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More Myself: Exploring Students' Perceptions of Self-Authorship Development

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my amazing family: Jennifer, Adalay, Olive, Simon, James, Wayne, Luelle, Jim, Linda, John, & Sandra. They have supported, funded, challenged, encouraged, humored, tolerated, motivated, and loved me more than I probably deserve, and this accomplishment is a testament to their quality more than mine.

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ABSTRACT

Increasingly, the challenges of modern adult life include the responsibility for ambiguous tasks, the need to work as a team with diverse others and the expectation to make important decisions in the face of competing interests. Research suggests that individuals able to meet these challenges demonstrate self-authorship, a way of knowing that allows them to exert control over their lives. Existing research provides insight into college students' self-authorship and the influence of situational, environmental and personal factors on self-authorship development. However, the literature has yet to explore students' own understanding of their self-authorship development. The purpose of this study was to explore the ways students make meaning of their self-authorship and self-authorship development.

This study utilized a qualitative approach and a narrative inquiry design to collect data from recent college graduates. Eleven graduates from a public, comprehensive university in the Southeast participated in the study. Participants represented a variety of ethnic backgrounds, ages, and academic disciplines. Each participated in two in-depth, semi-structured interviews. The study utilized a constant comparative approach to analysis, and open, axial, and selective coding, to identify themes that would inform the findings of the study.

The findings of the study include the following: (1) nine of the eleven participants demonstrated self-authored perspectives and processes, (2) participants viewed their self-authorship development not as a series of developmental experiences or transitions, but as a singular experience of continuous development, (3) participants made meaning of their self-authorship in the context of their independence and purpose, and (4) participants' understanding of their development provided new insight into self-authorship and its development.

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CHAPTER ONE
Introduction

Background

At work and at home, adults are challenged to seek out and analyze information from a variety of sources, weigh competing interests, make difficult decisions, work in teams with diverse others, argue their positions, communicate effectively, and more (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2007; Atkinson, 2010; Baxter Magolda, 2001; Kegan, 2004). Research suggests that individuals able to meet these challenges recognize the contextual nature of knowledge, direct their lives based on internal values and priorities, and actively manage their relationships with others (Baxter Magolda, 1998, 2001; Pizzolato, 2003, 2005, 2006). These are the hallmarks of self-authorship; a way of knowing that allows individuals to exert control over their lives (Baxter Magolda, 1998; Kegan, 1994).

Self-authorship is a developmental achievement requiring the integration of cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal complexity (Baxter Magolda, 1998; Wildman, 2007). Cognitive complexity, as discussed here, refers to the individual's ability to recognize knowledge as socially constructed, while intrapersonal complexity requires the individual to develop an understanding of his or her own goals, values, and identity. Individuals demonstrate interpersonal complexity by actively managing relationships with others and engaging with multiple perspectives without abandoning personal autonomy (Baxter Magolda, 1998). Self-authorship, as a way of knowing, emphasizes the intertwining of these dimensions (Kegan, 1994). For instance, an individual's sense of self is incomplete without an understanding of his or her identity in relation to others (Torres & Hernandez, 2007), and the recognition of the constructed nature of knowledge can help an individual gain confidence in his or her own internal beliefs (Jones & Abes, 2004). The development of all three of these meaning-making

dimensions is "necessary for adults to build complex belief systems, to form a coherent sense of identity, and to develop authentic, mature relations with diverse others" (Baxter Magolda, 2001, p. 269).

The development of these dimensions toward self-authorship occurs in four phases according to Baxter Magolda (2001): Following External Formulas, The Crossroads, Becoming the Author of One's Own Life, and Internal Foundations. These four phases track the emergence of an internal voice that allows the individual to actively manage his or her life rather than simply experience it (Baxter Magolda, 1998). Individuals who Follow External Formulas rely "on perspectives they have uncritically accepted from others" (Hodge, Baxter Magolda, & Haynes, 2009, p. 16) to inform their decision-making and behavior. As the individual encounters situations where these external perspectives and formulas do not yield positive outcomes and begins to recognize that knowledge is uncertain, and even contextual, the individual moves into The Crossroads phase (Baxter Magolda, 2001; Hodge, Baxter Magolda, & Haynes, 2009).

The Crossroads is characterized by the departure from recommendations of authority figures and the attempt to redefine dependent relationships, such as those with advisors, romantic partners, or parents. Individuals in the Crossroads phase begin to recognize the need to develop their own perspectives and their own internal values, beliefs, and goals, but may still be heavily influenced by external formulas. Becoming the Author of One's Own Life requires individuals to construct their own internally defined beliefs about knowledge, about themselves, and about the nature of their relationships with others (Baxter Magolda, 2001). Individuals Becoming the Authors of their lives focus almost entirely on their internal perspectives, at the expense of potentially valuable external sources of information. Realizing that their internal beliefs may not be sufficient for adapting to new situations and new challenges, individuals move into the final

phase. Internal Foundations balances these new internally-defined ways of knowing with the perspectives of others and with other external realities. For instance, individuals in the Internal Foundations phase are able to accept and consider advice from authority figures without being controlled by that advice. As individuals progress through these phases, they become increasingly self-authored. Individuals in the Becoming the Author of One's Own Life and Internal Foundations phases tend to be described as having a self-authored perspective (Laughlin & Creamer, 2007; Pizzolato, 2005, 2006).

Movement through these phases occurs as individuals seek new, better ways to make meaning of their world. When faced with new knowledge that undermines previously held perspectives, one may begin to recognize that knowledge is constructed (Piaget, 1950). When forced to choose between competing values, the individual may reflect on what each value means to him or her. When relationships with others diminish one's sense of self, the individual may seek new relationships that foster the sense of self instead. The literature related to self-authorship identifies such dissonance as a key catalyst for self-authorship development. Participants in Baxter Magolda's (1998, 2001) longitudinal study of recent college graduates' development moved toward self-authorship as a result of dissonance in the workplace or in graduate school, where they were faced with complex tasks, challenged to work independently, and expected to complete tasks without detailed instructions. In addition, individuals who experience dissonance when faced with stereotypes related to their racial or sexual orientation may feel compelled to rethink their understanding of themselves and their relationships with others (Torres & Hernandez, 2007). The literature is replete with examples of self-authorship-promoting dissonance stemming from nearly every aspect of individuals' personal and professional lives (e.g., Baxter Magolda, 2001; Jones & Abes, 2004; Pizzolato, 2005; Torres &

Hernandez, 2007). However, whether or not experiences of dissonance result in self-authorship development depends largely on a variety of factors.

As individuals manage dissonance, situational, environmental, and personal factors determine whether self-authorship development occurs, or whether the individual retreats to the comfort of Following External Formulas. For instance, Pizzolato (2005) found that students were more likely to demonstrate self-authorship if they demonstrated high volitional efficacy and self-regulation, two personal characteristics. Situational factors, such as exposure to diverse perspectives (King, Baxter Magolda, Barber, Kendall Brown, & Lindsay, 2009), and environmental factors, such as support structures (Torres & Hernandez, 2007), have been identified as influencing self-authorship development. However, any of these situational, environmental, or personal factors alone are unlikely to promote self-authorship development (Taylor, 2008).

Even though interaction with diverse peers is indicated as an experience that can promote self-authorship (King et al., 2009), Torres & Hernandez (2007) and Pizzolato (2004) found that participants who were marginalized due to language barriers or their status as high-risk students (respectively) retreated from internally defined beliefs and goals in favor of conforming to more immediately beneficial external expectations. These students likely lacked the necessary coping skills (a personal characteristic) and support from others (an environmental factor) to effectively manage their marginalization in ways that allowed for their continued development (Pizzolato, 2004). Many students face difficult choices related to their choice of majors and careers, a form of dissonance identified as a prompt for self-authorship development (Pizzolato, 2005). However, absent the kind of advising practices that promote self-authorship, some students uncritically accept the advice of others in positions of authority, often without consideration of

their own internal values or the others' qualifications related to the decision at hand (Creamer & Laughlin, 2005). Just as individuals may progress through the four phases toward self-authorship, it is also possible to stagnate in a phase, or even retreat to an earlier phase (Taylor, 2008).

Considering the personal and environmental chemistry required for self-authorship development, it may come as little surprise that, as presented in the literature, most college students do not graduate with a self-authored perspective (Baxter Magolda, 1992, 2001; Baxter Magolda, King, Stephenson, King & Kitchener, 1994; King et al., 2009; Torres & Hernandez, 2007). Baxter Magolda's (1992) study of college students' epistemological development found that her participants persisted in the Following External Formulas phase, focusing on becoming what they thought society wanted them to become. Laughlin and Creamer (2007) found a "reluctance, if not inability, to genuinely consider input from diverse others" amongst their college participants (p. 48). Indeed, Baxter Magolda (2001) estimates that most college graduates develop a self-authored perspective closer to their 30's than in their college years.

The lack of self-authorship development in college is particularly relevant as several new findings and voices suggest that college graduates lack the skills and knowledge vital to success in the twenty-first century (Arum & Roksa, 2011; Atkinson, 2010; Carey, 2011; Jaschik, 2007). Atkinson (2010) described recent graduates as being vastly unprepared for employment in entry-level positions that require them to know "how to think, how to write, how to speak intelligently, how to find information and make sense of it, and how to argue coherently…" (para. 7). In a survey of 302 employers, the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) (2007) found that a majority of employers wanted more emphasis placed on a variety of skills and competencies outside of students' major fields of study, such as intercultural competence,

teamwork, and analytic reasoning. These skills require the integration of cognitive, intrapersonal and interpersonal complexity that defines self-authorship.

The development of a self-authored way of knowing by more college graduates "is a broad and ambitious educational goal – as demanding as the problems we as a nation face in the 21st century" (Baxter Magolda, 2004, p. 304). The skills and abilities associated with self-authorship would not only help graduates succeed in the workplace, but also to develop goals and build relationships that are more satisfying at work and at home (Pizzolato, 2006). The development of strong internal values and the skill to manage relationships, rather than be managed by them, would likely help graduates steer away from behaviors and decisions that would lead to negative outcomes, such as legal troubles or interpersonal conflict (Baxter Magolda, 2003; Piper, 1997). In her study, Baxter Magolda (2001) noted that many of her participants

> had significant responsibility in society in their early twenties – they held responsible jobs in both the public and private sector; they became community leaders; they had children. They are our children's teachers, our accountants, our lawyers and doctors. Many had these responsibilities before they had traversed The Crossroads to Become the Authors of the Own Lives. They would have been better prepared for these roles, and have struggled less, had the conditions for self-authorship been created during their college experience (p. xxii).

Self-authored graduates would let their internal beliefs and values guide their understanding of truth (Hodge, Baxter Magolda & Haynes, 2009), reflect on how their actions impact themselves and others, and "see their individual decisions within a context of goals and situations...larger than the one in which they find themselves at the moment" (Pizzolato, 2006, p. 33). These are

the kinds of internal processes needed by participants and leaders in a democratic, multicultural society. Self-authorship is clearly emerging as a developmental achievement that benefits individuals, employers, and society at large. Promoting self-authorship development in a greater number of college students would thus serve the interests of institutions of higher education as well as those of students.

Despite being a relatively new concept, a growing body of literature describes college students' self-authorship development. These studies provide insight into the conditions and factors that promote or disrupt self-authorship development. Several studies have established the link between self-authorship and personal traits, such as coping strategies, volitional efficacy, and ethnic identity (Pizzolato, 2004, 2005; Torres & Hernandez, 2007). Others have assessed the positive impact of intentionally designed experiences on students' self-authorship development, such as residence hall community models (Piper, 1997) and service learning courses (Jones & Abes, 2004). Pizzolato (2006) found that academic advisors who demonstrated techniques described in the Learning Partnerships Model (Baxter Magolda, 1998; Baxter Magolda & King, 2004) helped their students develop self-authorship. In addition, several characteristics of students' experiences have been found to promote self-authorship, including interaction with diverse others and exposure to different perspectives (King et al., 2009).

The existing research provides information about college students' self-authorship development, as well as the opportunities and implications thereof, but is limited by the prominent use of a methodological approach that may limit the amount and kinds of data available to the researcher. Most of the research related to college students' self-authorship utilizes an interview approach which prompts students to describe an important decision or educational experience (Barber & King, 2007; Jones & Abes, 2004; King et al., 2009; Pizzolato

2005, 2006). Researchers then interpret the response to determine whether the student demonstrates a self-authored perspective, and if so, to go back to analyze the text for factors that might have affected the students' decision-making process. For instance, Pizzolato (2006) analyzed comments about the role of the academic advisor in students' accounts of their selection of an academic major, and used these data to find relationships between advising practices and self-authored approaches to major selection. Jones and Abes (2004) asked students to describe the influence of their experience in a service-learning course on their understanding of their own identity. From these descriptions, the authors drew conclusions about the students' degree of self-authorship and how the service-learning experience contributed to it.

Despite the prevalence of its use, there are several potential weaknesses associated with this approach (Baxter Magolda, 2007; Laughlin & Creamer, 2007). For instance, the description of an experience in which the student did not demonstrate a self-authored way of knowing does not necessarily indicate that the student is not self-authored, particularly when describing past experiences. Pizzolato (2005) notes that the provocative moment that signifies the shift from The Crossroads to Becoming the Author of One's Own Life might take place within a single experience, or might represent the culmination of a variety of experiences. Studies that examine a student's description of only a specific experience, like Pizzolato's (2005), cannot consider the latter. Finally, interview studies in which self-authorship is merely an analytical framework, such as Torres and Hernandez (2007) and Jones and Abes (2004), are heavily influenced by the participants' ability to identify the relevant characteristics of that experience. Barber and King (2007) indicated that their study of the demands that create developmentally effective experience was, more accurately, a study of the way students make meaning of those demands. Their study was limited to those demands that students thought to identify as important to their experience.

In short, what we know about college students' self-authorship is rooted not in data explicitly *about* self-authorship. Rather, self-authorship is teased from the data, and findings are heavily dependent on whether or not the student has chosen to describe an experience that yields relevant information.

Statement of the Problem

Self-authorship is a way of knowing that allows individuals to exert control over their lives, and is instrumental in helping individuals succeed as adults in modern society (Baxter Magolda, 1998; Kegan, 1994). In addition, the development of self-authorship by students in their college years is significant due to the benefits of such development for the individual, employers, and society at large. Present literature describes the development of self-authorship as a complex process that requires a variety of personal and environmental characteristics rooted in the individual's ability to synthesize and learn from multiple experiences across three developmental domains. Development can occur in college, and several aspects of the college experience are well suited for the intentional development of self-authorship. However, and despite the congruence between several intended outcomes associated with higher education and self-authorship, few college students graduate with a self-authored perspective (Baxter Magolda, 2001).

The research related to college students' self-authorship is primarily informed by students' accounts of (a) experiences deemed by either the student or researcher as relevant, and how those experiences affected them generally, or (b) their experience as members of identity groups or participants in developmental programs. From these accounts, researchers draw conclusions about the students' demonstration or development of self-authorship, and about the personal and environmental factors that fostered or hindered that development. These studies

present students' descriptions of a specific choice (e.g., Pizzolato, 2006), of their experience as a member of a minority group (e.g., Torres & Hernandez, 2007), or their experience in a program designed or perceived to influence self-authorship (e.g., Egart & Healy, 2004), or of an experience that the student identified as having been developmentally significant (e.g., King et al., 2009). As such, our understanding of self-authorship development in college is rooted in data limited to moments in time or to a priori themes (e.g., high risk students in Pizzolato, 2003; service learning in Jones & Abes, 2004).

We lack holistic descriptions of students' self-authorship development that trace development through a variety of college experiences over time, despite evidence that change occurs slowly, and as a culmination of a variety of personal experiences (Baxter Magolda, 2001, Kegan, 1994; Pizzolato, 2005). Furthermore, students have previously not been asked directly about their self-authorship. Asking students to reflect on and discuss their self-authorship development, rather than an experience identified as being related to self-authorship, allows participants to provide information outside of the constraints imposed by the specific focus of existing studies. Students' stories of their development, free of parameters related to their identity or their involvement in a specific program, may provide a more holistic understanding of the relationship between college and self-authorship.

In addition, most of our understanding of college students' self-authorship development is derived from students' prompted descriptions of an academic experience, of their interactions with an advisor, or of their interactions with peers. These data provide valuable information, but not knowing how students themselves describe and make meaning of their holistic development over time represents a significant gap in the literature. Students' own words regarding their development have implications for our current understanding of self-authorship.

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the ways students make meaning of their self-authorship development in college. The study was guided by three research questions.

1. What degree of self-authorship is reflected in students' discussion of their college experiences?

2. How do students describe their self-authorship development during college?

3. How do students' descriptions of their self-authorship development during college compare to existing findings related to situational, environmental, and personal characteristics?

Significance of the Study

This study of students' own understanding of their self-authorship development makes a significant contribution to the self-authorship literature. A rich description of the way students understand their journey toward self-authorship during college provides a more holistic view of college students' development than exists in the current self-authorship literature, provides a college student analog to Baxter Magolda's (2001) study of college graduates, and responds to the call in the literature for a "more holistic framework for understanding and fostering students' intellectual growth" (Meszaros, 2007, p. 13). In addition, gaining insight into students' own ways of making meaning of their development, in their own words, addresses a significant gap in the literature, and provides findings that enhance our understanding of college students' self-authorship. The study also raised a number of questions related to our understanding of self-authorship and its development, which led to several recommendations for future research. These are presented at the conclusion of Chapter Five.

Theoretical Framework

The study is informed by Baxter Magolda's (2001) theory of Self-Authorship Development. The theory suggests that individuals develop through four phases of development as they recognize new ways of understanding their world. Individuals are initially beholden to external formulas for engaging in cognitive, interpersonal and intrapersonal understanding, become unsatisfied with the utility of these formulas in their day-to-day lives, begin to identify and trust in their internal voice, and finally rely on internally defined core beliefs to make meaning of their world, their relationships, and their identity. A detailed description of the theory is provided in Chapter Two.

Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter One described the challenges facing college graduates in modern society, the need for students to be able to self-author as they navigate their adult lives, and the need to know more about how students develop self-authorship. This chapter also identified a gap in the literature related to students' own understanding of their self-authorship and their description of the self-authorship development, and identified the problem, purpose and research questions, and significance of the study. Chapter Two provides a critical review of the research and literature related to college students' self-authorship, including the origin of the concept, Baxter Magolda's (2001) theory of self-authorship development, the situational, environmental, and personal characteristics that influence development, and findings related to self-authorship development among college students. Chapter Three details the methods and procedures used to conduct the study. Chapter Four describes the research participants and details the findings of the study, and Chapter Five

provides a review of the study's findings, a discussion of the findings in relationship to extant

literature, conclusions, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER TWO
Review of the Literature

This chapter describes the current body of literature related to college students' self-authorship, including the origin of the concept, Baxter Magolda's (2001) Self-Authorship Development theory, movement through the phases, the situational, environmental, and personal characteristics that influence development, and findings related to self-authorship development among college students.

History of the Construct

Based on observations made during years of teaching and therapy, Robert Kegan (1982) presented a constructivist-developmental theory of human development rooted in the individual's meaning-making processes. Constructive-developmental theory emphasizes the importance of the individual's experience on their development, and posits that development occurs as experiences provide the individual with information that disrupts his or her current way of seeing the world. Kegan (1982) described his work as "empirically grounded speculation" (p. ix), but expanded on the theory in 1994 using cross-sectional literature analysis and Subject-Object Interview research. Specifics related the participants or methodology used were not reported, however. Kegan (1994) focused on the mismatch between the demands of adult life and the curriculum by which educational and social structures influence human development. He articulated five orders of consciousness. While Kegan did not specifically name these orders, Love and Guthrie (1999) label these as, from the first order to the fifth, Single Point, Durable Categories, Cross-categorical Thinking, Cross-categorical Constructing, and Transystem.

While individuals' progress through the orders is unique to their experiences, the first and second orders are usually present in children, the third order usually defines adolescence, and the fourth and fifth order will almost occur only in adults (Kegan, 1994). Children in the first or

Single Point order of consciousness are motivated by immediate feelings and struggle to recognize the consistency of rules, natural laws, and identity from moment to moment. As they experience the outcomes of following or not following rules (such as being rewarded with desert for eating their vegetables), and as they recognize patterns in the behaviors and needs of others, the first order of consciousness becomes less useful. In response to the need to develop a new way of seeing their world, children move into the Durable Categories order of consciousness. In the second order, they understand rules and the autonomy of others, but only as barriers or aids in the achievement of their desires. As they experience negative consequences of lashing out against individuals or rules which bar them from their desires, individuals gain the ability to manage their desires and impulses, mostly out of subordination to the expectations of others. This shift signifies the third order of consciousness, Cross-categorical Thinking. Individuals in this stage adopt behaviors and personality traits according to their perceived utility in fitting into a certain group or institution.

In the fourth order of consciousness, called Cross-categorical Construction by Guthrie and Love (1999), adults begin to develop a sense of self that is independent of the desires and expectations of others. Individuals in this stage are empathetic, and consider the expectations and perspectives of others. They utilize internal belief systems to mediate conflicting perspectives and ambiguous decisions. Rather than experiencing their lives as a character in a story, individuals in the fourth order act as the authors of their lives, hence Kegan's term "self-authorship." Kegan (1994) described the shift into the fourth order of consciousness as a slow one in which the individual begins to consider and then eventually practice self-authorship in his or her cognitive processes, sense of self, and interactions with others, but not necessarily concurrently. Self–authorship was characterized as the threshold beyond which individuals

become able to successfully manage their lives. Fifth-order or Transystem consciousness requires the individual to embrace paradox and uncertainty, and to recognize their place in the context of complex systems and relationships, and rarely occurs.

Because development occurs as a result of individuals' experiences, progress is not certain. According to Kegan, absent experiences that cause individuals to reframe their meaning-making, and the personal traits that allow them to do so, the individual will stagnate and struggle to succeed in increasingly demanding situations (1982). Conversely, individuals whose experiences compel them to seek new ways of understanding their world progress to the next order of consciousness.

Kegan (1994) identified three distinct, but integrated, domains that comprise the fourth order of consciousness: epistemological (more commonly referred to as the cognitive domain), intrapersonal, and interpersonal. Self-authored individuals demonstrate fourth order meaning-making not only through seeking out and constructing knowledge (cognitive domain), but also in cultivating an autonomous sense of self (intrapersonal domain), and managing relationships according to internally-defined goals and values (interpersonal domain). Kegan wrote that individuals develop self-authorship as they are able to make these domains *object* rather than *subject.* An individual's approach to relationships, for instance, is *subject* if the individual is unaware of the elements of their interpersonal skills; if she is unaware that other approaches to relationships are possible. The individual has made relationship-building *object*, however, if she "can reflect on, handle, look at, be responsible for, …take control of, internalize, assimilate, or otherwise operate upon" (Kegan, 1994, p. 32) the way she approaches relationships. Self-authorship, according to Kegan, requires that individuals make their sense of self, their approach to relationships, and the way they gain knowledge *object*.

Building on Kegan's (1994) work, and her own exploration of college students' cognitive development, Baxter Magolda (2001) provided empirical support for Kegan's claims and described the development of self-authorship, effectively transforming Kegan's (1994) developmental stage into a fully-realized theory of development. As Baxter Magolda (1992, 1998, 2001) sought to understand the data from her ongoing, longitudinal study of recent college graduates, she recognized in self-authorship a suitable framework for her analysis. Baxter Magolda (1992) engaged college students in a longitudinal study of their meaning-making in college. The findings of this study, which involved annual in-depth, semi-structured interviews related to their cognitive development, were presented in the book, _Knowing and Reasoning in College_. Thirty-nine of the participants continued to be studied for 10 years after graduation. As the recent graduates began to initiate conversations about intrapersonal and interpersonal issues, Baxter Magolda (1998, 2001) adapted her interview protocol to investigate not only the meaning-making dimension of individuals' development, but also the emergence of internally-defined values and behaviors. In these interviews, Baxter Magolda (1998, 2001) focused on "important learning experiences" (1998, p. 147) as identified by the participant from the past year. Baxter Magolda asked participants to also discuss the most relevant and demanding aspects of their lives, and how their ways of making meaning of their world had changed since the previous interview.

During the study, participants worked in the areas of business (19), education (7), social work, law, homemaking, and ministry (a total of 13 in the latter four categories). It should be noted that only three of Baxter Magolda's (1992) original participants were members of underrepresented or minority groups, and none of these participants persisted in the study through Year 10. As such, the findings that serve as the foundation of self-authorship scholarship

are derived from what could be considered a relatively narrow range of perspectives and backgrounds.

