Two decades of literature from national college student climate reports measuring student attitudes toward people who are lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgender (LGBT) indicate, “anti-GLBT intolerance and harassment has been prevalent” (Rankin, 2003). This study seeks to explore the determinants of such attitudes and explore the life contexts of students’ processes by which they came to hold such attitudes through a qualitative interview approach. The eight themes that emerged from the interviews reflect participants’ own voices and their worldviews about LGBT people. These themes inform a framework of general recommendations for student affairs programming efforts to reduce homophobia and resistance to LGBT people and lifestyles throughout campus.
A Qualitative Study of the Determinants of Resistance to Homosexuality in Heterosexual Identified Students

by
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I understand that my thesis will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to any reader upon request.

________________________________________________________________________
Cathlene E. McGraw, Author
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Never in my life would I have predicted that I had enough words in me to write a thesis. I am very appreciative of my friends and family. None of you are anywhere near as surprised as I am that I wrote a huge document. I love that.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to all of the Queers, Homos, LGBT, and Ally people in my life. You all made me brave when I sought your support while writing and interviewing.
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Chapter 1 – Introduction

In the Supreme Court Case Grutter v. Bollinger (2003) the court held that public universities have a “compelling interest” in fostering the educational and societal benefits from which flow diverse learning environments. A record number of amici briefs submitted emphasize reliance on public universities to produce individuals who possess awareness, knowledge, and skills consistent with cross-cultural differences (Akkaraju, Alemán, Martel, McGraw, 2005). Echoing the public demand for individuals with such skills, the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), “Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs” states that good practice in student affairs “builds supportive and inclusive communities” (Chickering & Gamson, 1987).

In the spirit of providing diverse learning environments, student affairs practitioners must be comfortable working with student populations that differ from themselves. The ACPA offers an inventory to examine whether a campus is building and supportive communities. The inventory states that student affairs personnel should “work with diverse groups of students, faculty, and staff to promote a just and civil campus climate” (Chickering & Gamson, 1987). ACPA also indicates that inclusiveness is modeled by staff.

As an out, liberal, Queer, white woman on campus I am afforded the opportunity to work with a diverse group of students. I get to work with people on my campus with centers that serve the LGBT center, Latin@, African-American/Black, Native American/First Nation, and Asian campus communities. Each of these organizations is traditionally associated with the idea of working with a diverse
However, because these are students I see each day, these are not the students with whom I need to make sure I am comfortable. My interest in studying resistance to homosexuality stems from my recognition that I may be under serving students with whom I am uncomfortable. I feel uncomfortable working with students who are politically conservative and who value evangelical Christian morals. Going to high school in a small rural town in North Carolina and negotiating a Queer identity was often painful for me because of the disapproval of friends who were raised in evangelical Christian homes. I feel challenged when working with students who come from religious backgrounds because of my previous negative experiences. Interacting with conservative religious organizations on campus has presented a challenge to me against the backdrop of my experiences with people from similar backgrounds. However, an ethical student affairs practitioner – which I am aspiring to become – realizes her biases and seeks ways to interact with these students that aids their student development. Part of creating successful interactions with any student group is found in understanding the role of the group on a college campus.

From completing research, I learned that many conservative and religious student organizations on campuses in the Pacific Northwest manage newspapers and student groups which are privately funded. Such a model is unlike my previous experiences with student groups. The groups with which I have experience are student fee funded and they must follow student conduct codes, and university polices in order to keep receiving funds. However, the students who are not student fee funded do not face the same restrictions. For example, a student fee funded group must maintain content neutral programming. In contrast, privately funded groups do not. They may
openly scold their university for creating special treatment programs, such as cultural centers, for traditionally marginalized student populations. These papers and student groups may affirm anti-gay ballot measures. In order to model an inclusive environment for my students, I must be better able to value the diversity found in conservative and evangelical Christian students.

Two philosophers offer ways in which it is possible to value all student differences. Josiah Royce in his article “The Moral Insight” in the book The Religious Aspects of Philosophy indicates that “moral understanding lies in the realization that our neighbor is a center of experience and desire just as we are” (p. 55). Further, Royce states that “the truth is that all the world of life about thee is as real as thou art (p. 58). What I know as truth is not necessarily true for students with whom I do not share political and religious values. However, simply because we don’t understand the same truths does not mean that any of our values are incorrect or immoral. These students and I need to figure out a way to connect with each other so that we can exchange these truths and come to understand each other’s worldviews. Politically radical, non-Christian student affairs practitioners – not unlike myself – must model such a behavior when working with LGBT students who become upset or angry when these differing viewpoints become printed in a paper that is available all over campus. We need to encourage students to ask questions about of another to understand the life contexts behind the words and behind the hurt perpetuated by those words. Only then will students gain the moral insight that Royce suggests.

Martin Buber, the second philosopher, offers a framework with which to work and value students. In his second edition writing of I and Thou, Buber offers two
associations with which people can form relationships. The first relationship is the I-It association. In the I-it association, people can never relate to each other’s “can never be spoken with the whole beings” (p. 21). In the I-It association, human beings become a “loose bundle of named qualities” (p. 22) and cannot be experienced as whole people. A handy example is the way in which I refer to the conservative, Christian students. These two qualities are only small parts of who they are as whole human beings. Buber states “only part of a being can be hated” (p. 22). In my life, this is true. I have negative associations with the words Christian and conservative and by applying these labels to a student population I am only experiencing small parts of who they are. Help is found in the second association, I-Thou. The I-Thou association demands that humans experience each other wholly. It is in this relationship with the students that I seek to understand the whole range of their life experiences and contexts. It is equally important for me to model this behavior for the LGBT students with whom I work primarily as it is important to share this behavior with students who write for papers on campus who are conservative. Of particular interest to me is to engage them in their role of perpetuating a campus environment that may not be welcoming for LGBT students.

Working with students who are resistant to LGBT people or who are resistant to the LGBT lifestyle is crucial toward promoting understanding among students. These students must be met students where they are in their development with compassion and understanding. One such way to understand their beliefs is to approach them within the Roycian and Buberian frameworks. It is critical to this
understanding to listen to these students life stories to find out how they came to identify with their beliefs (Grandy, 1973).

Substantial research indicates that campus environments are not currently welcoming for LGBT students and that anti-LGBT sentiments are pervasive on campus. Two decades of literature from The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force’s Campus Climate Assessment measuring student attitudes toward people who are lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgender (LGBT) indicate, “anti-GLBT intolerance and harassment has been prevalent” (Rankin, 2003, p. 9) and that “institutions of higher education have not provided an empowering atmosphere for LGBT faculty staff and students” (p. 13). This report found that “19 percent of the [LGBT] respondents reported that, within the past year, they had feared for their physical safety because of their sexual orientation/gender identity and that 51 percent concealed their sexual orientation/gender identity to avoid intimidation” (p. 24).

Conservative campus newspapers have never advocated the use of physical violence against LGBT students. Articles from these papers have not been affirming of LGBT culture, discussing them from a political, policy, and religious point of view. However, online clubs and forums that are unique to a campus culture may contribute to LGBT students feeling that they are physically unsafe on campus. Facebook is website unendorsed by any university but is a place for university students a place to post profiles of themselves and form online clubs with one another. Students utilized this website to form more than a thousand such clubs. The natures of these clubs vary widely in theme from “The Dorks Who Wear Pink Club” to “The PrePharmacy Club.” A search of the word “gay” within the clubs associated with a particular university in
the Pacific Northwest offers a group called [Student Name] is Gay. The identifying graphic for the group is a modified John Deer brand graphic. The original graphic has a picture of a deer and the slogan, “Nothing Runs like a Deer.” The modified graphic for the club features the silhouette of a limp-wristed figure running from an armed mob. The slogan states, “Nothing Runs like a Queer.”

While the original intent of the research was to inform student affairs practice for how to improve the campus experience of LGBT students, I believe that this experience offered insight on how to improve campus experiences for participants who are conservative as well. The collected data provide insight on how students perceive LGBT people. This data may provide insight to student affairs professionals on best practices around working with students to dispel myths that perpetuate heterosexism and homophobia. It may also provide useful insights that student affairs practitioners can use with students who are LGBT as a better understand the participants who display resistance to LGBT people or the LGBT lifestyle.

The purpose of this research is first to introduce new voices into the research examining homophobia and resistance to LGBT people. In completing the literature review I found no sources that allowed people with homophobic or resistant views to speak about their beliefs from their own perspectives. The secondary purpose is to learn more about how student affairs can work to challenge and support students to be in community with one another given their opposing worldviews.
Overview of Thesis Structure

In Chapter 2, I discuss articles and theories related to the identity development of students who are resistant to the LGBT lifestyle or to LGBT people. A great deal of the literature review hinges upon research on homophobia. Whether a student identifies as homophobic or resistant to either LGBT people or the LGBT lifestyle, the outward activities and behaviors that the participants evince have a common effect of creating an unaffirming environment for LGBT students. I examine the corollaries of identity characteristics that have been linked to resistance, such as gender, religious identity, and social distance. I discuss two theories related to heterosexual identity development. Both theories identify a progression through identity development in which heterosexual individuals become aware of social privileges or advantages afforded to them on the basis of their sexual orientation, which is valued for its consistency with social norms. To further flesh out these two theories, I worked with Janet Helms’s White Identity model. Her model identifies a racial identity development in which white people come to realize the advantages afforded to them by virtue of the value placed on the white skin color of the dominant culture (Helms, 1992).

Data collection and methods are discussed in Chapter 3. Throughout the data collection portion of this thesis research, I interviewed six participants who self identified as having an aversion, resistance, principled objection, or moral qualms with the LGBT lifestyle or LGBT people. I approached individuals on Facebook, the staff of conservative newspapers on campus, and visited a lecture class designed around
issues of sexuality to recruit participants. Each of the interview questions were
designed to prompt participants to share their insights around the correlates identified
in the literature review. The research explored these participants’ attitudes toward the
LGBT community and LGBT individuals. Each of the six participants voiced a
tremendous amount of resistance toward being identified as homophobic. Some would
only participate under the condition that they would not be labeled homophobic. A
longer discussion of the decision to move away from using the word homophobic to
describe the participants is offered under the “Discussion of Terms” heading.

The results of the data collection are reported in Chapter 4. Using the
qualitative research methods outlined in Chapter 3, I offer the results of the participant
interviews grouped in common themes. I also explore where individual participants do
not share their views and experiences in common with one another. Whether students
are consistent with one or more of the three identity development models outlined in
Chapter 2 is discussed in terms of the results of the data.

Chapter 5 explores the possible implications for student affairs practice. I will
discuss the limitations and strengths of a qualitative study. The participant interviews
are analyzed to determine how their stories match or do not match the behaviors
outlined in the literature review. Finally, I will discuss the results in terms of their
implications for student affairs practitioners who work with both LGBT students and
students who identify themselves as resistant to LGBT folks or to the LGBT lifestyle.
Discussion of Terms

Several terms are used throughout the research that may be inconsistent with common use or that are unique to LGBT culture.

**Homophobia.** Homophobia is not a term that will be used in this study, but a rationale for not doing so is needed.

Homophobia is a term that is debated by philosophers. Clinical psychologist, George Weinberg, in 1973 book, *Society and the Healthy Homosexual*, offers the definition that homophobia comes from the Greek and means an irrational fear and hatred of homosexuals as well as a fear of being in close quarters with homosexuals.

However, a brief internet review of postings on Wikipedia Encyclopedia about the term homophobia reveal a number of divergent points of view about the word from several different stakeholders. Wikipedia is a “web-based, multi-language,” encyclopedia written collaboratively by volunteers and sponsored by the non-profit Wikimedia Foundation. It contains “traditional encyclopedic topics and on almanac, gazetteer, and current events topics” (15 August, 2005). Discussion boards appear under entries and people can post their input to the definition. A review of the postings reveal that people who post who self-identify as conservative or religious take issue with the term because it appears to be biased toward the idea that homosexuality is an acceptable lifestyle (Poor, 2002, Msg 2). The posters write that an irrational fear is not the same as a principled objection. For the purposes of this study, homophobia will not be used to describe the participants.
The definition inadequately equates fearfulness with the belief that LGBT individuals are morally objectionable. Such sentiments are echoed in the literature. Students in this study took great exception to being identified as homophobic. One participant answered my recruitment email with “labeling me a homophobe simply because I choose to disagree with a lifestyle choice is equally as presumptuous as claiming that all people who oppose the war with Iraq are unpatriotic” (confidential personal communication, December 26, 2005). Another participant wrote “I am perturbed by the extent of your emphasis on homophobia: the fear (implicitly irrational) of homosexuals” (confidential personal communication December 26, 2005). In the same email the participant added “you appear to assume that "resistance to LGBT people" by which I presume you mean the belief that homosexual acts are wrong, opposition to same-sex marriage, and the like is infused with homophobia.”.

This study will identify behaviors as being resistant to or having an aversion to LGBT people or the LGBT lifestyle.

**Latin@.** This term is used instead of Latino/Latina or Latino(a).

**LGBT Community.** Throughout this study, the phrase LGBT community will be used as shorthand to refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals collectively. It has been my personal experience as a Queer woman in many different Queer communities that the interchangeability of these words is an accepted, common practice among my Queer friends, colleagues and family members.

**The LGBT Lifestyle.** Most participants in the study did not refer to LGBT people as such. For the participants, LGBT is not an identity; it is a set of behaviors. To be consistent with their perceptions, the LGBT lifestyle will be used throughout.
However, my conception of myself is in direct contrast with such language as I perceive my Queerness to be an integrated part of my identity.

**Sexual Orientation.** This term will be used throughout this paper over sexual preference. Sexual orientation is something that is not a choice, as sexual preference connotes. However, whether sexual orientation is a choice or an innate quality does not change the importance of determining the barriers toward acceptance of the LGBT community in participants who are resistant.

**Use of Acceptance over Tolerance.** Participants who are resistant were asked about their personal barriers toward accepting the LGBT community. Acceptance is more favorable than tolerance. Acceptance is explored on the Riddle Homophobia Scale from Kathy Obear’s (1986) ACPA workshop “Opening Doors to Understanding and Acceptance.” This scale offers eight levels of attitudes toward the Queer community, four are positive and four are negative. In order of most negative to most positive they are repulsion, pity, tolerance, acceptance, support, admiration, appreciation, and nurturance. Obear describes acceptance as unfavorable because it implies that “there is something to accept.” The acceptance stage is not ideal, but it may be the point at which participants are receptive to learning about supporting the Queer community and the patterns in the life stories of these participants should prove to be the most informative for inclusive student affairs practice.

**Queer.** Queer is meant to refer to the LGBT Community in the positive, reclaimed sense. It will be used interchangeably with LGBT Community to refer to lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgender folk collectively.
Ze and hir. These are two pronouns that will be used throughout when referring some students who self-identify as transgender, genderqueer, or who simply do not rely on binary gender pronouns such as he/she and her/him. Ze represents a blending of he/she and hir represents a blending of her/him. Transgender is a “term used to describe the people whose gender identity is not adequately described by the sex they were assigned at birth. Transgender is also used in some communities to describe all gender-variant people” (Sakurai & Shaw-Phillips, 2004, p.2) and genderqueer refers to “Someone whose gender expression is consciously not consistent with conventional standards for masculine and feminine behavior” (Sakurai & Shaw-Phillips, 2004, p.4) A binary gender system refers strictly to male and female expressions of gender and does not adequately account for transgender or genderqueer individuals.
Chapter 2 – Literature Review

Introduction

It is of extraordinary importance to me as a researcher to note that, as Chapter 5 will reveal, my experience of the participants was overwhelmingly positive. As they indicated, their interactions, behaviors, and campus dialog in newspapers toward the LGBT community is intended to be neutral or benevolent. Participants stressed that their behaviors are not motivated by hate or fear. However, my experience working with LGBT students has indicated to me that LGBT students are largely unaware of these benevolent intentions and perceive the participants to be homophobic. LGBT students indicate that the outward activities and behaviors that the participants evince create a campus environment that is unsafe. Chief among the reasons to create a forum for these two populations to meet is this misunderstanding of intentions. But, the same patterns of behaviors that the participants identify as a resistance, the literature review also identifies as homophobic. I established in Chapter 1 that it alienates and irritates the participants to be referred to as homophobic. The experiences of the LGBT students around the participants and the consistencies between behaviors that are “resistant” for one group and “homophobic” for another make a compelling case to utilize the research on homophobia as a framework for this study on resistance. I intend to honor through the literature review the desires of the participants to not be identified as homophobic and will balance honoring student participants with staying
true to the intent of the research outlined and the research that has been conducted to date.

In the literature review below, I will explore a number of resources to inform my interactions with participants. I will explore the available literature on heterosexual identity development models that indicate the steps student might take to develop a critical consciousness that is integrated into their heterosexual identity. I will outline several studies from student affairs and counseling research that surveyed college students to determine how homophobic attitudes are formed. Finally, I will explore models for how these attitudes are transformed as a means of providing a framework for how I will interact with students during interviews.

Student Affairs Professionals and Deconstructing Privilege

In her article “Vision, Privilege, and the Limits of Tolerance,” Cris Cullinan (1999) defines dominant culture privileges as “privileges that we enjoy that are unearned but nonetheless function every day to help us ‘make it through the day’” (¶1). An amalgamation of the benefits associated with privilege comprises the degree of power an individual has. These privileges are “are difficult to talk about and even more difficult to hear about” (¶1). She writes that while dominant culture individuals “want to believe that our intelligence and our effort alone are responsible for what we achieve” (¶4), three presumptions – innocence, worthiness, and competence – “perpetuate privileges for this cultural group, which often go unnoticed by members of the culture (¶1). In addition, she writes, “it is not unusual, when the subject is
diversity, that the persons asked to come forward to tell their stories are asked because they are seen as the targets of discrimination” (¶2). She says, although we may listen to these stories, we do not hear. Dominant culture individuals listen to these stories as though they are a “series of stories that seem isolated incidents that do not necessarily form a pattern and are certainly not evidence of institutional discrimination.” (¶2) She advocates that people lead an “examined life” and student affairs professionals can help students live such a life. One such way student affairs professionals can lead an examined life is by orienting themselves toward multicultural competence.

