or being interviewed. If you experience these feelings and would like to talk to someone about them, please contact any of the sources listed at the bottom of this form. A possible benefit of this study is that information obtained from this research may contribute to knowledge surrounding the predisposition to lead within the homosexual community.
5. Participation in this research project is wholly voluntary. You can choose not to answer any question on the questionnaire or in the interview. You can withdraw from this research project at any time and without consequences. No one will be upset with you and your access to health care or social services will not be affected at all. If you do decide to withdraw from the study, the information collected prior to your voluntary withdrawal from this research project will not be used unless you agree in writing to let the data be used.
6. If you have any questions about this research or activities that occur during the course of this research, you may contact David Robert Blair at (619) 216- 1330, or via the email at dblairsandiego@aol.com or the dissertation chair who is overseeing this research project, Dr. Fred Galloway at (619) 260- 7435, or via email at galloway@sandiego.edu.
7. The information collected from this research will be used to complete the researcher's dissertation process and possibly additional publications or presentations emerging from this research. These results will be reported in professional journals and meetings, but your real name will never be used.
8. By way of your confirmation statement, you are also confirming that: (1) you are 18 years old or older, and, (2) that you are not an active-duty member of the U.S. armed services.
9. There is no agreement either written or verbal, beyond that which is expressed on this consent form.

I, the undersigned, understand the above conditions and give my consent to my voluntary participation in the research that has been described.

Signature of the Participant _____ Date _____

Printed Name: _____ Address _____

Contact Information: Phone _____ Email: _____

Signature of the Researcher _____ Date _____

In the event you, the respondent, feel the need for assistance as a direct result of your participation in this research project, you may contact the following sources for no-cost counseling at the following agencies.

- (1.) San Diego County Mental Health Hotline,
Division of the California Department of Mental Health
24 Hour Crisis Intervention.
Toll-free Hotline Telephone (800) 479-3339
- (2.) The Center—Health Services
2313 El Cajon Boulevard
San Diego, CA 92104 Telephone: (619) 260-6380
- (3.) San Diego County Health and Human Services County Mental Health
3851 Rosecrans Street
San Diego, CA 92110 Telephone: (619) 692-8750

In the event you, the respondent, find, that as a result of your participation in this inquiry, are in need of legal advice or assistance; you may contact the following agency for no-cost assistance to:

- (4.) The San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program
625 Broadway, Suite 925
San Diego, CA 92101 Telephone: (619) 235-5656 x 105, 106

APPENDIX C

Sample Solicitation

The following is an example of the solicitation that will be made to members of AOL and Adam4Adam.com:

The initial message I sent to randomly assigned members was

Are you questioning your sexual orientation? Are you over the age of 18 and having sex with other men? My research project will explore the potential relationship between the coming out process of men who have sex with other men and the potential link to performing leadership in the community.

If you have interest or just questions about my research, please email me for additional information, and we even can schedule a brief telephone interview.

Thanks for your time!

APPENDIX D

Theoretical Models for Analysis

The following theoretical models were used throughout the inquiry and were specifically used in determining the particular level of development of respondents/participants.

Model for Stage-based Self-Integration Process Identity Management Strategies

Model for Stage-based Self-Integration Process Identity Management Strategies*					
Stages from Concealment to Direct Disclosure					
1	2	3	4	5	6
TOTALLY CLOSED	PASSING	COVERING	IMPLICITLY OUT	EXPLICITLY OUT	PUBLICLY OUT
O U T T O N O O N E	Lying I assume you Don't know See me as Heterosexual	Censoring I assume you Don't know Don't see me as gay	Telling Truth w/o Gay Labels I assume you know but I'm not sure You see me as gay if you want to	Affirming Gay Identity I know you know, you know I know you know See me as gay	O U T T O A L L
←----- FEAR ----- SELF-INTEGRITY -----→ SEPARATION-----PERSONAL/PROFESSIONAL HELP-----INTEGRATION					

(Source: Griffin, 1992, p. 177)

D'Augelli Model of Self-Integration (1994):

1. Stage 1, the individual exits the heterosexual identity and begins to come out to others.
2. Stage 2 is where the homosexual develops a personal gay identity and

where one begins the process of developing, or learning how to be gay.

This stage provides the individual with the tools and functionality to make contact with other gays.

3. Stage 3 is where the individual develops a gay social identity and where the individual shares his/her sexual orientation and becomes willing to provide support.
4. Stage 4 is where the individual becomes a gay offspring and comes out to family members, often leading to disrupted family relationship, and the individual looks at healing those relationships.
5. Stage 5 is where the individual develops and enters intimate relationships where both physical and intimate relationships are formed.
6. Stage 6 is where the individual enters the LGBT community; committed to political and social action and where the individual enters the process of challenging social barriers.

Cass' Model of Self-Integration (1984):

Stage 1: Identity Confusion is the stage where individuals begin to question their sexuality.

Stage 2: Identity Comparison is the stage where the individual accepts the possibility of being gay.

Stage 3: Identity Tolerance; is the stage where individuals seek out the company of other gays to fulfill social, sexual and emotional needs.

Stage 4: Identity Acceptance; is the stage where increased contact within the gay community encourages a more positive view of being gay and the gradual development of gay friends.

Stage 5: Identity Pride; is where pride and loyalty to one's sexual orientation leads to anger with society for the devaluation of homosexuality.

Stage 6: Identity Synthesis; where anger and pride from stage 5 are less emotional, but the gay lifestyle is no longer hidden, and feelings of peace and stability are established.

APPENDIX E

Scoring Matrix

Question	Response	Stage
A: I am totally closeted about my sexual orientation.	1	6
	2	5
	3	3.5
	4	2
	5	1
B: I think others see me as heterosexual.	1	6
	2	5
	3	3.5
	4	2
	5	1
C: If questioned about my sexual orientation, I do not tell other the truth.	1	6
	2	5
	3	3
	4	2
	5	1

Question	Response	Stage
D: I am not out to anyone about my sexual orientation.	1	6
	2	5
	3	3.5
	4	2
	5	1
E: I assume no one thinks I am gay.	1	6
	2	5
	3	3.5
	4	2
	5	1
F: When dealing with others, I censor and edit my comments about my sexual orientation.	1	6
	2	5
	3	3.5
	4	2
	6	1
G: I feel comfortable about having sex with other men.	1	1
	2	2
	3	3
	4	4
	6	5.5

Question	Response	Stage
H: I do not label myself as gay when speaking to others.	1	6
	2	4.5
	3	3.5
	4	2
	6	1.5
I: I assume others know I am gay, but I am not sure.	1	1
	2	2
	3	3.5
	4	4
	5	5
J: Others see me as gay.	1	1
	2	2
	3	3.5
	4	5
	5	6
K: I am proud about the fact that I am gay.	1	1
	2	2
	3	3.5
	4	5
	5	6

Question	Response	Stage
L: I openly share that I am gay with others.	1	1
	2	2
	3	3
	4	4.5
	5	6
M: I have no concern whether others see me as gay.	1	1
	2	2
	3	3.5
	4	5
	5	6
N: I assume others know that I am gay.	1	1
	2	2
	3	3.5
	4	5
	5	6
O: I feel comfortable about speaking out about gay issues regardless who hears me.	1	1
	2	2
	3	3.5
	4	5
	5	6

Question	Response	Stage
P: When I see discrimination against gays, I speak out only if I feel safe.	1	1
	2	2
	3	3
	4	4.5
	5	6
Q: I participate in a leadership role as a gay man.	1	1
	2	2
	3	3
	4	4.5
	5	6
R: I would speak out publicly, but only with support.	1	1
	2	2
	3	3
	4	4.5
	5	6

APPENDIX F

Quantitative Analysis

This appendix reveals the coded findings gathered from the 18 Likert-scale questions, 'A' through 'R.' Each question was correlated, and all but 3 questions, 'G', 'P' and 'R' proved to be significant at the 0.01 level. The results of these questions follow.

Question A

"I am totally closeted about my sexual orientation".

The recoded correlation coefficient for this question, and is 0.70, and the results are significant at the 0.01 level. This finding indicates a high positive correlation between one's self image concerning stage development and final stage assignment. The findings indicate that the question is moderately correlated to the propensity to perform leadership in the community at 0.44 and significant at the 0.01 level.

Question B

"I think others see me as heterosexual".

When this question is recoded and correlated with final stage 4, the resulting correlation coefficient is 0.65, which translates into a high moderate positive correlation at the 0.01 level. There is a strong correlation between one's self image as a gay man and the relationship to the average of all participants' final stage assessment. When question B is recoded and correlated with question Q, a low positive correlation exists of 0.37, yet the correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Question C

"If questioned about my sexual orientation, I do not tell others the truth".

When questions C is recoded and correlated with the final stage 4, a moderate positive correlation exists of 0.56, which is significant at the .01 level. This indicates a relationship between the attributions of stage with the question as compared with the overall final stage. When questions C is recoded and correlated with recoded question Q, the direct question concerning the participation in leadership as a gay man, the results represent a low positive correlation coefficient of 0.26, which is significant the 0.01 level. This finding indicates that there is a correlation between one's level of self integration and one's propensity, as a gay man, to take up a leadership role.

Question D

"I am not out to anyone about my sexual orientation".

When question D is recoded and correlated with the final stage 4 assessment, a moderate positive correlation exists at the 0.61, and a linear relationship between these two questions. This finding is significant in that it leads to the conclusion that increased self integration is directly correlated with an increase level of performance of leadership. This indicates a low positive correlation between the recoded questions D and Q at 0.30, which is also a significant at the 0.01 level.

Question E

"I assume no one thinks I am gay".

When question E is recoded and correlated with final stage 4, a moderately positive correlation is established which is 0.61, and the correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. Since the recoding of this question was performed so that results are displayed in the affirmative, the results are significant. This further indicate that as individuals progress along the stage-based developmental continuum they are, again, more likely to take up leadership roles in the community. When question E is recoded

and compared with question Q the resulting correlation coefficient is a low positive correlation at 0.33 and is significant at the 0.01 level.

Question F

"When dealing with others, I censure and edit my comments about my sexual orientation".

When question F is recoded and correlated with the final stage 4, the resulting correlation coefficient is 0.62, and is significant at the 0.01 level. This indicates a moderate positive correlation. The findings indicate a positive correlation at 0.27, which indicates a low positive correlation between the two questions, yet these findings are significant at the 0.01 level.

Question G

"I feel comfortable about having sex with other men".

When this question was recoded and correlated with the final stage 4, the Pearson correlation is 0.23 and this correlation coefficient provides little if any correlation, although the finding is significant at the 0.01 level. The majority of respondents scored this particular question high as compared with other questions in the survey.

Question H

"I do not label myself as gay when speaking to others".

When this question is recoded and correlated with final stage 4, the result is a moderate positive correlation at .60, which is significant at the 0.01 level. The correlation between the recoded question H and the leadership question Q indicate a low positive correlation at 0.32, yet this correlation is also significant at the 0.01 level.

Question I

"I assume others know I am gay, but I am not sure".

This question relates directly to stage 4 of Griffin's (1992) model. The recoded question I and final stage 4, indicates a low to moderate positive correlation at 0.42, which is significant at the 0.01 level. This question is significant because it is directly related to a positive self-integration of participants as compared with their final stage assessment. The correlation coefficient between recoded questions I and Q lacks significance, and there is little if any correlation at 0.13 between these two questions.

Question J

"Others see me as gay".

When this question is recoded and correlated with final stage 4, the resulting correlation coefficient is 0.55, which indicates a moderately positive correlation between the question and final stage of participants, and is significant at the 0.01 level. The finding of this question indicates a moderate relationship between participants' self-perception and final stage assessment. The results indicate the recoding of questions J and Q produce a resulting correlation coefficient of 0.28, which corresponds to a low positive correlation between the two questions.

Question K

"I am proud about the fact that I am gay".

The recoding of question K leads to a high moderately positive correlation coefficient with final stage 4 at 0.66, and the correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. The findings indicate that the recoded questions K and Q are moderately positively correlated at 0.49, and the correlation is significant at the 0.01 levels.

Question L

"I openly share that I am gay with others".

When this question is recoded and correlated with final stage 4, one of the highest correlations exists between variables in this inquiry. The correlation coefficient is 0.74, which is considered to be highly positively correlated and significant at the 0.01 level. As question L is recoded and correlated with question Q, a moderate positive correlation exists at 0.50 and is significant at the 0.01 level.

Question M

"I have no concern whether others see me as gay".

When this question is recoded and correlated with the final stage 4, the resulting correlation coefficient results in a moderately high correlation and .621 and is significant at the 0.01 level. This finding indicates a relatively strong relationship between this question and final stage assessment. When question M is correlated with question Q, a low positive correlation exists of 0.39, which is significant at the 0.01 level.

Question N

"I assume others know that I am gay".

When this question is recoded and correlated with final stage 4, the results is a highly positive correlation at 0.67, which is significant at the 0.01 level. This finding indicates a direct relationship between the question and final stage assessment. This indicates a low positive correlation at 0.31 between one's assumption that others know about the participants sexual orientation and one's propensity to perform leadership in the community.

Question O

"I feel comfortable about speaking out on gay issues regardless who hears me".

Findings indicate a moderately high correlation at 0.62, which is significant at the 0.01 level. The correlation coefficient between this question and final stage 4 confirms

the relationship between the individual question and final stage assessment. This indicates a low positive correlation 0.36 which is significant at the 0.01 level between the comfort level of an individual who feels comfortable about speaking out on gay issues regardless who hears him and the practice of leadership in the community.

Question P

"When I see discrimination against gays, I speak out only if I feel safe".

The correlation coefficient for this question, which is 0.20, indicates little, if any, correlation and is significant only at to the 0.05 level. One potential explanation for this finding is the poor construction of the question because it appears as a two-part question. This indicates the recoding of question P and Q have little if any relationship with each other as the correlation coefficient is 0.10 with no significant level.

Question Q

"I participate in a leadership role as a gay man".

The correlation coefficient for this question is a moderately positive correlation at 0.61 and is significant at the 0.01 level. This finding indicates a direct relationship between question Q and the final stage assessment.

Question R

"I would speak out publicly, but only with support".

There is no correlation, at 0.13, or relationship between this question and final stage assessment. It appears the reason for this is the poor construction of the question. There is no correlation or relationship at 0.03 between this question and the leadership question, Q. This finding is attributed to the poorly constructed question.

APPENDIX G

Qualitative Analysis

Question S

"Please describe yourself in terms of your sexual orientation".

Stage 1 participants: Those classified as a stage 1 nearly ignored the question. 2 out of 4 participants, or 50% at stage one, state they are bisexual. A single participant, or 25%, states that he is 'heterosexual,' and is more attracted to men than women. 1 participant, or 25%, completely ignored or failed to answer the question all together.

Stage 2 participants: Thirty-seven out of 150, or 25% of total participants, have been classified as stage two in the developmental stage-based continuum. All but 4 participants, or 11%, completed question S, providing answers such as: "Masculine man comfortable with myself," and, "The first time I actually kissed a guy, I was amazed about how natural it felt. I am not openly gay; because I understand the community and environment, I live in Atlanta, North Carolina, and in Virginia. Unfortunately I don't feel comfortable to be completely open with extended family and family friends," and, "I was previously married, really have no desire to be with women," and, "I know I have feelings for the same sex but I also know that it is a stand for what I was taught and brought up in my church. So I do struggle with this day in and out. It is a constant battle within myself." Finally, 8, or 22%, self-classified themselves as being bisexual, with statements such as: "I am a bi, married man, with a family, and have started enjoining homosexual activities at about 12 years of age still enjoy it," and, "I have been bisexual most of my life but I have lived with a younger man for the last 25 years," and, "I was always attracted to men. However, my moral principles, family principles, and the feeling for the love of a woman did not allow me to just be in a man-to-man relationship.

I did have a couple of encounters with a mutual friend during my marriage, and since 1990, I have been just with men," and, "I am a bisexual man." While 25 participants, or 68%, stated they are gay, these individuals offered answers such as: "100% homosexual," and, "Gay and think it's nobody's business," and, "I know I have feelings for the same sex but I also know that it is a stand for what I was taught and brought up in my church. So I do struggle with this day in and out. It is a constant battle within myself," and, "Not a typical homosexual," and finally, "I don't believe in many rights that homosexuals tend to want to fight for, nor do I condone if you're gay, you have to be a liberal Democrat."

Stage 3 participants: A full 50 out of 150 participants, or 33% of all participants, were classified as stage three participants. In responding to the first question, *"Please describe yourself in terms of your sexual orientation"*. 34 participants, or 68%, responded by stating that they are gay. 10 participants, or 20% of stage three participants, stated that they are bisexual. Only 6 participants, or 12%, failed to answer this question altogether. Typical responses include: "I am a gay white male," and, "Homosexual," and, "Everyone who knows me well, knows that I am gay," and, "Mostly gay now," and, "I am a gay man involved in a 19 year monogamous relationship with a man 24 years my junior," and, "Gay parents and grandparent," and, "I am very out," and, "I am a gay, white male who realized I was gay at a very young age. I am openly gay and have sex with other men," and, "I am basically gay," and, "100% gay," and finally, "I am gay, but do not fly our rainbow flag nor do I offer that information unsolicited."

Stage 4 participants: These 46 men who were categorized at a stage four, 39 of these men, or 85%, openly stated that they are either gay or homosexual. 2 participants, or 4%, stated, "I prefer to have sex with other men", while two participants, or 4%, stated that, "My sexual orientation is just part of me," and one individual, or 2%, stated, "Liked

to be a bottom", and only one participant, or 2%, failed to respond to this question altogether. According to stage theorists, stage 4 is where the individual becomes a gay offspring and comes out to family members. It is this stage where inquiries and contact within the gay community encourages a more positive view of being gay and the gradual development of gay friends. This description accurately portrays the responses from participants at a stage four of development.

Stage 5 participants: There were 13 participants categorized at a stage 5. All 13, or 100%, stated that they see themselves as gay. Clearly, these individuals are to be considered as out and even proud of their sexual orientation. According to these stage theorists, stage 5 is where the individual develops and enters his intimate relationships; where pride and loyalty to one's sexual orientation leads to individuals being explicitly out and affirming their gay identity. (D'Augelli, 1994; Cass 1984; Griffin 1992).

Question T

"Please list those people who know about your sexual orientation".

Stage 1 participants: These individuals' answers to this question range from: No answer at all, to "A friend" to "None, nobody, besides a few acquaintances," to, "The only people who know have been the few (about 5) who I have been sexually; otherwise none of my family and friends knows."

