

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: "PUTTING MY MAN FACE ON": A
GROUNDED THEORY OF COLLEGE MEN'S
GENDER IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

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The purpose of this grounded theory study was to explore the process of college men's gender identity development. Conducted from a social constructivist epistemological paradigm, through a social justice theoretical lens, and using a constructivist grounded theory methodology, the following research questions guided this study: (a) how do college men come to understand themselves as men; (b) how does this understanding of what it means to be a man change over time, if at all; and (c) what are the critical influences on this process? Three interviews with 10 college men from a large East Coast university were conducted.

The theory that emerged from this study is grounded in the participants' experiences and depicts gender identity as developed through constant interaction with society's expectations of them as men. In order to try to meet these expectations and be seen as men, participants described putting on a performance that was like wearing a mask or "putting my man face on." This process included learning societal expectations

of them as men, as well as specific cultural group expectations. The men in this study were all aware that they did not neatly fit behind the mask, either as a result of personal characteristics or social identities. Their resulting insecurities led them to wearing the mask both consciously and unconsciously so that they would be seen as men by society. Wearing the mask had consequences for the women in their lives, their relationships with other men, and themselves as they were also denying or masking their true selves. Although none of the men in this study had been able to completely take off the mask, they were able to identify critical influences in their lives that had helped each of them begin to remove the mask in certain circumstances and begin moving towards being their own man. This theory of college men's gender identity development has implications relevant to theory development, research, student affairs practice, and social justice.

“PUTTING MY MAN FACE ON”: A GROUNDED THEORY OF COLLEGE
MEN’S GENDER IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

By

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2007

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A dissertation never is – and never could be – the work of a single person. Throughout this endeavor, I have been blessed by the generous support of so many. The opportunity to express my deep gratitude ever-so-briefly here is a true joy for me, and one of the best gifts that this process affords me.

I am deeply indebted to Susan R. Jones who was willing to commit both to this project and to our relationship long before it was reasonable to do so. I have been incredibly fortunate that one of the profession's leading experts in both grounded theory methodology and gender identity scholarship was willing to offer her knowledge, experience, and expertise to this project. Even more valuable to me, however, have been her patience, insight, compassion, high standards, wisdom, humor, thoroughness, and encouragement throughout this process. As a result, this is a much better piece of scholarship than I ever imagined I was capable of writing.

I am also grateful to my committee members who were willing to offer their time, knowledge, and insight to this project. Thanks to Susan R. Komives for sharing her incredible curiosity and breadth of interests and knowledge to this study. She has been supportive of me and my interest in college men's issues long before this dissertation, and has been a tremendous professional and scholarly role model. Thanks to Marylu K. McEwen for bringing her expertise as a scholar and critic of student development theory. She has been a caring, centered, genuine, and always-present teacher – a word neither she nor I use lightly – both inside and outside the classroom. Thanks to Cordell Black for offering invaluable outside perspective. I have long admired his curiosity, willingness to speak the truth (in more than one language), and commitment to diversity and social justice. Thanks to Tracy L. Davis from Western Illinois University, one of the nation's leading experts on college men's issues. He has been willing to share his expertise and serve on this committee, even though it meant traveling halfway across the country for the dissertation defense. A couple of years ago he was generous enough to invest his time in an inexperienced scholar who was brash enough to ask for his help directing an independent study on college men's issues. It was his encouragement and guidance through that experience that initially brought me to this topic. He has been encouraging and supportive of me as a scholar and gender equity activist on several occasions, at times before I had earned it.

Thanks to my peer debriefers, Daniello Balón, Kevin Jones, and Daniel Ostick, who brought curiosity, wisdom, and their own experiences as men to this project. By questioning my decisions, offering different interpretations, and wondering along with me, they helped me to be more insightful about the participants' experience. Thanks also to Craig Alimo, who was generous enough to embark on the unenviable task of serving as inquiry auditor for this study. I am grateful that he brought to this study not only his experience with grounded theory but also the joyful exuberance he brings to everything. I am grateful to Kathleen G. Kerr for her valuable feedback on an early draft of these findings, as well as her inspiration to start this process, encouragement along the way, and many dinners with her family when I needed to escape it. This project also benefited from financial support from the University of Maryland's Mac and Lucile McEwen Research Fund and the NASPA Grant Foundation.

No one contributed to this study more than the 10 participants; known here as Kumar, Noah, Frank, Jason, Nicholas, Chet, Robert, Daniel, Chauncey, and Sean. I am grateful for their time, courage, and honesty. I never anticipated the depth of trust they placed in me, how deeply committed they would become to the quality of this research, or the kind of role models they would be for me as man. Far beyond the completion of this dissertation, they will remain with me in my consciousness and as my conscience. Throughout my time at Maryland I have benefited both academically and personally from a wonderful cohort of doctoral students; Patty Alvarez, Cara Appel Silbaugh, Stacey Brown, Jeannie Brown Leonard, Daniel Ostick, Wendy Wagner, and most recently Anna Gasiorski. Thanks to them: courses were more stimulating, fun, and realistic; statistics courses were made not only survivable but also manageable; and I have made through this process as sanely as can be expected.

Throughout my experience at Maryland, I have benefited from the support of the staff in the Beyond the Classroom Living and Learning Program (BTC). Thanks to James Riker for being supportive of my efforts toward this dissertation. Thanks to Megan Riley for helping me keep my perspective and sense of humor through many changes in BTC. Thanks to Jeanne Steffes who has been wonderful to me as a graduate assistant in her office and beyond. Thanks to Deborah Yolemi who shared an “office” and the past four years with me.

My family has been supportive of me throughout this process, even though through much of it they weren't really sure what I was doing, why, or how. I am grateful to my dad, Mark, for being willing to discuss masculinity and its consequences for his life, my life, and our relationship. Thanks to my brothers, Quinn, Reid, and Adrian, who reminded me throughout this process why doing this work was so important. Thanks to Therese, who has been a wonderful partner to my father and one of the most impressive parents I have witnessed as she raises her three boys. Thanks to my sister, Nora, who knows more than anyone what kind of “joy” it can be to grow up with an older brother who often felt the need to prove his manhood. Thanks to my mom, Carol, who has always been unconditionally supportive of me, regardless of my accomplishments and failures. Throughout my life she has been a feminist and made sure that I always knew exactly what that really meant. Finally, thanks to my Grandpa Bud who taught me at a critical point in my life that figuring out the kind of man one wants to be really is not a destination, but a life-long journey – and a wonderful journey, at that.

I have been blessed with many great friends throughout my life, which has in no small way led me to this project and made it possible. In particular, I am grateful to Grant Anderson, Tony Sertich, and Nathan Georgesen who, for more than ten years now, have joined me in learning, performing, reflecting, and struggling with what it means to be a man. Thanks for always both believing in me and making fun of me -- they both helped. Finally, thanks to Jamie Jackson who has been my partner during my entire experience as a doctoral student. More than anyone, she has borne the brunt of living with and loving a doctoral student and a dissertation researcher and writer. In spite of all that, she was willing to sign up for a much longer commitment. I am grateful to her for constantly reminding me of the man I aspire to be, holding me accountable when I fall short, and believing that I am that man more than I realize. Her patience, tolerance, love, and faith in me sustain me.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

During most of the history of higher education men have disproportionately benefited from the college experience and social institutions in general (Sadker & Sadker, 1994). Despite this history of advantage, recent trends in college male student enrollment, retention, and academic performance have caused great concern for higher education leaders (Kellom, 2004b). In 2003, men accounted for approximately 42% of college enrollment, with the largest gender gaps seen among African American, Latino, and Native American men and men from low income backgrounds (King, 2006; Knapp, 2005). In a review of the literature on a variety of issues facing college men, Kellom found evidence that college men study less; participate in study abroad, service, and pre-college programs less; use career services less; and vote less. Men are more likely to miss class, not come prepared, and not complete homework or turn it in late (Sax & Arms, 2006). Not only has college men's academic success been at risk, but also college men's well-being and survival (Capraro, 2004a; Davis & Laker, 2004). Men are three times more often the victims of violent crimes other than sexual assault, suffer greater rates of depression, and are four to six times more likely to commit suicide (Pollack, 1999). College men in particular have a higher suicide rate (Courtenay, McCreary, & Merighi, 2002), consume more alcohol and do so in more dangerous ways (Capraro, 2004b), and are more likely to be involved in campus judicial proceedings (Ludeman, 2004) when compared to college women.

Unfortunately, higher education professionals have not generally been trained to view issues affecting men through a gendered lens, or perhaps mistakenly believe that they already understand men and therefore do not need to further seek such a perspective

(Davis & Laker, 2004). Because higher education professionals, particularly student affairs educators, have recognized that many student development theories were developed by looking primarily, and at times exclusively, at White men, they often wrongly assume that student affairs professionals understand men (Davis & Laker). As Laker (2003) argued, "The early research did not study 'men.' Rather, it studied 'students' who were men. There was no gender lens in the research and thus the resulting theory cannot capture the gendered nature of identity development, for men or for women" (p. 1).

Further, Brod (1987) commented, "Androcentric scholarship is only *seemingly* about men. In reality, it is, at best, only negatively about men, that is, it is about men only by virtue of not being about women" (p. 264). Meth and Pasick (1990) also pointed out:

Although psychological writing has been androcentric, it has also been gender blind [and] it has assumed a male perspective but has not really explored what it means to be a man anymore than what it means to be a woman. (p. vii)

This androcentric perspective not only does not serve men, it also serves to perpetuate patriarchy, sexism, and privilege. Davis and Laker (2004) explained that this gender neutral perspective

leads to either reliance on stereotypical gender scripts or failure to consider men as gendered beings...In disturbing irony, ignoring the salience of gender or race in White male students reifies the privilege of those agent groups to the extent that invisibility perpetuates privilege. (p. 49)

The student development literature informing student affairs practice is just beginning to offer a gendered perspective on college men's identity development.

Research from a variety of disciplines helps foster a wide variety of theoretical perspectives on college student development (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998).

Building on the identity development work of Erikson (1980), scholarship on the identity

and psychosocial development of college students emerged (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). Reflecting the failure of many early student development perspectives that dismissed or ignored the experience of individuals from marginalized social identity groups (Widick, Parker, & Knefelkamp, 1980), scholarship on identity development with regard to marginalized social identity groups grew (e. g., Wijeyesinghe & Jackson, 2001). This led to research on identity development related to a variety of racial and ethnic groups (e. g., Wijeyesinghe & Jackson), gays and lesbians (e. g., Fassinger, 1998), and women (e. g., Josselson, 1996). Having recognized the value of understanding the experiences of individuals from marginalized groups, scholars also sought to examine the experience of individuals from dominant social groups (McEwen, 2003) through a social justice lens as a way of addressing privilege (Brod, 1987). Addressing these issues in an effort to liberate both men and women from the consequences of patriarchal masculinity requires an empirically based understanding of men's gender identity development (Capraro, 2004b; O'Neil, 2004).

Review of Literature

This study on college men's gender identity development was informed by the literature on the social construction of gender and the societal context influencing men's identity. This study drew from literature that described how socialization influences males throughout their childhood and as college men. Finally, this study was informed by scholarship on identity development and the critical influences fostering developmental changes in individuals' identity.

Gender, like race, class, and sexual orientation, is socially constructed (Weber, 2001). This social construction separates gender from sex, which is biologically defined

(Kimmel & Messner, 1998). Although much of the literature tends to conceptualize sex and gender in binary terms, there is a broader spectrum of experience with regard to both (Carter, 2000). Males may be born, but men become men through a complex interaction with the dominant culture's gender expectations of men. For decades feminist scholarship has explored the social constructions of femininity and how it has contributed to women's subordination and men's domination (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2002; e.g., Brownmiller, 1976; Friedan, 1963; hooks, 1989; Lorde, 1984). Although these efforts are far from fully realized, progress has been made in developing a broader and more equitable female gender role (Pollack, 1999). This body of feminist scholarship offers a model for scholars of men and masculinity to explore what it means to be a man from a social justice perspective, which has the potential not only to further feminist aims at gender equity but also help to liberate men from rigid and restrictive gender role norms (Brod, 1987).

The traditional definition of masculinity refers to the dominant culture's normative definition of masculinity. Many other versions of individual and cultural masculinities are forged in reaction to or interaction with the traditional definition of masculinity. The traditional definition of masculinity emphasizes a male gender role which measures manhood by strength, success, transgression of social rules, and opposition to femininity (Brannon, 1976). More recently the traditional definition of masculinity has been described as encouraging males to be emotionally restrictive, seek power, control, and competition, avoid affectionate and sexual interaction with other men, and define personal success through work status and financial gain (O'Neil, Helms, Gable, David, & Wrightsman, 1986).

Fear of femininity is such a central part of the traditional definition of masculinity that misogyny and homophobia become the most common strategies to define and reinforce the strict limitations on socially acceptable male behavior. This has been observed in men's transgressions towards women including sexual harassment, domestic violence, sexual assault, and rape (Berkowitz, Burkhart, & Bourg, 1994; Capraro, 1994; Heisse, 1997; Hong, 2000; Katz, 1995; Kimmel, 2004a; Kivel, 1992; Quinn, 2004). Homophobia has also been observed to define and reinforce the outer bounds of masculinity (Plummer, 1999). These transgressions are often about men trying to prove that they measure up to the traditional definition of masculinity or directing their frustration at not measuring up towards women and gay men who have been feminized according to the traditional definition of masculinity (Kimmel).

This traditional definition of masculinity is hegemonic because men's domination over women is a central organizing principle (Connell, 1987). This hegemonic version of masculinity fosters a patriarchal social system, including how individual men's identity perpetuates, contributes to, and reinforces patriarchy. This dominant version of masculinity is also hegemonic in that it places some men above other men. Men who do not fit the traditional hegemonic definition of masculinity because of their race, class, sexual orientation, religion, age, or ability are often marginalized as a result, as are the various versions of masculinities that these cultures and social groups develop. The current literature has specifically examined how men of color (Almaguer, 2004; Cantú, 2004; Chen, 2004; Espada, 2004; Espiritu, 2004; Fung, 2004; Hanchard, 2004; Kelley, 2004; Marable, 2004; Miller, 2004; Mirandé, 2004; Staples, 2004) and non-heterosexual men (Diaz, 2004; Fung, 2004; Herek, 1987; Herek & Berrill, 1992; Plummer, 1999) are

marginalized, dismissed, and diminished by traditional hegemonic masculinity. This version of masculinity also limits all men by placing them in a “gender straightjacket” (Pollack, 1999, p. xxiv) that encourages men to ironically transgress social norms in an effort to establish their masculinity as defined by social norms. This rigid definition of masculinity does not fit for any man, resulting in men’s denial of aspects of their humanity are not congruent with the traditional definition of masculinity and a loss of authenticity as they perform to aspects of traditional masculinity that do not represent their true selves.

Boys and men constantly interact with the traditional definition of masculinity throughout the lifespan. This rigid male gender role has fostered a culture of cruelty among boys in which both self and others have been the target of hostility and aggression (Kindlon & Thompson, 2000). These strict gender expectations persist into adolescence and high school, encouraging boys to transgress against authority through violations of school and parental rules, alcohol and other drug use, and risky and aggressive sexual behavior (Pollack, 1999).

Research on college men has recognized the continued influence of traditional masculinity as well as college men’s gender role conflict and the paradox of masculinity. College men who feel pressure to conform to the traditional definition of masculinity may begin to recognize the negative consequences for themselves and others as a result of their compliance and may begin to experience gender role conflict (O’Neil et al., 1986). College men trapped between the pressure to measure up to traditional gender norms and the stress and pain of not measuring up experience the paradox of masculinity (Capraro, 2004b). Researchers found hypermasculine environments such as fraternities

and college athletics to be rich environments for exploring the impact of traditional masculinity, gender role conflict, and the paradox of masculinity (Boswell & Spake, 2004; Curry, 2004; Lyman, 1987; Rhoads, 1995b). Scholars of men and masculinity also observed the impacts of masculinity on college men from marginalized social groups such as gay men and men of color (Clayton, Lucas Hewitt, & Gaffney, 2004; Dilley, 2005; Harper, 2004; Rhoads, 1995a; Yeung, Strombler, & Wharton, 2006).

This study on college men's gender identity development was informed by several conceptual and empirically based identity development models exploring the identity process for a variety of social group identities. This study on the gender identity development of members of a dominant group, men, was informed by White racial identity development as a dominant racial group identity (Hardiman, 1994, 2001; Helms, 1992, 1995). The wealth of scholarship on identity development of people of color (Cross, 1995; Cross & Fahagen-Smith, 2001; Helms, 1995; Root, 1992; Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2004; Wijeyesinghe & Jackson, 2001) also informed this study and formed the foundation for much of the emerging scholarship of various identity development models. Explorations of women's identity development offered a gendered perspective on identity. For example, Josselson's (1996) approach to exploring identity with women offered a model for questions to ask and lenses through which to consider gender identity development. The influence of multiple social group membership and their intersections also informed this study which considered the intersections of race, class, sexual orientation and other identities on men's gender identity development (Jones, 1997; Jones & McEwen, 2000).

Several scholars have used critical incidents as a means to empirically explore identity (e. g., Josselson, 1996; Marcia, 1980; A. Stevens, 1997; R. A. Stevens, 2004). Critical influences or crucibles refer to the significant people or events that foster growth in individuals' identity development (Bennis & Thomas, 2002; Flanagan, 1954). Several studies have also used critical influences as a tool to explore identity development (Skovholt & McCarthy, 1988; A. Stevens, 1997; R. A. Stevens, 2004).

Although psychological and developmental perspectives on men are available, they have rarely contextualized men's experiences in a critical gender lens (Edley & Wetherell, 1996). A new critical study of men and masculinity has emerged primarily from a sociological perspective, following the model set out by feminist scholarship (Brod, 1987). Scholarly attention has recently been drawn to identity from a critical perspective as a way to begin to understand and address the gender issues facing men and women (Davis, 2002; Scott & Robinson, 2001; Smiler, 2004). This identity perspective has explored how an individual constructs a personal meaning of masculinity in interaction with the social construction of masculinity. Two prominent scholars of men and masculinity recently called for an exploration of men's identity development using qualitative approaches through a social justice framework (Capraro, 2004a; O'Neil, 2004).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to understand the process of college men's gender identity development. The following research questions guided this study: (a) how do college men come to understand themselves as men; (b) how does this understanding of what it means to be a man change over time, if at all; and (c) what are the critical influences on this process? The intended outcome of this study was a

theoretical perspective on college men's gender identity development grounded in the experience of the participants.

Methodology

I approached this study on college men's gender identity development from a constructivist epistemological point of view through a social justice theoretical perspective using grounded theory methodology (Charmaz, 2000, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; hooks, 2000; Strauss & Corbin, 1994, 1998). As opposed to an objectivist paradigm, a constructivist paradigm defines reality as constructed through interactions between individuals' internal and external experiences within a social context including the researcher – participant relationship (Crotty, 1998). This approach was particularly appropriate for exploring men's identity because both gender and identity are socially constructed. A social justice theoretical perspective frames gender identity, for both men and women, as socially constructed in a patriarchal context (hooks, 2000) and intersects with other social systems that advantage some and disadvantage others on the basis of social group identity such as race, class, and sexual orientation (Bell, 1997). By examining college men's gender identity development from a social justice theoretical perspective, I hoped to gain a better understanding of how internalized patriarchy is learned, reinforced, and perhaps transcended by individual men (hooks, 2004).

Grounded theory is a qualitative methodology used to develop theory grounded in the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Grounded theory conducted from a constructivist epistemological paradigm is particularly suited for examining processes, structure, and context, all of which were key tools in exploring a socially constructed gender identity in a patriarchal context (Charmaz, 2006).

Grounded theory methodology guided the data collection and analysis in the study. Using a combination of theoretical, intensity, and maximum variation sampling, I sought college men from a large research university on the East Coast who had thought about what it means to be a man, using key informants and expert nominators (Patton, 2002). I conducted three open interviews with each participant. Using the transcripts of the interviews as data, I analyzed the data using initial, focused, axial, and theoretical coding procedures consistent with constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006). Using the constant comparative method, characteristic of grounded theory, initial data analysis informed later data collection in a cyclical process until saturation or redundancy was reached. Grounded theory methodology is not only a process but also a product (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The outcome of this study is an empirically based theoretical perspective of college men's gender identity development grounded in the experience of the participants.

Significance

The grounded theory that resulted from this study has the potential to make theoretical, practical, and critical contributions to the current literature. This study fills a gap in the literature about a gendered understanding of men's identity development as advocated by O'Neil (2004) and Capraro (2004a). Despite their male privilege, and perhaps in part because of it, college men experience significant issues with regard to their psychological well-being (Davis, 2002; Good & Wood, 1995; O'Neil et al., 1986), physical well-being (Capraro, 2004b; Pollack, 1999), and academic success (Kellom, 2004a). A theoretical understanding of college men's gender identity development, grounded in the participants' experience, may equip those in higher education with a

theoretical perspective informing more educationally effective and developmentally appropriate interventions with college men (Davis & Laker, 2004). More effective educational interventions for college men will not only benefit college men, but also college women and the entire campus environment (Davis & Laker).

Capraro (2004a) argued for a better understanding of men's gender identity development as a potential means to transcending patriarchy and the traditional hegemonic definition of masculinity. In this way, a theoretical perspective on college men's gender identity development may help illuminate the ways that individual internalized patriarchy and privilege are learned, reinforced, and perhaps transcended. Although patriarchy is a societal issue, gaining knowledge about individual men's experience in a patriarchal social structure may foster an understanding of how men's sexism is fostered. This understanding may offer insights to addressing, dismantling, and transcending patriarchy, first on an individual and then on a societal level.

Summary

College men are facing significant issues which the current professional literature in student affairs has yet to fully and effectively address (Laker, 2003). This study was informed by the literature on the societal context of masculinity and how boys and college men respond to these expectations. The purpose of this study was to understand the process of college men's gender identity development in this context from a constructivist paradigm and social justice theoretical perspective. The grounded theory that emerged from this study has the potential to make contributions to the literature and begin to address issues facing college men.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The use of prior literature in qualitative research in general and grounded theory methodology specifically requires a delicate balance. On one hand, the researcher cannot be constrained by the literature in a way that clouds or hinders creativity in the interpretation of the data gathered in the study (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). On the other hand, qualitative research “cannot be conducted without the conscious or unconscious use of underlying theoretical perspectives. These perspectives inform methodology, guiding theory, questions pursued, and conclusions drawn” (Broido & Manning, 2002, p. 434). The qualitative researcher must be informed by the literature in order to be able to construct relevant research questions and develop *theoretical sensitivity* to the data (Strauss & Corbin). “The important point for the researcher to remember is that the literature can hinder creativity if it is allowed to stand between the researcher and the data. But if it is used as an analytical tool, then it can foster conceptualization” (Strauss & Corbin, p. 53). This chapter is an overview of the literature that influenced my conceptualization of this study and how I collected data, analyzed data, and reported the results.

The purpose of this study was to understand the process of college men’s gender identity development. By exploring the means with which college men come to understand themselves as men, how this understanding changes over time, if at all, and the critical influences on this process with college men, this study sought to develop a theoretical perspective on college men’s gender identity development grounded in the experience of the participants. I begin the review of the literature that informed this study

by exploring the social construction of gender and performativity through a model that feminist scholarship has offered for exploring gender socialization and identity. Next, I take a look at the societal context in which men's identity is constructed. The traditional hegemonic definition of masculinity, reinforced primarily by misogyny and homophobia, has important social justice implications for this study. Then I explore male socialization and gender identity construction throughout the lifespan of college men in the context of the traditional hegemonic definition of masculinity to review how I was sensitized to the possible influences on the participants' identity development. This exploration begins by looking at how boys are socialized by the traditional hegemonic definition of masculinity and then moves to the influence of the traditional definition of masculinity, men's gender role conflict, and the paradox of masculinity on college men. I will then discuss the scholarship on identity development relevant to this study and the role of critical influences in understanding identity development. The lack of a critical gender perspective in the current literature on men's psychological development called for an approach to men's identity in the context of critical perspectives on men and masculinity following the model of feminist scholarship. Finally, I summarize the literature influencing this study on college men's gender identity development.

Social Construction of Gender Identity

Like race, class, sexual orientation, and other social group identities, gender is socially constructed (Weber, 2001). Although sex may be biologically defined, gender is socially constructed through a complex interaction between the individual and societal gender roles and expectations (Kimmel & Messner, 2004). Building on Erikson's (1980) notion of identity, Josselson (1996) explained the social construction of gender identity as

“not just a private, individual matter [but] a complex negotiation between the person and the society” (p. 31). Social identities such as gender, race, and sexual orientation are often thought to be unchangeable from an objectivist or essentialist perspective; however, it is “more appropriate and more useful” from a student development perspective to view these dimensions as they are “constructed, experienced, and lived within given cultural and historical contexts” (McEwen, 2003, p. 192).

Feminist scholarship has recognized gender as a socially constructed and constantly changing reality (Jones, 1989). Butler (1990) used the term “performativity” to describe the constant and inescapable process individuals go through to socially construct their own gender in social context. Similarly, Goffman (1959) described these presentations of self, in any context, as being like an actor on a stage performing to an audience. For decades, feminists have been critical of the way dominant society has constructed masculinity and femininity and the way those gender roles have fostered patriarchal systems and structures which have served to oppress women and privilege men (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2002; Brownmiller, 1976; Friedan, 1963; hooks, 1989; Lorde, 1984). Feminists have also worked to deconstruct the traditional definition of femininity and create a broader definition that is more inclusive and equitable. Although there is still much work left to be done to achieve this feminist goal, the definition of what it means to be a woman has expanded over the past several decades:

About forty years ago, society began the process of discarding its old rules about girls and women that tied them down to traditional feminine and maternal obligations, required them to forfeit higher education (and then depend financially on men), and barred them from participating in the many professions, activities, and pursuits once thought to be either “unladylike” or “for men only.” While we’ve hardly finished the process, we’ve come a long way in opening a range of opportunities to girls and women and in helping them feel comfortable sounding their true voices and being their true selves without fear of being seen as anything

less than a hundred percent “feminine.” We’ve come a long way in liberating girls and women from the gender straitjacket that for years they’ve been forced to wear. (Pollack, 1999, p. 296)

Achieving the goals of gender equity must include a similar examination and expansion of masculinity (Brod, 1987). These are not competing but collaborative efforts (hooks, 2004). Examining men and masculinity is critical to deconstructing power inequities in a patriarchal society stemming from the social construction of gender. Just as feminist efforts to identify, deconstruct, and confront sexism and patriarchy has benefited men as well as women (Brod), efforts to examine, critique, and deconstruct masculinity from a critical perspective have the potential to foster gender equity and social justice, expanding both men’s and women’s humanity (Freire, 1972/2000). Following the model of feminist scholarship, I approach this study using a social justice theoretical perspective (Bell, 1997; Charmaz, 2005) to understand college men’s process of developing a gender identity in the hopes that a greater understanding of this process in a patriarchal context will help foster an understanding of how patriarchy is internalized, learned, and perhaps transcended by individuals (Capraro, 2004b; hooks, 2004; O’Neil, 2004).

Societal Context: Traditional Hegemonic Definition of Masculinity

Identity is socially constructed through constant interactions between the individual and society (Erikson, 1980). Individual men’s identity or masculinity is socially constructed through a constant interaction with society’s dominant or traditional definition of masculinity (Kimmel & Messner, 1998). The dominant culture’s image and messages about what it means to be a man, the traditional definition of masculinity, provides the societal context within which all men construct their own personal definition

of masculinity (Kimmel, 2004a). This traditional definition of masculinity is hegemonic and primarily reinforced through misogyny and homophobia (Connell, 1987), which has clear social justice implications for both men and women (Brod, 1987; Freire, 1972/2000; hooks, 2004).

Traditional Definition of Masculinity

This study was informed by the traditional definition of masculinity as it is constructed by the dominant culture in the United States. Because gender and this traditional definition of masculinity are socially constructed, these dominant messages about masculinity are not universal, inherent, or essential but instead change over time and in different cultural or societal norms (Connell, 2005). Nevertheless, societies, both in the United States as well as many other Western nations and cultures (Grieg, Kimmel, & Lang, 2000; Plummer, 1999), have established a traditional definition of masculinity as normal, and anything that deviates from that norm is defined as deviant (Brannon, 1976; O'Neil et al., 1986).

In the United States other masculinities, both individual and cultural (e.g., Black, southern, and gay), are at least in part an interaction with this version of masculinity which is perpetuated by the dominant social groups in the United States (e.g., Whites, men, heterosexuals, and Christians) (Brod & Kaufman, 1994). As a result, marginalized social groups which do not fit with the traditional definition of masculinity (e.g., gay men, Asian men, and men with a disability) construct their own masculinities through complex processes of rejection, assimilation, and modification of the traditional definition of masculinity which serves to maintain the primacy of the traditional definition of masculinity and marginalize other masculinities (Connell, 1987). The

traditional definition of masculinity and the system of patriarchy it simultaneously reinforces, and is dependent upon, is maintained through dominant cultural values, institutions (e.g., media, religious institutions, and governmental agencies), and individual beliefs and actions (Hardiman & Jackson, 1997). As in other societies, the traditional definition of masculinity in the United States has shifted and changed over time as society and its expectations of men has shifted (Kimmel, 2006). This traditional definition has changed over time as dominant cultural norms and gender role expectations for men have changed. Many of the same core components remain the same over time even if the way they are manifested or performed has shifted (O'Neil & Roberts Carroll, 1988).

Brannon (1976) first described the four major expectations of the traditional definition of masculinity, at the time called male sex roles. The first rule was *No Sissy Stuff*. This rule defined masculinity in opposition to femininity and dictated that men can never do anything even remotely resembling femininity. The second rule was *Be a Big Wheel*, defining masculinity by power, wealth, and success. *Be a Sturdy Oak* told men that they must be dependable and keep their emotions in reserve at all times, especially in a crisis. *Give 'em Hell* explained that men were defined by their risky, aggressive, and daring behavior, which encouraged men to transgress the expectations of society. Based on more recent empirical quantitative data, the traditional definition of masculinity encourages males to be emotionally restrictive; seek power, control, and competition; avoid affectionate and sexual interaction with other men; and defines personal success through work status and financial gain (O'Neil et al., 1986).

Transgressing society's rules and fighting, both literally and figuratively, has also been observed even in young boys as central to proving one's masculinity (Ferguson, 2004). Ironically, breaking the rules has been a prime means of following the rules of masculinity. Brod (1987) described men who transgress against social norms as "not deviants or *nonconformists*, but *overconformists*, men who have come too much under the domination of a particular aspect of male socialization" (p. 270).

Traditional Definition of Masculinity Reinforced by Misogyny and Homophobia

Fear of femininity is so central to the traditional definitions of masculinity that these rigid expectations of men are defined and reinforced primarily through misogyny and homophobia (O'Neil et al., 1986). Men socialized through this traditional version of manhood learn that misogyny and homophobia are two primary means of proving their manhood in compliance with the traditional definition of masculinity (Kimmel, 1994).

The clearest forms of misogyny include forms of violence against women such as domestic violence, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and rape. These examples of abusive and violent misogyny illustrate how "patriarchy is as much about relations between man and man as it is about relations between men and women" (Cockburn, 1983, p. 123). As a result of their socialization men may feel entitled as men to a wife's domestic work, to pursue a career without distraction, and to be able to relax when they come home from that career (Deutsch, 2004). Despite this sense of entitlement of men as a group, individual men often do not feel entitled since they see themselves as having less entitlement than previous generations of men, other men they see depicted in the media, or their perceptions of their male peers (Kaufman, 1994). Instead of feeling entitled, men often feel short changed, resulting in resentment, inequitable expectations of wives and

perhaps leading to domestic violence. Noting how common sexual harassment and “girl watching” has become, Quinn (2004) also observed in her interviews of men and women that sexual harassment is often “dismissed or trivialized as only play or ‘boys will be boys’” (p. 306). Sexual harassment has been viewed as men having sexually based interactions with women as a means of engaging and proving masculinity to other men (Quinn). Several scholars have conceptually explored the connection between men’s adherence to the traditional definition of masculinity and men’s perpetration of sexual assault and rape, and the potential for transcending the traditional definition of masculinity as a means of addressing men’s violence against women (Capraro, 1994; Heisse, 1997; Hong, 2000; Katz, 1995, 2006; Kivel, 1992).

Historically homophobia, although most obviously directed at members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community, has perhaps primarily served to powerfully reinforce the rigid boundaries of traditional masculinity for all men, outside of which lies unacceptable behavior for men (Herek, 1987). Plummer (1999), based on his qualitative study of homophobia and men across a spectrum of sexual orientation identities, argued that while homophobia’s apparent target is homosexuals, perhaps that is not its primary target. In Western culture, homophobia is often primarily directed at men who defy a traditional definition of masculinity, and not at all limited to gay men. When men act out their homophobia, what they may really be doing is trying to prove that they fit within the rigid boundaries of the traditional definition of masculinity. Scholars also found homophobia to play a central role in shaping for men what it means to be a man among St. Lucian men (Davis, Thomas, & Sewalish, 2006).

As a way of proving manhood, homophobia can become a foundation for developing aggressive forms of heterosexuality. Messner (2004b) offered a powerful personal account of how homophobia influenced his own masculinity, as a man who later in life came to identify as heterosexual. He explored his own personal feelings and perceptions about sexuality, rooted in the traditional definition of masculinity, to illustrate the false conception of heterosexuality as “rock solid foundation” (p. 425).

Underlying homophobia, and the aggressive heterosexuality it fosters, contributes to violent misogyny such as sexual harassment, rape, and domestic violence as way for men to perform to the men around them (Quinn, 2004). Homophobia reinforcing the traditional definition of masculinity may also be at the root of such issues as school shootings and terrorism (Kimmel, 2004b; Kimmel & Mahler, 2003). Although none of the young, almost all White, boys in the flurry of school shootings over the past ten years shows any evidence of being homosexual, all of them were the targets of bullying and name calling often in the form of homophobia (Kimmel & Mahler). Terrorists such as Mohammed Atta, Timothy McVeigh, and Adolf Hitler were all emasculated through homophobia for being short, effeminate, or failing to achieve financial or social status as defined by their culture (Kimmel, 2004b). Once again, there is little credible evidence that any of these individuals were homosexuals, but all were the targets of homophobia (Kimmel). A critical analysis views these expressions of massive violence at least in part as an attempt to regain masculinity according to the traditional definition in one final attempt to over-conform to the traditional definition of masculinity that despises homosexuality and femininity and values aggression, power, and control (Kimmel).

Another recent example illustrates how political leaders understand not only that misogyny and homophobia are acceptable, but also tools to give them masculine credibility and to diminish their opponents. Revelations about Arnold Schwarzenegger's history of violent sexual harassment didn't hurt his successful campaign for governor of California. Instead he felt comfortable sharing his enthusiasm for such misogyny as he described taking a women's head and shoving it into a toilet bowl during an audition (Tonn, 2004). Schwarzenegger shared this not out of shame, but gleefully stating "How many times do you get away with this – to take a woman, grab her upside down, and bury her face in a toilet bowl?" (p. 383). Schwarzenegger later stated in planned speeches that his opponents who challenged his economic policies were "economic girlie men." Schwarzenegger was not held accountable for his misogynistic and homophobic comments by the mainstream media ("*NOMAS-Boston promotes equal access to "feminine" qualities,"* 2004).

Hegemonic Masculinity

Masculinity, as it has been traditionally defined, hierarchically positions men above women and some men above other men based on race, sexual orientation, class, religion, age, ability, and other social group memberships (Connell, 1987). Men's identity constructed in the context of this hegemonic masculinity contributes to sexism and other forms of oppression, just as those systems of oppression influence men's identity development. Men's identity constructed in this context contributes to the oppression of women, marginalization of some men, and limits all men. The social justice implications of hegemonic masculinity were central to the goals of this study as well as key theoretically sensitizing concepts for the researcher as the study was conducted.

Oppression of women. The traditional definition of masculinity is hegemonic in that it has primarily been organized around privileging men as a group over women as a group (Connell, 1987). As men constructed their identity through interactions with this traditional definition of masculinity, they learned patriarchal masculinity that reinforced and replicated men's domination over women (Kimmel & Messner, 1998). The social construction of gender in the context of the traditional definition of masculinity has been instrumental in defining, maintaining, and perpetuating patriarchy (Kimmel & Messner, 2004). Patriarchy is a massively complex system of individual, institutional, and cultural actions that serve to oppress women (Hardiman & Jackson, 1997; hooks, 2004; Johnson, 1997; Lorde, 1984). Understanding men's identity development in the context of the traditional hegemonic definition of masculinity offers great potential for addressing the systemic roots of patriarchy and individual sexism.

Marginalization of some men. The traditional definition of masculinity is also hegemonic in that its hierarchy not only places men above women, but also places some men above other men (Connell, 1987). The traditional definition of masculinity has emerged upon which all other masculinities are compared, scrutinized, and marginalized. Connell observed that the domination of some men over other men is not a consequence, but a central organizing principle of hegemonic masculinity, and a critical aspect of maintaining men's domination over women.

Although there is a dominant or traditional definition of masculinity, it is only one of many masculinities (Brod, 1994). There is no singular definition of what it means to be a man, but rather many different cultural, regional, and ethnically diverse definitions of masculinity. Despite these various masculinities, all forms of masculinity have not been

equally valued or accepted in hierarchical societies (Connell, 1987). Masculinities have been socially constructed and thus constructed differently based on factors such as geographical location, language, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, class, religion, and ability. Some masculinities have been more privileged than others as a result of oppressive hierarchies (Bell, 1997) functioning in the United States as well as in many other nations across the globe (Connell, 1987). The rigid boundary of masculinity is therefore defined and reinforced not only through misogyny and homophobia but also through other forms of oppression such as racism, classism, and religious oppression (Kivel, 1992).

Although there are numerous marginalized social group identities based on factors such as class (Nonn, 2004), ability (Gerschick & Miller, 2004), and religion (Kivel, 1992) to which men belong, and as a result are influenced by the hegemonic definition of masculinity, the current literature primarily focuses on the intersections of racism and heterosexism with gender. Traditional masculinity intersects with racist and heterosexist constructs to influence the way men of color and non-heterosexual men construct their masculinity in a hegemonic context.