In their book, Multicultural Competence in Student Affairs, Pope, Reynolds, and Mueller (2004) define multicultural competence, as “the awareness, knowledge and skills need to work with others who are culturally different from self in meaningful, relevant, and productive ways” (p. 13). The authors also define competence as having the “skills, knowledge, and awareness to address issues of multiculturalism with someone who is culturally similar” (p. 14) because “when Whites work with other Whites…there are multicultural attitudes, knowledge, and skills required in efficaciously addressing the issues and concerns of those individuals” (p. 14). This can mean that student affairs professionals from the dominant culture have both an advantage to reaching dominant culture students and a responsibility to teaching issues of multiculturalism to students. The authors also advocate a “self awareness, or the ability to be aware of those values, attitudes, and assumptions” (p. 15) that can complicate or enhance interactions with people from cultures different from their own.
Such an awareness of cultures different from self is outlined in theory. I found two theories that integrate Helms’s model with an outline heterosexual identity development (Hoffman, 2004). One theory outlines how people form a heterosexual identity in the context of developing an awareness of power and privilege (Worthington, Savoy, Dillon, & Vernaglia, 2002) and the other outlines how people form a heterosexual identity in the context of an awareness of homosexual alternatives (Mohr, 2002). Worthington, et al. define heterosexual identity development as “the individual and social processes by which heterosexually identified persons acknowledge and define their sexual needs, values, sexual orientation and preferences for sexual activities, modes of sexual expression, and characteristics of sexual partners” (p. 510). Both models are informed by Janet Helms’s (1992) research on White Identity due to this models incorporation of how individuals come to rationalize their participation in a privileged identity. “The most prominent model of majority group identity (parallel to heterosexual identity) is Helms’s White identity development model, which emphasizes specific attitudes a White individual holds toward other racial groups” (Worthington, et al., p.499). It is valuable to include the Helms’s research in connection with the heterosexual identity model because Helms’s provides insights into internal processes that the Worthington and Mohr models do not. These insights may be helpful during the data collection phase to understand the context of the students’ stories and promote compassion within the researcher.
Worthington et al. (2002) acknowledge that several factors shape heterosexual identity development and these include “culture, microsocial context, religious orientation, gender norms and socialization, biology, systematic homonegativity, sexual prejudice, and privilege” (p. 511). Worthington et al. describe “two parallel reciprocal processes: an individual sexual identity…[and] a social identity process” (p.510) and these two processes “occur within five discernible identity development states” (p.512) which are explored in detail in conjunction with Helms and Mohr below but include “unexplored commitment, active exploration, diffusion, deepening and commitment, and synthesis” (p.512).

Mohr’s (2002) model is complex. A brief overview of the model is necessary to understand the context in which Mohr has situated his working models of sexual orientation within a larger model that acknowledges three factors that contribute to the articulation of a heterosexual identity: Precursors of adult heterosexuality, determinants of adult heterosexual identity, and determinants of identity status. The first of these factors, precursors to adult heterosexual identity development contain two components: Experiences with personal sexuality and exposure to social information about sexual orientation. Experiences with personal sexuality include attractions, fantasies, and sex experiences. Exposure to social information about sexual orientation includes things like media, peers, family, school, and church. The second of these factors that contribute to heterosexual identity is the determinants of adult heterosexual identity, wherein Mohr describes the working models of sexual orientation and the core motivations that contribute to identity including social acceptance and psychological consistency Mohr’s working models are discussed
below in detail in conjunction with Helms and Worthington et al. (2002). The last stage of the models outlines how sexual orientation stimulus and immediate context work together. This stimulus and context determines the expression of personal and or public expression of sexual identity.

**Stages of Heterosexual Identity Development**

“We are all straight here, right?”

The Worthington et al. (2002) model begins with unexplored commitment. Individuals at this stage “tend to operate within culturally prescribed norms for heterosexist assumptions about normative behavior on the part of others and see their behavior as a monolithic, stable group with a consistent, clear sense of their own heterosexual identity” (p.515). At this point, “one’s awareness of a privileged, oppressive majority group is either repressed from awareness or accepted without question as normal, understandable, and justifiable” (p. 516). Mohr’s (2002) model begins with a stage called “democratic heterosexuality” (p.540). At this stage “individuals using this model tend to view people of all sexual orientations as essentially the same, with the major exceptions being sexual attraction” (p.541). Also at this stage, “instances of anti-gay discrimination are viewed as isolated incidents that should not be given much weight” and “individuals with a democratic heterosexual identity might be frustrated by radical forms of LGB political activism and social expression” because such activism and expression is a “distraction from what they view as the fundamental sameness underlying people of different sexual orientations”
These stages are consistent with Helms’ (1992) Contact stage where she describes an initial Contact status where Whites are generalized to be “ignorant about race and racial issues” (p. 24). Such a process mirrors the naïve undertone of the students operating in the first stage of Mohr’s model because a person in this stage is unaware of the tremendous disparities in privileges enjoyed by heterosexual people versus those denied to homosexual people. Her model also describes people in the contact stage feeling that they do not have a race, which reflects the heteronormativity described in Worthington et. al. model. Students who demand a straight pride club or are alarmed by gender expression in drag queens, for example, may be in the initial stages of heterosexual identity development.

“It’s Only Okay to be Straight”

Mohr’s (2002) second stage is that of compulsory heterosexuality. At this stage, people see heterosexuality as the “only acceptable and/or social acceptable sexual orientation; homosexuality and bisexuality, on the other hand, threaten core value systems” (p. 542). People in this stage see “their own sexuality as a proper lifestyle” and someone in this stage might include “a view of oneself as well adjusted” (p. 543). Worthington et. al. (2002) describe their second stage as the active exploration stage, and “due to the powerful impact of systematic homonegativity, and sexual prejudice, many heterosexually-identified individuals who enter this status are likely to focus primarily on needs, values, preferences for activities, and partner characteristics” (p. 516) when choosing a partner. Also characteristic of this stage is a
reflection on the “possibility that their compulsory heterosexual orientation does not fit them” and “the group membership process is likely to enter consciousness” (p. 517) for more active exploration. A student’s of themselves as a “member of the dominant heterosexual group might result in questioning of the justice of a privileged status or more consistently asserting the privileges of majority status” (p.517). This process of waxing and waning tension around recognizing privilege is very similar to the next stages of Helms’ (1992) model. Each model is similar at this point in that the dominant culture individuals (white or heterosexual) do not at this point assume any responsibility for any historical or current wrongdoings from the dominant culture toward nondominant cultures. People in this stage are characterized by comments such as “gays and lesbians have the right to marry, gay men have the right to marry women, and lesbians have the right to marry men” (p. 517). This belief places the onus of fitting into society on homosexuals and attempts to remove the dominant culture from responsibility to change discriminatory practices.

“I feel so guilty!” Or “What is the Big Deal?”

Mohr’s (2002) third stage concerns itself with politicized heterosexuality in which “individuals are seen as oppressed but valiant survivors of a hostile society or culture” (p. 544). Heterosexuals who are in this stage “interpret their own sexual orientation in terms of privileges that are associated with heterosexuality. They may be driven by anger at an oppressive society, as well as guilt and self-criticism related to their participation in heterosexist practices” (p. 544). Worthington et. al. (2002)
describe a diffusion point which “is defined as the absence of exploration or
commitment and often results from crisis” (p. 518). These stages parallel Helms’s
(1992) third and forth statuses. These statuses of Helms’s model concern themselves
with an initial conception of race characterized by discomfort at the realization of the
moral dilemmas around benefiting from race where students may “avoid contact with”
(p.26) people from nondominant cultures. This is parallel to Mohr’s model because
people in this status are recognizing the unique experiences of individuals from
nondominant cultures. A person in Helms’s model demonstrating characteristics of the
third and forth statuses “accepts the belief of white racial superiority” (p. 27) and
inferiority of nondominant races with any vestiges of discomfort or guilt about the
moral dilemma of being white turns into “fear and anger” (p. 29). These feelings may
be associated with Worthington’s crisis and diffusion. According the Helms’s theory
the student will remain in this stage of racial identity development until he or she
transitions “out of this status occurs when…a series of personal encounters that the
person can no longer ignore,” (p. 31) which causes the abandonment of a racist
identity. Students in these stages may be moving toward more accepting attitudes
toward LGBT individuals but are struggling to admit their role as privileged
individuals on their respective campuses. This frustration may be aimed at
nondominant cultures. For example, in back issues of another Pacific Northwest
student publication, authors created a “What did you do this summer?” (Oregon
Commentator, 2005, p. 7) a column in which they joked that during her summer, the
student body president cut off the penis of a student senator who began transitioning.
This is the same summer the student began transitioning. The authors maintain that ze
“immediately attains the status of an oppressed minority – a minority of one. The last thing we need at this university is more navel-gazing faux oppression” (p. 7). This student recognizes the process of a nondominant gender expression, but shrugs off the real oppression in ze’s experience.

Crystallized Identity

In the Worthington et al. model (2002), people move toward a “greater commitment to one’s identified sexual needs” and “group membership toward sexual minorities also begins to deepen and crystallize into conscious, coherent perspectives on dominant/nondominant groups relationship, privilege, and oppression” (p. 519). Worthington et. al. note that “this process of crystallization may take virtually any form along the continuum of attitudes from condemnation to tolerance to affirmativeness. This stage is unique to the Worthington et al. model and does not have a parallel in the Mohr (2002) or Helms’s (1992) but is an important piece. Students may represent a crystallized identity offers rationalized reasons for not accepting LGBT identity. It will be important for me to remember that the researcher is exploring identities throughout the research, not convincing people to adopt new beliefs. Students in the study may not exhibit the final stages of heterosexual identity.
The final stage of Mohr’s (2002) model describes integrative heterosexuality “wherein all individuals are seen as participating in an oppressive systems and no person[s are] all good or all bad with regard to [their] stance on sexual orientation issues” (p.545). People in this stage “acknowledge the qualitative differences” in their life experiences “due to their own privileged status in society” (p.545). Worthington et. al (2002) describe their final stage as the synthesis stage, which is “potentially the most mature and adaptive status of sexual identity [that] is characterized by a state of congruence among the dimensions of individual identity” (p. 519). Helms (1992) adds an important caveat about assimilations that is not apparent in the other two models. Students may think that granting LGBT people the right to marry may solve all of the social ills that plague these groups just ask people might adopt “white liberalist views in which it is assumed that people of color can be helped to become the equal of whites through such activities as affirmative action programs” (Helms, p. 32). It is not the experience of all LGBT people that they wish to participate fully in the prescribed social roles and responsibilities around things like relationship structures. When students realize that assimilation is not a helpful approach, they are ready for the Immersion-Emersion state where students begin to “seek out an “unsanitized version of White history in the United States” (p.33). Students in this stage may be receptive to taking classes that discuss the lived historic experiences of LGBT people in concentration camps, or contemporary issues like the 50% rate of suicide in people who are transgender (Cody, 2002). People in Helms’ penultimate status start to
assume “personal responsibility for racism” (p. 33). Students in Helm’s fifth stage also concern themselves with developing “a moral re-education of other white people” (p. 33). As in Mohr’s and Worthington et al.’s model, Helm’s final stage reflects a comfort with self. Individuals at this stage “no longer feel threatened to oppress, idealize or denigrate nonwhites” (p. 79). These students are the ideal candidates who can serve as mentors for others students experiencing multicultural interventions to help other students move through this internal process. These same students might be ideal to serve as heterosexual allies on campus speakers’ groups that are dedicated to dispelling myths that perpetuate homophobia and heterosexism.

How Attitudes are Formed: the Determinants of Homophobia

Many studies have explored the determinants of homophobia. An increased need for social distance, or the proximity to which members of one group permits members of another group to themselves, (Allport, 1958, p. 37) is positively correlated with homophobia (Gentry, 1987, p.205). A study that highlights this phenomenon is found in Social Distance Regarding Male and Female Homosexuals (1987). Assuming that there is a relationship between social distance and stereotypes (p. 204), researchers read a series of stereotypic statements about homosexuals that included “the belief that homosexuals are sinful, sick, and criminal” (p. 205). Findings indicated that people who display high levels of social distance toward homosexuals also believe these negative stereotypes of homosexuals.
Gender also has been typically correlated with homophobia. Anthony D’Augelli (1989) in his study of residents assistants observed, after administering a “questionnaire that consisted of Attitudes Toward Lesbian and Gay Men” (p. 547), found that men are more likely to have homophobic attitudes toward than did women. Literature throughout the sixteen years following D’Augelli’s findings reveals some of the determinants of male homophobia. Men who knew fewer gay men were more homophobic and made more derogatory remarks than did women and widespread hostile attitudes were found among first year students (D’Augelli, 1990).

Sexual orientation also has been correlated with homophobia. Students who self-identified as heterosexual from a large state university reported more negative attitudes toward people who were out as LGBT than toward people who do not disclose their sexual orientation in public (McHugh-Engstrom & Sedlacek, 1997). Other studies report that heterosexual’s dislike of homosexuals is at least partially motivated by a desire to maintain traditional gender role distinctions (Whitley, 2001). In female populations, levels of homophobia increase when participants identified an importance of feminine attributes in women (Basow & Johnson, 2002). Still other studies indicate that the frequency of religious attendance, political ideology, and prior contact with LGBT individuals contribute to a negative or positive conception of homosexuality (Mohr & Rochlen, 1999). Race is also a determinant; with African American students expressing more negativity than did white students (Schulte, 2002). Education level of parents, being younger, and having less education are also correlates of homophobia (Simoni, 1996).
Yet, none of these studies interviewed individual students with resistance or aversion to the LGBT lifestyle and analyzed their life stories of how they came to hold the beliefs and feelings to which they currently subscribe. A qualitative investigation of the determinants of homophobia using a compassionate approach toward students as outlined in Susan Palmer’s (1994) qualities of a Paradigm III approach may be helpful in understanding how students come to adopt resistant attitudes and may inform student affairs practice.

*How Attitudes are Transformed: Approaching Students with an Aversion to Homosexuals*

The act of listening to participants’ stories demands compassion from the student affairs professional who engages the dominant culture students. Judith Palmer (1994) outlines a framework for compassionate practice in her paper, “Diversity: The Three Paradigms.”

A Paradigm I approach focuses efforts on homogenizing the group by finding points of commonality and encouraging diverging perspectives to assimilate into the dominant. People who practice from the Paradigm I “resist programs” such as campus cultural centers “that separate out the issues faced by specific groups” because they believe such practices will “put bad notions into people’s head” (p. 253). They perceive these efforts to be unfair and are forms of special treatment. Such a paradigm appears to favor assimilation and in doing so does not allow differences to be valued.
A Paradigm II practice sees the value of providing specific spaces for cultural centers on campus, but places its focus on righting all social wrongs. Often, when students become aware of their own power and privilege, they become mired in guilt. Sometimes, in reference to racial identity development, this is referred to as white guilt. A Paradigm II approach favors allowing dominant culture students to stew in this guilt until they are compelled to act on behalf of socially disadvantaged groups. This implies that the only route toward wanting to learn about one’s own prejudices is through a path that is riddled with guilt. A Paradigm II approach is a favorite among my radical social activist friends, but does not allow for meaningful educational moments with students.

In my experience, the Paradigm III approach is more favorable that the first and second paradigms. Her Paradigm III approach advocates creating an environment where “everyone appreciate(s) the heritage and culture of many different groups and…respond(s) to the self-image and uniqueness of each individual” (p. 256). This paradigm also “emphasizes self-knowledge - learning the pattern of one’s own prejudices - and interpersonal skills, as well as specific learning about the cultural history of many different groups” (p. 257). Palmer’s process is one that encourages students to examine their own prejudices.

Paradigm III offers students a path that is focused on learning about the historical patterns of oppression and the future goals of changing such patterns rather than focusing solely on a difficult internal process. A Paradigm III approach to working with students is favorable because it focuses on promoting an understanding
of the experiences of LGBT-identified people, encourages students to think about their privileges, but does not encourage them to wallow in guilt.

For student affairs professionals who are active in transforming students’ homophobic beliefs, it is not only important to exercise compassion, it may also be important to practice from a framework of understanding oppression, privilege, and self-reflection.

Toward Data Collection

As stated above, none of the literature I found outlines a process in which researchers interviewed people who self identified as homophobic or resistant to the LGBT lifestyle. Each of the studies on homophobia listed above employed survey methods and gleaned factors that might correspond with a participant’s convictions around homophobia. I believe that the participants’ own reflections of their feelings and beliefs are helpful for student affairs practitioners, like me, who carry a significant amount of bias into interactions with students with beliefs similar to the participants in this study.

The review of the literature on homophobia helped me to understand the nuances of how a participant might come to hold homophobic views. The literature on transforming attitudes impressed upon me that I need to first be able to meet students where they were in their identity development. The way in which I accomplish this is through listening to their stories, in particular, listening to the contexts behind their beliefs. Given that their beliefs are a compilation of their life experiences, it is easy to
be compassionate and understanding. For example, in some cases, participants only knew Queer people who lived unhappy lives and concluded that all Queer people are unhappy. Armed with a cursory understanding of the experiences and themes that may occur during interviews, I began to recruit participants.
Chapter 3 – Research Methods

Methodology

Qualitative research “is a situated activity that locates that observer in the world” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.5) of the participants in a study. The method “consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible” (p. 5) to people who do not share the same cultural contexts as the participants in the study. Qualitative researchers are “attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p. 5). It was important to me to develop a sense of compassion for why students develop resistant attitudes toward LGBT individuals and lifestyles on campus. I felt that I needed to understand how they make sense of their worlds in order to have meaningful conversations with them. In addition, I wanted to model this compassion for meeting people where they are in conversations about difference for the Queer students with whom I work. In the Queer students’ roles as activists and educators it is critical that they understand how students who are resistant to Queer people and lifestyles make sense of the world around them in order to meet them where they are in their understanding of a Queer identity.

The standardized, open-end question interview approach allowed the participants to guide the conversation about how they came to hold the views that they did. This method “consists of a set of questions carefully worded and arranged with the intention of taking each respondent through the same sequence and asking each respondent the same questions with essentially the same words” (Upcraft and Schuh,
1996, p. 63). I choose this method because I wanted to hear how a variety of participants reacted to the same issues around forming a resistant perspective on LGBT people.

**Participants**

Six undergraduate students were recruited for this study. Undergraduate students were selected because much of student development theory focuses primarily on undergraduates. Additionally, the institution from which participants were recruited does not focus its student services on the graduate student experience: It is my observation that much of the student services on the participants’ campus serve undergraduates, whether that is their programmatic intention or not. Finally, this study seeks to understand the experience of students who are statistically younger and in earlier areas of their identity development. All participants were over the age of 18.

The goal for this study was to investigate six participants who were willing to share their stories. The recruitment methods, described below, recruited students whose personal experiences with Queer people would yield data rich results. In addition, together with my committee we decided that six students were a sufficient number due to the labor intensive methods I choose for collecting and processing data. Additionally, the study is qualitative the goal is not to create generalizable results; it is to hear stories. Six people’s stories provided a rich experience within the qualitative method.
Due to the inherently uncomfortable nature of exploring homophobia with the researcher, a Queer-identified woman, several methods were explored to recruit participants in an attempt to maximize participants’ comfort level and reduce anxiety. It was noted that, given that the participant researcher is openly Queer-identified and active within the LGBT campus community this may be difficult for participants in sharing their views.

Purposeful sampling, a common and respected sampling technique in qualitative research (Maxwell, 2005), was employed in choosing participants because they represent data-rich perspectives and have interest in exploring homophobia and resistance to LGBT people. I realize the implications and limitations of such a small and purposeful sample in terms of generalizability and accept this as a tradeoff for more meaningful and useful data. Through the purposeful sampling, every attempt was made to include participants who were able speak to a diversity of experiences, including those relative to age, gender, race, ability, and citizenship.

