Undergraduate Honors Theses

Honors College

2013

Situating the Study of Messages about Non-Heterosexual Sexual Orientation in Everyday Ordinary Interactions: A Call for Paradigm Change

Clinton Lee Brown

Situating the Study of Messages about Non-Heterosexual Sexual Orientation in Everyday
Ordinary Interactions: A Call for Paradigm Change

_____

(TITLE)

BY

Clinton Lee Brown

UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for obtaining

UNDERGRADUATE DEPARTMENTAL HONORS

Department of Communication Studies along with the Honors College at
EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
Charleston, Illinois

2013

I hereby recommend this thesis to be accepted as fulfilling the thesis requirement for
obtaining Undergraduate Departmental Honors

_11-20-13_____   _____
Date   THESIS ADVISOR

_11-20-13_____   _____
Date   HONORS COORDINATOR

_11-25-13_____   _____
Date   DEPARTMENT CHAIR

Situating the Study of Messages about Sexual Orientation in Everyday Ordinary Interaction:

A Call for Paradigm Change

Clinton L. Brown

UNDERGRADUATE HONOR'S THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the departmental honors program with the Honor's College
for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies in the
College of Arts and Humanities at Eastern Illinois University, 2013

Charleston, Illinois

Abstract

This study explores the motivations that may orient an individual to another's sexual orientation. Extant literature has traditionally focused on the ways in which individuals "detect" or recognize another's sexual orientation, but has failed to explore the communicative strategies individuals routinely engage in and the reasons he or she may be interested in another's sexual orientation. As such, this study fits nicely into the interpersonal and intercultural communication literatures that concern themselves with the social construction of identity, which is an ongoing interactional task to which conversationalists orient. The data for this study was collected during the fall of 2012 from the self-report responses from a sample of undergraduate and graduate students (N=574) enrolled in on-campus courses at a mid-sized Midwestern university and from in-depth interviews conducted with five participants. Thus, the goal of this exploratory study is to investigate the ways in which individuals understand behaviors attributed to differing sexual orientations and the reasons why sexual orientation becomes relevant in ordinary everyday social interactions. Furthermore, this study offers insight into how assuming heterosexuality affects the ways in which non-heterosexuals communicate during their everyday interactions.

Acknowledgements

I am very fortunate to have so many people in my life that have supported me and offered their guidance along the way to completing this project. In fact, I feel that just writing someone's name down does little justice to the hours many others have contributed to ensure the completion of this thesis. With that said, I feel that while these few pages are written to acknowledged those who've helped along the way, the relationships I build in the *real world* with those whom have made my academic career possible and successful is a much greater acknowledgement of my appreciation than words on paper may provide. Moreover, regardless of my feelings concerning acknowledgments, I do recognize the importance of saying thank you and recognize those who've had such an important impact on this project.

First, I would like to thank the faculty in the Communication Studies Department at Eastern Illinois University. Although I may not have had the privilege to study under each of you, I have always found that every individual in the department is eager and willing to help whenever asked. I wish to thank Dr. Shirley Bell who served as my advisor and mentor during my undergrad years. I never planned to be in this particular discipline, but taking the basic public speaking course with Dr. Bell, I fell in love with human communication. Dr. Bell helped me to find my home in the Communication Studies department, and for that, I am ever grateful. In addition helping me find my home in an academic discipline, Dr. Bell has always encouraged me to work harder, challenging me to achieve, and is one of my biggest cheerleaders. Dr. Bell, thank you.

My first introduction to academic research began like many students during an undergraduate research methods course. Dr. Richard Jones was my professor in this course, so I'm not sure if I should praise him or warn the world that he may have added "fuel to the fire" in

my quest for knowledge. Regardless, Dr. Jones was invaluable source of guidance and provided an abundance of advice during the completion of this project. He has provided me with resources and guidance on a wide variety of issues related to my work and graciously offered to serve as a reader on this project. For your contribution to this project and for jump-starting my interest in communication research, I am forever in your debt. More importantly, thank you for being you.

Having a close group of friends is also very important when one undertakes a large project. I am very lucky to have a group of people in my life who have always supported me and encouraged me to pursue my goals. Margot, Susan, Jessica, Brooke, and Ricky- you guys are all great. Additionally, while I was completing this project, my very best friend, Carly A. Schmitt was completing her dissertation at the U of I. Although this project in no way compares to a dissertation, I am beyond grateful to the guidance you provided me while I was completing this project, and it's fantastic that we're able to give shout outs to one another in our acknowledgements! Furthermore, thank you for accepting me for me, and for taking my 5am phone calls. Now, that we're both done, I'm ready for another vacation together, but this time I'll be referring to you as Dr. Schmitt.