The findings of this study included the identification of traits associated with self-authorship (1998), the existence and interrelationship of three domains of self-authorship (1998, 2001), and the development of a four-phase theory of self-authorship development (2001). Baxter Magolda (1998) found that individuals who self-authored demonstrated four traits: trust in their ability to internally define knowledge and personal priorities, the confidence to act in accordance with priorities, the ability to balance interpersonal and environmental realities with personal priorities, and the ability to prioritize personal knowledge claims and goals over the needs of others in relationships. Utilizing the same data, Baxter Magolda (2001), also found that three questions were central to her participants' development in their 20's: "How do I know?" "Who am I?" and "What relationships do I want to have with others?" (Baxter Magolda, 2001, p. 4).

These findings provided empirical evidence of Kegan's (1994) concept of self-authorship, his assertions regarding subject/object orientation, and his identification of the cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal domains as dimensions of self-authorship. Baxter Magolda (1998, 2001) advanced the understanding of these domains as well. As participants reflected on issues related to workplace challenges or personal decisions, they frequently referred to more than one of the domains as weighing on their decisions. As such, Baxter Magolda (2001) found that the three domains "intertwine" (p. 36), noting, "[the participants] could not address the epistemological dimension, or the 'how you know' question, without working with the other two dimensions" (p. 23).

Pizzolato and Ozaki (2007) provided support for Baxter Magolda's concept of intertwined domains in their study of 18 students' experience in an academic advising program designed to foster self-authorship. Pizzolato and Ozaki (2007) assessed the impact of an academic advising model based on the Learning Partnerships Model (LPM, described in detail later in this chapter) using an exploratory, qualitative, grounded study approach involving 18 participants at a large, public, Midwestern university. The researchers analyzed audio recordings of students' advising meetings, and conducted two one-hour interviews with each student focusing on the student's college experiences and academic planning and decision-making. In addition to other findings described later in the chapter, Pizzolato and Ozaki (2007) found that students' intrapersonal reflections often resulted from interpersonal conflicts. Further support was provided by King, Baxter Magolda, Barber, Brown, and Lindsay (2009), who found that self-authorship development outcomes, including awareness and openness to diversity, exploring beliefs and choices, identity development, and responsibility for learning, were interrelated. King et al. (2009) found that participants' interactions with diverse others often led to the exploration of personal beliefs. Similarly, they found that experiences that contribute to identity development compelled their participants to take responsibility for their increased learning and development. These findings support the contention that the three domains intertwine as individuals develop self-authorship.

Baxter Magolda's Theory of Self-Authorship Development

As Baxter Magolda (1998, 2001) engaged her participants regarding the developmental experiences in their lives, she identified similarities in the their journey toward self-authorship. She found that her participants demonstrated an increasing commitment to an "internal voice" (2001, p. 38) in response to the interrelated questions of "Who am I?" "How do I know?" and

"What relationships do I want to have with others?" Based on the changing nature of individuals'

responses to their annual interviews, Baxter Magolda (2001) found four distinct phases of self-

authorship development: Following External Formulas, The Crossroads, Becoming the Author of

One's Own Life, and Internal Foundations. The following sections will describe each phase in

detail, drawing from Baxter Magolda's (2001) original theory as well as the findings from other

self-authorship research.

      Following External Formulas. In the first phase, Following External Formulas,

individuals seek to accommodate the expectations and demands of others (Baxter Magolda,

2001). Many of Baxter Magolda's (2001) participants' career plans reflected their reliance on

external formulas, having been provided by parents, siblings, mentors, or older students.

Individuals are able to develop their own responses to challenges, and to reason autonomously,

but may become insecure absent external validation and approval. External formula followers

may use language that reflects their control over their lives, their commitment to a unique

identity, and their independence, but only as mimics, emulating the behaviors of self-authored

others (Torres & Hernandez, 2007). Such language may also reveal a desire to portray the

externally defined image of adulthood. For instance, one participant in Baxter Magolda's (2001)

study decided to marry his girlfriend in order to acquiesce her. Another expressed shock when

she became pregnant before her detailed life plan called for such a development. In their careers,

individuals expected success to result from "doing what one was supposed to do" (p. 78).

Baxter Magolda (2001) assessed these and other responses as evidence of participants'

commitment to "the standard plan for adult life" (p. 76).

      Even when individuals in this phase recognize the conflict between their internal desires

and the expectations of others, their concerns are overpowered by others, or they might seek out

a new external voice that supports their perspective (Baxter Magolda, 2001). In their longitudinal study of Latino/a students' development during college, Torres and Hernandez (2007) found that individuals following external formulas often avoid experiences or perspectives disruptive to their worldview. In an exploratory, qualitative study of 27 college freshmen designated by their institution as "high-risk," Pizzolato (2004) found that students relied on external formulas to fit in and that the characteristics of this phase were well suited for achieving short-term social goals, particularly for individuals who felt different from their peers. The priority in this phase is not to identify the best course of action or perspective, but to discern the course of action or perspective that is advocated by trusted individuals or authorities (Creamer & Laughlin, 2005; Torres & Hernandez, 2007). Creamer and Laughlin (2005) examined the career decision-making processes of 40 undergraduate college women based on interview responses, and found that their parents, not career counselors, served as the primary influence on their career interests. This practice of "relying on such a circumscribed circle of acquaintances for career information" (Creamer & Laughlin, 2005, p. 19) and other advice, as opposed to trained professionals, poses many challenges for individuals working to succeed the modern world. Following External Formulas makes individuals vulnerable to buying into stereotypes, even stereotypes linking to one's own culture (Torres & Hernandez, 2007), limiting their ability to engage with diverse others. .

The Crossroads and the provocative moment. Individuals shift from Following External Formulas into The Crossroads as they recognize the inadequacy of reliance on the advice, expectations, and demands of others. Recognition may follow negative experiences, such as the derailment of career paths, failed relationships, a lack of fulfillment despite faithful adherence to external formulas for success (Baxter Magolda, 2001), or exposure to conflicting but mutually compelling perspectives and values (Torres & Hernandez, 2007). In their case-

study of 29 female teachers participating in two graduate programs designed to contribute to the teachers' self-authorship, Collay and Cooper (2008) found that individuals may feel incapable of making difficult decisions between desirable options, such as career and parenting dilemmas. Torres and Hernandez (2007) found that participants in a longitudinal qualitative study of Latino students' development in college began to recognize that a single correct answer may not exist, and that there were multiple paths to their success. This realization helped students to "recognize negative stereotypes as racist and, as a result, [make] deliberate choices about how these negative images would influence how they saw themselves as Latinos/as" (p. 564). These choices, and others, represented new challenges for individuals who previously made decisions based on the example or advice of trusted others.

The Crossroads is defined by the realized need for "internal sources of belief and definition" (Baxter Magolda, 2001, p. 93). Faced with competing external interests, parental expectations, or unfulfilling career prospects, individuals recognize the need to assert themselves, to develop the means to manage these challenges rather than be managed by them. However, individuals in this phase lacking the "internal mechanism" (Baxter Magolda, 2001, p. 97) to consider these challenges from an internal perspective, may adopt defeatist attitudes (e.g., Baxter Magolda, p. 97; Pizzolato, 2004, p. 434) or turn inward, hiding their desire to act and reason in ways that honor their internal perspective (Baxter Magolda, 2001).

Just as Kegan (1994) suggested that individuals may practice self-authorship cognitively but continue to rely on third-order consciousness in their interactions and behaviors, individuals in The Crossroads begin to recognize their ability to articulate their own beliefs, and to make knowledge claims, but may lack the confidence to consistently assert their emerging internal voice into their behavior and relationships (Baxter Magolda, 2001; Torres & Hernandez, 2007).

These individuals decided when and how to act on their perceptions and beliefs based primarily on their assessment of how others would respond. In Torres and Hernandez (2007) study, one participant spoke out against racist remarks, but stopped short of internalizing his rejection of racism in principle by excusing the offenders on the grounds of their perceived ignorance. For individuals at The Crossroads, all that is standing between them and self-authorship is the decision to commit to their internal voice. This decision comes following what is called the provocative moment (Pizzolato, 2003, 2005, 2006).

Described by Pizzolato (2003, 2005, 2006) as the gateway to self-authorship, the individual's commitment to an internal voice indicates the experience of a provocative moment. The provocative moment results from the "jarring disequilibrium" experienced as external formulas fail to satisfy (Pizzolato, 2005, p. 625). Pizzolato conducted three studies related to students' self authorship development: Pizzolato (2003) drew findings from 35 high-risk students' descriptions of "important experiences" (p. 801); Pizzolato (2005) analyzed 613 students' narratives about two important decisions in order to identify relationships between students' experience of a provocative moment and personal or situational factors; Pizzolato (2006) analyzed 132 student narratives related to academic advising experiences. Pizzolato (2006) found a relationship between individuals' refusal to follow unsatisfactory external formulas, and their subsequent attempt to discover new options and to develop their internal voice. Rejection of external formulas, such as parental expectations, unwanted romantic relationships, and "the plan" (p. 635) for school and career success allowed individuals to look inward, to what participants in this study verbalized as their heart, their pride, and their independence. Once individuals committed to their internal voice, they began to author their own lives.

Becoming the Author of One's Life. As individuals enter the third phase, Becoming the Author of One's Life, they begin to assert there internal voice in everyday life, take a more active role in constructing knowledge and managing relationships, and develop a more complex awareness of their sense of self (Baxter Magolda, 2001). This is a phase of changes, as individuals renegotiate existing relationships and take new approaches to their work and careers. Baxter Magolda's (2001) participants discussed a newfound awareness of their world and their reasoning processes. This awareness allowed them to manage their world rather than be managed by it (Kegan, 1994). For instance, Baxter Magolda's (2001) participants described a redoubling of effort in the face of obstacles that might have daunted them in the past, exploring their faith in personal ways as opposed to "going through the motions" (p. 125), and being intentional about assuming new family roles as they recognized their subservience to their family's needs and expectations. Torres and Hernandez (2007) found that Latino/a students' emerging internal voice compelled them to give back to their community and serve others, suggesting a total commitment to their beliefs and values.

These behaviors reveal the individuals' commitment to "developing an internal system for making meaning of oneself, relations with others, and knowledge" (Baxter Magolda, p. 154). Pizzolato and Ozaki (2007) found that, in service of working toward more gratifying outcomes, individuals "place increasing emphasis on incorporating self-knowledge and goals in their meaning making" (p. 208). For instance, one of Baxter Magolda's (2001) participants came to terms with his company's partnership with a factory in China of dubious ethical standards by framing the ill treatment of workers as the natural byproduct of progress, reflecting on our own history of similar practices, and emphasizing national sovereignty. In this instance, the participant has made up his own mind about the issue: he rejected external condemnation about

the practices, and did not mention his company's stance on the issue. He described his opinion as being rooted in "deep feelings" (Baxter Magola, p. 147) on the issue. However, the participant framed his position not in terms of values and beliefs, but in terms of historical and cultural precedence. This, too, is an aspect of Becoming the Author of One's Life. Individuals in this phase may not have enough confidence to assert their internal voice on its own merits, an indicator that the convictions are "in their heads rather than in their hearts" (Baxter Magola, 2008, p. 280).

Internal Foundations. The integration of cognitive complexity with the development of a more complex understanding of self provides the Internal Foundation on which to make decisions, manage dissonance, and understand one's identity (Baxter Magolda, 2008). Baxter Magolda (2008) utilized the same data set as in Baxter Magolda (1998, 2001) to explore in detail the nature of self-authorship achievement. Individuals' internal voices, which tend to take the form of confidence in one's reasoning, skill in the previous phase, or authority, become belief systems more adaptable to external realities. Individuals Becoming the Author of One's Life might commit to a self-authored position, but through logic and reasoning. Having Internal Foundations allows individuals to articulate the core values or beliefs that drive their behavior, using simple language rooted not in financial factors, timing, and precedent, but in terms of feelings, vision, and being able to "tell" (Baxter Magola, 2001, p. 171) which decision is right. Baxter Magolda (2008) reported participants' descriptions of a "blurring of their knowledge and their sense of self" (p. 281). The Internal Foundation led a sense of peace, and to the confidence to make decisions that might not be popular or respected by family members, friends, or coworkers (Baxter Magolda, 2001; Pizzolato, 2004). Pizzolato (2004) found that high-risk

students' ability to confront social pressure in the pursuit of their college aspirations was made possible only by the confidence in their internally defined beliefs, values, and goals.

In this final phase of self-authorship development, individuals employ the same commitment to the internal voice as in the Becoming the Author of One's Life phase, but with the ability to manage and embrace uncertainty, divergent perspectives, and ambiguity (Baxter Magolda, 2001; Torres & Hernandez, 2007). Baxter Magolda (2001) described this as the participants' "acceptance of life as it unfolded," (p. 180). Such acceptance led not to complacency, however, but to more confident engagement in careers, relationships, and their world. "In the process of becoming authors of their own lives, participants realized that they could not control the external world; rather they could control how they made meaning of the external world" (Baxter Magolda, 2001, p. 183).

Possessed of a newfound comfort with divergent perspectives and confidence in the internal voice, self-authoring individuals welcome opportunities to see the world in new ways, and to reconsider their perspectives (Baxter Magolda, 2001, 2008). In her study of high-risk college students, Pizzolato (2004) found that self-authoring participants weighed others' perspectives against their beliefs and values, and other external factors. Having an internal foundation did not reduce decisions to instinctive, or "gut" (p. 429) reactions, but rather allowed for the careful consideration of how the opinions and needs of others fit, conflicted, or undermined established beliefs and values. Individuals whose internal voice guided their construction of knowledge, exploration of self, and relations with others, and who welcomed new perspectives, but who rejected the safety of following external formulas, were confident of their ability to manage the ambiguity and challenge of adult life (Baxter Magolda, 2001, 2008; Pizzolato, 2004). Such is the achievement of self-authorship.

Development Through the Phases

While Kegan (1994) and Baxter Magolda (1998, 2001) suggest that individuals who demonstrate self-authorship will not regress to earlier phases, some research contradicts this suggestion. Pizzolato (2004), for instance, found that, faced with sufficient "external hostility …toward outward expression of their internal foundations" (p. 439), individuals can abandon their internal voice in favor of more immediately gratifying external formulas. In addition, there is evidence that individuals can progress to the next phase in one of the three domains, while lagging behind in the others (Baxter Magolda, 2001; Pizzolato, 2004). However**,** Torres and Hernandez (2007) found that the three domains develop within one phase of each other, reflecting the interrelationship of the domains. For instance, an individual Becoming the Author of One's Own Life in the interpersonal domain must have at least reached The Crossroads (the previous phase) in the other two domains.

Factors That Influence Self-Authorship Development

Three types of factors have been found to influence self-authorship development: situational factors, environmental factors, and personal factors. In many cases, specific situational, environmental, and personal characteristics are, in and of themselves, insufficient for progress to the next phase of development. A discussion of the intermediary effects of various factors will follow presentation of the three types.

Situational factors influencing development. A variety of factors related to specific situations and experiences contribute to individuals' self-authorship development. These factors include the experience of dissonance (Abes & Jones, 2004; Baxter Magolda, 2001; Jehengir, Williams, & Pete, 2011; Jones & Abes, 2004; King et al, 2009; Pizzolato, 2003, 2004; Taylor, 2008; Torres & Hernandez, 2007), responsibility for mutual knowledge construction (Baxter

Magolda, 2001; Jehengir et al, 2011; Piper & Buckley, 2004; Pizzolato, 2003, 2006), internal vs. external catalyzation (Pizzolato, 2005), and reflection (Jones & Abes, 2004; Pizzolato, 2006; Rhoads, 2000).

  Dissonance. Perhaps the most prominent theme in the self-authorship development literature is the role of dissonance (Abes & Jones, 2004; Baxter Magolda, 2001; Jehengir, Williams, & Pete, 2011; Jones & Abes, 2004; King et al., 2009; Pizzolato, 2003, 2004; Taylor, 2008; Torres & Hernandez, 2007). According to Taylor (2008), who conducted a meta-analysis of present self-authorship research, "for progression of forward movement to occur, an individual must have a sense of dissonance and disequilibrium, which disrupts his or her current way of making meaning" (p. 230). King et al. (2009) found that development "often involved learning from negative experiences and relationships" (p. 114). Baxter Magolda (1998, 2001) described the tension her participants felt between conflicting values, competing goals, and the recognition that their education did not provide the answers to many of their challenges. Individuals also experienced dissonance as their adherence to external formulas in terms of career and relationship choices failed to yield personal satisfaction (Baxter Magolda, 2001). She found that engaging with these types of dissonance produced a "heightened…interest in multiple perspectives and the process through which one (chooses) among them" (Baxter Magolda, 2001, p. 196). In addition, dissonance can compel individuals to develop new approaches to challenges, abandon external formulas, and reflect on their own identities in the context of diverse perspectives (Baxter Magolda, 2001; Jehengir, Williams, & Pete, 2011; Jones & Abes, 2004; Torres & Hernandez, 2007).

  King, Baxter Magolda, Barber, Brown and Lindsay (2009) conducted 174 interviews with students from four different colleges and universities as a follow-up to the Wabash National

Study of Liberal Arts Education (WNS). The WNS was designed to "examine the practices and conditions supporting liberal arts education" (p. 109), and engaged 600 students in a variety of surveys and assessments. Data from the follow-up interviews examined in this study revealed a relationship between students' self-authorship and dissonance resulting from in a variety of curricular and co-curricular experiences: participants who described exposure to diverse perspectives and ambiguous challenges tended to also demonstrate self-authorship in their problem-solving and meaning-making. More self-authored participants began to take risks in class in order to enhance their learning, or sought to apply concepts from the classroom or co-curricular experience to their personal lives and their views of themselves. These findings suggest that dissonance is a necessary but insufficient factor leading to progression from one self-authorship phase to the next.

Dissonance arising from exposure to new knowledge or perspectives weakens the individual's commitment to external formulas, and fosters self-authorship development (Baxter Magolda, 2001; Jehengir, Williams, & Pete, 2011; Jones & Abes, 2004; Pizzolato, 2004; Taylor, 2008). In Baxter Magolda (2001), a participant described the dissonance resulting from his exposure to the living conditions in Mexico. Seeing families burn tires for warmth first-hand caused him to rethink his former rejection of the practice on environmental grounds. Jones and Abes (2004) conducted in-depth interviews with eight students who had taken part in a service-learning experience two to four years prior to the study in order to assess the long-term developmental impact of the experience. All of the participants were previously enrolled in a leadership theories course that required three hours per week of community service with either a food pantry or an AIDS service organization. During the interviews, participants were asked to reflect on the impact of their experience in the course on how they thought about their identity,

as well as other influences related to personal development. Findings suggested that nearly all of the students gained an "awareness of economic and education privilege and the advantages accompanying such privilege" (p. 155), which disrupted their understanding of their own background in comparison with the backgrounds of others. The diversity of individuals both working in and served by the service sites also disrupted students' previously held beliefs. These experiences of dissonance caused them to recognize the inadequacy of their previously held external formulas, and to be more open-minded about new people and new ideas, suggesting cognitive development toward a self-authored perspective.

Experiences of dissonance appear to harken the individual's departure from the Following External Formulas phase of self-authorship development. Jehangir, Williams, and Pete (2011) found that students experience dissonance when challenged to engage topics such as religion, race, and gender with diverse others. As students struggled to meet the challenge, they discovered unexpected commonalities and differences, and began to abandon externally informed stereotypes. These findings emerged from a case study designed to explore the influence of a multicultural learning community on students' self-authorship development at a large Midwestern research university. The authors conducted interviews with 24 first-generation college students three to four years after their experience in the learning community, and found that the integration of social and academic experiences in the learning community fostered their self-authorship development over time.

Abes and Jones (2004) conducted three in-depth interviews with ten women at a large, public research university in the Midwest in order to examine the relationship between contextual influences and the identity development of lesbian college students.

Their findings indicated that the participants' sexual orientation identity development occurred independent from that of other identities. Also, they identified the dissonance the participants experienced as they attempted to make meaning of stereotypes, labels, and expectations related to their sexual orientation identity as a contributing factor in their development. Pizzolato (2004) and Torres and Hernandez (2007) also found students' recognition of and discomfort with racial, ethnic, and performance labels to be a significant factor in their self-authorship development. Rejecting or reconstituting these external formulas allowed the participants to develop an internally defined identity (Abes & Jones, 2004; Torres & Hernandez, 2007).

While the experience and management of dissonance is an important catalyst for self-authorship development (Baxter Magolda, 2001), individuals may not always possess the ability to manage dissonance in constructive ways, causing them to retreat to the safety of practiced External Formulas. For instance, one of Torres and Hernandez's (2007) participants changed her major to Spanish in order to avoid being mocked for her accent in courses required for teaching, her original field. Pizzolato (2003, 2004) found that first-year high-risk students may enter college with self-authored ways of knowing. Pizzolato (2003) conducted one interview each with 35 students participating in support programs for high-risk students at a large Midwestern university designed to explore and contrast students' pre-college and early-college ways of processing their experiences. Pizzolato (2004) examined the ways first-year, high-risk students made sense of and coped with their college experiences. For high-risk students, making it to college in the face of lesser expectations and limited social and./or academic support required self-authorship. In fact, students with less college admissions privilege, defined by Pizzolato (2003) as "the unsolicited benefit of not having to figure out how to apply to or pay for college" (p. 804), achieved an even higher degree of self-authorship than their privileged high-risk peers.

Despite their development prior to college, their college experiences created significant disequilibrium in their confidence, and their trust in their internal voice. Feeling less prepared than their classmates and recognizing the different treatment they received from advisors and teachers caused these students to "stop acting in ways that fit with their entering goals and beliefs – their internal foundations. They opted instead to fit in" (p. 432). Just as dissonance may instigate individuals' commitment to developing their internal voice, it may also cause individuals to retreat to the comfort of external definitions. Dissonance is a necessary but insufficient factor in self-authorship development. Other personal, environmental, and situational characteristics are at play as well.

Responsibility for knowledge construction*.* Situations that task individuals with taking part in the meaning-making process promote self-authorship development (Baxter Magolda, 2001; Egart & Healy, 2004; Jehengir et al, 2011; Piper & Buckley, 2004). Baxter Magolda (2001) found that recent college graduates did not anticipate, and were ill-prepared for, the degree of autonomy experienced in their adult lives. At multiple levels of employment (i.e. – entry-level, management), participants discussed the lack of specific instructions and their employers' expectations of autonomy, which, while challenging for the participants, compelled them to discern the best way to work toward their goals on their own, rather than simply carrying out an external formula for success. Egart and Healy (2004) examined the assignments, journals, and interviews of participants in an internship program designed to foster student development. "One of the most noticeable contrasts that students identified regarding the classroom experience and the internship experience was the expectation that they be the knowers – that what they thought had significance and that their point of view was respected (p. 130).

In situations in which the individual is expected to take part in knowledge construction, they are encouraged to "yield to the authority of [their] inner voice to make…judgments" (Egart & Healy, 2004, p. 130). Such experiences are linked to increased interpersonal and cognitive development, two of the self-authorship domains (Baxter Magolda, 2001; Jehengir, Williams, & Pete, 2011). Participants in Jehangir, Williams, and Pete (2011) who demonstrated increasingly self-authored ways of engaging with new ideas and information attributed their development to being empowered to construct knowledge with their peers.

Outside of the classroom, evidence suggests that sharing responsibility for the standards and accountability mechanisms of their communities also helps students develop self-authorship (Piper, 1997). The University of Nevada Las Vegas implemented the Community Standards Model in the campus residential living community in order to improve community relationships. In the model, students are charged with the development, revision, and enforcement of the community's rules and standards, within the confines of state and university regulations. Engaging students in this process framed knowledge as complex and socially constructed, and led to increased understanding of others and willingness to assert their beliefs and values through action (Piper, 1997). Situations that empower the individuals to construct, to author, their own understanding of what to do, or how to think, appear to promote development toward self-authorship in all three domains.

Internal vs. external catalyzation. Personal decisions arising from internal commitments, rather than those made in response to external demands, are associated with increased self-authorship development (Pizzolato, 2005). In an analysis of 613 students' Experience Survey responses, Pizzolato (2005) found that "situations where the student independently determined that a decision needed to be made" (p. 632) were more likely to lead

to a provocative moment. By contrast, students in The Crossroads tended to continue to rely on external formulas when faced with decisions created by others, such as major selection, or whether or not to return to college. As participants in Baxter Magolda's (2001) study struggled to respond to marriage expectations or unexpected promotions, they made decisions to acquiesce to significant others, or to achieve what they saw as the next step in their progress toward adulthood. Situations that imposed decisions externally tend to be resolved by following external formulas (Baxter Magolda, 2001; Pizzolato, 2005). Pizzolato's (2004) high-risk students' decision to pursue a college education, on the other hand, was internally catalyzed, leading to the achievement of self-authorship years before many of their high-performing classmates. This idea that internally catalyzed decisions are more likely to promote self-authorship mirrors one of the tenets of Baxter Magolda's (2001) Learning Partnerships Model for self-authorship development: sharing authority for knowledge creation. As students take ownership of not only their response, but of the problem itself, they rely on their internal voice to guide them.