Stage 2 participants: There were 37 participants whose scores placed them at a stage 2 with reference to their developmental stage-based continuum. Twenty-three, or 62%, of these participants mentioned that they were out to family members, while 22, or 59%, of these participants stated they were out to friends, 15, or 41% of participants mentioned that they were out to their coworkers. 4 participants, or 11%, stated they were out to every one, 2 participants, or 5%, mentioned that they were out to gay friends, 2, or

5%, stated they were out to religious leaders, 2, or 5%, mentioned they were out to neighbors, 1, or 3% of participants, stated that he was out to a therapist, and only one other participant stated that he was out to no one.

Stage 3 participants: Out of the 150 participants in this inquiry, a full 33% have been categorized as stage 3 participants. From that group of individuals, 26, or 52%, of these respondents indicated that they were out to friends. 23 participants, or 46%, stated that they were out to family members. 16 participants, or 32%, stated they were out to coworkers. 5 participants, or 10%, stated they were out to every one. 1 participant each, or 2%, stated he was out to his students while the second participants stated he was not out to anyone. Statements range from: "All of my employers, colleagues, and students I know I am gay," and, "Friends I've made online," and, "A few of my friends," and, "My whole family and all of my friends and enemies," and, "My wife, my children, and their spouses, my siblings, my mother, my wife's immediate family, and a variety of friends and associates I have gathered around myself since I came out 11 plus years ago," and, "My sex buddies," and, "Every one except at work," and, "My entire family, work colleagues, boss, friends," and finally, "My mom, sister, brother-in-law, niece, nephew, cousins, all of my friends"

Stage 4 participants: Out of the 46 participants categorized at a stage 4, 37 individuals, or 80%, stated that they are out to family members as shown in Table 8. 28 participants, or 61%, stated that they are out to coworkers, 32 individuals, or 70%, state that they are out to friends, while 14 individuals, or 30%, have stated they are out to every one, and only 1 participant, or 2%, stated that he is out to every one except his parents.

Table 8

Stage Four Participants' Coded Responses to Question T

Coded Responses	N	Percentage
Every one except parents	1	2
Every one	14	30
Family	37	80
Coworkers	28	61
Friends	32	70

Responses include: "Most everyone I work with knows I'm gay," and, "Every one except my parents," and, "All of my family and friends," and, "Everybody knows," and, "My mom and dad and all my family, all of my friends, most people that I work with, and everyone that knows me beyond and acquaintances and all my neighbors," and, "Mom, dad, sister in law, grandparents, cousins, friends, boss, coworkers," and finally, "There is no one who knows me who doesn't know my orientation. I'm open about being gay and being a leather-man."

Table 9

Stage Five Participants' Coded Responses to Question T

Coded Responses	N	Percentage
Family	10	77
Friends	10	77
Coworkers	8	62
Anyone who asks me	4	31
Completely out	1	8
Church members	1	8

Table 9 shows that of the individual's categorized at stage 5, 10 individuals, or 77%, stated that they were out to the family and friends, while eight individuals, or 62%, stated that they were out to their coworkers. 31% percent of the participants stated that they were, "...out to anyone who asks me", and one individual each, or 8%, stated they were, "Completely out to all", and one individual stated that he was out to his church members.

Responses included: "I am out to my family, my friends, my coworkers, and anyone else that asks me," and, "My family, friends, boss, customers, vendors," and, "I'm completely out," and, "Friends, family, church members' people in my community," and, "I've been married to a wonderful man, who I met in 1988, almost 14 years. I make sure to mention him as my husband, when I meet anyone no matter how fleeting the acquaintance might prove to be. In this way, I have the opportunity to continuously come out," and finally, "I've grown a lot closer with my family. Most of my coworkers that I have told respect me and have supported me on issues regarding the gay community."

Question U

"Please describe how your relationship with people listed in question T has been affected since you came out to them".

Stage 1 participants: Only these participants who responded gave a few words: "Just sex," or, "No change," or, "It never changed," and finally, "They always knew me as bisexual." These few utterances lead to the conclusion that either these participants lacked interest in providing answers, or the answers are so brief due to the notion that these men do not see themselves belonging to the gay community as they are struggling with their true identity (D'Augelli, 1994; Cass 1984; Griffin 1992).

Stage 2 participants: These participants revealed strong, consistent responses and exhibited an indication of functionality with those to whom they state they are out to, and perhaps higher scores than what would be expected at stage two. Answers to this question are as follows: "They are all so bi and that makes no difference," and, "...been out bi and gay since I was 16... I don't care how people deal with it," and, "It doesn't come up," and, "Most old friends already knew, and no one has ever had a problem with it with the exception of myself," and, "They have trouble believing it because I am so straight acting," and, "Mom and dad took it moderately hard. They sent me briefly to a psychiatrist but stopped when the psychiatrist advised me that I should masturbate to relieve my central tensions," and, "Being strict Catholic, they don't agree with my lifestyle, but I'm a good person and they continue to act nice and civil with me," and, "Most of them go to the same huge 3000 member Southern Baptist Church, as I do, and they all still love me the same, but they all show witness to me, as in let me know it is a sin but they still love me unconditionally," and finally, "Naturally stronger. They feel closer".

Stage 3 participants: 50, or a full 33%, out of the 150 participants in this inquiry have been assigned to stage three. Of these respondents, 24, or 48%, stated there was no affect with the people mentioned in question T. 6 participants, or 12%, stated that coming out enhanced their relationships. 5 individuals, or 10% of participants assigned to stage 3, stated that they were accepted and supported by those to which they came out. 3 participants, or 6%, stated some individuals quit their relationship with the participant once the participants shared his sexual orientation. 2 respondents, or 4%, reported that they never told others so their relationship could not have been affected since they did not come out, and two other participants responded by stating they had experienced some strain in their relationships after they came out. 1 respondent, or 2%, stated that he had been discriminated against, and one other respondent stated that his family has nothing to do with him following the disclosure of his sexual orientation to his family members.

Responses included: "I have been discriminated but I don't let that hold me back," and, "My family, who are Southern Baptists, have nothing to do with me," and, "They love me for who I am," and, "No effect whatsoever," and, "Not at all," and, "Made the relationships deeper and more open," and, "Relationships have become closer with those to whom I have come out," and, "My mother had never loved me any less than any of her other seven children," and, "Most of those friends have no need or interest in me announcing what I do in the privacy of my bedroom anymore than they announce what they do in theirs," and, "Better," and, "Has not changed," and, "If anything, it has strengthened them," and, "We have become closer," and, "Was totally irrelevant to them," and finally, "Very cold at first, then gradually, over the years, accepted". Clearly, 48% of these participants experienced no significant change in their relationships following the disclosure of their sexual orientation.

As shown in Table 10, of the 46 participants categorized into stage 4, 35 individuals, or 76%, reported positive experiences with friends, loved ones, and coworkers as they shared their gay sexual orientation. 6 participants, or 13%, stated they are relationships were not affected at all, five individuals, or 11%, stated there was no problem, while three participants, or 7%, stated it doesn't matter, one participant, or 2%, stated there was no effect. Only 4 participants, or 9%, indicated a negative response to sharing their sexual orientation with others, as one participant, or 2%, stated that his parents were in the grieving process for him, and 3 individuals, or 7%, stated that at least one parent is no longer talking to him as a direct result of sharing his sexual orientation. Only 1 individual, or 2%, failed to answer the question altogether.

Table 10

Stage Four Participants' Coded Responses to Question U

Coded Responses	N	Percentage
Not affected at all	6	13
No problem	5	11
Doesn't matter	3	7
No effect	8	17
Supportive	6	13
Made relationships better/stronger/closer	7	15
Parents are in grieving process	1	2
Parent is no longer talking to me	3	7
No answer	1	2

Typical responses include: "Not at all," and, "There has been no problems," and, "There has been no effect at all," and, "It took a while to except the fact that I was gay, but I have wonderful support," and, "If anything gets made the relationships closer, easier to talk," and, "I have to say it's improved, after all I know longer feel the need to make up stories to hide my orientation," and, "My family has been supportive," and, "Not really any problems," and, "No longer speak with my father, mother is okay," and, "Certainly with my family, I feel closer to them and not having to hide a part of me," and, "I believe that my relationship with all of them has become even stronger since coming out. I am not hiding anything," and, "Initially my parents were devastated, after six months they became my best support," and, "Doesn't change anything," and, "I am better off now," and, "Dad didn't like it. I suspect that may have been part of the reason that he drank himself to death," and, "Gotten stronger and helps others open up to me too," and, "In a positive manner. Take the stress off of me being myself," and finally, "...and it doesn't seem to have made a difference one way or another."

As shown in Table 11, those categorized at stage 5 are clearly functioning with those individuals to whom they have come out. 7 individuals, or 54%, of the 13 that are classified as stage 5 participants, state that their relationships have not changed with those to whom they have told about their sexual orientation. 3 individuals, or 23%, have stated that those who they have come out to have supported them. 2 individuals, or 15%, of these respondents have stated that they have actually grown closer to individuals that now know of their sexual orientation. The same is true for the 2 individuals, or 15%, who have stated that they feel they have gained a sense of respect for sharing their sexual orientation, and only two individuals, or 15%, state that they have relationships that are unresolved as a direct result of their sharing their sexual orientation.

Table 11

Stage Five Participants' Coded Responses to Question U

Coded Responses	N	Percentage
Hasn't changed	7	54
Supported	3	23
Grown closer	2	15
Respected	2	15
Unresolved	2	15

Examples of these statements include: "I have grown a lot closer with some of my family. Most of the coworkers that I have told respect me and have supported me on issues regarding the gay community" and, "Over time and the more open and I became with my life, the more they came around to seeing that I wasn't any different than I was before. My relationships with my friends and coworkers haven't change," and, "It really hasn't affected any relationship that much," and, "I have an extremely supportive group of friends and family," and, "The transition was easy with the support of my older sister," and, "I have seen no change," and "Rocky at first but they got over it quickly," and, "I was very fortunate not to lose any friends during my coming out phase," and finally, "Very little difference at all."

Question V

"Please explain how you feel about the following statements:

- (1) *"It is not my problem how others feel about my having sex with other men" and*
- (2) *"It is my problem because I engage in sexual practices with other men".*

Stage 1 participants: Participant comments include, "Nobody knows, no comment," and, "I do care what others think, that's why I'm in the closet." This individual seemingly understands and recognizes that he is gay, and according to D'Augelli (1994), individuals at a stage 1 begin to exit the heterosexual identity and begins to come out to others. This participant lacks the development to exit his heterosexual identity as evidenced by the statement regarding what others think or care is of greater importance than the self-recognition that he is not heterosexual, but in fact, he recognizes that he is more connected and more attracted to men than women. Another participant stated, "True statements," while another said, "1. I disagree. I think it's important not only for my own mental health, but for those around me to know that I have sex with me. I just haven't gone there yet. 2. I don't know how to respond to that."

Stage 2 participants: Out of the 37 participants at stage 2, 8 participants, or 22%, failed to answer this question altogether. In reference to question number 1, 5 participants, or 14%, stated that they felt that it is their problem on how others feel about the fact that they are having sex with other men. Typical comments include: "It is my problem because I engage in sexual practices with other men," and, "It has been my problem always, and I will always feel this way," and, "Strongly agree with the statement one," and, "I do care what others feel, but at the same time I don't," and, "One is a true statement," and finally, "I wish I could care less what people think of me but deep down inside I care what God thinks. It bothers me that I am gay and at times, I asked God to forgive me for being gay."

11 participants, or 30%, stated that they were in agreement with the question, "It is not my problem how others feel about my having sex with other men." These participants provided comments such as: "It isn't my problem how others feel about my

sexual orientation," and, "Me having sex with other men is not a problem for me," and, "Really isn't anybody's business," and, "Strongly agree with statement one," and "What I do in the privacy of my home is my business," and, "True -- after 30 who cares what others think," and, "I don't look at having sex with men is a problem. It's a pleasure," and, "One is the truth," and, "One is a true statement. I have no right to judge anyone on who they have sex with, and in turn they should have no problems with me... it's not my problem," and finally, "It's not my problem how people feel." 4 participants, or 14%, of stage 2 respondents stated that in answer to this question, "It's nobody's business," while only 2 participants, or 5%, stated that they disagree with question number 1.

Regarding the second part of the question, *"It is my problem because I engage in sexual practices with other men,"* only 1 participant, or 3%, indicated he agreed with the question and stated that he felt that it was his problem. He went on to say that, "If I have sex with men certainly there are segments of society, if not all of society, which will treat me differently, often negatively. All of which goes to say that it is my problem because I engage in sexual practices with other men."

9 participants, or 24%, reported that it is not their problem with examples including: "It is my problem because I engage in sexual practices with other men," and, "Make no apologies for it," and, "It's not my problem that others feel the way they do simply because I'm gay, it's their own problem for feeling that way towards others," and finally, "There is nothing wrong with having sex with the same sex and nothing to be ashamed of."

While not a single participant stated that they agreed with the second statement, 4 individuals, or 11%, stated that they disagreed with the statement. Comments included,

"Don't agree with this statement," and two participants stated, "Disagree with statement two completely."

In summary, regarding the first portion of the question, 49% of respondents stated that they did not see their sexual orientation as it being a problem. In addition, 30% of respondents answered in the affirmative, that they do see it as their problem how others feel about the fact that they are having sex with other men. Regarding the second portion of question number 2, only 14% of these respondents agreed with the question, "It is my problem because I engage in sexual practices with other men." While this question may not relate directly to developmental stage-based assignment, nearly half of those who responded do not see their sexual orientation as a problem.

As displayed in Tables 12, and 13, stage 3 participants: 13 individuals, or 26%, of the 50 participants categorized at stage 3 responded by stating, "It's not my problem." 11 individuals, or 22%, responded to the first question by saying, "I don't care, it's not their business," 9 individuals, or 18%, responded to the question by stating, "I agree". By combining these first 3 related themes together, a total of 66% of the participants have indicated that it is not *their* problem how others feel about them having sex with other men. 3 individuals at stage three, or 6%, stated, "I am what I am." 1 individual, or 2% of respondents at stage three answered, "I am indifferent to this question," and 3 individuals, or 6%, failed to answer this question. When combining these last 3 respondents' answers to this question, a total of 14% failed to answer this question adequately.

In response to the second portion of question V, out of the 50 participants at stage 3, 7 individuals, or 14%, stated, "It's not a problem," three individuals, or 6%, stated, "It does not matter," 3 other participants stated, "They need to get over it", while another three participants stated, "I disagree." When combining these similar answers to this

question, 16 individuals, or 32%, at stage 3 contend that it is not *their* problem because of engaging in sexual practices with other men. Surprisingly, only 1 individual at stage 3 stated that he agrees with the question, and there are 4 who see his homosexuality as a problem. 1 stage 3 participants, or 2%, responded to this question as being "indifferent," and 3 individuals, or 6%, failed to answer this question altogether.

Table 12

Stage Three Participants' Coded Responses to Question 1

Coded Responses	N	Percentage
I don't care, it's not their business	11	22
It's not my problem	13	26
I am what I am	3	6
I agree	9	18
Indifferent	1	2
No answer	3	6

Table 13

Stage Three Participants' Coded Responses to Question 2

Coded Responses	N	Percentage
It's not a problem	7	14
It does not matter	3	6
They need to get over it	3	6
I agree	1	2

Coded Responses	N	Percentage
I disagree	3	6
Indifferent	1	2
No answer	3	6

(Some participants reported more than 1 response)

As shown in Table 14, when combining the similar answers given to question 1 by stage 4 participants, 99% of these participants feel that it is not their problem how others feel about their having sex with other men. Of these numbers, 9 individuals, or 20%, stated that, "It is nobody's business," while 27 participants, or 59%, stated, "It's not my problem." Another nine individuals, or 20%, stated they, "Agree with the question," and because of the construction of the question, individuals who stated they agree with the question are in essence stating that it's not their problem how others feel about they are having sex with other men. Only 1 individual, or 2%, stated the question was not applicable. Typical responses include: "It is not my problem," and, "Unless you pay my bills it's not your problem," and, "It's not anybody's business," and, "Statement one is true," and, "I don't view having sexual practices with other men a problem," and, "I really don't care what antiquated Americans think about my sex life," and, "What I do in the privacy of my home is my business, it's not my problem but theirs," and, "My sexual orientation is of no concern to others," and, "It's nobody's business but mine," and, "I tend to agree more with statement one," and, "I completely agree with statement one," and, "I could care less what others think," and, "I strongly agree," and, "It is neither their business to know nor my problem," and, "Some people still have a problem with same-sex relationships due to the stigma, it education, or religion," and, "I don't see being gay

as a problem," and, "I can help people look at different components with a different perspective," and finally, "I don't feel it's wrong to have sex with people of the same gender. I'm not hurting anyone so who cares."

Table 14

Stage Four Participants' Coded Responses to Question 1

Coded Responses	N	Percentage
It's not anybody's business	9	20
It's not my problem	27	59
I agree with the question	9	20
Not applicable	1	2

As shown in Table 15, and in responding to the second question, 24 individuals, or 52%, have stated that they do not see their sexual orientation as a problem. A total 18 individuals, or 39%, stated that, "It's not a problem," while five individuals, or 11%, disagree with this statement, and one individual, or 2%, stated, "It's not their business." By stating that, "It's not a problem," I disagree with this statement, and, "It's not their business," are properly combined as these individuals are basically making the same statement using different terminology. 16 individuals, or 35%, failed to respond to question number 2.

Table 15

Stage Four Participants' Coded Responses to Question 2

Coded Responses	N	Percentage
It's not a problem	18	39
I disagree with the statement	5	11
It's not their business	1	2
No response given	16	35

Typical responses to the second portion of the question include: "My having sex with men is never a problem," and, "It's not my problem," and, "My lifestyle is not a problem at all," and, "It is my right to keep the details of my sexual life private to those I choose, therefore, it is not my problem" and, "I do not view that as a problem," and, "I have no problem with what I do to other men," and, "I don't really consider it as a problem that I have sex with other men," and, "I disagree," and, "It's not my problem because I was born this way," and, "I don't view being gay as a problem -- it's part of who I am, not wholly to who I am," and, "When I was a practicing heterosexual I never felt like there was a need to consider how others feel about it," and finally, "I don't really agree. I practice safe sex and get tested for STDs every three months."

As shown in Table 16, there were 13 participants who were categorized into stage 5. 8 of these individuals, or 62%, stated that, "It's not my problem," and 3 participants each, or 23%, stated that, "It's not their business," and that they agreed with this statement, "It is not my problem how others feel about my having sex with other men."

Table 16

Stage Five Participants' Coded Responses to Question 1

Coded Responses	N	Percentage
It's not my problem	8	62
It's not their business	3	23
I agree with the statement	3	23

Example responses include: "It's not my problem how others feel about the fact that I have sex with other men," and, "What I do with my life is my business as long as I am not hurting anyone else," and, "I support number one that is fair problem, it wasn't something I asked for, yet it is something I cannot change," and, "I agree," and, "It really isn't my problem," and, "I don't see my sexual orientation as a source of a problem for anyone else," and finally "It is really no one else's business home I choose to have sex with."