I've always been very close to my family and for that I'm thankful. Rosie, Ron, Mandie, and Lance, although you make me crazy, I'm glad to have people like you in my life to make me crazy. And finally, to my partner Michael, I'm so very glad we met. I probably don't say it enough, but your support is the most important of all. Thanks for being my biggest cheerleader, my sounding board, and for keeping me grounded when needed. With my big personality, I have the propensity to become little over excited, so it's nice to have someone in my life who provides a counter balance.

Table of Contents

Chapter One

Introduction

In Plato's classic dialogue, *The Symposium*, Aristophanes speaks of heterosexual men and women, gay men, and lesbian women explaining sexual orientation is in-born, important, and a defining feature of the individual (Stein, 1999). Although some literary scholars have questioned Aristophanes' meaning, Plato's text alludes that since antiquity people, including scholars, have concerned themselves with notions about the nature and practice of multiple and differing sexual orientations. Although Aristophanes acknowledged the validity of multiple sexual orientations and insinuated the possibility that sexual orientation may be important in understanding the manner in which individuals experience the social world in which they live, the only sexual orientation that has enjoyed unquestioned acceptance is heterosexuality. As such, heterosexuality has become mundane; while non-heterosexuality is considered somewhat exotic and understood, by many, simply based on the ways in which it differs from the ordinary.

Consequently, individuals with non-heterosexual orientations have been the focus of a great deal of studies concerning the ways in which they differ from heterosexual individuals evident in the multitude of projects that investigated a variety of characteristics, which "mark" or differentiated non-heterosexual (usually male) individuals from the heterosexual population. In these studies, researchers presumed that non-heterosexual individuals are identifiable by non-normative physiological or behavioral characteristics. Accordingly, a great deal of scholarship in both the sexual behavioral and psychology disciplines is guided by these underlying assumptions. In one such study, for example, sexual behavior researchers explore the average difference in penile size among homosexual and heterosexual men (Bogaert & Hershberger, 1999). While this particular case may be an extreme example of research focusing on

physiological distinctions between the two populations in question, over the past decade, other studies have taken similar, yet less egregious approaches (Lippa, 2008). For example, McFadden et al. (2005) concluded that Caucasian heterosexual females and Caucasian homosexual males are likely to have significantly shorter index fingers comparable to the size of their ring fingers, while heterosexual Caucasian males generally possess shorter index fingers and relatively longer ring fingers. Thus, the researchers inadvertently suggest that an individual's sexual orientation is visible via outward physical characteristics. And while the findings of these studies are interesting, they provide little insight into the ways individuals identify the sexual orientation of another and fail to address the reasons individual's may become relevant during the interaction. That is, studies exploring physical characteristics that mark sexual orientation fail to recognize the fundamentally social and interactive nature of identity (including sexual identity).

In addition to studies exploring the physiological distinctions between heterosexuals and non-heterosexuals, a great deal of scholarship has, albeit inadvertently, perpetuated negative stereotypes about the behaviors of non-heterosexuals. Specifically, researchers in psychology have explored sexual orientation with tremendous depth. Moreover, many of these studies have offered remarkable insight into human sexual life, a great deal of this scholarship has been guided by one of the earliest studies that investigated specific behavioral cues of non-heterosexuals using the heterosexual population as a benchmark. For example, in one foundational study that many others have replicated, Berger et al. (1987) explored the specific non-verbal and behavioral cues that participants perceived as indicators or markings of specific sexual orientation. The findings from this seminal research suggested that individuals are able to "accurately detect" a non-heterosexual individual based on deviations from normative behavior.

This "detection and accuracy" model implies that certain cues are inherent to non-heterosexual individuals and serve as the means by which individuals identify the sexual orientation of others. Furthermore, the researcher suggested that greater accuracy might mean that certain individuals are more adept at identifying non-heterosexuals than are others- suggesting an ability of sorts.

This "ability" to detect a gay individual is referred to by many (both lay persons and within the academy) as "Gaydar", and is conceptualized as an ability to recognize and identify verbal and non-verbal behaviors that are associated with a non-heterosexual identity (Shelp, 2003; Nicholas, 2004; Reiger et al., 2010). Studies of gaydar have largely persisted in exploring a variety of non-verbal behaviors used to identify sexuality (Ambady, Hallahan, & Conner, 1999; Sirin, McCreary, & Mahalik, 2004, Johnson et al., 2007; Rule & Ambady, 2009; Rule et al., 2008; Rule, Ambady, Hallett, 2009). Although results from previous studies have suggested that accurate identification of non-heterosexual individuals occurs at above chance levels, the characteristics and behaviors observed by subjects to determine the target's sexual orientation often rely on cultural stereotypes associated with constructs of masculinity and femininity.