Hegemonic masculinity is influenced by and reinforces systemic racism. The dominant version of masculinity provides the context not only for individual men to construct their own masculinity but also for other marginalized cultural groups to construct their own masculinities. The impact of hegemonic masculinity can be seen in the struggles of individuals and groups from various racial and ethnic groups.

Many Latino men view masculinity from a “macho” perspective, often falsely believed to be a unified notion among many communities that identify as Latino

(Mirandé, 2004). This macho notion has been observed to have positive as well as negative connotations in Latino culture. As it is often applied to Latinos by the dominant culture, “machismo” is “imbued with such negative attributes as male dominance, patriarchy, authoritarianism, and spousal abuse . . . In short, under current usage the Mexican macho oppresses and coerces women, whereas his Anglo counterpart appears to attract and seduce them” (p. 29). However, a more positive connotation to “macho” calls Latinos to “adhere to a code of ethics that stresses humility, honor, respect of oneself and others, and courage . . . by such inner qualities as personal integrity, commitment, loyalty, and, most importantly, strength of character” (p. 30).

In a personal account, Almaguer (2004) questioned his place in Latino masculinity as a gay man trying to fit into a cultural perspective that does not recognize gay men as part of the sexual system. In another personal reflection, Espada (2004) discussed his own Puerto Rican masculinity as it had been taught to him and how he wanted to teach it to his son. He emphasized that aggressive masculinity is often performed not by those feeling powerful, but instead by those feeling powerless.

Chen (2004) took a historical look at Asian men in the United States and showed that racism and culture have intersected to define Asian men as “either asexual or hypersexual; today, they are constructed to be less successful, assimilated, attractive, and desirable than their female counterparts” (p. 39). When confronted with these stereotypes, the Chinese American men Chen interviewed employed four primary strategies, “compensation, deflection, denial, and repudiation” (p. 49).

Liu (2002) explored the lives of Asian American men and the interaction between adherence to the roles of traditional masculinity and their racial identity as Asian

Americans. He used several quantitative tools to explore relationships between racism, racial identity, prejudicial attitudes, and masculinity among Asian American men. Liu concluded that among his participants there were no differences in the outcomes between various Asian ethnicities; however, there was a strong positive correlation between Asian American men's racial identity development and gender role conflict. Specifically, for men in this study, nontraditional masculine attitudes were associated with attitudes supporting fighting racism and openness to diversity. Traditional masculine roles were associated with racial group marginalization, ethnocentrism, and fighting against racism. In terms of racial identity and gender role conflict, men who identified with racial confusion, ethnocentrism, and integration were more likely to experience gender role conflict. The more participants expressed openness to diversity the less likely they were to endorse traditional masculine attitudes. A similar study of Asian American college men found that men who had a more mature racial identity and who were more critical of traditional gender roles were more likely to have a higher sense of self-esteem, a measure often used as an indicator mental and emotional well-being (Shek, 2005).

Several Black men have explored their own personal experiences with hegemonic masculinity. Marable (2004) discussed the historical role of racism in emasculating Black men and its impact on him personally, using slavery and its reverberations in today's culture as one example. In another personal account, Saddik (2003) critiqued "gangster" rap as a hypermasculine attempt to use violence, homophobia, misogyny, and other hypermasculine behaviors in an effort to reclaim masculinity denied to Black men as a result of racism. In his essay, Staples (2004) explored the reality behind Black men's sexuality in comparison to racist stereotypes to dispel the conflicting notions of Black

men as emasculated, yet hypersexual, violent, and exploitative hypermasculine men.

Kelley (2004) also offered a personal account of frustration with society's expectations of him as a Black man who is simultaneously emasculated and hypermasculinized by racism. Majors and Billson (1986) described Black men's "cool pose" as a social symptom of racism and Black men's efforts at both expression and survival in an attempt to prove their manhood.

Traditional masculinity also shapes the internal and external experiences of gay and bisexual youth. In a study of 30 Australian men with a variety of sexual identities, the men who later identified as gay or bisexual reported that early experiences of homophobia from their peers often caused them to explore their sexual orientation identities long before any feelings developed for other men (Plummer, 1999). Men beginning to recognize same sex attractions experienced self-hate not because of their sexual orientation, but because they viewed these feelings as feminine (Savin-Williams, 2004). Men's efforts, including some gay men, to prove their masculinity in this hegemonic and homophobic context can result in harassment, threats, and violence; no reliable safe havens; impacts on family membership; trying to conform to homophobic standards; emotional distress; isolation and withdrawal; concealment; and self-harm (Plummer, 1999). Other studies have found that some gay men engaged in high risk sexual behaviors as a means of regaining their manhood after being emasculated by homophobia (Diaz, 2004) or as a way to deny their own sexual orientation to themselves and others (Signorile, 1993).

The scholarship on marginalized men and masculinities illustrates how hegemonic masculinity is not only men's dominance over women, but also some men's

dominance over other men. Although much of the literature specifically explores these differences related to race, class, and sexual orientation, the same approach could be applied to other marginalized social group identities related to ability, age, and religion (Kivel, 1992). In response, these marginalized men have developed counter-masculinities, or behave in hypermasculine ways to maintain their sense of self (Nonn, 2004). For example, in a qualitative study of men with physical disabilities, participants reacted to their transgression against traditional masculinity through reformulation, reliance, and rejection:

Reformulation, which entailed men's redefinition of hegemonic characteristics on their own terms; *reliance*, reflected by sensitive or hypersensitive adoptions of particular predominant attributes; and *rejection*, characterized by the renunciation of these standards and with the creation of one's own principles and practices or the denial of masculinity's importance in one's life. (Gerschick & Miller, 2004, p. 351)

When marginalized men recognized the way they are emasculated as a result of these oppressive systems, they often returned to the traditional definition of masculinity to prove their manhood (Fine, Weis, Addelston, & Hall, 2004). In this way they were simultaneously the products of, excluded from, hurt by, and reinforcing the traditional definition of masculinity (Brod, 1987).

Limitation of all men. Just as patriarchy has and continues to hurt women and marginalize some men, it also hurts all men, by placing boys and men in a “gender straightjacket” (Pollack, 1999, p. xxiv). This rigid definition of masculinity has powerful consequences for men that can be seen in a wide variety of social issues. Male gender role expectations have been connected to men’s alcohol use and alcohol problems (McCreary, Newcomb, & Sadavem, 1999), as well as men’s under-representation in psychological health services (Cochran, 2005). In a review of recent men’s transgressions

covered in the mainstream media from sexual harassment by prominent politicians to high school boys proudly competing through sexual conquest, Kimmel (2004a) saw issues of masculinity that must be confronted. “But it's not men on trial here; it's masculinity, or, rather, the traditional definition of masculinity, which leads to certain behaviors that we now see as politically problematic and often physically threatening” (p. 565). Kimmel concluded that transforming men’s violence including violence against women will require transforming masculinity.

Not only does this traditional definition of masculinity have consequences, it also does not fit perfectly for any man (Kivel, 1992). As a result, many men experience conflict with societal expectations of men. In the early 1980s, O’Neil (1981) began to examine the notion of gender role conflict and strain through quantitative studies, by looking at the external and internal struggles of men interacting with the traditional role of masculinity. He pointed out that gender role conflict can lead to internal psychological struggles for men as well as external behavioral conflicts, which have consequences for men and women. Later, O’Neil and colleagues developed the Gender Role Conflict Scale (O’Neil et al., 1986) based on 10 assumptions about gender role conflict. This scale has been used to explore men’s interactions with the traditional definition of masculinity (O’Neil, 1990). O’Neil’s extensive work on this particular phenomenon, and the work of others building on his scholarship related to college men (e.g., Capraro, 2004b; Davis, 2002; Liu, 2002), points to gender role conflict as a potential aspect of college men’s gender identity development.

Men are not only harmed by rigid gender roles, but also by the dominant position the systemic patriarchy reinforced by these gender roles places men. Patriarchy, fostered

by traditional masculinity, simultaneously gives power to men as a group and takes power away from individual men (Capraro, 2004b), leaving men as both harmed and privileged. As men assimilate dominant perspectives or internalized domination, men also pay a price. Brookfield (2005) explained that “hegemony works when people actively welcome and support beliefs that are actually hurting them” (p. 94). Although men’s privileges as a result of hierarchical and oppressive systems are very real and may appear to only benefit men, ultimately the unearned privileges men gain as a result of the patriarchal system and men’s sexism are relatively superficial compared to the humanity men lose as a result of being in the role of the oppressor (Brod, 1987; Freire, 1972/2000). Although men clearly benefit from male privilege, Brod argued that men would ultimately be better off without those privileges: “The claim, rather, must be not that men's interests are not being advanced by society, but that the sort of men's interests being advanced are interests men would be better off without” (p. 272). New (2001) described this as men’s “latent emancipatory interest” (p. 729). This interest remains latent in part because the insidious genius of oppressive systems (Kendall, 2006) has taught those with privilege to ignore how they are harming, and harmed, and has taught those who are oppressed to ignore how they are hurt (Freire, 1972/2000). Fostering this enlightened self-interest can be critical in fostering more effective, sustainable, consistent, and accountable social justice allies (Edwards, 2006).

Boys and Masculinity

The well-documented educational struggles of girls are a result of the preferential treatment of boys stemming from patriarchy and systemic sexism (Sadker & Sadker, 1994). This sexism has been observed in the ways girls’ learning difficulties are

identified less frequently than boys, the greater attention paid to boys by teachers and school personnel, and boys' higher SAT scores despite girls' higher or similar scoring at early grades (Sadker & Sadker). At the same time, the very real educational issues facing boys and men are also a result of sexism and the traditional definition of masculinity which limits men as well as women. The influence of the traditional definition of masculinity through boyhood leading up to college contributes to the gender identity college men develop. Relevant to this study are the influences leading up to and through the college experience for traditional aged college men.

The social construction of gender begins to affect males immediately. Research on infants revealed that male infants are actually more emotional than female infants (Pollack, 1999). This emotionality was socialized out of boys by caring and loving parents through shame and an intentional separation process applied to boys. As children grow older, mothers discussed a wide range of feelings and emotions with daughters, particularly sadness and distress, but the primary emotion discussed with boys was anger. Fathers used emotional words more with daughters, "with only one exception...disgust" (Pollack, p. 43).

This not only leads to a damaged relationship between child and parent, but also to what Kindlon and Thompson (2000) referred to as boys' "emotional illiteracy" (p. 5). As a result of this emotional illiteracy, and in an effort to perform to the traditional definition of masculinity, the "culture of cruelty" was created, in which boys competed to hurt and harm each other (Kindlon & Thompson, p. 75). The emotional illiteracy of boys intersected with this culture of cruelty to socialize boys who were incapable of dealing with the intense emotions they experienced (Kindlon & Thompson). The social pressure

to perform to the traditional definition of masculinity led boys to deny their hurt for fear that it would open them up to even more ridicule and hurt from other boys. Admitting hurt is weak, and weakness is synonymous with femininity. This lesson came at an emotional cost to boys; “with every lesson in dominance, fear, and betrayal, a boy is tutored away from trust, empathy, and relationship” (Kindlon & Thompson, p. 75).

Children have been observed displaying traditional gender roles in the interactions between students and teachers as early as kindergarten (Jordan & Cowan, 2004). The authors of this study observed the boys’ fantasy gender role as “warrior narrative” (p. 103). The boys wanted to act out their gender roles by fighting and using weapons against the “baddies.” The boys’ fantasy gender role was forbidden in the school environment. Instead, the boys were encouraged to act out a different masculine role of responsibility and rationality. As observed in the study, girl’s fantasy gender role of bride or mother was encouraged in the school environment and not unrealistic to achieve later in life. The boys’ fantasy gender role was not possible except in times of war. Boys were aware of this and learned as early as five or six years old that there was a public masculinity which was socially acceptable and a private masculinity which was to be hidden and in part defined by its social unacceptability.

Messner (2004a) observed similar socialization in elementary school aged boys and girls. He discussed observing children constructing traditional definitions of femininity and masculinity and what lies outside those boundaries through references to Barbie dolls and monsters in their idle play at soccer practice.

As boys grow older, they often experienced social pressure from other boys to disrespect and tease girls in coeducational environments (Pollack, 1999). However, boys

in all-male environments or co-educational environments in which they believed they were free from the pressure to compete with other boys showed a “natural inclination to honor these feelings in girls and women with compassion and respect” (p. 75).

Later in life, as teenagers, complying with the traditional definition of masculinity has tragic consequences for an individual boy, the boys around him, and the girls in his life. Teenage boys who more closely agreed with the traditional definition of masculinity were more likely “to drink beer, smoke pot, have unprotected sex, get suspended from school, and ‘trick’ or force someone into having sex” (Kindlon & Thompson, 2000, p. 16).

It is not surprising that so many boys turned to alcohol and drugs as a way to deal with emotions they were unprepared to feel, express, or manage in a healthy way (Pollack, 1999). As adolescence continues, girls generally viewed sex as a way of demonstrating love and connection while boys primarily view sex as a way of proving their masculinity (Pollack). Regardless of race or class, boys who reported the highest agreement with hypermasculine attitudes were the most likely to have unprotected sex (Kindlon & Thompson, 2000).

Athletics often creates a hypermasculine environment in which misogyny and homophobia are reinforced as well as competitive and violent masculinity (Curry, 2004). However, under the proper mentoring, coaching, and guidance, activities and involvement such as athletics can offer an environment for boys to explore meaningful homosocial bonds with other boys to begin understanding and accepting emotions of failure, loss, sadness, and shame (Pollack, 1999). These emotions are realities of the human experience, which boys frequently are discouraged from expressing and feeling,

are critical in developing emotional resilience (Pollack). An example of this kind of mentoring, teaching, and coaching is exemplified by Joe Ehrmann, a former professional football player, who coached high school football by teaching boys to live lives of character, integrity, and service to community while loving each other along the way (Marx, 2003). Developing this emotional literacy will benefit boys for the rest of their lives as well as the women in their lives.

Men and Masculinity in College

College men continue to experience the same pressures to measure up to the traditional definition of masculinity as boys (Davis & Laker, 2004). In addition, college men also begin to show evidence of conflict with the strict and confining gender roles (O'Neil et al., 1986). The paradox of masculinity illustrates how college men experience stress as a result of the pressure to live up to the traditional definition of masculinity and as a result of defining their gender identity differently than the traditional gender norms (Capraro, 2004b). Before looking at how these phenomena influence college men's experiences, I first look more closely at how college men experience the pressures of the traditional definition of masculinity, the strain of college men's gender role conflict, and the paradox of masculinity (Capraro).

College Men and the Traditional Definition of Masculinity

The pressure to perform to the traditional definition of masculinity has consequences for college men's behavior as well as their own well-being. Messner's (1987) interviews of 30 men reflecting on their past lives as both athletes and men revealed a lack of a rite of passage from boyhood to manhood led to a continuous struggle to prove manhood according to the traditional definition of masculinity. The men

in the study described the gender expectations as vague and unclear, but understood that it was clearly about not being feminine. Kilmartin (2001) discussed the role of the traditional hegemonic definition of masculinity's role in contributing to college men's perpetration of sexual assault and the potential of exploring male gender role socialization as a tool for sexual assault prevention with college men. Scholars have also begun to theorize the social construction of masculinity as playing a central role in college men's overrepresentation as college judicial offenders (Harper, Harris, & Mmeje, 2005).

College Men's Gender Role Conflict

The strict, rigid, and limited traditional definition of masculinity doesn't accurately reflect the humanity of any man. Men who tried to fit these rigid gender roles experienced significant strain (O'Neil, 1981). Men sacrifice integrity when they deny aspects of their humanity that do not fit the traditional definition of masculinity. Men also sacrifice authenticity when they perform to aspects of the traditional definition of masculinity that are not a part of their true humanity. As a result of this strain many college men experience gender role conflict (O'Neil et al., 1986). Unfortunately, college men who began to distance themselves from the traditional definition of masculinity faced significant strain rather than feel liberated. This gender role conflict had psychological consequences. When men came to understand that their conformity to gender roles had negative consequences for themselves and others, they experienced loss of self and faced increased depression (Good & Wood, 1995). As a result, men who experience gender role conflict are sought new positive messages about masculinity to replace the traditional definition of masculinity.

In a study of college men's depression and help seeking behavior using qualitative methods, Good and Wood (1995) discovered gender role conflict as central to men's psychological "double jeopardy." This double jeopardy describes the precarious position in which men who begin to deviate from traditional gender norms find themselves. For example, college men who experienced greater gender role conflict experienced increases in depression and were less likely to seek counseling. As a result men who begin to transcend the traditional definition of masculinity face a double jeopardy that helps to maintain the traditional definition of masculinity. Davis (2002) interviewed college men experiencing gender role conflict (O'Neil, 1981) and found that the men in the study described feeling restricted in how they were allowed to communicate, a fear of femininity, feeling overly challenged, and being confused about masculinity (Davis).

College Men and the Paradox of Masculinity

Kaufman (1994) described the conflicting experiences of men, who are clearly in the dominant position in society but who rarely feel powerful as individuals in their own lived experiences. Capraro (2004b) used the term "paradox of masculinity" to describe the contradictory ways that college men experience their power and privilege and the pressure it places on them. Capraro explained that "in objective social analysis, men as a group have power over women as a group: but, in their subjective experience of the world, men as individuals do not feel powerful. In fact, they feel powerless" (p. 192). College men feel powerless because of the pressure they feel to live up to the traditional definition of masculinity and the strain they feel when they deviate from this rigid gender norm.

One outcome resulting from this pressure to conform to the traditional definition of masculinity and the pain associated with not living up to such expectations can be seen in college men's alcohol use. The traditional definition of masculinity led men to alcohol use as a means of proving their manhood and encouraged them to use alcohol as a means to anesthetize their pain at not measuring up to the traditional definition of masculinity (Capraro, 2004b). Men came to problematic alcohol use through "two routes: one route starts at traditional male-role attitudes, passes through alcohol use, and ends in alcohol problems; another route starts at masculine gender-role stress and ends directly in alcohol problems" (Capraro, 2004b, p. 191). In this way the traditional definition of masculinity is at the root of two very different kinds of alcohol use among college men, which has significant consequences for both college men and women (Ullman, Karabatsos, & Koss, 1999; Wechsler, Lee, Kuo, & Lee, 2000). Capraro extended this same analysis, that men are performing as a way to achieve the traditional definition of masculinity or mediate their pain at not meeting it, to a variety of other hypermasculine behaviors in college. He stated, "drinking thus falls into a line of masculine icons, including body building, sexual assault, and pornography, that reveal the paradoxical nature of masculinity itself" (p. 195).

Impacts in Hypermasculine College Environments

The combination of the pressure from the traditional definition of masculinity, strain from gender role conflict, and combined effect resulting in the paradox of masculinity affects college men in a number of ways. Fraternity men and male athletes in particular are the focus of much of the study of college men for both theoretical and practical reasons. Theoretically men in these groups often are observed to engage in

hypermasculine behaviors that have consequences for the men involved and the rest of the campus community. Pragmatically these all male groups offer relatively easy access to a group of men with a strong masculine community and culture to both observe and access qualitatively and also to measure quantitatively.

In a qualitative study of fraternity men, Lyman (1987) discovered that college men often located the college experience as an experimental time between the authority of home before college and the authority of work and family after college. These men acted out their anger at this situation through transgressions during this particular time period in college when they felt the consequences would be minimized. Lyman observed that the men's transgressions against women and towards each other were rooted in their "latent anger about the discipline that middle-class male roles imposed upon them, both marriage rules and work rules" (p. 157). Arnett (2004) also observed college age (18-25) as an in-between stage between childhood and adulthood, using the term "emerging adulthood." He described this period in life much more positively as a time of freedom to explore, experiment, and gather information valuable in solidifying identity later in life.

Fraternities, which have been observed as bastions of privilege, homophobia, and misogyny (Rhoads, 1995b; Sanday, 1990), have illustrated how men's transgressions result from simultaneously not fitting into and performing to the traditional definition of masculinity. These struggles with fitting or not fitting with traditional gender roles may help explain the higher alcohol use of college men in general and fraternity men and college athletes specifically (Presley, Meilman, & Cashin, 1996). Particularly focusing on fraternities' role in campus rape and the rape culture, Boswell and Spake (2004) observed

the difference in parties taking place at fraternity houses where women reported feeling a high risk of sexual assaults and houses where women felt a low-risk of sexual assault.

At high risk houses, parties typically had skewed gender ratios, sometimes involving more men and other times involving more women. Gender segregation also was evident at these parties, with the men on one side of a room or in the bar drinking while women gathered in another area. Men treated women differently in the high-risk houses. The women's bathrooms in the high-risk houses were filthy, including clogged toilets and vomit in the sinks. When a brother was told of the mess in the bathroom at a high-risk house, he replied, "Good, maybe some of these beer wenches will leave and there will be more beer for us." (Boswell & Spake, p. 182)

In interviews with individual men in these houses, the authors found that many first-year men genuinely believed that rape is the fault of women who dress a certain way, have sex, get drunk, or other problematic behavior which leaves these men with no other option. This is yet another illustration of how men exert sexism, in this case violent sexism, as a result of the paradox of masculinity, seeing themselves as powerless instead of powerful (Capraro, 2004b).

Lyman's (1987) analysis of interviews exploring individual fraternity men's experiences and interactions with the fraternity described individual men who disagreed with the misogynistic culture of the fraternity, but also contributed to such a culture in an effort to prove their manhood and out of fear of being emasculated and ostracized by other men. Individual men in this study privately voiced frustration with misogynist behavior and a lack of meaningful homosocial bonds; however, these same men felt that they needed to continue to engage in this same behavior to maintain status within the group. Lyman found that the joking relationship among fraternity men had at its root misogynistic nature, causes, and impacts. The men joked, often sexually, as a way to form a connection and bond without disclosing or being vulnerable. Lyman viewed this

as the men's efforts to develop meaningful homosocial bonds that they were seeking but were otherwise prevented from by traditional masculinity in the forms of fear of femininity and homophobia. The dissatisfaction with this misogynistic environment was pervasive among individual men, but roundly supported among groups of men, illustrating the need for individual men to perform to a masculine ideal in these environments. Individual fraternity men reported being unsatisfied with the culture of fraternities and the behavior of fraternity men, while still reproducing that culture and behavior in the group.

This pattern of fraternity culture's misogyny as a result of individual men's conformity to traditional masculinity is also revealed in a critical ethnographic study of fraternity culture (Rhoads, 1995b). Rhoads identified three primary patterns of fraternity culture. The first two patterns included the misogynistic representations of women and positioning women as passive participants in fraternity culture. The third pattern was the rigid conformity to a narrow definition of masculinity that fostered oppression of both women and gay men.

Homophobia and sexism as a way of demonstrating masculinity is also observed in an ethnography of the college athletic locker room. Curry (2004) observed that athletic men privately admitted to wanting to be part of an athletic team as a means of seeking meaningful homosocial relationships. Unfortunately, because these groups transgress against the traditional definition of masculinity (choosing to live with other men or share a locker-room and physical contact with other men), there is a need to avoid any form of homosocial connection for fear of femininity and homophobia. In fraternities, men mediate the fact that they chose to be a part of a group of men, often times sharing the

same living environment. In athletics, men mediate the fact that they share such close physical contact through their sports and share vulnerable physical space in the locker room with other men.

Impacts on Marginalized College Men

In addition to these college experiences, social group identities are also relevant to college men's construction of their gender identity. The impact of traditional hegemonic masculinity has been observed with college men marginalized as a result of social group identity. Men of color and non-heterosexual men have primarily been the focus of the scholarship of marginalized men and masculinity.

Gay college men. Dilley (2005) used a qualitative approach employing a blend of queer theory and queer historiography as well as a combination of constant comparative, typographic, biographical, and narrative methodologies to explore how non-heterosexual college men came to various identities in college environments. The results of the study indicated just how influenced these men were by the dominant definition of masculinity and its accompanying homophobia. Participants often developed an identity that would either conform to or openly oppose these dominant messages about gender and sexual orientation. The typology of identities included homosexual, gay, queer, closeted, "normal," and parallel. Each of these identities was influenced by and influenced the participants' engagement in a typology of college environments which included campus environments, gay student organizations, fraternity life, sexual activity, the goals of being "normal" and emotional attractions.

Gay men's response to traditional gender and sexual orientation norms is also observed in another qualitative study of men involved in a gay fraternity (Yeung et al.,

2006). The researchers used both interviews and prolonged engagement to study the experiences of individual men and the culture of Delta Lambda Phi, a gay fraternity. The researchers found that the men as individuals and as an organization struggled between reproducing and rejecting the expectations of the traditional hegemonic definition of masculinity. On one hand, they engaged in performing femininity (e. g., acting “queeny” or dressing in drag), promoting intimacy among men, and including all men, with regard to not only sexual orientation but also other forms of diversity. On the other hand, they sought to limit resistance to their existence as an organization, particularly from other fraternity men. The researchers interpreted many of the participants’ actions as either direct and intentional resistance to the traditional definition of masculinity or passive and perhaps unintentional conforming to the traditional definition of masculinity. In this way, the traditional hegemonic definition of masculinity remained the dominant organizer of behavior by both the individual men and the chapter as a whole.

The dominant definitions of masculinity and sexual orientation have also been observed in college men’s coming out experiences. In a critical ethnography, Rhoads (1995a) found four themes of the coming out process: the ongoing nature of the process, personal change, negative experiences, and on-going harassment and discrimination. The coming out process was difficult because the participants understood the nature of dominant masculinity and homophobia and as a result frequently described very challenging experiences coming to terms with their own sexual orientation, let alone sharing it with someone else. The participants described the coming out process as on-going because of the constant pervasiveness of heterosexism which expects

heterosexuality. The participants also described direct and indirect homophobia aimed at them as a result of their coming out.

College men of color. The past several years has seen significant media attention paid to the gender gap in college enrollment, retention, and academic success (Brown & Espinoza, 2006; Coeyman, 2001; Conlin, 2003; Evelyn, 2002; Fonda, 2000; Jaschik, 2006; Lazar, 2003; Zyla Vickers, 2006). Despite this attention there is little evidence that a gender gap exists among middle and upper class White men (Brownstein, 2000; King, 2006). Instead, Black and Latino men, White and Latino men from lower income backgrounds, and men 25 years and older significantly fall behind their female peers (King). The gender gap is real, but instead of being solely about gender it is more accurately about the intersections of gender, race, and class. These concerns over the gender gap, when closely examined, reveal that race and income still represent the greatest disparities in college enrollment (King). It is also important to note that college achievement is not a zero-sum game and that more men are going to college than ever before, its just that women are going to college more than ever before in even greater numbers than men (King). The research thus far on the intersections of gender and race for college men primarily focuses on African American men. Although the experiences of other men of color are not the same, this research may provide insight into these intersections and their impacts for other racial and ethnic groups.

A recent symposium at Morehouse College on the gender gap among men of color and lower income men suggested that institutionalized racism and cultural resistance as well as their intersections with masculinity were two of the primary causes of lower enrollment and participation among these marginalized men (Clayton et al.,

2004). The same summit suggested more male and minority teachers as ways of addressing institutionalized racism and offering male role models to address cultural resistance among racial and ethnic groups. The summit also pointed out the need to address the prison industrial complex and the high rates of incarceration and criminalization among men of color. Black men in particular suffer from this criminalization. Although Black men account for 13% of monthly drug users they account for 55% of those convicted and 74% of those sentenced to prison (Blumenson & Nilsen, 2002). This criminalization, institutionalized racism, and classism collides on campus as well when African American students are expelled from higher education at twice the rate of White students for drug violation and new laws prevent students convicted of drug offenses from federal student aid (Clayton et al., 2004).

Research into the experiences of successful African American college males has demonstrated the potential for transcending the traditional definition masculinity holds for men who are marginalized by the dominant version of manhood. In a study of high achieving African American students, Fries-Britt (2002, July/August) found that these students felt double pressure. They felt pressure to camouflage their academic effort and success from their Black peers in an attempt to not be perceived as “acting White.” These same students also felt a conflicting pressure to constantly prove to White faculty, staff, and students who question whether or not they deserved to be there and whether or not they are an “affirmative action admit.” Harper’s (2004) qualitative study of high achieving African American men illustrates the role masculinity plays in increasing both of these pressures for men. Holding unconventional definitions of masculinity was a part of the story of success, as well as campus engagement and leadership in minority

organizations, for high achieving African American men at predominantly White institutions (Harper). Intentional strategies to involve African American men can be critical in fostering African American men's success (Harper & Wolley, 2002).

Identity Development

In addition to the social construction in the societal context of traditional hegemonic masculinity for college men, this study on college men's gender identity development was also informed by the literature on how individuals from other social group identities develop their identity in a social context. Identity reveals the individual's response to the question, "Who am I?" (Tatum, 2003). Erikson (1968) defined identity as "the ability to experience one's self as something that has continuity and sameness, and to act accordingly" (p. 42). Erikson also described identity development as an often unconscious process of constant observation, reflection, and judgment about how the individual fits with cultural expectations. Identity development models attempted to reflect some of the patterns and processes that individuals experience as they define who they are in "social, cultural, and historical context" (Tatum, p. 19). This process of consciousness also includes cognitive development from "concrete to abstract, simple to complex, external authority to internal agency, and clear-cut certitudes to comfort with doubt, uncertainty, and independent inquiry" (Adams, 1997, p. 41). Particularly relevant to this study are models on general social group identity, dominant group identities such as White racial identity development, people of color racial identity development, women's gender identity development, and multiple or intersecting perspectives on identity development. These models serve as sensitizing concepts in the process of conducting a grounded theory study of college men's gender identity development.

Although most identity development models refer to a particular social identity group, Jackson and Hardiman (1994) developed a conceptual model that is more broad. This model was general enough to apply to various types of social group membership including dominant and oppressed groups. When individuals began to acknowledge their social group status had meaning, they moved out of the *Naïve* stage and entered a stage of *Acceptance* of the dominant group ideology, which had active and passive components. Increasing awareness resulted in movement to the next stage of the model, which is *Resistance* of the dominant group ideology. *Resistance* also had active and passive components. At the *Redefinition* stage, individuals developed their own sense of self outside of the dominant ideology. In the final stage, *Internalization*, the individual's sense of self was more stable and less conscious as it was integrated into the person's full humanity.

As another privileged social group identity group, models, research, analysis, and development of White racial identity development can be useful in informing men's identity development. Helms's (1995) model of White racial identity development has received more empirical support than any other. Helms (1995) used statuses, as opposed to stages, to highlight the fluid rather than linear nature of development. Helms described two phases each with three statuses. The first phase and its three statuses describe the process of abandonment of racism. This first phase included contact, disintegration, and reintegration statuses. The second phase and its three statuses describe the process of defining a non-racist White identity. This phase included pseudoindependence, immersion/emersion, and autonomy.

The scholarship on people of color's racial identity development has so influenced the overall field of identity development from a social justice perspective that its influence cannot be dismissed or minimized even though it does not address superordinate or dominant social group identity directly. Much of the early work on identity did not include the experiences of women or people of color (Levine, 2002). In the past 25 years, numerous identity development models, particularly explaining the experience of people of color, have emerged (Cross, 1971; Thomas, 1971), been revised (Cross, 1991, 1995; Cross & Fahagen-Smith, 2001), and built upon (Helms, 1992, 1995). Other models have sought to explain the experiences of other racial and ethnic groups (Alvarez, 2002; Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001; Horse, 2001; Kim, 2001; Torres, 2003; Wijeyesinghe, 2001). Racial identity development models for people of color provide a variety of conceptual and empirical approaches to developing identity development models.

Scholars have also examined gay and lesbian identity development processes in general (Cass, 1979; D'Augelli, 1994; McCarn & Fassinger, 1996) and these processes for college students in particular (Abes & Jones, 2004; Fassinger, 1998; Love, Bock, Jannarone, & Richardson, 2005; Stevens, 2004). A review of the gay and lesbian identity development models for college students revealed "fluidity, complexity, and contradictions" (Bilodeau & Renn, 2005, p. 25). Brown (1989) described the process gays and lesbians use to define social norms for themselves given the lack of clear societal guidelines as a result of homophobia as "normative creativity" (p. 451).

Examinations of women's development through a gender lens offered models on inquiry and analysis for men's gender identity development. Several major contributions

have helped foster understanding of women's identity that has historically been missing. Rather than dismiss Erikson (1980) for his lack of attention to women, scholars can find merit in Erikson's work but must pay attention to the limitations (Levine, 2002). Josselson (1996) offered an example of recognizing limitations in Erikson's work, but built on it to help understand women's experiences. Josselson was also informed by another scholar heavily influenced by Erikson. Marcia (1980) identified the two interacting variables of commitment and crisis as the basis for four identity states: diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, and achievement.

Josselson's (1996) study of women's identity development, based on Erikson's (1980) and Marcia's (1980) concept of identity, examined college seniors and returned to them 25 years later. Josselson's longitudinal qualitative study identified four types of identities for the women: guardians, pathmakers, searchers, and drifters. *Guardians* were women whose identity commitments were made for them, often by previous generations. *Pathmakers* experienced a period of experimentation and made commitments on their own. *Searchers* were still in the process of experimentation and had yet to make identity commitments. *Drifters* were without commitment and were not taking steps to make them.

This study provided a qualitative example of exploring gender identity.

When we feel we are "getting to know" someone, we are in the process of becoming aware of another's identity. What matters to you? What goals do you pursue? How do you want others to think of you? What do you believe in? What guides your actions? Whom do you love? What values do you hold dear? Where do you expend your passion? What causes your pain? These are central questions of knowing another and knowing ourselves - the questions of identity. (Josselson, 1996, p. 29)

Social group identities of individuals are complex. Examining identity with regard to one social group identity at a time can provide needed focus, but in doing so, researchers must recognize the greater complexity involved in the multiple and intersecting identities (Reynolds & Pope, 1991). Scholarship on the impact of multiple social group identities on individuals' identity development can help inform the impact of multiple identities on men's identity development.

Rather than explore how individuals developed their identity as women, Jones (1997) explored how women developed their multiple dimensions of identity (e.g. race, gender, class, sexual orientation). Based on the research in this study, Jones developed a conceptual model of multiple dimensions of identity (Jones & McEwen, 2000). This model described a core identity made up of personal attributes, personal characteristics, and personal identity. Aspects of social group identity such as sexual orientation, race, culture, gender, religion, and class fluctuated around this core. These social group identities varied in their salience based on the individual and the context. This process took place in a social context which included family background, socio-cultural conditions, current experiences, and career decisions and life planning. Because of male privilege men probably won't view their gender as a salient component of their identity.

Recent scholarship has also emerged exploring the intersections between multiple identity development and other domains of student development (Abes, Jones, & McEwen, 2007). Kegan (1982) focused on the importance of context and environment and the connection between cognitive capabilities and human development. Several scholars have explored the connection between Baxter Magolda's (2001) epistemological framework of self-authorship, in connection with multiple identity development

processes in college students (Abes & Jones, 2004; Abes et al., 2007), intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005), and the potential for developmental benefits of facing the hardships of not having privilege (Pizzolato, 2003).

Critical Influences

In this study on college men's gender identity development, I was informed by the literature on critical incidents or crucibles. Critical influences are the significant people, places, and events impacting the participants' identity development (A. Stevens, 1997). Bennis and Thomas (2002) used the term "crucible" to describe the "transformative experience through which an individual comes to a new or an altered sense of identity" (p. 40).

Others (Skovholt & McCarthy, 1988; A. Stevens, 1997; R. A. Stevens, 2004) have investigated "critical incidents," a term first used by Flanagan (1954) as a flexible and subjective means of identifying incidents that stood out from the norm. This technique has been used in a wide array of studies across a wide range of academic disciplines, including human development where critical incidents describe "developmental turning points" (Skovholt & McCarthy, 1988, p. 69).

This approach has been used specifically in research leading to identity development models (Helms, 1992, 1995; A. Stevens, 1997; R. A. Stevens, 2004) and research on social justice allies (Broido, 2000). The flexibility and subjectivity of critical influences is appropriate for this study given its constructivist paradigm, qualitative approach, and the lack of current theoretical perspectives on college men's gender identity development (R. A. Stevens, 2004). The literature indicates that the researcher be open to a variety of critical influences including individuals such as fathers and mothers

(Pollack, 1999), teachers (Kindlon & Thompson, 2000), coaches (Marx, 2003), and peers (Capraro, 2004b; Lyman, 1987). Organizations and institutions such as media (Kimmel, 2004a), athletics (Messner, 1987), fraternities (Lyman), academic courses based on identity (Gurin, Nagda, & Lopez, 2004; Hurtado, 2001; Laird, Engberg, & Hurtado, 2005; Nagda, Kim, & Truelove, 2004), and college in general (Davis & Laker, 2004) may serve as critical influences in addition to social forces such as racism, classism, homophobia and other forms of oppression (Kivel, 1992).

Moving Towards College Men's Gender Identity Development

This study responds to the literature which has demonstrated the importance of a theoretical model of men's gender identity development, but has yet to reveal an empirically developed understanding of men's gender identity development. Conceptual and empirical steps towards men's gender identity development continue to draw scholarly attention and open calls specifically for a developmental model using a qualitative approach to inquiry from a critical or social justice perspective (Capraro, 2004b; O'Neil, 2004). Previous scholarship has frequently viewed gender as inherent and unchangeable, irrelevant, or simply as a way of limiting the sample being studied to one gender without a gendered analysis. In this section I position this study in the context of the historical and recent trends of studying men and masculinity.

As a result of men's dominant position in society, the bulk of scholarly research has focused almost exclusively on men until the women's movement helped make gender a relevant scholarly concept in recent decades (Scott, 1996). Historically, scholarship has considered its male participants, not as men, but as people (Brod, 1987). This

androcentric perspective clearly has left out women's experience and it has also left out men's experience, as men (Brod).