As shown in Table 17, regarding question 2, 6 individuals, or 46% of the 13 participants categorized at stage 5, stated that they disagreed with the question, "*It is not my problem because I engage in sexual practices with other men.*" 1 individual, or 8%, stated, "It's not a problem," and 1 individual stated that he agrees with the question. Three individuals, or 23%, out of the 13 participants categorized at stage 5 failed to respond to the second portion of the question altogether. Typical responses include: "I think this is an absurd statement," and, "Statement to me is how I feel," and, "I disagree with statement two," and, "I disagree. My sexual partners are of no concern to anyone," and, "I disagree -- I do not see my sexuality as a problem," and finally, "The second statement I don't relate to at all because of the judgments."

Table 17

Stage Four Participants Coded Responses to Question 2

Coded Responses	N	Percentage
I disagree	6	46
I agree	1	8
It's not a problem	1	8
No response	3	23

Question W

"Please tell me anything you wish to share with me".

Stage 1 participants: "Like to please men and find it rewarding," and, "Honestly, if I had a choice, I would choose to be 100% straight, it would make my life a little easier. But, unfortunately I was born like this." These individuals appear to lack the self-integrity to be honest with them, as evidenced by their answers given on a confidential survey, let alone possessing the strength to be honest with others they encounter. This near lack of integrity conforms to the categorization of stage one (D'Augelli, 1994; Cass 1984; Griffin 1992).

Stage 2 participants: Stage 2 participants provided a variety of responses to the question, *"Please tell me anything you wish to share with me."* Participants' answers to this question included: "I have lots of difficulties being a closeted married man," and, "I do feel if people know you're gay some feel superior when the opposite is probably true," and, "My main regret with my otherwise good life is that I never was able to marry a woman and have children, so I have lived my life contrary to my wishes," and, "It's been very difficult to be 38 and single. It's also very difficult to meet guys close to my age

who are professional, and drug and disease free, masculine, and take care of themselves," and, "Sex with men is nothing to be ashamed of, it is our culture that cannot handle it," and, "It was after having a spiritual awakening that I truly found happiness in all areas of my life including the acceptance of my sexuality," and, "Homosexuality is not an orientation, choice or malady. It's a normal way of life," and, "What makes me sad when people treat me different or act we are after they find out I am gay. I'm not 100% sure that God is pleased that I'm gay. The whole religion thing bothers me," and finally, "I find gay people who choose not to or are unable to assimilate into mainstream society, culture or politics, those who are bi, and choose to define themselves and defying the world around them solely in the context of their sexuality and the issues it brings, irritating and counterproductive to the acceptance of alternative sexuality in modern life."

Stage 3 participants: Again, stage 3 participants provided a variety of answers to the question, *"Please tell me anything you wish to share with me."* 1 respondent said, "Men have sex without wanting love because they fear society and religion; most really want long-term relationships but are afraid to see the light and dangers of the issue," and, "I really love everyone and I do not think I have to go around telling people I am gay and I'm proud!" and, "I hate that gay life and wish I was not gay, I miss the family values very much and family time," and, "My occupation and living in a small town prevents me from coming out to anyone other than my known gay friends," and, "I engage in sex with men because every fiber of my being gets excited by men," and, "I just wish that so many people wouldn't care. I personally lost two jobs due to the fact that I am gay. I would like to see some more positive representations from political or social to further the causes of rights for gays... as we are so discriminated against in the lower rungs of rural America," and, "I have always been gay and as a young teenager, I learned to hide the

fact that I am gay from others. I did seek therapy. I decided that it was time just two months ago to come out to someone that I love," and, "I had served on boards of community organizations, held offices on boards of trustees, and other examples of general leadership. I feel that the LGBT community is not looking for leadership can that includes my age brackets. The LGBT community is profoundly youth oriented with 30 something's already being labeled older men," and, "Being a gay parent and a 24 year relationship with the man, we were activists without going to parades," and, "I am a 28 year old HIV-positive gay white male living in the Midwest. I was brought up in a strictly religious Pentecostal home. I knew I was gay from a very young age and have just recently come to terms with that. I just came out to my family in February of this year," and, "I was 38 years old before he came out and even went so far as to get married to police society I have been more successful and lead a more fulfilling life since I have come out," and, "I strongly believe in the possibilities of gaining acceptance through collaboration with the LGBT community to expand the spaces where we can feel safe to be ourselves," and, "Why is being gay a problem with people... it's only love. Fate and God above tells us who to love," and, "I wish that gay man were the majority or all gay people had something like a purple birthmark to distinguish us to the world... it would make it easier... people could no longer hide their true selves," and finally, from the highest rated stage three participants, "I hate being gay for the reason of being discriminated against and shunned by society. I actually like being gay if others could just let us live our lives as equal, and I would be very happy being gay."

Stage 4 participants: Stage 4 participants responded to the question asking them to please tell anything you wish to share as follows: "I do not hide being gay," and, "I'm from a very small town and I thought that being gay here was going to be hard. I have no

gay friends," and, "Diversity in human compassion are very important to me. I am merely a homosexual," and, "Having full-blown AIDS has caused many issues of discrimination even from other gay people in the community," and, "The gay community only exists because of a repressed neo-Puritan society," and, "My class was taken aback at the discrimination we as gays deal with daily. Students said we'd absolutely changed their outlook on gay people and they wanted to thank me," and, "Well I am very involved in the gay as well as Jewish community and hold leadership roles both," and, "Homosexuality is genetic, so it's not a choice we are making," and, "I struggled with my sexuality for many years growing up. Then I joined the Air Force and was married at the age of 22, I think I was trying to hide being gay. I had to hide my sexuality for 20 years being in the military until I was 39. The last 10 years I have been completely open and not afraid to admit who I am," and, "I am fortunate to have grown up in the age where I could find role models," and finally, "Remaining closeted leaves people vulnerable through some sort of the most crucial development times in a man's life."

Stage 5 participants: The responses to this question are varied and revealing. Participants' descriptive responses support the stage theorists' classifications using *exact* wording to those published articles. Examples include: "I was having to live two lives and tried to console myself with eating. It was very hard for me to come out to my family as I thought that it would devastate them and possibly lead me to losing my family after I came out however, the relationship with my mother grew much stronger. My father was very supportive, as was his wife, my stepmother. She, however, is still on the fence but he is supportive of me. I think that through the process of coming out it made me feel more confident in myself and my viewpoints," and "I helped to coordinate the national letter writing campaign on the petition against San Diego LGBT pride," and "I

knew at a young age that I was different before I even knew what gay was. Because of my strong religious upbringing, Southern Baptist, I feel that I hid the fact not only for myself but others now; I never really have a proud woman with sharing my sexual orientation. I'm not ashamed of whom I am," and, "I teach Sunday school at a gay and lesbian church in Whittier and I have worked with the interfaith Council of uptown Whittier putting together their world AIDS Day celebration," and, "Openly queer since 1984 at the age of 19. Involved in queer politics and organizing 20 plus years," and, "I have written a book about Gay Testaments: Old and New, in 1997," and finally, "My mother always wanted me to get married and I almost did for her sake but sat her down and told her the life she was setting me up to live and then she understood and accepted me for who I am. I am a facilitator for a group of gay kids under the age of 21 in Albuquerque. All of the facilitators are positive gay role models for the kids to be there if they have any problems or just need someone to talk to."

APPENDIX H: STAGE ONE PARTICIPANTS

Responses

Question S: *"Please describe yourself in terms of your sexual orientation".*

68: bi

08: a heterosexual man who happens to like men, certain man that is, I don't like fats or Queens. I happen to like girls too, I see the appeal they have, and have been with girls sexually, however the connection and attraction with man is a little stronger

60: bi

Question T: *"Please list those people who know about your sexual orientation".*

68: a friend

08: the only people who know have been the few, about five, who I have been with sexually, otherwise none of my family and friends knows

60:

51: closeted bisexual living as a straight man.

Question U: *"Please describe how your relationship with people listed in question T has been affected since you came out to them".*

68: just sex

08: no change

60:

9. Nobody, besides a few acquaintances.

Question V: *"Please explain how you feel about the following statements;*

(1) *"It is not my problem how others feel about my having sex with other men."*

(2) *"It is my problem because I engage in sexual practices with other men."*

68: nobody no comment knows

08: I do care what others think, that's wine in the closet.

60: true statements

51:1. I disagree. I think it's important not only for my own mental health, but for those around me to know that I have sex with me. I just haven't gone there yet. two. I don't know how to respond to that. And

Question W: *"Please tell me anything you wish to share with me".*

68: like to please man and find it rewarding.

08: honestly, if I had a choice I would choose to be 100% straight, it would make my life a little easier. But, unfortunately I was born like this

60: I enjoy seeing other men with erections and watching them cum.

APPENDIX I: STAGE TWO PARTICIPANTS

Responses

Question S: *"Please describe yourself in terms of your sexual orientation".*

95. I am a bi, married man, with a family. Have started enjoying homosexual activities at about 12 years of age still enjoy it

128. 100% homosexual

36 .masculine man comfortable with myself

131. I am an openly gay man

142. I have been bisexual most of my life but I have lived with a younger man for the last 25 years and I no longer approach females.

103. I am 100% submissive bottom gay man

65. Day and think it's nobody's business. Don't care about what goes on in other people's bedrooms and think they shouldn't be interested about mine.

139. I have really never felt comfortable being a gay man, and I remain partially in the closet till my late 40s till my early 60s.

107. Buying a masculine, professional type, clean-cut, educated guy. I used to date girls in high school and college, but never had sex with them. It wasn't until my senior year in college that I finally ventured into a gay bar. The first time I actually kissed a guy, I was amazed about how natural it felt. I'm not openly gay, because I understand the community and environment I live in Atlanta, North Carolina, and Virginia. Unfortunately, I don't feel comfortable to be with completely open with extended family and family friends.

122. A white male, 37. More at top and bottom but versatile.

03. I am an older guy who is gay (attracted pretty much exclusively to man) who has been my securely closeted until about 10 years ago. Since I have been slowly come out to myself, therapists and selected friends. Still closeted to majority of my friends and family.

115. I am 5'5" tall, 130 pounds brown hair blue eyes. I am a gay male like to bottom TS, jack off with a little oral and have a white sock fetish. Have a safe sex and DD free.

13. In other to express my sexual orientation I must describe my upbringing. It's since my childhood, I have had sexual experience with men as well as women. Although I have engaged with both sexes, I was always attracted to men. However, my moral principles, family principles, and the feeling for the love of a woman did not allow me to

just be in a man to man relationship. For years I was able to balance both attractions. I was happily married and have a great son. During my marriage, my need to be with a man was no as strong. I was sexually happy with my ex-wife. I did have a couple of encounters with a mutual friend during my marriage. But after my separation and divorce I felt I needed to balance my life since 1990, I have been just with men. My life today since to be more balance. However, even though I have a few long-term relationships and I have been able to love the man I have been with, I have never felt in love with them, or attracted to them as I did with my ex-wife. Today, I am happily single and enjoying my life is being gay. However, does not discard the possibilities of changing down the road.

44. Openly gay to those on a need to know basis, not too distant family members whom I do not see that often etc.

108. I was previously married life, really have no desire to be with women.

110. Gay, out, and proud.

125. I am a bisexual man.

133. I am a gay white male, who does not flaunt his sexuality. When in a non-threatening situation I am happy to discuss my sexuality at not so when in a potentially threatening situation.

30. Having both a physical and mental attraction toward other men, I would consider myself gay, but my sexuality is a non issue when it comes to living and being who I am. I have a full time job like everyone else; I paid taxes and enjoy other forms of entertainment like the next guy, I never felt the compulsive need to wear a pride flag or have a pink triangle bumper sticker on my car. There's so much more to life, and life is complex enough as it is that I never had the need to proclaim my homosexuality to the world. Seriously, what's the point? I just feel that being gay does not to find who I am.

150. I am a confident game mail and love myself along with my lifestyle. I feel that instead of choosing to be gay, I chose to accept the reality that I am gay, acceptance of being the keystone to my happiness.

123. I am a proud gay male.

113. I am an out, proud gay man.

130. I am a gay man who was out and open. When meeting new people in work circumstances I never lie about my orientation when asked, but do not offer until I asked.

124. Gay masculine disc prof.

59. Gay but not completely comfortable with it.

136. I know I have feelings for the same sex but I also know that it is a stand for what I was taught and brought up in my church. So I do struggle with this day in day out. It is a constant battle within myself.

87. Much prefer masculine gay men.

145. Gay male

140. Comfortable in my own skin. Came out late in life. Didn't deal with sexuality when I was younger. Gay but I feel it's just an aspect of me... doesn't define me.

84. Very sexual but private game man.

73. Bi, but more into men

112. Widowed bi guy. Like the man thing now more so than women but not against either. I am a pitcher only.

104. 100% gay male

105. I am a game mail, who, when confronted on my orientation will be truthful, but I do not always volunteer that information. Depending on the circumstances, i.e., work, I do not hide who I am, however I do not make an issue of my orientation.

132. Not an atypical homosexual. I don't believe in many rights that homosexuals tend to want to fight for, nor do I condone the well if you're gay, you have to be a liberal Democrat.

101. I am a gay semi-out discreet male

63. Bisexual masculine.

Question T: *"Please list those people who know about your sexual orientation".*

95. friends

128. my brothers my priest my coworker -- certain my doctor

36. depends on the conversation but not as a rule

131. every one

142. all the people I work for all of my family and all of my neighbors

103. Mom, stepfather, close friends, some business associates.

65. Gay friends

139. Just about everyone I am in contact with now know.

- 107. My mom, but she doesn't talk about it. Close friends.
- 122. Family, friends coworkers
- 03. My therapists; some friends; folks at the gay youth center where I volunteer.
- 115. Brother's sister, coworkers, classmates. Etc.
- 13. My son, my ex-wife, friends, and think my mother suspects.
- 44. Mom, dad, coworkers, boss, sister, boyfriend, neighbors, friends.
- 108. My brother
- 110. Mom, dad, friends, other family members.
- 125. My wife and my daughter
- 133. Mom dead sibling, lovers, gave friends, a few straight friends, some work associates, passed priests.
- 30. Mother, father, brother, best friend and her husband, both their respective parents and in-laws, boyfriend, boyfriend's parents and their immediate family.
- 150. My whole family, everyone at my job, all of my friends, also anyone who asked.
- 123. My family, friends... every one I do not hide that fact.
- 113. Entire family, friends, coworkers
- 130. Whole family, friends, former bosses
- 124. Friends
- 59. Mom, brother, close friends, boss, some coworkers.
- 136. Mother, sister, immediate family as such as aunts and cousins, the ones that I am close to. My grandmother and my close straight friends.
- 87. Coworkers.
- 145. My family some friends
- 140. Sister. Friends.
- 84. Lover mother sister and brothers

73. All really good friends.

112. Every one

104. Mom, dad, brother, friends, work mates, every one I know on the planet Earth...

105. Partner, friends, mom, dad, sister, cousins, Pastor, coworkers.

132. My closest friends, my coworkers

101. Mom, brothers four, sisters two, coworkers two, friends of my family

63. Family friends coworkers

Question U: *"Please describe how your relationship with people listed in question T has been affected since you came out to them".*

95. they are also bi and that makes no difference

128. normal

131. it affects people differently...

36. been out bi and gay since I was 16... I don't care how people deal with it

128. I do not feel these two effects me in anyway, I really do not care about what others think of my sex partners.

142. no from homes

103. my mother freaked.

65. it doesn't come up

139. Most old friends already knew, and no one has ever had a problem with it with the exception of myself.

107. I am very close to my mother. She's my best friend.

122. Has not been affected at all.

03. Not much. They have trouble believing it because I am so straight acting.

115. It hasn't really. It shouldn't because it's really no ones business what a person's sexual preference is we are all human, have the same motions etc. etc.

13. None of them have been affected.

44. Only lost one college friend, conservative, type since I am out

108. He, my brother, is gay also. I knew it about him he was shocked about me. It has helped us both deal with the lonely gay closeted world.

110. mom had a hard time, but most have been accepting.

125. Better

133. Mom and dad took it moderately hard, I was very young about nine, in 1964, when they found out. They sent me briefly to a psychiatrist but stopped when the psychiatrist advised me that I should masturbate to relieve my central tensions. I related this, on purpose as I did not like the stigma of being thought to have a mental disorder, to my parents and they immediately terminated my treatments. They did not substitute any other treatment. They did not treat me badly either before or after treatments. My brother, one year older, has never commented on my sexuality but is aware of it. The straight friends that I know are okay with my being gay, no change after they knew. Work associates were good however I was told by some coworkers that I was laid off because I was gay however I doubt this as I had pretty much out at work for more than 15 years but never had any bad comments about it from coworkers!

30. I came out to my parents and brother almost 11 years ago and they have been completely fine with it. We're pretty close family and nothing negative has resulted in my coming out to them. We're pretty close family to begin with so the coming out thing was really no big deal. My best friend, best friend one, and her husband, best friend two, I should really say they're both my best friends actually, I have known both of them since high school. My relationship with each of them has not changed over the years, in fact I will when they're letting on. I'm very close to both of them. Best friend one's parents whom I have met several times over the years, take issue with the gay thing. Being strictly Catholic they don't agree with my lifestyle, as they call it that, but they have admitted to their daughter, best friend one, but I'm a good person and they continue to act nice and civil with me. Best friend to his parents I have also known them for years. They are a pair of possibly the greatest, nicest people I know who have no issue at all with my homosexuality. They have enjoyed my company countless times over the years, and I tears. We have all been on trips together, dined out together hundreds of times, etc. they're great people who I can safely say I love them and they love me and my boyfriend. Of course my boyfriend would know. He and I have been together almost 10 years now and the relationship is still growing strong. My boyfriend's parents are easily to people I would consider my other mom and dad. We all get along great together and have done tons of family activities together. I'm practically their son and they have told me this. I also get along great with my boyfriend's two sisters.

150. Since being gay is a major part of my life, those individuals listed in T. are able to better know and understand me. This only happened when I completely began to except myself.

123. It has not affected any relationships, if people have a proud woman with me being gay then it is not a problem for me, it is their problem and life goes on.

113. My relationships have gotten better, more honest and closer.

130. Supportive

124. Positive

59. Mom and brother are supported and we don't talk about it much.) Are completely fine with it. Unfortunately, I feel like my boss and coworkers treat me inferior at times.

136. Most of them go to the same huge 3000 member Southern Baptist church as I and they all still love me the same but they all show witness to me, as in let me know it is a San but they still love unconditionally.