Thus, the philosophical and methodological assumptions guiding these investigations significantly compromise their ability to advance our understanding of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) community. Instead, this literature (likely inadvertently) perpetuates heteronormative stereotypes of the LGBTQ community and limits research inquires of that community to simply how they differ from heterosexuals. Moreover, while such methodologies clearly objectify the non-heterosexual population, they fail to explore the ways in which the sexual orientation of another becomes relevant in ordinary interaction. Hence, scholarship using this model of "detection" fails to explore how messages about an individual's sexual orientation are constructed, communicated (or not), and how others then

interpret these messages. This is problematic because such studies isolate particular behaviors from the interactional context within which the fundamentally social nature of human sexual orientation becomes relevant and important (if it does) by individuals in ordinary interactions. Although, sexual behavioral and psychological studies have continued scholarly interest in sexual orientation, their methodological commitments disregard how sexual orientation is socially constructed and relevant in specific social and cultural contexts (Tannenbaum, 2006).

Present Study

To address the lack of scholarship exploring the social nature of human sexuality the present study explores the ways in which sexual orientation becomes important to and relevant in ordinary everyday social interactions. As such, this study differs from previous research in two important respects. First, it explores the interactional resources and constraints that make relevant or occasion interest in a conversational partner's sexual orientation. As such, the study shifts the domain of inquiry about sexual orientation from the "accuracy and detection models" to the verbal and non-verbal practices ordinary people use in everyday interaction to communicate (or not) messages about sexual orientation. Second, by examining both the heterosexual and non-heterosexual populations' orientation to and communication of sexual orientation, findings of the study will contribute to our understandings of differences between these populations and the ways in which marginalized, non-dominant cultural communities adapt and develop particular practices for use with co-cultural members.

Furthermore, this study shifts the focus of the communication and interpretation about an individual's sexual orientation from simplistic "accuracy and detection models" based on behavioral and physical distinction to a much more complex communicative event and addresses the reasons that make relevant sexual identity. Thus, the present research seeks to offer insight

into a marginalized cultural community that must navigate an often-problematic social terrain that often criticizes, demonizes, and publically ridicules their sexual orientation. Additionally, by examining both the heterosexuals and non-heterosexual motivations for determining another's sexual orientation, the findings of this study will contribute to our understandings of when sexual orientation becomes relevant and is important in interactions.

As such, this thesis is organized in the following manner. The present chapter provides an introduction into the domain of inquiry and rationale for this study. The next chapter contains the literature review and is organized according to extant scholarship conducted using similar assumptions and goals. The second chapter concludes with the research question guiding this study. The third chapter discusses the methods utilized in this study. It provides a description of the research design, the instrumentation, and participants. The fourth chapter of this thesis presents the findings of the present research, and explanation of the findings. The fifth and final chapter of this thesis provides a discussion of the implications of this study's findings and outlines the study's limitations. The final chapter concludes with idea for future directions of research concerning the ways in which sexual orientation is communicated and interpreted.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

The concept of *gaydar* is the ability to identify another's sexual orientation based on verbal and nonverbal messages (Nicholas, 2004). Nicholas argued that gay and lesbian cultural identification is difficult because sexual orientations lack outward physical characteristics. Instead, affiliation with the LGBTQ community is communicated through behaviors that are learned from a shared knowledge base and shared communication codes. Many gay and lesbian individuals believe they have the ability to pick each other out from others in a crowd (Shelp, 2003). Shelp tested the ability of self-identifying gay and straight men at judging the sexual orientation of others based on visual cues. Results from the experiment indicated that gay male subjects' accuracy was higher than straight males.

These results fit well with Nicholas' (2004) qualitative study of 35 participants. In this study, participants overwhelming reported that eye gaze serves as one major cue that the participants used to judge sexual orientation. Eye gaze may serve as a mechanism to activate gaydar, and the participants believed it communicates awareness of cultural membership. This study, along with Shelp's substantiated findings from previous scholarship that suggested non-heterosexual individuals are often better able to judge the sexual orientation of others at or above chance (Berger et al., 1987; Carroll & Gilroy, 2002; Linville, 1998). Furthermore, previous studies have found that accurate judgments of sexual orientations are possible based only on minimal exposure of nonverbal and verbal communication (Ambady, Conner, & Hallahan, 1999; Rule et al., 2008). Moreover, these studies remove all contextual cues and seek to isolate specific behaviors.