This gender blind perspective is especially noticeable in psychological scholarship, which in taking on a male perspective has ignored men's gendered experiences and women's experiences all together (Meth & Pasick, 1990). Early psychoanalysts, such as Freud and Jung, viewed gender as either inherent or irrelevant (Edley & Wetherell, 1996). Freud (1935) believed that boys developed a natural sexual pull towards their mothers, referred to as an Oedipus complex, and an imagined rivalry with the father figure, which resulted in boys' efforts to deny feminine characteristics and emphasize masculine characteristics as a way of competing with the father figure and a strained relationship between boys and the father figure. Jung's (1969) concept of masculine archetypes are not so different than the concept of the traditional definition of masculinity, only Jung saw the archetypes as rooted in genetic lineage or collective unconscious rather than socially constructed in the current society and instilled in boys through a constant process of socialization. Erikson (1968) made the first step towards recognizing societal factors in the psychoanalytic perspective on gender development by incorporating the influence of national and ethnic identity on masculine identity. These early psychoanalytic perspectives argued that concepts of masculine identity such as fear of femininity were inherent in men causing a sexist society, instead of a result of socialization in a sexist society (Gorski, 1998).

Stemming from these psychological approaches, developmental perspectives have generally ignored gender as a lens important to understanding development. For example, in *Seasons of a Man's Life*, the authors claimed to explore the developmental processes

of men, yet the interviews and the analysis lack a gendered lens (Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, & McKee, 1978). Vaillant's (1977) *Adaptation to Life* is another prominent example of the kind of developmental study of men that did not take into account that men have gendered experiences let alone help one understand men's gendered experiences.

Many of the early empirical research on student development produced theories used this androcentric approach, studying men, frequently White men. Yet these theories are often applied to all students which ignores the relevance of gender (Davis & Laker, 2004). Recognizing the psychological issues facing men and the lack of gendered understanding of men by many psychologists, Liu (2005) suggested including issues of men and masculinity as part of multicultural competence in human development. He argued that doing so holds the potential for not only more effective outcomes working with men but also in achieving social justice aims such as addressing patriarchy, homophobia, and sexism (Liu).

Critical approaches to men and masculinity have emerged from the women's movement, which brought feminist scholarship's emphasis on deconstructing the gendered experiences of women, which necessarily resulted in deconstructing the gendered experience of men as well (Brod, 1987). This has led to a critical perspective on men and masculinities primarily in the women's studies, sociology, and the emerging discipline of pro-feminist or critical men's studies (Brod). As reflected in much of this literature review, most of the scholarship with regard to critical perspectives on men and masculinity have come from a sociological perspective (Messner, 2004a).

In response to these critical perspectives, some authors have received great attention for confusing the critiques of traditional masculinity and patriarchal systems with attacks on men, claiming that feminism has gone too far and that now men are the real victims of sexism (e.g., Bly, 1992; Farrell, 1993; Mansfield, 2006; Sommers, 2000). In claiming to argue in defense of men, these authors really supported a return to the traditional definition of masculinity as the only way men, and the patriarchal society, can be validated.

After examining these different approaches to men and masculinity over the past 40 years, Smiler (2004) recognized the need for a developmental approach which examines individual men's experiences with societal definitions of masculinity. Such an approach to studying men would examine how individual men accept, modify, reject, and otherwise interact with the traditional definition of masculinity that scholarship from feminist, sociological, and men's studies perspectives has illuminated.

Some scholarship may at first appear to explore men's gender identity development, but upon closer examination doesn't look at men through a gendered lens. These studies use men as a way of limiting the exploration of another phenomenon through a critical lens, such as race or sexual orientation, to a single gender. One example of this is the approach Scott and Robinson (2001) took to conceptualizing a White male identity development model. This model primarily looked at White identity for non-females as a means of narrowing the population for which the model is intended to apply. The model primarily used a racial lens, but lacked a gendered lens to explore the interaction of gender and racial socialization. Similarly Jones (1996) used phenomenological methodology to explore Black men's identity development but

primarily focused on the men's construction of their racial identity in a racist social context and the ways racism plays out specifically for Black men.

Only a handful of studies have directly addressed men's identity development through a gendered lens. Harris (1995) framed men's identity development using a factor analysis for men's response to a survey which asked men how the influence of messages from traditional masculinity changed over their lifetime. This analysis yielded six stages over the lifetime assigned to specific age groups. During early childhood (ages 0 – 6), boys were learning how to identify by sex and answering the question of whether or not they were male. In primary school and adolescence (ages 6-18), boys were forming a male gender identity, which included defining what a man is. During early adulthood (ages 18 – 30), men were trying out their identity and asking themselves if they were a man among men. Later in life (ages 30 – 40) men were affirming their identity and struggling with what was important to them. In the next phase of adulthood (ages 40 – 50) men were evaluating identity and asking if this is the way they wanted to be for the rest of their life. Men 51 years of age and older were in the process of accepting their identity and asking if they liked themselves (Harris). This study does an excellent job of illuminating the role of societal messages of masculinity and exploring the individual responses to these messages over time. However, the assignment of these stages to specific age groups seems rather rigid and discrete given the complex process of gender development. This may be a limitation of the quantitative statistical analysis used in the study. Though published in book form in 1995, this study has received remarkably little attention in the literature.

Two unpublished dissertations have attempted to conceptualize men's gender identity development by combining other identity development models, particularly racial identity development models. Harrison's (1994) model for male gender consciousness development included five stages similar to several racial identity models: pre-exposure, conflict, pro-minority, immersion/emersion, and internalization. Harrison's model is well grounded conceptually, but it is not based on any empirical evidence. Koshkarian (1999) also developed a conceptual model based primarily on racial identity development models and a critical perspective on men and masculinities. This model on male feminist identity development has five stages; conformity, ambivalent awareness, feeling distress about sexism, loss and integration, and feminist action. A questionnaire based on Koshkarian's model did not support the questionnaire as a measure of stage levels. Koshkarian suggested qualitative approaches to men's identity development as a means to exploring the complexity of the process.

Another unpublished dissertation used a phenomenological approach to explore the sex-role identity development of 10 heterosexual men (Clipson, 1981). Eight themes emerged from this analysis. The themes highlighted the central role of traditional masculinity by pointing out the need for men to prove their masculinity, the varying congruent and conflicting masculine roles men experience, and the impact of masculine roles on men's intimacy and generativity. Other themes demonstrated the ways the men struggled with traditional roles in later adulthood, how men who challenged masculine roles experienced themselves differently, and how they could potentially redefine their own sex role identity. Men who redefined their sex role identity also changed other aspects of their lives to suit their needs. The process of struggling with traditional

masculine sex roles was an on-going issue for all of the participants in the study. This phenomenological study offered an in-depth perspective on men's experiences with traditional masculinity. However, the use of only heterosexual men limits the exploration of homophobia's central role in shaping masculinity to the way heterosexual men experience it.

Recently two prominent scholars of men and masculinity have called specifically for an empirically based study exploring college men's gender identity development from a social justice perspective. After 25 years of scholarship on men's gender role conflict (O'Neil, 1981, 1990; O'Neil et al., 1986; O'Neil & Roberts Carroll, 1988), O'Neil (2004) publicly called for exploration of men's identity through developmental perspectives using qualitative means during a keynote of the American Psychological Association. Capraro (2004b), an associate dean at Hobart College where he coordinates the only men's studies minor in the country, called for the development of a men's identity development model following feminist and anti-racist models:

The path to a reconstructed masculinity or alternatives to the dominant masculinity that includes more variety of men's identities and experiences may look something like Helms' stage-development model for a positive racial-cultural identity for minority groups. It will not be easy getting there. (p. 200)

This study sought to build on the movements towards understanding men's gender identity development and respond to the direct calls for a qualitative empirical approach to understanding men's identity in the context of the traditional hegemonic definition of masculinity from a social justice perspective.

Summary of Literature Review

In this chapter I reviewed the literature that framed and informed this qualitative study of college men's gender identity development. In conceptualizing and conducting

this study, I framed gender and gender identity as socially constructed and followed the model of feminist scholarship which has examined the social construction of gender, gender socialization, and gender identity from a social justice perspective. I also viewed men's identity as socially constructed in the context of societal messages about what it means to be a man dominated by the traditional definition of masculinity. The traditional definition of masculinity is reinforced by and reinforces misogyny and homophobia (O'Neil et al., 1986). This version of masculinity is also hegemonic in that the subordination of women is a central organizing principle and is accomplished in part by placing some men above other men (Connell, 1987). As a result, the traditional hegemonic definition of masculinity fosters a patriarchal and limiting men's identity.

Men's gender socialization in the context of this traditional hegemonic definition of masculinity has implications throughout the lifespan for boys and college men (Kellom, 2004a; Kindlon & Thompson, 2000; Pollack, 1999). The literature on college men has examined how college men struggle with these societal expectations and how they have struggled between living up to these expectations and the pain of failing to live up to the expectations (Capraro, 2004b; O'Neil et al., 1986). The implications of these influences on college men have been observed particularly in hypermasculine environments such as fraternities and college athletics and the hegemonic nature of masculinity has implications for marginalized college men, specifically observed with men of color and non-heterosexual men (Clayton et al., 2004; Curry, 2004; Rhoads, 1995a, 1995b).

The literature on identity development that informed this study draws on general social group identity development models, White racial identity development as a

dominant identity, women's identity development as a gender identity, and multiple and intersecting aspects of identity (Bilodeau & Renn, 2005; Hardiman & Jackson, 1997; Helms, 1995; Jones & McEwen, 2000; Josselson, 1996). The concept of critical influences or crucibles as critical incidents in the participants' identity development also informed this exploration of college men's gender identity development (Skovholt & McCarthy, 1988).

The current psychological and developmental perspectives on men and masculinity have yet to conceptualize gender identity through a critical lens (Edley & Wetherell, 1996). Critical men's studies, which has grown out of feminist approaches to gender roles and patriarchy (Brod, 1987), has primarily taken a sociological perspective (Messner, 2004a). The current literature has demonstrated a need for an understanding of how individual men develop their gender identity in the societal context outlined in the sociological literature of critical men's studies (Capraro, 2004b; O'Neil, 2004; Smiler, 2004).

From a constructivist epistemological paradigm the literature provided the researcher with sensitizing concepts that were explored with the participants. The literature reviewed here informed my conceptualization of the study as well as how I conducted the study including data collection, data analysis, and theory development. The next chapter will discuss the epistemological framework and theoretical perspective which framed this study as well as the methodological choices made based on the purpose of the study and informed by the current literature.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

The selection of a qualitative paradigm, and grounded theory methodology in particular, was rooted in the purpose of this study which was to understand the process of college men's gender identity development and to develop a theory of this process grounded in the experience of the participants. In this chapter I outline the epistemological paradigm and theoretical perspectives framing the study, explain the rationale for selecting grounded theory methodology, and outline specific methodological procedures such as sampling, data collection, and data analysis. This study was conducted in a way that was mindful of trustworthiness criteria, ethical considerations, limitations, and my own subjectivity as a researcher. I will briefly share my own experiences and perspectives with men's gender identity development in an effort to be transparent about how I, as the researcher, came to and conducted this study.

Epistemological Paradigm and Theoretical Perspectives

The epistemological paradigm (e.g., objectivist, constructivist, subjectivist) of the researcher informs the choice of theoretical perspective (e.g., feminist, postmodern, interpretivist, social justice). This theoretical perspective then informs methodological decisions (e.g., experimental, ethnographical, grounded theory, quasi-experimental) which in turn guide procedural methods choices (Crotty, 1998). In approaching this study, my own constructivist epistemological paradigm and social justice theoretical perspective informed all aspects of the study from its conceptualization to questions asked and conclusions drawn (Broido & Manning, 2002).

Constructivist Epistemological Paradigm

Research on college students and the college student environment has predominantly been explored through quantitative empirical research (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). These quantitative methods have allowed for generalizability and predictions based on statistical analysis of accumulated data from an objectivist epistemological paradigm (Arminio & Hultgren, 2002). The objectivist paradigm is "the epistemological view that things exist as meaningful entities independently of consciousness and experience, that they have truth and meaning residing in them as objects" (Crotty, 1998, p. 5).

On the other hand, the constructivist epistemological paradigm views "all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context" (Crotty, 1998, p. 42). A constructivist epistemological perspective views knowledge as socially constructed through interactions between individuals and the world around them in a social context (Crotty). Characteristics of a constructivist paradigm include:

1. The researcher-respondent relationship is subjective, interactive, and interdependent.
2. Reality is multiple, complex, and not easily quantifiable.
3. The values of the researcher, respondents, research site, and underlying theory cannot help but undergrid all aspects of the research.
4. The research product (e.g., interpretations) is context specific. (Broido & Manning, 2002, p. 436)

I approached this study on college men's gender identity development from a constructivist epistemological perspective because both gender and identity are socially constructed. Although sex may be biologically determined, gender is socially constructed

(Kimmel & Messner, 1998). Identity is constructed through a complex series of interactions between self and society (Josselson, 1996).

Qualitative research approaches are often most appropriate for exploring the process and experiences of participants, given the assumptions of a constructivist epistemological paradigm (Arminio & Hultgren, 2002). In student affairs and higher education the number of qualitative research studies being conducted has increased in recent years (Broido & Manning, 2002). Prominent quantitative scholars Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) also have argued that the field would benefit from more qualitative research given the complexities of the issues facing student affairs as a profession. Qualitative methodologies offer student affairs scholarship complex and sensitive methods of inquiry seeking to understand individual experiences in greater depth with the purpose of developing contextualization and interpretation (Brown, Stevens, Troiano, & Schneider, 2002).

In keeping with the constructivist paradigm, the complexity of identity and the lack of empirical models for men's identity development make qualitative inquiry appropriate for this particular study. Capraro (2004b) suggested exploring men's identity development in a manner similar to Helms's White identity development model as a way of illuminating privilege and acknowledged the complexity of this effort. O'Neil (2004), a prominent scholar of men's gender role conflict for the past 25 years primarily using quantitative methodology (O'Neil, 1981; 1990; O'Neil et al., 1986; 1988), recently called for researchers to explore men's identity development specifically using qualitative research methods.

Social Justice Theoretical Perspective

Because men's identity is socially constructed in a patriarchal context, I viewed this study through a social justice theoretical perspective (Charmaz, 2005). A social justice theoretical perspective as applied in this study has some similarities to both feminist and critical inquiry. Before explaining why I chose a social justice theoretical perspective, I first will clarify why I have not chosen to identify this study as a feminist or critical inquiry.

I did not claim that this was a feminist study because it is being conducted by a man and studying men. There are many definitions of feminism (Crotty, 1998). Although some feminist perspectives would be inclusive of a study such as this, which attempted to be sensitive to patriarchal structures, other feminists would argue that men cannot conduct feminist scholarship because they lack feminist consciousness which must be grounded in the lived experience *as a woman* (Stanley & Wise, 1983). As a man, I chose not to identify the research here as a feminist study for this reason and in part as a political choice not to appropriate terms of women's liberation for a study of men conducted by a man. Although I chose not to identify this as a feminist study, the social justice theoretical perspective through which I approached this study was informed by feminist scholarship's critical perspectives on gender roles and the hierarchical nature of systems of patriarchy.

There are also many definitions of critical inquiry. Critical inquiry has predominantly been defined as research done by and focusing on members of oppressed social groups with a perspective critical of the status quo and hierarchical or oppressive systems (Crotty, 1998). Similar to my political choice to avoid appropriating a feminist

label, I also chose not to appropriate a critical label on a study done by a person of privilege focusing on a privileged group. Nevertheless, the social justice theoretical perspective does share the assumptions of critical inquiry about oppressive social systems. Some definitions of critical inquiry also require an action component, often to help members of the subordinate group work against oppressive systems. Although participants in this study may have gained greater consciousness by participating, increased consciousness was not an aim of the study and was not an intended outcome of the research process.

This social justice theoretical perspective recognized patriarchy as a system that serves to advantage men and disadvantage women and that patriarchy is one of several intersecting and inequitable hierarchical social systems and structures (hooks, 2000). One of the assumptions of a social justice theoretical perspective is that systems of oppression such as patriarchy function on individual, institutional, cultural, and societal levels to advantage some and disadvantage others based on real or perceived social group membership (Bell, 1997).

Scholarship conducted from a social justice theoretical perspective reflects an awareness of these structures, but also is designed in a way that furthers social justice efforts to eliminate forms of oppression including sexism, racism, and heterosexism (Charmaz, 2005). This study did not ignore patriarchy or other inequitable structures, nor did it assume they would emerge from the data. Instead a social justice theoretical perspective was used as a sensitizing tool to expand rather than limit the data collection and analysis (Broido & Manning, 2002). Social justice researchers view these “concepts as problematic and look for their characteristics as lived and understood, not as given in

textbooks” (Charmaz, 2005, p. 512). I explored the experiences of the participants in the context of a hierarchical patriarchal structure to expand and enrich the analysis and theoretical outcomes.

A social justice theoretical perspective was appropriate for this study because college men’s gender identity is constructed not only socially but also in a patriarchal context. The traditional definition of masculinity is hegemonic in that its organizing principle is men’s power as a group over women as a group, which also serves to marginalize some men and limit all men (Connell, 1987). As men internalize their dominant societal position they also internalize beliefs and practices that are hurting them as well as granting them privilege (Brookfield, 2005). Rather than ignore these societal structures, my choice of social justice inquiry as a theoretical perspective focused this study on and problematized hierarchical social structures, in the hopes that doing so would further a vision of a more equitable society striving for social justice (Charmaz, 2005). This study was conducted in the hopes that the theoretical outcome would help foster an understanding of how internalized patriarchy is learned, instilled, and perhaps transcended.

Methodology

I employed grounded theory methodology (Charmaz, 2000, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) to develop a theory of college men’s gender identity development. I chose grounded theory over other qualitative methodologies because of its explicit purpose in generating a “theory that was derived from data, systematically gathered and analyzed through the research process, informed by the data” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 12). Because theories resulting from grounded theory studies

are grounded in data, they can offer insight, understanding, and practical guidance. Grounded theory methodology's focus on process, structure, and context make it particularly appropriate for exploring socially constructed phenomena such as identity development (Charmaz, 2000). A growing number of studies are employing grounded theory methodology as a means of understanding identity, in the context of the college environment (Jones, 1997; Jones & McEwen, 2000; Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005; Stevens, 2004; Torres, 2003; Troiano, 2003).

Grounded theory methodology, initially developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and later enhanced by Strauss and Corbin (1998), is based on the following assumptions:

1. The need to get out into the field to discover what is really going on (i.e., to gain firsthand information taken from its source).
2. The relevance of theory, grounded in data, to the development of a discipline and as a basis for social action.
3. The complexity and variability of phenomena and of human action.
4. The belief that persons are actors who take an active role in responding to problematic situations.
5. The realization that persons act on the basis of meaning.
6. The understanding that meaning is defined through interaction.
7. A sensitivity to the evolving and unfolding nature of events (process).
8. An awareness of the interrelationships among condition (structure), action (process), and consequences. (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, pp. 9-10)

I selected grounded theory not only because of its theoretical end product, but also because of its appropriateness given the constructivist epistemological paradigm (Charmaz, 2006) and social justice inquiry theoretical perspective of this study on college men's gender identity development. Constructivist grounded theory uses a "systemic approach to social justice inquiry that fosters integrating subjective experience with social conditions in our analyses" (Charmaz, 2005, p. 510). Rather than narrow the scope of inquiry, combining social justice inquiry with the analytical tools of constructivist grounded theory to explore the process of identity development broadens the scope of

this inquiry (Charmaz, 2005). This approach allows the researcher to use the “processual emphasis in grounded theory to analyze the relationships between human agency and social structure, which pose theoretical and practical concerns in social justice studies” (Charmaz, 2005, p. 508).

This constructivist approach employs methods in a more flexible and less rigid way than more objectivist approaches to grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006). Constructivist grounded theorists do not attempt to be objective in their data collection or analysis. Instead, they seek to clarify and problematize their assumptions and make those assumptions clear to others. In constructivist grounded theory, the reflexive researcher not only states his or her assumptions and perspectives up front, but also intentionally seeks data that will contradict those assumptions and perspectives to foster theory development. Later in this chapter, I will reflect on my own experiences that I brought to this study. However, the primary conceptual assumptions that I brought to this study as outlined in the review of the literature are (a) men’s gender identity is socially constructed through interaction with the traditional definition of masculinity, (b) the traditional definition of masculinity encourages a gender identity which fosters patriarchy and systemic sexism, and (c) hierarchical power relationships help shape and are shaped by this traditional definition of masculinity, primarily patriarchy but also intersecting forms of oppression such as racism, classism, and heterosexism.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this constructivist grounded theory study was to explore the process of college men’s gender identity development. Although this purpose guided the entire study, qualitative methodologies require that the researcher remain open to new

questions to emerge through the course of the study. The following research questions guided this study: (a) how do college men come to understand themselves as men; (b) how does this understanding of what it means to be a man change over time, if at all; and (c) what are the critical influences on this process?

Methods

As with any qualitative methodology, in grounded theory the researcher and the research design must remain flexible to account for emerging themes and patterns as the inquiry evolves (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Consistent with grounded theory methodology, the research was conducted using a constant comparative approach in which the data collection and analysis continued simultaneously, constantly being compared and influencing the next round of data collection and analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In this section, I outline the procedures used in this constructivist grounded theory study of college men's gender identity development.

Sampling Strategies and Criteria

Qualitative research employs purposeful sampling to find information rich participants most familiar with the phenomenon being studied (Patton, 2002). A combination of theoretical, intensity, and maximum variation sampling strategies were used in this study.

Intensity sampling. Employing intensity sampling strategy, I sought college men as participants with an in-depth understanding of how they came to understand themselves as men. The criteria for this selection were not based on the outcome of their understanding or any particular conclusions drawn about what it means to be a man. Instead, participants who had been observed spending time thinking about what it means

to be a man were selected. In other words, the selection criteria focused on the process of thinking about what it means to be a man, but not on the product of that process.

Participants may have demonstrated this reflection through activities, courses, or informal conversations regarding gender or masculinity.

Maximum variation. Because of the literature supporting the hegemonic nature of traditional masculinity and the various masculinities based on group membership, maximum variation sampling was critical to the purpose of this study. The selection of participants who brought maximum variation to the study was based on different college experiences and social group identities. Based on the current literature, 5 initial participants were selected to explore different perspectives particularly related to race, sexual orientation, and college experiences. Additional participants were selected to explore the themes as they emerged in the study. Sensitivity to social group identity and oppressive social systems was necessary because of this study's social justice theoretical perspective and focus on college men's gender identity constructed in the context of the traditional hegemonic definition of masculinity. However, participants were not considered to represent or speak for all members of their social group. To do so would have essentialized "identity, falsely assuming that people who share identity labels also share common experiences and understand their identity in the same way" (Abes & Jones, 2004, p. 615).

In keeping with the theoretical sampling strategy of grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), I did not predetermine the participants. Instead, as themes emerged from the data collection and initial analysis, I sought participants offering the best potential to add variation, depth, and breadth to the categories and themes emerging from the data.

"Throughout the research process, grounded theorists develop analytical interpretations of their data to focus further data collection, which they use in turn to inform and refine their developing theoretical analyses" (Charmaz, 2000, p. 509). After themes began to emerge from the data collected from initial participants, additional men were selected for their ability to "demonstrate dimensional range or variation of a concept and the relationship among concepts" (Strauss & Corbin, p. 210). As the theory began to emerge, I sought out participants who would "maximize opportunities for comparative analysis" (p. 211) using discriminant sampling. Using discriminant sampling, or negative case analysis, I sought participants whose experiences may not have fit the emerging theory as a means of verification and clarification.

This sampling strategy continued until theoretical saturation was reached. This is accomplished when "(a) no new or relevant data seem to emerge regarding a category, (b) the category is well developed in terms of its properties and dimensions demonstrating variations, and (c) the relationship among categories are well established and validated" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 212). To generate an initial list of potential participants, I employed intensity and maximum variation as sampling strategies, two strategies that not only fit the purpose of this study but are also common in grounded theory methodology (Brown et al., 2002).

Identifying participants. Participants were sought for this study using expert nominators and key informants (Appendix A). Expert nominators with special knowledge of men in different social identity groups or with various college experiences (e.g., service, football, fraternity membership, leadership and involvement) were identified to help recommend information rich participants appropriate for this study. Coordinators of

programs such as sexual assault peer educators, instructors of men/women or men's circle inter-group dialogues, fraternity advisors and house directors, athletics staff, multicultural support staff, fraternity presidents, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender support services staff, residence life staff, living learning program staff, and instructors of gender related courses were sought as expert nominators. These expert nominators were asked to identify students whom they had observed to have thought about what it means to be a man through personal conversations, academic work, or co-curricular involvement. Nominators were encouraged to identify participants from a diversity of social group identities and a variety of college experiences. Nominations for participants were solicited from approximately 40 faculty and staff members and approximately 25 fraternity presidents at the University.

From these nominators, 102 potential participants were identified. Each of these potential participants was sent an email notifying them that they had been nominated (Appendix B) and asking them to complete a brief information sheet (Appendix C) with their contact information, college experiences, and social group identities if they were interested. Potential participants were informed that if they were selected to participate in all phases of the study they would receive a \$50 gift certificate to the University bookstore as an incentive and token of appreciation.

Of the 102 potential participants identified by nominators 35 completed the information sheet and expressed interest in participating in the study. From these 35 interested participants, 10 participants were eventually selected. Five initial participants were selected to explore college men's gender identity development from different social group identities and college experience, based on their responses on the interest form

(Appendix C). Later, three more participants were selected to bring in more diverse perspectives not represented in the initial participants. The final two participants were selected to explore themes, provide depth, and explore contradictions to the experiences of the initial participants. These final two participants were selected because of their involvement in activities that specifically explored gender issues (intergroup dialogue and sexual assault prevention), which offered a different perspective from the other participants. Descriptions of each participants' social group identities and college experiences as well as other relevant information are provided in the next chapter as part of the findings of this study.

Sample size. Although there are no firm guidelines with regard to sample size in qualitative research, the researcher should select a sample size appropriate to the research question and the methodology (Patton, 2002). Due to the emerging nature of qualitative inquiry, and the theoretical sampling strategy in grounded theory specifically, this study sought a small initial sample (Patton, 2002) of five participants and continued seeking participants until data emerging from the participants reached saturation (Brown et al., 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) or redundancy (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and no new concepts or categories emerged from the data. Based on other similar grounded theory studies on women's multiple identities (10 participants) (Jones & McEwen, 2000), gay identity development in the college environment (11 participants) (Stevens, 2004), wisdom development (10 participants) (Brown, 2004), self-style of college students with learning disabilities (9 participants) (Troiano, 2003), and leadership identity development (13 participants) (Komives et al., 2005) it was anticipated that approximately 10 participants would participate in the study. After eight initial participants had

participated, it appeared that saturation and redundancy had been reached. However two more participants were brought into the study to add additional perspectives, explore contradictions, and insure saturation and redundancy.

Research setting. In an effort to focus the inquiry, participants were selected from a single institutional setting, a large research university on the East Coast (University). The University offered an appropriate setting for this study because of its large number of male students (approximately 50% of the student population), diversity of students and variety of student experiences, and the familiarity and accessibility of the institution to the researcher. The University was a Carnegie Classification Doctoral/Research Extensive institution and the flagship campus in its state. The undergraduate population was relatively diverse with approximately 33% of students identifying with racial and ethnic groups other than White. Approximately 11% of the undergraduate student body participated in a fraternity or sorority with a little less than 10% of all fraternity men participating in historically Black or multicultural organizations. Intercollegiate athletics were also a major influence on the campus with many NCAA Division I teams. Of the more than 50 students at the University officially identified as women's studies majors, only one identified as a man.

My own familiarity with the institution was more than simply a matter of practical convenience. I entered the study with an understanding of the campus structure and culture. My access aided me in data collection as I identified expert nominators and key informants. My familiarity with the context of the institution served as a tool to foster rapport, ask appropriate questions, and make meaning of the participant responses. Although there were benefits to my familiarity with the institution, it was important for

me to not allow my experiences to replace the participants' experiences. Throughout the study, I needed to continue to problematize my own experiences with the University and my perspectives of men on campus.

Data Collection

Grounded theory methodology can employ a variety of data collection methods such as interviews, observation, artifacts, or a combination. Because this study focused on college men's gender identity development, interviews offered the best means to not only reflect the participants' perspectives but to also allow the researcher to engage in the reflection process with the participants (Charmaz, 2002).

In-depth interviewing was used to collect data from the participants about their experiences. In-depth interviews have become a common way of exploring college student identity development using grounded theory methodology (Jones, 1997; Komives et al., 2005; Stevens, 2004; Torres, 2003; Troiano, 2003). This method was useful as a tool to explore complex internal processes such as identity development. The interviews were loosely structured and open ended (Appendix D) to allow for flexibility in examining the unique experiences of each participant and the themes as they emerged. In depth interviews are consistent with constructivist grounded theory and allow for exploration of in-depth processual relationships (Charmaz, 2002).

I conducted three interviews with each participant. These multiple interviews gave me and the participants opportunities to think about and explore the research questions in greater depth. This allowed the participants to reflect on earlier interviews, revise comments, and ask their own questions. I was able to explore the emerging themes from data analysis with the participants in a constant cycle of data collection and

analysis. The questions, recording equipment, and protocol were tested during two pilot interviews using two male graduate students from the research setting. Graduate students were selected for the pilot interviews to offer perspectives similar to those of undergraduates and also provide some informed feedback about the nature of the questions and the interview process. Each interview was audio recorded using digital means. In an effort to capture significant non-verbal communication during the process I took notes on visual cues during the interviews. I anticipated that some participants may have been reluctant to be recorded at all. I communicated in the consent form and verbally before the interview that the audio recordings would be used by the researcher as a data collection tool and would not be shared or published without the participants' authorized consent. None of the participants expressed any concern with being recorded.

Scholars have cautioned qualitative researchers about the potential for constructive or harm causing unintended outcomes as a result of interviews in research (Davis et al., 2006; Magolda & Weems, 2002; Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2002). The interviews were designed to encourage participants to be thoughtful about their experiences as men in society. Because of the privileged nature of masculinity, many men do not have a chance to discuss masculinity in a meaningful way (Davis, 2002). As a result, I anticipated that many participants would benefit from and enjoy this type of reflection, which was the case. However, some participants' experiences were painful and resulted in recollection of memories and meanings that were difficult for the participants to discuss. I made participants aware of these potential benefits and risks associated with these discussions at the outset of the study.

After sharing a brief overview of the study and completing the appropriate consent form (Appendix E), each participant selected a pseudonym to protect his anonymity. The first interview generally consisted of broad open ended questions (Appendix D). What does it mean for you to be a man? If and how does this differ from society's expectations of men? How do college men in particular prove their manhood? It was important to establish a tone for the discussion and carefully listen to the participants' sharing of their experience. I attempted to do this by being non-judgmental, curious, and open to whatever the participants shared.

After each interview I transcribed verbatim the discussions. From the data collected in the initial interviews, I began to code the data gathered. These emerging themes formed the basis for the future interviews and the selection of future participants. The second interview was used to examine in more detail the themes which had already emerged and to examine new themes. This interview generally explored how what it meant to be a man changed over time and what influenced those changes for the participants. Before the third interview a short summary essay was written (Appendix F). These summaries were shared with the participants so that they could have a chance to confirm and correct both what they said and my interpretations of what was said in the interviews. These summaries provided a form of member checking that also helped the participants to stay involved and foster reflection for the third interview. The third interviews explored in more detail topics from the participant's earlier interviews and discussed emerging themes from other participants. The emerging nature of this process was in keeping with the constructivist social justice approach of this study (Charmaz, 2000, 2005), and the constant comparative method which is an essential aspect of

grounded theory methodology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Through the constant comparative process I determined if theoretical saturation was reached, meaning that no new categories, themes, or phenomena emerge from the data.

As the study neared completion, participants who were not selected for interviews were notified (Appendix G).

Data Analysis

Strauss and Corbin (1998) outlined the goals for data analysis in grounded theory.

1. Build rather than test theory.
2. Provide researchers with analytic tools for handling masses of raw data.
3. Help the analysts to consider alternative meanings of phenomena.
4. Be systematic and creative simultaneously.
5. Identify, develop, and relate the concepts that are the building blocks of the theory. (p. 13)

A constructivist approach to grounded theory uses similar data analysis approaches but implements them in a more flexible coding process (Charmaz, 2006). A particularly rigid adherence to the coding procedures may be appropriate for a more objectivist approach that claims to “discover” the phenomena in the data (Charmaz, 2002, p. 684). However, an inflexible coding approach would be contrary to the “aims of an inductively derived theory” (Fassinger, 2005, p. 162) in a constructivist paradigm that acknowledges that the researcher “defines” what is happening through shared interpretations with the participants (Charmaz, 2002, p. 684). The product of a constructivist grounded theory approach is also more open and not confined by conceptualizing the data into a single core category and key categories that connect to the core category the way more objectivist approach to developing a grounded theory typically would (Charmaz, 2000). Consistent with constructivist grounded theory outlined by Charmaz (2006), I employed four types of coding in the data analysis

process; initial, focused, axial, and theoretical. These four coding procedures were implemented rather fluidly in an effort to develop an abstract theoretical concept or grounded theory from the voice of the participants (Charmaz, 2000).

Initial coding was used to examine the data and label the individual phenomena that emerged from the data. This was done by examining each piece of text from the transcripts of the participant interviews, line-by-line to determine the relevant action or events (Fassinger, 2005). More than 1100 individual line-by-line codes were generated in this initial coding process, keeping as close to the words of the participants as possible. Examples of these initial codes included “being in control,” “trying not to cry,” “finding a new path,” “joking about not being a man,” “not preparing,” and “proving masculinity as insecurity.” As part of focused coding, these initial codes were then grouped into categories accounting for each of the concepts within the category. Focused coding resulted in the 1100 initial codes being organized into 27 categories. Examples of these categories included “falling in to society’s expectations,” “proving manhood,” “crying,” “traditional definition of masculinity,” and “being socialized.” Following Charmaz’s (2006) suggestion of using a more flexible version of axial coding in constructivist grounded theory research, my axial coding process involved exploring the relationships between the 26 major categories and their many subcategories. I explored and tested out possible processual relationships between categories and how they related, influenced, or contradicted each other. This was primarily done through the drawing of diagrams, maps, and visuals throughout the research process, but particularly diagramming the relationships between the 26 major categories and writing a summary memo that described the categories and their relationships for the participants. This summary memo

became the earliest version of the emerging theory and was shared with peer debriefers, who offered questions and suggestions for further analysis. All of the participants were also invited to participate in an optional focus group to discuss the emerging theory reflected in the summary memo as a means of member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Five of the participants attended this optional focus group. Their reactions as individuals and as a group to the emerging theory that was presented helped to further co-construct the emerging theory with the participants by confirming that the emerging theory represented their experiences and spurring further theoretical analysis. This process resulted in an early draft of the findings which organized and shared the stories that the participants had told during the interviews. Theoretical coding was then used to reorganize the data and tell the story of the participants' experiences from an analytical perspective (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). I returned to the metaphor of performing masculinity as a mask, which had resonated with the participants during the focus group. I reorganized the stories the participants had told around the analytical story of the complex manner in which participants interacted with society's expectations of them as men by putting on and wearing a mask as a way of performing their masculinity.

The constant comparative method of grounded theory means that this process was not as linear as it may appear. I continued to return to the words of the participants, simultaneously using previous data collection and analysis to influence future data collection and analysis. Journaling and memo writing (Charmaz, 2000) throughout this process helped me, as the researcher, be more reflexive about the research process and track how data analysis and interpretation emerged throughout the process. My research journal focused on reflection on the research process such as how I was developing

rapport with the participants, how to decide whom to invite to be the next participant, and when saturation might be reached. I wrote dated memos about my interpretations and analysis of the participants throughout the process which allowed me to track, question, and examine how my interpretations changed throughout the process.

Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, the conceptual basis on which the research can be evaluated is called trustworthiness (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). Spending time in the field with participants, triangulating the data by examining it from different perspectives or through multiple interviews, alertness to bias through researcher reflexivity, and mapping effectiveness within the study are all means for generally addressing trustworthiness. Lincoln and Guba (1985) outlined four criteria through which trustworthiness can be evaluated: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability.

Lather (1993) has questioned the concept of validity or criteria, such as trustworthiness, applied to research from a poststructuralist paradigm and in studies done through the “ideological” theoretical perspectives such as feminism and social justice (Lather, 1986). This study was conducted from a constructivist paradigm using a social justice theoretical perspective. As the researcher, I recognized that the participants and I were constructing knowledge through our interactions and interpretations. In doing so, I did my best to pay attention to the influence of and the impact on inequitable social structures. The aim of this research was to develop a theory which reflects how the participants and I constructed knowledge in our shared context through interviews, data

analysis, and a focus group and not necessarily to establish the outcome of this research as verifiable and true, but only that it is as true as we can present it in our current context.

Recognizing that qualitative research often explores a socially constructed world rather than discovering verifiable data, Talburt (2004) suggested that new approaches to Lincoln and Guba's (1985) concept of and criteria for trustworthiness are needed for research which does not view knowledge from an objectivist paradigm. This study sought to meet trustworthiness criteria given the constructivist and social justice perspectives, following the lead of others who have adjusted this criteria for other emancipatory research such as critical ethnography (Talburt, 2004) and feminist grounded theory (Fassinger, 2005).

Credibility seeks to ensure that the data collected accurately reflected the phenomenon studied (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this constructivist study I sought to establish credibility by aspiring to collect data that accurately reflected the participants' view of their experiences. Individual participants received summary essays of their previous interviews as a means of member checking to insure that my interpretations of their interviews reflected the participants' own interpretations of their experiences. Individual participants rarely had major adjustments to the interview summaries beyond clarification of minor details. The participants were generally surprised and perhaps a bit unnerved at reading just how open and honest they had been in the interviews.

The participants were not only able to offer corrections and clarifications to their own story but also to their story as a group. The participants were invited to a focus group after all of the interviews were completed as another means of member checking and triangulation. Due to conflicting schedules, and potentially a desire to remain anonymous

even to other participants, only 5 of the 10 participants attended the focus group. During the focus group I presented the participants with the emerging theory and gave them an opportunity to discuss, contradict, amend, and supplement my interpretations. The participants asked excellent questions, but were generally surprised at how common their experiences and struggles as men were. They each felt vulnerable and never expected other men, especially men who were so different from themselves, to have such a similar shared experience. Realizing that they had all shared common experiences with being a man was surprising and liberating and resulted in an open conversation among the men about how well the emerging theory reflected not only their experience but also the experiences of their peers who are men as well.