Reflection. As with many developmental outcomes, reflection serves to foster self-authorship development (Rhoads, 2000). Jones and Abes (2004) described the relationship between service learning and self-authorship development in their interview study of eight students who had taken part in a service-learning experience two to four years prior to the study. All of the participants were previously enrolled in a leadership theories course that required three hours per week of community service with a designated service organization. According to the authors, "because of ongoing reflection and reframing engendered by their experiences in the two community settings, participants' meaning making illustrated growth in identity (intrapersonal), interpersonal, and cognitive domains" (p. 153). Similarly, a finding from Pizzolato's (2006) study of students' accounts of academic advising experiences identified the

use of goal reflection as promoting students' experience of the provocative moment. Taking the previous section regarding internal and external catalyzation of decision-making demands into consideration, reflection is presented here as a means of helping individuals take ownership of, and internalize, the decision at hand.

Without reflection, individuals select from the identified options using the external formula they deem most appropriate (Pizzolato, 2006). In major selection, for example, that formula might take the form of parental advice or likely grade outcomes. In the example of the service-learning course above, students might choose to process their experience at the service sites defensively, rejecting their sense of guilt and downplaying the implications for their sense of self. Egart and Healy (2004) found that reflection helped their participants articulate the internal beliefs and values guiding their behaviors, and begin to self-author their response to challenges and decisions. In essence, reflecting on an issue, even externally, catalyzed challenges, moving the issue from external to internal, and allowing individuals to frame their responses in terms of their emerging internal voice. Indeed, Abes and Jones (2004) and Baxter Magolda (2001) mention specifically the developmental impact of participation in the study itself when reflecting on their participants' journey toward self-authorship.

Environmental factors influencing self-authorship development. The literature describes two significant environmental factors that influence students' self-authorship development: support (Collay & Cooper, 2008; Jehangir, Williams & Pete, 2011; Pizzolato, 2004; Taylor, 2008; Torres & Hernandez, 2007) and exposure to diverse perspectives (Collay & Cooper, 2008; Jehangir, Williams & Pete, 2011; King et al, 2009; Pizzolato, 2004; Taylor, 2008; Torres & Hernandez, 2007).

Exposure to multiple perspectives*.* While *situations* that expose individuals to multiple perspectives may result in dissonance, and may or may not lead to development, *environments* in which diverse voices are valued foster students' development throughout their journey toward self-authorship (Collay & Cooper, 2008; Jehangir, Williams & Pete, 2011; Jones & Abes, 2004; King et al, 2009; Pizzolato, 2004; Taylor, 2008; Torres & Hernandez, 2007). Using interviews with 174 students conducted as a follow-up to the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education (WNS), King et al. (2009), identified four outcomes associated with experiences that promoted self-authorship development: increased awareness, understanding, and openness to diversity; exploring and establishing a basis for beliefs, choices, and actions; developing a sense of identity to guide choices; and increasing awareness of and openness to responsibility for own learning. In their findings, King et al. (2009) indicated that interactions with diverse others "opened the door to new ideas despite the fact that students [following external formulas] did not process them deeply" (p. 112). Friendships, living arrangements, and mutual involvement in co-curricular opportunities provided the bulk of these experiences for their participants.

As individuals engage with diverse perspectives, they become less likely to follow external formulas (Baxter Magolda, 1998, 2001; Jehangir, Williams, & Pete, 2011; Jones & Abes, 2004). For instance, individuals in meaningful conversations with diverse others often find that they have much in common (Jehangir, Williams, & Pete, 2011, Jones & Abes, 2004). Baxter Magolda (2001) referred to these new perspectives as "complicating" (p. 201) individuals' previously held views about others, themselves, and abstract concepts. In the midst of multiple perspectives, individuals recognize the need to contribute their own opinions (Collay & Cooper, 2008). As King et al. (2009) found, exploring and establishing a basis for beliefs is an over-arching outcome of experiences that foster self-authorship development.

Such experiences not only diminish the trustworthiness of external formulas, and compel the individual to articulate beliefs and values, but also encourage individuals to adopt a new way of making meaning of their world at large (Baxter Magolda, 2001; Jehangir et al., 2011; Jones & Abes, 2004). For instance, Jehengir, Williams, and Pete (2011) described their participants' newfound appreciation of multiple perspectives. King et al. (2009) found evidence that students who were exposed to multiple perspectives adopted new ways of learning in a variety of settings, not only the setting in which multiple perspectives were expressed. Seeking new alternatives to knowledge claims formulas and examining personal beliefs, both outcomes of exposure to multiple perspectives, are indicators of a self-authored perspective (Baxter Magolda, 2001).

Support. Environmental support can determine whether or not experiences of dissonance lead to increased self-authorship (Collay & Cooper, 2008; Egart & Healy, 2004; Jehangir, Williams & Pete, 2011; Pizzolato, 2004; Torres & Hernandez, 2007). In their study of Latino/a college students, Torres and Hernandez (2007) found that a lack of support, or even negative support, for "trying anything new" (p. 567) resulted in continued reliance on External Formulas. Negative support for considering new perspectives and engaging in new experiences occurred more for students living at home. Individuals who feel that acting on their internal foundations will not be supported by their local peer groups may not only stagnate in their development, but regress to following external formulas (Pizzolato, 2004). In contrast, positive support is usually associated with development towards self-authorship.

Whereas a lack of support for trying new things or adapting new approaches to managing dissonance stifles growth, programs designed to create supportive academic environments have been found to foster students' self-authorship development (Collay & Cooper, 2008; Jehangir, Williams & Pete, 2011). A supportive environment allows individuals to manage dissonance and

reflection (situational factors) in increasingly self-authored ways. Students in the multicultural learning community described in Jehangir et al. (2011) cite their comfort with, and trust in, their peers as vital to their constructive engagement in difficult conversations about race, religion, and identity. Collay and Cooper (2008) found that students' peer cohorts served to bolster their confidence in their internal voice, and to help them let go of the insecurities that lead to regression and stagnation (i.e. Pizzolato, 2004; Torres & Hernandez, 2007).

There are, however, exceptions. Pizzolato (2003) defined privilege as the "excessive support that cross[es] the line into protection," (p. 808). Taylor (2008) drew a parallel to findings in White male identity development theory that warn against environments replete with affirmation but absent dissonance and disequilibrium. Support, it seems, needs to be not of the person so much as for the practice of trying new things, taking chances, and committing to growth and development (King, et al., 2009; Torres & Hernandez, 2007). Jehangir, Williams, and Pete (2011) found that perceived support from their peers gave students the confidence to trust their internal voice as they engaged in discussions of diversity and ethnicity. Likewise, Egart and Healy (2004) found that lack of support may, in fact, initiate movement toward a more internally founded sense of purpose and achievement. Egart and Healy (2004) analyzed the journals and reflections of 25 participants in their assessment of outcomes related to the Urban Leadership Internship Program at Miami University, an internship program designed to foster self-authorship development. Absent supportive mentoring relationships, some individuals in the study abandoned their need for external validation in favor of their own assessment of their performance (Egart & Healy, 2004). Whether individuals are able to continue to develop in unsupportive environments likely has to do with whether or not the individual recognizes their own responsibility for constructing knowledge (Egart & Healy, 2004).

Environmental factors play a major role in determining whether individuals respond to the situational characteristics described above in ways that lead to progression, stagnation, or regression along the four phases of self-authorship development (Taylor, 2008). Environments that provide multiple valued perspectives and support for growth and development promote the development of an internal voice in the face of dissonance, ambiguous problems, and reflection.

Personal factors influencing self-authorship development. In addition to environmental factors, personal factors influence not only the way individuals manage situational factors, but also make meaning of their environment. Identity traits and personal processes converge to create conditions that foster, or hinder, self-authorship development (Pizzolato, 2004, 2006; Torres & Hernandez, 2007; Wawrzynski & Pizzolato, 2006). Primarily, personal factors have been found to influence development in one of two ways: (a) they present additional developmental challenges not present for individuals without those traits (e.g., Abes & Jones, 2004; Pizzolato, 2003, 2004; Torres & Hernandez, 2007; Wawrzynski & Pizzolato, 2006), or (b) they moderate individuals' responses to situational and environmental factors (e.g., Pizzolato, 2004, 2006; Wawrzynski & Pizzolato, 2006).

Race, ethnicity, and other identity traits. Identity traits, such as ethnicity or classification labels (i.e., "high-risk"), influence students' ways of knowing (cognitive), their interactions with others (interpersonal), and the way they view themselves (intrapersonal) presenting additional developmental challenges not present for individuals without those traits. For instance, drawing from the same research data – a longitudinal study of 29 and 22 Latino/a students (respectively) at four diverse institution-types - Torres and Hernandez (2007) and Torres (2009) found that Latino/a students engaged in additional developmental tasks not described in studies of White students. As participants in Torres and Hernandez (2007) examined and articulated their personal

values and goals, they did so in the context of societal images of Latinos/as. At earlier phases of

development, students were unable to recognize racist thoughts as such, and even internalized

these external stereotypes as having sway over their future (Torres, 2009). However, as they

developed through The Crossroads phase toward the Internal Foundations phase, they were able

to identify the underlying racism informing others' stereotypes and biases, and construct their

own self-image in the context of internal beliefs and goals (Torres, 2009). For instance, one

participant in Torres and Hernandez (2007) demonstrated her newfound understanding of social

inequality as she described the impact of limited educational opportunities on her development

and the development of other minority individuals. Also, several students who progressed to

Becoming the Author of One's Life and Internal Foundations phases identified personal life

goals related to confronting racism and oppression, underscoring the growth they experienced

related to their ability to acknowledge, accept, and make object (Kegan, 1994) the implications

of racism on their lives (Torres & Hernandez, 2007).

In addition, identity labels have been linked found to engage individuals with additional

interpersonal challenges. In particular, interaction with diverse others created unique

developmental challenges. Development toward self-authorship for Latino/a students required

them to first acknowledge the perspectives of others toward their ethnicity, and then to manage

their relationships with others in ways that were "consistent with an informed Latino/a identity"

(p. 568). Other studies suggest similar experiences for individuals with sexual orientation

identity labels (Abes & Jones, 2004) or academic performance labels (Pizzolato, 2004).

Membership in underrepresented groups not only poses the additional developmental challenge

of managing expectations and stereotypes, but also provides an additional intermediating factor

that influences students' response to situational and environmental conditions (Abes & Jones, 2004; Pizzolato, 2004; Torres & Hernandez, 2007).

As members of underrepresented groups, individuals navigate situational and environmental characteristics through the lenses of their identities. The level of dissonance associated with exposure to diverse perspectives may be greater for individuals whose identities are associated with oppression (Torres & Hernandez, 2007), or that distance them from their peers (Pizzolato, 2006). When advisors, instructors, and peers emphasized their label as "high risk," students in Pizzolato's (2004) study abandoned the internal foundations that helped them achieve their goal of college education in favor of external formulas for social acceptance. Their ability to move to a self-authored perspective depended largely on their ability to cope with the dissonance created by their status as high-risk students.

Individuals also engage in reflection through the lens of their identity. Evidence suggests that individuals from underrepresented or oppressed groups discover a commitment to serving their communities as they begin to commit to their internal foundations (Torres & Hernandez, 2007), whereas members of majority populations reflect on their complicity in socialized oppression and inequality (Baxter Magolda, 2001; Jones & Abes, 2004). Jones & Abes (2004) and Egart and Healy (2004) found that exposure to diverse others helped individuals whose identity traits were associated with privilege to recognize that privilege and gain a new perspective on their background in relation to the backgrounds of others. Identity traits moderate individuals' experience of other influences on self-authorship development. Sometimes this moderation causes individuals to experience dissonance as overwhelming, resulting in stagnation, or even regression (Pizzolato, 2004; Abes & Jones, 2004). Other times, identity traits may enrich the individual's experience by providing exposure to divergent viewpoints and

creating dissonance not experienced by individuals without those traits (Jones & Abes, 2004; Pizzolato, 2003; Torres & Hernandez, 2007). How an individual's identity traits influence his or her response to situational or environmental factors, and their self-authorship development at large, depends largely on their other coping mechanisms, volitional efficacy, and behavior regulation.

Coping strategies. Identity traits, such as ethnicity (Torres & Hernandez, 2007) and academic labels (i.e. – high-risk, Pizzolato, 2004), have been found to create cognitive dissonance as students seek to understand their sense of self and their relationships in the context of societal images. Students' processes for managing dissonance and regulating their behavior play a major role in their ability to self-author (Pizzolato, 2004, 2005). Pizzolato (2004) identified a relationship between coping strategies and self-authorship development. Students who avoided challenges to their ways of knowing tended to continue Following External Formulas, as in the case of the student who changed her major to avoid being embarrassed by her accent. Other students confronted challenges by reflecting on the obstacles and identifying actions that could decrease the challenge, labeled here as self-regulatory coping. For instance, one participant in Pizzolato's (2004) study who felt angry about the amount of effort his courses demanded, particularly in comparison to his non-high-risk classmates, identified behaviors that served the short-term goal of fitting in, but that were hindering his academic performance. Students who self-regulated in the face of challenges did so on their own, and while they may have been focusing on their internal voice, they did not demonstrate the incorporation of multiple sources of input and constructive relationship-building consistent with self-authorship. Students who sought out advice and clarification from others before developing action plans demonstrated supported coping. Supported coping was found to support self-authorship development across all

three domains, because it helped students develop more complex ways of making meaning of their situation, focus on their internal goals and values, and actively manage relationships in service of those internal foundations (Pizzolato, 2004). These findings underscore the role that internal processes play in students' self-authorship development.

Volitional efficacy and behavior regulation. In addition to coping strategies, goal commitment and behavior regulation traits also influence the way individuals develop toward self-authorship (Pizzolato, 2005). In the study of 613 undergraduate students at a large, public, research institution, Pizzolato (2005) found links between volitional efficacy, behavior regulation, and the experience of a provocative moment. This study found that students with high volitional efficacy, the ability to commit to their goals, and who self-regulated their behavior were more likely to experience the provocative moment when making important decisions than students with low volitional efficacy or whose behavior was regulated externally. The provocative moment marks the end of The Crossroads in self-authorship development, and ushers in Becoming the Author of One's Life. Utilizing the Experience Survey, students recounted, in written narratives, two important decisions they made, one of which was the decision to apply to college, the other was a decision of their choosing. Decisions that propelled students "to reconsider their goals and/or conception of self with the intention of possibly acting on their reflections (p. 629) were identified as representing the student's provocative moment. Pizzolato (2005) then analyzed these instances to identify personal and environmental factors that might facilitate provocation. High volitional efficacy and self-regulation were found to be highly associated with the experience of the provocative moment. In fact, all of the students in this study who experienced the provocative moment demonstrated self-regulation. Absent these personal traits, students were unable to manage dissonance in constructive ways, and tended to

eschew personal goals and values in favor of the needs and expectations of others, preventing them from progressing to Becoming the Authors of One's Own Life (Pizzolato, 2005). Identity, coping, and behavior regulation processes influence students' progress through the phases of self-authorship development. Some of these personal factors, including high-risk status, volitional efficacy, and self-regulation may themselves be influenced by other personal traits.

 Other personal factors. A number of other background and identity traits interact with students' self-authorship. In an attempt to provide a foundation on which to build a model of self-authorship development to explain the interaction of environment and other input characteristics, Wawrzynski and Pizzolato (2006) conducted a study of 368 undergraduate students at a large, Midwestern, research institution. Participants completed the *Self-Authorship Survey* at the beginning and end of the academic semester. The researchers analyzed the relationships between students' *Self-Authorship Survey* scores, students' personal characteristics, and students' Holland type. Regression analysis was used to determine the influence of the myriad personal factors on students' scores at time one and time two. Only two of the Self-Authorship Survey subscales, Self-Regulation in Challenging Situations (SRC) and Perceptions of Volitional Competence (PVC), had significant background predictors at time one. ACT scores, social Holland Type, academic classification, and transfer status altogether accounted for 11% of the variance in SRC scores, while sex, high school grade point average, and social Holland type combined to explain 4.3% of the variance in predicting PVC. Personal factors, such as ACT scores, being a first generation college student, being a student of color, transfer status, and time one subscale data predicted at least one of the subscales at time two. This underscores the influence of these characteristics on students' ability to develop a self-authored perspective.

While none of the factors predicted students' overall Self-Authorship scores at time one, they did predict several of the subscales representative of skills that predict self-authorship. Perhaps even more interesting, the same personal characteristic may not predict Self-Authorship at time one, but may at time two, as in the case of students' academic backgrounds. For example, transfer students were less likely to be able to Self-Regulate in Challenging Situations at time one, but more likely to score high on this subscale than non-transfer peers at time two. Personal factors that may not have influenced students' development of Self-Authorship prior to the study may have, however, fostered self-authorship development during the data collection period.

The literature describes a relationship between myriad personal characteristics and self-authorship development. Students' ethnicity, academic background and other academic labels served to create moments of dissonance related to the way they viewed their world, themselves, and others. Their behavior regulation, volitional efficacy, and coping strategies determined whether or not they managed this dissonance in increasingly self-authored ways. In each of these studies, students' personal traits affected students' experience of their environment. Students with high volitional efficacy responded to academic challenges by committing to work toward their personal goal (Pizzolato, 2005). By relying on others to cope with being labeled and treated as "high-risk," students were able to take pride in their accomplishments in the face of adversity (Pizzolato, 2006). Status as a transfer student did not affect self-authorship at the beginning of the semester, but predicted self-authorship at the end of the semester (Wawrzynski & Pizzolato, 2006). This personal background characteristic only contributed to students' self-authorship after the student engaged for a semester with their new college environment.

Finally, Utilizing Holland's (1997) theory of careers, Wawrzynski and Pizzolato (2006) investigated the relationship between the academic environment of varying fields of study and

students' self-authorship development. The authors used Holland's theory to characterize the academic environment as artistic, conventional, enterprising, investigative, realistic, or social according to the major. Only the social Holland type predicted either self-authorship or any of the subscales in the Self Authorship Survey. The social type predicted both the Self-Regulation in Challenging Situations and Perceptions of Volitional Competence subscales at time one, and the Capacity for Autonomous Action subscale at time two. These data describe a negative relationship between the social type and students' scores on these subscales. Holland characterizes social type students as being less easily influenced by others than their peers (1997). As such, Pizzolato (2006) characterizes the social type as a personal trait, one that hinders the individual's consideration of other perspectives (Baxter Magolda, 2001). Many personal factors seem not to contribute to self-authorship development on their own, but, rather, in combination with a variety of other situational, environmental, and personal factors.

College students' self-authorship.

The self-authorship literature provides ample commentary as to the value and importance of promoting self-authorship development in college (Baxter Magolda, 2003, 2004; Baxter Magolda & King, 2004; Hodge, Baxter Magolda, & Haynes, 2009; Meszaros, 2007; Wildman, 2007). These authors, and others, cite the explicit (e.g., Pizzolato, 2006) and implicit (e.g., Wildman, 2007) obligations of colleges and universities to promote students' self-authorship development. Unfortunately, most college students do not achieve self-authorship, defined here as having experienced the provocative moment and initiated the process of Becoming the Author of One's Life (Creamer & Laughlin, 2005; Jehangir, Williams, & Pete, 2011; King et al., 2009; Pizzolato, 2006; Pizzolato & Ozaki, 2007). Baxter Magolda (2001) described her participants as having been, at best, on the cusp of self-authorship at the time of graduation. In fact, some

authors point to aspects of the college experience that may hinder self-authorship development, such as the reliance on transmission of knowledge, rote memorization, and isolated effort that characterizes many college courses (Atkinson, 2010; Carey, 2011; Hodge, Baxter Magolda, & Haynes, 2009; Tharp & Gallimore, 1991; Wildman, 2007). Responding to this point, the Learning Partnerships Model (Baxter Magolda, 2001) has been widely proposed as a framework for use in curriculum, pedagogical, and advising practices in order to increase attainment of self-authorship outcomes among college students.

The Learning Partnerships Model. Considering the complex interaction of situational, environmental, and personal factors related to self-authorship development, Baxter Magolda (2001) proposed what is now referred to as the Learning Partnerships Model (LPM), "a heuristic proposed as a way to purposefully facilitate self-authorship development in undergraduates" (Wawrzynski & Pizzolato, 2006, p. 678). The LPM consists of three key assumptions and three key principles. The three assumptions correspond to the three domains of self-authorship: (a) knowledge is complex and socially constructed (cognitive), (b) self is central to knowledge construction (intrapersonal), and (c) authority and expertise is shared mutually in knowledge construction (interpersonal) (Baxter Magolda, 2001). Given these assumptions, Baxter Magolda (2001) proposed three principles for educational practice: (a) validate learners as knowers, (b) situate learning in learners' experience, and (c) define learning as mutually constructing meaning. Baxter Magolda (2009) urges educators to consider the model not as a set of pedagogical techniques, but as a way of thinking about our mutual roles in student development: "Learners are in charge of their learning, and need to be guided into this role to counteract the authority-dependence created in most contemporary secondary schooling" (p. 4).

Research regarding the model's implementation and effectiveness is limited, but supportive. Pizzolato (2006) found in her analysis of 132 students' accounts of academic major selection that LPM principles were "practiced by the academic advisors of students who displayed self-authorship in their selection of an academic major" (p. 41). Pizzolato and Ozaki (2007) assessed the impact of an academic advising model based on the LPM using an exploratory, qualitative, grounded study approach involving 18 participants at a large, public, Midwestern university. Findings suggest that the students whose advisors utilized LPM principles in their advising demonstrated modest, but measurable, progress toward self-authorship, while advising that did not demonstrate LPM principles was related to stagnation and reliance on external formulas.

The principles of the LPM are associated with self-authorship development in other studies that do not specifically address the model itself. Piper and Buckley (2004) analyzed self-reported development outcomes along a variety of domains of students living in a residential life program that utilized the Community Standards Model. The Community standards model invites students to construct and enforce their own community standards and policies. This process was designed to validate the students as knowers by inviting them to construct the policies, to share responsibility and authority for learning by charging the students with implementation and enforcement of the standards, and to situate the learning in their actual lived experience. Piper and Buckley (2004) found that students reported development toward self-authorship as a result of their Community Standards Model experience. Similarly, the multicultural learning community studied by Jehangir, Williams, and Pete (2011) demonstrated LPM assumptions and principles by engaging students in meaningful conversations about sensitive topics, charging the students with holding each other accountable for maintaining a constructive dialogue, and

empowering the group to establish its own conclusions. Baxter Magolda and King (eds.) (2004) provides several examples of ways the LPM could, and does, promote self-authorship development. Despite scant empirical evidence, the assumptions and principles of the LPM have been validated directly, and indirectly, as promoting self-authorship development.

Summary

The body of literature related to self-authorship thoroughly describes the construct, articulates and validates the associated developmental theory, and presents a number of factors that influence progress therein. College students' achievement of self-authorship has been found to be rare, but the literature provides an increasingly detailed understanding of the forces at play, and a model for the attainment of self-authorship outcomes, the LPM, has been shown to have a positive, if modest, effect. A variety of college experiences are empirically linked to self-authorship development, including multicultural learning communities (Jehangir, Williams, & Pete, 2011), service-learning (Jones & Abes, 2004), residential life community models (Piper & Buckley, 2004), academic advising (Pizzolato, 2006; Pizzolato & Ozaki, 2007), and research projects (Collay & Cooper, 2008).

However, the present body of research draws from limited data. First, some of the studies cited above draw conclusions from students' descriptions of specific decisions or experiences, with little context (i.e., Pizzolato, 2005, 2006; King et al., 2009). Self-authorship development is characterized as a slow, cumulative process (Kegan, 1994; Pizzolato, 2005). Relying on such narrow snapshots of students' lives represents a concerning limitation. In addition, the participants in these studies often select the experience described themselves, usually with the instruction of identifying "an important decision" (Pizzolato, 2006) or "key educational experiences" (King et al, 2009). Students' self-authorship is assessed based on situations that

may not have happened recently, and may not speak to their self-authorship or the development thereof.

Second, many studies examine students' self-authorship as members of an identity group (Abes & Jones, 2004; Pizzolato, 2003, 2004; Torres & Hernandez, 2007) or as participants in a specific program (Collay & Cooper, 2008; Egart & Healy, 2004; Jehangir, Williams, & Pete, 2011; Jones & Abes, 2004; Piper & Buckley, 2004; Pizzolato & Ozaki, 2007). In these studies, the data primarily speak to way those specific constructs relate to the individuals' development. In contrast, Baxter Magolda (2001) described the influence of their overlapping professional, personal, and educational experiences on the development of their internal voice. Indeed, Wildman (2007), Mills and Strong (2004), and Hodge, Baxter Magolda, and Haynes (2009) espouse campus-wide efforts to foster self-authorship development. And yet, much of the literature on which these recommendations are based explore the effects of specific experiences independent of other contextual variables acting on the students' lives.