Once I established that I would use purposeful sampling, I identified and emailed participants who had already demonstrated willingly and publicly their resistance to LGBT people. A copy of this email is available in Appendix A. I approached participants who had openly participated in public internet forums on websites dedicated resisting LGBT people, such as the Straight Pride Club on Facebook. I also searched recent school newspaper archives to find opinion-editorials that do not favor the inclusion of LGBT students into student activities, such as articles against funding LGBT centers with student fees. Given that these participants have already willingly and publicly expressed their attitudes toward LGBT individuals, I expected that their participation in the study would
induce undue discomfort or anxiety. Other than the initial anxiety that I provoked in misnaming them as homophobic, the participants who did consent to interviews were notably comfortable, laughing and joking at times.

I recruited participants using three recruitment methods. The participants who maintain email groups who maintain list serves where anti-LGBT comments are frequent. An example of such a list serve is the Straight Pride Club on Facebook. Each time a participant posts to the discussion forum in their interest group, their first name, last name and Oregon State email address appear. Approaching the participant who maintained the list serve was not anticipated to cause stress to the participants in the forum for two reasons. First, participants posting to the list serve publicly share their opinions about the LGBT community. Second, a public list of participants who belong to the list was not available, so participants who did not post but who did read the list serve were at no risk of feeling singled out or targeted.

In addition to email recruitment, I also recruited participants from asking students in a large human sexuality lecture class to participate. The script of the recruitment for participants in this class is included in Appendix B.

Finally, I asked colleagues to recommend students to me. I did not reveal the identity of the people who recruited participants when I contacted the participants initially, nor did I share the identity when the participants pressed me to help them figure out who recruited them.

All prospective participants were ensured confidentiality, not anonymity because they were known to me. All participants were offered the opportunity to select their own pseudonyms and they were informed that all of their identifying
information would be removed from the interview transcriptions and therefore from the final thesis. Participants were offered access to recorded transcripts and their journals to review for accuracy or to delete or change any responses made. They were all informed that all tapes and journals will be destroyed upon completion of a successful defense of the thesis.

Participants who did agree to participate read and signed the Informed Consent Document. This document is included in Appendix C. Participants were given a copy of the informed consent upon agreeing to participate and prior to commencing with any data collection.

Data Collection

During weeks one through three of the 2006 Winter term, I conducted interviews with participants. Initially all students who agreed to participate were offered the chance to break up interview questions over two sessions. Although each participant was offered the opportunity to meet with me a second time, each interviewee opted to complete all questions in one session ranging in length from an hour and a half to two and a half hours.

The standardized, open-ended questions mentioned above are detailed in Appendix D. Several types of questions were developed to understand the underlying stories and life experiences that led to participants’ current attitudes toward the LGBT community. I am aware of the delicate nature of these questions and the privilege of sitting down with participants willing to discuss issues that strike a sensitive spot.
Questions were worded carefully to avoid putting participants on the defense and the order and number of intense questions was considered carefully to maximize participant comfort during the interview. I created the questions from the determinants of homophobia outlined in Chapter two. For example, the literature review indicated that prior contact with LGBT individuals contribute to a negative or positive conception of homosexuality (Mohr & Rochlen, 1999). I asked participants if they could name LGBT people in the media, if they had any LGBT friends or family, and then asked participants about their impressions of LGBT people.

Each participant gave narrative responses with the exception of one who chose to answer the questions in journal form. Given his overwhelming negative experience with LGBT people, I feel that he may have been exceedingly uncomfortable sitting down with me and providing these responses. This participant’s journal provided some of the most data rich responses.

In the original proposal for research, participants were going to identify questions that they found difficult to answer and journal about these questions. None of the participants, with the exception of the student who provided journal responses for each question, opted to journal.

Recruiting Participants

Of the 412 students with whom I had contact through the recruitment methods, six agreed to participate. The final six participants, introduced below, represent each of the recruiting methods outlined above. One of the participants was from a student
affairs colleague who recommended him to the study. Two of the participants were from a professor’s class in which I completed a class wrap, the text of which appears in Appendix B. A class wrap is a small, informative speech delivered to a class. The final three participants are involved with the conservative paper on their campus and are involved on Facebook’s Straight Pride Club. Five of the participants identified as male and one of the participants identified as female. Five of the participants were white and one is a person of color.

Several factors account for the gender, race, and school activity representation in the participants. An initial email was sent to 12 students who had disparaging editorial about the LGBT student group on campus printed in their campus newspaper or who were either active in the Straight Pride Club leadership or discussion boards. Of the 12 emails, did not respond, four said they were not interested and three agreed to participate. Just two women were represented in this group. One of the females was interested but was too busy during the term. The other female indicated that I misidentified her as homophobic. Her public opposition to the Pride Center was not centered on her objection to Queers but on her objection to the student fee funding model. Just two people of color were represented in the group. One of these men of color wrote to me to let me know he identifies as gay and had joined the Straight Pride Club to spite the group. The other did not respond. Of the 410 students enrolled in the Human Sexuality class in which I presented my research, nine indicated that they were interested in participating. Of the nine who gave me their information, six female students were represented. However, just one female student responded to my email to organize an interview time. The race of the prospective participants from this class
could not readily be discerned.

**Background of the Participants**

These names are not the actual names of the participants. Each of the participants selected their own pseudonyms for the study; hence the odd collection of names and one of the participants choosing refer to himself as Mr. Smith. Additionally, all participants attended high school in the same state in the Pacific Northwest.

I am certain that the participants were candid in their responses. They shared their disgust with LGBT people openly with me and shared family secrets with me. For example, Whitney expressed her disgust at seeing a gay couple kiss. Cato shared his thoughts on how the rectum isn’t built for anal sex. Aquinas spoke of his family’s experience with a gay-identified uncle dying of AIDS. I approached each interview with the intent of setting up a safe, comfortable dialog. First, the students read the informed consent document. As they were reading, I told each of them to ask me any questions. The text of the informed consent document indicates that I am a Queer woman. After participants signed the informed consent document, I verbally disclosed my sexual orientation to each of them and told them that I have been involved in Queer activism for seven years. I told them that in these seven years I had heard about every negative perspective on the LGBT identity and that they would not hurt my feelings when they were sharing these perspectives. I also told them that their candid responses were important to my research. I do not believe that they censored
themselves to avoid offending me. For example, none of them agreed that LGBT people should get married. I am an LGBT person. If they did not want to offend me, they might have agreed that LGBT people should one day get married.

Bartholomew is a senior studying Microbiology. He is from a rural town of fewer than 8,500 people. On campus, he is a prolific writer for both the campus newspaper and the conservative campus newspaper. He was recruited specifically for an article he wrote about the LGBT center on his campus being “a slap in the face to evangelical Christians.”

Bartholomew is 21 years old. He identifies his ethnicity as “half Hungarian and the rest are Scottish and a mix of various European groups” and he identifies his gender masculine.

George is a fourth year student studying Graphic Design. He is from a “predominantly white” suburb outside of his state’s largest city. George is involved in one of the four cultural centers on campus and occupies one of the leadership roles with the most responsibility. His job at the cultural center necessitates that he interact with the staff of the LGBT center on campus. The leadership of the four cultural centers on campus and the two resource centers, which includes the LGBT center, share staff development and activities. He was recruited specifically for his conflicting thoughts about participating in one of these shared activities which involved an outward show of support for the LGBT center from the cultural centers. George is 22 years old. He identifies his gender as male and his race or ethnicity as Korean. He is the only person of color in the study.
Mr. Smith is a freshman studying Business. He attended high school in a coastal city of fewer than 10,000 people, though he spent some of his life in a southern town with population of about 60,000. He self-selected for the study through the class wraps presented in a professor’s Human Sexuality Class. He is 19 years old. He identifies his race or ethnicity to be “Scotch Irish, mostly German…French…English…[and] Cherokee Indian.” Mr. Smith identifies his gender as male.

Cato is a senior studying political science. He is from a rural town within a half hour drive of his campus. The town has a population of about 1200 people. Cato was recruited for his articles published in the campus newspaper and for his participation in the Straight Pride Club on Facebook. He is 21 years old. He identifies his race or ethnicity as “Irish-Danish. Little English…Maybe a little German, mostly Irish Danish.” Cato identifies his gender as male.

Whitney is a first year student at her institution but carries a sophomore standing in credits. She is from a town with 60,000 people. She self-selected for the study through the class wraps presented in a professor’s Human Sexuality Class. She is 18 years old. She identifies her race or ethnicity as Caucasian. She identifies her gender as female. She is the only female in the study.

Aquinas is a senior studying Physics. He is from a town with less than 600 people. Aquinas was recruited to the study for his involvement in Facebook’s Straight Pride Club and for his articles appearing in the main campus paper at his institution and in the conservative paper. He identified his race as “white, Anglo-Saxon.” He identifies his gender as male. He is the only participant who did not choose to meet for
Data Analysis

Collecting the interviews from the five students who interviewed represented 12 hours of interviewing. During weeks four through seven of the term, I transcribed all of the interviews myself to create verbatim scripts of the interviews. I wanted to transcribe the interviews myself so that I could hear the stories a second time. What I did not realize is that as a novice transcriptionist, I was afforded the opportunity to listen to most stories five and six times because I consistently missed pieces of sentences while stopping and starting the tape. To make sure I didn’t lose or misunderstand participant stories, I listened to the responses to each questions in their entirety after initially transcribing them. The total transcription packet of interviews represents at least 40 hours of effort. All of the data were kept confidential during the transcription process.

As I moved into the data analysis section of my research, I relied on a method outlined in *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data* (1995). In this book Herbert and Irene Rubin outline several steps to organizing and analyzing qualitative research. The authors indicate that coding is “the process of grouping interviewees’ responses into categories that bring together the similar ideas, concepts, or themes” (p. 238) discovered. According to the authors, once all the interviews are coded, the next step is to pull together the similarly coded information in order to glean examples of a
theme, piece together events, or pull together narratives. It is in this way that the material can be examined to see what evidence contradicts and complements each theme. The benefit of asking open-ended interview questions is that the questions provide the categories themselves within which themes can be determined among participants. In analyzing my data, I created one large document into which I pasted each interview. I used my interview questions as a template for the larger categories that Rubin and Rubin describe. In the document, I pasted the answers from each participant together in question 1a. I then strung the responses together in a narrative in which participant’s answers were compared and contrasted. I did the same with each subsequent question.

In this large document, I looked for themes using the following questions which I developed using the information that the literature review provided:

1. How do individual participants come to identify with the belief that they should not accept other participants who are LGBT?

2. What conditions foster the development of these feelings prior to college? During college?

3. Are there degrees of acceptance among participants who are homophobic? How close will heterosexual participants allow themselves to be to Queer people? Would participants feel comfortable being related to a Queer person? Would they be friends with a Queer person? Or being neighbors? Coworkers?
4. Given that LGBT participants, resources, faculty and staff are a permanent fixture the campuses surveyed (each having a Queer resource center, and in some cases, a professional faculty in Queer participant services), how do participants who are resistant to LGBT people reconcile their institution’s commitment to diversity and their personal beliefs?

5. Do participants desire to become more accepting of participants who are LGBT? And if so, what may be ways to reach participants who are resistant?

I marked on the document where the participants addressed the questions above in their narratives. A sample of this coding is provided in Appendix E. The participants’ answers, when coded in terms of the five questions, yielded more nuances within the questions and eight themes were determined from their answers.

Questions one, two, and three each yielded one theme. Question four was bifurcated into two themes. In reconciling their personal beliefs with the campus commitment to Queer resources, students demonstrated that they did not know a lot about Queer people from a Queer perspective and that they felt they had principled objections to the existence of such resources on campus. Question five yielded three themes. First, all the participants agreed that the sexual practices of LGBT people were largely unacceptable so LGBT people should be accepted but their behaviors should not. Second, despite their objections to LGBT resources, most participants agreed that they are a valued part of campus life and offer a different perspective.
Third, much of the participants’ ability to see themselves accepting LGBT people stemmed from their experiences of the world as a bi-gendered place.
Chapter 4 - Data Results

Eight themes were identified the result of listening to participants’ perspectives on how they came to adopt beliefs that are resistant to the LGBT lifestyle. Represented in these themes is an attempt to understand the nuances of their resistance, the origins of resistance in the lives of the participants, and the possible conflicts the participants face when interacting with people who are LGBT.

The themes follow the sequence of the interview questions that I asked the participants Appendix D. The themes are descriptive. The eight themes outline what informed the participants’ resistance to the LGBT lifestyle. The themes describe whether the participants perceive their resistance to be constant. They also describe how LGBT people and how participants religious beliefs might have influenced their understandings of LGBT identities. Finally, the themes explore the participants’ perspectives on whether LGBT organizations belong on their campus.

Theme 1: Participants came to identify with the belief that they should not accept the LGBT lifestyle through media, messages from their religious institutions, their family, and their experiences of LGBT people in their respective hometowns.

The unique responses to the question “What informs your opinions about LGBT people?” were from Cato and Aquinas. Cato indicated that his opinions were formed mainly from an instinctive response to LGBT and anatomy. He said “first off, it was just kind of an instinctive, ‘it just doesn’t make sense.’” He indicated that he
first came across the idea of homosexuality when he was watching television. “I must have asked my parents and they must have said it’s when a guy likes another guy kind of like a mom and dad, but now wait a second, anatomically I don’t get it.” It was the logistics of LGBT sex that Cato did not understand, because “when you are a little kid, you learn about where babies come from, it’s kind of like guys have poles girls have holes.” Aquinas identified his involvement with his conservative group of friends as a source of his opinion for LGBT people. He says that “internet accessibility stimulated a bit more research on my part for example, I was involved in several online forums that discussed a variety of issues pertaining to economics, politics, and society. And my friendships with various members of the conservative community fostered additional discussions.” Aquinas indicates that he is a “prolific reader, and have read a number of commentaries, both in favor of and in opposition to the homosexual community.”

Several participants said that their own awareness of their own sexual orientation informs their opinion. The other themes include religion, the media, family, and out Queer people around the participants. Whitney and Mr. Smith said that their own sexual orientation informs their opinions of LGBT people. Whitney said “the fact that I would say I am heterosexual” informs her opinion. Mr. Smith said in response to the same question that he is “extremely heterosexual and I’ve been around gay and lesbians before… it’s just that I don’t appreciate when it’s flaunted in my face just like I wouldn’t flaunt it in their face.”

Religion was a source that all the participants but one identified. Each of the participants who indicated church simply said “my church” and gave more details later
in the interview. Aquinas said that he had “stumbled across that point in the Bible, and was aware that the Catholic Church (and many other Christian denominations) regarded homosexuality (along with other sexual abnormalities, perversions, or vices, promiscuities, etc.) as being sinful.” Bartholomew said that he learned about LGBT people from his church during “teachings on the subjects of human sexuality in general as opposed to – it’s interesting, it probably didn’t come up until later on because I learned about adultery before I learned about homosexuality.”

Various sources of media informed participants’ opinions in different ways. George indicated that at the “present a lot of what’s changing my views is reading about things and on the internet, like with the voting I think two years ago,” referring to the anti-gay marriage ballot measure. In the interest of understanding both pro-LGBT and anti-LGBT opinions Aquinas reads “Townhall.com (which has access to National Review, Human Events, policy think tanks such as the Cato Institute and the Herritage Foundation), the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, Lifesite.net, and our own campus publications.” Mr. Smith indicated that “it’s amazing in the aspect of media [LGBT people] have so much control over what we see and don’t see.” He cited the publicity around Brokeback Mountain as an example of how LGBT views are “being pushed on” him.

Each of the participants could name at least one LGBT person in the media. Both George and Whitney joked about whether Michael Jackson counted as an LGBT person. Aquinas doesn’t watch TV and only gets his news from online sources. Bartholomew also does not watch TV and gathers his news from the internet. He sometimes reads Andrew Sullivan’s blog. Cato identified him as a conservative
journalist who writes opinion pieces for Time and who “supports gay marriage and he is gay himself. I believe he sees it as a civil rights struggle which seems to be the general trend to view it as a sign of equality.” Cato also reads Andrew Sullivan’s blog. He has noticed that LGBT people are generally involved in more liberal politics, like the pro-choice movement and the sexual revolution. Mr. Smith named many of the above people but added that he noticed that many stylists on MTV are gay. He said they are always like “you are fabulousth” [imitates lisp] that over the top gayness that kind of bugs me. You know it’s like they are almost so gay they are trying to be gay.”

Participants each drew several conclusions about LGBT people based on what they saw in the media. Whitney described Ellen Degeneres and Elton John as people who benefit from the full acceptance of their identity. She also said that she noticed that gay men typically have “very good friendships with heterosexual women.” She also noticed that “guys think it’s hot when girls kiss.” Aquinas doesn’t “especially look to see who is and isn’t a member of that community.” Bartholomew said that queer people generally view the issues that affect their community as “a question of equality and ultimately I suppose a sense of vindication that what they are doing is right.” He said that “if you think it is morally tolerable homosexual practice or the lifestyle is tolerable than of course you think you want everyone to treat you as the same as any other sexual practice.” Cato’s experience of LGBT people in the media is that “they tend to be more promiscuous than men do in general and I think gay men are more promiscuous than the general population.” He read a study from the Center for Disease Control that reported “a quarter of gay men” had over 500 partners in their lifetime and half reported having over 100 partners. He said that “heterosexuals tended
to have monogamous relationships albeit serial monogamy” so even though heterosexu-
sals would “have multiple sexual partners it was in single relationships at a
time.” Cato learned from this article that gay men disclosed that they “pick up a
different guy every night” at clubs. George concluded from his exposure to LGBT
people in the media that “they can be talented or funny,” but he doesn’t know the
people personally so cannot draw more conclusions. Mr. Smith said that out lesbians
on TV are “not necessarily classy women, they are more manly” and that they “have
abrasive personalities.” He said he hasn’t “been around any transgender people” but
has been around bisexual people. They “seem to be weirder people, they end up with
piercing and there is nothing wrong with that.” He says that bisexual women “tend to
be more militant about stuff and tend to be more aggressive about stuff and ready to
defend themselves on anything and you can’t have a real conversation with them and
you can’t agree to disagree and there is no happy medium with them.”

Participants’ family members were also a source of their opinions on LGBT
issues. In the first conversation that they had about LGBT issues, Whitney’s mother
told her that she needs to be accepting of people who are different from her. Whitney
says that she is accepting but she “doesn’t condone it.” Mr. Smith attributes his views
on LGBT people to growing up in a conservative home in the South. George
remembers growing up hearing people around him say that gay people were bad.
Aquinas had a great uncle who was gay HIV positive. Family discussions around
LGBT people and his uncle led Aquinas to understand “that such sexual tendencies are
sinful.”
Finally, out LGBT people around the participants also informed their opinions of LGBT people. In Aquinas’ case, he experienced his great uncle as someone who was obnoxious in addition to the family opinions about the uncle’s lifestyle. Cato’s interactions with LGBT people have all been with men who are actively distancing themselves from the gay lifestyle. This will be addressed at length later. Mr. Smith experienced two gay students and one lesbian at his high school. Outside of their high school lives, several participants had experience with LGBT people who lived in their home towns.