Three peer debriefers were used to offer additional perspectives for the data analysis and suggest further avenues to investigate. I selected peer debriefers who had at least a minimal understanding of the social construction of gender but who offered different perspectives and would perhaps challenge my own. One of the peer debriefers had already received his doctoral degree and the two others were current doctoral students. The peer debriefers also represented perspectives different from my own: Black heterosexual man, a White gay man, and an Asian American heterosexual man. The peer debriefers brought an informed perspective to the data analysis and questioned, clarified, and augmented the analysis of the primary researcher. The peer debriefers and I met in the midst of data collection and analysis to discuss initial findings and the possibility of future participants. We also met after data collection was completed to discuss an early perspective on the emerging theory. They offered alternative perspectives and explanations as well as different ways of presenting and representing the data. The

member checks of the individual interview summaries, the focus group member checking, and the peer debriefers all were employed in an attempt to ensure that the data and its conclusions were grounded in the experience of the participants.

Transferability seeks to ensure that the results of the study are appropriately applied in other settings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The burden of determining appropriate transferability lies with the reader and other researchers. As the original researcher, it is my responsibility to thoroughly describe all aspects of the study, or thick descriptions, in order to provide a wealth of information on which other researchers and readers of this research can determine transferability. In this study, the final dissertation serves as a thorough description and a means of addressing transferability. Transcripts, research notes, descriptions of participants, and other information from the study will also be preserved for three years for this purpose, at which point they will be destroyed to maintain the participants confidentiality and in accordance with the guidelines of the institutional review board.

Dependability seeks to ensure that procedures are followed and that the data reflect the changing conditions of the experience being studied (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In order to monitor my own subjectivity I used a reflexive journal throughout the data collection process. An inquiry auditor with an understanding of grounded theory methods examined and verified that the data collection, procedures, and coding all were done appropriately according to the procedures outlined in the dissertation proposal and according to constructivist grounded theory methods.

Confirmability seeks to ensure that another researcher can confirm the study when presented with the same information (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For this study, a detailed

audit trail including digital recordings, notes, and transcripts was preserved for this purpose. The inquiry auditor has also confirmed the product of the study as well as the process to address dependability. The inquiry auditor was separate from the interpretive process which the peer debriefers are a part of throughout the research process.

Ethics

Appropriate ethical research standards were followed including maintaining confidentiality and informing participants of the relevant risks and benefits of the study. To help increase participants' willingness to participate honestly, participant confidentiality will be maintained using a pseudonym in all published research materials, including this dissertation. Participants' actual identities have been maintained separately by the researcher to facilitate potential participation in a future research related research project.

Unanticipated ethical concerns revealing themselves during the research process is not uncommon in qualitative research (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2006). During the data collection process, I was conscious of the imbalance of the relationships between the participants and myself. They were sharing so much of themselves, so honestly, and in turn they knew very little about me. I discussed this with several of the participants near the end of our interviews and tried to relate my own personal experience when possible as a way to reciprocate, foster increased trust, and encourage the participants to go further in their reflections. Another ethical consideration that emerged during the writing process was about how to balance the participant descriptions. On one hand, a full description of each participant better helps explain their perspectives and offers thick description to the reader. On the other hand, full descriptions may make the participants identifiable. To

address this concern I decided to mask the specific institution, which was not the original intent. I also got approval from the participants for the descriptions of them that would be used in this dissertation as well as future publication and presentation.

Researcher Reflexivity and Subjectivity

Strauss and Corbin (1998) outlined the characteristics of a grounded theorist.

1. The ability to step back and critically analyze situations
2. The ability to recognize the tendency toward bias
3. The ability to think abstractly
4. The ability to be flexible and open to helpful criticism
5. Sensitivity to the words and action of respondents
6. A sense of absorption and devotion to the work process. (p. 7)

In objectivist grounded theory, the researcher aims to balance objectivity and sensitivity.

Objectivity is sought in the hope that the researcher can be confident that data and the analysis emerge from the experience of the participants and are reasonable and rational interpretations of the data. In constructivist grounded theory, the researcher does not strive for objectivity but instead aims to be transparent about the subjective approach and interpretations made through the research process with the participants (Charmaz, 2000).

Theoretical sensitivity (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) allows the researcher to be creative in developing a new theory.

In qualitative inquiry, the researcher is also the instrument of data collection and analysis (Brown et al., 2002). Through the research process I served as selector of participants, data collector, interviewer, transcriber, and data analyst. My central role in making decisions about which data were garnered and what meanings were made required me to be as reflective, transparent, and open about the perspectives and experiences I brought to this study and conscious of how they influenced the study (Lather, 1993).

In reflecting on my own experiences coming to understand what it means to be a man, it seems I always had a rough and ambiguous notion about masculinity. However, I was very clear, even from my earliest memories, that femininity and homosexuality were not “masculine” even before I had a real understanding of what those were. Eventually, I learned through media, friends, family, but mostly my peers what the traditional definition of masculinity entailed, though I never considered it in those terms at the time. I was never very clear about how I did fit with traditional masculinity, but I was most clear about how I did not. I strived to better fit that definition of masculinity through athletics, not appearing to put effort into academics, portraying a status of financial success, and sexual prowess, to name just a few.

It wasn't until later in college that I first began to become dissatisfied with the traditional definition of masculinity as it was being applied to me and how my peers and I were seeking to conform to it. I began to see how this rigid definition of masculinity was limiting my own expressions of who I was as well as my interactions with other men. This awareness developed into an on-going struggle as I wavered between my insecurities urging me to continue to perform to the traditional definition of masculinity and my own sense of self and justice which urged me to break free of a limiting role.

Role models of traditionally masculine behavior highly influenced me throughout this process. I looked up to older boys on the school bus in grade school to see what was acceptable. In junior high, I took the lead of popular and “masculine” male peers who openly mocked academic effort as nerdy. In high school I aspired to athletic success as a way to prove my manhood by playing basketball. I also performed to hegemonic standards of masculinity, particularly through homophobic comments and jokes with

other men. I often said or did things that I didn't agree with simply as a means of performing to prove my manhood.

During my first year of college, I largely sought to measure up to this same traditional hegemonic masculinity and saw college as a fresh start in which I could convince people that I did measure up in ways that I had failed to convince my peers in high school. As a sophomore I became a resident assistant. In doing so, I was exposed to positive male role models who were transcending the traditional definition of masculinity. For the first time I spent time around men who were proud of their transgressions against the traditional definition of masculinity and overt homophobia was challenged. During a training session in my sophomore year a hall director began to explain how men had a responsibility for ending sexual assault. I found this offensive and sexist in that he was blaming men. Despite my frustration I heard some of his message and encouraged a woman I was dating to take a self-defense class and take care of herself as she went off to college. Despite my genuine concern for her personal safety I wasn't able to acknowledge my own sexism or the impact of my own objectification of women and demeaning jokes and comments. During my undergraduate career I participated in various diversity trainings as a resident assistant, numerous courses related to diversity including women's history, and important interactions with female peers who exhibited inordinate faith and patience in helping me grow by sharing their own experiences with sexism, including my own. During my undergraduate years I also came to learn about the sexual assault experiences of many of my close female friends.

As a graduate student I was exposed to faculty, staff, and peers who were committed to multiculturalism and diversity broadly. I also worked in the Greek Life

office where many of the sorority women shared their stories of surviving sexual assault. Desperate to address the issue, I organized funding and brought a speaker to campus, the same speaker whom I had been resistant to as a sophomore. I was now ready to acknowledge the responsibility men in general had to address sexual assault. Thanks to all of these experiences, I was beginning to recognize my White privilege and male privilege intellectually, though I was still too guilty to internalize these concepts. I spent a lot of time and energy proving to myself and others that I was not sexist and used much of the work I was doing to protect women as testament that I was not “one of those guys.”

As a professional working in residence life, I came to take on a more active role and greater responsibility for diversity and social justice training at my institution. These responsibilities included residence life trainings for resident assistants, graduate students, and professional staff as well as co-teaching a course on multicultural counseling. I also began to present at national conferences on men’s role in ending violence against women and how men are socialized by the rape culture. I started and advised a student organization on campus focused on men’s role in ending rape. I also became very interested in the issues facing boys and men and the emergence of many books and articles in popular media related to this. I also developed an interest in examining the issues of masculinity in popular culture.

As a doctoral student, I was again exposed to an even greater focus on diversity and social justice from my coursework as well as my peers. I examined the gender gap in higher education emerging for college men and began to see how it was affecting some men more than others and the role the traditional hegemonic definition of masculinity

was playing in these and other issues facing men. My course work exposed me to a depth of identity development scholarship particularly related to people of color that I had not been exposed to previously. I began exploring social justice literature that focused on how systems of oppression were also harmful to members of the dominant group and the importance of exploring issues of diversity and social justice for those with superordinate identities. During an independent study on college men and masculinity I was exposed to a greater realm of scholarship on men and masculinity and discovered a need in the literature and a passion within myself to better understand college men's gender identity development.

In reflecting on my own struggles to meet the impossible expectations of the traditional definition of masculinity it is important to recognize those areas where I did fit. I bring many privileged identities (White, heterosexual, middle-class, and able-bodied) which help me fit this hegemonic nature of this dominant version of masculinity. I also am relatively tall and fit, which is by no means inconsequential, in proving masculinity. These aspects are important, yet often overlooked, as we are often so focused on where we don't fit social norms that we ignore or dismiss those areas of ourselves that do fit societal expectations.

My own story as a man, how I've constructed and continue to construct my own gender identity, and the experiential and scholarly perspectives I bring to this study are not limitations as long as they were conscious and transparent and my experiences were not assumed to be shared by the participants. Instead these perspectives served as tools aiding me in understanding and exploring the gender identity of the participants.

Summary

In this study, I employed grounded theory methodology to explore college men's gender identity development, from a constructivist epistemological paradigm using a social justice theoretical perspective. Theoretical, intensity, and maximum variation sampling strategies were used to identify participants with the assistance of expert nominators and key informants. With the words of the participants from the transcripts as data, I used line-by-line, categorical, and theoretical coding as data analysis processes and developed a theory grounded in the participants' experience. The constant comparative method allowed data analysis to inform future data collection and vice versa until a theory emerged and saturation was reached. Approaches were employed to establish trustworthiness, maintain ethical research standards, and balance my own reflexivity and subjectivity as the researcher. Through these processes I sought to develop a theory of college men's gender identity development grounded in the participants' experience.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

This study explored college men's gender identity development. I conducted three interviews each with 10 undergraduate college men. First, each interview was coded line by line resulting in more than 1100 individual codes. These codes were then grouped into 27 major categories. From these categories themes emerged which formed the basis for an emerging theory of college men's gender identity development grounded in the experience of the participants of this study.

In this chapter, I introduce the participants in the study, give an overview of the emerging theory, and discuss in detail the themes that emerged using thick descriptions and incorporating the participants' explanations and examples of college men's gender identity development. The emerging theory reflects the process of how college men interacted with society's expectations of them as men to develop their individual gender identity. The emerging theory uses the metaphor of a mask to describe the performances the men felt they had to put on in order to be seen as men according to society's expectations. These performances were a way of masking their true selves and portraying themselves as men according to society's expectations. The participants described why they put on a mask and how they wore this mask, particularly as college men. Wearing this mask had consequences for the women in the men's lives, the men in their lives, and for the participants themselves. Finally, I explore the process by which these men struggled to begin to remove the mask and transcend society's expectations of them as men and the critical influences in this process. I conclude with a presentation of the emerging theory of college men's gender identity development grounded in the participants' experience.

Participant Descriptions

Brief biographical descriptions, with a focus on the participants’ social group identities (Table 1) and college experiences, are included here using the words of the participants as much as possible. The focus in the selection of participants with regard to social group identities was on race, class, and sexual orientation, based on the literature on men and masculinities. Identities where the participants generally shared privilege identities such as age, ability, and religion were less salient in the conversations with the participants. Each participant selected his own pseudonym, which are used in this dissertation to protect the participants’ anonymity. All participants agreed that the following biographical descriptions accurately represented them and the perspectives they brought to the study as fully as possible while still protecting their confidentiality.

Table 1.

Participants’ Social Group Identities

Participants	Race-Ethnicity	Sexual Orientation	SES/Class	Age	Disability	Religion
Kumar	Asian Indian	Heterosexual	Upper-Middle	20	None	Agnostic
Noah	White	Heterosexual	Upper-Middle	21	None	Roman Catholic
Frank	White	Heterosexual	Upper-Middle	21	None	Non-Denominational Christian
Jason	African American	Heterosexual	Upper-Middle	18	None	Christian
Nicholas	Latino	Heterosexual	Working	21	None	None
Chet	White	Heterosexual	Middle	21	None	Methodist
Daniel	White	Gay	Middle	21	None	Non-Denominational Christian
Robert	White	Gay (Trans)	Middle	21	None	None
Sean	White	Heterosexual	Middle	23	None	Christian
Chauncey	African American	Heterosexual	Lower-Middle	22	None	None

Kumar

Kumar was a 20-year-old Asian Indian heterosexual man from an upper-middle class background who is agnostic. He was in a leadership position with a University honor society, a national leader with a national organization focused on children in war torn regions globally, works in a lab on campus, and was a member of the University's research living and learning community. He was an honors neurophysiology and psychology major who was currently applying to medical schools.

Noah

Noah was a 21-year-old White heterosexual man from an upper-middle class background who was Roman Catholic. He played football throughout his time at the University and was on scholarship during his final season. He was a U.S. history major who planned on working for the CIA, NSA, or Department of Defense after graduation.

Frank

Frank was a 21-year-old White heterosexual man from an upper-class background, who was a non-denominational Christian. He was actively involved in his fraternity, worked at a residence hall front desk, served in a leadership position with the Student Government Association, as president of both a campus health advisory group and a peer leadership organization, had participated in the University's leadership institute, and as a member of the Senior Council. He was a criminal justice major who planned on working full-time after graduation.

Jason

Jason was an 18-year-old Black heterosexual man from an upper-middle class background who was a non-denominational Christian. He was involved with the Black

Student Union and the University's NAACP chapter. He worked at a residence hall front desk and was applying to be a resident assistant. He was a criminal justice major who planned to work for a governmental agency or go to law school after graduation.

Nicholas

Nicholas was a 21-year-old Latino heterosexual man from a working class background who had been raised Catholic but identified as not religious. He had been highly involved in several Latino organizations on campus and was very proud of creating change for Latinos on campus. He was a political science major and after graduation planned on going to law school so that he could make meaningful social change for his community.

Chet

Chet was a 21-year-old White heterosexual man from a middle class background who was Methodist. He played soccer at another regional university until he injured his ankles and transferred to the University where he had been highly involved in his fraternity where he was president. He was partly motivated to run to be president of his fraternity after hearing stories from survivors who were assaulted by members of his fraternity. Shortly after becoming president he expelled five members of his fraternity related to these assaults. He was a criminal justice major with an internship with the Department of Homeland Security. After graduation he wanted to serve his country in some way by working for Homeland Security or other governmental agency.

Daniel

Daniel was a 21-year-old White gay man from a middle class background who had been raised Presbyterian but identified as a non-denominational Christian. After

coming out in high school he decided he couldn't join the Marines immediately after graduating from high school as he had committed to and instead went to a community college for a year and then another regional university before transferring to the University. He was briefly involved in the Pride Alliance after arriving at the University but found the group "too proud" or that being gay was too much of a focus of their lives and relationships. He had also worked at the outdoor recreation center and had been a resident assistant. He was a communications major and had an internship with a Washington DC public relations firm. After graduation he planned to go into public relations consulting and pursue his entrepreneurial interests.

Robert

Robert was a 22-year-old White gay "trans" man (biologically female but identified and lived his life as man) from a middle class background who was raised Eastern Orthodox but identified as non-religious. He had been actively involved in the LGBT organization on campus, a Greek ethnic organization, and a mechanical engineering honor society. He was a mechanical engineering major. After graduation he planned on working as a mechanical engineer for a year or two before potentially going to graduate school.

Sean

Sean is a 23-year-old White heterosexual man from a middle class background who was Christian. At the age of 13 he was repeatedly raped by a male peer. He also came from a home where his mother was verbally abusive for much of his life. He had been involved with a sexual assault prevention peer education group and was currently a peer advocate doing service and outreach for victims of sexual assault and relationship

violence on campus. He was a criminology and criminal justice major who planned to work in the social work field after graduation and eventually go to graduate school. He was also an aspiring actor and screenplay writer.

Chauncey

Chauncey was a 22-year-old African American heterosexual man from a lower-middle class background who did not practice any religion. He was an African American studies and political science major. He had been involved in campus leadership through the Black Student Union and a leadership role with the University NAACP Chapter. He had taken several intergroup dialogue courses which had helped raise his consciousness on several issues. After graduation he planned to work for a while before going to law school. He wanted to be a lawyer to create some social change in this country.

Overview of Emerging Theory

The focus of this study was college men's gender identity development, describing the process by which the participants came to understand themselves as men. The participants in this study developed their gender identity through constant interaction with society's expectations of them as men. In order to try to meet these expectations and be seen as men, the participants in the study put on a performance that was like wearing a mask. One of the participants described the way he performed to meet these expectations as "putting my man face on."

The men's gender identity development was a process of interacting with society's expectations by learning these expectations, putting on a mask to conform with these expectations, wearing the mask, and struggling to begin to take off the mask. The men learned society's expectations of them as boys and men early in their lives. These

expectations expanded and applied to more and more of their lives as they got older. As college men, society expected them to treat college like four years of freedom and to party. Some men also had cultural expectations of them as men such as Black masculinity, machismo, and working class masculinity.

The men in this study were all aware that they did not neatly fit behind the mask either as a result of personal characteristics or social identities. Their resulting insecurities led them to wearing the mask both consciously and unconsciously so that they would be seen as men by society. Wearing the mask had consequences for the women in their lives, their relationships with other men, and meant that they were also denying or masking their true selves. Although none of the men in this study had been able to completely take off the mask, the participants were able to identify critical influences in their lives that had helped each of them at least begin to remove the mask in certain circumstances and begin moving towards being their own man.

Expectations of Men

The external expectations of men form the context within which men in this study developed their gender identity. The participants described society's expectations of them as men and where they had gotten the messages that reflected these expectations. In this section, I begin by describing, using the participants' words, society's general expectations of men, how they learned these expectations, and how these expectations were enforced. Next I share how those expectations changed over the participants' lives up until and through college. In addition to the expectations of the overall society, participants from subordinate groups also described additional expectations unique to their cultural groups.

Society's Expectations of Men

The participants' descriptions of society's expectations of men in general were thorough, clear, immediate, and consistent. Major components of these overall expectations included being competitive, in control of emotions or unemotional, aggressive, responsible, the breadwinner, in a position of authority, rational, strong, successful, tough, and breaking the rules. Chauncey described these expectations:

Society makes it so that to be a man you must not show emotion...if something is bothering you it should stay inside. You should channel it 'cause you have the strength to overcome those things. And another thing is strength. Like, men are supposed to be the strong breadwinners. Ya know, we bring home the bacon...The man is supposed to be in control of his home and even like, outside of his home. He is supposed to be in control of the situation because he is a man. That also leads to a lot of conflicts with other men, because ya know, you can't have like, two bulls in the same room together.

Chauncey went on to explain that men also need to be aggressive and competitive:

And not just aggressive in terms of physicality. Like, in fighting each other and stuff like that. But aggressive in competitiveness. Like, if you are sitting in class and you are doing the assignment, then you have to out do that man. If you are all going down the street and you see a female going by you have to compete with that man to get that lady's attention.

Sean described two other key elements of society's expectations of men, toughness and sexual conquest:

Fighting through pain. Not having to . . . ya know, be in touch with pain and sadness and loss. Um . . . ya know just a general suppression of emotions I think is - is uh, rewarded in society for men. Um . . . I mean obviously in relation to women, uh, ya know men are um, ya know rewarded for being uh, for being involved with many women. Ya know, there is still that, if a guy is doing it he is a pimp and if a girl is doing it she is a whore.

These expectations were not just about who men were supposed to be but also about who they couldn't be, such as not being gay, feminine, or vulnerable and not crying. Robert captured this male imperative, "Emotion is associated with being feminine and obviously

if you are feminine then you are obviously lowering yourself down the rungs, kind of things...Not being gay and not being feminine 'cause those are kind of equated.”

The men had been socialized to conform to these expectations by role models and societal influences. One of the most powerful socializing influences for the men was the father figures in their lives including, in some cases, step-fathers, grandfathers, uncles, or big brothers. Robert mentioned how influential his father and grandfather had been for him, “I guess my kind of internal perception of who I want to be is...heavily influenced by my father and my grandfather - his father.” Other men in the men’s lives such as pastors, coaches, teammates, or older fraternity brothers also served to socialize the men about society’s expectations of men. Noah stated,

I think that um, I think figures in my life have really influenced or been the most influential for me. Whether it is coaches or teachers or it could be ya know, my dad or my uncle for example. People who I look up to.

It wasn’t just individuals, but also social institutions that taught men how they were supposed to act as men. Nicholas described how institutions, like the educational system, socialize men into certain courses, majors, and careers. He noted:

Teachers come in with the mentality that male students are gonna do better in the math and sciences already. So when they see a male exceeding at math and science, they start pushing him more. And I think it has to do with society, kind of feeding itself over and over again to kind of make itself play out into those roles.

The media in general, as a social institution, as well as specifics such as books, music, television, movies, video games, and magazines were influential in defining what society expected from these men. Chet described the messages he had received from the media and music, “everybody always says the rock star life, everybody always says sex, drugs, and rock n roll.” He also described what he saw in men’s magazines like Maxim and Stuff, “you can't flip through 10 pages without seeing half naked girls or beer

advertisements.” The *Spike* television channel, which bills itself as television for men and he described as showing ultimate fighting, action movies, girls, and beer commercials, was another example he used.

Not only were men socialized with these messages, but these expectations were enforced. The two most common tools for enforcing society’s expectations were misogyny and homophobia. Kumar talked about the stigma attached to a man who is not openly homophobic, “I know people who are just like - aren’t homophobic and they’ll just be like kind of singled out because they accept homosexuality.” Nicholas discussed how other men enforced society’s expectations by making fun of him for not being a man because he didn’t drink, “They are like, ‘come on, come on’ and like, ‘What are you like a pussy?’ They say that all the time.”

How Expectations of Men Expanded Over Time

As the men in the study grew older, the expectations of men simultaneously expanded and became more restrictive. Earlier messages remained but were added to, so the expectations became more complex and the men were expected to comply with these expectations more often. Although the expansion of society’s expectations didn’t connect directly with any grade level, these changes in grade level were important time markers for the participants and as a result this is often how they remembered changes in society’s expectations.

None of the participants could remember a time when they weren’t conscious of how men were supposed to be. They had learned these expectations so early in life that they couldn’t remember not knowing them, nor could they identify when they had first

learned them. Rather, it seemed that they had been aware of these expectations throughout their entire memory or consciousness.

At the beginning of the life span these expectations were rather straightforward, with only a few clear and powerful components. In elementary school being a man was defined as not crying and being tough. Nicholas recalled:

They used to call me, "Macho Man," 'cause when ever I would get hurt or hit something, I just wouldn't cry. I would hold it in. And just would go without. Like, one time I like fell down stairs, I didn't cry because men are supposed to be tough

For Jason, this stoic and unemotional toughness was exemplified by *Batman*. This character was someone who was powerful and in control and taught him to keep his emotions in control and hidden. Later in elementary school breaking rules was added as a part of the expectations for men. Jason remembered when this started for him and his friends. He stated:

My fifth grade year, I think. That is when everybody started cussing. That was the big thing to do. 'Cause you was breaking the rules. You was just saying anything. So I think I was just saying, F- this and everything in 5th grade, but then . . . it got tired after that.

By junior high, being a man also included playing sports, fitting in with the right peer group, competing for girls' attention and access to girls' bodies, and breaking the rules by swearing, being disruptive, or fighting. Jason explained, "I made the basketball team so that just kind of solidified me as [a man]." He also described the need in junior high to associate with the right peer group, which several participants mentioned and associated with junior high. Jason stated, "You have to sit around the right people at school and that is when I really became like into everything else. Like, before I was just going to school." The importance of the peer group in defining self at this time led Jason

to consciously associate with a Black peer group for the first time, “but you know about how Black kids sit together and White kids sit together. That is when it starts, in middle school.” Just as swearing had been a way to demonstrate breaking the rules in later elementary school, demonstrating access to women’s bodies became a way to break the rules and adhere to society’s expectations in junior high. Jason said, “But we used to do crazy stuff. We used to have bets about stuff - like grabbing girls’ butts and stuff like that.” Competing for girls’ attention and access to girls’ bodies was not the only ways men competed with each other. Chauncey remembered:

We used to do this thing called, "Going to the Body." [laughs] This is another thing when we were younger we would just get up and hit each other, like box each other, in the body or so. And if you like quit you were seen as - as a punk or so. And if you kept going and if you kept like hitting him then you were like, that is a real man right there.

In high school men were generally expected to be competitive, not be gay, and break the rules. Men could comply with these expectations by playing sports, having sex, and drinking. Chet summarized the expectations of high school men:

I mean, starting in high school you want to be the kid who beats your rival team in lacrosse and drinks that night to celebrate and has sex with a girl. Like, honestly that is every single high school kid’s dream - win the state championship, get wasted and have sex with a girl you have been wanting to have sex with for a while. Ya know, like, you’ll be at practice the next day and just brag about it.

Homophobia was such a predominant influence on men in high school that it resulted in tremendous pressure to have sex. All of the participants, who discussed their first sexual experience, described it as something that they didn’t really want to do but did out of pressure to prove their manhood, prove they weren’t gay, or just to “get it over with.” This was particularly the case in high school where there was much more pressure

to have sex than college primarily as a result of the increased homophobia. Jason described a need to prove that he wasn't gay as central to the first time he had sex:

The first time, I didn't really care about doing it so much. But just because they wanted me to do it so much, that's why I did it the first time...Because if you know a guy has been with a girl you are not gonna be like - like, if a guy hasn't been with anybody maybe he is [gay].

For Chauncey, the first time he had sex was not just to prove he wasn't gay but as a way to compete and try to prove himself to his male peers.

You definitely don't want to be labeled the gay one. Ya know, why isn't he having sex - 'cause he is gay obviously. Of course the competition is like, I got mine and so, ya know, when are you getting yours . . . I think if you didn't then - you were saw as weak and stuff.

Because of the competitiveness there was pressure not just to have sex but also have sex with lots of different people. Kumar explained, "cause you can kind of like, make a laundry list of who you did it with and tell people that you did."

Drinking alcohol was a way to conform to society's expectations as rule breaking. In high school, the participants didn't have to drink to excess because drinking at all was considered breaking the rules. Chauncey said, "if you drank, it was like, 'ooh what is gonna happen.' [laughs] Like looking around for parents or whatever or some adult figure."

All of the men agreed that society expected college men to treat college as four years of freedom between the authority of parents, teachers, coaches, and other adults earlier in life and the anticipated responsibilities to job, wives, families and other responsibilities later in life. Frank described this expectation:

In high school you are living at home. Your parents are driving you around for half the time. You are doing the high school thing. When you get to college...you have four years that you have commitments to do, but it's college. And then after you graduate you get your job - whatever it is going to be -...And most people

start families, get married. So I think that free - that's what I was talking about of freedom. It's like that four years of freedom.

This expectation was reinforced for Chet by his current and former fraternity members.

I mean, [laughs], one of our shirts said, "Graduating in four years, is like leaving a party at 10:30." It is like, nobody wants college to be over. They want to extend it. 'Cause that is the mentality that is that once you graduate you got to start getting up and you know You will see guys that just graduated and will come back to events and talk about how good, ya know, you have it. And all that does is just strengthen that need to do that even more. When a guy is like, "Ah, I gotta work five days a week and I only get to go out on the weekends, but I am still doing work anyways on the weekends." It is just like, ya know, you hear that and you are like, "Holy crap. I better take advantage of this."

Robert explained that these expectations encouraged men to view college as a time in between being a "boy" and being a "man." This was a time just to be a "guy." For participants who conformed to these expectations and treated college like four years of freedom, being a "man" was something they would reach later in life after they had become financially independent, gained a full-time job, were living on their own, and were on their way to having a family of their own.

The overall expectations were that college men would "party" during their four years of freedom. The men were remarkably consistent in saying that these partying expectations included drinking to excess, doing drugs, having meaningless or competitive heterosexual sex with many women, not studying or pretending not to study or care about academics, and breaking the rules. These expectations actually discouraged men from treating college as a time to prepare for life after graduation. College men who adhered most closely to society's expectations were described by multiple participants as the "stereotypical frat guy" or "meathead." Frank said that society expected college men to be "barbarians." Sean described the kind of man society expected college men to be.

Having sex with just all kinds of women. Drinking all the time. Just like completely wasted...Ya know, is he coming to class drunk or if he is that is like the funny thing, the cool thing. Um, someone who doesn't care too much about academics, about his work...Who is just kind of having fun basically. And um, I think of someone whose priorities are more like sports and um, women and just partying...Alcohol, drugs, anything. Just really an overall indifference about life . . . It is like college is looked at as that time where although you are preparing for the real world, it is like you don't have to think about it just yet.

For Chet the expectations of college men were very clear, “[laughs] I guess the overall theme to be a man would be [at] football games you are out there eating wings and shotgunning beers and you take a girl home that night. Like, you are the man.” He went on to explain how men are socialized to wear this mask even before they get to college.

Ya know, it is what they [freshmen] think college is because that is what society shows them. If it was every single freshman honestly didn't know what college was about then, this many kids wouldn't be drinking. Everybody knows what college is about because that's what they hear. They think about *Animal House* or something like that. And that is purely because that is what society shows to be a man in college.

Additional Expectations of Men of Color, Working Class Men, and Gay Men

Participants from groups subordinated in society as a result of racism, classism, and heterosexism, described the way these communities had developed their own expectations of men. These men, in order to be viewed as men, had to learn how to conform to dominant society's expectations as well as their own cultural expectations. Nicholas agreed that this was similar to being bilingual. They needed to adhere to the expectations of the dominant culture in academic settings or at work and conform to an additional set of expectation at home or with peers from their cultural group. In this study, the participants specifically discussed the creation of cultural expectations of men related to race and class, Black masculinity, machismo or Latino masculinity, and working class masculinity. Although these cultural expectations were created by their

communities, they were all in some way a derivative of the dominant mask either as adaptations, amendments, or rejections of the dominant society's expectations of men.

Working class men were expected to provide for their families in keeping with the dominant society's expectations; they were just expected to do so earlier in life. Nicholas explained that working class men go "straight into the job force. You are supposed to grow up a lot quicker." These working class expectations seemed to present a challenge to men from working class backgrounds by making college not only financially expensive but a selfish endeavor or a luxury. Nicholas explained that "whoever is the first one born usually bears all of the responsibility. So it might be acceptable, like, I am working hard for my little brother to go to school and that is perfectly fine."

The Black community's expectations of men were also a derivative of the dominant society's expectations of men. As Chauncey said, "It is probably very similar to... regular masculinity. Maybe the only thing that maybe is different is that Black men have to have a race consciousness as well." Similarly, Nicholas described machismo or Latino masculinity.

It is basically those roles that the man is supposed to play as the protector, as the breadwinner. All those roles that a man is supposed to have is what machismo is basically based off of. But machismo is also not treating women equally... You also see that on the individual level with a man treating a woman worse than he really should. And that is just because he thinks as a man he has the right to do that. Ya know? And that is the very negative side of machismo.

Although Black, Latino, and working class men were able to describe very clear expectations for them as men as defined by their cultural groups, the two gay men in the study did not describe a consistent or coherent set of expectations about what it meant to be a gay man. Robert explained that other cultural groups could amend the dominant society's expectations of men to create cultural definitions that those men can achieve.

For example, because of racism Black men have their ability to be seen as men according to society's expectations mitigated. However because of homophobia's central role in defining what it means to be a man, gay men have their ability to be men completely negated and therefore cannot amend the dominant society's expectations of men. As Robert said, "As far as the racism goes it kind of mitigates your ability to be fully a man kind of thing. But being gay just completely disqualifies you." Daniel explained that the only way for gay men to fit any amended version of the society's expectations is by denying that they are gay.

I can't see a definite amendment that has been created. It is more kind of like, just - if there is an amendment it is just that you tone down the noticeable characteristics... Ya know, it is not brought up. 'Cause if it gets brought up then you have failed [laughs].

Creating a clear set of expectations of gay culture's version of masculinity was also made more difficult in the eyes of the participants because of the lack of older role models for gay men. They explained that gay men rarely grew up with or were raised by gay parents and so they lacked an in-culture role model the way most men from subordinate religious, class, or racial groups did. As Robert explained, "there is no family structure supporting it [gay cultural masculinity]...Certainly none of the gay men that I know have been involved in my life anywhere to the extent that my grandfather and my father have." Because of the differences in social acceptability and the coming out experiences between different generations of gay men, Robert and his peers "didn't really have any sort of like, real adult gay person that was in their life at any of those times."

Because of their inability to amend society's expectations and a lack of familiar or older role models, the two gay participants in this study explained that gay men were left to create their own unique personal set of expectations of what they thought a gay man

should be. Robert explained, “you just have to kind of make it up on your own. And so it is kind of inter-self defined,” and “that definitely changes how you define, ya know, man because it is on a continuum.” The continuum on which gay men created their own individual version of gay masculinity was between fitting your gay self into traditional masculinity and a complete disregard for any gender roles at all.

Men who try to fit their gay selves into the dominant culture’s expectations of men were gay men who were completely out and did not deny that they were gay, but otherwise behaved in ways consistent with society’s expectations of men. Robert described gay men on this end of the continuum as “assimilationist” and would “express themselves in very stereotypically masculine ways.” He also speculated that these men might say, “I am gay, but I can be completely normal anyway.” Daniel described aspects of this end of the continuum as well:

Being the kind of gay that you would pass by and never ever know. Talk to in a conversation and never ever know. They - maybe they work out. They go to straight bars. They drink beer. They have - they are in a fraternity.

On the other end of the continuum, individuals viewed gender and sexual orientation as a social construction and as a result rejected any notion of femininity or masculinity. If the other end of the spectrum was trying to fit into the box of society’s expectations, Robert described this end of the continuum as “fuck boxes.” He described as, “kind of like the, ‘fuck this’.” Robert explained that men who were at this end of the continuum were gay men who dismissed any notion of femininity or masculinity, were not interested in gay marriage because it is a heterosexist social construct, and might prefer terms such as “families of choice.”

Men from all of these subordinated groups, including gay men, were very clear about the difference between alternate forms of masculinity that their own cultural groups had created and the racist, classist, or homophobic versions of masculinity assigned to them by the dominant culture. For example, Jason described a racist set of expectations created outside the Black community which was hyper-masculine and portrayed an image of Black men as harmful, scary, and dangerous. Chauncey also described how he viewed the racist expectations of Black men as “hyper-sexual, hyper-aggressive, dangerous...ultra-violet. Um, lazy, cannot be trusted. Ya know, not a hard worker. Uh, shiftless. I could go on for days.”

In this section I discussed the participants’ views of society’s expectations of men, how they learn these expectations, and how these expectations were enforced. Figure 1 represents the external expectations men feel they need to conform to by putting on a mask. The dominant society’s expectations of what it means to be a man are represented in the center of the figure building over time to represent how over the course of the participants’ lives society’s expectations expanded and were applied to greater aspects of their lives. The participants described being expected to use college as a time to party and not to prepare by society. This is reflected in the figure by the “partying” component being so prominent it covers up and discourages the expectations of men to prepare for life after graduation.

Some men had to learn to adhere to the additional expectations as a result of belonging to social groups facing racism, classism, or heterosexism. Subordinated cultural masculinities are represented as smaller and off to the left to indicate their marginalized role in society. The arrows from overall society’s expectations to these

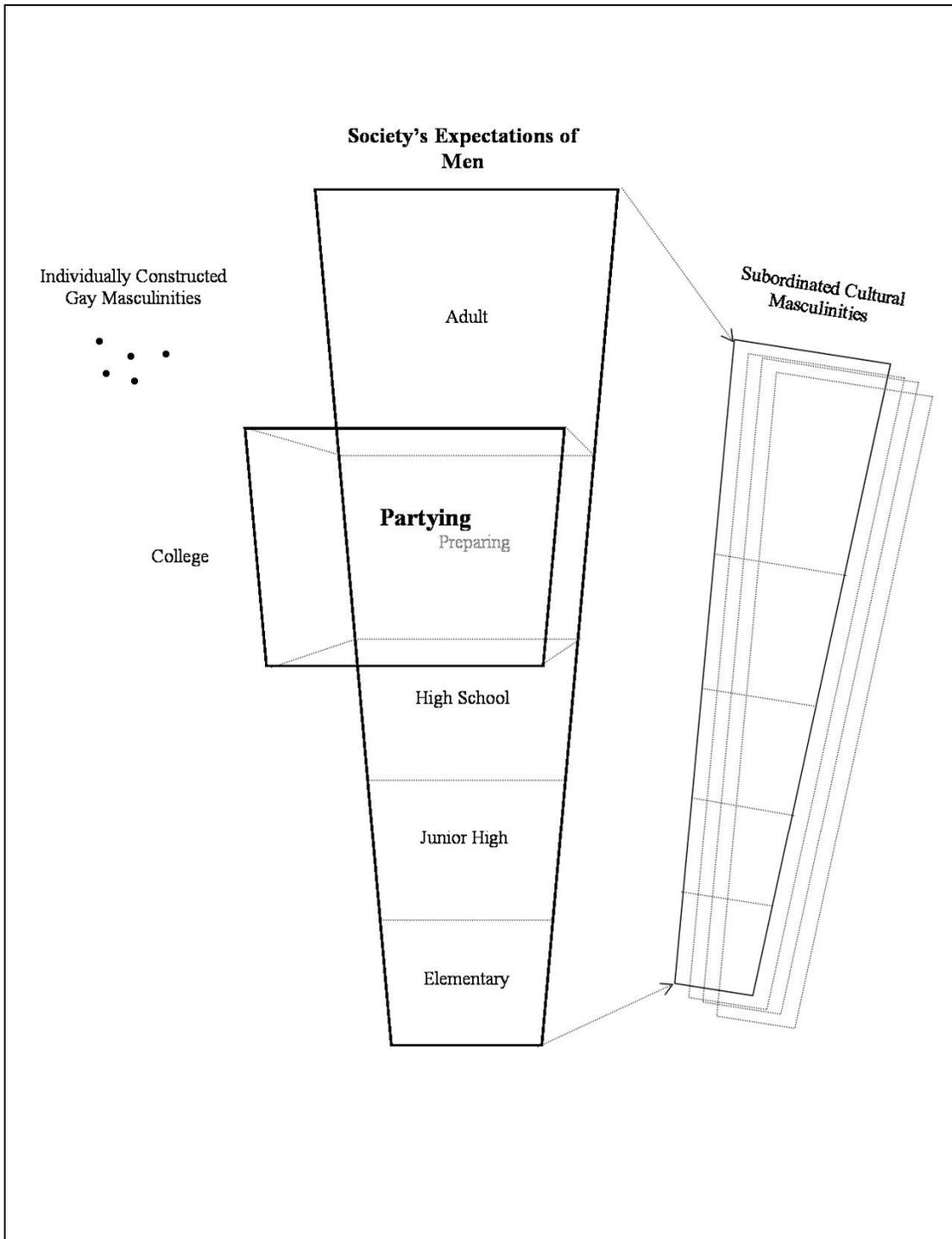


Figure 1. External expectations of men

subordinated cultural masculinities reflect how the participants described these cultural definitions of what it means to be a man, such as Black masculinity, machismo or Latino masculinity, and working class masculinity, as derivatives of the dominant cultures expectations of men, as amendments, rejections, or replications.