Finally, absent in the current literature are students' own descriptions, in their own words, of their self-authorship development. Instead, self-authorship findings are teased from students' descriptions of various experiences. A few studies only applied the framework in the analysis of the data, having designed the data collection without self-authorship in mind (e.g., Abes & Jones, 2004; Jehangir, Williams, & Pete, 2011; King et al., 2009; Torres & Hernandez, 2007). Rather than investigating students' understanding of related concepts, like identity development and decision-making, other bodies of literature explore the ways students make meaning of the construct itself (e.g., Edwards & Jones, 2009, and Harris, 2008, ask students directly about their understanding of masculinity). As such, much of our understanding of self-authorship development in college is rooted in data limited to moments in time, to students' experiences as a

member of specific group or participant in a specific experience, or collected with the intention of exploring a related, but distinct *a priori* themes (e.g., Latino/a students' development in Torres & Hernandez, 2007).

Just as self-authorship represents a holistic developmental construct, the self-authorship literature is well served by research that approaches the study of students' college experience holistically (see Meszaros, 2007). Better understanding of the aggregate outcomes of college students' experiences may identify opportunities for increased self-authorship among college students. In addition, research that utilizes self-authorship as not only the analytical framework but also the topic of the investigation not only serves to add to our current knowledge of self-authorship among college students, but also provides a means for validating or undermining a variety of existing conclusions. Finally, considering the recommendations related to validating learners as knowers, it seems appropriate to invite participants to speak directly regarding their self-authorship.

CHAPTER THREE
Methods and Procedures

The purpose of this study was to explore the ways students make meaning of their own

self-authorship development in college, guided by three research questions:

1. What degree of self-authorship is reflected in students' discussion of their college

experiences?

2. How do students describe their self-authorship development during college?

3. How do students' descriptions of their self-authorship development during college

compare to existing findings related to situational, environmental, and personal

characteristics?

This chapter describes the methods and procedures used in the conduct of the study including the

epistemological stance, research design, site and population, source of data, procedures, and data

analysis. The chapter also features a discussion of ethical considerations, trustworthiness, and the

limitations of the study.

Epistemological Stance

Research design is informed by foundational assumptions regarding the nature of

knowledge claims (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). This study sought to explore the way individuals

make meaning of their development of self-authorship. While self-authorship is familiar to the

researcher, it is unlikely that participants entered the study with knowledge of the construct. As

such, this study drew from a subjectivist epistemology, wherein the participants and the

researcher mutually create the findings and data during the course of the study (Denzin &

Lincoln, 2000).

A constructivist framework informed the study, emphasizing the importance of the

participants' meaning making regarding their experiences and development (Charmaz, 2000).

Constructivism identifies knowledge as the product of the interactions between the individual and their social contexts (Crotty, 1998), and data and findings as being created by the interactions of the participant and the researcher (Charmaz, 2002). Furthermore, the constructivist framework encourages the researcher to study the phenomenon "from as close to the inside of the experience as they can get" (Charmaz, 202, p. 677). The constructivist framework has been widely used by researchers interested in self-authorship (Abes & Jones, 2004; Collay & Cooper, 2008; Jehangir, Williams, & Pete, 2011; Jones & Abes, 2004; Torres & Hernandez, 2007).

Research Design

The purpose of the study was to understand the meaning students make of their development and to understand their "experiences…'lived,' or 'felt' or 'undergone'" (Sherman & Webb, 1988, p. 7) related to their self-authorship. As such, this study utilized a qualitative research approach (Merriam, 1998). Qualitative methods are suitable for the holistic study of complex constructs that are integrated into various aspects of individuals' lives and experiences (Rossman & Rallis, 1998). For the purpose of understanding how students perceive their self-authorship in their own words, and in an effort to gain a holistic understanding of their development over time, the proposed study employed a narrative inquiry design. According to Chase (2005), narrative "is a way of understanding one's own and others' actions, or organizing events and objects into a meaningful whole, and of connecting and seeing the consequences of actions and events over time" (p. 64). This approach is suited to the purpose of this study, particularly as it relates to the effort to address limitations in the current literature (i.e. – findings based on isolated, often researcher-defined experiences). This approach, essentially, allowed the researcher to analyze and convey the story of students' self-authorship development in college.

The term "narrative" has broad meaning, even in the discourse of social science research (Riessman, 2002). For the purpose of this study, narrative inquiry is defined as the collection and analysis of participants' stories related to or containing insight regarding the research topic (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zibler, 1998). Narrative inquiry is commonly associated with studies focusing on the life stories of one or two participants (Creswell, 2007). However, Chase (2005) suggests that the narrative approach is appropriate for research that employs a theoretical framework (such as self-authorship development). Indeed, Abes and Jones (2004) utilized a narrative approach to assess ten lesbian college students' identity development, which allowed them to access "the complexity of the participants' thinking and the meaning they made of their identities" (p. 615).

Research Site and Population

Data were collected at a public, comprehensive institution of higher education in the Southeast. The institution offers more than 50 bachelor's degrees and 28 advanced degrees. The university enrolls approximately 12,500 students, including 10,000 undergraduate and 2,500 graduate students. White, non-Hispanic students comprise 70% of all undergraduates. Campus life features varsity athletics, recreational sports, fraternity and sorority life, and more than 150 active student organizations. Ten percent of students are from out of state, and 19% of undergraduates live in university housing facilities. Nine percent of incoming freshmen (Fall 2012) ranked in the top 10% of their class, while 24% ranked in the bottom half of their high school class. The site institution awarded approximately 2,000 undergraduate degrees in the 2012-2013 academic year. Females accounted for 63% of Bachelor's degrees awarded, and White, non-Hispanic students received 79%.

Sources of Data

This study sought to contribute students' subjective perspectives regarding their self-authorship and self-authorship development to the literature. Interviewing was thus chosen as the best means of securing the relevant narratives. According to Patton (1990), "The purpose of interviewing…is to allow us to enter into the other person's perspective" (p. 196). Further, interviews are particularly appropriate when the phenomenon, self-authorship development in this case, cannot be observed directly, and when historical data is relevant (Creswell, 2003).

Data were collected during two in-depth, semi-structured interviews with each participant. Semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to collect useful data by posing questions related to specific information to all participants, while also providing participants the ability to respond to those questions according to their own worldview and in their own words (Merriam, 1998). The researcher employed the use of probes and follow-up questions to the initial question in order to clarify responses and gain maximum relevant information during the interview. All interview data were recorded using an audio recorder, and transcribed verbatim.

The first interview focused on research question #1: What degree of self-authorship is reflected in students' discussion of their college experiences? Essentially, this interview served to assess the participants' self-authorship in the cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal domains. The second interview invited the participants to reflect on and recount the experiences and personal characteristics that contributed to the development of their cognitive, intrapersonal and interpersonal processes in-use. This interview invited the participant to tell the story of their self-authorship development in college. Four of the participants engaged in face-to-face interviews, while seven participants' interviews took place over the phone. Interviews lasted an average of 47 minutes.

In keeping with narrative inquiry techniques, interviews utilized questions designed to elicit stories related to the topic (Lieblich et al., 1998), that is to say they were open-ended, and written in ways to avoid esoteric language related to self-authorship in favor of phrasing more accessible to the participants (Patton, 1990). Love and Guthrie (1999) suggested focusing on transition from one of Kegan's orders of consciousness to the next as a means for identifying the greatest opportunities for promoting e self-authorship development. Thus the interview protocols developed for this study sought data related to moments of transition. The protocols for each of the interviews may be seen in Appendix B, and a more detailed discussion of them appears later in this chapter. In addition, probing questions in both interviews sought to clarify whether the cognitive, intrapersonal, or interpersonal process described reflects their standard approach to similar situations at the time. Finally, the researcher made note of instances indicative of transition between self-authorship stages, such as using the term "intuition" or other constructs representative of the internal voice, and posed follow-up questions to ensure the collection of data related to those experiences.

Procedures

The researcher submitted all appropriate paperwork and materials and gained approval to conduct the research from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville Institutional Review Board and the research site's Institutional Review Board. Upon full approval from both institutions (see Appendix E), the researcher engaged in the research utilizing the following procedures.

Participants. The researcher sought to involve 10 participants in the study. The researcher focused on identifying "*information-rich cases* for study" (Patton, 1990, p. 440) by selecting participants who engaged in co- or extra-curricular experiences (such as employment, campus involvement, or participation in college athletics). The researcher also sought maximum

variation in terms of participants' personal characteristics and college experiences (Patton, 1990) in order to collect data related to a variety of experiences and from a variety of personal perspectives. Eligibility criteria included (a) students receiving their bachelor's degree in May of 2013; (b) variation in race, gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic background; (c) variation in academic major; and (d) variation in the extent and type of co- and extra- curricular involvement during college. Criterion (a) was informed by the assumption that the individuals with the most college experience would be most likely to provide rich information regarding their self-authorship development in college. One of the arguments for this study was the lack of findings unbound by a priori themes (such as specific experiences or identities). Utilizing maximum variation sampling helped the study avoid *de facto* themes that might result from a sample dominated by certain demographic identifiers or experience types.

Six hundred students who received a bachelor's degree in May 2013 were contacted via an email from the researcher. The email solicitation (Appendix A) informed prospective participants of the purpose and nature of the study, and invited them to indicate their interest in participating in the study by completing an online form embedded in the email to be returned to the researcher. The form solicited information related to their personal characteristics and college experiences. Due to a slow response rate, the researcher emailed colleagues at the research site, and encouraged them to forward the solicitation email to any May 2013 graduates with whom they remained in contact. Fifteen individuals completed the form to indicate their interest in participating: twelve replied to the researcher's initial email, the researcher's colleagues referred three. In order to achieve "reasonable coverage of the issues studied" (Patton, 1990, p. 184), the sample was determined by the participants' representation of diverse personal characteristics and college experiences. The researcher selected thirteen individuals for participation. One

participant was not selected because she is employed by the same department as the researcher, and another was not selected because his personal characteristics and college experiences would not have added diversity to the sample. Both were contact via email to thank them for their interest and inform them that they were not selected for the study. The researcher contacted the thirteen participants first via email and then followed up via phone as needed to provide participants with the Informed Consent form and arrange interview times. Two individuals failed to respond to both email and phone messages, and did not participate in the study. Data regarding the eleven individuals who completed the study are provided in Chapter Three. The information collected from students who did not participate in the study has been destroyed.

Data Collection. Once participants were selected, each was contacted via email in order to schedule the initial interview, and followed up with via phone as needed. At the interview, the nature of the study and the student's participation was explained again, as in the solicitation, and each participant signed an Informed Consent form (Appendix C) and given a copy to keep. In additional to asking the participant if they had any questions regarding the form, the researcher verbally discussed the voluntary nature of participation, and the steps that would be taken to protect the participants' identity. No data were collected until the researcher had a signed copy of the Informed Consent.

Interviews took place at a location mutually selected by the researcher and the participant to ensure comfort and privacy. The researcher utilized the interview protocols to guide the interview, as well as probes and follow-up questions in order to elicit the maximum relevant data from each participant. All interview data were recorded with an audio recording device, and later saved onto a computer and transcribed verbatim. Only the researcher has access to the data. After the first interview, the researcher and participant arranged for the second interview to be held at a

later date. The second interview featured the same data collection procedures, with one addition. Prior to the second interview, the participant and the researcher reviewed a summary of the first interview drafted by the researcher, and the participant was asked to provide feedback.

Data Analysis. This study drew heavily from the categorical-content analysis approach to narrative inquiry data analysis (Lieblich et al., 1998), and the constant comparative method of analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). These approaches are both characterized by their inductive approach, allowing the researcher to develop themes within and between cases in an iterative process. Using this technique, the researcher revisits the raw data to test new codes and themes throughout the analysis. For this analysis, the researcher identified *a priori* codes derived from extant literature about students' self-authorship development from Baxter Magolda's (2001) Self-Authorship Development theory. *Posteriori* codes emerged during open coding (see below).

A three-step coding technique was utilized involving open, axial, and selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Open coding refers to the identification and organization of participants' own words, responses or comments related to a specific phenomenon or construct. Axial coding involves drawing meaning from the codes generated in the open coding step that relate to students' self-authorship. Essentially, open coding takes data points out of their context for the purpose of identifying categories and possible themes. Axial coding brings context back into the picture, and answers the questions "when, where, why, who, how, and with what consequences," (p. 125). Finally, selective coding generated categories, related to (a) the research questions,   (b) commonalities in the participants' descriptions of their self-authorship and self-authorship development, (c) differences between these descriptions, and (d) ways in which the codes confirm to or deviate from existing self-authorship findings. For a list of initial

codes, codes that emerged in the data, and categories identified in selective coding, see Appendix D.

As noted above, the two interviews focused on two different aspects of self-authorship. Data from both interviews were analyzed using the process described above. In the first stage, data were analyzed to understand the meaning participants make of their self-authorship and self-authorship development. Analysis in this stage relied on Baxter Magolda's (2001) table, "Four Phases of the Journey Toward Self-Authorship" (p. 40) to assess the participants' present self-authorship (the first interview) and to situate participants' stories within the theory of self-authorship development (the second interview). In the second stage, analysis was informed by research findings related to the situational, environmental, and personal characteristics that influence self-authorship development (see Chapter 2). This stage of the analysis helped to address research question #3: How do students' descriptions of their self-authorship development during college compare to existing findings related to situational, environmental, and personal characteristics?

Dependability and Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, trustworthiness refers to the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the data and findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Member checks were used to ensure the trustworthiness of the data. Lincoln and Guba (1985) identify member checking as "the most critical technique for establishing credibility" (p. 314). Participants were asked to review an essay summarizing their responses from each interview, what Creswell (2007) called "preliminary analyses" (p. 209). Participants' feedback about the summary of the first interview and the researcher's initial analysis of the data collected during the second interview were included in the recording and transcript of the second interview. This

technique ensured that the findings were based on an accurate understanding of the participants' realities, enhancing the credibility of the study.

Qualitative research does not provide generalizable findings, as in quantitative research, but rather provides enough context and rich detail for the reader to determine the transferability of the results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), what Merriam refers to as reader generalizability (1998). Data collection procedures and interview protocols for this study were designed to elicit stories related to students' self-authorship and self-authorship development. Chapter 4 will present findings in ways that provide thick, rich descriptions and details, that, paired with information about the participants themselves, ensure that readers are able to make judgments related to the transferability of the findings to the reader's own experience.

Confirmability relates to the degree to which findings emerge from the data free of the researcher's biases and motivations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Because the participant selection strategy called for variations in terms of participants' backgrounds, ethnicity, race, and college experiences, the researcher took steps to address the possible influence of bias on data collection and analysis. A research journal was used to record the researcher's thoughts, insights, and concerns throughout the data collection and analysis process. Potential biases that emerged in the journal included those related to non-traditional college enrollment, military involvement, gender roles, and assumptions about co-curricular involvement. In addition, because the research site is also the researcher's place of employment, steps were taken to prevent a conflict of interest between the researcher's dual roles of employee and investigator. One potential participant was excluded from the study based on her employment in the researcher's department. The researcher, prior to the study, knew four of the participants, but did not have a supervisory or personal relationship with them. These efforts served to increase the researcher's reflexivity

related to personal experiences and suppositions in service of gaining the participants' own perspectives.

Ethical Considerations

Qualitative research involves the sharing of personal and potentially damaging information (Creswell, 2007). Several strategies were utilized to limit participants' risk of exposure. All participants completed a Statement of Informed Consent (Appendix C) indicating that participation was voluntary. Pseudonyms were used for the participants to protect their confidentiality, (pseudonyms are used), and their Informed Consent forms are stored in a locked storage cabinet accessible only to the researcher. Only the alias was recorded in transcripts and will be used in any presentation of the data. Where necessary, stories related to experiences that posed risks to the participant's confidentiality were omitted or presented with little context to limit the possibility of the identification of the participants or other individuals involved in the story. Finally, no individuals whose personal characteristics or college experiences are prominent and rare at the research site, such as relying on a service animal or serving as the student body president, was selected for participation in the study.

Limitations and Delimitations

Several limitations and delimitations should be considered related to the design of the study. First, qualitative research does not provide generalizable findings. In qualitative studies, the researcher acts as the instrument. As such, qualitative findings represent the researcher's subjective understanding of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The reader may be able to assess the transferability of the findings to their specific circumstances; however, no claims to generalizability can be made from the findings. To aid in the process of reader transferability, the researcher presents the findings using rich, thick details.

The study was further delimited by choices made regarding the research methods and procedures. The purpose of the study was to explore only the participants' understanding of their self-authorship and development thereof. As a result, this study was restricted to information about which the participants were consciousness and willing to discuss. In addition, the use of a single research site constrained reader transferability, because the data collected may not speak to the experiences of students at different types of institutions. Furthermore, there may be a response bias at play in participants' willingness to participate. The study engaged 6 graduate students, possibly related to their own interest in research, which might have influenced their approach to the experience. In addition, even though the solicited reference only students' "development in college," graduates who were happy with their development in college, or who were more comfortable speaking about it, might have been more likely to participate. Considering these limitations and delimitations, the study should be considered exploratory in nature.

CHAPTER FOUR
Findings

This chapter presents the findings of the study regarding the ways students make meaning of their own self-authorship development in college. Following a description of the research participants, findings are presented related to the study's research questions:

1. What degree of self-authorship is reflected in students' discussion of their college experiences?

2. How do students describe their self-authorship development during college?

3. How do students' descriptions of their self-authorship development during college compare to existing findings related to situational, environmental, and personal characteristics?

Participant Data

Eleven individuals who received a bachelor's degree in May 2013 from the research site participated in the study. Participants represented a variety of academic majors, ethnic backgrounds, current roles, and ages (See Table 1). The participants earned degrees in anthropology, public relations, psychology, exercise science, electrical engineering, history, bio-chemistry, education, business, and theater. Seven of the participants were involved in at least two co-curricular experiences during college, including fraternity or sorority membership, student organizations, volunteer programs, student government, campus recreation programs, and campus programming boards. Two others were involved in major- or career-specific co-curricular experiences only: Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) and the History Club. Two participants did not report any co-curricular involvement. Four participants transferred to the university after previous college experiences. One transfer participant engaged entirely in the site

institution's online education program. Involvement data are not presented in the table in order to protect the identity of the participants.

Table 1

Participant Information

Name	Age	Ethnicity*	Current Role
Winston	21	White	Graduate Student
Holly	22	White	Unemployed, Volunteer
Rebecca	22	White	Health Promotions Assistant
Nick	22	White	Army Officer
Dan	28	White	Graduate Student
Beverly	35	Other	Graduate Student
Annette	22	African-American & Filipino	Graduate Student
Pamela	45	Hispanic	Teacher
Kenneth	23	Black	Call Center Operator
Anthony	23	Black	Graduate Student
Laura	22	White	Graduate Student

* as self-identified by the participant in an open-ended text box.

Findings

Findings are presented in terms of the research questions. First, the degree of self-authorship demonstrated by the participants is presented. Next, the ways the participants understand their self-authorship development is presented in their own words. Finally, participants' descriptions of their development are compared to the factors identified as relevant in the current self-authorship literature.

Research question #1: What degree of self-authorship is reflected in students' discussion of their college experiences? Each participant in this study demonstrated processes

and perspectives that corresponded predominantly with one of the four phases of Baxter

Magolda's (2001) Self-Authorship Development theory. These are referred to as the participants'

primary phases. One participant continues to Follow External Formulas (first phase), one persists

in the Crossroads (second phase), six are Becoming the Authors of their Lives (third phase), and

three demonstrated a commitment to Internal Foundations (fourth phase). While there was ample

evidence to place each participant in a primary phase, some participants also demonstrated

perspectives or processes that did not conform to their primary phase. Evidence of each

participant's degree of self-authorship, and exceptions to a primary phase, are presented below.

Following external formulas. One participant in the study, Laura, continues to rely on

External Formulas in decision-making, managing challenges, and understanding her identity.

This can be seen in her explanation of how she made her decision to attend graduate school and

to pursue her current career path:

> Even like from sophomore year there was never a question of, like, you're done after
>
> your bachelor's (degree). It was almost expected of me from sophomore year that I would
>
> go to grad school. I have a professor who was very adamant about wanting me to pursue
>
> grad school and the fact that both my supervisor and an esteemed professor on campus
>
> already saw that potential in me made me say, like, 'Oh, I can do grad school!'

That these respected supervisors and professors had a significant influence on Laura as a

sophomore is perhaps not unexpected. However, Laura's perspective on her decision to pursue

her current career and graduate work is still grounded in that initial experience of encouragement

from trusted advisors. In fact, her plans after graduate school demonstrate a continued reliance

on external formulas. Having initially planned to pursue only a master's degree, Laura is now

considering doctoral work, as inspired by her young professors and colleagues. "Seeing young

professionals (pursue doctoral degrees), I was like, 'Oh, I can get my doctorate!'" Reflecting on this possibility, Laura revealed that it is not only her interest in the terminal degree that is framed by external formulas, but her previous reluctance as well: "It's weird to think, 'cause like when I talk to my high school friends, they're like, 'Okay, Laura is going to get a PhD, yeah right.'" Laura considers the prospect of doctoral work in the context of two external formulas: one presented by young professors and colleagues, and one communicated by her high school friends.

Laura's reliance on external formulas also became clear as she described her graduate school search process. Despite glowing recommendations and support from her supervisors, Laura was passed over for a graduate assistantship at the school of her choice. "It really threw me for a loop, 'cause it was like, 'Laura's going to get whatever she wants.'" As illustrated in this quote, Laura frequently described her experiences using quotes from others rather than her own opinions and thoughts. What threw Laura "for a loop" was not that she was not selected for a position, but that she was not selected despite having been told by others that she was a strong candidate. "A lot of my peers were accepted elsewhere and I was staying here. I was the one who was not successful." Laura viewed staying at her undergraduate institution as a failure because her peers were going elsewhere. She found peace with the situation by accepting another external formula provided by her father. "He said, 'Laura, you're going to grad school. That alone is a big accomplishment.' It doesn't matter where I go, as long as I'm doing what I love." The last part of the previous quote seems to suggest an internal voice, but that Laura only came to this realization because her father's perspective allowed her to do so.

External formulas frame the way Laura understands the world, and insulate her from experiences of dissonance related to that understanding. Laura frequently recounted incidents

wherein others challenged her ideas or behavior, and in each case the example concluded with affirmations and support from a trusted mentor or supervisor. "Whatever. I know I'm doing a good job," she said when asked how she responds to negative feedback, followed by, "If Keith (her mentor) thinks I'm doing a good job then it doesn't matter." As opposed to more self-authored individuals, those in the Following External Formulas phase ignore dissonance and commit to formulas that confirm their worldview and provide comfort, as demonstrated by Laura in the quote above.

Laura also recounted an incident in which her father used the word "fag" to refer to nearby men who he assumed to be gay. "I was so appalled. I was in a community (the college) where it was so not accepted. And it shocked me, and I was like, 'Dad, you cannot say that!'" Her father was open to learn more, and Laura explained that the word was derogatory and "can have a harmful effect on people." It is telling that Laura said, "you cannot" use the word "fag." Her word choice suggests that she is upholding a social norm. She is not shocked because her father has possibly revealed a prejudice, but that he did not uphold the formula for what is and is not acceptable to say.

The expectations of others and accepted cultural norms continue to influence Laura's identity awareness, just as they did in high school. As a white student in a predominately black[1] high school, Laura accepted, without "thinking much of it," that her minority peers were held to much stricter standards than she was, and that it was normal for the administrators to sometimes put on a show of punishing the white students to quiet concerns about fair treatment. Her acceptance of this formula was such that even in college, if she "saw someone getting in trouble I

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[1] The present study features the use of both "black" and "African-American" to refer to individuals' racial identity. The participants used both when they completed the solicitation form and in response to interview questions. As such, the term used by each participant was used in reference to and in the analysis of his or her specific comments.

would probably assume that they were black, because in high school if people were getting in trouble they were black." She praised diversity workshops for helping her to "open my eyes," to understand that "words hurt," and to become "more aware of privilege and how race affects other people." In each of these comments, Laura understands race and diversity issues not as relating to her own identity, but as a rational concept that "affects others."

Laura continues to Follow External Formulas in decision-making, when responding to challenges, and in understanding herself. Despite potentially dissonant input from the graduate school search, her peers and supervisors, and her father's homophobic slur, Laura's commitment to external formulas that uphold her worldview and her view of herself demonstrate the distinguishing characteristics of this first phase of the Self-Authorship Development: the lack of internal conflict.

Persisting at The Crossroads. One participant, Dan, demonstrated the characteristics of The Crossroads, the second phase in Baxter Magolda's (2001) theory.