87. Supportive

145. No big change... accepted

140. Actually stronger. They feel closer.

84. I 2000 miles away from most of my family.

73. Exactly the same as before I came out

112. Hardly at all they are just disappointed that they are out of the game with me, women.

104. No change... they all knew before I told them.

105. One is not my problem...

132. When I came out to them, my closest friends already have inclinations, and they were absolutely fine with it. With my coworkers, while they didn't have any inclinations, they were fine with it.

101. No effect, a few encourage my happiness and the pursuit of a boyfriend.

63. Not at all

Question V: *"Please explain how you feel about the following statements;*

95. it is my problem because I engage in sexual practices with other men... think it is not anybody busy but the man that I have sex together... think the law should not be so concerned about that...

36. 1. I think it's funny how many people feel the need to "care" about my sex life I generally just keep them guessing 2. 36.if you care about how others feel about what and who you do in bed than ha ha ha you're just stupid.

131.it isn't my problem how others feel about my sexual orientation. It is just that my sexual orientation

142.I don't have a problem with this

103. Me having sex with other men is not a problem for me in any way or form so I can't identify with either the statement above.

65. One. Really isn't anybody's business. Two. Don't feel it is a problem unless I make it one.

139. 1. It has been my problem always, and I will always feel this way. 2. It is totally my problem although most of my friends disagree with me.

107. 1. I don't want to call attention, because I feel like my sexual orientation doesn't to find my personality. 2. Don't agree with this statement.

122. Strongly agree with statement one. What I do in the privacy of my home is my business. Disagree with statement two completely.

03. 1. It is not my problem how others feel about my having sex with other men. I disagree because my concern how all the others see me. So I have hit a great deal of my emotions and have kept some people somewhat distant from me 2. It is my problem because I engage in sexual practices with other men. I have no problem because I have come to enjoy it.

115. It doesn't bother me because why worry what other people think. Everyone has their own opinion. People nowadays are shady and very judgmental on across.

13. I don't have any feeling about either one of these statements. I live my life the best I can and try no to allow any negativity ruin what I have worked so hard to get, my life.

44. 1. True -- after 30 who cares what others think. 2. Make no apologies for it.

108. One and two could be covered together. I don't look at having sex with men as a problem. It is a pleasure.

110. Other people are entitled to their opinion, and I don't feel that I can sway or change opinions.

125. One is the truth.

133. Well I find question one interesting, on the face of it I would agree but dig a little deeper and I would say that regardless of what you do others negative view of what you

do with your life certainly do affect you. If I speed the police, who enforce their views, the laws, the people that I live with, society at large, will certainly stop me and give me a ticket if I have red hair some people have a problem with that. If I have sex with men certainly there are segments of society, if not all of society, that will treat me differently, often negatively. All of which goes to say that it is my problem because I engage in sexual practices with other men.

30. One. Basically what it comes down to is I do care what others feel but at the same time I don't. Not every one has an open mind and a lot of people have preconceived perceptions about gay people, and because that is all that they know, I don't want them to judge me based strictly on my homosexuality. My sexual orientation is a non-issue to me but I know it's not for a lot of others so I do keep my orientation under wraps. This is especially true at the work place where I work with current and former military personnel. Being gay isn't important enough of an issue to me to allow others to cause a big fuss about it. Two. It's not my problem that others feel the way they do simply because I'm gay, it's their own problem for feeling that way towards others. This seems it can to asking someone if they regret being black, or Latino, or Asian, because being that way causes others to bring their prejudices down on them. Why change yourself if others can't do the same? I'm not ashamed of who I am or what I am, but my sexual orientation is really a small part of what makes me who I am as a whole person and how I live. It's not important of an issue to me honestly.

150. The only time that I feel it would be my problem is when my actions truly affect others. At that point I have to do the responsible thing for society -- whatever that may be.

123. One is a true statement. I have no right to judge any one on who they have sex with an intern they should have no problems with me... it's not my problem. Two, it is not my problem... that sounds like a right wing Republican statement trying to make people feel guilty.

113. One. I totally agree with this statement. Two. You can there is nothing wrong with having sex with the same sex and nothing to be ashamed of.

130. One. I agree with this statement. Two. I disagree with this statement, since I am comfortable with who I am and what and who I may have a relationship with is no one's business but my own.

124. Got it do what you got it do -- -- explore your true feelings in private is okay.

59. One. I wish I could care less what people think of me but deep down inside I care what God thinks. It bothers me that I am gay and at times, ask God to forgive me for being gay. I still worry that maybe I'm doing something wrong. Two. I am very attracted to men but due to all the STDs out there, as well as HIV/AIDS, I choose not to engage in sexual practices with other men. I have only had two serious boyfriends and even then we engage in limited activity.

136. Well of course I am going to go with number two because it is my right to do is I wish in this free country. It is my problem because I engage in sexual practices with other men. So yes if I want to be out of the norm then yes I guess I am going to have to subject myself to the out of the norm criticism that goes along with it. I'm a big boy I can handle it.

87. One. My life is my life. To. It's not a problem.

145. One. My choices are my choices... if it is the way I am I have to accept it for what it is. Two. I don't see this as a problem... it is who I am and the way I was born.

140. One. It's really not my business what others think of me. However, I don't like people throwing it in my face. Two. It's not my problem. It's what it is. I enjoy man. It didn't work having sex with women. I really enjoy the closeness and the communication and intimacy with man.

84. Who you have sex with is nobody's business.

112. Not a problem at all. At my age I don't worry about those things anymore.

104. With no one I totally agree... 100%

132. I really don't discern myself with others' opinions of my sexual practices. It can't be my problem when engaging in sexual practices with other man if I don't play safe.

101. 1. I feel strongly, what I do is my business, for those who know I am gay I don't care what they think about it. 2. I cannot help what I prefer her, I am strong in my desires and what I want to go for.

63. It's not my problem how people feel, it's my problem what people do, legislate, in regard to having sex with other men.

Question W: *"Please tell me anything you wish to share with me".*

95. I have lots of difficulties being a closeted married man. I enjoy sex with other men, I know there are a lot of use out there... it would be better if the public understood that

128 I have a good guilt free sex life

36. I don't see how this will help

131. I am over the whole gay marriage thing. There are more important things to worry about. Get over it!

142. me and my partner feel like a normal family. We attend each other's family reunions and are readily accepted by her families.

103. I've been very discouraged by the leadership in the gay community. I belong to hrc, pflag, etc. however I have not really been impressed by any of the so-called leaders. I'm also concerned that most of the leadership in the gay community seems to be lesbian women rather than gay man.

65. Think there is too much attention to orientation when it shouldn't matter. I do feel if people know you're gay some feel superior when the opposite is probably true. Don't think I have to wear my sexuality on my sleeve and be people over the head with it.

139. My main regret with my otherwise good life is that I never was able to marry a woman and have children. My family and friends and myself all feel that I would have made an excellent father and husband. But this wasn't possible, so I have lived my life contrary to my wishes.

107. It's been very difficult to be 38 and single. It's also very difficult to meet guys close to my age who are professional, and drug and disease free, masculine, and take care of themselves. Unfortunately, unless you're very lucky to have a life partner, I find being gay to be extremely lonely at times. At least I have my pets for companionship.

122. Grew up in strong Catholic background. Thought I would be chastised when I came out, but was lovingly received by my family and friends.

13. I'm not opposed about having people coming out, but what I am opposed to is someone trying to push deep in my through sexual orientation. It seems we all forget we are human and created via the same universe and that we should love each other no matter what, or who we are. It is so unfortunate that people have to wait until a loved one dies for them to show some love, and respect. And what is said, is to find the society, USA, so repressing about sexual orientation, and not the quality of life it's habitants can have.

44. Good luck.

108. Sex with men is nothing to be ashamed of, it is our culture that cannot handle it. It will be a while before that attitude can change. I know it took me a while. Now I am being honest with myself and realizing how many other men have been doing the same for years. On the other hand the young man today that are not being truly honest and have wives or girlfriends and are sucking and talking on the side. All because of fear and shame.

110. Excellent research idea.

133. Your study deals with leadership in the gay community. I do not feel that I have had a leadership role in society. I have always had non-managerial jobs and tasks and community organizations. I do not feel that I would make a good leader even though I want to be one. Various some history that prior to my being adopted at age 6 1/2 it was said in the adoption papers I was a leader of activities with the other boys in the orphanage, I do not know for sure if this is true but I seem to remember those years in a

positive light and indeed it may have been true. Good luck with your study and your doctoral candidacy.

30. This has been a very interesting and thought-provoking survey and I thank you for allowing me to participate.

150. I spent many years searching for happiness. A lot of that time, I spent and drug addiction. It was after having a spiritual awakening that I truly found happiness in all areas of my life including the acceptance of my sexuality.

123. Homosexuality is not an orientation, choice or malady. It's a normal way of life. It has been here since the beginning of time and will always be here. But no matter how we try to educate the public that he goes on.

113. Being out is the best thing that a gay person can be. It has given me confidence, a sense of community and pride.

59. What makes me sad when people treat me different or act weird after they find out I'm gay. I am not 100% sure that God is pleased that I am gay. The whole religion thing bothers me.

136. I hope your research goes well and I would love to see the final output of it all. ☺

73. I lied on the consent form.

112. I have so many partners that I do get bored with all some times and think about other things like SNM leather etc. just something new.

104. I love life... and am in a committed relationship with a man... we love each other deeply... are faithful to each other and have been together for five years now.

101. I am a gay man in today new military. Even though don't ask don't tell kind helps us, it doesn't cover is totally. I live my life to the fullest and stand for gay rights, but I am limited on how I can help my friends and my lifestyle in general. When I am out with my friends, I defend my friends and other gays when I see straight guys giving them hell. I am a defender but limited. Things were this survey, it opened up my own eyes. God bless you.

63. I find gay people who choose not to or are on able to assimilate into mainstream society -- culture -- politics, those who are buying, and choose to define themselves and defying the world around them solely in the context of their sexuality and the issues it brings, irritating and counterproductive to the acceptance of alternative sexuality is in modern life.

APPENDIX J: STAGE THREE PARTICIPANTS

Responses

Question S: *"Please describe yourself in terms of your sexual orientation".*

111. I am totally out with family and work

120. I am a gay male.

143. I do not put a label on myself, because I love men and women both sexually. I feel that it is no one's business but my own and the person I am dating.

144: Gay

50: Gay Man

102: 100% gay

28: I would describe myself as a sensitive caring person. I believe that being gay has made more compassionate toward others' needs And feelings, not only towards other gay people but towards people who are different in other ways as well.

116: strong religious background, married with children and young.

21. Always knew I had an attraction for guys, only recently actually began investigating and making gay friends.

129: I am a gay white male who came to accept his sexuality later in life

147: homosexual

118: everyone who knows me well knows that I am gay. I assume that people who don't know me well could guess and I am gay, but I don't generally discuss it with them

121: bisexual attracted to men and women but leaning towards man

148: Gay male comment formally closeted and married, hetero, with two kids -- -- came out at age 40

114: Gay Man

80: I am a gay male

72: mostly gay now... had been actively bisexual for most of my life, including a three year marriage to a woman

146: I am gay, I was married to a woman and lived in a hetero life for 15 years.

117: I am a gay man involved in a 19 year monogamous relationship with a man 24 years my junior. Teen gay is not the be all and end all in my life. As far as I am concerned, it's a part of who and what I am is a man.

83: I am a man that has been with both men and women however lean more towards the male side

137: Gay male

49: I'm just a simple easy to please human being... who just happens to like guys... I've never understood... why there has to be labels attached to any and every one, aren't we all just human beings... with different likes and dislikes...

147: I consider myself as a gay man. I have always been gay but he had the fact from others including family. I was married to a woman for three years and feel that it was just to protect myself. I did love the woman that I married. But deep inside I was hiding my sexuality from every one.

31: I am a person of male gender who is -- has been attracted to one woman in the universe... the woman who, approaching 22 years of age, became my wife. I am not sexually attracted to women in general. I am more broadly attracted to men.

126: Gay parent and grandparent and former foster parent

135: I am a gay white male 51 years old

39: Day white single male

100: I am sexually active and enjoy sex --period. I see nothing wrong with how you express yourself and the passion that I have in me

149: I am very out

81: I am a gay, white male who realized I was gay at a very young age. I am openly gay and have sex with other men.

43: white gay male

48: situational, involving

127: Gay

109: think kind bi

47: I have been days since early childhood, due to an early experience with an older man. I was deep in the closet for most of my life though. I was married for 33 years, but came out in 2001 at the age of 59. I am now separated.

70: I am basically gay, but have had bisexual experiences and enjoy the company of women. Most people would probably consider me to be bisexual.

119: I feel I am bisexual but I tend toward men

10:100 percent gay, but previously married to a hetero woman. No children.

12: I was married for 12 years to a female; basically knew I was different at age 6. Had male attraction around age 13; pressured in dating females through high school and college. Fell in love with my wife and enjoyed the companionship. The sex was good but not completely fulfilling. When I married at age 24, I thought I could change and adapt. Around age 30 to the Internet became accessible and I could explore homosexuality. Amicably terminated marriage for years later and came out to my wife. I came out to my family about a year after that. Now I lead a full homosexual lifestyle. I have a partner of three years. I am out to everyone except it work.

09: I am gay but do not fly our rainbow flag nor do I offer that information unsolicited. If asked directly I will answer the question but do not believe it is anyone's business for me to place my sexual orientation into the context of a conversation. I do not avoid conversations that may indicate my sexual orientation, such as political or social conversations. I simply let the person make the decision on whether they wish to pursue that line of questioning.

40: I am a 100% gay man and have no desire whatsoever to be with a woman.

24: I don't use my sexual orientation to describe who I am. If someone asks me if I am gay I have no problem telling them the truth, but in general what I do in my bedroom is not what I typically go around discussing with every one.

94: gay male

16: bisexual man, partnered currently with the man. Not out at work because of conditions, out with friends and family. Very active in LG BT organizations. President of local LG BT theater, LG BT rugby team and board member of bisexual foundation.

88: well I am an openly gay man well depends on who you say I'm open to... my mother knows I'm gay but she thinks I went straight so I keep it that way so that I can get my inheritance... I have a boyfriend and he is great... first relationship I have had in four years... I was with my ex-boyfriend for five years prior... it took me a long time to get over him... and now I'm dating someone else... finally... I don't really see myself as having to that day's I am gay... I'm just a straight acting mail that likes to for other guys basically... I'm a job/rap... and I work for the second-largest retailer in the world... I love home improvement...

74: gay man

57: Gay

37: single white gay male

41: I don't make sexual orientation and issue with the people I talked to or meet.

Question T: *"Please list those people who know about your sexual orientation".*

111. Everyone

120. All of my employers, colleagues, and students know I am gay.

143. My best friend, a coworker, my fraternity brothers

144: sons, sisters, brother, ex-wife, few friends

50: family, and friends, my boss, and some of my coworkers

102: my mom, my dad, my brother, every one at work including my boss

28: my friends here in San Diego know I'm gay except my friends from work.

116: several close friends, my cousin, also gay

129: friends I've made online

147: only those men who I have sex with

118: my immediate family, my extended family, cousins, uncles, aunts, my college friends who I am still in touch with, to high school friends I am still in touch with, former colleagues who I am still in touch with, people in my book club, all straight women

121: a few of my friends

148: 2 sons, three brothers, and their families, friends, coworkers

114: mom, dad, boss, brothers, coworkers

80: sisters, some friends, nephew, and nieces, some coworkers

72: best friend, ex-girlfriends, and gay friends

146: parents, boss, colleagues, friends, relatives, children and acquaintances

117: I have no living relatives and was not raised by my parents. The grandmother, who raised me knew and had no clue why she was supposed to care one way or the other. All our friends know. My employers, straight men, new my partner and I and have had dinner in our home many times

83: no one does that this time

137: my whole family and all my friends and enemies

49: mom, bosses, all my friends, and some who aren't my friends know... coworkers. etc.

147: my brother, my best friend and ex-boyfriend, others with whom I associate with at the gay bars and clubs.

31: my wife, my children, and their spouses, my siblings, my mother, deceased, my wife's immediate family, and a variety of friends and associates I have gathered around myself since I came out 11 plus years ago.

126: everyone who knows me, knows

135: mom and family and other friends

39: my boss -- my friends

100: my lovers

149: every one

81: mom, dad, grandmother, sister, brother-in-law, friends, and coworkers

43: family, close friends

48: my little sister

127: my sex buddies

109: a few close friends

47: my ex-wife, my daughter, and most of my friends, both straight and gay.

70: members of a gay man's nudist group, some neighbors, members of local gay and bisexual organizations

119: a few of my close gay friends

10: all family, friends, some former coworkers.

12: everyone except it work

09: my mother, my friends, my business partner, some of my fraternity brothers.

40: my mom, my dad, my sister, my friends, people I work with. The rest of my family does not know, to my knowledge.

24: my entire and immediate and extended family. Most any other people that know me know that I am gay. If people that I do business with asked me I will tell them. Example. I had a client one time for three years and then one day she asked me... I heard you were gay the other day. I told her yes I am. She said I never knew that. She had no reason to know what. What I did in my bedroom does not involve my business dealings with her.

94: entire family, work colleagues, boss, friends

16: mom, sisters, recent friends

88: my mom, my boss, but coworkers, friends, dead, one cousin, classmates

74: everyone I know or care to have in my life

57: most friends, but not family, coworkers, colleagues

37: parents, friends, and select coworkers

41: My mom, sister, brother-in-law, niece, nephew, cousins, all of my friends

Question U: "Please describe how your relationship with people listed in question T has been affected since you came out to them".

111. I have been discriminated but I don't let that hold me back.

120. My family, who are Southern Baptists, have nothing to do with me and I am not allowed to be and some other homes. Other people seemed to have no problem with my being gay; many are accepting and supported. Many of my college students have expressed appreciation after I've told my classes and I informed my classes that my classroom is a safe place for all types of diversity and will not tolerate any type of discrimination. I always have a long wait list to get into my classes.

143: well, they love me for who I am.

144: ex-wife -- bad, one Sunday -- good, one son -- fair, sisters -- good brother -- bad

50: no effect whatsoever. That I can sense

102: have not been affected at all...

28: all the people who know for sure I'm gay have known from the time I met them. My mom suspects that I am but I have not been able to bring myself to actually tell her yet. But she says it would not affect how she feels about me.

116: not at all

129: I've been able to fulfill my sexual needs through these friends

147: has not changed

118: they have been supportive, so it has only made the relationships deeper and more open

121: nothing changed with my friends

148: some strain within family at first, but now, okay

114: no change

80: it hasn't changed any I never told them they just knew I guess

72: relationships have become closer with those to whom I have come out

146: no effect, some occasional ribbing from coworkers but that's about all

117: it is not then affected at all. In the case of the younger of my employers he has if anything, been more sympathetic and supportive.