Cato and Aquinas said that they could name no one in their hometowns who might be LGBT but both believe this might have something to do with the fact that they are from small, rural towns. Bartholomew also could not name anyone from his hometown but said that he encountered a lot of Queer people at Oregon State. Whitney knew several parents who were Queer from her hometown. George went to high school with two men who came out as gay after high school. One of the men at his school “was on dance team” and “was always out.” Mr. Smith remembers one lesbian and two gay men who attended school with him and can recall several out, LGBT adults in the community in his hometown.

Whitney stated that she does not view the sexual orientation of the people she knows in her hometowns as being “a big deal.” She does not believe that the Queer people who she knows have influenced her opinions on LGBT people. She said being Queer is “like a part of their identifying features when I think of them, if my dad were to” talk about a certain family friend she would think to herself that the family friend is “kinda tall, has dark hair is lesbian. It’s just one of her traits.” Whitney said its
“weird because you think that knowing someone would make you more accepting and stuff.” She felt that she is not more accepting of LGBT people because she knows a few LGBT-identified people. Bartholomew said that none of his opinions on LGBT people changed as result of the interactions he has had. George noticed that many people made fun of LGBT people and so “growing up I was always the type of person who was like nice to the people who were alone.” Mr. Smith did not value the attitudes that the gay men in his school exhibited. He did value the fact that he could talk with the lesbian woman, sharing with her what he disliked about LGBT people and listening to her views on what she did not like about straight people. Mr. Smith values people’s ability to control their sexual impulses. He said he “heard of someone who heard of someone in California who realized that when he was 30 he was especially attracted to little kids.” The man decided to become castrated and Mr. Smith feels that is “outstanding” because when “people have something that is chemical, biological where something is just not normal in terms of culture” it is good when they do something proactive to change it. Additionally, he felt that if it was correct to be Queer, more people would either be Queer or accept the LGBT lifestyle. He said that “if only 10% of the United States population” is Queer and “if Oregon can’t pass a law that people of the same sex can get married that tells you something about the mindset of the country.” Mr. Smith said that “you can’t just look at that and say everybody else is wrong.” He said that racist white organizations are a good example of a small group that says they are right while everyone else is wrong. He said that Queer people saying that homosexuality is okay is the same thing as racist white men saying that racism is
okay. He said “it’s like everyone else” around these small minorities “is saying you are wrong. It’s the same thing.”

Theme 2: The participants developed their beliefs prior to college and these beliefs have remained relatively stable throughout college despite coursework and exposure to LGBT people and LGBT issues.

George is the only participant who feels that his views on LGBT people have changed to be “more positive” since attending college. He says “I was kind of more afraid of the LGBT community, like if I was with someone who was gay I would you know like, do they think I’m judging them?” However, since working in the cultural centers with the LGBT resource center, he’s “worked with people and met people of that community those fears are gone. In that aspect my views have changed a lot and I’m able to be comfortable because I’ve been exposed to.”

Whitney and Mr. Smith are each in their second term of attending college and both of them feel that their views have stayed the same. Though Whitney has had experience taking college classes, she has only this year been immersed in the college experience at her institution. Each indicated that their views are the same since attending college. Whitney explained that she is uncomfortable when she sees affection among LGBT couples but she is “not rude about it at all, I don’t say anything rude to them it’s just a matter of it doesn’t seem right to me so I have a resistance I guess.” She says that she is someone who looses respect for LGBT people but she
does think “it’s sad that people make fun of and lose respect in the LGBT person. I do think it’s sad but yet I still can’t help myself.”

Aquinas and Cato each feel that their views on LGBT have stayed the same but are different since attending college. Cato still disagrees “with the lifestyle, but I became a friend with the guy’s bisexual but he’s not practicing and I talked to him and got to know him a lot.” He said that through this friend he came to understand “why people would behave that way or end up with that orientation.” The non-practicing bi friend said that he had no relationship with his father. “I guess he put it, there was this masculinity deficit,” Cato said. Since there was “no assertion from his father,” as the friend “moved through puberty, this need for masculinity became sexualized I guess, so he talked about that a little bit.” Aquinas said that he would still say “that the fundamental opinion has been unchanged, in that I still regard such tendencies as being sinful. However, my beliefs have developed beyond just this.” He, like Cato, believes that homosexuality “is a struggle, one which can be overcome with helps and support; and that for those who are able to overcome these struggles, much congratulations are in order.” He says that he recognizes that one of the “great failings of the social conservative (and in particular Christian) groups, in that they too often will condemn homosexuality, bisexuality, etc. yet fail to offer any form of help with overcoming these tendencies.” He also has come to understand that the “LGBT community also drops the ball in this area.” He says that they “by-and-large fail to offer such support groups to those members of their community who wish to remain celibate, or who view that lifestyle as being sinful.” In his experience, “rather than respecting the wishes of such people, or even helping them, the LGBT community has
largely discouraged celibacy as a solution, which makes this choice that much harder for those who wish to make it.”

Bartholomew feels that his views have stayed largely the same and that these views are negative. He says that while his beliefs have “had to develop as I thought through them more completely. I think I retained approximately the same basic belief, which is opposition to homosexual acts.”

_Discussing LGBT Issues in Class_

All of the participants discussed LGBT issues in their classes at the college or high school level. Whitney, George, and Mr. Smith each discussed LGBT issues in the Human Sexuality class. Each of them described the discussion as being neutral in its advocacy for or against LGBT people. Mr. Smith described many of his high school teachers as very liberal and indicated that several of his high school teachers were open advocates for LGBT people. Cato discussed LGBT people in his political science classes and described these discussions as largely neutral and centering upon the freedom of expression and speech of LGBT people. Bartholomew, as a microbiology student has not discussed it often in his major classes. However, for a history class he completed a paper on “a comparison between the Roman and to a certain extent the Greek view of homosexuality with the modern.” He said that his interest in the topic came from “Christians who talk about how homosexuality is responsible for the Roman Empire falling apart – they are wrong.” His interest also came from “homosexuals or Queers, as you said, to use a broader example who tries to
use the example that the Romans and Greeks had homosexuality to try to substantiate their case.” He found that on “it is not comparable to the modern debate on either side” because “the Greeks’ primary form of homosexuality was primarily pedophilic – which is really not comparable at all.” He also found that in Sparta, homosexuality was institutionalized “and largely confined to the urban upper class. But again, the main emphasis was on playing the man’s role.” Aquinas said that as a physics major LGBT people were mentioned in his general education classes but that he hasn’t had “any classes that were meant to study them (even for a day).”

*Discussing LGBT Issues at Home: Prior to and During College*

The literature review indicated that people who have parents with higher levels of degree attainment are less likely to be homophobic. Among the six participants, 13 parents are represented: Five of the participants each have a mom and dad who have been married to each other their whole lives. One of the participants has a mom who remarried and a father. Four of the parents have bachelor’s degrees, one of the parents has an associate’s degree, and four have advanced professional degrees. Four of the parents had no college or a few college courses.

All of the participants had discussed LGBT issues in their homes with their parents. Two of the participants had neutral experience learning about LGBT people from their parents. George’s experiences with his parents were largely neutral. The words gay and lesbian only came up in his house when he and his sister wanted to know how to say the words in Korean. His parents are from Korea originally and are
“kind of sheltered to the world.” He explained that on Korean television, affection is rarely shown among coupled characters on television. When his parents saw two women kissing on television in the United States, they were disgusted but their disgust may have been at the affection itself rather than disgust at the same sex component of the kiss. Bartholomew indicated that his discussion with his parents was very limited.

Whitney’s mother encouraged her to be accepting of LGBT people during a trip to San Francisco. Whitney expressed disgust at a same gendered couple she saw making out in the Castro district. During a debrief of the day at dinner, her mom “was trying to explain and she probably said that people can’t help it, that that’s the way they are and we need to be accepting of it.” Her mom also said that “you are going to see that in society, you will see it in the streets downtown…if you don’t agree with it you don’t have to put it down like you work with someone who is different from you in any other way.”

Cato, Aquinas, and Mr. Smith each had largely negative discussions about LGBT people with their parents. Cato’s discussion in his home was a negative one centered on the logistics of LGBT sex. His parents first explained things “as you do for kids around anything sexual, a man likes another man and later on especially when we started asking questions like well, how do they have sex?” Cato thought about it and realized that “instead of the pole and the hole there’s two poles, so we were like “ugh” [disgust], that would hurt I think.” His parents said that LGBT sex is “not very healthy, it’s kind of unnatural.” Cato researched the details on his own. He said “he studied anatomy of why it doesn’t work, sexual intercourse between men doesn’t work the same as sex between a man and a woman, the orifices are designed for that.”
Aquinas’s family discussed his great uncle’s HIV status and disparaged his uncle for continuing to have sex after learning of his status. The family speculated that the uncle infected others with the virus. Additionally, his cousin who is a senior in high school recently came out as a lesbian. The family is keeping her in their prayers.

Each of Mr. Smith’s parents is not accepting of LGBT people to varying degrees. His mother and he were watching a movie that featured a same sex relationship. He says that his mom is a “southern Christian woman, so it is all considered gross and disgusting.” He said that “anything kissing I guess mostly the sexual stuff she thinks is gross.” His father “got a little tipsy one time and he used to say ‘light in the loafers’” when referring to LGBT people. He said that while he has never heard his parents “say fag or anything but they might have said things like that’s a little bit faggy but never anything like that.” Mr. Smith’s believes that his stepdad is homophobic. “For instance if I saw another man checking me out and it was very obvious he was checking me out, I would just be like whatever,” Mr. Smith said. However, his stepdad “would be kind of like really grossed out about it.”

Whitney, Cato, and Bartholomew do not have any LGBT people in their families to their knowledge. Aquinas had one gay great uncle and currently has a lesbian cousin. George may have one gay cousin. This cousin has not come out but several of George’s family members suspect he may be gay. Mr. Smith feels that he may have a bisexual sister in law, but this is largely because he feels she is “a slut.”

From his family, Aquinas has drawn a number of conclusions. He felt his uncle was “promiscuous, having multiple sexual partners over the course of his life.” This differs from the rest of the family because “marriage fidelity is very highly
honored in our family.” Since his uncle contracted HIV, Aquinas believes that “STIs proliferate through the LGBT community.” He said that since his uncle “continued to have sexual relations well after he contracted even HIV, and after he had been positively diagnosed as carrying it,” he has concluded that “members of the community fail to practice common sense or self control in matters relating to the sexual impulse.” Aquinas believes that “this is a somewhat selfish way to live life, especially knowing that one of his partners eventually died from AIDS, having contracting HIV from him.”

With his cousin, Aquinas feels differently. She was “a senior in high school when she declared herself to be a lesbian” and “hasn’t really been living that kind of lifestyle for very long,” though she has had “a single same-sex partner during high school.” Aquinas said that he has noticed changes in his cousin. Since coming out she is now “more vocal,” and socially “she has moved to the left.” Finally, his cousin was more “feminine than she now is; she hasn’t exactly changed to be what could be called masculine, but a noticeable change is there.”

George offered some thoughts on his family’s reaction to his potentially gay cousin. Because the cousin exhibits some nontraditional gender traits the family jokes that he may be gay.
Theme 3: There are degrees of acceptance among some participants. Some participants welcome LGBT people into their personal lives while others do not.

The Social Distance Scale, as detailed in Chapter 2 highlights how close or far participants allow LGBT people into their lives. Each of the participants were asked how comfortable they would be with LGBT in their lives as close kin by marriage, in their club as personal friends, on their street as neighbors, working alongside them in a job, as citizens in their country, as visitors to their country, or if they would exclude LGBT people from their country.

George is the only participant who would not exclude any LGBT people from any part of his life. He says “its wrong to discriminate.” Each of the other participants feels varying degrees of distance around LGBT people. None of the participants would exclude LGBT people from the United States. Additionally, none of the participants would exclude LGBT people as visitors to the United States or deny them citizenship.

Whitney and Mr. Smith expressed some discomfort at being on the job with LGBT people. Mr. Smith worked at a diner with one of the two out gay men from his high school. At the diner, he had trouble working with [name removed to protect identity] the gay because “he bugged the shit out of me because that guy can’t work worth shit.” During busy times in the restaurant, Mr. Smith would encourage [name removed to protect identity] to work harder, saying “go bus some tables and he’d go out there and pick up one plate at a time and then do this little feminine walk back.” According to Mr. Smith [name removed to protect identity] also danced at work.
When business at the diner was slow “he’d go into the foyer and he’d say “I feel like doing a podmerae [sic]” and you’d be like what the hell is a podmerae [sic] and he do some little dance move in the middle of the floor and then he’d go back and do some work again. Just flamboyantly gay people.” However, Mr. Smith said that he is “still nice to him I still make it a point to be nice to him.” He made a distinction, indicating that “it is all about how they present themselves.” For example, he said that he “can come across as the type of guy who is more anti-gay but just in talking to me you can tell that I am more conservative by the way that I act, and anti gay goes along with being conservative, I can’t help that, and I am not saying I am anti-gay, I am just against the lifestyle and I am not against the people but I don’t agree with it.”

Whitney said that it depends on the job as to whether she’d feel comfortable working with LGBT people. She worked for a summer at Victoria Secret and said that it would probably be different to work with a gay man. “I don’t think it would be weird and I think that’s what most people would assume it there was a guy working there anyway was that he was gay and also I would assume that my own orientation that he and I were both interested in men and not in women.” Whitney expressed concern that working with a lesbian might be the same as working with a straight man. She would “feel like maybe both of them were looking at me and that’s not something you want to think about while you are at work and I think that the other thing is there would still be a difference between a heterosexual guy.” The difference, she says is that she would “probably take it as a complement in a way if the guy found me attractive” but “if a homosexual girl was interested in me I think it would freak me out
it would scare me and I don’t know I would be very uncomfortable talking to her because I’d feel like she was looking at me that way.”

Bartholomew did not have experience working with LGBT people but did have experience working with “coworkers who have lifestyles that I don’t agree with.” He said he’s “had some coworkers who sleep around, I’ve had coworkers who do drugs, I’ve had ones who – to put it harshly – are kind of losers, when I worked at MacDonald’s for a while in high school…I always got along with them, I didn’t have any conflicts.” He said he tries “not to pick fights personally, I try to keep it at an intellectually level.”

None of the participants would feel uncomfortable with having LGBT people on their same street as neighbors. Aquinas qualified his answer, saying that “so long as the issue isn’t being pushed by them, it won’t really be pushed by me. From there, any relationship established is by the merits of who the person is.”

Cato and George are the only participants who are friends with people who identify as LGBT and who express interest in accepting this part of their lives. Cato and George do not offer any conditions on whether they’d be friends with LGBT people. Aquinas does not notice difference in his friends “unless they’re deliberately brought up by the other person.” He said that he has “a few friends within the LGBT community. These have largely been met through activities such as dance classes.” Since he does not notice differences, “the members of the LGBT population are equally as much my friends as anyone else (with variations due to common interests, personality, etc, as is normal for any friendship).”
To our mutual amusement, Bartholomew noted that it would be “kind of odd to have a gay person” in the clubs in which he is interested. He said that they have had “a few atheists work for the… conservative paper I work for, but – I know that at least one person who is supportive of gay rights.” He said that he “would be surprised if there was a gay person who wanted to work for it, we are in opposition to it.” But, if a gay person did want to work for his paper, he imagines “it would be someone who is more like Alan Gould” who is a conservative gay author. He said he’s “had a lot of coworkers who have lifestyles who I don’t agree with and I try to keep that out of the relationship.”

Whitney was not sure what she would do if a friend came out to her and she said it is unlikely that she would become friends with a lesbian. She said “I don’t know how I’d end up meeting anyone whose personal friends are to the extent that I would become friends with them. I think it would be harder though because I think I’d automatically put up a shield or a barrier ahead of time.” She said she has a friend whose “best friend all throughout high school came out to her after a while that she was homosexual their senior year and once she found out that her best friend didn’t see her that way they were just as good of friends or better than they were before.” Whitney hopes that she “could harbor the same friendship with a homosexual or a gay or a transgender or a lesbian.”

Mr. Smith does not see himself in relationships with LGBT people for several reasons. He doesn’t agree with “their lifestyle.” He also worries that he couldn’t count on LGBT people as true friends. He said “if you offend them that day would they be able to come help you when you needed it? Like with my other friends, if I had an
argument with them that is superheated and almost broke up our friendship, I could call and say hey man I’m in trouble and they will come but it’s just because we are likeminded in that way.” Mr. Smith was unsure that LGBT people would be able to be there for him.

Participants varied in their responses on how they would welcome LGBT people into their family. The statement “as close kin by marriage” did not make sense to any of the participants. I gave them all the same example. I told them close kin by marriage might be if your sister married a guy and that guy’s brother was Queer. Mr. Smith did not answer the question but joked that he might have a bisexual sister in law because she is promiscuous. George would not exclude LGBT people from his family. Whitney’s close family ties would not let her exclude someone from their family. She said “I am pretty close with my family as a whole and I think it’d be very out of line to tell someone they couldn’t come because of that.” She said that “you might have to explain to little kids or something that he’s different in that respect but” that “he is still part of the family…but I would say he should come.”

Bartholomew, Aquinas, and Cato each had similar responses. They would be cordial to their new Queer family member but would not approve of their lifestyle choices. Bartholomew would “disapprove of what he was doing” but would “establish a familiar rapport with him and try to get along with him, seeing as I have with other relatives with whom I have disagreements about things.” Aquinas would “be saddened that member of my family (as such) would be burdened with this struggle” but said that “that each person has his or her own cross or crosses to bear.” Recently, one of his cousins “declared herself to be a lesbian. I am saddened by this revelation, and she
remains in my prayers. However, it is her decision to make.” Cato said that he
“wouldn’t exclude them” from family functions. He would “explain why I disagree
with the lifestyle and why I disagree with the behaviors, but I disagree with
heterosexuals who are promiscuous and I have good friends and family members who
do that stuff.” Cato imagines “there’d be some tensions because of the different
values but, like with my bi friend, I wouldn’t reject them.”

Theme 4: Despite their relatively high comfort level demonstrated with the Social
Distance Scale, participants seldom choose to have many LGBT people as their
friends.

The Social Distance questions indicate that each participant would welcome
LGBT people into their lives. However, Whitney, Mr., Smith and Bartholomew do not
have any LGBT friends. Cato has two friends who were once Queer but who now are
learning to leave the lifestyle. George has many friends in the LGBT center on his
campus but no Queer friends in his close circle of friends. Aquinas has at least one
LGBT friend.