Whereas Laura exhibited confidence and comfort with herself and her approach to life after college, Dan communicated a significant degree of doubt and discomfort related to aspects of his life and how he views himself, hallmarks of the second phase of Self-Authorship Development. Dan is a graduate student and a former military officer who began college during his time in the service and completed his last two years after leaving the military. Even though he recognizes the negative consequences of following external formulas for engaging in school, relationships, and identity awareness, he has yet to identify his internal voice, and is, in his own words, "trapped" in his own life.

Dan possesses lofty ambitions: he wants to change the galaxy. "I want to do something great, something incredible," he said, referring to his plans to put his engineering degrees to

work in the space program. "Of course! Who doesn't want to do that?" he said. "If I did something crazy that sent people to outer space, like suddenly we can colonize other planets because of me, that would be, like, 'Hey, I did this!'" Dan's interest in working in outer space is framed not as a personal aspiration, but, rather, something that everyone would want to do. His enthusiasm and zeal faded during the interview, however. "Maybe I'm just trying to get attention," he reflected. This bit of introspection is revealing of Dan being at The Crossroads in his self-authorship development. In this instance, and in several others throughout the interviews, Dan described both his commitment to external formulas and the anxiety that they bring.

Like many other individuals in their late teens, and like many of the participants in this study, Dan viewed college participation as a foregone conclusion. "I wasn't good at sports, so I figured that's what I would focus on," he said, revealing a theory-in-use that requires individuals to either be good at sports or school. "My thinking of why I wanted to go to college was that college was where smart people go. I'm smart, so I should go to college," Dan noted, again employing rigid rules as to who should go to college and what "smart people" do. When asked if he applied the same thinking to his decision about whether to attend graduate school, he said, "I wanted to go to graduate school for the same reason. I did really well as an undergraduate. From what I understood, if you're smart you go to graduate school." In this example, the decision to attend graduate school is something to be understood and followed. Following this formula has not made Dan happy, however: "I guess I see myself as not good enough, and always needing to work harder."

Dan's relationship with his live-in girlfriend is equally unsatisfying, despite the fact that he believes himself to be meeting his obligation in the relationship. After having moved together to a new state for his graduate program, his girlfriend's unemployment began to cause stress at

home: "I start to think I might be being taken advantage of and you combine that with the stress of school, and suddenly I get snappy." Dan's frustration is rooted in his beliefs about how his life should be progressing: "I want children at some point, and if she had a job we could have been married and started having a family by now. I would have been very comfortable with that" He expressed frustration over not being able to save money because she is not able to support herself, and suggests that the fact that she has no social group of her own is limiting his ability to engage socially with his peers. Dan and his girlfriend lived together prior to college graduation, but in that setting her unemployment was less concerning. The current dissonance he expresses is largely the result of competing external formulas: obligation and adult progress. "I did ask her to move in with me, so I feel responsible," he said. "What's she going to do if that ends?" Dan frequently expressed concerns that his girlfriend had limited prospects, and that her only real option would be to move back in with her aging parents. "If I thought she might have anywhere to go, I think I might have ended it already. I feel responsible for her. That's what keeps me with her."

Dan is caught between two externally defined formulas, and his anxiety was apparent as he processed this struggle during the interview: "I don't feel in control. I honestly feel stuck." Dan lacks the internal voice to settle this conflict based on his values, desires, and instincts, and is thus paralyzed in the face of such dissonance.

Dan's understanding of external formulas heavily influences his decision-making and relationship management. Whereas Laura is confident and comfortable Following External Formulas, Dan's circumstances have created cognitive dissonance from attempting to reconcile those formulas. Dan's understanding of his identity also illustrates this dynamic.

I'm Caucasian. White bread. I feel maybe hated, by default. 'All white males are like this, but you're different, Dan.' I'll never have trouble getting a loan, or a job in my field. I'll never have to worry about driving through Georgia and worrying about a van following me with the lights off. But it still feels stifling, like I don't have freedom to express how I feel. But then I feel guilty for feeling that way. Maybe I'm jealous that I've never been discriminated against, which feels weird as hell. In the past four or five years I've been reading a lot of progressive stuff about how difficult it is being a woman or a minority. And it makes me feel excluded and also maybe aware that I might be perpetrating some of these bad things that white men do, and "am I a bad person?" A friend on Facebook was like, "Oh, I was walking down the street and this man complimented me, and aren't men terrible!" And I'm like, "What!?" And I take offence to that. I compliment people sometimes, like, "I really like those boots." My girlfriend has made me aware of nice fashions. But now I'm afraid she (the person he compliments) will think I'm a rapist. Maybe I've always been looking for a reason to hate myself, and this has just given me that reason.

Faced with perspectives that critique social structures, and specifically the role of the white male in those structures, Dan has no other mechanism for processing these than to accept them, which causes considerable stress. Neither his desire to compliment the woman on the street ("My girlfriend has made me aware of fashions.") nor his feelings of guilt over the woman's possible offense ("I'm afraid she'll think I'm a rapist.") are internally founded. He has accepted his racial identity as being "White bread" and the privilege, guilt, restricted expression, and exclusion that his understanding of the formula entails, despite an impulse to speak out, to be included, to understand, and to reject his privilege. Dan has yet to experience a provocative

moment, the event or culmination of events in which the individual decides to invest in their internal voice (Baxter Magolda, 2001), and thus continues to face dissonance and uncertainty in the face of competing and contradictory external formulas.

Dan consistently demonstrates the characteristics of The Crossroads in the way he thinks about his identity, his relationships, and his career. He is aware that the external formulas are not helping him to lead a satisfying life, but has not identified an internal voice from which to navigate challenges and competing formulas.

Authoring their lives. Six participants demonstrated the cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal processes associated with the third phase of the Self-Authorship Development theory: Holly, Rebecca, Annette, Pamela, Kenneth, and Nick. Individuals Becoming the Author of their Lives assert their internal voice in everyday life, take a more active role in constructing knowledge and managing relationships, and develop a more complex awareness of their sense of self (Baxter Magolda, 2001). These participants spoke with confidence and described their lives in the context of their values, preferences, skills, and goals. Participants in this phase have taken control of their lives even in the face of uncertainty and challenge in ways that Laura and Dan have not.

Pamela. Pamela, a 45 year old who completed her last two years of college entirely online, described her decision to pursue teaching from a purely personal perspective:

> I want to do it. It's not about the money. I want to help. When I see a lot of the struggles that (the students) have, I see myself in them, and the struggles I've had, and so helping them helps me in a way, if that's not too weird. I don't want them to give up. Even if they have some disability or something, they shouldn't give up on their dreams. If they take anything from me I want them to take that.

Pamela's decision to teach and the way she thinks about teaching are personal. Pamela not only understands how the work fits with her values and interests, but she also chose work because of that fit, demonstrating an awareness of, and commitment to, an internal voice.

Pamela prioritizes her own values and voice above her relationships. For instance, her extended family outwardly supported her decision to go back to school in her 40's, but not when it affected Pamela's role in the family:

> My family complained a lot that I wasn't spending time with them. I didn't go to a lot of the family functions, because I had a paper to write up or something was due. They didn't understand. At the beginning I felt guilty, and I felt really bad that I couldn't participate with them. So I had to learn how to block people off. Sometimes I wouldn't even pick up the phone. I had to do myself first.

Pamela prioritized her goals over the role that her family expected her to play, managing her relationship rather than being managed by them. Her ability to assert her internal voice in her relationships carries over into the way she understands her cultural identity.

An Hispanic woman, Pamela describes herself as an "equal" to her husband, despite strong cultural influences that promote rigidly patriarchal family structures. "The way I was brought up," she said, "the woman takes the traditional role." Pamela saw her mother's diminished role in her own family growing up, and "never wanted to be like that. I kind of did the traditional thing, because I didn't work and I stayed at home, but I went back (to college). I always wanted to go back." Pamela's commitment to attending and finishing college not only represents a departure from the dependent, supportive role of the female in patriarchal households, but also a rejection of her family's sexist views about educational aspirations:

When my brother decided to go to college, they made a big decision because they thought

that he was going to help the family. All that money that was collected for him to go to

college…he didn't last very long. So, among the discussion was, 'Okay, we're not going

to worry about Pamela, because Pamela's going to get married.'

Pamela's commitment to college represents a rejection of the role that her family expected her to

play, and trust in her internal voice. She now describes herself as "an independent Hispanic-

American woman." For Pamela, this identity is defined by her ability to provide for her family,

and having "a sense of power" in her life. Pamela embraces a caregiver role that could be

attributed to cultural expectations, but noted, "this is because of our personalities." She relies on

her immediate family and her husband for support, but not permission. She has decided that she

can be Hispanic and independent at the same time.

Pamela did, however, also demonstrate perspectives and processes that do not correspond

with the Becoming the Author phase. Pamela worked at a day care while she was earning her

degree. When asked whether she employed any concepts from her coursework in her day care

experience, she said, "They had their own way of doing things." She said that she would have

used more electronic documents rather than paper, but otherwise seemed to have no internally

defined perspective about how the job should be performed. Despite espousing a highly personal

sense of purpose, and despite her ability to assert ownership over her current classroom, Pamela

demonstrated Following External Formulas in her work right up to the point of college

graduation.

Pamela also ventured into utilizing Internal Foundations, the final phase of the theory,

specifically in relation to the perspective she brings to current classroom challenges. Pamela

described the care and effort that she takes to give students second chances to make the right

decision or own up to bad decisions:

> Everybody needs the chance to redeem themselves. My family experience influenced this
>
> approach. My brother had a really challenging childhood, but he made a change in his
>
> life. He decided to before a better person. He passed away, but before he passed he
>
> changed his life.

Her approach to her classroom is not merely the result of finding the pedagogy that is a good fit

for her skills or experience. She harbors a core belief that redemption is not only possible, but

also life-saving; that even if the consequences of ones' actions cannot be reversed, the person can

be redeemed. This, paired with her previous statements about why she teaches, suggests that

Pamela approaches her world not only with an internal voice, but also with an internal

foundation. However, she seems to be unaware of these foundations, and so continues to manage

most challenges and make meaning of her world primarily in line with the Becoming the Author

phase.

> *Nick.*   Nick, another participant in this phase, always knew that he wanted to go into the

Army, but while in college he explored various careers to prepare for civilian life:

> I started off as an international studies major, and I took one political science class and
>
> was like, "I can't handle politics." I was undecided for the next year and a half, and I
>
> found exercise science and I got really into that. I decided I wanted to be a physical
>
> therapist one day.

As a military officer, many of Nick's decisions in his current role are governed by rank and

military procedure. When it came time to rank his preferred service areas, Nick ranked the

Medical Services Corps first because it was a good balance between generalist military work and

his post-military career interests. "The next three or four years I'll decide if I want to continue to pursue Medical Services officer or if I want to go into the Medical Corp and pursue physical therapy," he said of his plans. Nick referenced only his own opinions, assessments, and interests as he spoke about this process. The scope of his autonomy is limited in many ways, but when it comes to his career planning, Nick is the authority.

Nick also demonstrated an internally defined understanding of his role in the military, and, simultaneously, his identity. Nick indicated that his most salient identity is that of an Army Officer:

> I have to take responsibility onto myself to lead people, and possibly into combat where some of them may die or I may die myself. It's kind of a heavy thing for me. It makes me want to put more into it. My senior year I was S3 and Training Chief. I planned things, explained them, and saw my unit do it. That's when I started understanding the weight of being an officer. They had put the words in my head, "Leads a platoon," whatever. But the realization came from practice of it.

Nick's understanding of his role as an officer came from his own experience, and his reaction to that experience, and is illustrative of his primary phase.

In other aspects of his identity awareness and interpersonal processes, however, Nick fails to demonstrate an internally defined understanding. Nick, like other participants in the study, deflected prompts about racial and gender identity. "There's a saying," he said. "'Everybody's green in the Army.' Not to say racism doesn't exist in the Army at all, but that's the feeling that we try to generate. As far as my experience so far, this rings true." Whereas Nick demonstrates a commitment to his internal voice in many contexts, he has accepted the Army's message that there is no such thing as race.

Nick also demonstrated adherence to the military's formulas in his approach to social relationships: "Officers aren't supposed to hang out with enlisted, and I'm an officer." He reported having no social relationships at his current post, and having had only superficial conversations with others on base. When asked if he was comfortable with this situation, he said, "Usually yes. I'd have to say I am." Nick seems to have no internally defined understanding of what kinds of relationship he wants beyond what his military role dictates. Whereas Nick constructed his own meaning related to the responsibility of an officer, and asserted that he only relied on input from others in decision-making when he "couldn't figure out what to do on (his) own," he follows external formulas when it came to racial identity and social relationships.

Holly. Holly moved to Tennessee to pursue a sales job that turned out to be a door-to-door direct-sales opportunity. This was not what she had in mind. When she started her job search anew, Holly sought not only paid opportunities, but also volunteer work. "I guess I felt like something was missing, so I wanted to volunteer and that would make me feel better," she said. Holly positions the decision as having been her idea, and as a way to make her "feel better." She also referenced the ability "use my degree." She understands the opportunity in reference to her internal voice, not as something recommended to her by an advisor or family member. Contrasted with Dan's rational assessment of what should come next, Holly's decision is about a feeling.

As did other participants in the Becoming the Author of One's Life phase, Holly often used words like "feel," "like," and "want." These words suggest that Holly's meaning-making relies on her internal voice rather than external information. For instance, Holly contrasted the way she managed relationships early in her college career with the way she views relationships now, saying, "I don't *need* anyone, I just *want* them in my life." These comments suggest an

agency in managing relationships that is informed by how she feels about the other person, not to her role in the relationship. Her friendships, then, are object (see Chapter Two for more about the subject-object dichotomy).

Speaking about her friendships, Holly recounted two examples of putting her two closest friendships in jeopardy. "We talk every single day," she said of her closest friend. "We were fighting, and we went a couple of days without talking to each other and it was awful. It was about a person. Like, she didn't like him but I did." Holly decided to continue dating the person in question, at risk to her friendship. Her other best friend frequently expresses that he wants her to move back to the state where they attended college. "I told him that I was thinking of going to graduate school here (in another state) and he was like, 'Oh, so you're gonna stay there…' It makes me feel bad, but I really just don't want to move back." In each situation, Holly jeopardized the stability of the relationship by committing to her internal voice.

On the other hand, Holly failed to demonstrate self-authored perspectives related to her racial and gender identity. Holly cited coursework and social relationships that challenged her understanding of stereotypes, but engaged with the new perspectives in a way indicative of The Crossroads: "Growing up in a small town, where the stereotypes are used every single day…I realized I have been very closed-minded. I'm just like…I can't believe I used to be like that." When asked what she does when she hears others stereotyping people, she said, "I feel bad, but I try to ignore it…Sometimes I don't say anything, or sometimes I'll say, 'You know, not everyone is like that.'" The conflict between Holly's relatively new understanding of stereotypes and her cultural background are creating discomfort and anxiety, but have not led her to develop an internally-defined understanding of her racial identity. This dynamic is illustrative of The Crossroads.

About her identity as a female, Holly said, "Well, it doesn't really affect me. I guess there are some roles that go with it." When asked what kind of roles, she said, "I don't know. It's cool." Holly's understanding of her gender identity is problematic in terms of the theoretical framework. She acknowledges that external formulas exist ("some roles"), but does not seem to be following them with any sort of intentionality. However, she also fails to demonstrate any internally defined understanding of her gender identity. Holly demonstrates a self-authored approach to decision-making and relationships, but not in her own understanding of race and gender.

Annette. Annette primarily demonstrated her self-authorship in reference to her relationships with her parents, her confidence in an internally defined identity, and her ability to construct her own knowledge to make decisions. Annette described her parents as overbearing and controlling while she was in college. Now, as a graduate student, "I've kind of set things straight with my parents…and now I feel I'm capable of making my own opinions." Annette has not distanced herself from her parents, or rejected their influence, but rather, "set things straight." She described a mutual understanding, wherein she is autonomous, but not isolated. The quote reveals a significant sense of agency, and that Annette manages, rather than is managed by, her relationship with her parents.

Annette demonstrates a similar authority over her identity, and specifically her gender performance. Annette likes "hair and makeup and girly stuff." She is also pursuing a Ph.D. in biochemistry, the only female in her cohort.

> There's a little bit of tension at least, that I've experienced. It really makes me feel a little bit isolated. Whatever. I think I'm being whoever I am. I barely ever put on makeup now because I don't have time, and I'm kind of doing my own thing.

Facing exclusion, Annette might have conformed more rigidly to gender expectations (i.e., by wearing makeup and engaging in stereotypical gender performance) or rejected that identity in a bid to fit in with her peers. Annette continues to emphasize her "girly" identity, but does not feel the need to perform it. Thus, her identity is internally defined, independent of the expectations of others. When asked if she was concerned that her gender might be inhibiting her ability to connect with her classmates, Annette said, "If they want to be friends with me and if any of that stuff happens, that's fine. But I'm not changing for them."

In the Becoming the Author phase, individuals recognize that external formulas may not be reliable, and commit to making their own meaning of their world (Baxter Magolda, 2001). Annette demonstrated this as she approached the decision of which lab to join, and which primary investigator (PI) to request. While many of her peers simply sought out the PI whose research areas most aligned with their interests, Annette developed additional priorities.

> I made that decision based on the research I was interested in, but also on who I actually felt comfortable talking with. Not just as an academic advisor, but a life advisor, too. I would go into my rotations and not just talk about research every time I went into the PI's officer. I would also go in and talk about "This is what's going on right now," and ask for advice about classes and studying. The PI I chose stressed that he didn't support me just so that I would join his lab, and that he wanted me to choose the route that was best for me and that I was most comfortable choosing. He would still be interested in serving me or mentoring me even if I picked another lab.

Annette developed her own approach to this decision, opting to trust her internal voice rather than following the accepted formulas of those around her. Of all the participants in the study,

Annette's comments most consistently adhered to a single phase: none of Annette's comments demonstrated perspectives or processes outside of the Becoming the Author phase.

    Kenneth. Kenneth, a former pre-med student-turned business major is currently working at a call center, helping customers troubleshoot basic technology issues. And yet, Kenneth frames this work in the context of his goals and interests.

> I'm using that as a focal point to work on customer relations, how to speak to someone when I can't see them. I think that's very valuable. We know right now that healthcare is going very virtual, and so having those skill sets, being able to communicate with someone face-to-face and on the phone will be a valuable asset.

Kenneth's ability to see this experience as beneficial is rooted in his dogged commitment to his goals, and his ability to construct his own understanding of the situation based on his personal goals and interests. Like many participants in this phase, Kenneth engaged in internships and experiences that any sound advisor might have recommended, but he positions the opportunity, and the decision to pursue it, in his own terms, and from his own understanding of its value.

    During Kenneth's senior year he was appointed president of Dance Marathon, a campus program that was new to the institution. He said, about the experience:

> I was reading things online, watching videos about it. I started to see what it's really for. Dance Marathon's all about the kids. Once I figured out what the 'why' was, it was simple. I tried to learn what other people had done, and then I started picking and choosing what would work for us. I put my own brand on their ideas.

Kenneth constructed his understanding of the program and allowed his internal voice, here verbalized as his "brand," to shape his efforts.

Kenneth trusts in his internal voice in dealing with relationships as well. As a college freshman and sophomore, Kenneth felt pressure to hang out with friends who were not committed to academic success. "For me, it was just like, I need to either completely change who are my friends, which would put me into a group that I don't know and who I won't connect with in other ways," he reflected, "and that's when I started creating those social (sub)groups. Like, he likes to party, he's in my science classes…" Kenneth organized his friends into categories, and engaged with each group when it made sense to do so. He also expressed the importance of being able to be himself in his relationships. "My past girlfriend," he reflected, "she couldn't talk about religion with me, because she felt uncomfortable. It's like 'it doesn't matter; we're just talking about something from different viewpoints.' For the next girlfriend, being able to comfortably talk about things that we disagree about is important." Kenneth demonstrates his self-authorship by organizing his relationships with other based on his interests and values, and prioritizing his internal voice above his responsibility to the friendship.

Finally, Kenneth demonstrated an internally defined understanding of his identity as a black man in the context of the expectations of his work friends and brothers in his historically black Greek-letter organization.

> I told one of my coworkers about having coffee with a friend. And she was like, "That's so white of you!" And I was like, "What?" And she was like, "Look at how you dress, from American Eagle and you wear blazers and bow ties." That's my style. But if you wear that in this area (the South), you're considered to be pushing yourself away from your black culture in a sense.

Kenneth was questioned often about his tastes and beliefs that put him at odds with stereotypes associated with southern black men.

I don't listen to the craziest rap. When I joined the fraternity, they were like, "Oh, you

haven't seen this movie?" <u>The Godfather</u>, I think. I guess it's a movie that all black

people were supposed to watch. Like, I missed the memo. And some of my brothers were

like, "Are your parents black?" Also, being black is synonymous with being very

religious. So, being a black male who's not conforming to these stereotypes, who's not

religious, people are like, "Oh, you're Baptist, because you speak a lot." No. "Oh, you're

Catholic." No, I'm atheist. "YOU'RE WHAT?!" If I did watch all those movies, and

conform to those stereotypes and if I was religious, I think my life would be a lot easier,

but that wouldn't be true to myself.

Kenneth still hangs out with friends, coworkers, and fraternity brothers who fit the stereotype.

Rather than distancing himself from a black identity that brings so many ill-fitting expectations,

Kenneth considers himself "a lower tier black male." He has constructed his own view of his

identity, aware of, but not beholden to, external formulas.

Kenneth's response to interview questions consistently corresponded with the Becoming

the Author phase of Self-Authorship Development, and encompassed all the domains: cognitive,

interpersonal, and intrapersonal.

Rebecca. Rebecca's approach to decision-making, relationships, and her gender identity

demonstrated her awareness of and commitment to an internal voice. For instance, after college,

Rebecca interviewed for a job with excellent pay and benefits, but declined the job at the final

interview in favor of a limited-term position in health promotions. "I like it better and it would be

more (in line) with where I want to go with my career," she said, framing the decision in terms of

her goals and "likes." She similarly framed an upcoming decision regarding her next move, as

her boyfriend awaits news of an impending transfer.

I never wanted it to be like, "guy comes first," but it is serious and we have to think of each other. I would look into the area that we would be moving to. I would want to have some kind of stability once I'm there. I'm not going to pick up and go without having any type of financial means. More than likely I would go just because I feel that this area has already given me all that it can offer. There's plenty of graduates here and the market is limited, so I feel like going elsewhere would open up more possibilities and options that I haven't thought of, and that's exciting.

Rebecca acknowledges a formula that seems to be at play here, that her relationship subordinates her agency in the decision to move, but she emphasizes her ability to make an active decision by noting that she would not go unless she had financial independence. She has also assessed that the move might offer more opportunities that her current location. Note that she attributes neither of these points to advice from others, or as accepted facts, but instead presents her personal understanding of the situation, indicative of her self-authorship.

Rebecca's relationship with her mother also illustrates her self-authored approach to relationships. When Rebecca informed her mother during her junior year that she was planning to begin taking anti-depressant medication, "she was completely against it." Rebecca's counselor had made the suggestion to consider medication, and Rebecca decided to research the decision thoroughly. "I've talk about it (with others)," she told her mother, "I've thought it over. I've researched this and I know what I'm doing." When asked if she would have been able to stand up to her mother as a freshman, she didn't believe that she would have: "I didn't have the knowledge." Rebecca's self-authorship in this case is not only indicated by the fact that she committed to her decision, but that she actively constructed her own knowledge related to the decision.

Rebecca spoke often of her mother's expectations, including those related to beauty and religion, and Rebecca's estranged father. Rebecca's mother seldom speaks about her father, and has never encouraged her to engage with him.

> We left my father when I was 10. I wanted nothing to do with him. I was very angry and bitter. It's only just now gotten to the point where I've been talking to him on the phone. So now I'm talking to him, and I'm not going to be able to fully heal until I figure out what I need from him. I was having PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) symptoms every time I talked to him, or about him. In psychology classes when we would talk about PTSD or abuse I would get really tense. On top of all of this other stress from school, the fear of having to speak to my father, or the death of his parents, just made me realize I needed a change.

Rebecca has abandoned the external formula that informed her lack of contact with her father for so long, and has decided to engage with him as way to respond to the dissonance that his role in her life creates.

Rebecca also demonstrates a self-authored ownership of her gender identity. Whereas she used to feel like "a trophy girlfriend," and play up her attractiveness to get attention from others, she has begun to self-author the role that beauty and appearance play in the way she sees herself. "Even though it's still nice to get, 'You look good,' from others, my identity isn't dependent on it," she said, demonstrating her ability to accept the fact that she sees herself as attractive without being controlled by it. She explained:

> I work for a catering company (in addition to the health promotions job). And I'm a server. I know that sometimes they put me at certain parties because I'm attractive. It looks better to have more attractive wait staff in certain parties. It doesn't make me feel

very good. I have a very hard work ethic, but sometimes one of my bosses will text me, 'Hey, can you work this event? I need you to be your charismatic self, there's going to be a lot of cute guys there.' It makes me feel like they're using me for my looks rather than my work ethic. I don't like that. I'm very conflicted with how I react to someone telling me I'm attractive and how I feel about myself. Sometimes I like it, sometimes I don't. Sometimes when I'm interacting with men closer to my age I'm definitely more flirtatious, not in an 'I want something out of you' kind of way. But because I know I'm attractive I feel like maybe I take advantage of that in certain situations. If it's not on my terms or if it's unwanted then it does make me uncomfortable, but if I'm actively engaged, it's fun and it gives me satisfaction.