Because gay men were completely negated from their ability to fit into society's expectations of men because of homophobia's central role in those expectations and because of a general lack of older gay role models, gay men did not have a monolithic alternative cultural definition derived from society's expectation of what it means to be a man. As a result gay masculinities were not described as connected to society's expectations of men in the same way as other subordinated cultural masculinities. Instead, gay men created their own expectations for themselves as men on a continuum between fitting their gay selves into society's expectations and a complete rejection of any kind of gender expectations. The dots to the left on the figure reflect how each individual man creates his own version of gay masculinity on this continuum. What follows is a description of why and how the participants performed to these expectations and how this performance was like putting on and wearing a mask.

Performing Masculinity

In response to these external expectations, including both the dominant culture's expectations as well as subordinated cultural group expectations, the participants in this study described putting on a performance so that they would be seen as men. Chauncey described this performance as, "putting my man face on." This performance was like a mask that they put on in an effort to cover up the ways in which they did not meet these expectations and present to others someone who would be seen as a man. Frank

explained that he felt he had to put on a mask as a man, because “that is what society sees us as.” In this section, I describe why the men felt a need to put on a mask, how they wore a mask, and the consequences of this performance.

Putting on a Mask: Why Men Perform Masculinity

Men in this study described feeling a need to put on a mask because of their insecurities and the realization that they could never fully live up to society’s expectations of them as men on their own. By putting on a mask they were masking themselves both by disguising themselves as someone that they were not who would conform to society’s expectations and covering up aspects of themselves that didn’t fit society’s expectations. They put on this mask both intentionally by trying to prove their manhood and unintentionally when “falling in” to society’s expectations in spite of themselves.

Feeling a need to put on a mask. As individual men, the participants each realized that they did not, would not, and could not ever perfectly fit into these external expectations as themselves. Because these expectations of men were so complex and limiting, the participants were each insecure about their manhood and often felt like less of a man because they didn’t fit into these expectations. Because of the impossibility of anyone actually living up to society’s expectations for men, feeling insecure about one’s manhood was shared by all of the participants. Although they were painfully aware of how they didn’t measure up to society’s expectations, they thought that other men naturally fit in with society’s expectations and that they were the only ones who needed to put on a mask to cover up their failings as men.

Reasons for feeling like less of a man included personal characteristics (body size, lack of attention from women, and being sensitive and/or emotional) and experiencing forms of oppression such as racism, classism, and homophobia. For example, Frank was concerned about his body size and being too big:

There is a lot better looking guys and a lot skinnier guys than me...I see it more in a social situation at a party, at a bar, something like that. Um, I might not be the one that like, the girls are trying to hook-up with.

At the same time, both Noah and Jason were concerned about their body size and being too skinny. Noah acknowledged, "I always have wanted to be bigger. That was always a big insecurity." Jason also shared that he always felt small:

I am always talking about how skinny I am. I am trying to get bigger but - I feel like all my friends are bigger than me I feel like all my friends got more muscles than me for some reason. [laughs]

Men from subordinated social groups often felt like less of a man as a result of experiencing oppression such as racism, classism, or homophobia. Gay men often felt like lesser men because of the homophobia they experienced as part of society's rules about who was and wasn't a real man. Robert explained, "There are definitely aspects of that societal one [expectations of men] that just get tossed out the window right off the bat [when you are gay]." Because of society's expectation that men be financially successful and provide for their families, working class men felt insecure as men as a result of their financial struggles, feeling less successful and less able to be a breadwinner or provider. Nicholas explained, "It is kind of like, you are not doing your job even though you are working just as hard as that other person who has a higher wage." Racism and racist stereotypes often left men of color feeling insecure as men. Chauncey described being singled out by police as an example of racism directed at Black men and

how he felt like less of a man as a result, “When you don't feel like you are in control of your situation...When you don't feel like you are in control or others ya know, won't recognize that you are, ya know, a man.” Jason discussed very similar experiences with racism. For him these experiences were so common that he felt he needed to anticipate these racist experiences saying, “you got to expect it . . . be careful enough and know that this could happen.” Kumar experienced entirely different stereotypes as an Asian Indian, but similarly felt like less of a man as a result of the racist stereotypes. He explained, “And in a sense that hurts ... your chances of being viewed ... as masculine.” Nicholas received messages as a Latino man about his inability to succeed and how much he enjoyed proving these stereotypes wrong.

Like to me, here at the college level, one thing that people like really associate is that minorities being dumber than everybody else. So, people always try to prove themselves smarter than you. ‘Cause like, if you have an intelligent comment. They are like, oh my God, the Latino guy knows - how do I not know this.

When the men had a greater sense of self or were more confident in their own masculinity they were less likely to wear the mask and more able to be themselves.

Kumar described feeling generally pretty confident in himself but recognized just how precarious that could be:

I think I have already proven to myself what I am. So I don't think I am really easily swayed or easily um, irritated by someone mentioning something immasculine. ‘Cause what is masculine to them is all well and good, but to me I think I have already achieved or am at a point not - hopefully I don't revert back.

Participants who were more aware of how society's expectations of men played out in their own lives were less vulnerable to feeling insecure about their manhood because they were aware of where the insecurities were rooted. Sean, who spent a lot of time reflecting on society's expectations of men, said, “It doesn't wear off as much with my behaviors as

it does with my mindset I mean I have a pretty good foundation for what I see [as positive masculinity].”

Masking self. The pressure to conform to society’s expectations left men putting on performances as a way of masking their true selves. As Noah explained, “I think people definitely put on a guise of some sort. People definitely put on a front a lot of the time, just to act tough. Just to act big or ya know.” The men described putting on a mask by pretending to be things that they were not so that they would be seen as a man by others and as a way of masking the ways that they didn’t meet society’s expectations as themselves.

These performances were rooted in the men’s insecurities. For instance, Daniel felt added pressure to perform according to society’s expectations of men in an effort to prove that he could still be manly even though he was gay. Even though he was out, Daniel still found himself vulnerable to homophobia and performing masculinity as way of portraying an image of himself that fit with society’s expectations of men.

So ya know, I may um be more inclined to go to the gym because again influenced by what society thinks, being muscular and I may be more inclined to ya know, go camping. Or get excited about camping...Maybe like going out and playing football or soccer with some guys just to show them, ya know, "hey I am a guy too."

The participants also saw their peers putting on a mask by performing as well. For example, they had no doubt that the men who were most demeaning and degrading of women were simply performing to society’s expectations and likely had entirely different views if you could only get them in a one-on-one setting in which they felt comfortable. Noah speculated “Like, you get someone one-on-one to talk about that away from whatever setting they feel the pressure from or whatever setting they are insecure in.”

Chet appreciated the insight he gained through the interviews not only about himself but about the way other men, like his fraternity brothers, were putting on a mask as well.

It makes you appreciate I guess, a lot of the little things that you think about in the back of your head, but it is cool to know that other people think about it too. It is cool to know that I can go back to my fraternity and know that it is in the back of the guy's head. Like, knowing that I can sit in a room and be like, "Dude, I know what you are thinking."

Sean also saw other men similarly putting on a performance as a way of masking their real emotions such as sadness, vulnerability, and hurt, because they were taught that those emotions make them weak and the only acceptable emotion for men to express is anger.

I mean, 'cause with anger you see power and you see force and domination but it is like, I don't know I can look under that kind of stuff and see where this person was as a child. Ya know what I mean? And um, where the real roots...I see more vulnerability in the people that are so um, outwardly, ya know, angry um, or violent or any of that stuff. Or even if you look at misogyny and stuff. When you see a guy who acts like he doesn't have any feelings towards women and he is just gonna get with as many as he can and just throw them to the curb afterwards. I don't see somebody who um, really . . . where that is like who they are. I see - I pretty much think when I see something like that like, "OK, who broke his heart." Or what was this relationship like with his mother.

The men not only put on a mask to put forward an image that would be seen as manly but also as a way to cover up and hide aspects of their true selves that wouldn't be seen as masculine. For example, Jason laughingly described how he put on a mask by pretending he didn't listen to R & B music because it wasn't seen as masculine enough. When his friends came home he put his mask back on. He said, "I like to listen to R & B music. So I will cut that on when I am in the room or whatever and then when my roommates come back or my friends come over I change the music." Daniel felt bad about putting "too much time into like studies or um, in school work or um, ya know some other personal interests that don't really fit the typical male college student." Jason also noticed that as a result of these expectations that college men wouldn't put effort into

academics that his friends “would hide studying at sometimes.” Chet saw his peers pretending that they didn’t want to spend time or listen to women they were dating and covering up the time they spent with girlfriends.

Now especially being in a fraternity, you do not ever like, you don't ever want them to see that your girlfriend is the one that tells you don't go out tonight. You lie to your friends about not going out tonight.

Trying to prove manhood: Intentionally putting on a mask. When individual participants felt like less of a man, they were more likely to feel a need to put on a mask and conform to society’s expectations out of fear that others would realize that they didn’t measure up. The men in the study had spent their whole lives intentionally putting on a mask to try to prove their manhood. They generally perceived manhood as something that came naturally to everyone else and that only they were putting on a mask by performing masculinity. Chauncey described why he wore his mask.

I am more of an emotional person than I was. Back when I was younger I never really showed much emotion to anybody. I would laugh but I wouldn’t cry. I would look down and be like what is wrong. And I would always have like a constant face...I never really felt much like who I was because I felt that that maybe it was like – I guess, maybe me putting my man face on, I guess.

When participants felt insecure as men, they often responded by trying to overcompensate and prove their manhood to others and to themselves. Robert discussed how he tried to overcompensate to prove his manhood. In his case he did so very literally as a “trans” man to prove that he wasn’t a woman, as his peers had known him and as he had been up until he came out.

When I came out as trans...being really butch is to, um, prove to other people that I was interacting with that I was male despite the fact that everybody knew that I was female. So it is like, ya know over compensation.

One might expect that the experience for Robert would be very different from the other men as a transgendered man; however, his experience and his description of it turned out to be remarkably similar to the other men in the study. Although Robert needed to literally prove that he wasn't a woman, the other men felt this similar pressure to prove their manhood. As Kumar explained:

I think behind it all, people who try to be overly masculine are somewhat insecure with themselves. Um, and I guess you could say lost in a sense and they obviously turn towards societal norms for how they should be acting. Um, and at that point it is more important for them to do exactly what society says in that respect.

Many of Kumar's friends pretended not to study because it wasn't seen as manly and didn't fit with the partying expected of college men. It wasn't until later in the interviews when he acknowledged that he does the same thing himself. He also acknowledged that his own insecurities contributed to his own performance, "The pretending that you haven't studied. The fighting back tears . . . Sure."

Because he was felt like less of a man for being skinny, Noah worked extra hard to lift weights and run sprints better than his football teammates as a way to make up for feeling small and to prove his manhood, even though these things weren't relevant to his position. Kumar also saw men's use of racial and homophobic slurs as a way of putting on a mask in an effort to prove their masculinity, "Like 'he's a fag, he's whatever.' Just because, just because they can, just because their friends around, maybe a girl's around so they want to prove that he's not like that."

Chauncey described giving in to pressure to go out to the clubs and bars with his friends to try and prove his manhood. Had he been more secure at this time he would have been less likely to fall in to the pressure and go out, "I would have been like, I am just gonna chill out at home." He went on to explain that when he is more insecure he is

more likely to be dismissive or demeaning towards women. When he felt more confident in his manhood he was more likely to be himself, “The opposite happens as well...If I am feeling good about myself I am not dismissive and angry.”

The way they described their first sexual experiences illustrated just how much pressure the men felt to have sex as a way to prove their manhood. All of the participants who discussed their first sexual experience described it as something that they felt pressure to do rather than something they engaged in as an extension of a relationship or even simply a mutually gratifying physical experience.

It was very clear to the participants that men who behaved in the most stereotypically masculine ways were the men who were the most insecure men trying to prove their manhood. Frank saw insecurity at the root of many of men’s performances:

Insecurity leads to competition and that is why you do these things. That is why [guys] are buying rounds of shots and ya know, who can yell louder at girls and who can get with more girls.

“Falling in”: *Unintentionally putting on a mask*. At times men put on a mask unintentionally or unconsciously. The participants had so deeply internalized society’s messages that they often acted in ways that contradicted their own values without even being aware that they were doing so. Kumar described it as finding himself “falling back into traps” of society’s expectations. He stated, “I just feel like after when I redefine my own self or my own masculinity as successful and loyal and morals I really want to stand by you kind of realize - it hits you more when you falter from that.” Several participants used the term, “falling in,” to describe when they had found themselves unconsciously falling in to society’s expectations in ways that contradicted their own expectations of themselves as men. Examples of falling in to society’s expectations in spite of themselves

and doing things they regretted or didn't intend included making homophobic comments, objectifying or demeaning women, drinking to excess or competitive drinking, or suppressing their own emotions. Generally, the men didn't regret what they had done falling in until later, when they were either confused by or disappointed in their own actions. Kumar said, "I usually recognize it a couple of days afterwards. You never really think about it when you are doing it."

Chet discussed how he had often engaged in the partying that society expected of men in college in a way and to a degree that he regretted.

The stuff that we do is just like absolutely falling in to the stereotypical, ya know, shotgunning, we are around a bunch of girls that we are trying to impress, I mean I definitely have and ya know, it is something that I look at and you know, what you said, I look back on it and it sucks.

Frank found himself falling in when he felt less attractive to women than other men at the bar, by buying rounds of shots and then realizing how silly this was when he was walking home thinking that he had drunk too much and spent too much money trying to prove his manhood. He had also done things falling in to society's expectations that he regretted such as, "waking up next to a girl and having no idea or you know, 'Why in the world did I do this?' or 'What did I do?' Um, drinking far too much. Blacking out." Despite not wanting to be "that guy" and regretting things he had done, Frank still found himself falling in. "I still do it. I still go out too much. I still drink too much."

Kumar also regretted things he had done falling in to society's expectations of men in high school like putting other people down and throwing things in class, which he now realized he did out of a need to compete with other men.

If you make a joke about someone else and people laugh, you feel bad for a second but then you are like, "Oh what, they're laughing. Whatever. Who cares." Um . . . it can really hurt someone.

Jason had made some degrading comments to women and acted in ways that belied his cultural pride as a Black man as a result of feeling insecure about his manhood in the moment. He said, "You say something to a girl, you shouldn't really be saying to a girl. Or...you portray yourself in front of somebody else, like, in front of White people in a way that wouldn't best represent your culture."

Many times men didn't reflect on these performances at all, until they were given a reason to reflect. Chet talked about his recent falling in during a trip to the renaissance festival with his fraternity. After our the conversation in our first interview he viewed the behavior of other men as a performance; he and his friends competed over dates, drank, broke the rules, fought with each other, and went right to some of the violent games at the fair like axe throwing and knife throwing, "It was every single thing that we had talked about and it was just in a nutshell...It was EVERY thing that we talked about." His new awareness didn't prevent him from falling into the same performance himself, "Like, earlier in the day I was. Like, I got drunk and I went immediately to over to the knife throwing." In the moment he didn't think of it as a performance, "No. I was thinking, 'I am having a good time.'" Only later did he consider it a ridiculous performance, "Later when you look back. Or even the next day when we talked about it."

Frank realized that he had been falling in as well over the course of our interviews and shared this with his roommates. He shared that together they discussed how some of their behavior seems strange when looking back on it.

But when they sit down and think about it, they are like, "Yeah that is kind of weird" or "yeah I am kind of like motherly in this way or not so masculine in this way. I like to go out and drink and get drunk and fight and things like that." I think, like I said in the beginning, it is in the back of our mind, but we don't think

about and talk about, like, why do we instead of going out for three drinks like we should. Instead go out for 13 and have 10 too many.

The interviews also provided Chet with a chance to reflect on other falling in he was doing out of his insecurities as a man. One of the more powerful moments in all of the interviews came when Chet realized that he had been avoiding committed relationships and hooking up with different women out of his own insecurities. He had been taught, directly by his older brother and former fraternity members, that sleeping with lots of different women was what was expected as college men. Although he wasn't really proud of what he was doing, he clearly enjoyed these casual sexual relationships with lots of different women and had no plans of changing. He rationalized this as part of his four years of freedom, by explaining that he was engaging in these casual sexual relationships so he would get it out of his system and be better able to be faithful later in life when he was married. Yet, he was doubtful that this would really be the case, "I guess I am hoping that is something that I don't take out of college."

Chet later realized that his need to have sex with many different women was not because he was confident and popular but rooted in his insecurity and a need to regain his status as a man.

I feel like maybe I do it because it is like a reassurance that I am like a confident guy or that I can do that...I feel like that has to be in insecurity... I do to say, that now I have had sex with a girl in this sorority...And it wasn't even a girl that I was extremely attracted to or was extremely like, I wanna get with this girl. It was, I can get with this girl and it is gonna boost my confidence if I do...And I feel like, now that I look at it this way it is a matter of being insecure about myself. Because if I have to do something like that just for my own sake. Being like - "Oh I can do that." Ya know, it is just like - it is not fair to them. And it is not fair to myself.

Chet was stunned by and very uncomfortable with this realization. As he talked about this he took several long pauses, shifted back and forth in his chair several times, took his hat

on and off several times, and knocked his fist on the table. He went on to talk about how disappointed he was with himself now that he was conscious that he had been putting on this performance as a way to mask his insecurities underlying his behavior.

‘Cause I look back at it and how ridiculous it seems...I guess it is the macho thing to do is hooking up with a lot of girls and that is why I get a sense of looking at it that way. If I was secure with myself I wouldn't.

Sean was the only participant who at times recognized that he was falling in as he was doing it. He talked about a couple of times when his friends were looking at pornography as an example.

I don't believe in pornography. Um, but there have been times where I have slipped up and either because someone decides to put something on or because I am just - I would slip up. And ya know, I will look at it. And I can look at it and enjoy it - but at the same time I think it is wrong. I know it is wrong.

He went on to describe how these internalized messages about how men should behave kept him from speaking up despite his personal values and commitments.

Most of the time it registers what is going on. I tell myself you are doing this or I don't - other times it won't be so much that I am giving into those things, but when I see my friends doing it, I don't speak up. Um, so sometimes I will be sitting there thinking, "This is so lame. I really don't feel like doing this. I really don't feel like looking at this. I don't know why this is such a big event for you to see this." But I won't necessarily say anything.

He acknowledged that recognizing this in the moment was unusual for men and speculated that his consciousness and intense reflection on gender issues as a result of his work in sexual assault prevention and victim advocacy as well as his own personal therapy had helped him to be more reflective and conscious of these issues: "I have been known to be labeled like, someone who thinks too much or someone who is over-analytical. And these kind of issues are very important to me and they are things that I think about a lot."

Wearing a Mask: How Men Perform Masculinity

The participants not only described why they wore a mask to conform to society's expectations but also how they wore this mask, particularly as college men. As college men they were expected to party, which meant that they needed to cover up the preparing they felt a need to do despite society's expectations. Men also wore a mask in an effort to make ways in which they deviated from society's expectations acceptable. Men who experienced oppression often felt like less of a man as a result of the racism, classism, or homophobia they experienced and wore a mask as one of the ways they tried to regain or maintain their manhood. As men experienced frustration with society's expectations they attempted to amend these expectations and develop their own personal definitions of what it means to be a man.

“Partying” as wearing a mask for college men. As college men, the participants were expected to party as a way of performing their masculinity according to society's expectations. Despite the external pressures to party, the participants also felt a need to prepare for life after graduation. Negotiating the external pressure to party and feeling an internal need to prepare was central to the participants experience as college men. Partying was a mask that they wore to cover up the preparing they felt a need to do but wasn't seen as masculine. As a result of these competing demands, several of the men in the study described having a divergent college experience. The men with more perceived privilege tended to be able to party more and the men with less perceived privilege trended to feel a greater need to prepare, even though it was in violation of society's expectations of them as college men.

Because society expected college men to treat college as four years of freedom and a time to party, the participants described feeling not just permission to party but also pressure and a sense of entitlement to party. They talked about college men who could actually be quite angry that they only got four years of freedom in their lives and as a result felt entitled to college as a time free from responsibilities and consequences. Sean described this perspective:

I think that is definitely an outlook on the whole thing is feeling like this is what I am here for. This is what I deserve. And it is expected. It is an expectation. That - and it seems like a wasted experience if you don't have it. And it is not just like you didn't take advantage of it, but like you are owed this time.

Because of these societal expectations college men not only felt entitled but also tended to overdo it. These men felt pressure to make the most out of their time in college and get this out of their system before the responsibilities of family and career they anticipated later in life. Chet described feeling this pressure to cram as much partying in during this brief window of freedom.

I feel like, a lot of it is, ya know, people are in college for four years...They try and cram as much of this stereotypical machoness in while they can before I guess, they are snapped into reality and have to start really living as what they really think a man should be. I feel like a lot of people really do know what it takes to be a man... I feel like a lot of people will put that off until they need to start doing that. And that is when they start say having a family or having a serious career. But when a college student's only worry is making it to their eleven o'clock the next morning. Ya know, stuff [partying] like that [happens].

Chet didn't want to go out to the bars because he had just spent \$150 the night before, but was convinced by a friend who argued, "It is your senior year, you are graduating in a year...you are not gonna be able to do this." Noah described this mentality of college as four years of freedom as "an excuse for doing things they maybe wouldn't do before or after college." Chet excused and justified his "hooking up" with multiple women as

something that he was doing in college to get out of his system during his four years of freedom.

I guess getting it out of the system is one of the things. I guess that is a horrible way to approach it but I think that may be what it is, I guess...I don't want to find a girl that I really like and fall in love with and then get to a point, where I am like, well I have never really hooked up with this type of girl before. I have never really seen what the other fish in the pond are. And I guess that is what I said, I am hoping that I will graduate and I don't take my lifestyle here with it. [laughs] I hope that is what I get from it. Is saying, "OK that is what I used to do in college. I am done with that."

Despite society's expectations that men treat college as a time to party, as individuals each of the men felt at least some need to treat college as a time to prepare as well. They described "preparing" for life after college as taking academics seriously, going to class, studying, internships, involvement, worrying about GPA, carefully selecting a major, learning, filling out the resume, and learning about self. However, because the mask society expected men to wear clearly included partying, the men were often masking the preparing they did by hiding, minimizing, or dismissing the things they did to prepare. They felt a need to prepare in spite of society's expectations of them to party, mostly out of a fear that without preparing they wouldn't be able to achieve the things that men were expected to achieve after graduation. As Kumar said, men who primarily view college as partying, "they don't really set-up a foundation for their life to be thoroughly - truly successful." Those who primarily used college as a time to prepare in spite of society's expectations, did so because they didn't feel that they could afford to treat college as four years of freedom before adulthood. They treated college as the first part of adulthood. Because of Nicholas's working class and Latino culture background, he saw college as the first part of adulthood in spite of the dominant society's expectations.

I am not gonna have the experience where I didn't have to work these four years to kind of do that. I already have those responsibilities so I can't share in what they are saying. So I understand what they are saying, they are like, "alright this is our time for freedom. So we can do this and when we get out of here that is gonna be the next step." But I already feel like I am at the other step. The adulthood part that they are at - that they are gonna be at later on.

As a result of these competing and contradictory pressures to party and prepare, several of the participants described having a divergent college experience. Publicly they wore a mask by partying because of the intense social pressure to party. More privately they worked to prepare for life after college out of their fears about what will happen after graduation, often hiding their preparing from all but their closest friends. Several participants discussed lying about what they were doing when they studied, keeping their leadership and involvement relatively private, pretending that they didn't study for exams, or talking about skipping class when they had no intention of doing so.

For example, Frank felt immense pressure to join in the partying aspects of college but also felt a need to prepare for life after graduation. He wore a mask, primarily with his fraternity brothers, by drinking and hooking up with women. He also felt a need to prepare, which is why he was a double major, involved in student government, president of two major campus organizations, and had been appointed to a prestigious position on senior council. Yet, few of his peers in his fraternity knew all of the things that he was involved in and those who did often gave him a hard time about it. Even though he didn't feel like less of a man for doing it, Frank recognized that was how others viewed it and explained that he had more to do than just party in college.

It would be not being a man in that way. Necessarily. We kind of, I think, touched on it when we talked about the stuff I was involved in and how that wasn't a man's place in like a college career I have other things to do besides, go to class, procrastinate, go to my frat, go out and drink, go have sex.

Frank described it as almost having two entirely separate college personas. One version of Frank was focused on the fraternity and social life and going to bars and drinking and all of the rest that comes with partying. Entirely separate from that persona was a version of Frank that went to classes to earn a double major and is highly involved. Frank acknowledged his divergent college experience and we joked that these “two Frank’s” were so different that if they met each other they might not even like each other. Chet also experienced this divergent college experience. His experience as a partying and womanizing “frat guy” was so divergent from his internship with a governmental agency that he actually left campus every Thursday night for home so that he could sleep and get up early in the morning for his internship each Friday morning.

For some college men what would otherwise be a divergent college experience was unified by some powerful form of involvement. Football was this unifying college experience for Noah, who also observed that for others significant involvement in student government, a demanding major like engineering, or commitments to a student organization could fulfill the same role if that became the central component of the college experience and dominate all of the academic and social lives of the student.

The more time and focus men put on partying relative to preparing was related to their perceived privilege. As Chauncey said, “They [men with privilege] act out the partying, whereas if you are not privileged you act out - you try to be - turn your focus to preparing yourself.” Chet, one of the more privileged participants, discussed the pressures that he sees placed on those with less privilege, particularly first generation college students, “Because they have so much weight on their shoulders. They don't want to let anyone down.” In this way, wearing a mask and conforming to society’s expectations of

college men was a luxury that men felt they could afford or not afford based on their perceived privilege.

Men who had more perceived privilege felt they could afford, financially and otherwise, not to use college as an opportunity to prepare for life after college. Because of their privilege these men felt entitled to opportunities after college or had reason to expect opportunities would be there for them regardless of what they learned or accomplished in college. Chet discussed how some of his peers with enormous privilege counted on their connections to help them be successful after college and could afford to not use college to prepare:

They are gonna get a 2.4 [GPA] but they are gonna get a job working at their dad - ya know, Booz Hamilton with their dad or something...I can even say that with my best friend...His dad, ya know, runs a hospital and he goes to [a prestigious private university] now and so he got an internship on Capital Hill. He got an internship at [a prestigious Washington DC firm]. He got all these sweet internships and he doesn't have the grades, but I just know that right when he graduates he is gonna be really well off.

These men always knew they would go to college and so for them this experience was inevitable and the partying was not only what society expected of them but a part of the experience that they felt entitled to as college men.

Men with less perceived privilege did not feel that they could afford to treat college as a time of freedom. Instead, they felt fortunate to have the opportunity to go to college and a need to make the most out of the college opportunity for themselves and for their community. Nicholas described this pressure.

It is something that not a lot of people get. And even in general, not a lot of people get the opportunity to come to college...especially for my [Latino] community it is kind of like an obligation. It is a responsibility. You have this opportunity, take advantage of it, make the most of it.

With these pressures men from their own communities, the men with less privilege felt that they were not able to conform to society's expectations of college men by partying as often, and frequently felt ostracized as college men as a result. These men, like Nicholas, had less time, money, and opportunity to be wasted on partying, because of the additional responsibilities they had to themselves, to their families, and to their communities.

Responsibilities basically, we are like, coming into college you still have responsibilities for home, you still have responsibilities for making sure that you are doing well... it is not four years of freedom for us 'cause it is four years of having to work to pay for school . . . Having to still do well in school. Having to do that part time job. All of these responsibilities that come with it. So it is not like, "Oh I have no ties. I can go do an internship if I want and work for free, get experience." Nah, you have got to work to pay for school.

Men who came from historically underrepresented groups felt greater pressure not only as individuals but also collectively as members of groups who hadn't historically been afforded these opportunities. Part of the pressure was to overcome the racist, classist, and other oppressive stereotypes that men from underrepresented groups wouldn't make it to college or wouldn't be successful once they got there. Chauncey was conscious that he and his Black peers were one of the first generations to be able to go to college and they were "expected to be able to like, ya know, handle your business and like [not] embarrass your community." These men also anticipated that as a result of these oppressive systems and oppressive stereotypes that they may face additional obstacles in achieving their goals after college. These men didn't feel like they had a safety net provided by their race privilege, financial means, or family connection. Nicholas described how important those connections can be.

Basically minorities don't have those same connections with those who come from a - what is it called - a higher income level. ..I know people who are basically, have their college degree but they have still yet to get a job because they haven't had that connection.

As a result they felt as though they had no margin for error without the financial or other support. As Nicholas said, “if you mess up you don't get a second chance.” As a result, men who felt a lack of privilege developed strategies as individuals and as a community to try and overcome these obstacles. Jason described recognizing this collectively with his Black male peers in college as a first generation college student.

We are supposed to be working and we are trying to stay on top of each other to do the right thing and how we will be the first people to make it all the way through college from our family and stuff at like a major college... So we always get on each other about staying on top of our work or we are all trying to get this RA position too to save our parents money.

This didn't mean they didn't feel the pressure to wear the mask and party as men, or they didn't have a desire to be less serious and more social. Jason wished that he could “go to college and just not have to work and hang out and stuff. But I can't do that. I won't be able to stay here. I won't succeed.” Those who viewed college more as a time to prepare discussed the importance of recognizing the opportunity they had and not falling in to the pressure to treat college as nothing more than a time to party. Nicholas felt that doing so would be a waste, “It is kind of like, you have an opportunity and you throw it away.”

The relationship of perceived privilege with college men's tendency to do more partying or more preparing was discussed along the lines of race and class by the participants. The stereotypes that the participants were exposed to as a result of being a part of these groups were damaging to the participants themselves in fostering self-doubt. Because of the harm these men had experienced as a result of these stereotypes, they were deeply committed to proving those stereotypes wrong which added additional pressure.

The participants explained that the connection between partying and preparing would apply to any group that faced structural hurdles or stereotypes about the inability of members of those groups to be successful in college. They participants were also clear that this dynamic did not extend to sexual orientation because there aren't societal messages that gay men will not go to college or are less smart or less likely to succeed in college. However, it did apply to the level of privilege gay men felt with regard to their other social identities if those social identities experienced oppression. Robert observed this dynamic within the gay community.

'Cause, ya know, as a gay man, if you are raised in an upper class or middle to upper class household with the expectation that you are going to go to college cause your parents can afford it. Ya know, with the expectation that you are going to get a job because you parents have jobs or whatever, kind of thing. Ya know, that mindset, I mean, just the family connection kind of thing.

Men engaged in more partying or preparing based on their perceived privilege, which was relative and based on the race or class privilege they had in comparison to those around them. For example, Jason saw his Black male peers who come from more upper-class backgrounds being able to have more flexibility and freedom.

They have something else that they can fall back on or their monetary status is - their family has more money so they could afford to fail a class and take it over or take more summer classes or something like that.

For some of the men with race, sexual orientation, and class privilege, fear tempered their sense of entitlement and motivated them to try and make the most out of college by preparing as well as partying. These individuals experienced adversity and knew how precarious their privilege was, had negative role models, didn't have good grades, or had received negative messages about their ability to succeed in spite of social group privilege. For example, Frank who was relatively privileged was still afraid that if he

didn't put in the work that he would not be successful. He came from an upper-class home and had \$100,000 waiting for him upon graduation, but until then he had to pay for school himself. Despite this, Frank did not feel privileged, particularly because of the enormous financial wealth of his peer group both within and beyond the fraternity. Because he grew up with a single mom who put herself through law school he was keenly aware of the fragility of socio-economic success. Because of this fear, he worked very hard at being involved in order to prepare for life after graduation because "my academics aren't as well as they should be."

Wearing a mask to break the rules. At times men wore a mask to compensate, cover-up, or make what otherwise would be seen as transgressions against society's expectations socially acceptable. The men in the study described being able to do things that contradicted society's expectations if they simultaneously made up for this by wearing a mask in other ways by being successful, making a joke or mockery of their transgressions, taking a principled stand, propping up their masculinity in other ways, or using drinking as an excuse.

Success was so central to what society expected of men that even if they were successful at something that wasn't considered manly, their success made it acceptable and allowed them to be seen as a man anyway. Kumar described how all of the service activities that he was involved in were seen as not masculine, right up "until the point where they saw the results." Noah was very much into art in high school. Instead of being seen as less of a man, he was admired for being very good at it. "I think it is only not seen as masculine if it is not that good. But when someone is good at it, it would be - that is Ok." Similarly, Chet played the violin in orchestra in high school. He was often made fun

of for doing this because it was not very manly. However, for another peer who was very good at playing the violin, it actually helped to establish his masculinity and was a way of wearing the mask for that individual. Chet stated:

Everybody thought it was so cool. It is whatever, he is the dorky kid. And then he played for the whole school and everyone was like, "Wow, he is extremely talented." And it like, it almost boosted his masculinity... he was good at what he did. It almost goes to - goes back to the alpha male.

Nicholas and Chet both mentioned cooking as a perfect example of successes central role in society's expectations of men. Cooking was generally seen as not masculine, unless one were a very successful chef, which was actually expected to be a man's role. Chet said, "I always thought that was funny. But because he is a really good chef it is not immasculine." Nicholas was even made fun of for cooking by his cousin whose father is a chef and well admired by their family for his excellent cooking.

Men were also able to do things that weren't typically seen as manly if they made fun of themselves. By mocking their transgressions men were able to maintain the mask. Daniel described dressing up as a woman in high school as a joke to be a "twin" with his female co-anchor of the school news show. He said this was acceptable because, "it was a mockery or just as a joke and it was clear that it was a joke" He also noticed this type of mockery in the way many of the fraternity men on campus dress up as women, "a lot of the frat guys dress up in dresses and stuff like that. And that is clearly is a joke and they get away with it." Chet saw several occasions in his fraternity, where men had more emotional or vulnerable conversations and then joked about it or mocked themselves for being gay or a woman as a way of putting their masks back on to re-establish their manhood.

If a guy starts opening up to another guy he will joke around like, "You look like you are ready to make out with me." I don't think that that is something that I wouldn't do because I have done it.

Chet then laughingly agreed that this joking and mockery was a lot of work just to be yourself with your close friends.

Men were also able to make decisions that were not generally seen as masculine if they were doing so as a result of a principled stand. Nicholas mentioned gaining the respect of his peers for his principled stand not to drink or have sex. Drinking and having sex were generally seen as ways of partying and proving manhood for college men, but because Nicholas chose not to engage in these things as a principled stand they were acceptable to others. Chet had made a principled stand not to do any drugs and was well respected by his fraternity brothers for taking such a stand, even though they mocked other men who didn't do drugs but who didn't take such a principled stand.

They are not like, "oh you big loser." They like joke about it. They almost think it is like cool that it is something that I take a stand on. . . . Like I know someone who has said, I am just not gonna have sex until I get married. Other guys can't be like, oh you've been trying to have sex and you haven't yet, when you take a stand on it . . . making a principled stand against what a majority does I feel like a lot of people even admire that even if it is something that they don't do at all.

Men were also able to seemingly transgress social norms about what it meant to be a man if they had reinforced their mask by propping up their manhood in another manner. Noah mentioned that his interest in art was acceptable not only because he was good at it, but also because he played soccer and did other sports in high school which had already propped up his masculinity. His mask was reinforced by playing soccer and so art was more acceptable.

If I wasn't an athlete I wouldn't have been friends with my friends who were on the soccer team necessarily or on the football team. But, they uh, but I think

people were like, wow. "It's pretty cool that you do that too." So it like boosted me up even more.

Several of the participants told stories about how they had intentionally done very stereotypically masculine things to reinforce their mask, knowing that they were going to share something that would make them vulnerable. Jason mentioned how he sees his friends propping up their masculinity before having conversations where they fear they might be more vulnerable, "Cause you already have your masculinity by watching sports or playing video games or something. Yeah, I notice that." Chet also noticed men reinforcing their mask before opening themselves up, "if you build up your masculinity it is less likely that you will be judged in a bad way for opening up or talking about these types of things." Drinking was one way men could prop up their masculinity and conform to society's expectations of them as college men.