83: no problems because I am not out

137: not at all

49: well, some friends quit being friends after finding out... that I was gay, I just wrote them off as not being my friend in the first place, no love lost there, others were supportive, and some friends and I grew closer because of it.

147: my brother is okay with it. And my friends are all day anyway so they are good with it to. They do address the fact that I am not completely out with the rest my family.

31: my wife and I had a difficult relationship crisis in 1985 when she discovered something I had written to an online contact. With the help of each other, a commitment to each other, counseling, support groups, self education, etc., we were able to find a way to re-organize and restructure our relationship and our marriage so my interest in men were embraced within the circle of the relationship/marriage we are monogamous and that we only have one spouse. There is fidelity in her marriage and relationship because we operate within mutual agreements. We are not sexually exclusive. My wife is very supportive and has come a serious advocate for LG BT issues.

My mother: felt she knew I was interested in men when I was in a junior in college. In 1986 she was diagnosed with stage for ovarian cancer. She elected not to do radiation or chemo but rather to have palliative care. She made the last trip away from her home in Wyoming here to visit me and my family. It seemed that one of the reasons for her making that trip was to tie up loose ends about her knowledge/suspicious of my underlying sexual orientation. She was greatly relieved to know that my wife was, in the know, and that we have no plans to separate or divorce. She seemed like a Bird led out of a cage and talk freely and openly about issues when she thought of them. She said that

in spite of what she felt she knew in her heart she had never loved me any less than any of her other seven children, I am the oldest, and that she felt she wanted to write to the family encourage them to continue loving me as she had loved me all the years since she came in to her knowledge. I decided it was appropriate during her visit here to write a letter to my siblings about my whole personality, assuring them I wasn't a pedophile, communicating that my wife was away her and that we had no plans to divorce. I allowed my Mother to and/or edit the letter before I sent it. I don't remember that she changed anything.

My siblings: my next younger sister said her first thought was to find an opportunity to reaffirm a regard and love for me. The next younger brother, now deceased, was a minister and he engaged me in a correspondence dialogue, he lived in another state at the time, regarding his concern for my eternal well-being and his feelings about how sexual orientation issues were mandated to be handled by Scripture. We did not agree on some basic tenants and ultimately I observed to him that I felt if we continue to try to dialogue on the issues we were progressing towards becoming adversaries. I said I wanted him much more as a brother than as an adversary and asked if we could put the sexual orientation issues aside. We did and we never tried to speak of the issues again. The brother next younger reported feeling glad that I had finally openly acknowledged what he felt was obvious since junior high days. The rest of my siblings made no response to my epistle of disclosure.

Fairly early on, my mother-in-law said privately to my oldest daughter, I don't like what you're dad in is. I felt some urge to engage her in a discussion about the issues but ultimately let things pass. She demonstrates through attitudes and affection that her position has softened and that she has great regard for me.

My children: when my wife found a copy of something I had sent to an online contact and we were immediately and relationship crisis, my oldest daughter was graduating college, my son was finishing his freshman year of college, and my youngest daughter was graduating high school. I felt important that we find ways to let them know what the situation was because they are all bright individuals and would feel the tension in the home as my wife and I struggled through our relationship crisis. Their response was remarkably similar: a, they realize that my sexual orientation had the potential to affect their lives profoundly... especially if their mother and I divorced. But... they wouldn't actively worry about that until it started to happen. B, they didn't want their mother to expect herself... or to be expected by others... to live in an ongoing situation where she could not find resolution, support, and peace. C, they asked that we not come to them to unload or vent our issues and that we were not ask him to take sides require in to tie their allegiances to one parent or the other. Largely, I believe we succeeded in all of those requests.

The workplace: I'm self employed so I don't have a boss to calm out to, or hide from. The majority of my personal life is not cogent to my business activity or ability to do my job so I feel no need to announce what I do in the privacy of my bedroom anymore than my clients and associates announce what they do and mares.

Social: I have a group of friends and acquaintances that I have had for many years -- -- predating my outing by my wife. Most of those friends have no need or interest in me announcing what I do in the privacy of my bedroom anymore than they announce what they do and mares. I see many of them as lacking any kind of mechanism in their life to help them process and/or understand information about my sexual orientation. It would therefore be inappropriate expectation on my part for them to accept and support my

interest in men. I don't feel the need for their acceptance and support on LG BT issues. I find acceptance and support in other environments that are more able to give me acceptance and support.

The faith community: I am involved long term, since my parents, with a simple, fundamentalist Christian, home-based fellowship. I compartmentalize the body of believers in faith... and my personal relationship with my creator. If there is judgment to be made I believe it rightfully comes from my creator. I believe the both of believers are limited in their ability to respect and celebrate many kinds of diversity on many issues. I see many of them as lacking any kind of mechanism and arrived to help them process and/or understand information about my sexual orientation. It would therefore be an inappropriate expectation on my part for them to accept and support my interest in men. I don't feel a need for their acceptance and support on LG BT issues. I find acceptance and support and other environments that are more able to give me acceptance and support. I have not felt excluded, rejected, or abandoned in my personal meditations and relationship with my creator. My relationship with my creator trumps what the body of believers may or may not do.

126: better

135: hasn't really affected them guess I am lucky

39: lost one friend years ago -- but it seems they were not my friend after all

149: everything is fine

81: nothing has changed.

43: has not changed

48: my sister sucks my dick less often

127: cool

109: same, they knew

47: my ex-wife and I get along although we live apart. My daughter seemed to have accepted my gayness, she just stated that she did not want to meet any boyfriend that I might have. My straight friends do not seem to have minded. My gay friends think I did the right thing to come out.

70: my relationship with others hasn't been affected very much by coming out to others

119: not at all

10: family a bit strange at first, now not really talked about. Family dynamics in general have always been dysfunctional. Lost a few friends from past life, but that was years ago when coming out.

12: no, every one has been great

09: it hasn't.

40: as far as my family, nothing has changed though we do not discuss my homosexuality. I told them, they know and it's like they forgot. I don't push the issue. I was always out to my friends and coworkers go. Nothing has changed their.

24: if anything it has strengthened them. With business people it is almost a feather to know or have a gay vendor in some areas, since we tend to be more creative and have a little more imagination.

94: relationship is better, I am more confident at work

16: sisters comfortable from the beginning, no change

88: my mother told me that I'm going to get AIDS and die of it as well as I'm going to hell... she also told me for a long as she is alive and I am gay that she will make my life living hell.

My boss well he doesn't care I just got promoted.

Coworkers well most of them are gay.

Friends same most are gay of the relationships never changed

I feel like I can be myself around them

57: we have become closer and the females are now more open about their private lives to me.

37: was totally irrelevant to them

41: very cold at first, then gradually, over the years, accepted.

Question V: *"Please explain how you feel about the following statements;*

111. I don't care its not their business.

120. One. I someone else has a problem with my being gay, they need to get therapy to deal with it. I have no problem with being gay: not to be quoting the title of a song but I am what I am.

143: 1, it's not my proud moment as long as I am safe.

144: 1

50: 1. I strongly agree 2. Having sex with men is not a problem

102: I agree with statement number one

28: I feel that it doesn't matter if other people have a problem with how I choose to have sex with because it does not affect them. The only people who it should matter to are the ones who I am or have been intimate with, but I believe that's the case with straight people too.

116: one. Is valid if you are secure in your homosexuality and other people, as in relationships and children, are not affected by your gay impulses or activities. Two it is your problem if you choose it as a problem; otherwise the extent of problems would be the emotional and health risk of having sex with men -- or women for that matter.

129: I'm completely in different to both statements

147: the only people who know I have sex with men are the men themselves my private life is of no concern of others it is the way I am so yes it is a problem but one that cannot be changed so I deal with it the only way I can

118: I agree with number one in principle, although the statement has a certain strident tone to it that I would not take on. As for number two, I would not consider engaging in sexual practices with men is a problem so I would not to find the issue in this manner.

121: it's my life I will make my own decisions

148: not my problem in most situations; but since I work with kids professionally, I am careful because of professional reputation and a highly homophobic community

114: being gay is who I am. But, I don't throw it up in anybody's face. What I do privately shouldn't be of general concern. However being out -- Gay does shape my personality in relationships

What I do on my own home and bedroom is no one else's business. If it bothers them they will get over it

72: my sexual preference and activities are my business and no one really needs to know the exact details, except for current sexual partners

146: it is not my problem, I feel others need to be enlightened about human sexuality to better understand the meaning of homosexuality. I don't define my sexuality based on the fact I prefer sex with men. I am defined by the fact that I have an internal desire for men rather than women.

117: being gay was never anything I ever had any concern about. I neither hid it nor advertise. As a man who was raised in a horrific slum, I learned at a very early age how to physically defend myself so I have never had to accept abuse, verbal or otherwise, from anyone.

83: it's a great statement

137: I agree with number one

49:1, right, it's not my problem. I could really care less what any one thinks of me, it has it really is none of their business to begin with. 2. What?... what problem? I engage in sex.

147: not sure how to answer either of his statements. Just feel that when it comes to how others feel about the fact that I have sex with men, I do care and respect others opinions about the issue. I do not think that it will affect my choice to continue with the practice. I've always been attracted to men and will continue to do so regardless of how others feel.

31: 1. no man is an island, sound familiar?? Smile, and all of us are interrelated in interconnected in many ways. I believe it is unthinking and arrogant to feel what we do and what we are has no impact on others. I believe in being reasonably discreet about personal issues -- sexual orientation being one of them. If I am in association with others who are sensitive about something, not just sexual orientation, I believe it incumbent on me to know about and be careful about respecting those feelings so that I don't complicate or limit my ability to be helpful, friendly, and effective in that particular environment.

On the other hand, I believe I have a responsibility to myself to know where my boundaries and limits are and should not be afraid to do find them for others as well as enforce them. There could well be situations where I should/would decline in association with certain people if mutually agreeable modes of association could not be created.

2. Everyone owns some of their own problems because they have sex with men, don't have sex with men, are of a certain skin color, are a particular nationality, etc. There are both costs and benefits in just about any human condition or behavior you can think of.

126: 1: I don't need their approval, two: when I was young I felt that way

39: one, I don't see it as something I discuss with others. To, that statement makes it sound like I feel bad or it's wrong -- I don't feel it is

100: to each his own -- whatever turns you on is okay with me, as long as you don't hurt people or interfere with their lives and the way they want to live them.

149: I feel free to do what I want

81: it is not my problem how others feel. It is something that is they are problem and they need to deal with it in whatever way they can.

43: it is no one's problem and probably not even their business

48: gregarious

127: none of any boys business

109: both non-issues

47: I think that one, is how I feel about the issue now. I do not think that most people really care what I do in my bedroom anymore than I care what they do in theirs.

I used to believe in, two, and that is why I had my sexuality when I was younger and sought out a normal life, lived in the closet, got married and had a family. As I age and began to see my sexuality, I finally gain the courage to be what I am; a gay man.

70: one, I really haven't changed as a person and I hope that others accept me as such and will except those that I might develop a deeper personal and sexual relationship with. Two, as long as I am careful about my relationships, practice safe sex, and don't flaunt my sexual preference there it really isn't a problem. It becomes my problem if I flaunt my preference at times when it is not appropriate

119: one, I feel it's private information. two, I feel it's private information

10: other people need to come to terms with reality. There are gay and lesbian people all around and if they have a problem with that, that's too bad. It's time for them to accept reality and get over it. 2, is irrelevant.

12: well I don't like the use of the word problem

09: one. I agree with statement number one. It's quite frankly is none of anyone else's damn business home I have sex with as long as it is with an adult and consensual. Two. I disagree with statement number two. I do however make a choice to engage in sexual practices with other men, but it's not a problem. Some men, however do have a problem because of irresponsible engagement is sexual practices or unethical engagement such as cheating on a partner or knowingly having sex with a married mad.

40: I agree with statement one. It is not my problem that others may feel adversely to my having sex with men. They should get over it. I disagree with statement two. It's not my problem that others feel bad about what I'm doing. But I know that there are some people who wouldn't accept it at all, regardless of how much you try to explain it to them. I try not to let it bother me.

24: I don't see it as a problem. It was the way I was born and it is what is natural to me.

94: I do not feel that others should judge but I understand that we all do. I know there are is nothing wrong with my relationship with my partner and that is more loving then many straight relationships that I am aware of.

One) I don't see that a is a proud plum per se but am concerned by the judgments and discrimination that others hold because of it.

88:1 well it's true it's not my problem... what happens in my bedroom is no one's business.

2 statement two is just totally stupid cut as well it's not my problem or anyone's problem and anyone that thinks like that should be well should just die!!

74:1, I agree, 2 disagree

57: other people are concerned because of the high risk of STDs and have some justification for their levels of concern. But it does come down to being more my problem than any thing else.

37: one. I really don't care about others opinions about my sexual orientation, however it angers me when issues like gay marriage come up and I am discriminated against for being gay. Two. I have a right to engage in any activity I wish with whomever I choose, they have a problem not me.

41: One. I agree, unless how others feel turns to be punitive financial or physical abuse.
2. It's not my problem..

Question W: *"Please tell me anything you wish to share with me".*

111. Men have sex without wanting love it is because they fear society and religion most really want long-term relationships but afraid to see the light and dangers of the issue.

120. When my students ask me how I feel about gay marriage or same-sex partnerships, I tell them the truth and telling them about my past relationship. My partner and I were together for over 16 years. Before he became terminally ill, we had done all the legal procedures possible, power of attorney, joint tenants with writers survivorship etc., to establish our rights and our relationship. When he was in the hospital in critical care, I was not allowed to see him because I was not his next of kin. After it took off from work to care for him when he was informed he had only a few weeks to live and did not want to go to a hospice, the visiting nurse who came to pronounce him dead would not release his body until next of kin had been notified. They, the nurse and the corner, insisted on calling his ailing 83-year-old mother of three in the morning to tell her that her son had died. She had been out to visit him the previous week in our home and had left because she told me she knew he was in the best of care with me as his caretaker. When I finished telling my students about that situation in response to their questions about how I feel regarding gay marriage or partnerships, I conclude with need I say more?

143: I really love every one and I do not think I have to go around telling people I am gay and I'm proud!

144: I hate that day life and wish I was not gay, I miss the family values very much and family time. The gay life I have found is all centered around bars and sex.

129: my occupation, engineering/construction, and living in a small town prevents me from coming out to anyone other than my known gay friends.

147: wish I were not homosexual

121: I like to cross-dress and not sure if I am bi or gay

114: good luck with your findings.

80: I thought you might go more in depth with this like he is being gay hereditary or learned or not I can tell you I am the youngest of 10 and I am gay I have one sister that is all so and two nephews and nieces we are all from big families

146: I am first a father, a man, a husband, to another man, a hard worker, intelligent being. I engage in sex with men because every fiber of my being gets excited by man. I can't control that, I tried, and I needed to learn to accept that. I only have people in my life that share or except my existence.

117: many gay men seem to be obsessed with their sexuality. I have always taken it for granted. It really doesn't do find me. It's not something I ever spent any significant of time thinking about.

83: nothing

49: I just wish, and it's a big wish, that so many people wouldn't care so much about what anyone does in this day and time. It's not as though we don't have enough to worry about without having to worry about what's looming over their horizon. I find it on fair that so many gays have lost their jobs due to the fact that they are gay. I personally lost two jobs just for that very thing. I work in an ad will state, and that amount of frustration is overwhelming, knowing that an employer can fire you for nothing more than... I don't want you working for me because you are queer. I would like to see some more positive representations from political or reserve's to further the causes of rights for gays... as we are so discriminated against in the lower rounds of rural America. I could go on and on but it's Saturday, and I'm off work, hope this helps you in some regards take care, kev.

147: I have always been gay. Since I was very young I have always felt different and have always questioned my sexuality. As a young teenager, I learned to hide the fact that I am gay from others. People can be very cruel when they told of others' sexual preference. Adults are no different. I didn't choose to be gay. I was born this way. People don't seem to understand that fact. I did seek therapy when I was 30 because I wanted to learn how to deal with my feelings about it. I had anger management issues that affected my work and became very antisocial. All because I didn't know how to tell my family that I was gay. I decided that it was time just two months ago to come out to someone that I love. I came out to my brother. He was bothered by it at first but accepted the fact. He's fine with it now and knows that I'm having a problem with coming out to the rest of the family. He is supportive of me. I must sound like I am not making sense, and I hope that I have helped in your study.

31: to speak more directly to the topic of a predisposition to lead within the homosexual community and the likeliness of taking up leadership within the community as individuals are more open about their sexual orientation, with themselves and others: I see these issues existing with two polar positions. One, the interest in, ability to, and predisposition towards taking a leadership position, and two, the homosexual community's interest in and/or willingness to be led by a given individual, type of individual or group of individuals.

For example, I am an educated, well read, professional, assertive type personality who has served on boards of community organizations, held offices on boards of trustees, and

other examples of general leadership. I'm articulate, write well, and do well both at organizing elements as well as finding creative solutions or procedures to deal with challenges presented to me. It wouldn't be a stretch then, to assume that I could be a natural at leadership in the LG BT community. I don't feel however, that I have had an opportunity to exercise my leadership skills in the LG BT community. I feel that the LG BT community is not looking for leadership in the , graphic of people that includes my age bracket. I experience the LG BT community to be profoundly youth oriented with 30 -- something man already being labeled older men.

For quite a time I was involved with San Diego's bisexual forum. I attended meetings and try to share insights and opinions from my background, experience, readings, etc., when asked of course. For a long time I felt acknowledged and held in some regard. For the last several years, however, I pulled away from the form because the membership entered a phase of being made up of younger people than I, and I came to feel that my contribution was no longer held in reasonable regard and that I was mostly being patronized by the younger membership. I know of one other person, a Ph.D. psychologist who has had a very long association with the forum and has been instrumental in its growth and viability from its inception, who has similarly pulled away for the same issues I just mentioned. It's a sad loss of personnel and their resources for the organization. I don't feel this is unique to the five form, though -- rather I feel the shift of focus away from the contributions older people can make to a younger population is endemic in our culture. I don't feel it's an issue solely related to issues of sexual orientation although I believe the LG BT subculture is even more focused on youth then he is the general population.

126: because of being a gay parent in a 24 year relationship with a man and straight neighborhoods we were activists without going to parades.

100: I love sex with men -- I can take a very submissive, feminine role. I love pleasing a man sexually. I am very submissive and love to try everything.

81: I have nothing more to say.

43: nothing to share

48: chicken butt

127: try gay sex it's (unreadable)

47: as a long closeted individual, that lied to and deceived my family and friends, I lived with being gay and coped with what I perceived as societies condemnation of gayness and my guilt at all the deception.