Bartholomew believes he does not have any friends who are LGBT because “a
lot of what I do is political and is also politically involved…most of what I do tends to
come out on some level of opposing sides.” Aquinas agreed. He does not “share a
common worldview with most of the LGBT community.” In his experience, they are
“non-Christian, and both socially and economically liberal.” Aquinas indicated that “a
number with whom I have interacted have been at least borderline anti-Christian (as
opposed to simply being non-Christians.” He has not “interacted with any for a long enough period of time to develop a friendship.” He believes that “oddity of the LGBT community is that they tend to fall into adversarial positions in those areas in which we do interact (generally, in the realms of politics, economics, society, religion, philosophy, etc).” He noted that “it’s very difficult to establish a friendship with someone who tends to disagree with me on all of my major values.”

Theme 5: While participants indicated that various sources had informed their perspectives related to LGBT lifestyle, participants explain their objections to Queer marriage, Queer adoption, and legal protections in the context of their religious beliefs.

Whitney was raised Methodist. She does not currently attend services while in school but is looking into churches in the area. Aquinas is Catholic and attends mass once a week at the minimum. Bartholomew was raised in an evangelical Christian home and attends church fairly regularly. Cato also identifies as an evangelical Christian and is currently between churches since moving to the town in which he attends college. George was raised in a Presbyterian home but is currently between churches while he figures out his relationship to God. He engages in religious activities about twice a week, he said. Mr. Smith was raised Seventh Day Adventist and is currently looking for churches in the city in which he attends school.

Each of the participants received a variety of messages about homosexuality from their place of worship. Aquinas was taught that “the Bible and the teachings and
practices of the Catholic Church make it abundantly clear that homosexuality is a sin” and that homosexuality is like “any other sexual deviations (fornication, adultery, etc.).” He believes that homosexuality is “a mortal sin, meaning that it is not a light sin, but rather a very grave one” and that because it is a mortal sin being homosexual “strips a person of any state of grace that he or she may have previously been in, making salvation ultimately impossible.” Bartholomew disagrees that being Queer is a choice. He believes that attraction “is going to be determine or will at least be disposed toward a homosexual orientation. The question is to what extent. I also think that appetites grow if you feed them.” He said that “supposing that homosexuality is entirely predetermined, it still doesn’t mean that they should act on those in the Christian doctrine.” Cato said that while his faith presents homosexuality as a matter of choice “but its not that simple because choice makes it sound like something you do in one day and it’s a combination of choices and reactions to conditions over years and not just, choice is like, if there is a term that is more complex.” Evangelical Christian tradition, according to Cato, “describes different lifestyles, homosexual among several that are incorrect and it emphasizes that they can be destructive and so it’s not just don’t live that way.” Cato emphasizes that each rule in his religion has a purpose; the rules are not arbitrary. Mr. Smith hasn’t discussed the matter with any religious officials at his church. Whitney said that “it’s seems clear that the Bible says it’s wrong so since most of Christianity is based on the Bible, it is that it’s wrong.” But she did ask her “youth pastor about it one time just because I was curious” and the youth pastor told her that sometimes God gives people different burdens but that “God
so loves these people, that he still has a place for them in heaven, even though they are being sinners.”

**LGBT People in Participants’ Religious Communities**

A few of the participants shared their experiences of what they learn about LGBT people from their church. Participants were also asked if any LGBT people attended their family’s church when the participants were growing up.

Bartholomew couldn’t think of any LGBT people who attend his church but does remember that supporters of the anti-gay ballot measure came to his church to collect the signatures necessary to put the measure on the ballot. He speculated that they might not feel welcome there. Cato agrees that the LGBT “lifestyle isn’t conducive to Biblical teaching, just as promiscuity isn’t either.”

Whitney knew a family who had a daughter at her church who came out. She noticed that the girl who came out changed her outward appearance dramatically, but said that the family expressed accepting, loving behaviors toward her. She said it was “weird” because “the family was raised in the church.” Watching this girl come out made Whitney think that being gay was a function of genetics.

Mr. Smith couldn’t think of anyone who attended his church who was LGBT but shared some strong feelings about Christian-identified LGBT people. A friend of his is Episcopalian. This faith just a few years ago “accepted a gay bishop.” He asked her how she could “belong to an organization that has such hypocrisy?” and said that
this situation is similar to “being best friends with Martin Luther King and then being a skinhead. It’s just like, dude, you can’t practice what you preach.”

Aquinas also doesn’t “know any Catholics or even Christians who are also members of the LGBT.” He said homosexuality is “considered sinful by nature to be a practicing homosexual,” but he does know “of groups such as Dignity which exist for those members of the LGBT community who wish to practice abstinence.” He believes that priests who are Catholic who molest boys are Queer-identified and believes that in light of the lawsuits “homosexual priests have had a negative impact on my religion from that aspect.” He has experienced some LGBT people asking the church to revoke the claim that homosexuality is a sin. Aquinas believes this can never happen. He believes that the “Bible explicitly states that homosexuality (etc.) is wrong, and it does so several times in both the New and Old Testaments” and that it will be impossible for his church to “renounce its doctrines that state homosexuality to be a sin.” He said that reversing any part, however small, of the doctrine of his faith would cause a great calamity. “Reversing this doctrine is also to call into question all infallibly held doctrines, and thus to call the religion itself into question. The Church would then be in a state of heresy, and thus would no longer be the Church.”

Faith and Forming Friendships: LGBT People in Participants’ Personal Lives

Mr. Smith and Whitney did not share their perceptions on how their faith might shape their abilities to form relationships with LGBT people. However, the
other four believe that their faith plays different roles in their relationships with LGBT people.

Aquinas believes that his faith “causes LGBT people to either deliberately shun me or at the very least to fall into separate social circles than I do.” He said that most of his “social circles include mostly other Christians, though I do have a few non-Christian friends.”

Bartholomew said that he is “going to disapprove of those actions, it is going to hinder” forming relationships. He would prefer to address these issues in “public, intellectual forums, places like the school paper where people reading what I write know what to expect. They are going there to read opinion.” He doesn’t like to “take arguments on it on a personal level.” He tries to let other people “initiate discussion on stuff.”

Cato believes a person’s queer identity affects his ability to make friendships “in the same sense that it affects my ability to be friends with anybody of a different belief set and the same is probably true with them of me.” He said in particular when “I came to understand the physics of gay sex and I was like “eee” [disgust] and I was like wait a second, you actually like that, that doesn’t seem right.” He said that “it would be the same as if a heterosexual female friend who told me that she likes anal intercourse, I’d be like whoa, that’s a little weird, so it affects it like that, but religiously I guess it affects everyone the same except with a different religious orientation.”

George’s thoughts on religion and LGBT people are changing. Currently he believes that “people are people and no matter what if I don’t like that person it’s
going to be based on how they are as a person and not what they…are.” But prior to attending school, he said that all he had was “school life and church life and that was my basis off of everything like who I knew.”

Participants’ perceptions of LGBT identities and LGBT civil rights

Bartholomew would prefer that society was “basically the way it was during the 19th century. It was largely kept and basically it was just one of those peculiarities that polite society let happen but didn’t comment on. The gay people didn’t push it into view.”

George is the only participant who perceives that LGBT people do not enjoy the same rights as straight people. For example he says “they don’t have marriage” and “in terms of rights as the unwritten kind of law, like how they are treated and the abuse and stuff, in that aspect then LGBT people are definitely gypped.” Whitney feels that while LGBT people have the same constitutional rights, those rights “probably aren’t upheld to the full extent that they should be.” She feels that as a country “we are getting more liberal with our understanding of human rights” and she feels that “the fact that LGBT people have the same constitutional rights could definitely be a bi-product” of the liberal movement. She does feel like “they should have the same rights.”

Cato and Mr. Smith both gave simple answers. Cato feels that “the first amendment applies to all…I’d say yes. They should have the same rights and they do.
The first amendment applies to all.” Mr. Smith said “Sure. If they are a United States citizen, they do have United States rights.

Aquinas and Bartholomew had lengthy reactions to the question. Aquinas feels that “fundamentally, yes” the rights are the same. Since LGBT people benefit from “equality before the law; freedom from governmental restrictions against the development of a person’s natural abilities or talents; emancipation, i.e. freedom from slavery; religious freedom; the right to own property and also to seek sanctuary on that property; and other, less fundamental rights such as the ability to make mistakes, and freedom of association.” Aquinas believes that “human rights are ultimately based upon human dignity. This in turn must ultimately be based upon the existence of the soul.” He said that “being a part of the LGBT community does not deprive a person of his or her soul, any more than it can cause them to become less human.” In conclusion “none of the members of the LGBT community can be justly deprived from their natural human rights simply for being members of the LGBT community.”

Bartholomew indicated that it depends “on how you define rights…the questions is, are rights the same as law?” He does not believe so. He says that LGBT people “have the same rights as in that they are entitled to the same justice from the government.” He feels that as far as whether being barred from being married “is a violation of rights will depend on what you think justice and the role of government requires as far as sanctioning and subsidizing human sexuality I think that it should be entirely left alone.”

Bartholomew expressed concern that “you start having movement to basically accept that some of the old taboos regarding sexuality will be broken down and we’ll
be moving toward acceptance of homosexuality.” He worries that accepting
homosexual marriage is like “saying that homosexual relations are interchangeable
with heterosexual ones and to really say that is to accept that there is no distinction
between them.” His concern is that marriage “won’t have much to do with the sex of
your partner so is marriage just a temporary relationship governing tax breaks for your
homosexual partner? I think that is negative in the long term for society.”

Participant Perceptions of LGBT Marriage

Universally, the participants do not believe that LGBT people should be
afforded the right to marry however, they vary widely in their reasons why they
oppose Queer marriage.

Cato said that “that they do” have the right to marry. He clarified, “they do
have the same right as heterosexuals to marry someone of the opposite gender.”

Mr. Smith believed that LGBT marriages are yet another function of LGBT
people flaunting their lifestyle. They are doing the “shoving it in the face thing” and
that they only want marriages so that they can be “considered to be just like everybody
else.” He believes that if what the United States considers to be marriage were called
civil unions then LGBT people would want civil unions instead of marriage because
they “trying to pry your way into society that statistically, it’s the people who are
Christian and in a Christian society that are completely against gay marriage and
marriage, and gay people too and marriage is part of Christian society.” He believes
that LGBT marriage is “really a slap in the face to people who are outspoken against it. It seems like a slap in the face to me, that’s the way I take it.”

Bartholomew, in addition to his concerns raised earlier about LGBT marriage, feels that Queer people contradict themselves. Lawrence v. Texas, he feels, is an example of how Queer people do not want the government “in their bedroom.” Bartholomew feels that “gay marriage actually brings the government into their bedroom. It’s a subsidy, it’s a sanction and it’s a regulation of homosexual marriages that wasn’t there before.” Additionally, he feels that the government should not “sanction gay marriages I think that that will change the idea of what we consider marriage.” Bartholomew is concerned that legalizing gay marriage “will limit distinctions between male and female” because “you force society into a very large metaphysical conflict.” Aquinas agreed in his concerns about changing gender roles. He said “a case can be made against same-sex marriages based off of the different gender roles. In the case of the two men or the two women, who would fill which roles?” George is conflicted because of what he learned about marriage and gender. He said on one hand he wants to say LGBT marriage should not be legalized because he “was taught, somehow it’s in my head that marriage is between a man and a woman and it’s to be kept holy.”

Aquinas feels that family is another reason why Queer people should not get married. He said “the more stable the state of the family in our society, the more stable our society will ultimately be” and that the most “stable form of family is ultimately the so-called nuclear family, with a mother and a father and their children. Cato agreed that the “purpose of marriage” is to provide “the ideal socioeconomic...
environment for children.” He would also say that heterosexual roommates should not get married if they “were like dude that would be pretty sweet, we’d get some killer Pell Grants if we got married.”

Bartholomew noted that in the short term, he feels that “Fred and Steve getting married” won’t “affect Bob and Julie next door,” however, “it will change the next generation’s opinion of marriage which will change the way they behave toward marriage.” Aquinas agreed. He felt that allowing same-sex couples to marry “opened the doors to allow for polygamy, incestuous marriages, and a variety of other forms of marriage.” He points to Canada as an example of how these concerns are coming into reality. LGBT marriages are currently legal there and Aquinas said that “the Canadian Justice Department conducted a study recently, and already the suggestions are being made to legalize polygamy there.”

Mr. Smith said that he knows plenty of heterosexual couples who are together their whole lives and do not get married. Further, “no matter how you look at it, it plays into religious aspects and when you have religion involved, you know it says not to be married, it says not to be gay period, it’s supposed to be a man and a woman and I think every denomination will look at it that way.”

Whitney and Mr. Smith both believe that LGBT people should be afforded civil unions, but that marriages in the church are designed for males and females. Whitney feels like an institution that is identical to marriage could be put into place and this second track could be called “civil unions.” George agreed with Whitney’s idea for civil unions. He is the only participant to offer a reason why LGBT people should get married. He said that “people aren’t getting married with God in the
middle; people are getting married because they want to and they love each other and” he asked “why should our worldview be the dominant worldview?”

Participant Perceptions of LGBT Insurance Benefits as substitutes for LGBT marriage benefits

Participants were asked about whether LGBT people should be allowed to insure their partners and children in order to gauge participant knowledge of issues facing LGBT people. Since most participants would agree that LGBT people have the same rights as straight people, the participants are probably unaware that LGBT people face a number of barriers in insuring their partners and children.

Only George identified some of these barriers. He agreed that LGBT people should definitely have more insurance rights for their partners. Whitney agreed. George watched an episode of “ER where this lesbian couple had been together for 30 or 40 years and...you know when you sign things over for surgery,” the partner of the patient couldn’t sign her into surgery because they were not married and not on each others’ insurance. George said “it was so traumatic because this person is going to die because they don’t have legal documents that she is her spouse and I was traumatized.”

In contrast, Bartholomew incorrectly speculated that “for a couple who really wants to do that to go an attorney because I believe you can gain access to medical records or write each other into each others’ wills and it wouldn’t be entirely fair in
the sense it would be inconvenient.” He said that the “alternative is to say that sex and sexuality and gender don’t matter…This society does exist in trade offs.”

The rest of the participants have similarly low levels of awareness around LGBT insurance benefits. None of the participants identifies the cost of the legal fees associated with the measures that they suggest so that LGBT people can figure out a nontraditional way to insure their families. For example, Aquinas said that “insurance is, after all, a service that can (and is) provided by one entity to another, often as a source of income to the provider.” Ideally, the insurance provider “will be allowed to grant or deny this service to other people in the manner that the provider sees fit.” He believes that “if one provider refuses to provide this service, another one willing to provide this service can just as easily make a profit from this arrangement.” He did not indicate any awareness of what would happen if no company in a given state was willing to provide insurance, but did write that the “LGBT couple in question can choose to either have two insurance policies or move to an area with a hospital and insurance provider that will provide them coverage as a couple.” He does say that “if a privately operated hospital refuses to accept insurance for same-sex couples, this is unfortunate for those couples, but they should have this right.”

Mr. Smith believes that insurance and civil unions are the same thing. Cato equates LGBT couples with any roommates and believes that insurance is “just a contract that you set up with yourself and a partner and that’s something that my roommates could set up together.” It is okay with him if LGBT people “wanted to buy a house, or get insurance benefits.”
Participant Perceptions of LGBT People as Parents

Participants were asked this question in an effort to understand another dimension of the social distance scale from earlier. Participants who are more resistant might reveal more aspects of their resistance in their perceptions of LGBT people as parents.

Whitney and George do not have any problems with LGBT people as parents. Whitney knows that “if they raise children they will grow up to be gay. I think that implies that there is something wrong with you and I don’t think it’s something wrong with you.” She said that everyone’s family operates differently and “if it’s two moms or two dads” kids wouldn’t know the difference, only that the family is “different from the norm, socially aware, socially active.” George agrees and says “if you are going to raise your kid in a good way, more power to you and if you don’t then that sucks.” George is concerned about “how the kid is going to feel.”

Cato believes that it is “ideal, and most people on the left and right agree that a feminine influence and a masculine influence is best for children to be raised.” He believes that “obviously there are plenty LGBT homes that are more ideal that some heterosexual homes, so I don’t have a problem with a child being adopted as opposed to being thrown around among foster homes.” Cato thinks that in adoption “preference should be given to a man and a woman because it is ideal to have that man and woman influence on the children, but I think it’s okay if you let them raise children.”

Bartholomew objects to LGBT parenting because he believes that “children tend to do better when raised in a stable home including both a mother and a father.”
However, he is “strongly pro-life, meaning (among other things) that I would oppose an abortion to prevent such a couple from raising children.” He is not excited about LGBT parent adopts because “it creates a skewed idea of what man is as far as who defines what we are – do we get to define ourselves or are we defined in another way?”

Mr. Smith believes that it is up to the individual parents to decide, but does not believe that an LGBT home is ideal for children. He went to high school with two children of LGBT homes and he perceived that the kids were “very stressed about it.”

Aquinas believes that “children ought to be raised by their natural parents whenever possible.” But he believes that children should not have to remain in abusive households just so that they can remain with their natural parents. He pointed out that “in the case of an LGBT couple, it’s not possible for both parents to be the biological parents of the child.” He believes that “at the least, children need both a father figure and a mother figure. An LGBT couple cannot provide this to a child; nor, for that matter, could a single-parent household.”

In his journal, Aquinas also had the following insights and statistics to share about LGBT people and what he perceives to be their “pedophilic tendencies.”

There are the pedophilic tendencies of many members of the LGBT community. Now, I know that this point is often debated and contested. The ACLU, for example, argues against this, saying that “90% of child molestations” are committed by heterosexuals. Using the most liberal statistics, 10% of the population is homosexual, meaning that the abuse rates are the same. However, the adoption/birth rates area also lower for same-sex couples
than for heterosexual couples. Thus, even using that 10% figure (itself
contested as being high), the abuse rate is higher in same-sex couples.

There’s also the case of the Catholic Church, in which 80% of the sex-
abuse cases involve same-sex abuse, many of these also being pedophilic.
Furthermore, according to American studies, “Less than 3% of the population
is homosexual, yet one-third of the sex abuse cases are committed again boys,”
and also “According to a study published in Adolescence, 29% of the adult
children of homosexual parents have been specifically subjected to sexual
molestation as a child by a homosexual parent, compared to only 0.6 percent of
adult children of heterosexual parents.” This latter finding was confirmed by a
study published in the American Sociological review.

Theme 6: Participants agree that LGBT people should be affirmed, but their “lifestyle”
and “sexual choices” should not.

Aquinas indicates that no one, of any gender, should affirm an LGBT person’s
sexual lifestyle. He believes that more moral society will never “occur so long as society treats the LGBT sexual lifestyle as being normal, good, or morally
acceptable.” He indicates that “this is true for any deviation from a moral standard:
sexual or otherwise. So long as there is no reason to conform to a moral principle, that
moral principle will be disregarded by many in society.” He is concerned that “as society becomes less supportive of the concept of the straight monogamous concept of sex (and marriage, for that matter) as compared to other forms, the tendency of society
will be to drift away from this single form and to branch into the other forms (polygamy, infidelity, homosexuality, etc.).”