Alcohol not only propped up men's masculinity, but it also lowered their inhibitions and made them more willing to let the mask go and open up and be vulnerable and provided an excuse for their behavior that was acceptable according to the expectations of college men. As Frank explained, "A lot of serious conversations happen when you are drinking and it is 'cause you are more comfortable and you have that excuse that if tomorrow comes." Several of the men, also talked about how they or their peers would plan this ahead of time. Knowing that they wanted to talk about something personal, they would drink ahead of time so that there was a built in excuse.

Wearing a mask as responding to oppression. Men who experienced racism, classism, or homophobia often felt that they were seen as less than real men as a result of this oppression and often responded by wearing a mask to regain their manhood. Their responses to social injustices and stereotypes are presented here distinctly for clarity, but

in reality the participants experienced them in a much more complex and intersecting manner. Nicholas, who discussed experiencing both racism and classism, explained how difficult it is to separate the two out. He said, “the class structure is based off a racial structure so that is why these things can float in and out of each other.”

One of the ways that gay men in the study responded to being seen as less than men was by distancing themselves from society’s expectations of men. Of all of the participants, the two gay men, Robert and Daniel, by far had the most difficulty describing society’s expectations of men. They spoke about it in intellectualized terms, while other participants talked in very personal terms. If they focused on trying to be a man by society’s definition, they would inevitably fail simply because of who they were. Daniel explained that he had distanced himself from society’s expectations of men because, “it would be just too much of a performance.” Gay men are so ostracized from society’s expectations of men that these men had, in large part out of self-defense, avoided society’s expectations all together as a way to maintain their sense of self as men. Nevertheless, the gay men still found themselves trying to prove their manhood by society’s expectations by wearing the mask and performing, particularly when they felt insecure as men because of homophobia. They also found themselves falling in unintentionally and realizing it later. Daniel discussed realizing afterwards that the reason why he had joined the Marines in high school was to prove to himself and others that he was a man despite his new recognition that he was gay. Even after he had come to terms with his sexual orientation and was out, he still found himself putting on a performance and wondering who he was trying to fool.

Afterwards, I am like, ya know, I am sitting there thinking, "They know I am gay. And the people I am with know I am gay. And that wasn't me." Ya know, one of my real friends said something about that and I just looked stupid.

When working class men were seen as less than real men because of classism, Nicholas observed that they put on appearances to try to appear more financially successful and stable than they really were as a means of maintaining their masculinity. He had personally observed one of his uncles trying to put on appearances by buying brand name items for his family, "My uncle you see him wanting to like provide those brand name things for his children and stuff like that. And to him that makes him feel like he is doing his job." In doing so he was undermining whatever financial stability they did have as a working class family.

Those who experienced racism and felt insecure as men as a result discussed a few common responses that they had observed others using and found themselves using as well. These responses included believing the stereotypes; choosing the stereotypes; needing to not be the stereotype which for many results in experiencing stereotype threat; or overcompensating according to the traditional definition, which often unintentionally reinforces racist perspectives of cultural masculinity.

For some men of color, particularly those without a support system, the racist messages were so prevalent and pervasive that the men came to believe the racist expectations. As Jason said, "It is gonna come through in the way you act or approach situations 'cause you think, 'Oh it doesn't matter anyway. I am not good at math cause I am Black.'" Nicholas also found this in the low expectations many Latino students were exposed to in the educational system and told that they wouldn't be successful:

That is what the school says, the school is an authority, so apparently that is my job. And then you just kind of go with the flow and go with whatever they do. It is

a lot easier basically to go along with people than to go against the grain. So just go with the people and screw it - it is easier to me.

Many of the men feared that they would be left with the stereotype as their only option so they chose the stereotype so that they could maintain a sense of agency and control. Jason said, "I definitely see falling in to the stereotype and then choosing. Like, if you give in to it before somebody else you can't say that somebody forced you." The pressure to not be the stereotype can be paralyzing as several of the men of color discussed seeing their peers or themselves experiencing stereotype threat. Nicholas described this pressure:

You do feel that kind of pressure in terms of, I am the only one here because I have to make sure that I am on point because I am representing my whole people...Like, "I don't want to be the guy who doesn't do well because then they start looking at me and start saying it is all Latinos that don't do well."

When men of color felt insecure as men because of racism they often sought to regain their manhood in the eyes of society by overcompensating and performing in particular hyper-masculine ways. Jason described this as "over-masculine" and "trying to act too hard." Chauncey described the reaction as, "I just got racially assaulted here, how can I get that back. How can I make up for it?" At times, in reaction to racism, men of color's overcompensation resulted in unintentionally reinforcing some of the very same racist stereotypes that had emasculated them in the first place. Chauncey mentioned feeling like Ralph Ellison's invisible man as he moved across campus, "Unfortunately you are like...trying your hardest to do the right thing to get through. And when that doesn't work you have to sometimes resort to the aggressive tactic which - and they are thinking how foul Black men are." Chauncey described that this insecurity could stem from actual and anticipated racism. He explained, "It is probably the threat of racism and the fear of like what could happen."

Rather than direct their anger at Whites or social structures when they felt emasculated, men of color tended to take it out on others within their community, often times reinforcing the same racist stereotypes that led them to feel like less of a man in the first place. As Chauncey said:

I think the problem that a lot of Black men have is that they internalize that anger - that feeling that they have and when they internalize it, they ya know - when they internalize all that racism, all that emasculation, they end up acting out the negative Black male image.

Men with greater support networks were able to let go of the feelings of insecurity and not internalize their experiences of racism allowing them to more consistently be the men they wanted to be.

Creating one's own mask. One way men in the study responded to feeling that they couldn't measure up to society's expectations or frustration with society's expectations was to develop their own personal definitions of what it meant for them to be a man. They then struggled to live up to these definitions in the face of the constant pressure to wear a mask and portray what society expected of them. Generally these personal definitions were in some way amended versions of society's expectations of them as men. In this way the personal definitions were new masks that the men had created that still maintained their manhood but were, in their eyes, more acceptable versions of society's expectations. For example, Nicholas's personal definition reflected an amalgamation of the different masks that he was expected to wear: dominant society, Latino culture, and working class culture. He described his personal definition of masculinity as "stepping up" to his responsibilities including going to school, paying for school, and benefiting his Latino community.

Although based on society's definitions of masculinity, these personal definitions reflected much more pro-social aspects than the participants descriptions of society's

expectations and varied greatly as they were the unique creation of each individual man. More pro-social components of society's expectations that the men incorporated as part of their personal definitions of masculinity included being responsible, accountable, assertive, chivalrous, productive, respected, responsible, successful, and honest; having integrity and honor; being a man of your word and positive role model; and doing the right thing. Chet described his personal definition in this way:

I feel like to be a man you have to be someone of your word. And someone that people respect...I feel like just in today's society and just in general in order to be a man you got to be able to stand up for what you actually represent.

Almost all of the participants went out of their way to reject aspects of society's expectations which they recognized as sexist by incorporating non-sexist attitudes into their personal definitions including not needing to make more money than your wife, being respectful of women, having equitable views of women, treating men and women the same, and being involved in women's issues. Several of the men still held onto some of the more patriarchal aspects of society's expectations of men, particularly those that could be described as benevolent sexism, including being the head of the family, being protective, taking charge, and being in a position of authority.

Men who intentionally and consciously included direct rejections or contradictions of society's expectations identified with things like being fallible and embracing and learning from failure, in touch with emotions, sensitive, and vulnerable. They also identified with not being competitive, not needing to conquer or make a lot of money, and actively and intentionally pursuing emotion based relationships with men as friends. Sean described the man he wanted to be as:

In touch with like one's emotions. I think that, ya know, to be honest, to be vulnerable are uh, not solely manly qualities, but I feel like there is a certain

strength I find in someone who is in touch with their emotions - who is not afraid to be vulnerable. Or who can admit their insecurities. So, someone who is very self-aware... I guess a lot of it goes against the stereotypes.

Several of the participants directly included working for social change as part of what it meant for them to be a man. They mentioned being a sexual assault prevention worker or victim advocate, influencing the community as a professional responsibility, being angry at injustice, wanting to make a difference through social change, and being in a position of authority to help people. As Sean explained, "You use your position and the privileges of being a man for good."

Other components of the personal definitions of masculinity were based on personal experiences and values. These components included being a good Christian, being drug-free, being self-aware, and valuing street smarts over book smarts. The men also frequently identified growth as a component of being a man such as being a better man, trying to better yourself, overcoming adversity, or being all that one can be. The final category included general human characteristics such as being nice, happy, personable, passionate, inclusive, and courteous. Kumar describes how this has become important to his view of masculinity as he has gotten older.

It can be as simple as just like holding doors and simple things, like if someone drops their books helping them pick them up. If some body needs help, just do it for them.

Consequences of Wearing a Mask

The participants were not only able to describe why and how they performed masculinity but also the consequences of their performance. In this section, I focus on the participants' descriptions of the negative consequences their performances of masculinity had for women in their lives, their relationships with other men, and for themselves. By

wearing a mask and performing to society's expectations, the participants had taken on misogynistic attitudes and behaviors towards women, placed limitations on their relationships with other men including friendship with men and father figures in their lives, and sacrificing their authenticity and humanity by losing themselves to the mask by pretending to be someone they were not. These consequences reveal the social justice implications of how men perform to meet society's expectations.

Demeaning and degrading attitudes and relationships with women. Many aspects of society's expectations that the participants disagreed with, observed in others or recognized in themselves, were related to women. Degrading, objectifying, or demeaning women were some of the most common ways of performing to society's expectations that frustrated the participants when they noticed it other men and in themselves.

Kumar described how his wearing a mask had resulted in having a series of unfulfilling relationships with women.

I think in high school, even my first relationships in college I got into for the complete wrong reasons... The whole homosexuality thing is a lot more serious in high school 'cause you want to prove to any extent... So you do a lot of like - that stupid like hook-up things ... you do it just to kind of prove yourself. To prove that you can . . . for the wrong reasons.

The pressure to prove manhood resulted in men engaging in their first sexual experience as a way of wearing the mask. Sean described how just having sex wasn't enough, instead demeaning and degrading attitudes toward women and sex with many women was necessary. He described how wearing the mask, "is about being with different women...it is not just about having sex with different women but your attitude towards the different women...I think it is also about that you don't care."

The misogynistic behaviors the participants described were often not rooted in their sexual desires, but instead a performance they put on to live up to what they believed society demanded of them as men. This point was illustrated by Daniel, who is an out gay man, but still found himself engaging in demeaning, degrading, and objectifying women, including his female friends, “I always sit down and think, [laughs] ‘What was that performance I just gave?’” Even when they didn’t engage in this behavior they let themselves down by not speaking up and confronting other men. Noah described how wearing a mask prevented him from confronting friends about things he disagreed with like cheating or particularly demeaning and degrading sexual activities that men bragged about, “I’ll tell someone else, ‘man, what do you think about that. That’s not that - that’s pretty messed up. Someone should say something to him.’ But, I mean, I’m not always the one to speak-up.”

Beyond the sexually degrading comments and behaviors, performing to society’s expectations resulted in other sexist behaviors as well. After wearing a mask for so long, Nicholas had a hard time even recognizing some of the more patriarchal aspects of machismo he had internalized.

That is something that I used to do a lot, was just speak and speak and speak and wouldn't let anybody talk....And usually, especially in our community it would be the men discussing something while the women sat there. And I had to work on that - allowing different people to speak and kind of like not playing that role of the dominant person.

It wasn’t until he had the opportunity to reflect on his actions in the interviews for this study that Chet realized that the casual sexual relationships he was having with many women were a way of performing to mask his insecurities. He also acknowledged that

this was unfair to both the women who engaged in these casual encounters and to the women who wanted a more meaningful relationship with him.

As a result of the social pressure to treat women in demeaning and degrading ways, the men damaged potentially meaningful relationships with women in their lives. Beyond the emotional costs of this pressure, the participants suggested that it was entirely possible that men would feel so much intense pressure to engage in sex with women that they may employ strategies for doing so that may lead to sexual harassment, sexual assault, or rape. This would be an extreme consequence of the demeaning, degrading, and objectifying ways men are socialized to view and treat women.

These attitudes and behaviors toward women tended to escalate in all-male environments like fraternities or athletic teams because of the increased competitiveness among the men. Noah described how some men talk about their relationships with women on the football team, “For example, they don't even know the girl . . . And the next morning . . . they're just like, maybe they hook up with them again and then they never talk to them again...hooking up and maybe ditching the girl later or something like that.”

Chet, who was conflicted about whether or not fraternity culture contributed to these misogynistic attitudes, acknowledged the competitiveness among fraternity men and how women were a way of measuring men's status as individuals and as groups.

I guess that is what Greek Life hones in on. We want to hook-up with more girls than this fraternity...another fraternity is having a party the same night we are having a party, we want to have the more girls there. We want to be the ones the next day to say we had sex with more girls. In order to do that maybe some guys would become maybe desperate in that fact, so. Um, I did think about that and I feel like it is the competitiveness, it gets honed in on more when you are in an [all-male] organization.

Limiting relationships with other men. The participants described three main components of society's expectations and how they live up to those expectations that limited men's friendships: homophobia, competition between men, and fear of being vulnerable or emotional. Wearing a mask that conformed to society's expectations got in the way of their ability, despite their clear desire, to have more meaningful relationships with the men in their lives, including more meaningful relationships with friends and the father figures in their lives.

The men had many acquaintances with whom they spent time, but they generally had only two to three, if any, close friends whom they could say really knew them and vice versa. As Sean said, "I don't have um, tons of friends who I really consider friends." Nicholas explained that he didn't have many men in his life who really knew him because, "I don't let my guard down and I just need to build up a little trust with somebody to let them know." Despite their few friends the men also expressed a real need for close relationships with men. Chet believed that "every single guy like needs that. I feel like guys care more about their friends." Even Chauncey who shared that he didn't have any close friends wanted that connection:

I think that it is important to have - I have always wanted to like have like a friend to rap to and be like this is my life. How do I solve this or whatever. I think most men have that desire. Myself I do.

The close friends that they did have, afforded them the safe space within which they could let down their guard and at least at times let go of having to wear a mask. Sean shared that, "All the male friends that I consider to be close friends all know about the rape." Chet shared that he had recently been able to break down and take off the mask

when he was with his close personal friends from high school and how important this was for him.

And then with these guys, they are the most, ya know, where I feel the least vulnerable. And that is what it was. I could just tell [them] everything that was happening, not only with the event but what was going on with me.

Nicholas described how much trust was necessary between two friends to overcome the obstacles that masks placed between men and their friends.

It is just basically like, being able to trust that person enough to let down your guard in terms of like showing emotion...Not being a afraid of homophobia because you trust that person doesn't - is not gonna look upon it that way...competing. You are not - you are like mutually respectful of each other. You are not trying to out do each other...Fear of vulnerability, which is basically a fear of showing emotions or showing weakness. And all of that stuff is like built up on a level of trust and that is why I think it is. It is just building up that level of trust enough to trust somebody. To be able to show those vulnerabilities.

Although these close relationships with other men were difficult because of the masks men wore, they were not impossible. Sean recognized these limitations and was proud that he and his friends had intentionally worked to make sure that their relationships weren't limited. He found that once he put himself out there and started to take his mask off, his male friends didn't push him away, but instead grew closer.

Our relationships are developing because I make myself vulnerable. And there is one good friend of mine who I used to uh, sensor my stuff around, because I thought he was more of a guy that, ya know, doesn't want to talk about emotions or hear about this or that... [I] decided I am not gonna do that anymore...because I care about him and because I want to be myself about him. He is gonna get the same stories that this guy gets. And as a result he has opened up more too.

The desire to have more meaningful relationships was consistent and a part of why several of the men participated in all-male groups, such as football and fraternity life. As Chet said, "They want something where they will have guys stand, ya know, that have the same interests and will actually bond for that." These groups were appealing

because of the possibility of bonding and connecting with a whole group of other men. Chet recognized that the military, fraternities, and athletic teams all share some kind of initiation type experiences that offer men a chance to prove their manhood, at least giving them the hope of allowing them to be more authentic in their relationships with other men. But upon closer reflection the reality of this myth was revealed. Because of the hyper-masculine competitiveness that is fostered in these all-male environments, rather than offer environments where men were able to take off their masks, these groups actually demanded more adherence to society's expectations. Men in these all-male environments had to put on a stronger performance reinforcing their mask out of a need to compete with the other men and a fear of revealing their true selves, which masked their ability to form deep meaningful connections with each other. The men in fraternities and football teams all described these meaningful relationships as one of the primary reasons for being a part of these groups, but all identified their very closest friends as being outside these groups. For example, Frank noticed during his fraternity's welcome back event that not everyone had the same level of connection. Chet also recognized both the appeal of the myth and the reality.

And a lot of guys join fraternities and they do want that. They want something where they will have guys stand, ya know, that have the same interests and will actually bond for that. But like, I got three best friends that don't go to [University] that I can talk about - that know my whole situation with everything. Like the back of their hand.

The relationships the participants had with their fathers, or lack there of, were one of the most significant influences on them and their conceptualizations of themselves as men. All but two of the participants had a consistent father figure in their lives. Frank was missing a father figure at the beginning of his life until his mother married his stepfather

when he was seven years old. Chauncey had been missing a father figure since his father was incarcerated when he was eight years old.

As a result of the masks that the men in the study wore and the masks they described the father figures in their lives wearing, they generally discussed feeling very distant from or having a more business like relationship with their fathers. Nicholas described this distant relationship with his father, “Usually we talk about what is going on in the news. Like, how my school is. How his business is. And just talk like that. And that is basically our relationship.”

Despite the lack of connection, the men were able to speak to the importance of these relationships. Gaining their father’s approval was as elusive as it was important to the men. Because he knew his father wasn’t necessarily proud of his being gay, Daniel felt a need to overcompensate to prove this manhood to his father. He shared that it was important for him to actually be more successful than his father to compensate for being gay, which he believed his father thought made him less of a man.

I have always in my life wanted to make my dad proud of me and impressed by me and so forth. So if I am on the same level with him or lower and gay... So it is like I need to be above.

Jason illustrated how important and elusive a meaningful connection with his father was when he had to go back nearly 10 years to describe a time when he and his father had really connected on a road trip when he was nine years old. Despite the fact that he was able to describe this moment so clearly, he could not remember at all what he and his father discussed. It was not the content of the conversation that mattered to him, just the connection with his dad, “I mean I remember the experience being there. I just don't remember the subjects that we were talking about. I remember being there though.”

Sean, who also had a very distant relationship with his father, coveted the relationship one of his friends had with his father, “They were the most supportive parents that I had ever come across.” He sought to fill that void through relationships with other older men such as coaches, teachers, and mentors.

Chet saw how important it was to have a father’s approval and the way not having that approval can affect men’s relationships in the long-term, “If guys didn't have that then they still kind of need to protect themselves so they are not extra vulnerable or extra emotional.” In his view, men without their father’s acceptance had a greater need to keep the mask on to protect their vulnerability.

The men described some of the limitations to their relationships with other men playing out in their relationships with their own fathers, including homophobia, competition, and a fear of vulnerability. In order to overcome these obstacles, Jason put on his mask by talking about sports to prop up his masculinity and form a common connection with his dad. He stated, “I know that when I have something real important to say to him that I will try and deviate off the subject and ask him about something sports related most of the time first.”

One of the touchstones of the relationships between fathers and sons was whether or not they said, “I love you” to each other. Several of the participants indicated never having heard their father figure say, “I love you.” Nicholas shared, “Like, I don't think my dad has ever said ‘I love you’ to me. Like, ‘I am proud of you’ is probably the closest. I don't even think he said that.” Other participants shared that it was said but not very often and certainly not as often as it was shared between them and their mother. This was

the case for Kumar, “I’ve told him before, but it is more awkward. It is easier to tell my mom, naturally.”

The masks the participants and their fathers wore made this expression of their feelings very difficult. Most of the men had no doubt that their father loved them and were confident that their fathers knew that they loved them; nevertheless, the words were difficult to say. At first Kumar explained that he didn’t say it to protect his father, “Saying it doesn’t bother me. I think saying it would bother him.” Perplexed by why he and his father didn’t say this, he later speculated that it might be about the mask he was wearing, “I guess they’re trying to fit into the um, man to man conversation.” Finally, he acknowledged that it might not be his father’s discomfort, but his own that he was avoiding.

Just two of the men said that saying, “I love you,” was a common and comfortable exchange between them and their father. The two counter stories to this theme were the relationships that both Chet and Noah had with their fathers. Interestingly, both Noah and Chet were the only two men who described being comfortable with and regularly saying, “I love you” to their fathers and also discussed not having to gain their father’s approval. For them, their fathers were men in their lives with whom they could take off the mask. Chet never felt a need to prove himself to his father to gain his acceptance, approval, or love. He also pointed out that his father did not fall into society’s expectations and didn’t wear a mask as much as other men. He described his father as cool, but as a “dork.”

I feel like that is what has made me confident as a person. Ya know, it is like, my dad has always been there. He is always just whatever I do, he has been there for me. I have never had to impress him so why do I have to impress you? . . . I

guess that's added to my brother and I just being real confident people because he has always been there for us.

Losing your self to the mask. Not only were the participants' relationships with women and other men in their lives damaged, but they also described losing themselves to the performance as well. They lost some of their authenticity by pretending to be someone they were not and sacrificed some of their humanity by denying aspects of who they really were. The men had been performing for so long, so consistently that it became difficult to know who they really were. In other words, they could no longer distinguish between themselves and the mask. Daniel explained, "That is why it is hard to say what is your identity. 'Cause in my opinion it is a mixture of it all. Cause there is no figuring out which one of those it really is."

They described sacrificing some of their humanity by denying who they were, what they did, and how they felt to conform to society's expectations. Although Sean knew intellectually that he wanted to be a different kind of man and was proud of that, he often didn't feel tough enough. Despite his intellectual consciousness, his socialization was so powerful that it made him emotionally feel lacking and wish he was something that he wasn't and left him feeling bad about who he really was.

I am a very sensitive person and I don't hide that for anybody And so I will find myself sometimes . . . feeling like I am lacking something or mad at myself because I am not tougher. And sometimes I wish like, that I could have more of a fearless attitude. Where I wouldn't get paranoid. And there is also times where I am out and somebody says something or somebody tries to start something and my [snaps fingers] initial instinct is not to snap and fight. Ya know, if it comes to that - that is another thing. But I sometimes - I find myself many times wishing that I didn't think so much. That I didn't care so much. . . . That I could just be instantly violent. But I know that that is not the way that I should be.

One of the ways that the men discussed commonly denying who they were and masking their true feelings behind a performance was by not crying. Many of the

participants had not cried for years or more. Kumar stated, "I haven't cried in ages," and Frank laughingly admitted that he hadn't cried for more than two years. The men all clearly remembered the last time they cried even if it had been a long time, reinforcing what a powerful transgression it was against society's expectations. As Chauncey said, "I don't cry often though. In fact, the fact that I can remember each moment tells you that I don't cry all that often." Crying in front of others was particularly rare. As Jason said, "I mean, I haven't cried in front of anybody in a long time." Kumar had only cried in front of someone else once.

Crying was seen as a sign of vulnerability and weakness. As a result the men made a conscious and intense effort into masking their vulnerabilities by denying themselves this expression of emotion in front of other people and even when they were alone. Daniel noticed the absurdity in denying his own emotions as he laughingly explained that each time he cried he would put a mask right back on, "you get it all out and say, 'Quit it. Enough already. Just stop. Let's get back under control.' ... And then getting myself hardened or strengthened."

The exception was that some of the men discussed having cried in front of their very close friends. In these rare situations with very close friends men were willing to stop the performance, but just for a little while. Frank had cried in front of his roommates, but described that as an exception, "I don't cry in front of other people. It was my roommates. They were the ones I have now and I mean, I cried with them but they knew what was going on." Chet also discussed crying in front of his close friends:

I was camping with my two best friends and just talking about everything that I was going through. And like, I don't know I just kind of opened up to them... I just broke down. 'Cause it was like killing me. There was a lot of sleepless nights. And that was it. I was like, just opened up to my best friends and so - I mean,

yeah....It was just like, 'cause I was literally going crazy. I would have gone nuts if I wouldn't have done that.

The common reasons the men shared for crying included having a “breakdown,” being hurt in relationships, injustice on a massive scale, or the death of a family member. Daniel described crying when he could no longer take the stress, “The stress was just too much. And I broke down. Literally had a breakdown in my room.” Nicholas had a similar experience.

I remember this one time I just broke down in one of my friends' rooms. And that was just because of so much stress. I was trying to do so much stuff on this campus and I couldn't handle it and I just broke down then. And like, that is basically it when I completely just lose control is when I just start crying.

Being hurt in a romantic relationship also led some of the participants to cry. Chauncey remembered,

One time like me and my girlfriend were having like an issue and it kind of like hurt me a little bit and it kind of hurt me a little bit and I cried there just because of that issue.

Kumar also described crying at the enormous pain and injustice he was exposed to through his work with a service organization working on injustice and genocide in Africa and how it was affecting children, “This foundation that I am working with that does the Africa awareness. That kind of stuff will make you cry.

One of the more powerful moments in all of the interviews was when Nicholas openly cried in his very first interview. When I asked how he ended up in college, with all of the messages that Latino men and working class men shouldn't or can't go to college, he described how he is only at the University because his sister made him apply. He was reluctant to discuss this and became choked up and then openly cried. In our next interview he shared that the subject of his getting to college was very emotional for him

and something that regularly makes him cry. As a result, he avoids the issue altogether whenever he can to keep those emotions out of view of others as a way of maintaining his status as a man. He acknowledged that he was embarrassed and ashamed after crying in the first interview, but he also cried in each of the following interviews as well. Once he had let me see behind the mask in spite of his best efforts, he knew he had permission and was more willing to let the performance go in later interviews. In his second interview he cried as we again talked about what makes him cry and how lucky he feels he was to be at the University. In the third interview he cried about a family loss that had happened after our second interview as the reason why he had to postpone our third interview.

The men in the study had been wearing a mask so long that some of them described having a real difficulty being able to cry, despite their desire to be able to cry more often as a healthy and satisfying way of expressing their emotions. Chauncey described his surprise at not crying recently:

Like last Friday my professor passed away - uh, a good professor like I had and like, I have known her for two - about a good year now. She passed away uh, earlier this semester in like, October. And that hurt me. I wanted to cry. I really felt like it was in me, but I couldn't. And then Friday there was a memorial service in the chapel and like, they were describing her life and I really felt - I felt like real down. But I just - I don't know why I didn't cry.

Sean first shared that the last time he cried was during a time of great tension in his romantic relationship when he thought the relationship might be coming to an end. Only later did he explain exactly what had “piled up” for him. At the age of 13 Sean had been repeatedly raped by a male peer and throughout his growing up been victimized by a verbally abusive mother. Because of these two experiences, Sean had a deep desire to have positive and meaningful relationships with women in his life and friendships with men.

No matter what kind of like, cynicism I had towards like relationships or towards women or ya know, towards women that it could never overpower like the need that I had for love and for intimacy. And um, so that has always been there. And I have never been ashamed to acknowledge that. So I didn't shut down like a lot of people could shut down under these circumstances, like, "I don't need that." And although I protected myself around my family, when it came to the outside world, I just reached out to that and held onto that tight.

He illustrated just how deeply robbed he felt by his inability to connect with his emotional self as a result of his socialization and wearing of a mask.

I hated the fact that I was numb and I wanted - I always had this desire to feel this pain. Like, I used to have this uh, I just would pray that I would be able to cry like - with a female. Like, in her presence. Like, being held by a woman and crying - like balling like a little kid.

He went on to discuss all of the strategies he had used to try to get beyond his mask and get in touch with those emotions.

And a lot of the movies that I loved had rape or sexual assault or molestation or something in them as themes. And a lot of the times it was male victims. I have tons of episodes recorded of Oprah with rape victims, people who are prostitutes. Or anything related to like sexual crimes or sexual violations. Things like that. So basically I was using these - these things to try to tap into my own experience. And my own feelings that I couldn't get to. It was easy for me to watch Oprah and tear up for what this girl is going through as opposed to what I have been going through and tear up for that.

He explained that his breakdown with his girlfriend was the first time he really had a chance to feel and express emotions not just around their situation, but all of the pain in his life. Once the mask came off everything that had piled up behind it came pouring out. Finally, being able to connect with these emotions with her meant a great deal to him personally and to their relationship.

That I wanted to feel - that I always had a desire to feel this pain and to deal with it. And that was like what my break down last year was about. I actually got that opportunity with my girlfriend to cry about everything that I had gone through in my life. Um, it felt good.

Summary of Performing Masculinity

The participants described why they felt a need to put on a mask. They felt a need to put on a mask because they didn't feel that they measured up to society's expectations as themselves. By putting on a mask they were able to portray someone who did fit society's expectations and hide the aspects of themselves that did not fit these expectations. They also described how they wore this mask to conform to society's expectations. As college men they wore the mask and performed to society's expectations by partying and not preparing. They negotiated between partying to meet society's expectations and preparing out of an internal need to be ready for life after college. The participants also wore a mask to make their transgressions more acceptable and as a way to respond to experiencing oppression. In response to their frustration with trying to live up to society's expectations, each of the men had created his own version of what it means to be a man, which were decidedly more pro-social but were still a mask. By wearing a mask the participants took on demeaning and degrading attitudes towards women, limited their relationships with other men, and losing themselves to the mask, by losing their authenticity and sacrificing their humanity.

Struggling to Begin Taking Off the Mask

Although none of the participants had completely taken off the mask and transcended society's expectations of them as men, each of the participants had begun to take off the mask at least in specific circumstances or contexts. Some of the men were more intentional in their efforts to begin moving beyond some of the external expectations of them as men, but still found themselves falling into these expectations when they weren't paying attention, when they were feeling insecure about their

manhood, or unconsciously as a result of their constant socialization and their internalization of those messages. Kumar, who was very committed to letting go of many aspects of how society defines what it means to be a man, thought that completely taking off the mask was impossible:

I mean, to an extent, everyone follows social norms for masculinity, but - to an extent. 'Cause if you completely disregard them, then you are . . . you can disregard some social norms and still be seen as masculine in some ways. But when you disregard them all you'll kind of lose that credibility.

Accepting Ways the Mask Does Not Fit

Most of the men had come to terms with specific aspects of who they really were that just didn't fit behind the mask. In these specific ways, such as being more sensitive, choosing not to drink or have sex, or being involving, they had accepted that as individuals they were just different kinds of men. Specific events, including the interviews for this study, served as powerful critical influences that supported men's efforts to take off the mask and move beyond society's expectations. These critical influences helped men put the mask further behind them and move closer to being their own man and made them less vulnerable to putting the mask back on. They were able to take off the mask by being more emotionally available, avoiding meaningless sexual relationships with women, speaking up against sexism and homophobia, or avoiding partying aspects of the college experience all together.

Several of the participants talked about being more sensitive than they believed other men to be. Kumar described himself as an unusually good listener for a man and someone others sought out. As he described this, he also acknowledged how different this was from what society expected of men.

Like, for some reason people just come talk to me when they have issues or whatever. A lot of people see that more like a girl's strength kind of thing where like the girls are the ones who are supposed to talk about emotions and feelings and all that crap [laughs].

Many of them kept their sensitivity hidden behind their mask, but others were proud of it.

Frank also described himself as more sensitive than other men but didn't share this with many people.

I share it, but it is not like, over the edge. Like I recognize things and I take things in and you know, if it needs to be shared I will share it. But I don't let things eat me up inside or anything like that. But I feel like I see things that a lot of other guys and men, college kids don't pick up . . . and a lot of my friends know that I am more like aware of girlfriends' feelings or more level headed about going out than a lot of people.

The men also discussed the ways that they were able to take the mask off with regard to specific components of the mask college men were expected to wear. For example, Frank took some pride in not being the stereotypical "frat guy" and breaking some of the expectations that people outside of his fraternity had of him as a fraternity guy. He said, "It has been fun to like break away from that stereotype. And like, be professional and ya know, be very extra-curricular without that plastered on my forehead that I am some frat guy." Sean was so troubled by all that comes with partying, that he was able to take the mask off by simply avoiding that whole scene all together, "I have really stayed out of the crowds that are associated with those behaviors. For the most part."

Nicholas had taken two major stances contrary to what is expected of men in college by choosing to not drink and to abstain from sexual activity. Although not choosing to be abstinent, Sean took sexual relationships seriously. He found that he could not distance himself from the emotional aspects of sex. He described a specific situation,

in which a woman who he was clearly attracted to wanted to have sex with him, but he wasn't comfortable with it because of her history being violated by men and he didn't want to be in a situation where it was at all possible that he would be taking advantage of her vulnerability:

Even though that is what she wanted, I just felt like that is not what she needed And how about just for once a guy let it be. And let her know, like, I am cool just being here with you.

Several of the participants admired other men for being able to take off the mask and some were admired themselves for removing the mask. Chet admired one of the younger members in his fraternity whom he had recently seen confront an older brother about the way the older brother was fighting with his girlfriend.

This sophomore went up to him and the kid is older than him. And was like, "You can't talk to her - I mean, it is none of my business. But you can't talk to her like that." And so it was, it was something And I was really impressed to see, ya know, someone who is younger is usually intimidated by someone who is older and he just went up to him and was like, "Listen. I know this is your relationship, but you can't talk to her like that."

Noah shared a story about how he was admired by other football players for not falling into the normal expectations of college men. He discussed a time when a teammate told a new member of the team to follow Noah's example, "And so one of the guys was like, don't be like me. Don't be - follow Noah, be like him. But don't be like me or [another teammate] or whatever it might be."

Critical Influences in Men's Struggle to Take Off a Mask

The participants identified several critical influences that helped them begin to take the mask off. These critical influences included personal influences, historical or literary influences, being exposed to alternate versions of masculinity, academic course, and critical events in their lives.

Personal influences. The people who encouraged the participants' interest, willingness, and ability to move towards being their own man and removing the mask included parents, teachers, and coaches. Parents were a primary source of learning to be a different kind of man. Nicholas explained that his personal definition of masculinity was shaped by, "personal morals that I probably got from my parents." He recognized that parents' influence even if they weren't conscious of specific examples, "you kind of hit that point where you realize that - you think that you just figured it out yourself but it's really your parents and you never really listened to them. [laughs]"

Jason was able to distinguish between the ways his parents taught him to be a different kind of man. His father was a role model by his actions and his mother was vocal about the things she expected from him. He talked about turning to them when he finds himself in a tough situation, "I think about what he would do and I hear what she would say." Frank attributed his sensitivity to the influence of his mother, a single mom during the early years of his life, "I guess growing up in a like, my emotional mother being a single mom and going to school and not having a lot of time. I think I have a lot more um . . . I guess heart than some men will."

Family members were a powerful influence even when they weren't positive role models. For example, Jason shared that not doing drugs was central to his personal definition of being a man. It wasn't until later in the interviews when he explained that several uncles and one of his aunts had become addicted to drugs. Similarly, Nicholas had chosen to abstain from drinking entirely in part because of seeing the way alcohol had damaged several members of his family, "The [not] drinking and stuff like that is just

from an early age being exposed to relatives who are basically alcoholics and it is just not good.”

The personal influences extended beyond the family to the larger community. For some of the men, particularly men of color, the influence was not limited to their immediate families but also the broader cultural community. Nicholas had learned about his responsibilities not just from his family but also from the larger Latino community. Other figures also played a role including primarily teachers and coaches. This was the case for Noah:

I think figures in my life have really influenced or been the most influential for me. Whether it is coaches or teachers or it could be ya know, my dad or my uncle for example. People who I look up to.

Noah went on to mention a particular speaker who was also a football coach and former professional football player, Joe Ehrmann, who had come talk to the football team.

It really struck me hard, but not in the sense like it was something that I was like, "Yeah, that is exactly what I want to tell people sometimes." Like, treat girls or your relationships with girls as if - like you want another guy to treat your sister. And I have two sisters. So that like hit home. I was like yeah, I wish I saw more of that.

Strong woman peers also had a powerful influence on the participants. Nicholas described being confronted by a Latina leader about his dominating the conversations of their leadership board.

One thing that really affected me is that one person on the board confronted me about it. And she was basically like, "I feel like you don't listen to me." And I was like, "No. I do listen to you." And like, basically sitting there, talking to her about why do you feel . . . and then she started pointing out these things. And I was like, "Wow. I do that. What can I do to change it?"

Literary or historical influences. The two Black participants in particular, described how they also learned how to begin taking off the mask through a variety of

literary or historical role models who modeled ways of being a different kind of man.

Literary role models were particularly important to Jason, whose mom made him read about historical role models, particularly Black male role models.

My mom, she made me read all the time. I think that helps out too. Where you read about issues that other people have had in the past and you've gotta understand the past to know how to change the future. Like, she used to make me watch "Roots" and stuff like that... Martin Luther King. Stuff like that...Black History Month would be kind of serious in my house. ...So, I used to read Donald Goans books. They are like gangster books. But they always had a moral at the end of the story ...I read Claude Brown's biography was one that really hit me. 'Cause it was like his whole life, he came from nothing to become this writer. And he used to do drugs and stuff like that. And his mom - I think his mom overdosed or something like that and he was in a boys' home and he had seen all these people growing up and how none of them were turning out right or anything. But he just turned his life around.

Malcolm X was a particularly powerful role model for both of the Black men in the study. Jason explained that Malcolm X's ability to overcome adversity and his constant evolution, trying to be the best man he could be, served as a role model for him:

He was on the streets and stuff and went to jail and reformed his life and stuff. So he came out and he was so strong and militant about his ways. But he, he still saw that they were wrong and still had the ability to change his ways. He wasn't scared to say that he was wrong and come out and say that he was wrong.

Chauncey also saw Malcolm X as a role model for the kind of Black man he wanted to be, constantly evolving and growing.

He was always honest and like really out there. Like, he put out there that like, "Yeah, I was a hustler when I was younger. That is what I did. And yes, I did go to prison. I am not gonna hide that."...Like, when he converted from the Nation of Islam to traditional Islam and saw what he was doing back in the Nation of Islam days was terrible. Was like actually like, contributing to the problems of this country.