Most people who know me, while closeted, considered me a well-adjusted person not knowing I was gay.

I cannot be certain of why I came out. Possibly, because at the age of 59, I saw my mortality. Possibly, it was because I finally develop the Kurdish to be what I am.

Possibly it was my need to be loved by a man.

70: as an older guy/gay male man, I haven't seen numerous changes in attitude and acceptance. Having served on neighborhood committees and been involved with political groups, I find that it is only when I forced my sexual preferences into the issue that respect his loss and my leadership question. Being a responsible citizen applies to sexual orientation regardless of what that might be.

119: I am a gay clergy person who happens to be married. I love my wife but we do not have sex. She is not aware of my gay side but suspects it. I do not feel guilty but I am careful because of my profession.

12: when I was married I was politically and community involved. That has changed. Partially due to meet changing professions, bank VP versus software development.

40: I am a 28 year old HIV-positive gay white male living in the Midwest and have all my life. I was brought up in a strictly religious Pentecostal home where we didn't believe in anything. I knew I was gay from a very young age and have just recently come to terms with that. I just came out to my family in February of this year, despite them knowing I was HIV positive for the last seven years. (It didn't register with them how I was infected.) I've been to death's door and back and can thankfully say that I've come to a place now where I am a lot more loving and accepting of myself and have found others to be the same. I am currently going to school to be a paralegal and work part time at the Ryan White clinic doing HIV testing and counseling. Every day, I get to meet new people, gays and straights, and I'm able to talk with them about their lives, their issues and lead them down a path towards better sexual health and I can't be your life.

24: I was 38 years old before I came out and even went as far as to get married to please society. I have been more successful and lead a more fulfilling life since I have come out. I am sorry that my ex-wife had to go through it but, I was truthful with her before I married her and told her that I had been with men and still had an interest in them. We were together for 10 years before I ask for a divorce. I told her I could never be what she wanted or deserves to have in a relationship and that she would thank me later for the divorce later. She did and to this day we are still very close friends.

16: I strongly believe in the possibilities of gaining acceptance through collaboration with the LG BT community to expand the spaces where we can feel safe to be ourselves.

88: you have to remember that most gay men are just regular people that work for a living and have a meaningful relationships... why is being gay a problem with people... it's only love... like a Man loves a woman is just like I loving a man... it's all the same thing love you can't change or choose... fate and God above tells us who to love him.

74: I wish that gay man were the majority or all gay people had something like a purple birthmark to distinguish us to the world... it would make it easier... people could no longer hide their true selves

37: I hate being gay for the reason of being discriminated against and shunned by society... I actually like being gay and every other aspect, if others could let us live our lives as equal, I would be very happy being gay.

APPENDIX K: STAGE FOUR PARTICIPANTS

Responses

Question S: *"Please describe yourself in terms of your sexual orientation".*

54: Gay

55: gay

69: I am a gay man

79: I am a single 22-year-old man from Oklahoma. I live and work in a town where being gay is not accepted, so I stayed in the closet until I was 21. But with my jobs that I had when I came out nobody cared. All of my friends are still my friends, and my family is 100% behind me. Except for my father and one younger brother. I run a pharmacy by day a pharmacy by day, and am a DJ at night. People here love the fact that I am gay, but there is something weird that I had found. There are three or four other day guys here in this town but I am the only one that they will even consider having anything to do with. It's weird but that's the way it is here.

19: I am a homosexual man. That is not the first element of who I am, though. I am just me, but I do sleep with men.

134: masked man in a management position and most everyone I work with knows I'm gay but I do not go around telling everyone if they ask I say yes if they don't then they don't really need to know.

67: I'm a redneck in the game man's body. I'm gay however being gay is only part of my person... not the sole part of myself. I don't feel the need to live wrapped up in my sexuality. My sexuality is only a small part of who I am and how I perceived in life. I see many gay men only living a life of gay not living life and part of it is gay... it's hard for me to connect with the gay community here in the desert due to the heavy duty gay life in that other gay guys don't do things like four-wheel, ski, camp, road trip, motorcycle ride etc. I view most gay men as wrapped into the gay scene to the point that they are limiting their experience to the bars, dance halls, whether someone is that exact match, and other typical gay screen stuff. I came out in the early 80s on the Russian River. I'm so glad that I had the opportunity to to experience the Russian River gay life. He was a totally different scene than today! They guys work guys. Unfortunately most guys of that era are no longer with us. An entire group of gay man has been wiped clean from a palette of gay society. I see a similar thing happening to the gay community here in the desert. It makes it hard to get to know people again because I just don't want to go through the death and mayhem again.

92: I prefer to have sexual relations with other men. I find that sex with other homosexuals is more fulfilling, in tents, and pleasurable.

77: I am an openly gay male

56: I'm an openly gay male, have been in a couple long-term monogamous partnerships, some people don't realize I am gay as I don't wear it on my shoulder but if asked I will say yes. I feel everyone should be comfortable with who they are beaded homosexual, heterosexual, or bisexual.

14: I don't describe myself in terms of my sexual orientation. I am a well-rounded man who happens to prefer to love and have sex with men. Being gay is just a piece of my pie.

18: IM just myself, I really don't concern myself with what others think but I do not screamed that I'm gay that is a personal preference and I feel I should keep it that way. I don't flaunt it might just accept it

33: I like to be on the bottom and like a guy that likes to be a top.

99: my sexual orientation is just a part of me, it's not who I am as a person.

75: I am a confident gay male

98: top -- not receptive

91: masculine gay male

26: I have known I like men in a special way since I was a child. I accepted my orientation as a team despite virtually no known support from anyone close to me. I have since been clearly open about my orientation in my personal life and have been well received. I am private about my orientation in my profession, as I view it inappropriate to share most of my personal life with the clientele I serve. I do however find it important to be open with my peers at work.

02: I'm just a regular guy. I work, I go to school, I pay taxes, I shop in travel and go out, etc.. I'm just a regular guy... I just prefer to have sex with other guys. Frankly, I've never seen what the big deal is. I could see people having a problem with it if I were giving some guy head on the corner of fourth and Broadway at high noon on Monday. And I don't do stuff like that. No gay person I know it does. It's nobody's business who I sleep with. You don't see gay guys trying to peek into header rows bedrooms. What goes on in arts is nobody's business.

21: my sexual orientation is only one small aspect of my overall life. I'm open about my sexuality but I don't see that it makes any specific difference. I am used to using information about my orientation only one it is of use to the situation in which I am concerned. My orientation, if using the old Kinsey scale, would be probably almost exclusively gay. I did experience with heterosexual sex when I became sexually active; however since I found no emotional connection during it it didn't continue. I can and do have emotional bonds with women but only in a platonic manner. My emotional bonds and sexual activity coincide and stimulate me only when I am with the man. I found growing up that could be true to that need and desire and live openly as a gay man or I

could high that and live a lie as a header or sexually active man who really wanted to be with men. Other than that part of my orientation I don't really consider myself a day. I don't really participate in a gay lifestyle; to me a part of being gay is no different than being blonde or blue-eyed. I don't hear of people living a blonde lifestyle. One is gay, bi or straight in sexual orientation not in living life. I don't hide the fact that I'm gay; I don't advertise it either. If someone wants to know something I tell them, I make couch my answer in a manner to cause list is comfort in the other person but I don't pull punches. I don't live in the gay ghetto and only a 10% activities; I find there is too much in the world to limit myself to be the 10% gay world. There are lots of things in which I can find something stimulating that are not related to being gay; why should I exclude those things from my life.

85: I am a totally out practicing gay male. I am also bi curious. I'm not sure if that is what info you are looking for or not.

20: fully homosexual that vaginal virgin

90: Gay

22: I am comfortable being gay

96: known homosexual, and owned numerous gay bars through my wife and use them as a liberating tool to prove to others that being openly myself is the only way to live.

29: I am gay, but do not live a strictly gay life. Being gay does not run my life, but it is something I am not ashamed of.

76: I'm a top versatile gay male, in two versatile or first bottom man around my own age of 40 I like tall men blonde/blue seems to end up being the bill of fare and I don't mind that. I like the leather scene and I'm not some kinky sex/role-play as well. I get into some BT/S. a.m. to, but I'm still growing in that area.

11: heterosexual 1940 -- 1973, bisexual 1973 -- 1979, homosexual 1979 -- present. Out and integrated in all society

82 Colin I've always been gay/new this one I was a small boy as early as five years old. I've always been attracted to other men, have no desire to father children and have loved and been love by many men in my long life.

38: I am a single day white male, bottom seeking a long-term relationship

86: I am a man who is physically and emotionally attracted to men. Therefore if a label is necessary I am gay

42: I consider myself gay, although I was married when I was younger and have two children. My younger son is also gay.

71: I sensual with a male partner.

46: gay

17: gay male

66: I am an openly gay man. I have been since I was a senior in high school. I am who I am and I am not ashamed of it. Jesus himself could tell me it was a sin and I would tell him to blame his dead not me.

78: a gay man living his life to the fullest.

97: totally gay, only attracted to men.

32: I am gay, but still dream and fantasize about having sex with women. I was married and have three children.

64: Gay -- vers top

01: I am an openly gay male with a partner of nearly 4 years however my sexual orientation does not define who I am or how I live my life. I am out to my family and friends, however I am conservative about being out in the workplace. I put a large amount of focus on establishing myself as a professional success before letting that component of myself be known or confirmed.

52: I am a gay man. What more can I say.

61: I burst to monogamous relationships with other men only.

06:

15: adult male homosexual. Kinsey six and almost exclusively bottom. Involved with leather -- kink/bdsm as a bottom as well.

Question T: *"Please list those people who know about your sexual orientation".*

54: every one except my parents

55: everyone

69: all of my family, and friends.

79: everybody knows. But people are shocked a little bit one May 1 find out because I'm very straight acting

19: parents, family, some colleagues, boss, subordinates

134: my parents and my sister or my brother-in-law my coworkers, my aunts my uncles, my friends

62: my family, my coworkers and boss, my friends

67: my mom and dad, and all my family, all my friends, most people that I work with, and everyone that knows me beyond and acquaintance and perhaps them. All my neighbors, and probably people that I don't know... no I'm gay... that may not believe it... but that's another discussion.

92: my mom, my boss, my family, my friends, everyone I know

77: entire family, all friends, coworkers, boss

56: Grandparents, mothers side, grandparents, father side. Half sister and her husband and four kids, friends, coworkers, boss, neighbors

14: my business employees, my mom, my dad, siblings, all friends, and just about everyone.

18: my whole family and everyone I know

33: parents, boss, friends, tricks, employees\colleagues

99: parents, family members, coworkers.

75: mom, employer, sisters, grandparents, aunts, uncles, friends, coworkers

98: everyone I know and sometimes I come out on stage

91: mother, brother, sisters, coworkers, boss, friends, nieces, nephews.

26: my mother, father, two sisters, two brothers, nephews, nieces, aunts, uncles, etc.. Oh of course my mother-out-law (in law if you need that version) my coworkers, and immediate boss. My neighbors, all of my friends. Let's not forget my partner, and his whole family including the nieces and nephews.

My entire family and all my friends. A few people at work and no, to include my boss. I'm not hiding anything, I just don't feel the need to go up to people and say, "Hi. I'm Joe the gay guy." Quite of my neighbors know as well.

21: coworkers, family, and neighbors

85: mom, dad, brother, mom's boyfriend, step mother, friends, some immediate relatives, partner, partner's family, win Lord, boss coworkers

20: parents, Salem's, aunts, uncles, neighbors, friends, anyone who's seen me on TV picketing or walking at pride or leading rap groups etc.

90: parents, siblings, friends,

22: my four sisters, my mom, my boss, my coworkers, many of my business associates, many of my board members, some of my church members, my partner, my partner's parents, my partner's sibling, my godson, personal friends, casual acquaintances at the gym, cast mates of the theater productions by participating, all of the people on my Christmas card list (assuming they read the cards).

96: entire family, all persons I work with, tricks

29: mom, dad, brother, best friends, family, friends, some coworkers.

76: mom, aunt, uncle, to six cousins, both coworkers, my entire clientele is a hairdresser, all five tellers at the bank and the manager. My doctor numerous (300) straight friends where I tend landmark curriculum for living.

11: my mom, my dad (deceased 1980), my sister, my other sister (deceased), dental assistant, dental receptionist, 80% of my dental patients, and man (gay/bi/non--- gay) in mankind Project international (see www.MKPSD.org), viola teacher and her husband, therapist (now former), sons, daughters in law, ex-wife, attorney (heterosexual), physician (homosexual), colleagues and my professional building, neighbors, fitness trainer, pastor.

82: my mom, my boss, my best friend.

38: Mom, dad, sister-in-law, grandparents, cousins, friends, boss, coworkers

86: family, work including my immediate supervisor and my direct reports, my friends and acquaintances

42: my parents, my brothers, my children (and their family) all my friends, all my coworkers and bosses. Every one that I know knows I am gay.

71: my mom, I am self-employed involved with numerous nonprofit connections both G. L. BT and not and they all know.

46: every one

17: my mom, my boss, parent, boss, friends, strangers... the bus driver, coworkers, probably the fellows who glare at me as I walked to work. Wonder if they are just confused here want to say something and can't. I don't engage the men and women who give me that questioning. Look it's not my obligation to educate them... I further don't believe I should explain my sexuality, heterosexuals are not called upon to explain they are being... they just art... so in that same logic... so am I.

66: my friends, my family, coworkers, pretty much everyone.

78: my employees, my parents, my sister, my friends, my business associates

97: every one

32: mom, dad and new, he's deceased now, my two siblings, both brothers, children, friends, aunts, uncles, nieces and nephew, cousins, former bosses did, I work for myself now... and also my ex wife knew while we were married. She was the first one I came out too.

64: family, friends and coworkers and bosses, neighbors

01: my entire extended family, all descriptors, all friends, college, high school in current. My roommates, my colleagues, my boss. Every one. However, I am in the process of moving to a new position which I start on August 14 as an associate vice president. No one yet at my new job knows my sexual orientation... yet. I am not sure when I will tell them.

52: all family, boss, coworkers, friends

61: all family, all friends. Some business partners.

06: mother, brother, father, friends, boss, coworkers, neighbors, clients.

15: there is no one who knows me who doesn't know my orientation. I'm open about being gay and being a leather man.

Question U: *"Please describe how your relationship with people listed in question T has been affected since you came out to them".*

54: everyone except my parents

55: not at all

69: there has been no problems.

79: it really doesn't matter to them at all

19: no effect at all.

134: I noticed no change in my relationship with any of them.

62: not at all

92: nothing has really changed since I came out. I was brought up in Canada so it's not that big of a deal.

67: I've been isolated and belittled by my family, fired from my job for having HIV, treated inferior, fag bashed -- (assaulted), people have tried to make me look foolish at work. Treated like I have a lower intelligence or am stupid.

77: there has been no effect at all

56: family and friends have no since I came out when I was 12 years old, only a few of my closed minded family members have been jerks. The rest have to this day been supportive and loving towards me and only wish me the best.

14: only in one instance, about 20 years ago, did I lose a friendship over coming out. Everyone else has been supportive.

18: it took a while to accept the fact that I was gay. I came out when I was in my late teens and it was even harder when in my 20s that I found out that I had the AIDS virus but I have wonderful support for the most part except that my mother or will not discuss my sexual orientation with her family board that I have AIDS. It's known but not discussed.

33: not at all. It came out when I came to California, San Diego and they only know me is gay.

99: if anything it's made the relationships closer, easier to talk.

75: no effect

98: my dad was cool and my mom went through the grieving process. I do not tell them about anything sexually

91: none

26: I have to say it's improved, after all I know longer feel the need to make up stories to hide my orientation. I just feel I am who I am. I have the ability to keep the things most people keep private, private Poland and the things most share with others, open and honest.

02: when I told my parents, I was preemptive about it. I heard horror stories about dramatic, "I have no son! My child is dead!!" Scenes, and I wasn't going to have any of that. So when I told them, (I was 20 then and had been supporting myself 100% since I was 18) I also told them if they have a problem with it, I would leave the house immediately, and would not mind if they never spoke to me again as long as I live. They knew I was serious... and I was. I've heard secondhand some smart aleck comments from other family members a way by and large, my family has been supportive; no family member has lectured me or refuse to see me or anything like that. They don't want to talk about it, with the exception of my sisters and a few of my closer cousins, but that's okay. Small price to pay.

I did have one friend I'd been buddies with since high school. When I got out of the Army and moved to San Diego, he was my room a for a couple of months. There was a gay couple down the hall from us and he used to make the most ridiculous comments about them -- I was still in quote don't ask, don't tell" mode, so he didn't know I was gay, too. He used to say he wouldn't let his dog play with the gay guys go up because gay men for their dogs and that turns the dog Day. So if you let your dog play with the gay dog, the gay dog will try to fight your dog, turning your dog gay. The literal ship that's viewed from his mouth was jaw-dropping in its ridiculousness. After a few months, I

came out to him as well. At that point, we were both around 24 and we'd known each other/been friends since we were 16 or so. We met in high school and a psychology class, or I saved is as from failing because they did all the work, we were a team partners -- the instructor assigned every one to two men teams. After I told him I was gay, he said it didn't matter, but there was a noticeable change in our relationship. We saw each other less and less; we used to be pretty close. Within a few years, we only saw each other once or twice a year. In 2000, he moved to Long Beach and I haven't spoken with him since. I think about them from time to time and miss the good old days. Hey, should happens. He is the only friend who turned away from me; in fact, the majority of my friends are straight and have no problem with my sexual persuasion.

21: not really any problems but considering most of them have known about me for between 10 and 20 years it's hard to tell how things might have been different. The only thing I can say for certain is that my mother wishes I would have children.

85: no longer speak with my father, mother is okay with it but would prefer me to be straight, brother is fine with it, everyone else seems to be okay with it

20: some name calling from neighbors, couple of sibs sure I am hell bound. Parents were unhappy but accepting.

90: improved

22: not really certain that it has affected most of that list. Certainly with my family, I feel closer to them in not having to hide a part of me. Beyond that, I'm unaware of any changes.

96: they have learned to except me, primarily because I have learned to accept myself

I believe that my relationship with all of them has become even stronger since coming out, I am more counter bull with it and now I am not hiding anything.

76: my immediate family was disappointed. I think it's because they all wanted me to carry on the family name for them or something. But as time went by they got used to it I guess. As for my friends, I don't have a problem telling people if they need to know.

11: dad refused to speak with me even though his health was waning (died in 1980). Mom, now 90 years old, has continuously prayed for me to be normal, attempted by guilt and shame to manipulate me back to heterosexual, as God wants me to be. All others are fully comfortable and interactive with me.