Whitney agrees that it is easier for women to publicly accept LGBT people because in her experience men “feel the need to make comments, especially if they are around other guys I think they would do it to get laughs out of their friends.” Bartholomew attributes the difficulty for men to show support maybe because of “the way the culture works. Particularly in say a southern state. Some of the norms around masculinity are more rigidly enforced for a straight man to openly support gays.” Cato said it is easier for females to show support because “women tend to be more of a nurturing nature and a little bit more of accommodating and emotional and they tend to kind of get along with more people,” whereas males “tend to be a little more rigid of who they can get along with.”

George attributed the difference in the way men are supposed to treat LGBT people to concern that men have about how they will be perceived. George says “it just seems like if a guy were to say he was an ally I guess the automatic response would be, he’s gay.” When he first started working with the LGBT center on his campus he was walking with a coworker from that center and remembers “thinking what if people see me walking with him, will they think I am his boyfriend?” Mr. Smith agreed. He believes that “guys have the whole macho mentality and that is what plays into the whole racist, anti-gay thing because they don’t want to be seen as weak.”

Aquinas indicated that it is most important for all genders to help LGBT people to “remain chaste.” Support should come in a form of “not generally thought
of as support: a gentle warning of the sinfulness of such habits.” He said that “sin
cannot be fought if it is not recognized, and those sins of a sexual nature are among
the hardest to fight to begin with.” Cato agrees and said that as a male, he can “believe
that the behaviors are not okay and still be able to say to the person I think you would
benefit from changing these behaviors and this lifestyle. I am not going to fire you, we
can still have lunch but I think you should change these behaviors.”

Each of the participants was asked if there was a certain way that LGBT
people should be treated. All participants agreed that regardless of their own moral
stance or opinions on LGBT people, that all people should be treated with compassion,
dignity and respect.

Theme 7: Despite their highly nuanced resistance to the LGBT lifestyle, most
participants accept LGBT people as a fixture on their campus.

The participants’ institution is an environment that is supportive of LGBT
students. The campus has six student funded organizations, a full-time faculty
member devoted to LGBT student persistence and retention, and the surrounding town
is also supportive of LGBT families and people. Participants were asked if they knew
that their tuition dollars fund the student organizations and if they knew that LGBT
people were so accepted in their town. They were also asked how they reconcile their
resistance with the fact that they pay mandatory student fees that support LGBT
organizations and people.
Bartholomew knew that the institution had the services it does before he attended school there. He believes that the school is not supporting diversity but instead is supporting social activism. He believes that it is inappropriate for a campus to be an institution of social change. Aquinas also knew but his decision to attend was not affected. He believes all student organizations should have to fundraise their own money from private donations. Cato agrees with Aquinas and believes that the school is in violation of Supreme Court precedent. Citing Southworth, he believes that schools are not supposed to give out money “on an ideological basis,” and he believes that this is the case with LGBT student organizations. He believes the school has “decided to take a stance and embrace discriminating ideology.”

Whitney said she doesn’t “know where most of her tuition goes” and does not have a problem with what her fees support. Speaking of her fees money she said that “the fact that it goes to one club or organization or the Black rights group, it doesn’t surprise me at all, but it wouldn’t turn me away from [Whitney’s institution] at all.”

Mr. Smith also doesn’t know where his tuition dollars go, but “isn’t surprised” they go toward LGBT student groups. He said “it’d be cool if they had a straight pride center, you know, equal stuff out.” He indicated that “maybe kids, who identify as homophobic” could go there “and you know, hang out.” In addition, he indicated that since there is “a center just for African American students, why can’t we have a center for just white students.”

Aquinas indicated that he is “not particularly happy about the cash flow from my wallet to any organizations whose activities I find to be dubious.” But, he says he is “a
big fan of the free-market approach to diversity; especially since this actually adds value to the concept of diversity.”

Cato said that he “has no problem with the student group, don’t have any problem with the activism and in fact I love the different points of view, I don’t like that the school has decided to take a stance and embrace discriminating ideology.” He feels that the fact that the administration has “given [LGBT organizations on his campus] their “own center and gives it an inordinate amount of student money,” and he feels that this is a case of the administration “playing favorites.” He thinks the administration is doing something “unethical, they are taking the students money for something that is political.” He reiterated that he has no problem with the student group.

Theme 8: Participants Who Value Traditional Gender Roles Express more Resistance to the LGBT Lifestyle.

Aquinas clarified that a traditional family consists of a woman and a man and outlined what he called the traditional responsibilities of such a family. He ended his journal entry on gender roles with a disclaimer. He said “I’m not saying that society should necessarily force people into these roles, rather than if people would follow these roles more closely, they would be on the whole happier.” Aquinas said “ultimately, men need to be the leaders of their households.” He also clarified that his intention is not to “degrade women as being incapable of leading. There are many women who have demonstrated that leadership is not a trait exclusive to men.
However, any group of people, from the largest nation to a single family, must ultimately have leadership.” Bartholomew also thinks that “men should take more of a leadership role” but does not mean to sound sexist. He said gender roles in families are like dancing,

You have a lead and a follow – both parts are necessary and the thing is, it is really hard to say that – they are certainly not equal in terms of the equivalency of what they do but that one is better or worse than the other is a misconception of dancing. One initiates and one follows, but a lot of times it is the follower who do the really flamboyant stuff that shines on the dance floor. Aquinas indicated that “the responsibilities of men ought to include: that they are responsible as the leaders of their households; that they shall provide for their families as they are able; and that they should protect their families with their very life when there is the threat of danger.” Bartholomew agrees. The leadership responsibilities, according to Aquinas include serving as the family spokesperson for things like resolving neighborly disputes or deciding where to take family vacations. Men are ideal for these roles because “it’s a simply observable fact of nature that men are larger, stronger, and more physically aggressive than women. They are also thus the most capable of prevailing in a struggle, and at the same time the least likely to hesitate should physical force be needed.” Families should also look to the father as the spiritual leader who is “responsible for ensuring that their family remains strong in its faith,” leading Bible studies and studies of other religious texts and documents. Bartholomew agrees and said that in addition men should not “be feminine.” Cato agrees with these gender roles and describes the man’s role as a servant leader who helps his wife “to be self-fulfilled, would be the new age term for it, to develop and work on developing her character.” George observed that “men are repressed
emotionally,” and are not supposed to do “artsy stuff, like dancing, the performance arts stuff, cooking.”

In contrast, Aquinas said that there are “certain things that women were meant to do which men should/can not do.” Women should “complement the leadership role of the husband/father by swallowing her pride and falling into the follower’s role (provided that doing so poses no threat to her safety, though the man would not be leading in that case).” He said that “without a follower, there can be no leader.” Men are more suited to work than women because “men do not get pregnant; women do.” He stresses that he doesn’t believe that women should not work “but they are ultimately forced into a situation of needing maternity leave for certain periods of time.” His concern is that if the “mother be the primary welfare provider of the family, there will ultimately be periods during which the family lacks a source of income. However, if the father is the primary provider for the family, then when the mother gets pregnant, there is no need for the family to go without for a period of time.” Cato agreed with this family set up and said that most of the girls with whom he has contact say that they see “something wrong with” a man who does not serve in the protector role and allow her to be the follower.

Just as the husband provides for the family’s “subsistence and safety, the wife must provide for its nurturing and for its comfort.” She provides for the family’s “mental well-being” and this “may well involve staying home to raise the family’s children.” A woman should see “any pregnancy to its natural end (birth) and then at a minimum raising the child until he or she can be at least semi-independent.” A wife should be “there at the end of the day for the husband and for the children,” because,
he asks, “if both parents trudge home tired from work, who will motivate the family to
do so, especially if the children also return tired from sports and school?” Women are
best suited for this role, according to Aquinas because “in matter of the family and the
community, men will more naturally try to find the solution that is best for the
community as a whole, while women will look for the best solution for the family
alone.”

Whitney valued less traditional gender roles. She believes that women must
make something out of themselves. She said that since women have equal rights now,
they should take advantage of it. Even if women are going to be housewives, they
should “have a proper education and have goals for yourself you should still try to
make something of yourself.” She sees no limitations placed on her gender other than,
she joked, “playing professional football.” Whitney is someone that values activities
that are traditionally associated with being a feminine female. “You are suppose to
like having girl’s night out…You should like a day at the spa, or like girl bonding
times. Now I want to go to the spa.” She said you should “like purses and shoes and
cute skirts.” But, she said that these may only be her personal preferences and not all
women do value these things but that is okay. In comparing and contrasting the roles
of men and women, Whitney believes that women have less latitude to show an
interest in having sexual relationships with people. Such women are “slutty.”

Mr. Smith indicated that historically, men have been the “bread winner” in the
family but that today roles are much more flexible. “Now a man’s role is just how
comfortable he feels in the household and I’m sure kids play a big role in that like for
instance, if the woman is established in her career and the man is just started out and
it’s easier for him to quit and stay at home then that’s fine.” He said, “it all depends” and “it doesn’t really matter,” but said he “would be more comfortable with someone who is more passive and comfortable staying at home. You know I’d feel more comfortable with a woman who values more traditional values…like with the dad going to work.”

Participants Experiences Compared Literature Review

The limitations of a qualitative study are such that the extremely small population will not definitively support or definitively disprove a theory. However, the participants’ experiences were both consistent and inconsistent with the literature review. The literature is yet another way to understand the larger life contexts of the participants and provides another dimension by which to provide educational interventions promoting their understanding of LGBT people and culture.

Social Distance

Gordon Allport (1958) indicates that social distance is defined as “increased need for social distance, or the proximity to which members of one group permits members of another group to themselves” (p. 37).” Social distance, according to Gentry is “positively correlated with homophobia” (Gentry, 1987, p.205). Allport’s model was used with the students, as indicated in Chapter 4. However, some of the cultural nuances associated with each of Allports’ fields may have had more of an
effect on the participants’ self-identification of where they lay on the scale. For example, all of the participants practice some denomination of Christianity and all of them to some degree attributed their strong ties to their family as a function of their religion. They value family a great deal. It is not surprising that none of the participants would exclude LGBT people from their family. Cato, Aquinas, and Bartholomew indicated that they would not approve of their family member’s lifestyle but that they would not exclude them from family function and would continue to pray for the family member. Additionally, most of the participants are excited about the marketplace of ideas at school. They like having a diversity of thought. So, it is also not surprising that none of the participants would exclude LGBT people from the United States, neither barring them from citizenship nor forbidding them to visit from other countries.

Gentry (1987) found that, assuming that there is a relationship between social distance and stereotypes (p. 204), researchers read a series of stereotypic statements about homosexuals that included “the belief that homosexuals are sinful, sick, and criminal” (p. 205). His research also indicated that people who display high levels of social distance toward homosexuals also believe these negative stereotypes of homosexuals. Cato, Bartholomew, and Aquinas each identified homosexuals as sinful. As indicated above, all three of them hold stereotypes about Queer people to be fact. However, each of them would not look at a friend’s sexual orientation status as a determinant of whether to continue to be friends with them and none of them would exclude LGBT people from being their neighbors. These three appear to have the strongest ties to their respective religious communities. However, Mr. Smith affirms
Gentry’s research. He holds many stereotypes about LGBT people and identified the greatest amount of social distance.

The literature indicates that men are more likely to display homophobic attitudes than women (D’Augelli, 1989). However, due to the restraints of the participant recruitment, I can not adequately account for this research with my current participant pool. But what can you say about the men in contrast with Whitney?

Men who knew fewer gay men were more homophobic and made more derogatory remarks than did women and widespread hostile attitudes were found among first year students (D’Augelli, 1990). Only one man, Mr. Smith, was a first year student. He admitted to using the phrase “that’s so gay” with friends but did not characterize it as a derogatory remark. Mr. Smith identified that he knew four Queer people in his life and displayed the greatest amount of social distance. Bartholomew, Cato, and Aquinas each identified themselves as resistant to the LGBT lifestyle, but made a distinction between rejecting an LGBT person and rejecting an LGBT act: These participants strongly reject the act and lifestyle but embrace LGBT people. This may be why they did not score themselves as needing much social distance from LGBT people. Cato knew two formerly gay men, Aquinas had two LGBT family members and Bartholomew, Aquinas and Cato each had regular contact with LGBT people through classes. None of them displayed hostility, if hostility does not include disgust or pity, toward the LGBT people in their lives.

The next theme in the literature review indicates that researchers found that sexual orientation has also been correlated with homophobia. Those who identified as heterosexual statistically displayed more homophobic qualities than those who
identified as straight (McHugh-Engstrom & Sedlacek, 1997). Indeed each of the participants was recruited because they self-identified as straight. A Queer person who is homophobic is more likely to be someone who is experiencing internalized homophobia. This phenomenon is another research project in and of itself.

Other studies report that heterosexual’s dislike of homosexuals is at least partially motivated by a desire to maintain traditional gender role distinctions (Whitley, 2001). Mr. Smith indicated that while he would prefer traditional gender roles, it is not important to him that his wife take on more traditional submissive, follower female role. As stated in Chapter 4, gender roles are of the utmost importance to Bartholomew. He believes that society will be forced into a large metaphysical conflict if gender roles are determined to be socially constructed. He devoted significant column space to explaining how he perceives the transgender experience to be definitive proof that everyone believes the traditional gender system is essential for everyone.

In female populations, levels of homophobia increase when participants identified an importance of feminine attributes in women (Basow & Johnson, 2002). As outlined in Chapter 4, Whitney indicated that she does value feminine attributes in women but does not identify these values as being important for all women. Compared to the male participants, she and George were the only two participants to indicate that they believed LGBT people would one day be able to marry. In contrast to the male participants, Whitney indicated that she would feel specifically uncomfortable with Queer women in her life because she thinks she would worry about whether the woman was trying to flirt with her.
Still other studies indicate that the frequency of religious attendance, political ideology, and prior contact with LGBT individuals contribute to a negative or positive conception of homosexuality (Mohr & Rochlen, 1999). The participants in the Mohr, et. als. study who had devout religious beliefs did appear to have negative views related to LGBT people and lifestyles. Each of the participants has attended church regularly at some point in their lives. However, Mr. Smith and Whitney displayed the greatest amount of social distance and have not attended church regularly since enrolling in their institution six months ago. Cato, Bartholomew, and Aquinas each attend church regularly and demonstrated the lowest amount of social distance. Each of these participants indicated that they accepted LGBT people, but rejected LGBT behaviors. Each of them likened LGBT behavior to adultery or another sexual sin. Their religious institutions might have shaped their perception that people engage in LGBT behaviors, and that these behaviors are separate from a person’s core identity. The participants’ life experiences indicate that people who attend church more often are more likely to accept LGBT people while rejecting LGBT behavior.

Prior contact with LGBT people, according to the study is correlated with less resistance to LGBT people. However, from the participants, it is clear that simply being in contact with LGBT people is not enough to radically alter their perceptions of LGBT people. Whitney drives this point home when she said she didn’t think that “the people I know of who are gay have really shaped my views on homosexuality because I still stereotype who I don’t know, which is kinda weird because you think that knowing someone would make you more accepting and stuff.” Additionally, Cato knows two ex-gay men and indicated throughout his interview that he would tell any
practicing LGBT people in his life that he doesn’t agree with their choices. Aquinas had a gay family member, but his family speculated about his sexual practices and responsibility as an HIV positive man in such a way that he was demonized as a promiscuous, irritating, diseases-spreading man. Another component, in addition to knowing gay people and knowing a variety of gay people, is having a variety of perceptions about gay people presented to students like the participants. Finally, the study indicates that people who have a conservative ideology are more likely to be resistant to LGBT people. Each of the participants identifies as conservative and each of them drew on conservative sources to inform in part or in total, their opinions about LGBT people.

The literature also indicated that people of color demonstrate higher levels of homophobia than their white peers; with African American students showing the greatest amount of homophobia (Schulte, 2002). None of the participants offered much about African American people and their perceptions of LGBT people that was rooted in their experiences of African American people. Most participants guessed what it might be like based on stereotypes they had of the community. However, George’s contrasting experience of growing up in the United States and growing up in a Korean household can offer student affairs administrators an insight into how students of color negotiate LGBT issues differently from white students. Much student affairs developmental advising encourages students to gain independence from their parents. However, asserting himself in this way to his parents would be disrespectful George mentioned that if he were to come out to his parents, he would disappoint his parents and disrespect traditions. Asking George to adopt new ideas,
distinct from his parents may be a source of different stress for him than it would be for his white peers. The educational interventions provided to students to foster their curiosity and acceptance of the LGBT community for students with similar experiences to George’s must be culturally in tune with the population to which information about LGBT issues is presented. Educational programming must be mindful of the cultural contexts that students are mixing with new information about LGBT people in their heads. Additionally, George feels conflicted about his conservative beliefs about LGBT people and his accepting outward behavior toward them. He thinks his “conservative ideology comes from me being a Korean Christian” but it conflicts with things like “drinking and partying in general and there is the gay marriage thing and the rights.” Gay marriage demonstrates the conflict he feels. He said that he isn’t sure “why should people be denied marriage because you know at this point marriage isn’t part, you don’t have to have God in it like you can get married down in city hall.” Additionally, anyone can “have a wedding with no religious aspect to it why deny marriage to people something that doesn’t even have anything to do with what the Christian or the Catholic community says.” However, at the same time, his understanding of marriage, he said, is between a man and a woman.

Education level of parents, being younger, and having less education are also correlates of homophobia (Simoni, 1996). Whitney and Mr. Smith are the youngest participants, have been in college the shortest amount of time, and identified a need for the greatest amount of social distance. However, the Simoni study also indicates that parents who have less experience in higher education are more likely to be homophobic or resistant. In the case of the participants, this is not true. Just three of 13
parents among the participants did not go to college before they had children. Cato’s parent obtained a degree after Cato went to school, and the remaining two parents are George’s. George experienced the greatest amount of contact with LGBT people, the lowest, unconditional social distance, and the greatest knowledge of LGBT people.
Chapter 5 – Analysis, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Approaching Participants

Working with the participants and hearing their stories was challenging, but not in the way that I expected. I began each interview by telling the participants to be candid in their responses and let them know that as a Queer woman who has been an activist for seven years, there were few negative perspectives about Queer people to which I was not already privy. I wanted them to feel okay about sharing their perspectives. Whether the participants felt they were entirely candid with their responses, I will never be able to know. However, based on the depth of what participants did disclose, I believe that they were comfortable sharing their aversions with me. The act of interviewing the participants and hearing their stories was not difficult; the act of transcribing the interviews was extraordinarily difficult for me. I have a background in newspaper reporting and was able to go to take a journalistic approach and collect data from the participants just like any other interview I’ve ever conducted on any other topic. I learned that I have compartmentalized information gathering in my professional interactions such that I felt unaffected by the negative views participants shared with me about people with my same sexual orientation. However, by the time interviews were completed, I had collected 10 hours of interviews and had been given a 20 page journal to review. I transcribed all of the interviews myself. In my home, I did not have to provide a safe, professional space for the participants. I felt, at times, like I absorbed all of their opinions. The participants directed their sentiments toward people like me, toward my students, toward my
friends, and my family. Sitting in my home, listening and typing all 10 hours of interviews broke my heart. I had to replay parts of each tape five and six times. Hearing all six participants tell me five and six times each that they did not think I would be a fit parent as a Queer woman was difficult to hear.