Opponents of gaydar, however, claim that it is near impossible to distinguish between

heterosexual and homosexual individuals (Bennett, 2006, p. 409). Woolery (2007) notes, "any psychologist specializing in gender-related issues would tell you sexual orientation is something you cannot know about a person simply by looking at them" (p. 10).

Not surprisingly then, members of the gay community are often divided regarding the existence of gaydar or one's ability to determine another's sexual orientation without explicit knowledge (Woolery, 2007). To some, this may be obvious, and suggests that if individuals do make accurate judgments, those judgments may be made on cultural stereotypes. Furthermore, although biological differences between homosexuals and heterosexuals exist (Bogaert & Hershberger, 1999; Lippa, 2005, 2008; McFadden et al., 2005; Rendall, Vasey, & McKenzie, 2008), the ability to perceive an individual's sexual orientation is not biologically inherent. That is, individuals are not born with an ability to identify sexual orientation.

As mentioned in chapter one, and alluded to above, a great deal of extant literature has concluded that individuals are able to judge the sexual orientation of another at above chance levels. To explore this further, this chapter is devoted to an overview of previous scholarship that has explored the ways in which sexual orientation is communicated. As such, the chapter is organized by those studies sharing similar assumptions and topics. The first section of this chapter comprises previous scholarship exploring physiological and behavioral characteristics that has been founded to differentiate heterosexuals and non-heterosexuals. The fourth section of this chapter reviews literatures concerning the social interactive nature of human sexuality. This section synthesizes literatures that explore the ways in which sexual orientation is often assumed and the ways in which it becomes relevant during ordinary interactions. The chapter concludes with the research question that guiding the present study.

Physiological and Psychological Markings of Sexual Orientation

Inquiries concerning the characteristics that differentiate non-heterosexuals from heterosexuals are well researched in academia in multiple disciplines. Many scholars ground theoretical approaches regarding sexual orientation from a biological perspective, but acknowledge the lack of a definitive conclusion regarding the origins of sexual orientation. Studies exploring these physiological differences have ranged from investigations on gay and straight men's comparative penile sizes, acoustic speech patterns, pupil dilations in response to sex-specific stimuli, cell cluster size in the brain's hypothalamus, and analysis of tabulated Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator Scores (Bogaert & Hershberger, 1999; France, 2007; Linville, 1998; Nieto, 1996; Shelp, 2002, 2003).

Within the past decade, other studies have taken similar approaches, but grounded themselves in genetics, prenatal development, and a variety of environmental factors (Lippa, 2008). As discussed in chapter one, McFadden et al. (2005) found that Caucasian heterosexual females and Caucasian homosexual men tend to have shorter index fingers comparative to the size of their ring fingers, while Caucasian heterosexual males do not. The researchers concluded that such variations are due to a lack of testosterone introduction to the fetus during prenatal development, yet they argue that comparative finger size may mark sexual orientation. While McFadden et al., were the only researchers, to date, having examined finger size, other researchers grounded in genetics and prenatal development, have found that that waist-to-hip ratio and waist-to-shoulder ratio is often indicators of sexual orientation (Johnson, et al., 2007; Johnson & Tassinary, 2007, 2005; Pollick, Kay, Heim, & Stringer, 2005). These scholars found that women typically have an hourglass shape and smaller waist-to-hip ration, while men, are allegedly more tubular in morphology, having a larger waist-to-hop ratio.

As such, this line of scholarship suggests that an individual's morphology, is found to be an important indicator of sexual orientation because when an individual's body is in motion, those bodies that move in accordance to their attributed sex and gender, are likely to be perceived as straight. When there is a perceived conflict between the two, the individual is likely gay (Johnson et al., 2007; Johnson & Tassinary 2007). Along with morphology, posture has been examined as a possible indicator of sexual orientation (Knöfler and Imhof, 2007). In this study, the researchers concluded that heterosexual males and females have postures attributed to their gender and sexual orientation, while gay men and lesbians typically display neutral postures. The researchers did note that gay men do not imitate feminine posture types. However, the literature suggests that a neutral posture indicates non-heterosexuality.

While body shape has been found to be on factor in determining another's sexual orientation, much more controversial inquiries has focused heavily on facial features in the context of sexual orientation identification. Ambady et al., (1999) conducted research where participants were asked to judge the sexual orientation of the target viewing gray scale photos. These scholars found that participants are able to judge the sexual orientation of another based on facial characteristics at above chance levels. Further this line of research, Rule et al., (2008) and found that hairstyles and hair growth patterns alone were significantly more accurate ways to judge the sexual orientation of another than any other part of the face. Both the Ambady et al., (1999) and Rule et al., (2008) studies were substantiated and replicated in Rieger et al., (2010) research which participants were correctly able to judge the sexual orientation of multiple targets by utilizing static pictures and accuracy levels decreased when hair was removed.