82: their relationship became more honest and stronger.

38: gotten stronger

86: initially my parents were devastated, after six months they became my best support and my mom was more militant than me, otherwise there have been no issues with my friends or with work

42: with the exception of my parents, every one list above have been very supportive since I came out. My parents did not speak to me for about seven years after I told them. Although they are fine now, it's not a topic of discussion ever and that's been 11 years ago.

71: they are fine. I don't see a problem with anyone. However, we are about the business at hand, not my sexual orientation which is the way it should be anywhere.

46: doesn't change anything

17: I would like to believe it is more honest and no room for doubt. I do make it a wearer to them also if they should have any questions... don't hesitate... if I'm going to get to know you or work with you... then it would be your obligation to get to know me if you choose to... in most cases... questions of my sexuality are not an issue... more my sensitivity to people's needs or to get the job done.

66: when I first came out I did lose a few friends. But I know now that I am better off now.

78: there has been no effect on my relationship with any of them.

97: Fine I agree

32: dad didn't like it. I suspect that may have been part of the reason that he drank himself to death. Brothers are a Bolivia's two most everything. Mom is supported, but still hides it from people. Children are excepting but dealing with their own issues. The ex-wife dealt with it, but after I left her I believed it caused her to alienate my kids for me.

64: gotten stronger and helps others open up to me to

01: I have never had a stronger relationship with every one listed above. I think people understood that challenging coming out and respected that it would come when I was ready. Most of my family stated that I have establish myself within the family at such a level that the gay thing didn't matter. I am closer with my family and just more confident having to find the me that I am.

52: boss/coworkers don't care. The family does not care, expect older brother. We do not speak

61: in a positive manner. Take stress off of me being myself.

06: I think problem is an interesting word in both of the above statements. I didn't think my sexuality is a problem, but does occasionally cause complications. I am not responsible for what others believe or feel about anything, including my sexuality. Unless I am being sexual with them, then my sexuality is none of their business. I am responsible for treating everyone with respect, regardless of how they perceive me in relationship to my sexual identity. As with any minority, I feel a certain obligation to be

a good representative example of my social subgroup to the majority group. This adds a certain small amount of stress to our lives, but no more than all the members of all the other might know her at ease. Unless we are white heterosexual man, we're going to be held in a different standard than the majority. That doesn't mean I have to go buy into the perceived need for approval from the minority members.

With regard to statement number two above, once again I feel there are some complications due to my sexuality. For example, there are some neighborhoods that I wouldn't feel safe and if I were walking down the street and was to be perceived as gay. Once again, I don't perceive this is my problem, just a complication that arises from a culture that is primarily fear-based, with the federal administration that continually fueled so the fear fire to meet their own hands. The problem isn't mine, it's my society's problem. My main reaction to the societal problem is a slow and simmering anger at the pervasive fear that rob so many cultural majority of true joy, understanding, and compassion, and therefore, true freedom in their daily lives. Maybe that is my problem. I'm always a bit angry that most folks can't muster up the courage to embrace life rather than building boundaries around it.

15: and it doesn't seem to have really made a difference one way or another. I can't say I think I've been either benefited or hurt by it. It does certainly means less stress than not being open. I am surprised that few people seem to react to the leather/kink thing. Some of been curious but nobody's been hostile. Perhaps it's their but I just refuse to buy into it and don't see it.

Question V: *"Please explain how you feel about the following statements;*

- (1) *"It is not my problem how others feel about my having sex with other men."*
- (2) *"It is my problem because I engage in sexual practices with other men."*

54: it's true, it's my life I should do what I want

55: I don't judge others and expect to be treated the same

69: number one it is not my problem. But I am considerate towards others' thoughts.

79: what to do in the bedroom is your business. Unless you pay my bills it's not your problem. I don't push my beliefs on you, and I expect the same respect

19: 1. Anybody else's opinion of me matters to me. If, however, therapy and is solely based on my sex life, there is little I can do about that. I avoid people in situations where such prejudices exist: to the extent that they affect my professional life, I am only outspoken when necessary.

2. The question implies that I think it's wrong to engage in sexual practices with other men. I do not feel that way.

134: it is not my problem they cannot accept that fact... I have and so have many around me

62:1 -- it's not a needy ones business what I do in bed and who I do it with. Two-- it's just a statement that imply someone is uncomfortable with their sexuality and or who they are.

67: statement one. I feel the statement is a true one. However I don't just talk about my sexual practices like other gay men do. I've seen how this can make some ignorant people feel uncomfortable to the point that they feel threatened. That is at that point that they can act out in a violent way. I don't think that the gay community understands that due to some people's lack of education on gay life can leave them feeling truly in danger. And at that point some feel the need to defend themselves. I believe many bashings occur under these circumstances.

Statement two. I don't view having sexual practices with other men a problem other than it does not occur and mouth with love and caring emotions. I have found that it does occur with fetish, role-playing, promiscuity, etc. All this seems to me as a lack of self-awareness on the gay man's part and therefore are they need those tools.

- 92: 1. I really don't care what antiquated Americans think about my sex life.
2. My having sex with men is never a problem its freedom and enjoyable.

77: as far as the first question: what I'd do in the privacy of my home is my business. If someone chooses to think about it, it's not my problem but the heirs. I don't go around wondering what straight people are doing in their bedrooms. As far as the second question: it's not my problem at all about who I choose to have sex with.

56: as for question one, if someone has a problem with what I do with someone else in my own personal time. Then I guess they have two choices one, deal with it, too, find a way to ignore it till they can deal with it. I am who I am and since I don't go flapping my gums to every one about any guy asleep with then all they have to go on is their imagination. As for statement too. Why would I view the fact that I have sex with men as being a problem? I mean yes I engage in sex with other men if that's a problem then I guess it isn't mine.

14:1) while I don't advertise my sexual lead to the knees, just as I wouldn't as a heterosexual man, it isn't my problem how people view my sexual life. I don't judge them and they should not judge me. 2) I totally disagree with this statement

18: that is a private matter and should be kept private that same as heterosexual should keep their sexual preferences in the bedroom.

33: 1) my sexual orientation is of no concern to others and I don't flaunt it to anyone other than those who ask. If they don't ask I don't say anything about it since I don't know how comfortable they feel about gays and the lifestyle. If I am asked about it I tell him what I and it is about and only elaborate on anything that is asked of me. Other than that it is up to them to ask me and it is their problem what they want or don't want to know about. I don't try to change anyone's mind about it not do I tried to expect them to have to change their minds or feelings about gays.

2) my lifestyle is not a problem at all and don't appreciate it being considered a problem if anyone asks in that way. If they ask in that way then I avoid them since they don't deserve the right to ask or being informed of what they are asking about. Ignorance is bliss and if they choose to live in bliss then that is their problem and I have nothing to do with their life living in bliss. I don't judge them for liking pussy so I don't judge them for judging me either. I keep it to myself just like straight folk keep it to themselves and only share amongst friends what I do in private just like any other normal person does or in the locker rooms when the time is right.

Statement one, it's not my problem, people have the right to feel what ever they want about it. If they choose to educate themselves great, if not, not my responsibility to teach them. The statement to, it's not my problem, I'm doing what comes natural to me.

75: one/not applicable. Two, not applicable

98: It isn't my problem but if we still have a decent relationship. Everyone else is cool and if I disclose on stage while doing standup it seems to be taken well and I have not been harassed.

91: it is definitely not my problem how others feel about my having sex with other men.

26: 1, I feel that it isn't my problem yet I find this statement has an aggressive tone about it. I much preferred to assert myself and help show that I don't appreciate them visualizing two men having sex together anymore than myself viewing the bride in Rome when they share their vows. I like to have people see the person I am and the keep some civility in how their sexual lives are viewed as compared to mine. If people continue to have negative feelings about my having sex with other men, well then I would repeat the statement.

2. Whether or not I engage in sexual practices with other men does not deny me the ability to identify myself as gay. Yet most people will assume that I'm having sex since I went so far as to identify myself differently than most and therefore I must be having sex. Again I feel it is my right to keep the details of my sexual life private to those I choose. I also feel that it doesn't mean I have to deny being gay. People don't necessarily know whether I engage in oral or anal or mutual masturbation. Yet, if I were to start assuming what types of sexual behaviors they engage in, I would be considered having gone beyond personal boundaries. I therefore feel that it is not my problem but my responsibility to advocate for my right to similar boundaries.

02: number one. I absolutely agree with that statement; it's nobody's business but mine and my partners. As I said earlier, you don't see gay man peeking into hetero's bedrooms. You never hear US hypocritically wail about how sacred marriage is when Heather Rose average to 23 marriages in their lifetimes. How sacred is that? So what I have sex with men? Mrs. Smith has a husband and a secret lover. Mr. Jones, and this is a conversation I actually overheard at a bar in Pacific Beach, transferred all his assets to his girlfriend so his wife couldn't attach child support or alimony. Nice guy, right? So again, how sacred is marriage when Heather Rose treated so poorly? That coupled with the fact that I've slept with many married men, tells me the whole right wing anti-gay marriage agenda is just a political ploy. If they really want to protect the sanctity of marriage, impose some

kind of mandatory classes/counseling before couples are allowed to wed or outlaw divorce or make cheating on your spouse a crime. Something like that. But of course that will never happen. They talk the talk, but straight people would explode if they walked the walk. Number two non-applicable; there is no problem with me. Noisy straight people with too much time on their hands are the problem.

21: I tend to agree more with this statement one rather than the second however I also do have some understanding that statement two does put some of the burden on myself and I have to accept that reality. I am doing something that is not in the arena of experience which the average person has experience; and anything new and different can cause discomfort and some people when they encounter it. I have done the same when I encounter something new or different however a good portion of my personal makeup is enjoyment in exploring the new. I fully understand not everyone wants to try her experience new things; their preference to try or stay with the old ways with which they are comfortable. I didn't come out to my mother officially until she was willing to take this step and ask the question of whether I was gay. Other people I have been more aggressive with in explaining myself, while with others I have been more reticent to give details about my orientation to especially when I felt it would cause significant and possibly long term emotionally harm to their psyche. Too many people I've never out right told them I'm gay given any of the gory details; I just introduced my partner and left it at that point. I found that to be the most non-threatening but open way of letting people know about my orientation.

I've noted over the past couple of decades since first seeing news of the Stonewall riots as a preteen (and a quarter of my current age) through the early gay shock troops of the early 70s to the onset of AIDS in the 80s and the backlash bear and the don't ask don't tell policies of the military that as most people become more aware of gays and their common place living that most people will open up their minds to the gays presents without really trying to understand all the details. I will explain quite forcibly when I feel people may not understand why we want our rights and not special rights. To those who are unwilling or unable to allow any opening of their minds to the differences I will not expend any great effort in attempting to get them to understand what it means to be gay. Those people can take it or leave it. It's their problem

85: I completely agree with the statement one. I feel as though everyone should be totally free to live their own lives how they see fit. Who like they, have sex with, live with, etc. have nothing to do with anyone else. I feel that a person's friends and family should love them unconditionally and be supportive.

20: I agree with one, I do not have a problem. Situations happen and need to be dealt with but I don't let them be a problem. The statement two is inane

90:1 in sensitive 2: not a problem. I disagree

22: I am in agreement with this statement one. Teen gay is just one facet of my life. While it may change the way I perceive the situation and events, and may help shape how I react to problems or rewards in my life, the homosexual act is as inconsequential to my

everyday dealings as a heterosexual act is to straight people. As my practice of having sex with men doesn't include them, it should have no bearing on their feelings.

96: I strive to prove to people that I live a good life, self accepting, so no one has to ask questions about what happens at my house when the lights go off.

29: 1) I could care less what others think. What I do in private is my business, not others.
2) totally disagree, it's not a problem

76: (1) I totally agree with this. I don't go looking in their bedrooms, it doesn't appeal to me. I don't have to make them wrong or hate them to get along, why do they?

(2) I totally disagree. My orientation is not a crime! We don't deserve to be persecuted or segregated or ostracized over it.

11: (1) agree. Though I respect their possible disagreement with my life, it is very issue. I do confront bias and bigotry. Further, I champion those who I perceive as being wronged by the privileged non-target heterosexuals. I also stand up for myself in the moment. (2) it is my choice to be authentic and express my love, both physical and emotional, with my male partner. I do not view that as a problem.

82:1. I strongly agree. Two. I have no problem with what I do to other men and often sends a need that I can uniquely fulfill.

38: I feel that my sexual life is mine. I don't want to hear about straight couples having sex. So it is neither their business to know, nor my problem if they care.

I do not like the word problem in either statement. I do my best not to worry about what other people may think and to try and be lower key in front of people who I do not feel good deal well with homosexuality. I do my best to be comfortable about my sexuality and yet not flaunt it. I do not feel bedroom talker sex talk is appropriate anyway in all situations

42: One. I really don't care how others feel about the fact that I have sex with other men, however, that being said, I don't go around telling everybody about all the men I have sex with. It's a personal thing and what goes on in my bedroom stays in my bedroom. Two. I don't really consider it as a problem that I have sex with other men. I was in the closet for many many years and finally decided this was who I am. What I do in the privacy of my own bed is my problem and no one else's. But I wouldn't label it as a problem.

71: I don't like number one, some people still have a problem with same-sex relationships due to stigma, education, or religion and they need to be assisted in understanding that we are not enemies, we are just humans.

46: one I agree. Two I disagree

17:1. it is not my problem how others feel about my having sex with other men. Two. It is my problem because I engage in sexual practices with other men. Each is a cut and dried statement... however, I do know that it is not that simple for every actually

participate in... there is a ripple effect. Additionally, there is a curiosity about gay sexuality... but in limited doses... it goes back to what I said earlier... I don't feel it is an obligation for any gay male/female to explain why we are... we just are. If having sex with gay men is problematic issue for a game mail... then maybe there should be some consideration as to "are you actually out to yourself?" "Are you ashamed of your sex?" These seem to be the main issues for heart I believe above all lots of fellas who choose not to be identified as gay because of the stigma or pain they went through growing up. 66: I do not agree with either of them. It may not be my problem how people feel but it is my charge to address the issues that they have. Try to connect with them and help them understand that being gay does not make you at any different that it would if I had black hair instead of Brown.

1: It isn't my problem. I don't care what people think. They should mind their own business. I don't ask what they are doing in their bedrooms. Two. It's not my problem because I was born this way.

97: it is other problems if they just like my sexual orientation.

32: it's not my problem how others feel about my having sex with other men. It is a good statement that describes how I feel. Unless of course, it puts my life in danger, which would indeed make it my problem! I am more willing to share my true sexual orientation unless it will put me in a position of being physically harmed or killed.

64:1. I don't see being gay is a problem. If others do -- they probably just don't know many gay man out and open to them -- people are usually afraid of the unknown. two. Again, I don't view as being gay a problem -- it is part of who I am, not wholly who I am.

01: one. I feel that I cannot change the world or the people in it, but I can help people look at different components with a different perspective. They having sex with other men part is a component of being gay, but I feel more focused on others excepting the traditional life sharing points in a homosexual relationship... like those within a heterosexual relationship, such as marriage, family, building a stable life and home together. Others will always hold their opinions on the practice of sex between men and their fear and lack of understanding oftentimes lead any negative feelings.

Two. I have engaged in sexual practices with women and men in my life and I don't feel that it's anyone's problem to change how anyone feels. When I was practicing heterosexual sex, I never felt like there was a need to consider how others feel about it.

52:1. I don't feel it's wrong to have sex with people of the same gender. I'm not hurting anyone so who cares. I totally agree with this statement. Two. I don't really agree. I practice safe sex and get tested for STDs every three months.

61: I agree with the first question

15: well it isn't my problem what other people think, now is it?

Question W: *"Please tell me anything you wish to share with me".*

54: gay man rock!

69: I do not hide being gay. And I also do not throw it in anyone's face. I am who I am. A decent law abiding citizen. With a life. I have never had any problems with others.

79: I'm from a very small town and I thought that being a gay man here was going to be hard. It was and has been for others. I think it all has to do with personality and the way you act around these people here. Most are close minded at first but warm up very quickly when I begin to talk to them because I don't bring up my sexuality. I let them bring it up when they feel the need, and 100% of the time it always comes up and they are asking a thousand questions a minute about my lifestyle. I'm very lucky to be around the kind of people that I'm around. And another little fact is that I have no gay friends. All of my friends are straight but love going to my gay bars and look forward to gay pride.

19: I am a very successful professional in the nonprofit world, specifically in social services environment. Diversity and human compassion are very important to me. At the same time, I do not force my private life on anybody. I am merely a homosexual; I do not to find myself in terms of what I do with my Dick. Frankly, I have problems with men who do. "Is that all you have to say about yourself???"

134: there are big spectrum of gay men in this world... from very masculine to very feminine most people get the wrong idea about gay man because of the way some of them behave. The funny thing is, is that a lot of gay men don't condone that behavior either.

67: wow... have I not said enough. I'm a long-term HIV survivor (over 20 years). I don't have many if any initial outward signs of me having full-blown AIDS. It has caused many issues of discrimination even from other gay people in the community. I just keep truck and though the bullshit and don't think about others' opinions unless it's going to cause me a problem

92: I don't understand how now there is only 5% of people who are gay when Sparta in ancient Greece it was commonplace for almost all men. A gay community only exists because of a repressed neo-Puritan society. Anal sex between men is the height of evolution. The more connections one hands in the community the less likely that man will destroy the other. Do some real research and research the point the prostate plays in evolution. Things don't feel that good by accident. That's why gay men are so successful, they are participating in complete accordance with nature. Whereas other men are denied this and this blocks their mind from achieving mass slows self-actualization.

77: nothing

56: I'm an open day mixed heritage male who is healthy, sane, and happy with myself. And I try to surround myself with people who were healthy, sane and can be my friends for Hawaii and him and not have a problem with something as dumb as what my sexual preference is.

33: the gay lifestyle is a personal lifestyle that doesn't need to be shared by or to anyone just like the straight community does. We are not looking for the same privileges and respect as the straight community with the same normalcy as anyone else without being judged and persecuted. We all look for the same thing in a person even though we are still looking for the same type of intimacy even though it is delivered in a different way and between two different types of people. The same thing just different packages.

99: what is the big issue anyway, I don't understand why people have to make this such a problem. Homosexuality has been around for as long as heterosexuality or sexuality.

98: I am not ashamed of who I am or what I have done including becoming HIV-positive in the early 1980s. I had relationship with a man for 17 years and although it wasn't perfect, nothing is, it was worth the ride

26: I found the reading portion of the survey at times difficult due to the type of work I do myself. I have clients that need to know I am there to assist them professionally and also to be shown that I have a right to personal privacy. It is in itself a demonstration of the majority and personal responsibility. I know that being open to those I chew this has made me feel I am more trouble for citizen in this society. I will continue to share my feelings and thoughts regarding society's reluctance and resistance towards my right to be.