As stated in Chapter 2, Judith Palmer (1994) outlines a framework for compassionate student affairs practice in her paper, “Diversity: The Three Paradigms.” Her Paradigm III approach advocates creating an environment where “everyone appreciate(s) the heritage and culture of many different groups and…respond(s) to the self-image and uniqueness of each individual” (p. 256). When I began to feel heartbroken about what I was hearing, Palmer’s approach proved helpful to me. The participants’ perspectives on Queer people and Queer culture are a reflection of their unique lives and the perspectives are situated in context of each of their cultures and heritages. The participants never seemed to be intentionally hurtful. It is difficult to remain heartbroken in the absence malice.

For example, Aquinas carries a strong Catholic culture and heritage having grown up in the church and maintaining predominantly Christian social contacts. I can appreciate that given his cultural context, he believes that pedophiles in the Catholic Church are homosexuals. He sees grown men inflicting sexual relationships on young boys and because there is a single-gendered relationship he believes it is the same as homosexuality. However pedophilia is like rape or sexual assault. Because there is a power imbalance between men and children, the boys could never give consent. Because they cannot give consent, the acts committed against the boys are necessarily violent and not sexual. Aquinas did not connect that the power imbalance between
these men and these boys necessarily connotes an act of violence, not an act of sex. I use this point to illustrate that he and I brought very different worldviews to our conversation. Before completing this research, I would have heard Aquinas’ statements to be intentionally hurtful given my understanding of sex, power, and consent. I would have felt very angry because I would have expected him to have the same understanding as me. However, after completing the research, I understand the worldview from which these opinions originate. Understanding when I feel angry in conversation about tough topics is related to the Palmer’s Paradigms.

Paradigm III (Palmer, 1994) also “emphasizes self-knowledge - learning the pattern of one’s own prejudices - and interpersonal skills, as well as specific learning about the cultural history of many different groups” (p. 257). The paragraphs on pedophilia in Aquinas’ journal made me feel frustrated. When I first read his journal, I incorrectly identified his perceptions as being hateful. I initially thought that there was no way to reach students with similar views. These are my prejudices. Realizing that I had prejudicial thoughts about Aquinas being hateful, I re-read through his journal. Reading through the whole journal, I was able to catch a glimpse of Aquinas’ cultural history. His perceptions of homosexuality are not my experiences of being Queer identified. His perceptions of what constitutes homosexual sex and what constitutes violence are not distinct. It is a reasonable conclusion, given his background and worldview, that he would conclude that pedophiles are included under the LGBT acronym.

Only after working through each of my prejudices and only after developing an appreciation for each of the participants’ worldviews do I believe that I am truly
capable of working with them from a place of compassion. When interacting with students who differ from me as dramatically as the participants did, it is critical to work toward multicultural competence when working with them. As they outlined in their book, Multicultural Competence in Student Affairs, Pope, Reynolds, and Mueller (2004) define multicultural competence, as “the awareness, knowledge and skills need to work with others who are culturally different from self in meaningful, relevant, and productive ways” (p. 13). Such a framework will prove critical in the interventions to address participants misconceptions outlined below. Additionally, the authors also define competence as having the “skills, knowledge, and awareness to address issues of multiculturalism with someone who is culturally similar” (p. 14) because “when Whites work with other Whites…there are multicultural attitudes, knowledge, and skills required in efficaciously addressing the issues and concerns of those individuals” (p. 14). The authors underscore here that it is equally important that as an aspiring LGBT student affairs professional that I work with the LGBT students to inspire compassion within them to interact with students like the participants

Recommendations and Conclusions Based on Research Themes

The intention of these recommendations is to provide student affairs professionals and educators the opportunity to understand the worldviews of some students on campus that must be considered when programming is proposed. My research is not intended to predict or represent the behaviors of all students at all colleges. Instead, the participants in this study demonstrate behaviors that any student
in any functional area might demonstrate. Student affairs professionals must prepare
themselves to work with students with varying perspectives and at a variety of levels
of understanding about issues of discrimination, power, and privilege. For example, a
student affairs professional working in a student union may have to work with student
leaders who object to an LGBT office in the union. The professional must work to
create an environment that is accepting of both the LGBT students and the students
who have the objection. The professional must foster a productive dialog between both
interests such that they are able to exist on campus together.

The recommendations provided below will discuss each of the themes
identified in the previous chapter. It is important to note that although the participants
come from a unique institution, they are not unlike any other students at any other
school. Therefore, many of the recommendations may have universal application to
other institutions. However, it is more likely that the recommendations will be a good
fit for other large, public institutions.

Theme 1: Participants come to identify with the belief that they should not accept the
LGBT lifestyle through their families, media, and messages from their religious
institutions.

Educators must understand that some students are socialized to be resistant to
LGBT people or to LGBT behaviors before they come to campus, through a variety of
sources. The goal of interacting with students who hold similar beliefs to the
participants can therefore never be to change their beliefs overnight. An immediate
goal may be to help students like the participants to have successful professional relationships with Queer students. For example, it is necessary that students who are resistant and Queer students be able to share student fee money and to share campus facilities in a way that is consistent with a campus mission statement that values civil conversation among students. Whether students like the participants adopt LGBT people into all of the dimensions of their personal lives and whether these students embrace LGBT people and their respective behaviors may need to be a long term, ideal goal for educators. The participants in this study offered a variety of sources including family members, mass media, and their religion which have informed their opinions about LGBT people.

Student affairs professionals should sit down with students who are expressing negative views on LGBT people and listen to where those views originate. I sat down with participants for 12 hours and listened to their views. Professionals must figure out how to get to know the students with whom they work in order to understand their life stories. It is not my goal to change the participants or students like them, but it is my goal as a student affairs professional to provide information to students from which they might benefit. For example, within this theme the participants identified information about queer people that is not consistent with how queer people experience themselves.

Educators may consider offering programming that represents a variety of Queer people and Queer identities as a means of supplementing the wealth of information accumulated from media, religious institutions, and families. For example, each of the participants, with the exception of George, only spoke of the
LGBT lifestyle in terms of sex. Many of them learned this view from the media, their home lives, or religious communities. Should this view arise among any student population in any functional area, professionals might consider working with students to provide a broader view of the LGBT lifestyle, that the LGBT identity encompasses many more aspects than just sex. For example, professionals might invite speakers from LGBT families to talk about their lives. They might work with an LGBT center to bring a performance artist to talk about nuances in gender identity in the LGBT community. Or, professionals might simply bring in Queer students, staff, and faculty for a facilitated discussion about how LGBT construct their identity. Many of the participants indicated that they saw a distinction between people and their LGBT behaviors. Many students in the general student population may feel similarly to the participants. The proposed discussion could talk about how LGBT people see their LGBT identity as one of their core identities and not just descriptors of the type of sex that they have. The purpose of this programming would not be to dissuade students who are resistant to LGBT people of their beliefs. At the very least, providing new information to students with similar beliefs to the participants may cause them to reflect on how this new information fits or does not fit with their beliefs.

LGBT students can also benefit from understanding the disconnect between how Queer people conceive of themselves and how people around them conceive of what it means to be an LGBT person. For example, LGBT students might benefit from understanding that students who hold similar beliefs to the participants are not necessarily launching personal attacks. The participants indicated that they are objecting to a set of behaviors when they oppose LGBT people. LGBT students could
benefit from understanding that these objections are not always or necessarily meant to be personal. This may help LGBT students to approach students like the participants with compassion and empathy which will foster educational rather than adversarial relationships between LGBT students and students like the participants.

Student affairs professionals may consider working with LGBT allies in a community of faith. It is likely that many students have the same deep religious convictions around their resistance to LGBT people as the participants have. Several of the participants seemed amenable to learning more about LGBT people. These learning opportunities must be constructed in a way that is respectful of their religious beliefs, but in a way that is also challenging, fostering critical thinking. For example, Bartholomew believes that gender roles are very important and this importance of traditional gender roles is communicated to him via his faith. Negating his experience of gender will not create an affirming environment in which he can learn about how LGBT people experience their gender. A member of the religious community on campus might be best suited to lead a discussion that explores gender roles.

Theme 2: The participants develop their beliefs prior to college and these beliefs remain stable throughout college despite coursework and contact with LGBT people.

It is necessary that college students learn to interact with people who are different from themselves. The participants indicated that they are resistant to LGBT behaviors and that this resistance has remained stable throughout college.
Since many college students freely select their majors and courses, a recommendation may be for institutions to look at their general education requirements and how well courses within these requirements help foster interaction. Participants in this study each much take one course for the general education requirements in which they learn critical thinking skills related to difference, power, and discrimination that are necessary to engage differences. Perhaps an audit is in order to determine the efficacy of these courses in addressing systems of oppression and valuing difference. For example, Mr. Smith spoke often of his contempt for political correctness and wanting to treat people as people. He did not communicate an appreciation for the different ways in which different groups of people construct their own identities. Whether the participants agree with the LGBT lifestyle, they must understand that it is not useful to say that they “don’t largely take note of differences.”

To say that he does not take note of difference is to say that he experiences the world as being largely the same. Educators at any institution must examine their general education requirements and determine if students are meeting the learning outcomes of those requirements.

Since general education requirements cannot and should not provide the only step toward engaging students in appreciating differences, student affairs professionals can work with the student populations in their functional areas to understand these systems. For example, they may offer training to student leaders so that they each understand how the economic advantages of their parents affect their lives, decisions, and understanding of the economic mobility to people around them. Participants relied on their understanding of the religious implications for marriage, but did not cite the
economic reasons for marriage. An activity that student affairs professionals might offer in trainings could take the following shape: Students could compare the economic advantages of awarding $60 marriage licenses to LGBT people rather than making Queer couples accrue the cost of employing an attorney and paying court costs. Students who believe that separate civil union legislation could bring about parity for LGBT people could benefit from educational programming on the history of segregated institutions in the United States society that demonstrate to students the failure of separate institutions to provide adequate education to people of color under Jim Crow laws. Students could be shown films on Jim Crow and then a facilitated discussion could follow on how historical segregation informs the civil union versus marriage debate.

Changing the way students relate to each other is one way to challenge deeply held beliefs. Several of the participants were involved in the same clubs and organizations on campus. These clubs have recently seen a change in the way they relate to student affairs professions in the student leadership center on their campus. All organizations housed under the leadership center must have a peer liaison who attends meetings to offer guidance and experience. These peer to peer interactions represent a significant amount of time and are substantial because the peer guides must share who they are with the student organizations and the members of the organization share themselves in return. It is a far more substantial interaction than classroom interactions among students in class together. One of Bartholomew’s organizations was a Queer-identified peer liaison. Bartholomew has asked this student if she would be willing to speak with him and share information about her Queer identity. Whether
the peer interactions resulted in Bartholomew’s interest in learning more about Queer students is difficult to determine, however, I feel that his increased openness seems to be a promising sign that he is willing to learn more about Queer issues from a Queer perspective.

A significant challenge for student affairs administrators is reaching students who do not want to be reached or educated around issues of homophobia. A method of resolving this may be through building relationships with students. For example, on the Facebook, one of the students in the Straight Pride Club at the participants’ institution posted the following quote in the announcements section of the Straight Pride Facebook page: “Guess who can still get married?? That’s [sic] Right!!!! Straight people!!!!” Student affairs administrators who happen upon this page should make an effort to build relationships with the student who posted it. Professionals could ask the students about the intent of the group. They could ask the students how they see statements like the one above positively contributing to that intent. Alternatively, professionals could use the information posted on his Facebook account to influence the people who are already in his life to challenge him on his views. The name of the web designer is available on the group’s homepage. The web designer states on his Facebook profile that he is involved in student senate. Professionals could connect with the student senators and provide training and information to the whole of student senate as a means to challenge homophobic views.
Theme 3: There are degrees of acceptance among some participants. Some participants welcome LGBT people into their personal lives while others do not.

Welcoming LGBT people into one’s own personal life becomes critical toward building community in places like residence halls. In the interest of building a community that is accepting of everyone, it is important that all students feel comfortable with the prospect that they may have an LGBT neighbor or roommate. The social distance scale utilized in the research with the participants may not provide a full picture of how any student who is resistant to LGBT people truly feels about LGBT people. For example, each of the participants wanted to guide LGBT people toward a safe, healthy life that they perceive a Queer lifestyle cannot offer. With the exception of George and Whitney, each of the participants indicated that while they are open to having LGBT people in their lives, they do not approve of the LGBT behaviors. It follows then that, the Social Distance Scale may not represent the participants’ decisions to fully include LGBT people into their lives, inclusive of their Queer identity. Students from the general student population are likely to agree that they would accept LGBT people but would not tolerate the LGBT behavior. For many of them, this belief may originate from their religious backgrounds which would be consistent with the participants’ experiences.
Theme 4: Despite their high comfort level demonstrated with the Social Distance Scale, participants demonstrated low levels of understandings of LGBT people from an LGBT perspective

A theme among the identity development of the participants was that, with the exception of George, they did not appear to know much about how LGBT people experience their own identities. Participants were very knowledgeable about how their religion and families members, who are not LGBT, perceive Queer people. Many of the participants expressed a genuine concern for LGBT people and perceive that the lifestyle can not be fulfilling. Additionally, Aquinas suggested that Queer people should be encouraged to remain celibate.

There are many examples of how the general student population could learn more about LGBT culture. Student affairs professionals who are working with students who object to LGBT people because they feel that the LGBT lifestyle cannot be fulfilling could examine their student and professional staffs. Are there examples of people in the functional area who are LGBT and who are living a fulfilling life? Are there people on staff who are not LGBT who feel that LGBT people are living fulfilling lives? The concern that an LGBT lifestyle is not fulfilling could be allayed simply through the resistant staff having conversation with coworkers who are affirming of LGBT people. Student affairs professionals would do well, therefore, to hire people who represent a variety of life experiences.

Alternatively, Queer people may benefit from dialoging with non-Queer, resistant people as a way to gather new ideas on how to meet the needs of the Queer
Aquinas’ suggestion that all Queer people should be encouraged to remain celibate may be a valid suggestion for some Queer people. Student affairs staff must understand that not all people who suspect or believe that they may be LGBT are excited about being LGBT. Students experiencing this kind of crisis might need to seek out professional counseling. As with any contentious issue, student affairs professionals must help students to communicate with one another. Students can be taught to learn from one another respectfully by asking each other the reasons behind their beliefs. They could be taught to engage one another’s different ideas without making personal attacks. This communication style could be part of the professional expectations that student affairs professionals have of students who work in their functional areas. Rather than constantly challenging one another’s worldviews, students can learn to engage each other in civil conversations about the differences between their worldviews.

Students who do not want engage in these conversations may need very safe ways to explore issues around difference. Perhaps students employed in different functional areas could be required as a condition of their employment to keep a journal for reflecting on their job performance. This journal could sometimes ask students to reflect on things like their comfort level with different activities on the job. Professionals could ask their students to reflect about their comfort level with engaging conversations about difference and students could share the barriers they feel are in place for them when they are asked to have these conversations. As the participants demonstrated, students seem willing to talk about why they are uncomfortable with difference more than they are willing to talk with people who are
different from them. As students identify their discomforts in the safe environment of the journal, professionals can engage with resistant students on a more informed level. For example, a resistant student might write that she does not feel she needs to talk about difference because she largely does not take note of differences. A professional can then ask her what that means to her and engage her in a conversation. In a one on one setting, the student and professional could talk about how important and noticeable difference is to people who face challenges in their lives because of differences.

Simply encouraging participants and students like them to speak with people with whom they disagree may have a profound difference in their ability to value differences, as George’s experience indicates. George has had the opportunity to ask each of these questions in the leadership class associated with his job at the cultural centers. Many campuses around the United States have a similar leadership model among cultural centers and LGBT-focused centers where learning and training opportunities are combined among communities. He self-identified a huge shift in his understanding of LGBT people and feels more able to interact with Queers students he knows from his job.

Each of the participants, with the exception of George, did not indicate that they understood the experiences of people of color who are Queer. George’s answers to this question were extensive and provided not only his experience of his own race around LGBT people but also provided coherent experiences from other cultures that were founded in his interactions with people from those cultures. As discussed earlier, the institution that the participants in this study attend offers a variety of courses that
address issues of difference, power, and discrimination that are listed as options to fulfill part of their general education requirements. Whitney and Mr. Smith were currently enrolled in such a course at the time of the interviews and all other participants have already taken one of these courses. Perhaps a pre and post test could be provided to students taking these courses to demonstrate the efficacy of these courses in their ability to reach students who are resistant to LGBT issues and who do not understand systematic oppression.

Theme 5: Participants Explain Their Objections to Queer Marriage, Queer Adoption, and Legal Protections in the Context of Their Religious Beliefs

Student affairs professionals encountering faith-based objections to LGBT people would do well to consult the religious community on their campus. At a workshop I attended on how to address contentious issues in the classroom, I learned of one strategy to address faith-based objections. The workshop presenter, a minister, spoke of a time when she was teaching a class at a private, religious school about the Bible. She told the class that the Bible had many different authors and provided her evidence. Students in the class were outraged. She received many emails that students felt her lecture was blasphemous and was a slap in the face of everything their pastors had taught them about the Bible. The next year, she arranged a different approach. She asked students to explore the different narrative styles in a few Biblical passages. The students collected different narrative styles and wrote them on the board. She also had them explore inconsistencies in some of the historical accounts within the Bible.
students wrote these inconsistencies on the board. She asked them what they might infer based on these findings. A student raised her hand and said that one might infer that multiple authors wrote the Bible. The instructor agreed and then lectured the class on the theorists who have explored the idea of multiple authorship of the Bible. No angry emails followed. The students were not told information; the multiple author idea came from the students.

Questioning the authorship and origins of the Bible is one way to foster a critical consciousness that may move students to a place where they can have conversations about the usefulness of citing religious views as a rationale for perpetuating the oppression of LGBT people. Students could move from an exercise like the one mentioned above and be more willing to complete an exercise that the Rev. Dr. Jaime Washington commonly uses during his workshops on homophobia and the Bible.