Even though Rebecca expresses some anxiety, she is engaging in a self-authored understanding of herself as woman. She is aware that her employer treats her differently because of her looks, but emphasizes her work ethic. Her ability to embrace but not be controlled by the fact that others see her as attractive is illustrated by the fact that she undermines her appearance at work and in her relationship. Regarding her performance of attractiveness in her relationship, Rebecca noted, "I don't have to wear makeup (around my boyfriend). We live together!" In her work in health promotions, Rebecca dresses modestly: "I usually pick something that is form fitting but professional. Nothing that shows any cleavage or anything like that." When asked if she thought about the role her appearance plays in her work, she said, "It's really not about my attractiveness whatsoever. The only time I feel that being attractive can come in handy is in giving presentations, just because people will pay attention to you longer." Rebecca acknowledges and accepts the way that others view her, but is not controlled by it.

Rebecca is self-authoring her life, but tends to describe herself as if she is in The Crossroads phase of development. On multiple occasions, Rebecca described herself as still "working away from" external formulas. "I still feel like those thoughts (external formulas) affect me, because it's something I have to work toward." Rebecca seems to still feel the dissonance associated with negotiating external formulas, despite having abandoned them in favor of trusting in her internal voice. In addition, Rebecca, like several other participants in this study, revealed a perspective regarding her racial identity that does not conform with any of the four phases: "I know that because I'm a white female I may have more advantages than others, but when I'm hanging out with people I don't let that affect me." Rebecca is not following the external formula (that white people have advantages), but also denies that being white "affects" her. She possesses neither an externally nor internally defined understanding of her racial identity. Rather, she seems to resist the idea that this is part of her identity at all.

Participants Becoming the Authors of their Lives prioritize their values, interests, and goals when making decisions and managing relationships, and actively construct knowledge about their world and their identity. However, whereas participants who are Becoming the Author apply their internal voice to specific decisions or challenges (as in Pamela's decision to prioritize school over family obligation), participants in the next phase, Internal Foundations, match the challenge to their core beliefs.

Internal Foundations. Three of the eleven participants, Winston, Beverly, and Anthony, demonstrated the use of Internal Foundations in their understanding of themselves, their world, and their relationships. Individuals in this phase demonstrate a sense of confidence and peace, even when making decisions that might be unpopular with others (Baxter Magolda, 2001; Pizzolato, 2004). Whereas participants in the previous phase may relate a specific decision or

situation to their internal values, goals, or perspectives, participants in this phase consistently reference a core belief about themselves or their world that informs and serves as a reference for many decisions and in many situations. Participants in this study demonstrated the perspectives and processes associated with the Internal Foundations phase by articulating their core beliefs when approaching decisions and relationships, and adapting to new information and circumstances without abandoning their core beliefs. The term Internal Foundations is used in this section as both the title of the phase, and to represent the core belief or beliefs that inform their self-authorship.

Winston. In an excellent illustration of the Internal Foundations phase, Winston, a graduate student, referenced a core belief that emerged during a course titled Ethics and Contemporary Society: "I tended to take the stance in the position that I believed was most fair; that genders were equal, that there's no reason for racial discrimination, or gay marriage bans." Winston identifies his core belief (fairness), and provides examples of how that system dictates his views in specific contexts. Rather than approaching each dilemma on a case-by-case basis, Winston's core belief in fairness provides a framework for understanding these kinds of dilemmas.

The internal foundation was perhaps most evident when Winston spoke about his decision-making processes: "When it became clear that I wanted to do this submerged prehistoric stuff with the first Americans, I knew I had to specialize, and that I need(ed) to go to graduate school." Winston framed the decision as having been instigated, not merely influenced, by a core belief in his interests. Time and time again Winston spoke about his work and his career as a product of his interests, rather than just a good fit. For example: "I always liked diving, and I grew up diving around my hometown in springs and sinkholes, and I had always

idealized a career where I could have some kind of research interests and dive." This understanding of his interests and goals gave him the confidence to consider multiple opportunities, including marine biology, historical archeology, and prehistoric underwater archeology. Whereas individuals in the previous stage might relate their interests to a specific career option, Winston frames his belief in his desire to engage in submerged research as a stable vantage point from which to consider and explore possibilities.

Similarly, Winston prioritized his belief in his desire to engage in submerged research in selecting a graduate school. During his search, he made a strong connection with a professor at a school located in an excellent place for his favorite hobbies: climbing, hiking, and other outdoor pursuits. Selecting this institution would certainly have been deemed a self-authored choice, but Winston demonstrated his Internal Foundation by returning to his core belief in his purpose:

> The gut feeling I got from that school was not all with education in mind. It was more that I could see myself living there. But that wouldn't have been the right reason to choose a graduate school. (The school I ended up selecting) has a really well known research institution that is a great fit for my interests, and they have a lot of the resources for my work.

Winston demonstrated the use of internal foundations by earnestly considering multiple ways to make the decision and making a decision informed by the core belief in his academic aspirations. Throughout the interview, Winston referenced his goal of becoming a submerged researcher in the context of major selection, graduate school choice, internship opportunities, summer jobs, and research projects.

Winston also described a recently developed approach to relationships that illustrates the difference between asserting one's internal voice and employing the use of core beliefs.

I kinda would just meet a girl somewhere, who seemed really cool to me, and really soon after we'd be in a relationship as opposed to just dating. Now I kinda tend to keep away from that, 'cause it's much harder to end a relationship than it is to break off a series of dates. I would kinda just jump headfirst into stuff. I'm much more cautious now before I put a label on something before I really know how I feel about the person. I'm also way more interested in connecting with somebody as opposed to just having a good time.

Winston's initial approach was self-authored: his decision to start a relationship with the person was founded not on external formulas for whom he should date, but on whether or not he thought the person was cool. However, he applied his internal voice person-by-person. His new approach reflects the use of a more abstract belief: that "dating" provides for more flexibility and a chance to find out the degree to which he connects with that person. Winston's internal foundations do not necessarily influence the way Winston thinks about the person he is interested in dating, but in how he approaches the possibility. Not coincidentally, Winston also described a newfound commitment to make more patient and deliberate decisions related to purchases and even academic research. These comprise a core belief system that emphasizes careful consideration and exploration of the opportunity.

Another characteristic of the Internal Foundations phase is the ability to accept life as it comes, and develop new perspectives in light of new information. As Winston said about his new girlfriend, "We've been maintaining a long distance relationship, which I don't really do. But I feel very close to her and we agree on a lot of things, and so I feel like it's worth it to continue maintaining it." Winston's comment indicates that he is willing to change his mind. Participants in the Internal Foundations phase were able to navigate conflicting internally defined

perspectives, in this case the perspective that he shouldn't engage in long-distance relationships and the perspective that he should date someone who he likes and with whom he connects with.

Despite otherwise demonstrating the Internal Foundations phase of self-authorship development, Winston revealed himself to be following an external formula related to racial identity. In his response to the invitation to participate in the study, Winston identified his race as "human." When asked about this, he said:

> That was just kind of an anthropological joke. Race is just a societal construct, and I feel that it automatically casts people into stereotypes. In a couple of courses we talked about how there really is no scientific differentiation between races. We got really down to the science behind it and how DNA varies. I just took it to heart, I guess.

Winston has accepted the external formula provided by his instructor: race does not exist. This belief is not supported by examples from his lived experience, or his understanding of the world, but only by the fact that his professor made a compelling case. While Winton primarily relies on Internal Foundations, the final phase in the theory, he also demonstrates the first phase, Following External Formulas.

Beverly. Beverly's use of a core belief was evident in both her decision to return to college after 10 years away, and in her decision to pursue her Master's degree after completing her Bachelor's degree:

> I've had jobs my whole life. I've managed retail, I've managed food, and I got tired of all that and wanted to finally have a career, and one that I enjoy. I could have a job every day of my life, or I could have a career.

For Beverly, there is a difference between "work" and "career." She framed her interest in a "career" as a part of the larger context of "working on myself. Doing things for myself." As

she approached graduation her professors encouraged Beverly to consider graduate school. Even with several enticing employment prospects, she decided to apply to graduate school. "I chose graduate school to further myself and my career. I like learning. I wanted to broaden my horizons." Beverly relates variety of decisions to her commitment to learning and growing, and references this principle frequently, identifying it as a core belief.

A core belief also informs Beverly's approach to relationships. Whereas relationship management in the previous phase requires only that the individual prioritize his or her internal voice above their role in the relationship, relationships in this phase are informed by core beliefs. For instance, in talking about a disagreement with a friend, Beverly emphasized the need for rugged loyalty in her relationships, saying, "If you're not going to hang in there when I start speaking my mind, I'm sorry." Beverly's belief system regarding relationships includes the expectation to "hang in there," but also that others should be able to explain their perspective and work to find common ground when disagreement occurs. "If it's like, 'No, I'm not budging, I'm not going to accept you for your beliefs, these are my beliefs and this is the way the world should be,' then that might be the end of the relationship." Consider Rebecca and Holly's disagreements with friends in the Becoming the Author section above. Holly, Rebecca, and Beverly all recognize the need to assert themselves, but whereas Holly and Rebecca only spoke about the specific encounter and/or friend, Beverly framed her approach to the conflict in terms of her beliefs about relationships generally.

Internal Foundations allow individuals to consider new perspectives without losing confidence in their internal voice, but that is not to say that their perspectives change. Beverly admitted that prior to returning to college she would not have been able to define feminist critique. However, as a female, she experienced pressure from peers to conduct research that

advanced feminist agendas. "I'm like, that's propaganda! (Being a history major) changed my notion of what it means to be a woman. I realize how lucky I am to be a woman in this era, but I'm right in the middle. I'm a feminist but not a feminazi." Beverly considered the new perspective and incorporated it as she saw fit. She was able to articulate the way her experience has changed her thinking about being a woman, but resisted peer pressure to adopt a feminist approach.

Beverly did not describe any processes or perspectives that fell short of the Internal Foundations phase, except perhaps in expressing doubt and uncertainty related to her performance as a mother. "Of course I worry if I'm a good mom," she said. "I want to give him a four-wheeler, but also don't want him to have everything he wants all of the time," she said, referencing her ex-husband's penchant for giving their son lavish gifts. She also referenced an approach suggested by her mother, to "not think about him as a little boy in front of me, but think about who he will be when we're having coffee in 30 years." Beverly's anxiety and the influence of these two external formulas suggest that her understanding of her identity as a mother is more closely aligned with The Crossroads, the second phase in the Self-Authorship Development theory, than her primary phase.

Anthony. Anthony's comments about his mother illustrate the interplay between articulating core beliefs while adapting to new information and circumstances without abandoning one's core beliefs, a process characteristic of people in the Internal Foundations phase of development.

> My mom was a single parent and she's done everything. I wouldn't say I was spoiled, but I got everything I wanted, and it's not that I had everything (that has influenced me), it's how I got the things I wanted and the skills I got. I saw her take care of everything and I

knew that if she could do it by herself, I could do what I wanted to do myself. She did her

own thing with her own struggles and people not understanding, so I looked at that and

knew if she could do it, I could do it. She knew what she wanted and she did it, and I

know what I want.

Years later, Anthony's experiences have confirmed for him this core belief that he learned from

his mother: I can do anything. With this as a foundation, Anthony has the confidence to make

difficult decisions, manage adversity, and commit to his dreams.

Anthony's demonstrates confidence not in a specific choice, but in his ability to manage

choices. For instance, Anthony initially attended an arts college in Chicago.

In musical theater the end goal is to move to New York or California and audition and

stuff, and I knew I didn't want to wait four years to get started at that. Like, what if I

didn't like it when I actually went? So this was a great way to try it while I was in school.

Anthony's core belief is that he will be able to do what he wants to do. When financial

realities forced Anthony to pursue other educational options, he transferred to the research site

because it was a good financial value and his state scholarship applied. Anthony described the

transfer, and not connecting with the Theater department there, as "a setback," but never

abandoned his interest in performing. Anthony is currently in graduate school studying

Education Administration. "I'm planning to graduate, and get a job in California, and act and do

auditions on the side," he said of his current plan. "I like what I'm doing now, and I don't ever

want to be in a situation where I don't like what I'm doing. A lot of people who like acting try,

and try, and fail, and they don't have anything to fall back on, and they fall into something they

don't want to do." Anthony's desire to perform is not a rule that governs his decisions, but a

foundation on which he bases them. Otherwise, he would likely only pursue work in the

performing arts. He has confidence not just that his current work is a good fit for his interests, but that he will be able to "do whatever I want to do, when I want to do it."

Anthony struggles to apply a core belief to his relationships with others, however, and fails to articulate a self-authored perspective regarding his identity.

> In my fraternity there are so many different people. A lot of times you can say who's in your group, but in our (fraternity) you had to work with everyone. It made me look at relationships differently. There's people that I didn't really like, but we had to work around that.

Anthony adapted to the situation ("It made me look at relationships differently."), a characteristic of the Internal Foundations phase, but fails to connect his role in the relationship to a core belief. Being in an organization with people he didn't like was something to be navigated. He doesn't find any sort of core belief in fraternal brotherhood for instance, to help him make sense of the relationship, aligning his perspective in this example more with the Becoming the Author phase.

Similar to some of the other participants, Anthony's understanding of his racial identity does not conform to any of the phases in the theory. "My dreadlocks (hair style) were just something I did,' he said. "If anything people would assume I was Jamaican, so I had to tell people a lot I was Nigerian. That's really the only times I ever had to think about who I was." Anthony did not report having any personal feelings related to the assumption that he was Jamaican, and did not describe why the distinction mattered. Anthony seems not to have any salient sense of racial identity, externally defined or otherwise.

Beverly, Winston, and Anthony rely on Internal Foundations to shape their approach to challenges and in the ways that they engage others. Whereas participants Becoming the Authors of the Lives applied their personal values and interests to their choices and

relationships in order to weigh options and make decisions, participants in this final phase frame the decision itself in the context of their core beliefs. The characteristics of the Internal Foundations phase allow them to adapt to new challenges and new information, and to explore options with confidence.

Research Question #2: How do students describe their self-authorship development during college? This section presents findings related to the ways participants described and understand their self-authorship development in college. Participants understood their development as a single, continuous process rather than a series of developmental experiences, and framed their development in the context of independence and purpose.

"It's a process." Participants in this study struggled to identify specific experiences that propelled their development when asked, instead referencing the college experience generally or emphasizing steady, continuous development. Rebecca, for instance, continued to describe herself as working to assert herself in relationships, in the way she viewed herself, and in decision-making, despite demonstrating a self-authored approach to all three. As noted in the previous section, Rebecca acknowledged that she no longer performs the role of the trophy girlfriend, allows her mother overdue influence on her life, or subordinates her health to the needs of her friends. And yet, she described "still struggling" with self-doubt and anxiety related to her former, non-self-authored way of engaging her world. "It's an ongoing process," she reflected.

Rebecca and other participants used the term "process" to describe their development, and to deflect questions about specific experiences that influenced their development. "It was definitely a process from the beginning," said Beverly. Kenneth described his development as, "extremely chaotic. I don't know what defining moment it was. It was like an accumulation of

defining moments." When the prompt was clarified, and he was informed that he could identify

any influential experience, he said, "I can't think of anything specific. It's just experiences."

Despite his reluctance or difficulty identifying specific experiences, Kenneth eventually spoke to

the influence of joining a fraternity, serving in the student government, attending Leadershape,

and disagreeing with friends about priorities. He, like several other participants, described a

number of experiences that influenced his development, but he doesn't think about his

development in terms of these experiences.

Participants were able to contrast the differences between their previous and current ways

of approaching decisions, relationships, and identity, but struggled to identify the experiences or

factors that accounted for the difference. Annette's response, when asked about experiences that

helped her develop a new approach to decisions, illustrates this:

I guess maturity and exposure? I think I just didn't know a lot about making decisions, or

I didn't have any idea of what I should even be considering when making decisions. I

guess it just kind of came when I was learning in undergrad.

It is worth noting that Dan, who did not demonstrate having developed his self-authorship during

college, described his development in almost exactly the same terms:

The people around me and the media I've consumed? I don't know. I'd have to think

about it. I don't think there was any specific point when my problem-solving approach

changed. It was more like continuous growth. That's what growing up is, isn't it?

Prompts about specific within-college experiences were met with responses like those in

the paragraph above, but participants' stories about their development revealed a variety of

developmental experiences. This suggests that the participants had developmental experiences,

but that they did not think about their development in terms of specific experiences and moments

of transition. Rather, they understand their college experience as a singular, continuous, bound experience.

    Self-authorship in context. In reflecting on their development, however, participants' responses suggested experiences and factors that influenced their self-authorship development primarily in two contexts: their emerging independence and their sense of purpose.

    Independence and the inner voice. Seven of the nine self-authored participants provided evidence of a complex relationship between the college experience, independence, and self-authorship. While only three participants (Holly, Anthony, and Pamela) specifically used the words independent or independence, five others referred to their ability to exist and operate without relying on the support or direction of others; indicating that they gained independence from their previously accepted family roles and previously held belief structures. For instance, Rebecca indicated:

> One of the main things I got in college was breaking away from what I thought society
>
> wanted from me, and the image I had then, into my own thoughts and feelings and into
>
> the person I am now. It helps that I lived on campus, and I didn't go home everyday. I
>
> was able to have a life outside of my home life.

Rebecca's comment illustrates the link participants' made between their independence ("a life outside of my home life") and their self-authorship development.

    Participants' understanding of college as a singular, bound experience is perhaps most evident in their preference for attributing their development simply to having attended college. Four of the participants indicated that attaining the college degree itself influenced their development. Beverly said:

You almost approach life differently when you have that piece of paper. Sort of an

accomplishment. If I needed to pick up and leave to a new location I would have that

piece of paper behind me to give me that credibility. I make decisions differently than I

did before I got that piece of paper. More than I even realized I would.

Beverly indicated that degree attainment had provided a sense of confidence in making her own

way in the world. This independence led to a new, more internally defined cognitive approach to

opportunity and career planning.

Pamela and Annette describe the impact of their degree attainment on other aspects of

their self-authorship. As noted above, Pamela has developed a self-authored view of herself as an

independent Hispanic American woman. "Before I graduated, I didn't feel confident enough to

say that. After I graduated, I felt so confident and so powerful. It gave me validation." Even as

she worked through her coursework as a middle-aged mother of three, despite complaints from

her family, and while also maintaining a full-time job, Pamela was not able to Become the

Author of her Life until she earned the degree, and gained a sense of independence: "Now I'm

able to make a change in myself and in my environment." For Pamela, agency and trust in the

internal voice were secondary to, and used primarily to describe, her sense of independence.

Similarly, Annette was not able to feel independent from her parents prior to earning the

degree. Annette lived at home during most of her college career, and struggled to assert her

independence: "I tried to tell them, 'I'm 20 years old and it's time for me to start making my own

decisions.'" Despite this effort, Annette continued to feel controlled and beholden to her family

until she received her degree. "Now I feel I'm capable of making my own opinions, capable of

taking care of myself. I'm more independent. I didn't have that before." Obtaining a college

degree helped Annette assert herself in her family relationships and in her understanding of the

world, but she framed these developments in the context of becoming independent from her family.

Participants' emerging independence in college also facilitated their exposure to other factors that promoted their self-authorship development. Six of the eleven participants lived on campus for at least one year during their college experience. The independence associated with living away from their family helped foster their development. Prior to college, and during her first year, Annette Followed External Formulas, as demonstrated by her reliance on direction from her parents, and a strict performance of traditional gender identity ("I couldn't walk around the dorm without being completely dressed and done up."). After moving home following her Freshman year, having experienced the independence of living on campus, Annette began to "have conflicts" with her parents: "They are very controlling, and I wasn't always ready to do whatever they wanted me to do. After that break of kinda being able to do whatever I wanted whenever I wanted at school…it was really a turning point for me." This seems to have been Annette's provocative moment (Baxter Magolda, 2001). Her year of independence led to dissonance and unhappiness when she moved back home, which compelled her to seek new, self-authored ways to engage in her world.

Five participants also framed their emerging independence as proxy for, or indicator of, their self-authorship development. Holly, for instance, experienced a break-up with her boyfriend around the time that her friend group began to "go in different directions," as Holly described it.

I depended a lot on (my boyfriend), and so after that I didn't really have anybody close. So that's when I started to kinda be more independent. (My boyfriend) had a very "lone wolf" kind of thing about him, where he just didn't need anybody. Very independent. And so after that I thought about the way he was, and I thought, maybe I should try that. I

just started doing a lot of things by myself. I basically had the attitude, "yeah, I can do this."

Holly's independence was an attempt to mimic her ex-boyfriend's "lone wolf" mentality, illustrating a Following External Formulas way of approaching her world. However, this independence provided her the space to find her internal voice, and to make decisions that did not fit with her previously held external formulas. For instance, she began going to the gym and working out, and she joined a sorority despite anxiety about the "kind of girl" she was. "I said I'd never join a sorority, so I figured people would be kinda negative about it." Contrast this journey to Laura's experience, in which she quickly transitions from peer group to peer group, never allowing herself to be independent from her friends. Holly's independence is at first a product of Following External Formulas, but in the end allows her to discover and trust in her internal voice.

When asked to describe their development in college, participants in this study often referenced their emerging independence both as a factor in and proxy for their development. In contrast, neither of the two participants who do not demonstrate self-authorship referenced their independence. Rather, Laura's development seems to have been stifled by the fact that she has always had close peer group and family relationships during college, which likely prevented her from having the sort of space necessary to become her own person, and Dan's major source of dissonance was his inability to assert his independence from his girlfriend.

Purpose and self-authorship development. In addition to independence, participants also described their self-authorship development in the context of their sense of purpose. Participants' comments related to purpose intersected with a variety of self-authorship constructs, including trusting their internal voice, core beliefs, intrapersonal processes, and relationships. Findings

related to participants' purpose have already been presented to illustrate participants' Internal Foundations. However, participants' use of this construct as a context for describing their self-authorship warrants closer examination. All nine participants found to be self-authored referenced their purpose, here defined as an intended goal or achievement that is informed by personal values, interests, and skills.

Holly, for instance, discovered her sense of purpose in a communications course: "It was all about how different cultures communicate with one another through business or personal communication. And that sort of opened my eyes, to a bunch of different things. That helped me figure out that I want to end up in global public relations, helping companies expand into new countries. I always liked to learn about different countries. That class brought it back up and expanded on it." Holly's class helped her learn to weigh decisions against internally defined values and interests, but she viewed it primarily as contributing to her sense of purpose.

Nick's experience in ROTC informed his sense of purpose as an Army officer. As noted previously, Nick developed an understanding of "the weight of responsibility" through the experience of leading his unit in training exercises and other operations. Prior to this, his view of his purpose was externally defined. According to Nick, this experience, and his newly self-authored understanding of the role, inspired him to "put more into it." Analysis might reveal that this experience had a variety of self-authorship outcomes, but Nick only understands the experience as impacting his sense of purpose. Holly and Nick described an emerging understanding of purpose, not an increasingly self-authored cognitive or intrapersonal processes that these experiences might have promoted.

Pamela revealed the influence of her internal voice when she spoke about teaching: "I want to help…I see a lot of the struggles they have, and I see myself in them, and so helping

them helps me, in a way." When asked to describe how this internally constructed sense of purpose had changed over time, she framed her answer in terms of purpose. "When I was taking classes up north (right after high school)," she reflected, "I didn't know what I wanted to be. After I moved (here) I volunteered at the day care center, and I fell in love with the little kids." Pamela indicated that she had to overcome low self-esteem and a lack of support from her extended, but very present, family to go back to college. It is likely that the strong sense of purpose related to her work provided an Internal Foundation that allowed her to overcome these challenges, but Pamela only noted the impact of her day care teaching experience on her career decisions.

Winston and Anthony both had a relatively strong sense of purpose prior to attending college. As Winston said:

I recognized, more so than most of my friends, that education wasn't just an end in and of itself, but a means to an end. I think I had the end a little bit more in mind than a lot of my friends.

Anthony's framed his career planning and his ability to adapt to setbacks in terms of his commitment to performing. Winston and Anthony's purpose acted as their Internal Foundation, their core belief. Winston, Anthony, and several other participants described their purpose in ways that closely resemble the principles and components of self-authorship.