02: when I was at SDSU, I belong to the gay/lesbian student Union and I used to participate in speakers appear arose. Different professors would invite us to speak to their classes about our experiences as gays and lesbians. Many of the students were, for the first time, exposed to gay people... at least as far as they knew ☺; were everywhere. So the comments we got were quite enlightening. The students expected a group of lumber jack dikes and poodle walking drag queens to show up. When they saw a panel of regular people, they were taken aback. All he knew about gays and lesbians were the rumors and urban legends they'd heard -- -- like how gays have sex with their dogs. That kind of stuff. We told them about our experiences and they got to ask us questions. After time, I was one of the older members of the group. I had been in the Army, from 18 to 24, and didn't start college until I was 26, so they had all a lot of questions for me, particularly about being in the army pre- don't ask don't tell. I had some horror stories for them all right and they were, again, taken aback at the discrimination we as gays deal with daily. I really feel it was an educational experience for them; one they'll remember for a lifetime. For example, time constraints (full time work/full-time school) reduce my ability to appear on these speakers bureaus. About a year after I had to stop, I ran into a couple girls at Mesa College. I had no idea who they were, but they remembered me from one of my classes I've spoken to. They told me that after we left, there was a discussion of what had happened, and of course there was a little bit of sneering about fags and such, but the vast majority found it quite enlightening. They said we'd absolutely change their outlook on gay people and they wanted to thank me. I almost cry; it was quite touching. I finished my undergrad in marketing at SDSU you and am now working on an MBA in marketing at National University. I'm about 85% done with that program and will graduate this fall

21: Friend years ago used to tell me that we need the shock troops such as the young Queen's, or the act up people or the drag queens or the Dykes on bikes to drive the wedge into people's thought processes. Kind of like the ice breaking open a rock. But it takes the slow growing of the tree roots to get in and break up the rock and make it fertile soil. Most gays living a quiet neighborhood life next door to the mixed race couples; across the street from the retired couple and besides the Hispanic family to show that we really aren't any different from any of them. This is what breaks down most. Her's and allows acceptance and even engender support for us in the long run. This is how I pretty much live my life. I'm a professional and am open at work to my coworkers and subordinates; however to my patients find purely professional. If they figure out that I'm gay and don't like it or do like it if neither makes much difference unless they try to make something out of the situation.

85: I am very open about my feelings, thoughts, and my life. If there is anything you want to know, please feel free to ask.

20: I think I am fairly realistic about the world and no one it's best to keep quiet and when it's best to speak up.

90: anything we can do for our gay youth should be attempted. I was closeted for many years because of peer pressure.

22: I have been in a relationship with my same-sex partner for 16 years. We need are flawed nor hide our relationship. We live in the suburbs next to straight families and pursue careers without consideration of our sexual preferences.

96: good luck, dude!

29: well I am very involved in the gay as well as Jewish community and hold leadership roles in both. I'm not ashamed of anything I do. The work environment is really the only area that I do not talk about my sexuality.

76:1 thing, as I understand it, the medical community has proven that homosexuality is genetic, so it's not a choice were making. The religious right would have everyone believe that we are demons. When one brings up that researchers have proven we're essentially born this way today (the thumpers) say the devil shows up in many ways too, yet they have no problem going to the best doctors in the land when they're sick. I have a problem with their measure of reality and how they twist and manipulate issues.

11: I am currently challenging a 75-year-old former Air Force Cornel who list about Catholic about the bumper sticker on the back of his SUV which states, "one man plus one woman equal marriage www.nogaymarriage.com. It is contrary to our values in mankind Project international men's organization, composed of gay, bi and non--- gay man. He is a former international elder council chairman and I am the current certified leader well-being chairman 4 a.m. KPI. I have asked him not to bring that vehicle to mankind Project events where its message may be wrongly interpreted to be the values of our organization. He is working through his issues of being Catholic with powerful influence from his church and his love and respect for me. I have asked him to initially

do that work with other header is sexist man to discover how it may be offensive to me, and my partner. When he has more clarity I will engage him further about this multicultural issue. And MKPI is open to all men 18 years old and older. I was married to a woman 14 years. I am a father and grandfather, for it-year-old grandson and another grandson to a November, and very proud of my sons and their families. My partner and I are fully out to his family, East Coast, too. I have been in three committed homosexual relationships, 10, 2 and now eight years durations.

82: I want to help you get you get to your goal by being open and honest about my experiences.

38: I have gone through many struggles in my life. The fact that I am gay gave me a sense of belonging. Even in a time when things were at a worse time. I knew I had a family of friends that would be fair, always being gay is more than sex with same-sex partners, it's a bond. Best of luck with the research.

86: I came out when I was 19. My parents confronted me and rather than why I decided to admit it. We have horrible six months and I even attended counseling in an effort to help them deal with the issue. After six months they realized if they wanted to see me they would need to cope and accept. After that my mom became a proud mother of a gay man. She outed me to more family and friends out of pride and support. I strongly believe coming out is a very personal journey for each person and they need to be able to do it at their comfort and pace.

42: I think I pretty much said all there is to say in the above questions. I can tell you that I struggled with my sexuality for many many years growing up. From about the age of 15 or 16 when I first knew I was attracted to other guys, from gym class in high school. Then I joined the Air Force and was married at the age of 22, I think I was trying to hide being gay,. We have two boys who are now 27 and 20, my younger son being gay has been an experience to say the least. After my ex-wife had two affairs I knew it was a sign from above that I get out and be who I really am. I had to hide my sexuality for 20 years being in the military until I was 39. But for the last 10 years I've been completely open and not afraid to admit who I am.

71: remember, people are people and humans are humans. She LPT people are not asking for special rights or privileges -- only equal rights and privileges.

17: I am a proud gay male I enjoy the act of sex with men... sucking, flocking, holding, caressing, being caressed the area I believe we need to delve into as much as well is emotional strength and growth. It seems we gay men can go about fighting one another without too much a do... but to allow the concept of emotional strength and development... to become a couple. If you will, is a whole other issue altogether... my relationship history has not been one that I would consider stellar... I have allowed far too much to happen... that if I were wiser and more emotionally sound to have a relationship... the results would have been more favorable. I have learned along the way... I am sure his many of us have... there is no one class, book or confidant that can tell by us was the right way to go about our relationship. It's hard and frustrating... only complicated by the way we treat one another... I have ranted enough... there are other

thoughts I have on the class and caste system of who is hot and who isn't... what it comes down when you stop and think about it.

66: I am fortunate to have grown up in an age where I could find role models. They may not have been the best they may have been a stereotype. But it's better to see that than nothing at all.

32: I worked as a high profile consultant for software company for 11 years. I had been successfully managing large software projects for Fortune 100 and 500 corporations, traveling around the world. A new vice president came into my division who apparently didn't like the fact that I was open about my sexuality and successful at that time. After about a year of harassment, I was terminated. Determined to seek justice I took the corporation to court and after 4 1/2 years the case was settled in my favor.

01: I feel like the bottom line is that remaining closeted leaves people vulnerable through some sort of the most crucial development times in a man's life. The longer we hit it, the more likely we are to practice extreme sexual practices including unsafe sex. On the other hand, boys that come out too soon with minimal guidance are not guided safely into their sexual exploration. As I have moved through my career I find that I have been able to do my job better and be happier in it with my sexuality on the table. If you feel uncomfortable and like you are doing something wrong by being gay, how are you supposed to handle anything in life the right way with regards to your own well-being... and the well-being of others?

52: I have nothing more to share.

06: I would really be interested in reading your final report after you complete the study.

15: frankly, coming out as gay didn't seem to me to be a big issue. I never really had an emotionally taxing time with it, it was just sort of "eh"... what did turn out to be that big a hot for me was when I first started to realize my identity as a submissive and got heavily into a leather scene. That was far more empowering for me and far more emotionally difficult. That experience led directly to my current position as a leather titleholder and community leaders/activist

APPENDIX L: STAGE FIVE PARTICIPANTS

Responses

Question S: *"Please describe yourself in terms of your sexual orientation".*

58: I am a gay male

07: I'm not quite certain I understand this question. I'm an out gay male who has been out since I was 18. I work for a gay paper, and the treasurer for a gay leather club and a member of a drag activist and fundraising organization. I've been HIV-positive for six years and graduated from stepping stone in San Diego five years ago. I'm comfortable with being who I am to the point I don't tend to edit myself or anyone.

23: I am a gay male

35: I am gay and very okay with it.

45: exclusive sex with other men

53: gay

05: 100% homosexual, have never had a heterosexual experience

89: open and active gay male in my personal life and at the workplace.

34: 100 percent queer

25: I am a man who is attracted to other men and enjoy having sexual relationships with other men.

04: I would qualify as a Kinsey six. I have been having sex with hundreds and hundreds of men since I was 14 years old. I've never had sex with a woman. With the exception of one week when I went through the crisis of choosing between my religion and my sexuality, I've always considered myself gay.

93: i.e. you are an openly gay male who has lived his life as a gay male since the age of 10 and have never felt ashamed of the fact that I am gay. Growing up in the South, I did run into problems but never let them get the best of me and always fought for my rights and my friends write. I try my best to set a positive example for the youth of today and show them you can be gay and way of an open gay life and have it as a rewarding experience. I have the good fortune of being in a relationship for 10 years now and consider my partner my other half.

27: gay since birth, or shortly thereafter; never been with nor had any desire to be with a woman.

Question T: *"Please list those people who know about your sexual orientation".*

58: I am out to my family, my friends, some of my coworkers, and anyone else that asks me

07: my mom, my dad, my brothers, my sister-in-law, my nephews, my grandmother, my great aunts including one who is a Benedictine Sister of perpetual adoration, my aunts, my uncles, my cousins, my friends, my neighbors, my boss, my coworkers, my ex-boyfriends family and friends

23: my family, friends, boss, customers, vendors... neighbors

35: I'm completely out.

45: my boss, my parents, my partner, my family, my coworkers

53: friends, family, church members people in my community, my apartment building

05: my entire family including cousins, nieces, nephews, etc. my boss and all coworkers, or landlord and neighbors in my building, all my friends.

89: dad, sister, friends, colleagues

34: my entire immediate family, uncles, aunts, cousins, grandparents. Bosses, coworkers, friends

25: my friends, professors, cousins, aunts, uncles, coworkers, classmates.

04: I have been married to a wonderful man, whom I met in 1988, for almost 14 years. I make sure to mention him, as my husband, when I meet anyone, no matter how fleeting the acquaintance might prove to be. In this way, I have the opportunity to come out.

93: mother, father, step out there, grandmother, sister, nieces, nephews, my boss, all my coworkers, everyone on both sides of my family, everyone I come into contact with in Albuquerque, everyone I went to school and college with, everyone I knew in Greenville, South Carolina.

27: at this point in my life, just about everyone knows. I do not discuss it openly with my family, except for with my sister. I am out of church, work and friends. I have a rainbow bumper sticker on my car, so even passing me on the street know, assuming they know the meaning of the sticker. Although I don't flame, at least in my opinion, I've always thought that anyone that talk to me for 10 minutes would know.

Question U: *"Please describe how your relationship with people listed in question T has been affected since you came out to them".*

58: I have grown a lot closer with some of my family, but mother and stepmother. Most of the coworkers that I have told respect me and have supported me on issues regarding the GL BT community

07: it was a little rough at first with my family when I came out, but over time and the more open I became with my life the more they came around to seeing that I wasn't any different than I was before. My relationships with my friends and coworkers haven't changed.

23: it really hasn't affected any relationship that much... there were times of awkwardness, but through the years most people are okay with it.

35: I have an extremely supportive group of friends and family.

45: collegial relationship so sexual orientation is not a problem at work

53: my mother was shocked at first but the transition was easy, the way I chose to come out her was with the support of my older sister and in session with a counselor in a safe setting

05: I have seen no change in my relationship with any of the above.

89: no effect except, dead -- refuse to accept, will not talk about it, distance himself from me

34: Rocky at first with maternal grandmother who raised me, but she got over quickly... father, who was not involved in my upbringing, took 15 years to get over it

25: I was very fortunate not to lose any friends during my coming out face. There were some acquaintances that were not comfortable with me after learning about my sexual orientation but I didn't consider them good enough friends to be concerned over the loss of contact with them.

04: I've been out for almost 30 years. My mother and brother, fundamentalist Christians, are now distant but polite: we used to fight, now we just avoid talking about anything more than the weather. Everyone else in my life is completely supportive, I am self-employed.

93: my mother sent me to a shrink when she first found out for a year and he tried to make the moves on me. Then she finally came to accept it as part of me. My grandmother totally accepted me and it bonded us closer together. My sister was great about it. My boss hired me knowing I was gay. I lost a few friends over time but they must have really not been my friends anyway.

27: very little difference, if at all. No one has started, ended or changed our relationship based on knowing my sexual orientation, at least to my knowledge.

Question V: *"Please explain how you feel about the following statements;*

- (1) "It is not my problem how others feel about my having sex with other men."*
- (2) "It is my problem because I engage in sexual practices with other men."*

58:1 -- I would say that it is not my problem how others feel about the fact that I have sex with other men, however if someone confronts me directly on the issue I do not think that I have the right to try to show them why their argument does not make sense. 2-- I think this is an absurd statement

07: The statement one to me is saying that whoever would say it is a bit on the apathetic side who doesn't understand how other people's points of views affect the ability we have to live our lives. Statement two to me is how I feel. I think we have to be aware that other people ultimately have the final say on accepted into the mainstream we be calm, and far we'd get to becoming treated as equal citizens under the law. If we feel that we are an island onto ourselves than we are fooling ourselves.

23: I feel what I do with my life really is my business as long as I am not hurting anyone else... so I would say I agree with statement one and disagree with statement two

35: I don't think sex really should be labeled the way it is. Homosexuality is much more than just sex. There is love involved in it too. Granted, being attracted to the same sex can be termed, but people really need to understand that love is involved too.

45: I support number one that is their problem with my having sex with other men. It isn't a problem for me, and it wasn't something I ask for, let it isn't something I can change

53: 1. With all the issues that are affecting the planet and the issues I have in my personal life, this issues is the very least of my concerns

05: 1. I agree. Those who wage their wars against gays, and by those I mean the Christian right, for they are about the only hatemongers still out there at the moment, are not going to change their minds about homosexuality no matter is said, shown are proven to them. By simply living our lives honestly and openly as productive citizens in society will go the farthest in advancing our cause of totally quality.

2. I disagree. My sexual partners are of no concern to anyone, period

89:1. Everyone has a personal life, gay, straight, bi etc., if I spend time thinking about what others think about my sexuality than I am only wasting my time. Open-mindedness is a great partner to intelligence. Two. I disagree -- I do not see my sexuality as a problem

34:1. People develop their own feelings based on their own ship, so it really isn't my prop one. Only difficulty there it is that other people fuck with a little political systems and fuck me over in the process. Two. bullshit!

25: the first statement is the one I identify with more. I don't see my sexual orientation as a source of problem for anyone else -- problems as such would be for them to figure out and learn to deal with constructively. The second statement I don't relate to at all because of the judgments will tone and projects. It carries a stigma of shame that none of us should have to bear.

04: it's not my problem. There are ignorant. I make sure that there is no trace of self-hatred in me. That I do not reject any trace of guilt or doubt, which I don't feel, but you know how old programming can last!

93: what I do in my bedroom is of no concern to anyone else other than the person I am in bed with. If other people have a proud home with it than it is their problem not mine.

27: it is really no one else's business whom I choose to have sex with -- except those that I'm having sex with. Having said that, I know there are people that make generalizations that being gay is wrong and that guys are bad people. I feel that if more gays were open about their situation, these people would begin to realize that if the people they know to be gay are good, then maybe all gay people aren't so bad either.

Question W: *"Please tell me anything you wish to share with me".*

58: before I came out I was severely overweight, and I believe a major reason for that was the fact that I was having to live two lives and we tried to console myself with eating. It was very hard for me to come out to my family, as I thought that it would devastate them and possibly lead me to losing my family. After I came out however the relationship with my mother grew much stronger. My father was very supportive as was his wife. My stepfather however is still on the fence but he is respectful of me. I think that through the process of coming out it made me feel more confident in myself and my viewpoints.

07: I am a member of the Los Angeles boys of leather and the sisters of perpetual indulgence. I helped to coordinate the national letterwriting campaign on the petition against San Diego LG BT pride and its stance against allowing you into the pride festival this year.

23: I knew at a young age that I was different. I would say I knew before I even knew what day was. Because of my strong religious upbringing, Southern Baptist, I feel that I hid the fact not only for myself but others as well... when I turned 20 I became involved in a mail -- male relationship and at that time came out to my family. It was not easy at first, but in time it was accepted, although I'm not 100% sure they totally understand my feelings. I never really have a problem with sharing my sexual orientation. I don't shout it on rooftops, but I'm not ashamed of who I am. I have been out for so long, that it is really that hard to share who I am.

35: my partner and I have been together for over five years. Both of us have had other relationships -- but are now happy that we've found our match.

45: gay male, partnered for more than 20 years

53: I teach Sunday school at a gay and lesbian church in Whittier and I have worked with the interfaith Council of uptown Whittier putting together uptown Whittier's world AIDS Day celebration.

89: good luck with Ph.D. -- Ph.D. here in music

34: sexually active with boys since junior high. Openly queer since 1984, 19. HIV time DX98 but suspected dates to mid 80s. In involved in quarter politics and organizing 20 plus years.

04: I doubt that you've read it, but I had written a book, "gay testaments: old and new", back in 97. In it I edited and commented on 15 ancient and modern texts that deal positively with men loving man. I notice that you don't really mention love in this document that's rather curious, don't you think?

93: I have had sex with many married men who are really gay but because the way society dictates they got married and had kids but are sleeping with men behind their wives back thereby not being truthful to themselves or to their wives or children. It's a shame as they could bring home a disease and give it to their wife. My mother always wanted me to get married and I almost did for her sake but said her down and told her the life she was sitting me up to live and then she understood and accepted me for who I am. She now loves my lover just as if he were her own son. She also won a grand kids which my sister was able to give her but she wants me to have children which is the next step in my lovers and my relationship I'm very happy with my life and wouldn't trade it for anyone else's life. I'm also a facilitator for a group for gay kids under 21 and Albuquerque named the under 21 group where gay kids from 11 to 21 can get together and meet other gay kids there age and we do activities and have positive gay movies for them to see and all the facilitators are positive gay role models for the kids to be there if they have any problems or just need someone to talk to.

27: reading that your researches in leadership, my personality does not lend itself to being out front. In the past, I have participated in March as an offense, but more in a supportive role; I'm not a strong political activist.