Exposure to other ways of being a man. Several of the participants who struggled with society's expectations had found other paths to being a different kind of man. They found positive alternate versions of masculinity from what they acknowledged were

pretty traditional bastions of masculinity, such as the Catholic church, the Marines, and Boy Scouts. However, for these men their unique experiences had left them with messages about being a man that either contradicted society's expectations of what it means to be a man or emphasized aspects that were congruent with their personal definitions of masculinity.

Noah described the role his faith played in his developing his personal definition of masculinity and rejecting much of the traditional masculinity, particularly respect of women and commitment to relationships, "My faith teaches me to be uh . . . a good role model to other people and to treat other people as though they - ya know, as they would like to be treated." Kumar had learned another path for being a man in the Boys Scouts grounded in being trustworthy, loyal, courteous, helpful, and kind, "I guess most of this is just from Boy Scouts, I guess. Just to do the right thing at certain times and always have this general idea that the right thing is the most important thing."

Chet found a similar alternative path growing up near a Marine base when he was a young child. He didn't really see the other aspects of the Marines that many people think about like the fighting, aggression, and violence. Instead, he saw Marines in the community with their families and volunteering as coaches.

I would first see them as the guys that have the families and the guys that I would see at Denny's on Sunday after church. That is what I saw and I was only in North Carolina for two years and that just influenced me that much.

For Chet the Marines epitomized men who believed in something and were standing up for what they believed in.

I respect those guys, those type of people. Those that serve their country. People that do it because they have a passion. They want to represent something. They don't do it cause they want the money. It is something that they have a passion for...I feel like I envy the guys that are Marines more than the guys that are on

Wall Street making a lot of money. Because the guys who are Marines, I feel like is what our talk - like, they know what it takes to be a man. They stand for something that they are passionate about and they represent. And they are putting their lives on the line.

Pat Tillman, a professional football player who left his team to join the Marines after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 was a particular role model for Chet. He noted, "He gave up everything and said, "Listen this is something that I have told myself-" And I feel like he is the definition of what it takes to be a man."

Men from marginalized cultural groups, who learned their community's expectations of what it means to be a man, benefited from understanding at an early age that masculinities were constructed. It helped them understand that they could create their own. The disadvantage was that it was difficult to learn multiple definitions of masculinity and recognize the sometime very subtle cues as to when and where each is appropriate. But there was also an advantage because once they recognized and were able to navigate wearing two masks it exposed them to the possibility that the mask wasn't fixed or natural and that perhaps they could do without either mask. Nicholas described these advantages and disadvantages:

You are growing up in this culture and this is your norms and then this is the culture out here that is dominant and so you have to adjust to that...So in terms of that that is a complete disadvantage cause then you have to change everything that you know to fit into this mold...But after you do know how to play both of those roles. That is where it becomes an advantage. But until that - I don't think a lot of people reach that where they can play both roles fine. Then you are not gonna have the advantage to combine.

Gay men also faced the difficulty of creating their own masks after being precluded from being seen as a man in society's eyes. It can be lonely and confusing to be excluded entirely from society's version of what a man is supposed to be, lack a clear gay alternative to what it means to be a gay man, and have few if any role models of what

is acceptable ways for gay men to behave, specifically as men. On the other hand this complete rejection from any form of masculinity opened up the possibility of not wearing any mask. If society was clear that they were not allowed to be seen as a man by any of its definitions, it made letting go of the society's mask altogether more reasonable.

Men from marginalized groups were also able to relate their experience with other forms of oppression to gain insight into how sexism, including their own actions as men, were affecting women. Nicholas describes how he was able to relate his experiences of racism to understand his male privilege and patriarchy's influence on women.

So I think seeing the insight is kind of what also allows me to see the sexism, like you were saying...But it is kind of learning about racial hierarchies and then looking at gender. Looking at things that are basically along the same lines. And just realizing that it is basically all the same.

Academic courses. Academic courses were also powerful in both helping men to gain consciousness of some of the problems with wearing a mask and to encourage new ways of being a man. Nicholas first began to see some of the sexist things that he was doing in a course that was discussing different aspects of machismo.

I think it basically was learning about those inequalities and learning about the dominating role that men can have. And realizing that sometimes I do that. Like, sometimes I don't allow women to speak or sometimes I try to - I am overprotective with my sisters.

Chauncey credited the beginning of his entire consciousness raising process related as starting in an intergroup dialogue course that he took by accident.

The class was a real moving experience for me...It forced me to kind of through, ya know, sexualities, different identities, different races, different ya know, perceptions. And I had to like confront them myself and see how I felt about these certain issues, which before I never really like, discussed...Just from an African American perspective. But taking that course or taking that dialogue made me see things from, ya know, White women's perspective or a homosexual male's perspective or a White male's perspective...And since that course I have been

like, always trying to be cognizant of uh, different, ya know, how different groups.

Critical events. Several of the participants had specific events that significantly influenced them as men and helped them begin to take the mask off and move closer to being their own man. These critical events included being raped by a male peer, having an abusive mother, being in a meaningful romantic relationship, taking a difficult principled stand, and the interviews for this study.

Sean had been raped by a male peer and had been raised in a home in which his mother was domineering and verbally abusive. As a result, he actively sought to take his mask off and find new ways of being a man and rejected society's limiting expectations because he saw wearing the mask as limiting to his own growth, healing, and fulfillment. These were both such powerful influences in Sean's life that he actually interrupted the very beginning of our second interview to share both of these events, "I just felt like if I was answering questions without that information out there that it just didn't feel like I was covering all of why I am the way I am. Why I think the way I do."

Sean explained that he and his brother were repeatedly raped by a male peer when he was 13 years old. He explained, "I just wanted to put that out there at this point. 'Cause that definitely goes into being a man and all my definitions." One result of this event was that Sean was incredibly empathic about the power differences in sexual relationships and wanted to avoid any possibility that he would unintentionally take advantage of another person sexually, physically, or emotionally, the way he had been victimized.

Outside of sexual assault it has affected how I treat women, how I look at women. The fact that I don't want to look at them um for sexual gratification alone. The

fact that when I interact with women, I try to be as gentle as possible. I try to be as um . . . ya know, unthreatening as possible.

An unexpected way this event influenced Sean was that he felt a need to be closer to other men as a means of reclaiming his relationships with men and define them on his terms and not have them be defined by his perpetrator. Sean also felt that rather than feeling like less of a man after being raped by another man, that this situation had made him more confident and secure in his masculinity than most men. Being raped by another man was one of the most emasculating experiences anyone could experience, because of lose of control and homophobia, yet Sean still felt like a man. In this way, being victimized by another man had made it clear to Sean that his sense of manhood was not easily shaken by external forces.

But it has made me understand that ya know, because I didn't feel like less of - less masculine as a result of that experience it made me realize that men can still be men - can still be masculine even when they have been fearful, even when they have been taken advantage of, even when they aren't all powerful and all tough... I never felt like, ya know, am I gay or am I a bitch or am I weak? I felt like I could hold my own, I felt like I was still a man.

The abuse of Sean by his mother and his father's passivity about it had a profound impact on him throughout his growing up. A specific critical event occurred when Sean was 19 years old. He and his mother had gotten into a huge fight in which she attacked him physically and Sean pushed her down and away from him, while his father watched silently. He talked about that as a traumatic turning point. This incident taught him that he could not rely on others, not even his mother, to be in control and would have to learn to be in control of his emotions and his actions no matter what happened. He said, "I haven't had a fight with her since then in terms - where I was not in any control. I don't go there... I mean, I - I have gotten better at expressing myself." He actively sought to learn

how to do this through therapy, both so that he could better respond to his mother's abuse and also because he was afraid that if he didn't learn these skills that he could end up like her.

I have been in therapy for these past two years. So, although these issues about manhood and my growing up and stuff like that and what I learned from my parents, this has all been touched on in therapy. I had thought about that before therapy but it has really been opened up more in therapy.

A critical event for Chauncey was a serious romantic relationship he had with a woman in college. After his father was incarcerated when he was eight years old he had turned inward behind the mask as a way to protect himself emotionally. It wasn't until this relationship that he was challenged to open up and reveal himself without the mask.

Like she like, opened that door up for me...[A serious relationship] kind of opens that up for you and you start seeing like more of what I am about and stuff I definitely like, noticed stuff that I didn't in the past. And was like, wow that wasn't really becoming of me or whatever. And then I like, also viewed myself - stepped back and had someone viewing me and you shouldn't be doing this and you shouldn't be doing that and stuff.

Chauncey went on to describe this as a critical turning point which opened him up to greater consciousness on a wide variety of critical social justice issues.

Well, I mean it is a process. The consciousness came later on. So, first it was emotional. You open up a little bit. And consciousness later on. You start seeing things differently and it is like, wow I should be aware of these different issues and stuff. And reading up on things yourself. I think that is probably what did it.

A turning point for Chet was removing five of his brothers from his fraternity after hearing from several women that they had been raped by these men. Chet decided to run to be president of his fraternity so that he could do something about the situation. This situation gave him the opportunity to stand up and be the kind of man he had always said he wanted to be.

I feel like I wouldn't have been able to do it, unless I already had some attributes of being a man...And so I knew the type of man that I was and wanted to be and it happened and I feel like helped further define me.

Despite already knowing the kind of man he wanted to be, being confronted with doing so under difficult circumstances was a pivotal event in his life as a man.

It was a pivotal time in my life and it was a pivotal time in my college career...I figured out who I was as a person. I was like, listen if this is the right thing to do I am gonna do it, no matter what the repercussions were...And I feel like, I don't think it takes a traumatizing event to - for something like that to happen. That was just what happened to me. It was just something, I really had to find who I was as a person.

Being able to think long-term was key for Chet to overcome the immediate pressures and challenges he was facing to keep the mask on and do nothing, "But then would I be able to live with myself. When I look back in 30 years, I just wouldn't have been able to - have been like, this is something that I could have done my senior year." Looking back on it, Chet realized that by taking on this issue he forced other members of his fraternity into their own critical event when they had to either stand up for their principles and expel their brothers or side with their friends, "I mean, there was no way of ignoring it for these guys. And they didn't. It showed who some of these guys really were. And it was good."

All of the men in the study identified the interviews for this study themselves as one of the critical events for them as men. The interviews were a unique experience for the participants who found them both enjoyable and difficult. They found that having reflected on their masculinity and talking about the kind of men they wanted to be and what got in their way of being that man was helpful in holding themselves accountable and taking off the mask. The participants also expressed a desire to extend the experience with others, particularly their close friends whom they now saw as trapped behind the mask.

Most participants described the focus of the interviews as something entirely new that they hadn't thought about, let alone talked about before. One of the things that helped to keep the mask in place was not talking about it. Kumar said that this experience was "entirely new, because no one really talks about masculinity and guys don't talk." Jason had thought about it, but never really talked about it with anyone else, "I had thought about this stuff before, but I never talked about this stuff before, ever. So that was just an experience for me, letting the words come out of my mouth from what my mind was thinking." Robert had spent so much time thinking and talking about what it meant to be transgender that he very much enjoyed this opportunity to focus on his experiences as a man and not be essentialized as transgender. The lack of opportunities to reflect on himself as a man made it difficult for Robert to express himself in the interviews, "I have a hard time finding, ya know, language that appropriately. Ya know, it is like I have got kind of nebulous thoughts that don't get verbalized very efficiently." Frank also found the conversation entirely new, "I never think about why you are doing things or I never think about what my views are to be a man. And it kind of just put things into perspective." He later explained why:

Men are these strong guys who are unemotional and if we think about things too much then we are going to start, I don't know, deviating from the norm and we need to be these strong figures at all times.

Participants overwhelmingly enjoyed the interviews despite the fact that the interviews were at times difficult for participants either because the participants needed time to think about the questions or the questions elicited personal responses that made them feel vulnerable. Chet enjoyed the interviews and how they had given him a new lens on himself and other men that would stick with him.

It has opened up a lot of things for me...I thought this whole experience was cool. I liked it a lot. And like, three minutes ago, I would never thought about like the things that I do is based off like, my insecurities...These three interviews are I feel like why I came to college... You made me open up on a lot of stuff that I had never thought of...And being able to say that like, I can do that is something, ya know, that I am gonna remember for a while, ya know?

Despite the personal nature of the interviews participants were very clear that they had been honest and authentic in the interviews. Almost all of the participants shared things in the interviews that either no one knew about them or very few people did. In this way, they let me as an interviewer behind their masks. In fact, when we discussed the summaries that I had written at the beginning of the last interview, several expressed shock and feeling unsettled at just how honest and revealing they had been in the interviews when they read the summaries. This was the case for Jason:

These are thoughts I would never say to anybody else. Like, I feel like I could open up to you because I know that - Like, you made it so it is confidential and nobody is gonna know who it is so I feel like so I can give you my honest opinion without you going and telling other people and judging me or anything like that. So I just felt like I could tell you everything. And just get everything off my chest. So, I just loved the experience. It is like going to a psychiatrist. [laughs]

Frank mentioned that he was more authentic in these interviews than he otherwise would have been and was unnerved to see just how much of his true self that he had revealed:

It is funny to see, like my views in like a three-page summary here. And something that I didn't write. Um, I feel like if I wrote it, I could have twisted it however, it should sound...I would have sugar coated it."

They felt comfortable opening up because of the confidential nature of the process, the rapport built with me, and their desire to contribute honestly and fully to the research being done. Noah was surprised at what a rapport we had developed in such a short time.

'Cause I remember the first day, leaving here being like, "Wait a second. Wow that was crazy..." Like, I didn't even know this guy. And I was thinking just now coming here today. I was like, "how many times have we met? Have we met only twice?" I felt like it was four or five times.

For most of the participants these kinds of personal conversations were a unique experience for them as men. Jason was surprised at how much he had opened up in the interviews because it was so unlike him.

You are like the first person I have like, really opened up to. I mean, I have friends and stuff but I don't really talk about my problems. I keep it to myself. So you are really the first person I told like, my whole life story to and how I relate with my parents and stuff like that. So, I was just telling people that I had a really good talk with a guy that I had never met before. [laughs] ...I'm not gonna lie. It was difficult at first. I was a little nervous.

Although it was not a goal of the research, the participants found that even one interview changed how they viewed the world and themselves. Discussing the men they wanted to be helped them hold themselves accountable to more consistently act in that way and fall in to society's expectations by wearing the mask less. In an analogy that resonated with other participants in later interviews, Jason described the experience as going to church, "So like, for a couple of days after church you are like, 'Ah, I got to change my life. I got to do this. I got to stop doing that.' And then it eventually [wears off]." He left the interviews and was more accountable and better about being the man that he wanted to be for a few days and then he put the mask back on, "It made me think about drinking and smoking and stuff more so. Uh, the way I treat women. It made me think about that. I don't know. It just - it was like, like I said, like going to church." Once he came back for another interview he again got back to the man he wanted to be, but he expected that sooner or later it would wear off. Jason wanted to maintain more congruence and wondered what would help him do that.

And I think to myself, will I ever be able to go to church like that? For it not to wear off. Like, I don't like it wearing off. But, I can't help it. I wonder if I can ever get to that point where like, I go to church every Sunday. Or not treat women like

this or - that is what I am trying to get. I don't know how long it is gonna take me to get there.

Participants who came into the interviews with a greater consciousness and were regularly reflective of their experiences as men found themselves not falling in as often and were more consistent in their attempts to take the mask off.

Having talked about the kind of men they wanted to be, they were more likely to hold themselves to the standards they expressed for themselves. For Frank, the perspective he had gained in the interviews had led him to reconsider some of the ways he was proving his manhood.

And it puts everything in perspective. This is how I say a man should act. This is how I act. The frat. The leadership. Entitlement. It's kind of - it makes me think about, ya know, am I doing this right? What should I be doing? Should I change this? . . . And then like, going out and should I be like drinking that much and not remembering. Ya know, and the Facebook profile, like some of the pictures came down. Um, and that is a change that I have made and consciously thought about.

For Nicholas the interviews had offered him a chance to reflect on the kind of man he wanted to be and how he was living up to his own expectations of himself as a man.

Or am I actually living up to these things that I am saying. You start to think...I forget what week that was that we talked about like making fun of somebody for going to study. And I was about to do that and then like, I was like, "Oh yeah." Like, let them do whatever they need to do. So like, yeah it does remind me . . . [pause] I caught myself like, listening to people some times. Like, "Oh I gotta go read." It is like, "Nah let's go. Let's chill out for a while." And then I thought about it for a while and then I was like, "Nah man. I gotta go." And I just got up and left and was like, "See ya later." Kind of like checking myself too.

Because the conversations were so valuable to them, many of the men wanted to share the experience with their peers, particularly close friends who were men. Many friends, parents, or romantic interests were very interested in learning about what the participants and I talked about or reading the participants' interview summary. Because of the personal nature of the conversations, the participants were very careful about

whom they told about the interviews and none of them were comfortable sharing their interview summary with others. Participants often wanted to interview their friends or have me interview their friends so that they could get a glimpse behind their friends' masks. Kumar shared,

There is definitely one person I want to talk to about it. Someone who I feel is a really good friend of mine, but kind of falls into the traps of masculinity a lot. About control and dominance are like their own personality. Because they are, I would say, insecure...But I think there are certain people who I think would definitely benefit from it. They would benefit from these talks.

Trying to Be My Own Man

Although none of the participants had completely transcended society's expectations of them as men, this was clearly the goal as they saw it. Given the opportunity to offer advice to other men after going through the interview experience Kumar responded, "Be yourself." They described a process of working towards completely removing the mask and putting it behind them. The constant socialization they experienced served as an elastic cord around the back of their head, tethering them to society's expectations of them as men. Even if they were able to take the mask off in certain circumstances, as soon as they felt insecure, it snapped back into place and they would find themselves falling in to wearing the mask in spite of themselves.

They continued to struggle to be their own man, in the context of constant messages about how society expected them to be as men. If "be yourself" was the destination, Kumar described the journey as "a general progression where you start thinking more about yourself over time and then when you start thinking more you - you start thinking about why you are trying to be something you are not."

Grounded Theory of College Men's Gender Identity Development

The theory that emerged from the participants' experiences (Figure 2) centered on the individual men's process of interacting with society's expectations of them as men. This process included learning external expectations of them as men, society's general expectations as well as specific cultural group expectations. Once they had learned these external expectations they described putting on a mask, how they wore a mask as way of performing to these external expectations, and the consequences they saw as a result of wearing the mask. The participants also described beginning to struggle to move beyond these external expectations and be their own man.

Social Context: External Expectations of What It Means To Be a Man

- Dominant society's expectations
- Subordinated cultural group expectations

Performing Masculinity According to External Expectations

Phase 1: Feeling a Need to Put On a Mask:

- To meet society's expectations after feeling like one does not measure-up as self
- To portray an image of a man according to society's expectations
- To cover-up aspects of self that do not fit society's expectations
- Both intentionally/consciously and unintentionally/unconsciously

Phase 2: Wearing a Mask:

- By "partying" as college men
- To make transgressing against society's expectations in other ways acceptable
- In response to experiencing oppression
- By creating one's own mask based on society's expectations

Phase 3: Experiencing and Recognizing Consequences of Wearing a Mask

- Demeaning and degrading relationships and attitudes towards women
- Limited relationships with other men, including friends and fathers
- Loss of authenticity and humanity

Beginning to Transcend External Expectations

- Accepting the ways the mask doesn't fit
- Critical influences and critical incidents helped men transcend the performance in certain aspects of their lives and/or in specific circumstances

Figure 2. Grounded theory of college men's gender identity development.

Social Context

The participants all experienced society's expectations of them as men to be a set of very narrow, rigid, and limiting expectations that were initially relatively straightforward and then increased in complexity and were applicable to greater aspects of their lives over time. These societal expectations began as basic as "be tough" and "don't cry" at the earliest of ages and expanded to expect men to treat college as "four years of freedom" to "party." Some men had additional expectations unique to their own cultural group such as Black masculinity, working class masculinity, and machismo or Latino masculinity.

Performing Masculinity

In order to meet these expectations the men in the study put on a performance that became a mask that felt they needed to put on in order to be seen as men by society. Putting on a mask covered aspects of their true selves that did not meet society's expectations and presented to society an image that did fit the expectations. The men described wearing a mask and performing to society's expectations both intentionally by trying to prove their manhood and unintentionally by "falling in" to society's expectations of them in spite of themselves.

As college men, the participants negotiated wearing a mask to meet society's expectations by partying and hiding or covering up the preparing that they felt they needed to do. The more perceived privilege men had, the more partying they were able to do, and the less perceived privilege they had, the more preparing they felt they needed to do, in spite of society's expectations of them as men. Men also found that by wearing a mask and conforming to society's expectations in some ways they would be given the

latitude to break the rules of society's expectations in other ways. Men who experienced racism, classism, or homophobia felt that their manhood was diminished in the eyes of others as a result of the oppression they experienced and wore a mask in an attempt to regain their manhood according to society's expectations. Men also amended, rejected, and co-opted society's expectations to develop their own personal versions of what it means to be a man. Although these personal versions were decidedly more pro-social, the men in the study struggled to live up to their personal versions of what it means to be a man because of the constant pressure to conform to society's expectations.

Wearing a mask had its costs. Because of the pressure to act in certain ways to demonstrate their manhood, the participants expressed attitudes and engaged in behaviors with women that did not reflect their true feelings and were often objectifying of women and demeaning and degrading of both the women in their lives and the men themselves. The masks the participants wore, as well as the masks they perceived other men wore, also limited men's ability to develop meaningful and close relationships with friends who were men and their fathers, despite their deep need and desire for these relationships. Wearing the mask also had costs for the men themselves. They sacrificed their authenticity by pretending to be something that they were not. They also sacrificed their humanity by covering up or denying aspects of their true selves that did not fit society's expectations of men.

Beginning to Transcend External Expectations

Although the men in this study thought it was impossible to completely transcend society's expectations of them as men, each had begun to struggle to move beyond these external expectations and be their own man. Several of the men had come to terms with

certain aspects of themselves that did not fit with society's expectations. Despite their socialization, they had also learned that there were other ways of being a man from critical influences in their lives such as personal influences, literary or historical figures, alternative versions of masculinity, academic courses, and critical events in their lives. Although completely transcending society's expectations may be impossible according to the participants, they were beginning to move towards being their own man.

Summary

The 10 participants in the study each explored their experiences as men over the course of three interviews. In doing so they described a process of gender identity development as college men. The men had been socialized that being a man meant feeling, thinking, and behaving in a certain way. Their gender identity development included the process of learning these expectations, performing to these expectations like wearing a mask and struggling to free themselves from these external expectations and beginning to take the mask off and connect with their true selves.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the emerging theory of college men's gender identity development outlined in the previous chapter in relation to the research questions which framed this study, the related literature, and implications for theory development, student affairs practice, social justice, and future research. This chapter will conclude with an examination of the strengths and limitations of the study.

Discussion of Emerging Theory in Relation to Research Questions

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to understand the process of college men's gender identity development. The following research questions initially guided the study: (a) how do college men come to understand themselves as men; (b) how does this understanding of what it means to be a man change over time, if at all; and (c) what are the critical influences on this process? The intended outcome of this study was a theoretical perspective on college men's gender identity development grounded in the experience of the participants. These questions guided the study and the theory that emerged relates to each of these questions.

How Do College Men Come to Understand Themselves as Men?

The process by which college men come to understand themselves as men is at the heart of this study on college men's gender identity development. The college men in this study experienced their gender identity development as a process of constant interaction with society's expectations of them as men. In response to society's expectations, the men put on a performance that was like a mask in that it allowed them to portray an image that conformed to society's expectations and cover up the ways that they felt they didn't measure up to society's expectations. The participants also described

experiencing consequences as a result of this performance as well as struggling to begin to break free from these external expectations.

Socialized according to the traditional definition of masculinity, the participants spent much of their lives performing to external expectations of them as men. They were socialized by personal influences such as parents, coaches, and teachers as well as by social institutions such as education, sport, and media. Men from marginalized cultural groups not only had to learn the dominant culture's definitions of what it means to be a man, but also their own culture's expectations of them as men. As the men got older these expectations became increasingly complex and applicable to increasingly greater areas of their lives. These various external expectations of what it means to be a man were so rigid, so limiting, and so complicated that they were impossible for any of the men in the study to fully fulfill.

Each of the men in the study felt as though he was the only one who didn't measure up to these impossible expectations. As individuals, each man felt that somehow he was the only one who was less of a man. In their efforts to prove that they were "real men," to everybody else and to themselves, they put on a performance which was like a mask. This performance masked the participants by hiding aspects of themselves that didn't fit society's expectations and putting forth an image that did so that they would be seen as men. The participants described putting on this mask both intentionally and unintentionally.

The consequences of this performance included demeaning and degrading attitudes and behaviors towards women, limiting relationships with other men, and sacrificing their own humanity and authenticity. When the men were conscious of some

of these consequences as a result of wearing a mask, they were able to begin to develop their own personal definitions of what it means to be a man. These personal definitions were redefinitions of the traditional definition of masculinity and were more consistent with the individuals' values and experiences. However, even men who had personal definitions of masculinity different from the traditional definition of masculinity continued to wear a mask, even when it directly contradicted their own values, particularly when they were insecure about their masculinity.

Because of the constant socialization and influence of society's expectations of them as men, taking their mask off and leaving it behind entirely was seen as impossible. However, when the men felt more secure about their manhood they were able to step out from behind the mask to reveal their true selves until their insecurities as men resurfaced and they were jerked back to the mask conforming to the traditional definition of masculinity. Taking off the mask and letting go of the performance in specific contexts not only benefited the women and other men in their lives, but they also were able to regain their sense of self that was lost to the performance. Although the participants did not think it was possible to break free from external expectations entirely, they did aspire toward being themselves and letting go of the conscious and unconscious need to wear a mask to fit external expectations.

How Does This Understanding of What It Means To Be a Man Change Over Time?

The men's understanding of society's expectations of them changed over time. The men had been socialized so early in life that none of the participants could remember a time when they didn't know these expectations or when they first learned them. Early in life these expectations were relatively simple such as "be tough" and "don't cry." As the

men got older, these expectations became increasingly complex and relevant to greater aspects of their lives. By the time the men were in junior high, playing sports, identifying with a popular peer group, competing for women's attention and access to women's bodies, and breaking rules were added to ways men needed to prove their manhood. The competition among men increased as they got older and by high school they were also expected to prove that they weren't gay by displaying homophobia and by having sex with women. They also felt a need to demonstrate a willingness to break the rules by drinking alcohol.

College men were expected to prove their manhood by partying, including drinking to excess, having sex with many different women, doing drugs, not caring about school, and breaking the rules. Men were socialized to view college as a time to party because it was their four years of freedom between the authority of parents, teachers, and coaches and the responsibility of job and family. Men were discouraged from viewing college as a time to prepare for life after graduation, because it wasn't manly. In reality, each of the men negotiated between the external expectations to party and their internal need to prepare. Men with greater perceived privilege tended to treat college more as time to partying and the men with less perceived privilege tended to treat college as more of a time to prepare.

What Are the Critical Influences On This Process?

The critical influences on the men's gender identity development process included the many socializing factors teaching them how society expected them to think, act, and feel as men and the critical influences and events that helped men begin to transcend society's expectations. These critical influences helped them move towards the men they

wanted to live their lives as rather than the men that they felt society needed them to be. These critical influences included personal influences, literary or historical figures, exposure to alternate versions of masculinity, interacting with marginalized cultural definitions, and academic courses. Critical events in the men's lives that encouraged them to transcend society's expectations of them as men included being raped by a male peer, having an abusive mother, being forced to take a principled stand, and participating in the interviews for this study.

Relationship of Grounded Theory to Existing Literature

In Chapter II, I outlined the literature that framed this study and informed my data collection, data analysis, and theory development. In this section, I discuss the results of this study and its connections, contradictions, and contributions in relation to the existing literature as well as the literature I turned to during the process of interpreting the findings.

Identity Development

By describing their gender identity development as a process of learning to wear a mask in response to society's expectations, wearing the mask, experiencing consequences for wearing the mask, and struggling to take the mask off, the participants in this study support Erikson's (1980) definition of identity, which Josselson (1996) described as "a complex negotiation between the individual and the society" (p. 31). Rather than explore the participants' overall multiple identity development (Jones & McEwen, 2000), this study examined the participants' gender identity specifically as one component of their overall multiple identity. This study focused on the participants' identity as men, taking into account the influence of other identities, particularly race, class, and sexual

orientation, specifically on their gender identity development. The theory that emerged in this study is more fluid and non-linear than other identity development theories that are stage based (Cass, 1979; Cross, 1995; Helms, 1995; Jackson & Hardiman, 1994). This theory does, however, describe a developmental process because it progresses towards a more complex understanding of themselves in a social context and moves from an externally defined self towards a more internally defined self (McEwen, 2003).

Learning to Wear a Mask

The participants in this study wore a mask that they had created in response to society's expectations of them as men. The societal expectations that they described reflected the descriptions of the traditional definition of masculinity in the existing literature. Brannon (1976) described this traditional definition as avoiding being feminine or gay, being successful, being strong and in control of emotions, and being daring and aggressive. Research on men's struggle with the traditional definition of masculinity has defined men's expected gender role as demonstrating control of emotions, being in control, successful, and avoiding vulnerability (O'Neil et al., 1986). The men in this study described society's expectations of them as men in very similar ways. Regardless of background or experience, the participants' descriptions of society's expectations of them as men were remarkably consistent. They described the traditional definition of masculinity as being in control or in charge, competitive, successful, in control of emotions, aggressive, strong, tough, and willing to break the rules.

The men in the study also understood that society defined manhood by what men should not be, as well as what they should be. They understood that men were expected to not be gay, feminine, or vulnerable and to not cry. These understandings reflect the

literature explaining how homophobia and a fear of femininity are central to traditional definition of masculinity (Davis, 2002; O'Neil, 1981; O'Neil et al., 1986). The participants described homophobia as one of the primary tools used to punish any behavior that deviated from society's expectations of men, regardless of their sexual orientation. This supports Plummer's (1999) description of homophobia as "directed at men who defy a traditional definition of masculinity, or hegemonic masculinity, and not at all limited to homosexual men" (p. 9).

The participants also discussed how these societal expectations changed for them as they were growing up. The messages that participants received about what it means to be a boy reflect much of what Pollack (1999) referred to as "boy code" (p. xxv). Researchers have observed connections between boys who more closely adhere to the traditional definition of masculinity and those who tended "to drink beer, smoke pot, have unprotected sex, get suspended from school, and 'trick' or force someone into having sex" (Kindlon & Thompson, 2000, p. 16). The men in this study explained that the reason for this correlation is that these were the behaviors that they were expected to engage in to prove their manhood as boys.

A unique contribution of this study to the existing literature is the way participants described the traditional definition of masculinity for college men as partying. The participants all agreed that the primary expectations of college men included drinking to excess, doing drugs, having sex with many women, breaking the rules, and not caring about academics, though they didn't all fall into these expectations. Although these behaviors by college men have been observed and raised concern (Davis & Laker, 2004), viewing these partying behaviors as how college men are encouraged to

conform to society's expectations is a contribution to the literature on issues for college men. This perspective provides empirical support for, and extends to college men's problematic behaviors, Brod's (1987) view that men's apparent transgressions are not "nonconformists, but *overconformists*, men who have come too much under the domination of a particular aspect of male socialization" (p. 270).

Just as men partied as a way to prove their manhood, they also avoided or hid preparing as way to maintain their status as men. A part of performing masculinity was avoiding, limiting, or hiding behaviors that college's and universities would encourage such as taking academics seriously, putting time and energy into studying, being involved, worrying about grades, taking an internship, and engaging in self-discovery. This helps explain why researchers have observed that college men spend less time studying; are less likely to participate in study abroad, community service, career services, and pre-college programs; and more likely to miss class, not go to class prepared, and not complete homework or turn it in late (Kellom, 2004b; Sax & Arms, 2006). Rather than conclude that men don't care enough about school, the reason for these observed behaviors may be that they care so much about and feel so much pressure to establish their manhood.

The participants described societal messages that encouraged them to view college as a time to party and not a time to prepare, positioning college as four years of freedom between adolescence and adulthood rather than the first stage of adulthood. Lyman (1987) found a similar perspective among the college fraternity men in his study, encouraging the kind of partying behaviors also described in Rhoads (1995b) ethnography of fraternity life. The findings in this study not only support this research

related to fraternity men, but also provides support for extending these conclusions to other college men as well. Arnett (2004) took a more positive perspective on this same theme, which he described as emerging adulthood, a time between 18 – 25 for individuals to explore their identity and try things on in order to find out who they really are. The participants in this study didn't describe society's expectations of them to use their four years of freedom as a time for self-exploration, although some of the participants used this time for exactly this purpose through their involvement, relationships, and self-discovery.

The relationship between college men's perceived privilege and their ability to wear the mask and treat college as a time for partying or preparing is also a new contribution to the literature. Pizzolato (2003) has observed that high-risk students, particularly those with low privilege, develop ways of self-authoring prior to college. Her research observed that despite the concrete advantages of having privilege, those with less privilege received a developmental advantage over their more privileged peers precisely because of the challenges they faced. This also contributes to the literature concerned with the academic and social success of men from underrepresented groups, particularly men of color and working class men (King, 2006). Several scholars have observed that men in general (Kaufman, 1994) and college men in particular (Capraro, 2004b) often feel powerless, despite their male privilege. The privileged college men in this study felt powerless out of their inability to live up to the impossible expectations of them as men. They did not feel powerless to women, but instead felt powerless to the very sexist and patriarchal expectations of them as men that were simultaneously granting them privilege. This connects to other scholarship that explains how members of the

privileged group are diminished by a system of oppression that appears to only benefit them (Freire, 1972/2000; Johnson, 2001; Kivel, 1992, 1996).

The men in this study who were a part of marginalized cultural groups not only had to learn the traditional definition of masculinity but also their own cultural definition of masculinity. The participants described cultural definitions of Black, Latino, and working class masculinity. As the existing literature on men and masculinities has clearly acknowledged, the traditional definition of masculinity is only one of many masculinities (Connell, 2005). For these men, they needed to perform to one or the other (or more) based on the cultural context. The traditional definition of masculinity has been described as hegemonic because men's dominance over women is a central organizing principle as is the marginalization of other masculinities (Connell, 1987). This power structure and the marginalization of some men is reflected in the way the participants described their cultural masculinities as derivative of the traditional definition of masculinity either as replication, amendment, or rejection. This is not unlike Gerschick and Miller's (2004) description of the process men with disabilities used to create their own masculinity by reformulation, reliance, and rejection of the traditional definition of masculinity. The participants also acknowledged other versions of cultural masculinity which were not created by their own cultural community but imposed on them by the dominant society.

The way the two gay participants in this study described a lack of a monolithic gay identity because of homophobia's centrality to traditional masculinity adds to the emerging perspectives on gay masculinity (Plummer, 1999; Rhoads, 1995a; Stevens, 2004). Instead, the participants described a continuum of gay masculinity between fitting their gay selves into society's expectations of men on one extreme and a complete

rejection of gender roles of any kind on the other extreme. This is not unlike Brown's (1989) description of the process gays and lesbians use to create their own norms as a result of a lack of clear expectations as "normative creativity" (p. 451). The fact that two gay men in this study, with entirely different experiences as gay men, both offered such a similar and unique perspective on gay masculinity adds merit to further exploring these initial findings to the contributions to the literature on gay identity development (Bilodeau & Renn, 2005).

Performing Masculinity

Realizing that they could never live up to society's impossible expectations as their authentic selves, the men in this study put on a mask by performing masculinity out of their insecurities as men. They did this by masking who they really were and portraying themselves as someone who did live up to society's expectations. They put on this mask both intentionally by trying to prove their manhood and unintentionally by "falling in" to society's expectations in spite of themselves. How they wore this mask and conformed to society's expectations included partying and not preparing as college men, finding many ways to break society's rules, and responding to oppression, and creating their own personal version of masculinity.

By describing being a man as wearing a mask and putting on a performance in response to social expectations, the participants lend empirical support to conceptual scholarship that has described social identities in general (Weber, 2001) and gender specifically as a social construction (Kimmel & Messner, 1998). The participants in this study almost never described being a man as based in biological, hormonal, or phenotypical essence, but instead described it as a set of social behaviors including

feelings, thoughts, and actions. They also revealed the social construction of gender in how they described what it meant to be a man changing over time and depending on the social context, including different racial, socio-economic, and sexual orientation contexts.

The participants also experienced their gender identity as being socially constructed. The metaphorical description of their gender identity developmental process as wearing a mask by putting on performance also strongly relates to Butler's (1990) notion of identity as performativity and Goffman's (1959) metaphor of social action as a theater production.

For Butler (1990), performativity is the process through which identity is both created and performed through repetitive acts in reaction to social norms. According to Butler, the performance defines the actor and precedes the self and so there is no true gender identity but only a performance. This notion of performativity is supported in several ways by the participants in this study. The men lend support to the notion that the performance precedes the self, in that they could not describe a time when they first learned or did not know how men were supposed to behave. If the performance does not precede the self, for the participants it certainly preceded their memory or current consciousness. The men in the study also believed that fully transcending society's expectations of them as men was impossible because of the way they had internalized the social messages they had already received and the constant socialization they would continue to receive. By describing how they wore their mask both consciously and unconsciously, the participants also lend support to Butler's notion that performativity is much more than just an intentional performance that one puts on or can stop putting on, but instead a conscious and unconscious construction of who we are.

Another way of looking at gender identity is through Goffman's (1959) use of a theater as an analogy for social action. This analogy of a performer on stage is similar to the metaphor of wearing a mask used in this study. This metaphor described the individual as an actor on a stage who chooses to perform for the audience in accordance with the context or theatrical set. Goffman's analogy places great importance on the context, including front stage, back stage, props, and so forth and the actor behaving in a way that is coherent with the setting. The participants in this study also described the importance of context in how they wore a mask. For example, men from marginalized cultural groups reported wearing one mask in the dominant society's context and wearing another mask in their own cultural group context. Goffman also noted that although the individual performs for the audience, the actor also is an audience for the viewers' own acting. The participants in the study were clearly not only acting, but also an audience constantly observing and continuing to learn about society's expectations so that they could perform with congruence. Although Goffman described the actor on the stage making choices about the performance given, the participants in this study also described unintentionally falling in to wearing the mask even when it contradicted their own values and beliefs and only realizing that they had put on a performance after the fact.