Dr. Washington gives workshop participants a worksheet that contains a tic-tac-toe grid. In each of the nine spaces on the grid, he has written a statement such as “Someone who is wearing a cotton/wool blend.” He asks participants to move around the room and find people of whom the statements are true, introduce yourself to them, and have them sign the square. One people complete the exercise, Dr. Washington tells the participants that each of these squares represents a recommendation on how a Christian should live their life. He then asks participants to wrestle with why we follow some of these recommendations (homosexuality is wrong) but not others (wearing cotton/wool blends).
Any approach to challenging the religious views of students should not come in the form of making recommendations or offering advice to students. Students should be given new information and new evidence to weigh in their own minds. I believe that a challenging discussion around religious texts and what is written about LGBT people would be best facilitated by someone who is familiar with the text of the religious from which the objections originate. Some with this expertise would also be able to provide the support for students of faith who may struggle with new ideas.

Theme 6: Participants agree that LGBT people should be affirmed, but their “lifestyle” and “sexual choices” should not

Many students on any college campus may come to campus with misconceptions of Queer sex. Several of the participants indicated that they did not find anal sex to be a healthy practice. Student affairs professionals must be able to be informed about different kinds of sex to promote healthy sexual relationships with all students. A simple meeting with a sexual wellness expert from the campus health center could provide this information to professionals in any functional area.

For example, Cato and Mr. Smith in particular talked about how they felt anal sex might be painful, that an excess of blood might be involved, and that the rectum itself is not designed for penetrative sex. Each of these is a misconception that is reinforced with wrong information that the LGBT identity is unhealthy (Eaves, 2006). A small workshop on sexual wellness could debunk these myths. For example each of the participants concerns can be addressed in a few sentences. To start, it is a
misconception that only Queer people engage in anal sex. Therefore, rejecting LGBT people because of a fear of the healthfulness of anal sex would necessitate a rejection of all straight people who engage in anal sex. It is more likely that people will experience bleeding from anal sex. This is because the anus does not provide its own lubricant. The likelihood of bleeding is lessened through the use of a quality lubricant that will promote relaxation (Martin, 2006). Finally, the rectum may not appear to be designed for sex. However, the rectum is quite accommodating and can handle objects as large and long as the human fist and forearm (Eaves, 2006).

Again partnering with religious experts on campus may be a way to get students holding views similar to the participants to such workshops. Students are more likely to hear new information in settings that are familiar to them. Bartholomew indicated that at his church there are “topical discussions where you’ll talk about things from parenting like how should Christians parent or you will talk about things like what is prayer or various things that affect your life.” He indicated that every once in a while “things on sexuality will be addressed, like what is the Christian view on how should a Christian live.” He observed that the topical discussions on sex are popularly attended. He joked “my pastor was giving a series on sex and Christianity he said you know if we really wanted to pack the place out we should just put ‘sex’ out there on a big sign.”

Participants also expressed objection to the LGBT lifestyle because of the gender roles in the relationships. Participants indicated that they felt men and women provided gender-specific pieces to partnerships that could not be replicated in LGBT relationships without confusing the traditional responsibilities of each gender. All
students could be given the opportunity to learn more about gender roles and the construction of intimate relationships. Within student staff trainings, in the classroom, and in workshops directed toward the general university population students could be given opportunities to weigh the benefits and costs of traditional gender roles as well as learn alternative gender roles and expressions.

Students who identity as homophobic or resistant could be partners in planning workshops to address traditional gender roles. Cato indicated that he and his friends spend time talking about gender roles among themselves. For example, he said that he feels that “men fill a kind of protective role and when guys fall short on that, like girls and guys they see it and they are like there is something wrong with that guy.” He indicated that he hears this from “Christian and non-Christian girls who are like to be honest I want a guy who is assertive, it just seems to be the role for the male.” It is reasonable to believe that if they are spending there free time discussing these issues then they would be interested in helping to plan workshops.

Theme 7: Despite their highly nuanced resistance to the LGBT lifestyle, most participants accept LGBT people as a fixture on their campus

I have no recommendations to change this belief. I see this as a promising sign that LGBT people and students like the participants could be in community.
Theme 8: Participants Who Value Traditional Gender Roles Express more Resistance to the LGBT Lifestyle

Participants appeared to understand the critiques of their beliefs about traditional gender roles because they offered a variety of explanations in defense of their beliefs without being solicited. For example, Bartholomew provided an explanation of how gendered dance roles qualitatively different but neither is better than the other. The dance metaphor, he says, translates to his perceptions of traditional family roles. It is not necessarily better or worse that a woman stays home, according to Bartholomew, it is just different. However, students like the participants and LGBT students may gain a lot from talking with one another about their notions of gender.

As a queer woman, understanding Bartholomew’s perspectives on gender as neutral and different roles changed everything about my perceptions of students with views similar to the participants. I did not realize the profoundly different roles gender plays in my life compared to the roles it plays in Bartholomew’s life. For example, I did not realize that Bartholomew and I might be having entirely different conversations about gender if we were to engage in a conversation about how important gender is. In my life, gender is dynamic. People in my circle of friends and my LGBT colleagues transition among gender all the time and purposefully play with people’s perceptions of their gender. People in his circles understand gender to be the most important parts of a relationship. Each gendered body has a different set of qualities to contribute and these qualities are intrinsically attached to the gender of the
person carrying them. Where do we begin speaking to each other? He would perceive me to be confused about gender and I would perceive him to be too stuck on tradition.

Students on college campuses would benefit from asking themselves these sorts of questions and learning how to meet people in their beliefs to have conversations about these differences. Student orientation programs could dedicate part of their programming to helping students understand how they will interact with different people on a diverse campus as part of the orientation day. Facilitated dialogs during the day could help students learn about themselves: What are my beliefs around gender, around homosexuality, around religion? During this dialog they could also learn tools on how to respectfully dialog with one another on campus with the goal of learning more about themselves and about others around them.

Additionally, LGBT people would benefit from understanding that none of the participants have ill-intentions of LGBT people. As they described, they have a principled objection to the sexual component of LGBT relationships.

Other Recommendations

LGBT people on campus could benefit from exploring a suggestion from one of the participants. Aquinas suggested that LGBT centers on campus have information on how to leave the lifestyle. This is a viable suggestion. The LGBT lifestyle may not be a desirable life to lead for all those who seek out an LGBT center. At the institution that the participants attend, the LGBT center would recommend any student in distress
to the counseling center and these outcomes can be decided between the student and
the counselor.

Any student affairs professional could benefit from spending an extended
amount of time with students and staff and other colleagues with whom they share few
similarities. Although I went into the interviews feeling open to the participants’
opinions I kept catching myself categorizing them and downplaying their
characteristics as individuals. I found myself breaking them into pieces and heard parts
of their stories, seeing them as hateful and listening only to how their stories hurt my
feelings. Each time I did this, I began to relate to the participants in Buber’s “I-it”
relationship. If I was only listening to the stories as they hurt my feelings, I was not
taking their worldviews into perspective. It is critical that student affair professionals
approach all students in an “I-thou” relationship. Students are the sum of their life
experiences; none of them have the intention of causing harm or being hateful.
Understanding their beliefs in the contexts of their complete lives was critical toward
my being able to hear their stories. Every student affairs professional should identify
people about whom they hold prejudicial beliefs and set an action plan to address
them.
Chapter 6 - Conclusions

Limitations of this Study

The study was limited in a number of ways. I am a novice researcher. This study represents my first experience with research. Experience may have afforded me things like interview questions that probed deeper into the nature of homophobia and resistance.

Additionally, to this study I bring just five years of student affairs experience and just two years of that time represents my graduate experience. I feel that this has affected the depths and breadth of my recommendations. With more time in the field and more exposure to different educational methods, I hope to better understand how to meet students where they are in their development and gently nudge them toward a social justice orientation.

Six participants is not a large enough sample size to make any generalizations about any student population. Perhaps student affairs as a field could benefit from a quantitative study outlining a model of homophobia and student development.

Self-identifying as a Queer woman may have affected the willingness of participants to speak with me despite how I advertised myself as a very nice, understanding person. I do not regret the way I identified to participants and would not feel comfortable not identifying as Queer because of the decisions I’ve made in my life about how “out” I want to be. However, it would be interesting to see how a similar study would develop where the orientation is not known to the participants.
Finally, the conversations I’ve had with participants represent two hours of each of their lives. A longitudinal study that explores how participants’ views change over time that explores what stimulus in their lives prompted those changes would inform student affair practice in an immense way.

Areas of Further Research

The issues that the around homophobia and resistance to LGBT people are extraordinarily nuanced. It is clear that a new study focused on homophobia within communities of color on campus is needed. The issues that George addresses offer rich but tiny insights into the complexity of homophobia and resistance to LGBT people in populations of color. At George’s institution, the cultural centers in which he works offer a few comprehensive approaches to addressing issues of homophobia in the cultural centers while addressing issues of racism in the LGBT center on campus. First, George’s supervisor is a student affairs professional. She works with the student affairs professional who works with the LGBT center. As students fill the LGBT center and cultural center positions, from day one they know that their supervisors maintain close relationships with one another. The students see that they are closely allied. The two professionals co-teach a spring leadership class to each of the coordinators from the centers. In this class, students learn about LGBT identities and about the identities of people of color. The centers are together at retreats and are required to program several events together throughout the year. They have ample opportunity to get to know each other. Together, the complete staff from the cultural
centers and the LGBT center totals about 60 students. It is no surprise, given all this exposure and information to LGBT people that George demonstrated what appeared to be the greatest amount of movement in his lifetime toward becoming accepting of LGBT people. Making a homophobia-free space in people of color organizations will allow for students who experience multiple oppressed identities to feel at home in either the people or color or the LGBT people space on campus.

Second, it is significant that both George and Whitney seemed to display lower levels of resistance to Queer people. These two participants are both once removed from the privileged, dominant status of white, male, heterosexual. Perhaps because Whitney and George do not benefit fully from the privileges afforded to the other participants, they have a greater sense of empathy for Queer people. Although Whitney is reticent to integrate Queer people into her life, she indicated that she does notice a societal shift toward institutionalizing more privileges for LGBT people such as marriage and feels fine with this shift. For example, she makes a distinction between her own discomfort and whether it is right or wrong for LGBT people to adopt children. Similarly, George feels comfortable with LGBT people in his life but is having trouble reconciling his religious views with his desire to see his Queer friends happily married. A similar study, targeted at people who are once, or twice removed from the dominant paradigm would inform how privilege or lack thereof manifests in one’s understanding of homophobia.

Third, researching how receptive participants might be to learning about different systems of principles contributing to a stable society would be a beneficial next step. Participants expressed fear that there will be no monogamy if Queer
marriage is legalized and that accepting LGBT people is part of a chain reaction leading to the downfall of society. It appears that these participants feel that people with morals are people who follow their same religious beliefs. They could benefit from understanding people’s secular principles and how these principles might contribute to a stable society. I am curious to know how worries and fears about the social fabric might be allayed if they knew more about different principle systems.

Fourth, perhaps campuses in general could benefit from understanding better its conservative, white, male constituents. The participants appear to feel that the campus administration has a liberal stance, is overly supportive of LGBT issues, and is not necessarily there to serve them. It would be beneficial to work with these students to understand what needs they might have and what role the campus can play in fulfilling those needs while still honoring diversity and difference.

Finally, each of the participants indicated that the Bible states that homosexuality is a sin. However, in my experience, I’ve heard many scholars indicate that this is not the case. I am in no way a Biblical scholar, having grown up in a pagan household. It would be beneficial to study what religious messages are communicated to which congregations and how this might compare to scholars who do not glean these same messages from their studies of the Bible. It would also be beneficial to study participant reactions to this dissenting information.
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APPENDICES
Dear POTENTIAL PARTICIPANT NAME,

My name is Cathlene McGraw and I am graduate student in the College Student Services Administration Program. I noticed that you are involved in ORGANIZATION NAME and you might be a good person to help me with my thesis research.

I am looking to sit down with students who are 18 years of age or older throughout the year next year and talk to them about their life experiences. I want to interview people who are uncomfortable with, irritated by, or who are just not accepting of gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender people.

I am examining students who either self-identify as homophobic or who self-identify as someone who is not comfortable with gays, lesbians, bisexuals, or transgender people. If you choose to participate, you must know that I will never contradict your opinions: I am not interested in debating students. I am simply trying to understand the cultural phenomena of homophobia and resistance to LGBT people.

I cannot guarantee you anonymity because your identity will be known to me. I can, however, guarantee you confidentiality. All your identifying information will be excluded from the final report, and you will be involved in looking at drafts of the interview transcripts to make sure that I am representing your opinions accurately. You will also be able to review the final thesis. If you are willing to be interviewed, please email me. If you are unwilling to be interviewed, please email me with your suggestions on who might be interested in being interviewed.

The time commitment will span approximately 2 hours. You will answer 30 questions. You will be able to determine the length of each individual interview, and asked to keep a journal for 2 of the research questions. This journal will be kept in my home in Eugene.

Thanks,
Cathlene McGraw
APPENDIX B

Class Wrap Language

Spoken

My name is Cathlene McGraw and I am a student in the College Student Services Administration program here at Oregon State. I am completing a thesis this year that is exploring students who are resistant to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender people. I am looking to speak with students who are 18 years of age or older and, for whatever reason, do not feel comfortable around LGBT people, or who have a moral objection to LGBT people, or who might self-identify as being homophobic. I can’t offer you extra credit and neither can your teacher, but you’d be helping people who work at colleges learn how to better serve students.

So, you would be a great person to participate in my study if you agree with any or all of these statements:

These statements appeared on an overhead

I would feel uncomfortable if a lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender person was my neighbor.
I am okay with lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender people, as long as they don’t openly flaunt it.
I think lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender people should not marry.
I would be uncomfortable if someone of the same gender as me asked me out on a date.
I believe that my religion or my culture recognizes being lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender as something that is immoral or wrong.

The time commitment will span approximately 4 hours. You will answer 30 questions. You will be able to determine the length of each individual interview, and asked to keep a journal for 3 of the research questions. This journal will be kept in my home in Eugene.

If you would like to participate, please write your email on the piece of paper on your desk. Thank you for your time and pass your slips to your right so I can collect them.

Slips of Paper on Students Desks

My name is Cathlene McGraw and I am a student in the College Student Services Administration program here at Oregon State.
I am completing a thesis this year that is exploring students who are resistant to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender people.
I am looking to speak with students who, for whatever reason, do not feel comfortable around LGBT people, or who have a moral objection to LGBT people, or who might self-identify as being homophobic. I can’t offer you extra credit and neither can your teacher, but you’d be helping people who work at colleges learn how to better serve students.

The time commitment will span approximately 2 hours. You will answer 30 questions. You will be able to determine the length of each individual interview, and
asked to keep a journal for 2 of the research questions. This journal will be kept in my home in Eugene.

Your name: _________________________________

Your email: _________________________________

Thank you in advance if you choose to participate!
APPENDIX C
Informed Consent
APPENDIX D
Research Questions

1. What informed your opinions about LGBT people?
2. This set of questions will ask about your educational background and how much exposure to LGBT issues you have had in your classes. We will also touch on your family background with LGBT people.
   a. What year in school are you?
   b. Have you ever discussed LGBT people in any of your classes in your lifetime?
   c. Was this discussion positive or negative?
   d. Were your beliefs about LGBT people the same before you attended college as they are now? Please explain.
   e. What is the highest educational level of your parents?
   f. Did you all discuss LGBT people in your home?
   g. What were some words used to describe LGBT people in your home?
   h. Give you first reactions. How would you feel about having LGBT people...
      i. As close kin by marriage.
      ii. In my club as personal friends.
      iii. On my street as neighbors.
      iv. Working alongside me in a job.
      v. As citizens in my country.
      vi. As visitors to my country.
      vii. I’d exclude them from my country.
3. This set of questions will ask you to think about your gender and your perceptions about how easy or hard it is for someone of your gender to express accepting behaviors toward LGBT people.
   a. What is your gender?
   b. Are there things that your gender is supposed to do in life? What might some of those things be?
   c. Are there things that someone who is not your same gender are supposed to do in life? What might those things be?
   d. Can people of your same gender be openly supportive of LGBT people?
   e. Why or Why not?
   f. As someone who is your gender, are their acceptable ways to treat LGBT people?
   g. What are those ways that LGBT people are supposed to be treated?
   h. Where did you learn that?
   i. Do you think it is easier or harder for people who NOT the same gender as you to be supportive of people who are LGBT?
   j. Why is it easier? Why is it harder?
4. This next set of questions will ask you to describe how many lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender people you know and how.
a. Can you name any LGBT people in the media?
b. Who?, What shows/ads/magazines did you see them in?
c. What conclusions have you drawn about LGBT people based on what you witnessed in the media?
d. Do you know any LGBT people in your home town?
e. Who? Did you know them from school? Sports?
f. What conclusions have you drawn about LGBT people based on the LGBT people you knew in your hometown?
g. Have you ever met an LGBT person face to face?
h. Who? How did you meet this person?
i. What conclusions have you drawn about LGBT people based on the LGBT person you met?
j. Do you have any LGBT family members?
k. Who? How old were you when you learned of this person’s LGBT status?
l. What conclusions did you draw about LGBT people based on your LGBT family member?
m. Is your LGBT family member a welcome part of the family or no?
n. Do you have any LGBT friends? Do you have any friends who have LGBT friends?
o. What is your relationship to these LGBT people?
p. What conclusions have you made about LGBT people based on your interactions with these LGBT people?

5. This set of questions will ask you to think about your racial or ethnic background and how this background might impact your views on LGBT people.
   a. What is your race or ethnicity?
   b. Can you think of LGBT people who are your same ethnicity?
   c. Who are they? How do they shape your views of LGBT people?
   d. What are your impressions on what it might like for someone of your same ethnicity or race to be LGBT?
   e. Do you think it might be easier or harder for people who are a different race or ethnicity than you to be LGBT?
   f. Why is it easier? Why is it harder?
   g. Some studies have shown that resistance to LGBT people is higher in Black student populations. Why might that be?

6. This next set of questions will ask you to think about your relationship to religion and how it might impact your views on LGBT people.
   a. Are you religious?
   b. Do you attend temple/services/church?
   c. How often are you in contact with people of your same religion where you are discussing or celebrating your religion?
   d. What did people in your religious community tell you about people who are LGBT?
   e. What about people in your religion who are LGBT?
f. How do your religious beliefs influence your ability to form relationships with people who are LGBT?

7. This set of questions will ask you about your reactions to LGBT people who are politically active.
   
   a. Do LGBT people and heterosexual people have the same rights?
   b. Why or why not?
   c. Should people who are LGBT have the right to marry?
   d. Why or why not?
   e. Should people who are LGBT have the right to insurance benefits for their partners?
   f. Why or why not?
   g. Should people who are LGBT have the right to raise children?
   h. Why or why not?
   i. You attend school at Oregon State – are you aware of OSU’s commitment to diversity that includes a Pride Center and full time faculty position dedicated to supporting the LGBT community?
   j. Were you aware of these commitments before you started school here?
   k. Are you aware that your student fees support the programs in the Pride Center?
   l. How do you reconcile your personal views of LGBT people with attending a school that is so supportive of LGBT people?
APPENDIX E

Coding Sample