Participants' sense of purpose also served in a developmental capacity. Kenneth related his healthcare aspirations to his work with Dance Marathon, noting that both engaged in non-medical efforts to improve the health of others, and decided to take an approach to the event that emphasized its core purpose rather than what he called "the façade" of the event. In this , Kenneth attributed his ability to construct his own meaning related to the event to his sense of

purpose. Kenneth also noted that it was easy to abandon efforts to dress "more black," and to stop spending time with friends he deemed to be unfocused once he found his purpose. "It just comes naturally. It's like, these are the things I want, and here is what I need to do to get there." Annette provided a similar example related to being isolated by the men in her cohort: "I'm there for school, and I just forget about the rest." Participants' sense of purpose served in a developmental capacity in these examples, inspiring self-authored career plans, promoting reflection and self-awareness, helping them trust in their internal voice, and allowing them to prioritize their goals above the needs or expectations of others.

The two participants who were not self-authored, Dan and Laura, related their career choices to their strengths and interests (Laura is good with people, Dan likes technical challenges), rather than purpose. When these choices are viewed in terms of purpose, both are revealed to be following external formulas: Dan spoke specifically to his desire for attention in relationship to his choice of field, and Laura seemed most interested in honoring the recommendations of mentors.

Research Question #3: How do students' descriptions of their self-authorship development during college compare to existing findings related to situational, environmental and personal factors? The self-authorship literature identifies a number of situational, environmental, and personal characteristics that are perceived to influence students' self-authorship development through the four phases, as presented in Chapter 2. This section examines the findings in relation to the developmental factors identified in the literature.

Findings in support of the literature. Participants' descriptions of their development affirm, and provide additional empirical evidence related to the influence of experiencing

dissonance, engaging with multiple perspectives, coping strategies, responsibility for knowledge construction, identity traits, and decision catalyzation play in their development.

Dissonance. According to Taylor (2008), "for progression or forward movement to occur, an individual must have a sense of dissonance and disequilibrium, which disrupts his or her current way of making meaning" (p. 230). Participants in this study both directly and indirectly implicated experiences of dissonance as factors in their development.

For instance, Holly described the influence of becoming a member of an Asian-interest sorority:

> My freshman and sophomore year I met quite a few people with different backgrounds from me, and it made me think about all those stereotypes that I had in my head, from growing up in a small town, where the stereotypes were used every single day… Hearing (my sisters) talk about their past, the things they've been through, I realized that I had been very closed minded. I can't believe I used to be like that. It helped me be less judgmental and open up to people and not assume.

Holly attributes her change not to just learning about her sisters, but to the dissonance that hearing their stories created for her as someone who "used to be like that." As a result, she developed a new approach to learning about others. Kenneth's continued marginalization from his black identity provided the dissonance that compelled him to develop an internally defined understanding of his racial identity. During his freshman year, Kenneth dressed in baggy clothes and went with his friends to nightclubs during the week to emphasize his black identity: "I was performing the roles. I thought it was adding to my blackness." However, his peers continued to point out the ways in which he failed to live up to the expectations of a stereotypical black man, and Kenneth began to take ownership of his racial identity: "If that's the definition of being

black, then I'm just going to do what I do." His transition from "performing" black identity to developing his own racial identity followed his experiences of dissonance.

For Dan, however, experiencing dissonance has not helped him to identify an internal voice. "It makes my day-to-day life more difficult," he said of the dissonance he experienced related to external messages about race and gender. "I feel confused, and know less about who I am." Dissonance seems to be the only developmental factor present in Dan's life, however, and so he persists in The Crossroads, unsatisfied with following external formulas, and unable to identify an internal voice. Dan's situation supports King, Baxter Magolda, Barber, Brown and Lindsay's (2009) finding that dissonance is a necessary but insufficient factor in self-authorship development.

The findings in this study also provide support for the contention that individuals may avoid experiencing dissonance, and thus stagnate in terms of their development (Pizzolato, 2004). For instance, Laura described the end of a romantic relationship, in which the other person "just kind of stopped. It was very confusing." When she asked him why he stopped calling her, "he was just like, 'Well, you're smarter than me,' and he didn't like that. I guess that kind of showed me, wow, he was intimidated by me, which kind of made me feel like, he thinks I deserve someone better. So I was like, 'Sure, let me go find someone better!'" When faced with a breakup, Holly, Annette, Kenneth, Rebecca, Pamela, and Winston all described deep introspection about who they were and what they wanted, whereas Laura avoided the dissonance that this situation might have yielded by unquestioningly adopting the external formula provided as rationale for the breakup. Laura has thus far avoided developmentally useful experiences of dissonance, despite having experienced situations with the potential to disrupt her understanding of herself and her world.

Similarly, many of the participants in this study did not describe experiencing dissonance related to their racial or gender identity. Nick, Winston and Laura described externally defined understanding of their racial identity, even though Nick and Winston's formulas rejected the concept of race. Rebecca, Beverly, and Anthony dismissed the implication that their racial identity affected their lives, or omitted it as an aspect of their identity. Several of these participants cited the developmental benefits of exposure to and learning about diverse others, but no resulting experiences of dissonance. Interestingly, Rebecca, Nick, and Winston acknowledged racism and privilege, but did not report having experienced any cognitive dissonance in relation to it.

Exposure to diverse perspectives. Collay and Cooper (2008), Torres & Hernanez (2007) and others suggest that, while *situations* that expose individuals to multiple perspectives may or may not lead to development, *environments* in which diverse voices are valued foster students' development throughout their journey toward self-authorship. The present finding that students understand their college experience as a singular whole, rather than as a series of experiences, supports this distinction between situation and environment. Beverly attributed her exposure to multiple perspectives to her coursework, classmates, and being present in the college environment generally. "I read book after book," she noted, "and sifting through archive after archive, and reading research, you stumble upon something that makes you think, that broadens your scope." Her peers also broadened her scope by challenging her to take a more feminist approach to her work, a concept that she "couldn't even define prior to college." Beverly related her broadened scope to an increased control over her life: "I think being challenged, and getting out of that box and realizing that there's a whole world of people and ideas…I didn't want to be in the box. I wanted to steer my own ship."

Diverse perspectives also facilitated students' ability to explore their internal voice and weigh decisions against their own values and interests. For instance, Kenneth's Leadershape experience, a multi-day leadership development workshop, helped him to recognize that his medical school aspirations were not his own. "They were like, 'Do you really want to do it, or is it what your parents want to do?' And I was like, 'Well, that's what my parents told me to do, and I kinda like it to.' And that was the turning point for when I started thinking outside the box for what I wanted to do." As a high school senior, Nick intended to enlist in the Army. "I was pretty dead-set on it," he reflected. His parents encouraged him to consider college, and provided information about the ROTC program. "I weighed the facts and what the future would be like, and decided to do it (college). Going to college was more internally-driven, since most of my friends were enlisting." Nick's parents and Kenneth's Leadership facilitator challenged previously accepted formulas for their lives, and instigated processes of "weighing the facts," and "thinking outside the box," that led to more self-authored college and career plans.

The findings provide additional empirical support for previous findings that diverse perspectives play a significant role in self-authorship development. However, the literature, speaks primarily of *exposure* to diverse perspectives, while participants in this study (see Nick and Kenneth's comments above) describe *engaging* with them. It seems, then, that the presence of diverse perspectives in their environment did not propel their development, but rather their engagement with these perspectives. This is a stance that was implied in King, Baxter Magola, Barber, Kendall Brown, and Lindsay (2009)'s finding that having friends and roommates with different backgrounds foster's development, but the authors continue to describe environments in which diverse perspectives exist, and in which individuals are exposed to them. The present findings, then, differ from what is established in the literature, asserting the role of the individual

in engaging with these perspectives if development is to occur. For instance, Dan's

environments contained diverse perspectives, but he failed to engage them. Consider the anxiety

that Dan reported related to his relationship with his live-in, unemployed girlfriend. Dan has

accepted two different perspectives related to this issue: that "you cannot save an adult," as

informed by his counseling experience, and that his invitation for her to move in makes him

responsible for her well-being. When asked if he engages others in conversations about his

girlfriend, he noted that he doesn't have the chance to talk with friends or coworkers about it,

and that he avoids discussing it with his family. "I think they might see her as a loser. Maybe

they wish I would get rid of her." Dan has created an environment where he does not have to

engage diverse perspectives. In contrast, Winston also described a relationship that existed out of

a sense of obligation:

> This girl had a lot of issues in her home life; her parents were in the middle of a divorce
>
> and her mom had some really horrible illness. A good friend of mine kept asking me,
>
> "Hey, are you in this for you, or her, or both of you?" And I was pretty honest with
>
> myself, and it made me reflect back on it and I realized that I was just being with her to
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> support her, as opposed to being with her because I genuinely loved her. That was kind of
>
> a big coming around moment. After that I was more cautious.

Winston engaged earnestly with the diverse perspective, and that process led to the development

of an internal, core belief about how he should approach relationships (that he should carefully

and patiently consider whether or not to become involved in a committed relationship). The self-

authored participants in this study described their engagement with new and different

perspectives, whereas Dan and Laura noted the presence of diverse perspectives, but failed to

earnestly consider and explore them. These findings suggest that engagement with, not exposure to, diverse perspectives promotes self-authorship development.

Coping strategies. Pizzolato (2004, 2005) found that students' coping strategies mediated their experiences of dissonance and interactions with diverse perspectives. Specifically, Pizzolato (2004, 2005) found that students who engaged in avoidance coping strategies also avoided the potentially developmental outcomes associated with engaging with diverse perspectives and experiencing cognitive dissonance; that individuals employing self-regulating coping strategies began engaging their internal voice to negotiate challenges but failed to engage with diverse perspectives; and that individuals who utilized supportive coping strategies were able to construct their own internal foundations in the face of dissonance, and engage and incorporate multiple perspectives into this decision-making and worldview.

The present study provides compelling evidence in support of Pizzolato's (2004, 2005) findings. Laura, who continues to Follow External Formulas, demonstrated avoidance coping by quickly dismissing uncomfortable feedback and viewpoints, and transitioning quickly from one viewpoint to the next rather than weighing the merits and liabilities of each. When faced with negative feedback from a supervisor, Laura dismissed the input by discrediting the source, and committing to other, more supportive sources of feedback.

Likewise, Dan's descriptions of his college experience align closely with Pizzolato's (2004, 2005) findings. Specifically, Dan self-regulates in the face of challenge, processing the situation internally and on his own. As a result, he recognizes that external formulas are unsatisfactory, but does not possess the ability to consider the issue from multiple perspectives. Unlike Laura, Dan experiences significant dissonance when presented with information or experiences that disrupt his worldview. However has yet to experience the provocative moment

in which he commits to his internal voice. Dan copes with the dissonance on his own, or self-regulates. For instance, Dan does not speak with friends and family about how he truly feels about his relationship, and even said during the interview, "I think that the only way I'll be free is if she gets a job, or dies. I don't mean that with any malice, it's just the way I feel. This is the first time I've ever said that out loud." As such, he lacks the opportunity to learn about potentially successful ways to negotiate the challenge.

Avoidance coping prevents individuals from experiencing the dissonance that might compel them to identify their internal voice, and self-regulated coping prevents them from understanding multiple perspectives. Supported coping, however, involves intentionally seeking out advice and clarification. Holly demonstrated supported coping while trying to develop her plans for the future. Holly is unemployed, but hopes to work in public relations, and is currently considering graduate school:

> I talked to my friend about it, and she's really supportive. I talked to my family and they see how I've been applying for jobs like crazy and I've gone to a couple of interview, but nothing has worked out. They just want to make sure that it will really help me before I make the decision to go. Because graduate school is really expensive, and they want to make sure it will help me get a job. I had that in mind anyway, but hearing it from them just kinda brought it up again. It is a big concern. I think that in PR, having a 4-year degree is a good thing, but having experience is more important than having another degree.

In engaging her friends and family to solicit input, and in the way that she earnestly considers their concerns, Holly demonstrates a supported coping strategy. She will need to continue to construct her own knowledge about the decision if she is to resolve the conflict between her

interest to go back to school and the concerns about utility raised by her family. Had she engaged the decision from a self-regulating approach, Holly would have wrestled with the choice privately, and may not have weighed the utility of the decision against her values, missing an opportunity to continue to develop her internal voice.

Responsibility for knowledge construction. As participants described their self-authorship development, they emphasized experiences in which they had the autonomy and responsibility for making their own decisions, affirming findings in the literature that opportunities to construct one's own knowledge promote self-authorship. According to Egart and Healy (2004), situations that empower individuals to take part in knowledge construction, encourage the individual to "yield to the authority of [their] inner voice to make…judgments" (p. 130). For instance, Kenneth described his work as a committee chair in the student government:

> They gave me the process, ABCD, but it kind of fell off, and I was like, "Okay, what do I do?" I was in the office for hours trying to figure out what works best for me. I decided to not just review what was submitted on paper, but to actually meet with people. I wanted to see what's behind the paper. I want to feel their enthusiasm. I can support them, but if you don't have the enthusiasm, you may not follow through.

Having the autonomy to engage in the position in his own way compelled Kenneth to consider his options in the context of his values and skills, and construct his own knowledge about how to assess the requests he was getting from his constituents. This experience occurred during Kenneth's junior year, as he was just beginning to Become the Author of his life. "I was so used to people telling me what to do versus having the autonomy to do whatever I needed to do to help the organization," he reflected. Kenneth carried this lesson over to other aspects of his life

as well: "I was thinking, choosing what to do in student government can happen in my life."

Anthony shared a similar experience:

> In all my other experiences, I knew what I was doing, I was confident. You get a binder,
> and it's pretty structured, and things are kind of set up for you. In a sense, you can't fail.
> But on the programming board, there was no structure, and you could fail. I liked going
> in and not really having stuff to look at. We had to create our own experience, and didn't
> really have anyone behind us saying "This is right," and "This is wrong." It made me
> realize how creative I could be, and it really gave me ownership over what I was doing.

Kenneth illustrated Baxter Magolda's (2001) argument that taking part in knowledge construction will help students take charge of their own learning: "For me, when people told me what to do, if I failed, I can blame them. They're going to give you more guidelines and tell you to try something else. When you have your own autonomy, then if you fail the only one you can blame is yourself. And from there you can think of what to do better." Situations that imparted a sense of autonomy in decision-making and knowledge construction promoted participants' self-authorship development. Kenneth reflected on the relevance of this experience, echoing Baxter Magolda's (2001) finding that many young graduates struggle to manage ambiguous tasks at work: "Just like in real life, you're going to have a blank sheet of paper, you're going to have the resources, and you're going to have to figure it out."

Race, ethnicity, and other identity traits. The present study affirms claims in the literature (Abes & Jones, 2004; Pizzolato, 2004; Torres & Hernandez, 2007) that identity traits, particularly for minority participants, provide additional developmental challenges and opportunities. For instance Annette associated her isolation from being the only female in her cohort compelled her to focus on her personal goals and aspirations, and trust in her internal

sense of self. Kenneth's racial identity called into question his taste in movies and music, his religious beliefs, and the way he likes to dress. Whereas initially Kenneth worked to conform to external formulas, these conflicts eventually provided opportunities to assert his internal voice and develop a more personalized sense of purpose and identity. Pamela framed her development in the context of her independence from patriarchal role performance that she perceived as the expectation of her as a Hispanic woman.

Jones and Abes (2004) and Egart and Healy (2004) found that individuals reflected on experiences through the lens of their identity. Laura, Beverly, Winston, Nick, and Rebecca, none of whom identified as belonging to a racial minority, acknowledged privilege and racism, but downplayed its impact on their lives. In Winston's words, they are "conscious of (identity labels), in kind of just a characterization way." Affirming the findings from Jones and Abes (2004) and Egart and Healy (2004), their racial lens allowed them to view diversity issues as belonging to others.

Internal and external catalyzation. Findings in this study affirmed claims in the literature that decisions arising from internal commitments, rather than those made in response to external demands, are associated with increased self-authorship development (Pizzolato, 2005). Rebecca, for instance, decided to see a counselor to help her manage her stress and depression. "My friends did say that I was taking a lot on, that they were seeing changes in me," she reflected, "But ultimately I felt that it was me that made the decision. Like, 'I need to change. I need to set things in motion for my life to be healthier.'" Rebecca made an internally catalyzed decision to seek counseling, and responded to therapy in self-authored ways.

Annette contrasted two romantic relationships that further illustrate Pizzolato's (2005) suggestion that internally catalyzed decisions are associated with self-authorship development. In

high school, a classmate that she had not previously considered as a potential boyfriend invited her on a date. "I was really shy," she noted, "and I figured, 'Okay, well, I'm being pursued, and it may be my only opportunity,' and I just kind of let that develop." Annette felt stifled in the relationship: "The conversations we had…we weren't even on the same level. There wasn't any development there." And yet, she continued in the relationship for almost three years. The decision to begin this relationship was externally catalyzed, and in it she played the role of a timid and supportive girlfriend. In contrast, she and her current boyfriend met while studying, and became close friends. "A few months into being really good friends, we just decided that we liked each other and started dating." In this relationship, Annette frames the initiation as mutual, and sees herself as able to pursuit her interests and goals.

Participants' descriptions of their development suggest, however, that internal catalyzation is, on its own, insufficient in promoting self-authorship development, which is consistent with Pizzolato's (2005) finding that catalyzation could be mediated by other factors. While trying to help his mother gain independence from an abusive boyfriend and a destructive lifestyle, Dan decided to seek counseling. "The therapist actually suggested that I not try to save her," he recounted. "She told me that sometimes you can save a child from themselves, but you can never save an adult from themselves." Dan also referenced this advice in describing his dissatisfaction with his girlfriend's unemployment. Despite the fact that Dan's idea and decision to engage in counseling were internally catalyzed, he failed to assert his inner voice, and accepted the counselor's advice as yet another external formula to follow.

Findings discrepant with the literature. This section explores five findings of the study that are discrepant with extant literature related to self-authorship development: support, reflection, decision catalyzation, volitional efficacy, and behavior regulation. The absence of an

affirmative finding herein should not necessarily be interpreted as undermining existing empirical evidence. Rather, these findings raise questions about the posited impact of these factors, speak about an impact that participants in this study did not experience (or whatever this), or may merely be evidence of something that the participants in this study did not recognize as influencing their development.

Support. Self-authorship literature suggests that support fosters development through the phases (Collay & Cooper, 2008; Egart & Healy, 2004; Jehangir, Williams & Pete, 2011; Pizzolato, 2004; Torres & Hernandez, 2007). Only one participant associated support with her self-authorship development. Rebecca said that her friends and boyfriend "gave her the strength" to engage with her estranged father, to break free of her mother's expectations regarding appearance, and to assert a self-authored religious identity. Other than Rebecca, participants in this study expressed appreciation for support from others, but did not ascribe any developmental value to it. Holly, Anthony, Winston, and Pamela all referenced having felt supported by their friends and family members, but often just before saying things like, "but I knew what I really wanted to do" (Anthony). Furthermore, Laura described feeling supported by her parents, coworkers and supervisors much in the same way, but never leveraged that support to assert her internal voice like Rebecca did. Considering the empirical evidence for a a relationship between support and development (Collay & Cooper, 2008; Egart & Healy, 2004; Jehangir, Williams & Pete, 2011; Pizzolato, 2004; Torres & Hernandez, 2007), these findings may suggest that some individuals may not recognize the developmental value of support, or that support may be a related, but not contributing, factor in self-authorship development as suggested in the literature.

Reflection. Whereas the literature (see Jones & Abes, 2004, Pizzolato, 2006) identifies guided reflection as a developmental practice, participants in this study did not identify reflection

as a factor in their self-authorship development. Jones and Abes (2004) attributed their participants' self-authorship development to reflection more so than the service experience affiliated with their research, and Egart and Healy (2004) argued that reflection was vital in helping students articulate their internal voice and beliefs. Rebecca and Dan both described counseling experiences, but neither framed these as reflective exercises, or suggested that they articulated their internal voice as a result of their experience. None of the participants described guided reflection related to major selection or course scheduling, or reflective activities related to co-curricular experiences. All of the participants demonstrated the ability to reflect on experiences and their development, but none implicated the practice of doing so in describing their development. As opposed to the findings related to support, none of the evidence is discrepant with the literature. Rather, the participants simply did not identify it as a factor. This finding allows that (a) the participants may undervalue the influence of their reflection experiences, or (b) that they did not engage in reflection as a feature of their curricular or co-curricular experiences.

Volitional efficacy and behavior regulation. Pizzolato (2005) found that students with high volitional efficacy were more likely to experience the provocative moment; that volitional efficacy effected their development. In this study, participants demonstrated volitional efficacy and self-regulation not as a contributing factor in, or even a precursor to, their development, but as occuring after, and as a result of, their commitment to their internal voice. This finding suggests that volitional efficacy may not be a factor that facilitates development (Pizzolato, 2005), but rather a proxy for or product of self-authorship. For instance, Kenneth reported that his commitment to his medical school aspirations began to wane as he experienced dissatisfaction with his classes:

> You're not doing it for yourself, and when they're not constantly trying to boost you up, because they aren't there, you sort of lose motivation. And you start seeing a decline and your grades go down. And you start questioning, why am I even here. For me it was my junior year before I realized why I was here, and it was like, "This is where I need to go. Let's get it."

Kenneth's volitional efficacy occured after he identified a career interest informed by his internal values and goals, and after he had begun to construct his own knowledge about his identity and his work in student government. Likewise, Rebecca only articulated her goal of loving herself after she began to recognize the destructive nature of following external formulas and made the decision to engage in counseling. In terms of self-regulation, Annette, Beverly, Pamela, Rebecca, and Kenneth all described their initial college aspirations as being heavily influenced by others, but all currently demonstrated behavioral self-regulation. Volitional efficacy and self-regulation were not described by the participants as factors influencing their self-authorship development, as in Pizzolato's study (2005), but rather as parallel, or perhaps intertwined, internal processes.

Summary

This chapter presented findings related to the research questions regarding students' self-authorship development in college. Participants demonstrated perspectives and processes illustrative of all four phases in the Self-Authorship Development theory, and described their self-authorship development as a singular, continuous process rather than a series of developmental experiences, and framed their understanding of their self-authorship in the contexts of independence and purpose. The findings supported many of the developmental factors identified in the literature, but also raised questions about some of them.

CHAPTER FIVE
Summary, Discussion, and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to explore the ways students make meaning of their self-authorship development in college. The study was guided by three research questions:

1. What degree of self-authorship is reflected in students' discussion of their college experiences?

2. How do students describe their self-authorship development during college?

3. How do students' descriptions of their self-authorship development during college compare to existing findings related to situational, environmental, and personal factors?

To this end, the study utilized a qualitative approach (Merriam, 1998) and was guided by a narrative inquiry design (Chase, 2005). The researcher solicited participation from 2013 bachelor degree graduates from a comprehensive, public institution in the Southeast. The graduates participated in two, in-depth, semi-structured interviews related to their cognitive, interpersonal and intrapersonal processes and development during college. The eleven participants who completed the study represent a variety of academic majors, college experiences, racial identities, and ages.

Interview data were analyzed using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), and a three-step, open, axial, and selective coding technique (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). A complete list of initial, emergent, and selective codes may be found in the Appendix. Member checks added to the trustworthiness of the findings, and researcher reflexivity contributed to the confirmability of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Aliases were used in referring to participants and personally identifying information was limited in order to protect the identities of the participants.

This chapter presents a summary of the findings, a discussion of the findings in relation to the current literature and to their the implications. Conclusions and recommendations for future inquiry are also provided.

Summary of the Findings

This section summarizes the major findings of the study organized according to the research questions:

1. Participants in this study demonstrated perspectives and processes aligned primarily with one of the four phases detailed in in Baxter Magolda's (2001) Self-Authorship Development theory. Collectively, the participants represented all four phases in the theory: one in Following External Formulas, one in The Crossroads, six in Becoming the Authors of their Lives, and three in the Internal Foundations phase.

2. While there was ample evidence to place each participant in a primary phase, some participants also demonstrated perspectives or processes that did not conform to their primary phase, but rather to another stage of development.

3. Participants described their self-authorship development as a singular, continuous process rather than a series of developmental experiences, and framed the process in the contexts of independence and purpose.

4. Participants' descriptions of their self-authorship development provided supporting evidence for many of the developmental factors presented in the existing literature, but raised questions about others. In addition, the findings suggested a possible discrepancy between empirical evidence related to self-authorship development and participants' understanding of it.

Discussion

The findings of the study affirmed that self-authorship does indeed help individuals manage the complexity of adult life, as suggested in the literature. As was found in the study, those participants who engaged their internal voice seemed confident in their decisions and their ability to succeed, even in the face of adversity. The findings also affirmed, and in some cases, provided supporting evidence for previous research findings about the role of dissonance, diverse perspectives, responsibility for knowledge creation, coping strategies, identity traits, and decision catalyzation in self-authorship development. A discussion of these as they relate to the existing literature was provided in the section of Chapter Four that responded to Research Question #3.