The above studies discussed above have offered insight into biological and physiological distinctions between heterosexuals and non-heterosexuals. Although researchers have found a

number of physical characteristics that distinguish heterosexuals and non-heterosexuals, many of these studies base their findings on the way in which one's physical characteristics are similar or dissimilar to others sharing a specific sex, gender, and sexual orientation. Regardless, these studies have influenced a number of other studies in behavioral sciences that link concepts associated with given behaviors to sexual orientation.

As mentioned above, research suggests that different physical characteristics exist between heterosexual and non-heterosexuals. In addition, researchers have also identified a number of behavioral characteristics that may mark sexual orientation. Knöfler and Imhof (2007) identified distinctive patterns of nonverbal behavior that are altered in dyadic interactions when a homosexual was one member of the dyad. These nonverbal behaviors have been further deconstructed and examined using a variety of methodological approaches. For example, in one such study Carroll and Gilroy (2002) and Nicholas (2001) surveyed gay communities to determine the specific nonverbal behaviors interpreted in order to identify a non-heterosexual. Other researchers have taken more quantitative approaches, in which targets observe videotaped behavior with sound (Berger et al., 1987) videotaped behavior without sound (Rieger et al., 2010; Shelp, 2002), and in truncated segments controlling availability of different nonverbal cues (Rule & Ambady, 2008; Rule et al., 2008). Still others have incorporated judgments from observed voice recordings (Linville, 1998; Rieger et al., 2010; Smyth, Jacobs, & Rogers, 2003), and even simple written passages detailing the target and their occupational role (Wong, McCreary, Carpenter, & Korchynshy, 1999).

The research discussed thus far, has consistently relied on an individual's ability to form impressions. Impression formation can be considered the process in which a large amount of unorganized information is combined in a cognitive representation in the effort to reach a

consistent meaning (Huber, 1989). Through this synthesis, information is simplified and made more useful by creating a rapid feeling for unknown people (Carlston & Skowronski, 2005; Gilbert & Malone, 1995; Huber, 1989; Kahneman, 2003; Newman & Uleman, 1989). Initial impressions, however, do not necessarily rely on an exchange of information between parties. They need not be communicative in nature. That is, initial impressions are often categorical in nature and based heavily on noticeable behaviors and characteristics, which are processed using an individual's existing schematic frameworks (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990).

Sexual Orientation in Social Interaction

Cameron and Kulick (2003) suggested that members of dominant groups are not subject to the constant identity scrutiny that marginalized groups endure. Any communicative differences from heterosexual norms imply sexuality differences within the same cultural group. However, as Schegloff (1997) and others argued that although someone can be categorized to a particular identity group that categorization is not automatically relevant. Hence, and individual's particular identity group isn't also relevant in a given interaction suggesting that even though individuals may be able to categorize another based on sexual orientation, it isn't always important in a given interaction.

Kitzinger (2005) supports Schegloff's position in her research focusing on the ways in which heterosexuality is routinely deployed as taken-for-granted in ordinary interactions. Using foundational data sets of conversation analysis the researcher examined how everyday talk interaction produces and reproduces heterosexual norms. In (The conversation analysis examined how individuals produce themselves as heterosexual and co-construct a heteronormative world. The research suggested that heterosexuals communicate their heterosexuality, but are not actively seeking to do so. The data reveals that heterosexual

individuals do not speak as heterosexuals, they speak as husbands, wives, friends, and co-workers, and yet, their conversations reproduce, without orientation to doing so, heterosexuality. Kitzinger suggests that in these conversations, for the heterosexual, the conversation is ordinary and unremarkable, but for non-heterosexual individuals, such conversations and assumptions of heterosexuality, the conversational partner's sexual orientation is overtly apparent.

Martin's (2009) research fits nicely with Kitziger's (2005) work as Martin finds how children are often socialized to be heterosexual through their mother's talk and interaction. Martin suggests that mother's construct heteronormative worlds for their children in early childhood and contributes to the ways in which adults view and understand heterosexuality as normal and non-heterosexuality as a deviation from that norm. A mother's ascription of heterosexuality in their discussions of love and marriage in very mundane ways further demonstrates how engrained heteronormativity is the fabric of everyday life.

While the heteronormative world is communicated in very ordinary ways, non-heterosexuality can present interactional challenges. Land and Kitzinger (2005) find that conversational partners assume heterosexuality. Consequently, lesbians often encounter interactional difficulties when managing their identities with strangers. By exploring the ways in which sexual orientation is communicated (or not) in live interactions, the researchers found that even when an individual's primary goal is the achievement very pragmatic ends, such as plumbing issues, a doctor's appointment, or speaking with an insurance agent, their sexual orientation is made relevant because of the heterosexist presumption. As such, this research reveals that individuals don't' necessarily orient to another's sexual orientation because they can, but that sexual orientation is made relevant to a specific interaction.