The participants described experiencing consequences as a result of wearing the mask to conform to society's expectations of them as men. The consequences they described related to attitudes and relationships with women, relationships with other men, and a loss of self and these reflect the consequences described in the existing literature. Literature on men and masculinities, particularly from a critical or pro-feminist perspective, has outlined how men's conformity with the traditional definition of

masculinity contributes to boys' (Pollack, 1999) and men's (Katz, 2006; Kivel, 1992) degrading and demeaning attitudes and behaviors towards women. These attitudes and behaviors have been observed to be associated with men's sexual harassment (Quinn, 2004), sexual assault, and rape (Katz, 2006). The connection between the traditional definition of masculinity and men's violence against women has been observed among college men in particular (Capraro, 1994; Heisse, 1997; Hong, 2000; Katz, 1995, 2006; Kivel, 1992).

Others have observed the damage to men's relationships with other men, including friends and fathers, as the men in this study did. Walker (2004) described obstacles to men's friendships and the strategies men use to navigate those obstacles such as use of space, joking, and talking about women. The men in this study observed similar obstacles in the traditional definition of masculinity such as their friendships with men resulting from the homophobia, competition, and a fear of vulnerability, but found that with a small group of close personal friends they could let the mask come off and reveal themselves from time to time. The participants in this study also discussed wanting more meaningful relationships with other men and joining fraternities or athletic teams as a way to form those kinds of bonds with other men. The reality that the participants experienced and observed in these environments was that because of increased competition in these all-male environments men's relationships were even more limited. These observations and experiences are reflected in studies of men's friendships in fraternities (Lyman, 1987) and locker rooms (Curry, 2004).

Men's loss of self to the traditional definition of masculinity has been explored through scholarship on college men's physical, mental, and emotional well-being

(Pollack, 1999). The cost of this socialization resulted in what Kindlon and Thompson (2000) described as boys' "emotional illiteracy" (p. 5). In this way men's socialization as men had hampered aspects of their psychosocial development, such as managing their emotions (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). The men in this study had experienced pressure to hide their emotional lives, other than anger, for so long that several of them were actually unable to express their emotions despite their best efforts. The participants also described feeling pressure to be violent, get in fights, and engage in risky behaviors, particularly related to sex and alcohol. This connection between society's expectations of college men and their dangerous behaviors have also been observed in relation to college men's health problems (Courtenay et al., 2002) and increased alcohol consumption (Capraro, 2004b).

Struggling to Take Off the Mask

Although the participants in this study thought that removing the mask entirely was impossible, each of the men had made attempts to take the mask off, at least in certain circumstances or situations. They were struggling to find different ways of being a man. This was a challenge not only because of the messages they had internalized and the constant socialization they would continue to experience but also because of the risks, costs, and challenges to men who try to transcend the traditional definition of masculinity. This struggle is similar to self-authorship, in which individuals move from following external formulas towards following their own internally defined path (Baxter Magolda, 1998, 2001). Other scholars have also discussed the connection between self-authorship and identity development processes (Abes & Jones, 2004; Abes et al., 2007). Abes, Jones, and McEwen (2007) described a meaning-making process through which

individuals filter society's messages to formulate the multiple dimensions of their identity. Although my examinations in this study did not focus on exploring a meaning-making process, the way that the participants described trying to move from an externally defined version of what it means to be a man to an internally defined version is consistent with Abes, Jones, and McEwen's reconceptualization.

This struggle to take off the mask has been explored in the literature on men's gender role conflict (O'Neil, 1981, 1990). This conflict or strain described the psychological condition in which society's rigid gender norms have consequences for the individual or others (O'Neil, 1990). Gender role conflict has been explored specifically with college men (Davis, 2002; O'Neil et al., 1986). Other scholars have explored how college men experience gender role conflict (Davis) and the costs and pain it has for men (Good & Wood, 1995). College men who experienced gender role conflict experienced a "double jeopardy," because they were more likely to suffer from depression because of their realization that they didn't fit society's expectations of them as men and were less likely to seek help for their depression because of their fear that doing so would further emasculate them (Good & Wood). College men who experienced gender role conflict have also experienced, "communication restrictions associated with scripted gender roles, fear of femininity, feelings of being overly challenged, and a sense of confusion about 'masculinity'" (Davis, p. 508).

The men in this study anticipated and experienced similar costs to deviating from society's expectations of them as men. Realizing that they didn't fit, and didn't want to fit, society's expectations of them as men, left the participants caught between their desires to be a different kind of man and a need to prove their manhood according to

society's expectations as a result of their insecurities. The participants in this study tried to modify the traditional definition of masculinity to create what O'Neil (1990) called "a more positive sense of their masculinity" (p. 24).

The men in this study found more positive versions of the traditional definition of masculinity from personal influences, literary and historical influences, alternative versions of masculinity, academic courses, and critical events in their lives. Interestingly, both deeply painful and traumatic personal events as well as powerful positive experiences helped men begin to move towards taking off the mask. Other studies of identity development (Helms, 1992, 1995; A. Stevens, 1997; R. A. Stevens, 2004) and social justice allies (Broido, 2000) have also found critical influences and incidents to be key in fostering growth. With regard to the specific critical influences the participants described, positive role models of being a man have been described as key to boys fostering a positive image of themselves as men (Kindlon & Thompson, 2000; Pollack, 1999). The fact that identity based academic courses was mentioned by several men was not surprising given the breadth of literature supporting the positive education, personal, and societal outcomes associated with these courses (Gurin et al., 2004; Hurtado, 2001; Laird et al., 2005; Nagda et al., 2004).

Summary of Relationship to Existing Literature

Although the theory of college men's gender identity development that emerged from this study is not a stage based model, it does describe a developmental process of the participants' gender identity, moving towards a greater understanding of themselves as men. The way the participants described society's expectations of them as men reinforces much of the literature on the traditional hegemonic definition of masculinity

and makes new contributions as well, particularly related to expectations of college men. The way the men described performing masculinity by putting on and wearing a mask adds insight into gender performativity scholarship and helps begin to explain some of the roots of troubling behaviors that have been observed in men in general and college men specifically. The participants' insights around how they were struggling to begin to take off the mask adds to the scholarship on college men's gender role conflict and provides insights into how student affairs educators may encourage men to begin to transcend external expectations and live their lives as themselves.

Implications

The results of this study offer insights with implications for theory development, student affairs practice, social justice efforts, and future research. These insights come not only from the theory that emerged from the study but also from the process coming to this theory through the framing of the study, the interviews, and the process of making meaning of the participants' experience.

Implications for Theory Development

The theory emerging from the participants' understandings of themselves as men offers three insights for future theory development, particularly of identity development theory. First, the emerging theory in this study highlights the critical importance of exploring superordinate identity development processes. Too often theorists either assume that they already understand these privileged identity development processes because of the historical over-representation of members of dominant groups in research or that by exploring the identity development process of individuals from dominant groups researchers are reifying dominant group members privileged status. Just because

the men in the study were privileged based on their gender status didn't mean that they were not struggling with their identity. In fact, the privileged nature of their identity led to their struggle precisely because of the dominant ideology of masculinity and the way their privilege had helped to make the topic and their experiences as men invisible. The findings of this research provides further support that the privileged nature of dominant group identities leaves them unexplored and unexamined not only in the literature but also in the individuals themselves (Johnson, 2001; Jones, 1997). For the participants in this study, exploring their identity as men was difficult and challenging because this exploration was new and their gender identity had been taken for granted. This also meant that the discussions were valuable and enjoyable for them because of the insight that they gained as a result of the brief exploration. The insights that the participants in this study came to may not only be valuable to them but also to the men and women in their lives as they described beginning to break down at least their overt sexism. Further explorations of superordinate identities can offer insight for individuals and be useful for practitioners in a variety of professions interested in identity development theory and social justice.

Another implication for theory development from the emerging theory is the importance of both separating out multiple social group identities and re-forming these identities in an effort to understand the whole person. An important contribution of this study is that it explores men *as men* and examines how other social group identities influenced gender identity development specifically. Separating out gender offered a new perspective by exploring gender identity in depth, but such an exploration needed to focus on and appreciate the influence of other identities on the way these men came to

understand themselves as men. Examining men's holistic identity development would have brought to the forefront or amalgamated the many and competing social group identities of the participants. The emerging theory from this study illustrated that these multiple social group identities had an impact not just on the overall identity but on how the individual men constructed their gender identity specifically.

Finally, the connection in this study between an identity development process and self-authorship encourages exploration of the connections between different domains of theory. Abes, Jones, and McEwen (2007) pointed to the interconnected nature of domains of theory as a promising area for theory development based on a handful of successful approaches in recent years (Abes & Jones, 2004; Abes et al., 2007; Baxter Magolda, 2001; King & Baxter Magolda, 2005).

Implications for Student Affairs Practice

This impetus for this study was framed in the issues arising in college men's academic success, well-being, and role as campus citizens (Kellom, 2004a). The emerging theory offers new insights into understanding college men's experience and can help inform more effective practices for student affairs educators.

First, the emerging theory in this study reflects the participants' very clear understanding of society's expectations of them as men and can be useful in understanding and addressing the issues facing men on campus. The college men in this study felt that partying was what was expected of them and what they needed to do to prove their manhood. On the other hand, preparing for life after college could leave a man vulnerable to feeling like less of a man according to society's expectations.

Student affairs educators who have observed college men engaging in the partying behaviors of drinking, doing drugs, sexual activities, lack of academic effort, and general disregard for institutional policies and procedures may become frustrated with these men and concerned about the consequences of these behaviors for the men and other members of the campus community. The emerging theory in this study helps frame these behaviors and the men themselves not as deviant, but as conforming performances men feel they must put on to be seen as men. These behaviors are not who the men are, but a mask they feel they must wear to be seen as men. This understanding certainly does not excuse the behavior, but it offers a whole new perspective on the roots of the behavior and insights useful in addressing these behaviors. Rather than seeing men who party as ignoring social norms or irreverent to authority, instead student affairs educators may understand them, in part, as men who feel trapped by social norms as they understand them and confined by the authority of society's expectations. Although student affairs educators may be frustrated with these men, it may be that the men are just as frustrated, ashamed, or embarrassed by their behavior as well.

Instead of responding to the performance, educators may find more success helping men grow and changing their behaviors by working past the performance by trying to address developmentally appropriate interventions based on the men's real identity and not think that the performance accurately represents their identity. The challenge is in creating opportunities where men feel comfortable to let go of the performance and reveal their real identity so that those interventions can be informed by something other than the performance.

Once student affairs educators understand partying as performing, they can foster one-on-one relationships and create social environments that give permission to these men to let go of the performance and not party or party less. For example, counseling, mentoring, supervisory, or coaching relationships may all provide opportunities for educators to connect directly with college men and foster the kinds of interactions that the men described were so meaningful in this study. Living learning communities, athletic teams, men's groups, fraternities, or sexual assault prevention organizations could all be structured to provide supportive environments for men to let go of the performance and move towards being themselves. In fact, this permission to take the mask off and stop performing may be exactly what the men engaging in these damaging and destructive behaviors are looking for themselves as a socially acceptable excuse not to engage in these behaviors that they may not enjoy or might find harmful to themselves or others.

College men not only party because of society's expectations, but they may also hide or avoid using college as a time to prepare for life after graduation. As a result, student affairs professionals may observe men putting in less time academically, being less involved in co-curricular activities, and generally appearing not to care about academics or their future. This performance can result in men's lower levels of college attendance, persistence, academic success, and general involvement (Kellom, 2004a). This too can be seen, in part, as a performance to prove their manhood. By not putting the time and effort into academics, college men may appear privileged, arrogant, and overconfident, when in fact they may be avoiding or hiding their preparation out of their insecurity about their manhood. Student affairs educators may also begin to address these issues by fostering individual relationships and social environments in which men using

college as a time to prepare is acceptable and expected of men and not emasculating. Academic advisors may encourage identity based academic courses as a way for men to explore their identity. Similarly, career advisors may suggest involvement, internships, jobs, and careers that allow men an opportunity to reflect on their identity the way participants in this study were able to do through jobs like sexual assault prevention educator and victim advocacy. Again, men may be eager to take advantage of these opportunities because they feel a need to prepare and a desire to take advantage of the college experience but feel doing so would make them less of a man because of external pressures.

Recognizing the different pressures placed on men and different responses to those pressures based on their perceived privilege can help student affairs practitioners to understand the differences in how college men from different backgrounds experience college. Men with less perceived privilege may avoid attending college all together because they may have been taught that attending college is self-indulgent and irresponsible and may feel that they can better prove themselves as men by immediately entering the work force and providing for themselves and their families. Men from less privileged backgrounds who do decide to attend college may feel such pressure from their cultural group to make the most out of the experience and not waste the opportunity that they may willingly take advantage of opportunities to prepare regardless of the emasculating consequences of the dominant culture and a recognition of the social structures that may be obstacles for them after graduation and a need to prove negative stereotypes wrong. Keeping this in mind may help higher education communicate particularly with men of color and working class men from a perspective that is culturally

relevant to them with regard to race, class, and gender cultural perspectives (Liu, 2005). Men who perceive they have less privilege and feel a greater need to prepare for life after graduation may be willing to take advantage of curricular and co-curricular opportunities, particularly if they are framed in a culturally relevant manner.

Men with greater perceived privilege may be hiding the preparing that they are doing out of fear of being emasculated. They may also be engaging in more partying than they can afford financially or academically and more than they want to engage in. Again, giving these men the permission to let go of some of their partying behaviors and encouraging them to engage in more of the preparing aspects of college may not just encourage behaviors that are more consistent with higher education's educational mission, but it also might be just what these men are looking for.

Another powerful implication of this study is that the participants already had their own personal definition of what it meant to be a man that was decidedly more pro-social. Student affairs educators recognize the issues facing college men and other members of the community as a result of their behavior (Davis & Laker, 2004) and often ask how they might be able to encourage college men to be a different kind of man as a way of addressing these issues. What the participants in this study can teach student affairs practitioners is that they already wanted to be a different kind of man. What they needed was encouragement and help in actually being the men that they want to be and not the men that they feel they have to be. Simply talking about the masks that they were wearing was helpful to the men in beginning to remove the masks. The participants described how the private and confidential nature of the interviews helped them to open up and explore their identity, which leads support to encouraging these kinds of one-on-

one opportunities for college men. Student affairs educators can also encourage men to be the men that they want to be by fostering environments that are more open and accepting of different ways of being a man, such as student organizations focused on discussing and addressing traditional masculinity, facilitated intra-group or inter-group dialogue experiences on gender issues, or men's groups facilitated by counseling center staff.

Student affairs educators can also help men be the men that they want to be and feel less of a need to perform by fostering men's security and sense of self as men. Those concerned with men's privilege, dominance, and oppression may find it counter-intuitive to support men's self-esteem as men. However, if student affairs professionals understand men's transgressions against community standards and sexist actions as, in part, a performance they feel a need to put on out of their insecurity, men with a greater sense of self and less insecurity as men may be more willing to take off the mask and drop the performance resulting in fewer behaviors that raise concerns. This lends further support to Kegan's (1982) call to confirm before educators contradict or challenge to foster growth and development.

Some of the critical influences in this study that helped men begin to transcend society's expectations of them as men can be encouraged by student affairs educators. Academic courses and student affairs programs that raise their consciousness on social group identities in general, expose men to historical and literary figures who offer new ways of being a man, and alternative versions of masculinity may be effective in helping men begin to transcend the traditional definition of masculinity. Student affairs educators may themselves serve as personal role models for being a different kind of man for college men. The fact that the interviews themselves were powerful experiences for men

in the study also indicates that providing individual and group opportunities to discuss these issues can themselves be powerful critical events in college men's lives.

Implications for Social Justice

This study was framed by a social justice theoretical perspective and one of the explicit aims was to develop a theory about college men's gender identity development that could advance social justice goals. The emerging theory of this study reveals the consequences for women, other men, and for the men themselves of men's conforming to the traditional definition of masculinity. The results of this study illustrated that fostering men's gender identity development and helping them to begin to transcend society's expectations of them as men can have social justice benefits. Those concerned with individual men's sexism, including degrading and demeaning attitudes and behaviors towards women, may find the emerging theory in this study useful in understanding and addressing men's sexism and misogyny. Men who were insecure about themselves as men at times demeaned and degraded women as a way of trying to prove their manhood to other men and to themselves and unintentionally falling in to society's expectations of men. Similarly, the findings in this study demonstrate homophobia's role in enforcing the traditional definition of masculinity and how men may exhibit homophobic behavior and comments, not out of a hatred for gays or lesbians, but potentially as way of either intentionally or unintentionally trying to regain their manhood. A better understanding of the roots of men's sexist and misogynistic behaviors can provide guidance for more appropriate and effective social justice interventions.

Understanding men's sexism as rooted in a conscious or unconscious performance according to the traditional definition of masculinity and fostered by men's insecurity as

men offers several means of addressing these behaviors. Recognizing many of these behaviors as a performance and not necessarily what men genuinely believe and feel implies that if educators give men permission to drop the performance and be themselves that they may behave in a more pro-social and less overtly sexist manner. Cultivating spaces where men feel affirmed and secure, as men, can provide opportunities for men to explore and practice taking the mask off. Addressing the cultural messages and socialization that men receive encouraging them to mistreat women may also be a way to address individual men's sexism. Social justice advocates may seek to foster men's security as men as way of encouraging them to be themselves and stop performing to patriarchal expectations of men. This performance has consequences not just for women but also for the men themselves in diminishing their relationships with other men, including friends and fathers, and sacrificing their own humanity and authenticity. By helping men recognize that this performance is not only hurting women but also diminishing their relationships and sense of self can be a way to foster an enlightened self-interest to trying to be a different kind of man. This enlightened self-interest may be useful in creating men who are more effective, consistent, sustainable, and accountable in their efforts to work against their own sexism and the sexism in society (Edwards, 2006).

The emerging theory in this study also includes critical influences that helped the participants begin to transcend a patriarchal society's expectations of them as men. By exposing men to personal influences, literary and historical influences, alternate versions of masculinity, and consciousness raising academic courses men may begin to transcend the hegemonic traditional definition of masculinity. The unique critical events in the lives of the participants in this study may also offer insight into the kinds of experiences that

men had that helped them to move closer to being the kind of man they want to be and feel less of a need to act like the man that they feel they need to be. College men may benefit and even be eager for opportunities to formally or informally reflect on their experiences and the meaning of those experiences for them as men.

Implications for Future Research

Through the process of conducting this study several implications for future research emerged. These implications were related both to the unintended impact of participating in this study on the participants and implications for future research related to college men's gender identity development.

Through the process of conducting this study it became readily apparent that all research is intervention, whether that is the intent or not. Although influencing the participants was not at all an aim of this study, the participants were clearly influenced and changed by the experience. Simply by engaging in the conversation the men found themselves noticing the behavior of themselves and their peers differently. They also found that having the conversations resulted in greater accountability in their efforts towards becoming the kind of men they described aspiring to be. Although this was not an intent of the study, the participants clearly found that this to be a valuable conversation and a clear benefit of their participation. This further supports scholarship examining the influence of interviews and qualitative research processes on participants' development (Davis et al., 2006; Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2002) as well as the potential for unintended harm that could result from these interviews (Magolda & Weems, 2002).

Future research related to college men's identity development is encouraged. This study focused on an in-depth exploration of the 10 participants in this study. The

emerging theory suggests that this is an area ripe for research using both qualitative and quantitative means of inquiry. Although the participants were selected to represent a diversity of social group identities and college experiences, full diversity could never be accomplished with only 10 participants. Further exploring the role of additional diverse social group identities such as ability or religion and additional college experiences not represented by the participants in this study have on college men's gender identity development would be an area rich for future research.

This study also was limited to interviewing college men. Researchers could examine the gender identity development of men beyond college including issues such as significant committed relationships, family, career, and other aspects of life not central to the participants in this study at this point in their lives. It may also be useful to explore how older men saw themselves when reflecting back on their college experiences rather than getting the perspectives of men in the midst of the college experience, as was done in this study.

Several researchers have used a variety of means to explore how men are socialized according to the traditional definition of masculinity (Brannon, 1976; Kindlon & Thompson, 2000; O'Neil et al., 1986; Pollack, 1999). However, this is such a complex process that changes as quickly as social institutions and society change that constant examination will be necessary, preferably from a variety of perspectives. The explanation of partying as what society expected of college men, instead of using college as a time to prepare, and the connection of privilege to how men navigate these competing external pressures and internal insecurities was an unexpected outcome of this study and a valuable contribution to the existing literature. Further exploration of this particular

aspect of the study could also be a rich area for future researchers to contribute to an understanding of college men's experiences.

Research has been done on aspects of men's performance as men, particularly O'Neil's (1981; 1990) work on gender role conflict and other studies on how college men experience gender role conflict (Davis, 2002; Good & Wood, 1995; Liu, 2002; O'Neil et al., 1986). However, examining other aspects of men's performance of traditional masculinity and their struggle with this performance would benefit and extend the results of this study and other research. Finally, further research on how men can begin to transcend society's expectations of them as men is deeply needed. The participants in this study were just beginning to transcend some aspects of society's expectations and generally thought that completely transcending would be impossible given their internalized socialization and the constant socialization they experienced. Perhaps exploring this with men who were more experienced in their efforts to transcend society's expectations of them as men would lead to insights into whether or not, and possibly how, men can transcend the traditional definition of masculinity.

Limitations of the Study

There are some important considerations to keep in mind before others use the emerging theory in this study to guide theory, practice, or research. This study was conducted on a single campus with a small number of participants. The purpose of this study was to explore in depth the experience of these specific participants, not to develop a theory that would be generalizable to all college men. Any attempt to do so would not be in keeping with the purpose of this study. The constructivist approach used here implies that as the researcher, I was not seeking to discover an objective reality that

exists, but instead an understanding of the reality that these participants portrayed as constructed in a social context. The social justice theoretical perspective further recognizes the hierarchical nature of the social context. Charmaz (2000) described the end product of such constructivist research as “more like a painting than a photograph” (p. 522). There are several cautions about the researcher, the participants, and the context of this study that should be considered along with the results of this study.

Acknowledging these limitations and their epistemological roots does not diminish the value of the study, instead it enriches the study by making the underlying assumptions, premises, and approaches transparent, visible, and open to critique.

As with any qualitative study, the researcher had tremendous influence on the process and the product of this research. I framed the study, conducted the interviews, co-constructed meaning with the participants, and developed theory based on the experiences of the participants. Any other researcher conducting the same study would inevitably have fulfilled these roles differently which may have resulted in a different outcome. However, the trustworthiness criteria adhered to in this study may support exploring the transferability of these findings. It is essential that qualitative research such as this is conducted keeping the perspective of the participants central and using the existing literature and external influences simply as a tool to better understand the participants’ experiences. Because the participants’ experiences are so central to this type of research, it is vital to create a space in which the participants feel comfortable being honest and vulnerable. To get at internal processes such as identity it is critical that the participants be honest not only with the researcher but also with themselves, if the research is to elicit anything other than socially desirable or socially acceptable

responses. The participants identified this as a strength of the study and felt able to be honest and open in these interviews in ways that they hadn't felt comfortable talking with anybody else.

The participants were also a unique group of college men and by no means average or typical. Although they did represent a variety of social group identities and college experiences there are many social group identities and college experiences that were not represented and could not be represented in a study with such a small number of participants. Because this study focused on the gender identity of the participants, thorough explorations of their other identities was not a focus of this study. There are also an infinite number of combinations of multiple and intersecting identities that could also be explored. The participants in this study were nominated for being men who had thought about what it means to be a man. It is unclear how this influenced the perspectives the participants shared, although they didn't think their responses would be all that different from other college men they knew. Many men never consider what it means to be a man. In fact, despite the nomination process, for most of the participants in this study the conversations were difficult and enjoyable because they were entirely new. Other participants would have entirely different perspectives and offer plenty of avenues of future explorations of college men's gender identity development.

The context of this study is also important. The participants in this study were from a single institution. This was done intentionally so that the influence of institutional context could be explored with different participants. Because college men's gender identity development is socially constructed a different institutional, geographic, or cultural context would offer different insights and observations.

Strengths of the Study

The strengths of this study stem from procedures that were consistent with grounded theory methodology and the college men's open and honest participation in the study. This study used a constructivist grounded theory methodological approach (Charmaz, 2006), which uses a similar, yet more flexible, approach than traditional, more objectivist grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). I followed the procedures of constructivist grounded theory methodology in the framing of the study, data collection, data analysis, and theory development. As a result, the findings of this study reflect, to the best of my ability as a researcher, the process of the participants' gender identity development. I used member checks with the participants, as individuals and as a group, to insure that my interpretations and conclusion were in keeping with their experiences. I used peer debriefers to challenge my conclusions and offer alternate understandings of the data emerging from the participants. I also used an inquiry auditor to verify that I followed the appropriate procedures of this methodology as outlined in the proposal for this study.

The participants in this study were incredibly honest, vulnerable, and forthcoming about their experience. Their level of openness was surprising both to me and to them. The participants shared that their trust in me as the researcher, their anonymity in the study, and their commitment to contributing as accurately as possible to a research project they thought was important, fostered open and honest participation in the study. The participants also represented a variety of college experiences and social group identities. This was useful in exploring the role these social group identities and college experiences influenced the participants' gender identity development but also in

reinforcing the commonalities of their experience. During their interviews each participant felt as though the performances he was putting on and the struggles he was having as a man were unique. When the participants came together for the focus group and read about and heard these similar struggles from other men who were so different from them, they realized that this wasn't just their own personal story. If the experience described in the emerging theory was a shared experience among such a diverse group of men they felt that it would likely be shared among other men as well.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss the findings and emerging theory in this study as it relates to the research questions framing the study, the existing literature on men and masculinities and identity development, and implications for theory development, student affairs practice, social justice, and future research. Limitations of the study and strengths of the study were also discussed.

The college men in this study engaged in a process of gender identity development that centered on a complex interaction between them as individuals and society's expectations of them as men. Over time they were socialized into and then internalized dominant society's increasingly complex expectations of them as men. These men spent their lives wearing a mask and performing to these expectations, which was a struggle because it did not reflect their true selves. This performance had consequences for women, other men, and for the participants themselves. Each of the men had begun to remove the mask and transcend society's expectations of them in certain situations or under certain circumstances. They described critical influences and critical events that helped them to begin transcending these external expectations of them as men.

I entered this study eager to explore with college men how they came to understand what it meant to be a man in the hopes of understanding them and understanding myself. Because of their honesty, the 10 college men who participated in this study provided me with rich interviews from which a theory of college men's gender identity development emerged as a result. Along the way, the participants also learned about how they could better be the men they wanted to be. Because of their honesty and wisdom, so did I.

APPENDIX A: ELECTRONIC LETTERS TO NOMINATORS

July __, 2006

Dear _____,

I am writing to solicit nominations of University of Maryland students who are men for my dissertation research. The purpose of this study is to understand the process by which college men come to understand themselves as men; how this understanding changes over time, if at all; and the critical influences on this process.

Please nominate undergraduate men who are attending the University of Maryland who have thought about what it means to be a man. I am seeking a wide range of viewpoints and perspectives. The outcome of their reflections is not important; however, the fact that they have begun reflecting on their own gendered experience is important. These men may have engaged in discussion on this topic with you, you may have observed them discussing this with other students, or they may have explored this through academic work or co-curricular involvement. I am seeking a wide diversity of college men both in social group membership (e. g., race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, ability, or religion) and college experience (e. g., fraternity men, athletes, resident assistants, commuters, engineers, musicians, military, or peer educators).

Please send the names and email addresses (if possible) of college men who come to mind by [date two weeks from date sent]. You can provide this information to me via email at edwardsk@umd.edu. The students will be informed that you personally nominated them unless you would prefer that you not be identified to the student.

If you wish to contact me with questions or for any other reason I can be reached at:
Campus Mailing Address: 0200 Calvert Hall
Office Phone with Private Voice Mail: 301-314-9860.
Cell Phone: 302-377-2982
Email: edwardsk@umd.edu

I look forward to hearing from you and thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Keith E. Edwards
Doctoral Candidate
College Student Personnel Administration

Dr. Susan R. Jones
Associate Professor
College Student Personnel Administration

APPENDIX B: ELECTRONIC LETTER TO NOMINATED PARTICIPANTS

July __, 2006

Dear _____,

Hello! My name is Keith E. Edwards. I am a doctoral student at the University of Maryland conducting a research study on college men's identity development. You have been nominated by [Name of Nominator] who believes that you have thought about being a man and what it means for you. It is my hope that you will consider being a part of this study, as you have the potential to make an important contribution.

The study will consist of two to three individual interviews, each approximately an hour long, to be conducted over the summer and early fall semester. You will also be invited to participate in an optional focus group meeting with the other participants near the conclusion of the study. During these interviews we will have the opportunity to discuss how you have come to understand what it means to be a man, how that may have changed over time, and the influences on that process. If you are interested I can send you some of the initial questions in advance. Your participation will remain confidential as you will select a pseudonym for the purposes of this study. Participants will receive a \$50 gift certificate upon completion of the study.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may chose not to participate at any point in time. If you are interested in participating, please complete the attached interest form and return it to me. I will select participants based on the forms that are completed and then be in touch with selected participants about scheduling an interview. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

If you wish to contact me with questions or for any other reason I can be reached at:
Campus Mailing Address: 0200 Calvert Hall
Office Phone with Private Voice Mail: 301-314-9860.
Cell Phone: 302-377-2982
Email: edwardsk@umd.edu

I am very excited about this project and pleased that you would consider participating as well. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Keith E. Edwards
Doctoral Candidate
College Student Personnel Administration

Dr. Susan R. Jones
Associate Professor
College Student Personnel Administration

APPENDIX C: INTEREST FORM

Name: _____

Address (Local or Campus): _____

Email Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Will you be available for interviews during the summer of 2006? _____

Will you be available for interviews during the fall of 2006? _____

Participants in this study will be selected to represent a wide range of social group identities and college experiences. Any information you can provide with regard to the areas below will be helpful in identifying participants for this study.

College Involvement (fraternity, athlete, resident assistant, student groups, etc.) List all that apply.

Have you lived on campus? If so, where and when? _____

Major/Minor/Certifications: _____

What are your plans after graduation (career, grad school, Peace Corp, military, etc)?

Age: _____

Disability: _____

Race: _____

Ethnicity: _____

Sexual Orientation: _____

Religion: _____

Socio-economic Status (Class): _____

Please return this completed form to: Keith E. Edwards, 0200 Calvert Hall or via email as an attachment at edwardsk@umd.edu

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

FIRST INTERVIEW

Introduction

Thanks for agreeing to participate in this study on college men's gendered identity development. I am excited to get to know you better and learn about your experiences. Before we begin you will need to read and sign an Informed Consent form. This form will tell you more about the study and asks you to sign indicating that you agree to participate. [Participant reads and signs consent form.] Do you have any questions?

I'm very much looking forward to discussing with you how you have come to understand what it means to be a man; how has this understanding of what it means to be a man changed over time, if at all; and what have been the critical influences on this process. I'm hoping that we can begin this conversation today and continue it in one or two more conversations.

We are going to record this conversation so that I can listen to it later and transcribe our conversation. I will summarize our conversations before the third interview so that you can be sure that we are both as clear as we can be about what you have to say. In our future meetings we'll discuss some of what we discuss here today a bit further as well as any additional thoughts you have between now and then. You will also have the option of discussing this with other participants in a focus group meeting near the conclusion of the study. Do you have any questions?

In order for this to be as confidential as possible I'd like you to select a pseudonym that I will use in any written material related to this study. [Participant selects pseudonym.]

Questions

The first interview will focus on introducing the participants to the topic and getting their initial thoughts and getting them thinking and reflecting on their men's identity development. The following questions reflect the topics to be discussed in the first interview.

Potential Questions/Topics:

- Tell me about yourself. Why did you agree to participate in this study?
- Discuss and clarify the demographic information the participant provided.
- How have you come to understand what it means to be a man?
- How would you describe society's definition of what it means to be a man? How does that fit or not fit for you?
- How has your understanding of what it means to be a man changed over your life?
- What significant people, places, or events (good or bad) were critical in changing how you understood what it means to be a man?

SECOND INTERVIEW

The second interview will focus on the participants' responses in the first interview and exploring those topics in greater depth and exploring the participants' reflections since the first interview and in response to the summary essay.

Potential Questions/Topics:

- In addition to general society's view of masculinity are there other versions of masculinity that you have been exposed to other than society's general definition? Do those versions of masculinity fit any better or worse for you?
- How did you define what it means to be a man when you started college?
- How has being a man influenced your college experience?
- Has being a man influenced any of the choices you have made during your college experience?
- What has been the best part of being a man for you in college?
- What has been difficult part of being a man for you in college?
- Do you know of any individuals that role model for you what it means to be a man?
- If so, what have they taught you and how?
- If not, why not and would like to have some role models? If so, what might those role models offer you?

THIRD INTERVIEW

The third interview will focus on following up with any remaining questions or topics to be explored from the previous interviews as well as discussing with the participants the overall picture that is emerging from their responses and the overall study as a means of member checking.

Potential Questions/Topics:

- What has it been like for you to participate in this study?
- Have you learned anything about yourself through our conversations? If so, what?
- Have you noticed any changes in yourself as a result of these conversations?
- What questions to you have?
- How would you describe college men's identity development?
- How have you come to understand what it means to be a man?
- How has your understanding of what it means to be a man changed over your life?
- What significant people, places, or events (good or bad) were critical in changing how you understood what it means to be a man?

OPTIONAL FOCUS GROUP MEETING

The optional focus group meeting will focus on the participants discussing the emerging themes from the study as a group.

APPENDIX E: STUDENT CONSENT FORM

Project Title: College Men's Identity Development: Grounded Theory Inquiry

Why is this research being done?

This is a research project being conducted by Susan R. Jones and Keith E. Edwards at the University of Maryland - College Park. We are inviting you to participate in this research project because you are at least 18 years old, and have been nominated by a faculty or staff member at the University as a college man at the University of Maryland – College Park who has thought about what it means to be a man. The purpose of this research is to understand college men's identity development.

What will I be asked to do?

The procedures involve participating in two to three interviews during the summer and fall of 2006 and an optional focus group meeting near the conclusion of the study. Each interview will be approximately an hour long. The interviews will be guided open-ended conversations rather than formal question and answer sessions. During the interviews you will be asked to discuss how you have come to understand what it means to be a man; how that understanding has changed over time, if at all; and the critical influences on this process. All interviews will be conducted at times and locations on campus or another private location convenient for you. In addition, all interviews will be digitally recorded and transcribed for analysis. You will be given a summary essay based on your interviews for your review and comment before the third interview.

What about confidentiality?

We will do our best to keep your personal information confidential. This research involves making digital recordings of the interviews to provide a complete record of our interviews. To help protect confidentiality, your interview tapes, transcripts, and documents will be coded with a pseudonym you select. These documents will be kept separate from the demographic information on the interest form. Only the researchers will be able to link the research materials to a specific person. All transcripts and digital recordings will be kept in a locked file cabinet at the home of the student researcher. All computer files related to the study will not include any identifiable personal information. Only the researchers will have access to the digital recording and they will be destroyed in May 2010. Your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible in any report or article based on this research. Your information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland - College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law.

What are the risks and benefits of this research?

There are no known risks of participating in this research project. This research is not designed to help you personally, but you will have the chance to reflect on your identity as a man. This process may affect your perceptions of yourself and inform your future personal and professional decisions. The results may help the investigators and others learn more about college men's identity development.

Do I have to participate? Can I stop participating at any time?

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you would otherwise qualify.

Do I receive any compensation for participating?

In appreciation for your time, you will receive a \$50 gift certificate to the University bookstore at the conclusion of the study.

What if I have questions?

Susan R. Jones and Keith E. Edwards from the Department of Counseling and Personnel Services at the University of Maryland - College Park are conducting this research. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact one of the investigators:

Susan R. Jones
Associate Professor
CAPS Department
3214 Benjamin Building
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742
301-405-8384
sjones4@umd.edu

Keith E. Edwards
Doctoral Candidate
0200 Calvert Hall
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742
301-314-9860
edwardsk@umd.edu

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact the following office:

Institutional Review Board Office
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742
301-405-0678
irb@deans.umd.edu

This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland -College Park IRB procedures governing your participation in this research.

Statement of Age and Consent

Your signature indicates that:

- you are at least 18 years of age,
- the research has been explained to you,
- your questions have been fully answered, and
- you freely and voluntarily choose to participate in this research project.

Name of Participant: _____

(Please print)

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX F: SUMMARY ESSAY COVER LETTER

Dear _____,

Thanks again for your willingness to participate in this study. As I mentioned previously, I am attaching a summary essay of our previous interviews based on the transcripts. I ask that you carefully review this essay, providing commentary or clarification on anything you feel I may have missed or misrepresented. Please include any additional insights, ideas, or comments that are triggered in this process. Please feel free to comment directly in the margins or on additional sheets.

Once you have finished reviewing the essay, please let me know via email or phone so that we can arrange the best way for me to receive your comments. In our next interview we will discuss some of the issues raised in our previous interview as well as any corrections and/or additions you might have.

Thanks again for giving your valuable time to this effort. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns. I look forward to hearing back from you as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Keith E. Edwards
Doctoral Candidate
College Student Personnel Administration

APPENDIX G: ELECTRONIC LETTER TO NOMINATED PARTICIPANTS WHO
WERE NOT SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE

November __, 2006

Dear _____,

Thank you for your interest in participating in a research study on college men's identity development. The study is nearing completion and we were fortunate to have more participants than we needed, so your direct participation is no longer necessary. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

If you wish to contact me with questions or for any other reason I can be reached at:
Campus Mailing Address: 0200 Calvert Hall
Office Phone with Private Voice Mail: 301-314-9860.
Cell Phone: 302-377-2982
Email: edwardsk@umd.edu

Thank you for your interest and willingness to participate in this study.

Sincerely,

Keith E. Edwards
Doctoral Candidate
College Student Personnel Administration

Dr. Susan R. Jones
Associate Professor
College Student Personnel Administration

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