In contrast, a number of findings raised questions about positions advanced in the literature and/or were discrepant from the existing literature. The section that follows examines the questions raised by these findings, and considers possible reasons for the differences between the findings and what is suggested in the literature.

Self-authorship development in college. Self-authorship scholars suggest that the increasingly complex demands of modern adult life require that individuals recognize the contextual nature of knowledge, direct their lives based on internal values and priorities, and actively manage their relationships with others (Baxter Magolda, 1998, 2001; Pizzolato, 2003, 2005, 2006). And yet, research suggests that most college students do not graduate with a self-authored perspective (Baxter Magolda, 1992, 2001; Baxter Magolda et al., 1994; King et al., 2009; Torres & Hernandez, 2007). However, the present study found that more than two-thirds of participants demonstrated self-authored perspectives and processes. Further, while Kegan

(1994) and Baxter Magolda (2001) suggested that self-authorship occurs as individuals near their 30's, seven of the self-authored participants in the current study were in their early 20s.

The present study identified higher degrees of self-authorship among recent college graduates than might have been expected, given the predictions in the existing literature. If this finding is also reflected future research, then self-authorship would appear to be a more attainable college outcome than has previously been understood, and one that may be more amenable to efforts to engender its development as part of the college process than previously believed.

What accounts for a finding that differs from the prevailing thinking about when this development occurs? One possibility, of course, is that the group studied was somehow different from the populations used for prior studies or in which speculation about when self-authorship develops has been grounded. There is nothing to suggest this is the case, however given the small number of participants in the study, it is conceivable that they are in some way idiosyncratic rather than in any way more or less representative. Perhaps more likely, the disparity may be related to methodological differences. A number of the existing studies that frame the current understanding of college students' self-authorship rely on researcher- or participant-identified experiences (e.g., Egart & Healy, 2004; King et. al., 2009; Pizzolato, 2006). This approach reflects an assumption that the student's engagement with a specific experience, or set of experiences, allows the researcher to assess the students' degree of self-authorship. These studies also assume that the researcher or the participant has identified experiences in which the participant demonstrates their predominant and/or most current degree of self-authorship, despite often using broadly defined prompts to solicit responses (such as "key developmental experiences" in King et. al., 2009, p. 109).

In contrast, the present study assessed participants' self-authorship by asking them not about a specific experience, but about their approach to decisions, relationships, and understanding their identity. Participants were first asked to describe the ways they make meaning of their world, and then to reference specific relationships, experiences or decisions that illustrated their approach. Similarly, the participants were asked to describe how their approaches changed during college, and to provide examples to illustrate that change. In addition, because this study did not place parameters on the participants related to a specific experience or context that researchers may have determined to be influential *a priori*, participants could, and did, reference more than one example to illustrate their self-authorship and self-authorship development. By focusing on their understanding of their self-authorship, and inviting them to identify illustrative examples, the participants may have been better able to identify examples and experiences that spoke to their self-authorship than was possible in existing studies, thereby allowing the researcher to assess their level of self-authorship more accurately.

Problems with identity. The findings of this study raised questions about the construct of intrapersonal self-authorship in the literature, both in terms of the consistency with which individuals may understand various relationships and whether individuals' intrapersonal development is consistent with the external-to-internal continuum described by the Self-Authorship Development theory. Kegan (1994) suggested that individuals make meaning relatively consistently within each domain. For instance, once an individual learns to trust in an internally defined understanding of their gender identity, they should also demonstrate an internally defined understanding of their identity as a parent or immigrant. However, participants in this study demonstrated a high degree of consistency related to decisions and relationships, but not to their understanding of their various identities, particularly racial and gender identities.

Abes and Jones (2004) found that individuals make meaning of their sexual orientation identity independent from other identities, but not whether this aspect of their identity reflected disparate degrees of self-authorship from their other identities.

No existing studies have identified such disparity, perhaps because of methodological constraints built into such studies. Most studies that focus on intrapersonal self-authorship explore only one aspect of the participant's identity. For instance, Torres and Hernandez (2007) looked at participants' degree of self-authorship in three domains (cognitive, interpersonal, intrapersonal). In the intrapersonal domain, only the participants' approaches to understanding their Latino/a identities were probed. That study, and others (e.g., Abes & Jones, 2004; Pizzolato, 2003, 2004), limited their focus to a single aspect of the individual's identity, which might have obscured disparities in the ways participants made meaning of their various identities. Because the present study focused on the participants' approach to understanding their identity broadly, and prompted participants to speak to aspects of the identity that they did not initially address, findings emerged that suggest the potential for significant variation in the ways individuals understand different aspects of their identity. This finding might suggest that students' degree of self-authorship related to the ways they approach their racial and/or gender identity may not be reflected in the ways they approach other aspects of their identity.

In addition to the questions raised about consistency within the intrapersonal domain, the present study also raises questions about whether intrapersonal development aligns with the Self-Authorship Development theory. The theory posits movement away from externally defined and toward internally defined ways of understanding one's identity (Baxter Magolda, 2001). As such, individuals must either (a) accept an understanding of their identity that is based on social expectations or informed by family roles, as in Torres & Hernandez (2007), (b) construct their

own understanding of their identity based on personal experiences and their internal values and beliefs, as in Collay and Cooper (2008), or (c) demonstrate some combination of the two as development occurs. Some participants in this study, however, revealed meaning making related to their identity that was neither externally nor internally defined. These participants acknowledged racial or gender formulas, but in ways that suggested that they did not accept them. Their identities related to these traits were not self-authored, but neither were they informed by external expectations. Thus, some participants' racial and/or identity awareness in this study, or at least their understanding thereof, cannot be explained by the theory. Further, no existing studies have noted any similar mismatch between the theory and participants' intrapersonal perspectives.

This finding that participants failed to understand aspects of their identity in terms of external or internal perspectives, then, is discrepant with both existing literature and the theory itself. It might be that the discrepancy with the theory is related to the questions raised previously about whether race and gender identity development occurs in isolation from other aspects of the intrapersonal domain. Further research is required to explore this possibility. As it relates to the existing research, this discrepancy may reflect the methodological differences between the present and extant research. Many studies in the existing literature related to participants' intrapersonal self-authorship focus on minority identities (see Abes & Jones, 2004; Torres & Hernandez, 2007), or on the outcomes of specific experiences designed, or anticipated, to influence the intrapersonal domain (see Jehangir, Williams, & Pete, 2011; Jones & Abes, 2004). Torres and Hernandez (2007) found that minority identity traits initiate additional developmental challenges as compared with non-minority identities, including confrontation with external formulas, and Jones and Abes (2004) found that service-learning led students to confront

external formulas related to their race and privilege. Focusing only on minority identities, or only on students who have participated in an experience designed to promote intrapersonal development, essentially ensures that the research will identify aspects of the participants' identities that align with the Self-Authorship Development theory. The present study, in contrast, allowed the researcher to explore multiple aspects of identity, and to discover that some participants' intrapersonal perspectives and processes could not be explained by the Self-Authorship Development theory. While the present study should be considered exploratory, and care should be taken to not generalize its findings, it does raise a number of questions about the intrapersonal domain, and whether or not intrapersonal development is accurately described in the Self-Authorship Development theory.

   Participants' understanding of their development. Participants in this study described their development in the context of their independence and purpose. A number of researchers have implied that these concepts are relevant, but have not specifically identified them as the primary ways that students make meaning of their self-authorship. For instance, Creamer and Laughlin (2005) explored students' career decision-making through a self-authorship framework, and Pizzolato (2005, 2006) studied academic advising experiences, both of which are related to their participants' sense of purpose. In addition, both independence and purpose appeared as constructs in participants' quotes in many studies, including those by Egart and Healy (2004), Wawrzynski and Pizzolato (2006), and Baxter Magolda (2001). Finally, Pizzolato (2006) found that her participants verbalized their internal voice as their heart, their pride, and their independence. In each of these cases, however, the purpose of the study was to understand self-authorship development, not the participants' ways of understanding it, and so findings related to the ways participants made meaning of their self-authorship were not presented. However,

exploring the ways in which students make meaning of their self-authorship development was the purpose of the present study, and so responses were analyzed not just with the mechanics of self-authorship development in mind, but also the ways in which they described that development. In doing so, the present study identified the participants' tendency to provide illustrations of their self-authorship and self-authorship development that related to the concepts of independence and purpose. These findings, which are unique in the literature, are the direct result of designing the study to explore not only self-authorship, but also how the participants describe and make meaning of their self-authorship.

Developmental factors. The findings of this study raise questions related to several factors identified in the literature as promoting self-authorship development. For instance, the findings in the present study suggested that development was not a result of *exposure to*, but rather *engagement with*, diverse perspectives. Participants identified a number of instances that exposed them to diverse perspectives that did not promote development. As discussed in the response to Research Question #3 in Chapter Four, this is a distinctly different way of understanding the role of diverse perspectives in promoting self-authorship.

This finding raised questions related to whether the extant literature fully accounts for the agency of the individual in his or her own development. Many studies provide descriptions of the ways in which service-learning, learning communities, residential community standards, or other interventions leverage diverse perspectives to promote self-authorship development (i.e., Jehangir, Williams, & Pete, 2011; Jones & Abes, 2004; Piper, 1997; Rhoads, 2000). The studies usually explore the impact of the intervention on the participants, and the underlying suggestion that the outcome is the result of the intervention, not the participant's engagement with the intervention. None of the studies cited above explored the intersection of potentially mediating

factors (coping strategies, identity traits, etc.) and intervention outcomes. In contrast, the present

study explored the participants' development broadly, and engaged both individuals who

developed self-authorship in college and those who did not. As a result, the present study was

able to compare similar experiences that yielded different developmental outcomes for difference

participants. It seems likely that the focus on the individual's development, rather than the

outcome of a specific experience, resulted in findings that suggest that *exposure to* diverse

perspectives is insufficient to engender self-authorship development. Rather, it is suggested that

engagement with these perspectives promotes development.

The findings of this study also raised questions about the role that support and reflection

play in self-authorship development. These factors are identified in the literature as contributing

to development (Collay & Cooper, 2008; Egart & Healy, 2004; Jehangir, Williams & Pete, 2011;

Pizzolato, 2004; Torres & Hernandez, 2007). However, with only a single exception, participants

in this study actively diminished the value of support, noting that even without it they would

have likely made the same decisions or held the same viewpoints. These responses usually

followed questions about their relationships with others, or the ways others influenced their

decision-making. This finding is discrepant from the literature, which posits the mediating role

that support plays in allowing individuals to experience dissonance and other factors in

developmental, rather than regressive, ways (see Torres & Hernandez, 2007).

There are two possible reasons for the disparity between what was found in relation to

support in this study and what is presented in the literature. First, it is possible that support does

not directly affect self-authorship as espoused in the literature. Rather, it may be that support is

related but not influential. For instance, individuals who have supportive relationships may be

more likely to engage in the coping strategies associated with self-authorship development.

Second, it is possible that the participants may have benefitted from support and reflection without being aware of its influence. Given the empirical evidence related to these factors in the existing literature, the latter seems more likely to be the case.

Conclusion

- More students may achieve self-authorship during college than the literature suggests.

- Students appear to make meaning of their self-authorship and self-authorship development in the context of their purpose and independence.

- Students' personal characteristics, such as coping strategies or identity traits, may play a significant mediating role in whether or not potentially developmental experiences yield developmental outcomes.

Recommendations for Future Research

This exploratory study provides a variety of findings that warrant further examination.

1. This study should be replicated on a larger scale to support or challenge the findings. In addition, similar studies should be undertaken at a variety of institutions and institutional types to see if there are differences in findings related to institutional type.

2. Much of the existing self-authorship literature assumes that self-authorship is rare among college graduates. However, the present study found that nearly all of the participants demonstrated self-authorship. A large-scale study should be undertaken to determine the extent to which college graduates have achieved self-authorship. Such a study might utilize interview techniques focused on assessing students' predominant or optimal ways of approaching decisions, relationships, and identities as described in this study.

3. The findings of this study raised questions about the construct of intrapersonal self-authorship, both in terms of the consistency with which individuals may understand various relationships, and whether individuals' intrapersonal development is consistent with the external-to-internal continuum described by the Self-Authorship Development theory. A longitudinal interview study exploring students' approach to understanding their identity during college should be undertaken to provide clarification related to the validity of the domain and its relationship to the Self-Authorship Development theory.

4. This study presented findings related to the ways participants understand and describe their self-authorship development. Specifically, participants understand their self-authorship in the contexts of independence and purpose. To that end, advising, mentoring, or other interventions should be empirically tested to see if those that engage students in conversations or activities related to independence and purpose engender self-authorship outcomes more effectively than those that do not. The aforementioned Self-Authorship Survey (Pizzolato, 2007) is recommended as a possible pre- and post-test instrument to use, while Pizzolato's (2005) study of provocative advising experiences might also provide an appropriate framework. In addition, existing data sets, like King, Baxter Magolda, Barber, Brown and Lindsay's (2009) interviews or Pizzolato's (2005) data could be analyzed to determine whether there is a relationship between experiences or decisions related to independence or purpose and self-authorship development.

5. Finally, further research is needed to determine the role that coping mechanisms play in students' self-authorship development. Students' coping strategies appear to dictate

their potential to become self-authored. As such, Pizzolato's (2004) study related to high-risk students' coping strategies should be replicated with a sample that involves a wider range of students in terms of academic and personal characteristics. In addition, an experimental study testing the effect of interventions designed to promote supported coping strategies on college students' self-authorship development should be undertaken with the intent to support or challenge the present findings. The Self-Authorship Survey (Pizzolato, 2007) should be administered as a pre- and post-test measure, and an accompanying follow-up interview should be conducted to assess the participants' understanding of whether, and how, the intervention affected their approach to decisions, relationships, and identity.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
Email Solicitation

Dear 2013 Graduate,

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study related to students' development during college. My name is Benjamin B. Stubbs, Ph.D. student at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. You are being asked because you graduated from college in May of 2013, and may be able to provide valuable information that will benefit college students, as well as their employers and communities.

The study will require two one-on-one interviews, scheduled at a time and place convenient to you. You will not receive any compensation for your participation, but may benefit from reflecting on your college experiences.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Prior to the interviews, you will be provided a detailed statement of informed consent. Your decision whether or not to participate will in no way affect your current or future relationship with your institution. Should you elect to participate, you have the right to withdraw from the research at any time without penalty. You also have the right to refuse to answer any question(s) for any reason, without penalty.

If you are willing to participate, please complete the form embedded below:

Name:

Email Address:

Phone Number:

College Major:

In what co-curricular experiences were you involved during college?

Did you work on- or off-campus during the majority of your college career?

Hometown:

Sex: Male / Female / Transexual

Race:

APPENDIX B
Interview Protocols

Interview #1

In this interview I hope to learn about how you approach decisions and relationships, and how you think about your identity.

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself.

2. Could you tell me about your plans now that you are finished with college?

3. How did you decide on these plans?

4. Would you say that the way you're approaching your plans is similar to the way you approach other challenges?

5. Can you tell me about a recent challenge and how you addressed it?

6. How did you know or decide what to do?

7. What role do friends, family members, or advisors play in your decision-making?

8. Can you tell me about an interaction with a friend that is a good example of your relationship?

9. Can you tell me about your relationship with your family members?

10. What kinds of things do you and your family members talk about?

11. How would you describe your identity?

12. How did you come to think of your identity that way?

13. What aspects of your identity are most important to you?

14. How does your identity or how do you identities affect your day-to-day life?

15. Do you have any other examples of experiences or relationships that are good examples of your approach to decisions, to relationships, or to the way you understand your identity?

Interview #2

This study relates to a theory called self-authorship, which relates to the ways individuals understand their world, manage relationships, and understand their identity. In the last interview we discussed these things, and I have sent you a description of my initial analyses of your responses. In this interview I want to discuss the experiences that helped you develop your approach to decisions, relationships, and your sense of identity.

1. Would you say that you changed during college? In what ways?

2. In the last interview you discussed [specific approaches to knowledge or decision]. Have you utilized this approach since you came to college?

3. How did you make decisions when you first came to college?

4. How did you approach the decision of which college to attend, or whether or not to attend college?

5. How would you compare that approach to your current approach to your current plans?

6. Can you tell me about experience shaped your current approach to decisions?

7. Last time we also talked about relationships. Can you tell me about your approach to similar relationships when you first came to college?

8. (If different) Why do you approach relationships differently now?

9. Did your relationship with your family change during college? In what ways?

10. Why did your relationship change?

11. Can you tell me about the experiences that helped shape your current approach to relationships?

12. How did you understand your identity when you first came to college?

13. How did your understanding of your identity change during college?

14. Can you tell me about experiences that contributed to your current understanding of your identity?

15. Do you have any other examples of experiences or relationships that caused you to change your approach to decisions, to relationships, or to the way you understand your identity?

APPENDIX C
Informed Consent

Informed Consent Form for College Student Self-Authorship Study

You are being asked to participate in a research project conducted by Benjamin B. Stubbs, of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. You are being asked because you graduated from college in May of 2013.

The purpose of this study is to explore student development during college.

You will be asked to discuss the some of your experiences during college, and to describe the ways in which you manage challenges, engage in relationships with others, and your understanding of your personal identity over the course of two interviews. We expect both interviews to take place within a two-week time period, and to last between 45 and 60 minutes. You will also be asked after each interview to review a summary of your responses in order to ensure accuracy.

The potential risks associated with this study are minimal, but may include discomfort related to discussing relationships and identity, and the possibility that others who know you and your experiences may be able to connect you with quotes used in the reporting of the findings. We expect the project to benefit you by assisting you in reflecting on your college experiences. In addition, we expect this research to benefit college students by providing valuable information to college educators related to student development, and society by assisting colleges and universities in their development of students as constructive citizens and capable employees.

You will not receive any compensation for your participation.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will in no way affect your current or future relationship with your institution. You have the right to withdraw from the research at any time without penalty. You also have the right to refuse to answer any question(s) for any reason, without penalty.

Your individual privacy will be maintained in all publications or presentations resulting form this study. Quotes used in publications or presentations related to the study will be attributed to an alias to protect the identity of the participants. In addition, the research site (the University of West Florida) will never be mentioned by name, and its characteristics will be dscribed broadly so that they might apply to a number of other institutions. Personal characteristics or experiences that are so rare as to reveal the identity of the participant (for instance, if the participant was the Student Government President, or the only international student on campus) will not be included in publications or presentations. In order to preserve the confidentiality of your responses, only the researcher will have access to the participants' identities and associated interview responses. This information will be stored in a password-protected electronic file, and physical materials will be kept in secured location.

If you have any questions or would like additional information about this research, please contact me at bstubbs@utk.edu, Building 22 Room 242, 11000 University Parkway, Pensacola, FL 32514, or (850) 830-8677. You can also contact my research advisor, Dr. Norma Mertz, at nmertz@utk.edu, or (865) 974-6140. The University of Tennessee, Knoxville Institutional Review Board and the   Institutional Review Board have both approved this project. You may also contact IRB at the University of Tennessee at (865) 974-1000, and at the   . A signed copy of this consent form will be given to you.

I understand the above information and have had all of my questions about participation on this research project answered. I voluntarily consent to participate in this research.

Signature of Participant _____   Date _____
Printed Name of Participant _____

Signature of Researcher, Benjamin B. Stubbs:
_____   Date _____

APPENDIX D
Codes and Themes

Table 2: Initial codes

Codes	Description
External Formulas	illustrative of the phase
Crossroads	illustrative of the phase
Becoming the Author	illustrative of the phase
External Foundations	illustrative of the phase
Provocative Moment	illustrative of the provocative moment
Identity	related to participants' understanding of their identity
Relationships	related to social or romantic relationships
Decision making	related decision-making processes
Catalyzation	related to the internal or external impetus for decisions
Dissonance	illustrative of cognitive dissonance related
Diverse perspectives	illustrative of exposure to multiple perspectives
Family	related to family roles or relationships
Others	descriptions that feature non-family third parties
Support	illustrative of participants' feelings of support
Expectations	related to the expectations perceived by the participants

Table 3: Emergent codes

Codes	Description
Confident	related to participant's confidence
College impact	related to the perceived influence of college as a whole
Developmental experience	describing an experience associated with a change in S-A
Felt right	described choice as a feeling or instinct
Post-graduation	related to experiences after graduation
Real experience	related to internships or other practical experiences
Contexts	meaning-making influenced by situation characteristics
Personal background	related to an experience from the participant's past
Pre-college	related to experiences prior to college
Never thought about it	new perspective or idea resulting from interview
Personal fit	describing a fit between decision and values, goals, etc.
It's a process	describing developmental experience as ongoing and holistic
No formulas	absence of external formula to follow
Logical next step	illustrating rational, formula-based decision-making
No positive feedback	absence of positive feedback related to decisions or behavior
False development	participant perceived but did not demonstrate development
Low self-esteem	related to a lack of confidence, uncertainty
Adult life	related to challenges of post-graduation adult life
Feedback	related to input from others
Purpose	related to participants' sense of purpose
Classroom experience	describing an in-class experience

Table 4: Categories

Categories	*Notes*
Contexts	describes the contexts within which participants tend to provide the most information relevant to their self-authorship (Associated codes: Purpose, Independence, Confidence)
Development	indicates data related to participants' change over time, or when they spoke to their development directly (Associated codes: Post-graduation, Pre-college, College impact, Developmental experience, It's a process, No positive feedback, False development, Low self esteem, Classroom experience, Provocative moment, Catalyzation, Dissonance, Diverse perspectives, Others, Relationships, Real experiences
Degree of S-A	Felt right, Personal fit, No formulas, Logical next step, Adult life, Family, Relationships, Identity, Internal Foundations, Crossroads, Becoming the Author

APPENDIX E:
Institutional Review Board Approval Documentation

THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE UT

KNOXVILLE

Office of Research & Engagement
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)

1534 White Ave.
Knoxville, TN 37996-1529
865-974-7697
fax 865-974-7400

August 27, 2013

IRB#: 9262 B

Title: Exploring College Students' Self Authorship Development

Benjamin Stubbs
Educational Leadership & Policy Studies
12 Gilmore Drive
Gulf Breeze, FL 32561

Norma Mertz
Educational Leadership & Policy Studies
A315 Bailey Education Complex
Campus - 3400

Your project listed above has been reviewed and granted IRB approval under expedited review.

This approval is good for a period ending one year from the date of this letter. Please make timely submission of renewal or prompt notification of project termination (see item #3 below).

Responsibilities of the investigator during the conduct of this project include the following:

1. To obtain prior approval from the Committee before instituting any changes in the project.

2. If signed consent forms are being obtained from subjects, they must be stored for at least three years following completion of the project.

3. To submit a Form D to report changes in the project or to report termination at 12-month or less intervals.

The Committee wishes you every success in your research endeavor. This office will send you a renewal notice (Form R) on the anniversary of your approval date.

Sincerely,

Brenda Lawson
Brenda Lawson
Compliances

Enclosure

Big Orange. Big Ideas.

MEMORANDUM

September 19, 2013

TO: ████████████████████████
        Research and Sponsored Programs

FROM: ████████████████████████
        Associate Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School

        Chair, IRB for Human Research Participant Protection

SUBJECT: <u>IRB Approval</u>

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Human Research Participants Protection has completed its review of your proposal titled "Exploring College Students' Self Authorship Development" as it relates to the protection of human participants used in research, and has granted **<u>conditional approval</u>** for you to proceed with your study at the ████████████████████). Final approval from the ████ IRB is contingent upon your submission of the following documentation to the IRB:

- Signatory approval of the project from your ████ supervisor/department head.

Additionally, as a research investigator, please be aware of the following:

- You acknowledge and accept your responsibility for protecting the rights and welfare of human research participants and for complying with all parts of 45 CFR Part 46, the ████ IRB Policy and Procedures, and the decisions of the IRB. You may view these documents on the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs web page ██████████████████████ You acknowledge completion of the IRB ethical training requirements for researchers as attested in the IRB application.

- You will ensure that legally effective informed consent is obtained and documented. If written consent is required, the consent form must be signed by the participant or the participant's legally authorized representative. A copy is to be given to the person signing the form and a copy kept for your file.

- You will promptly notify the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs any changes in human participant research activities that have been approved by your home institution's IRB. \

- You will immediately report to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs any injuries or other unanticipated problems involving risks to human participants.

Good luck in your research endeavors. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at ████████████ or ███████████

VITA

Benjamin B. Stubbs was born in Savannah, GA to Wayne and Luelle Stubbs, and has one brother, James. Benjamin grew up in Fernandina Beach, FL, received a B.A. degree in English Literature from the University of West Florida, and a M.S. degree in College Student Personnel from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Benjamin held positions in the campus recreation department at the University of Tennessee, and currently serves in the areas of campus activities, fraternity and sorority life, leadership development, community service, and student involvement at the University of West Florida. His research interests include self-authorship, student leadership development, masculinity, and civic engagement.