Research Question

With the above literatures offer insight into the ways in which heterosexuality and non-heterosexuality is marked and may be identified by others. With this in mind, it is applicable to ask the following research question:

RQ1: What occasions interest in another person's sexual orientation (i.e., what makes the

sexual orientation of another relevant) in ordinary interaction?

Chapter 3

Methodology

The two preceding chapters of this thesis suggested that little is known about the ways in which sexual orientation becomes relevant in everyday ordinary interactions. Moreover, as noted in the former chapters a great deal of existing scholarship has focused on the identification and detection of gay and lesbian individuals suggesting that their behavior is deviant and consequently detectable. As such, the paucity of research concerning the relevance of sexual orientation in interaction and how messages about sexual orientation are constructed and interpreted by individuals has disadvantaged our collective understanding of people with differing sexual orientations. The design of the current study addresses the deficiencies in previous research by situating the inquiry in the ordinary interactions of individuals engaging in everyday life.

This chapter is then devoted to providing a detailed explanation of the methods utilized to address the research question. This study employed both a self-report questionnaire and in-depth interviews. Additionally, as this is an exploratory study, it is well suited for a mixed-methods approach, as it requires a more comprehensive analysis and greater description of the phenomenon of interest. As such, this chapter is divided into two sections. The first section consists of a description of the survey instrument, data collection procedures, the instrumentation's measurements, and a description of the survey participants. The first section concludes with a description of the coding and dataset input procedures and a discussion of the data analysis techniques. The second section of this chapter describes the interview method. This section first provides an overview of the interview procedures and a description of the interview participants.

Survey

To date, there exists no instrument that addresses this type of inquiry or would allow for modification without substantial threats to its reliability and validity. Therefore, as the present study's design is exploratory, the survey was constructed using a priori method. The instrument consisted of a total of 35 questions of which 6 seek demographic information (see Appendix A.). The remaining questions included both open-ended and close-ended questions and utilized a 5-point Likert-type index for the close-ended questions. It took approximately 20 minutes to complete. The overall design of the questionnaire is consistent with previous studies in the social sciences where the researcher is attempting to explore the attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, and practices of differing cultural communities (Creswell, 2003).

Survey procedures.

After the questionnaire's initial construction, a pilot study was conducted to ensure the intelligibility of the survey. Based on the findings from the pilot study, no changes were made to the original instrument. A convenience sampling method was utilized to recruit participants. Upon receiving the IRB's approval to conduct the research, recruitment activities commenced. Recruitment consisted of in-classroom announcements at the beginning or end of class time by the researcher only after receiving the instructor's approval. Participants were recruited from multiple undergraduate and graduate courses at a medium-sized Midwestern public university during the 2012 Fall semester. Participation in the study was strictly voluntary. In exchange for their participation, students received extra-course credit at the class instructor's discretion. After agreeing to participate, individuals were provided with informed consent documentation, which detailed all pertinent information. Once the consent forms were signed, participants were provided with a physical copy of the survey. Completed surveys were sealed in visually secure

envelopes and stored in a locked filing cabinet in a secure location. Only the primary researcher

and faculty advisor had access to the completed surveys.

Survey measurement.

As suggested earlier, to date, no existing measurements exist that were adaptable to the

research question. Thus, the questions in the survey (from this point referred to as survey items)

attempted to explore the participant's attitudes and beliefs exploring why sexual orientation may

become relevant in an interaction. In order to address the research question, survey items were

selected and grouped together using a priori method. This permits the researcher to extract the

data needed from the data set in order to create the dependent variables needed to address the

research question.

In order to address the research question this study explores, Survey Item 22 was

employed as it explores the reasons the participants report that would cause them to be interested

in another's sexual orientation. The survey item permitted the participants to choose any or all

reasons or to provide their own as to why they would become interested in another's sexual

orientation. Survey Item 22 is described below.

22) The reasons why I would become interested in another's sexual orientations are
(check all that apply or fill in your own response):
o To identify a potential romantic partner.
o To identify a potential sexual partner.
o To identify a potential friend.
o To identify someone who shares my values/world view.
o Just because I want to know.
o Other (please specify):_____
o Other (please specify):_____

As stated, this survey item explored the reason(s) why the sexual orientation of another

may be relevant to the participant. The question's design permitted multiple responses allowing

for two distinct measurements of the data. First, the data is analyzed based on the number of

responses each participant provided. The second measure examined the frequency of responses

for each item and compared those frequencies to each sexual orientation cohort.

Survey participants.

A total of 574 individuals agreed to participate in the survey. The survey sample included

226 (39.4%) males and 348 (60.6%) females. The male to female ratio is consistent with the

university's 2012 fall enrollment statistics. The participants' ages ranged from 18 to 53 years old

($M = 20.66$, $SD = 2.949$).

Sexual orientation was self-reported by the participants using a modified Kinsey Sexual

Orientation index (1 = Exclusively Heterosexual, 2 = Mostly Heterosexual, 3 = Bisexual, 4 =

Mostly Homosexual, and 5 = Exclusively Homosexual) (Rendall, 1997). Participants whose

sexual orientation was not represented on the index were allowed an open-ended response in

which they were able to self-describe their own sexual orientation. The final sample was then

comprised of the participants identifying as: 44 (7.67%) as Exclusively Homosexual, 10 (1.7%)

as Mostly Homosexual, 17 (2.9%) Bisexual, 31 (5.4%) Mostly Heterosexual, 468 (81.5%)

Exclusively Heterosexual, and 4 (0.7%) participants indicated their sexual orientations did not fit

the designated options.

Survey coding.

Survey responses were entered into SPSS. Since the sexual-orientation index was a

continuous variable, coding proceeded so that the "Exclusively Heterosexual" cohort was

renamed "Heterosexual" and retained original responses and a new category was created called

"Non-Heterosexual" which included all sexual orientations other than "Exclusively

Heterosexual. The numerical values assigned for the Likert-type responses were consistent for all

questions. No reverse coding procedures were used. The responses concerning the reasons why

conversationalists orient to the sexual orientation of another were collapsed into a one multiple-response variable to examine frequencies. The dataset was finally imported into SPSS for analysis.

Survey data analysis.

Statistical analyses addressing the research question commenced once all data entry was complete. The dataset was visually inspected for entry accuracy and response integrity. Additionally, the dataset was inspected to assess if the assumption of normality based on a visual assessment of each item for each cohorts' respective histograms and Normal Q-Q Plots. The assumption of normality was satisfied for each item and cohort.

The dataset was split by sexual orientation and descriptive frequencies were computed for each variable. A chi-square test of independence was conducted on Survey Item 22 to determine if participant responses were independent or related to their self-identified sexual orientation. Additionally, an independent samples $t$test was conducted on the summarized responses for survey item 22.

In-Depth Interviews

To further explore the ways in which sexual orientation becomes relevant in ordinary interaction, five one-time semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted. Each interview lasted between 50 to 120 minutes. An interview protocol (see Appendix C.) guided the researcher's questions. This interview method permits additional questions to be addressed and/or questions to be altered based on the conversation exigencies. As such, the following subsections outline the participants, interview procedures, and the way in which the interview data was analyzed.

Interview procedure.

Although the interview method chosen for this study is an in-depth interview that is guided by an interview protocol, the researcher interviewed the participants in a conversation like-manner. This less structured and more relaxed approach was designed to put the participants at ease with the interview and provided a more natural form of talk. Additionally, this structure allowed for additional topics to be raised and additional questions asked as they became relevant. All interview times and locations were prearranged and were chosen at the convenience of the participants. With the consent of the participant, the interviews were audio-recorded. The recordings were subsequently transcribed verbatim (see Appendices C-G). Both the researcher and faculty advisor checked the accuracy of all transcripts.

Interview participants.

Participants were recruited using a convenience sample through an email sent out to acquaintances and colleagues of the researcher. The recruitment email explained the project and the scope of the interview. Five individuals agreed to participate in the interviews. The interview participants consisted of two (40%) females and three (60%) males. The participants' ages ranged from 23 years to 34 years old ($M = 25$, $SD = 5.0497$). Four interview participants identified as non-heterosexual and one identified as heterosexual. Additionally, the interview participants were not drawn from one specific pool of available people (i.e. they were not drawn from one particular group of people); instead they consisted of individuals from a variety of backgrounds, professions, and education levels.

Conclusion

This chapter provided a detailed explanation of the methodology and data analysis procedures, as well as descriptions for the participants from both the survey sample and

interview sample in the present study. The following chapter, reports the findings of this study.

Conclusions complete the thesis.

Chapter IV

Findings

This chapter contains the findings the present study and is organized according to two measures used to address the research question. The first section of this chapter discusses the findings from the first measurement of urvey item 22. The section presents the findings from the analysis that explored the overall differences between the two sexual orientation cohorts and their interest in another's sexual orientation. The second section of this chapter presents the findings from the second measurement and analysis of each item in survey item 22. This section presents a more detailed analysis of each survey item and integrates relevant interview data. A conclusion completes the chapter.

General Findings

Exploring the reasons why an individual becomes interested in another's sexual orientation was the primary goal of this study. As such, this research question explored why an individual's sexual orientation becomes relevant at certain times and at other times it does not. Thus, instead of focusing on the "accuracy and detection" models previously discussed, the findings in this section are situated in the lives of individuals. To accomplish this, aggregate responses from Survey Item 22 was employed.

First, to determine if there is a difference between the two sexual orientation cohorts concerning the overall number of reasons an individual would become interested in another's sexual orientation an independent samples t test was conducted on the total number of reasons participants reported. There were no outliers in the data, as assessed by inspection of a boxplot. Each option participants were able to indicate for orienting to another's sexual orientation scores for each cohort were normally distributed, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilks test (p > .05), and there

was homogeneity of variances for reasons for orienting to another's sexual orientation scores for both heterosexual and non-heterosexuals as assessed by Levene's Test for Equality of Variances (p=.275). Individuals in the non-heterosexual orientation cohort indicated many more reasons for orienting to another's sexual orientation as their mean score was 3.51 (SD = 1.67), than individuals in the heterosexual orientation cohort as their mean score was 2.63 (SD = 1.58): $t(572) = -5.011$, $p = .0005$. Chart 4.1.0 depicts the overall scores for the participants' reasons for orienting to another's sexual orientation indicated in the survey.

Chart 4.1.0: *Total Response Mean by Sexual Orientation Cohort for Survey Item 22*

Reasons for Orienting to Another's Sexual Orientation
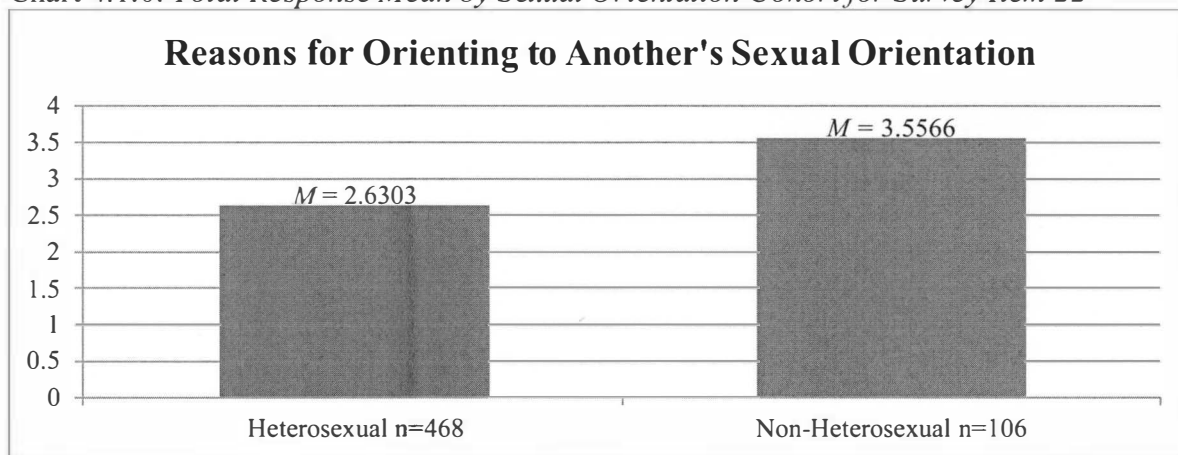
From these results, it is clear that overall, non-heterosexuals reported many more reasons for orienting to another's sexual orientation than did their heterosexual counterparts. As such, exploring the large difference between the mean scores warrants further examination of each reason between the two sexual orientation cohorts.

Individual Findings for Each Survey Item

This section presents the findings of each item in Survey Item 22. Each section is provides detailed descriptions the of analyses performed, findings, explains the findings, and then integrates relevant interview data illustrating the way in which messages about sexual orientation is embedded in the most ordinary interactions.

Identify a Potential Romantic or Sexual Partner

It is clear that the first two options, Survey Item 22a and Survey Item 22b, (to identify a potential romantic and to identify a potential sexual partner) respectively concern similar motivations and so, these two options are analyzed together in this section.

The first option a participant was able to indicate as a reason for orienting to another's sexual orientation was Survey Item 22a: Identify a Romantic Partner. The responses for this survey item were analyzed by conducting a chi-square test for independence between the sexual orientation cohort and the participant's interest in another's sexual orientation to identify a potential romantic partner. The results of this test explored the possibility of the survey response occurring by chance. All expected cell frequencies were greater than five. Table 4.2.1 displays the 2x2 contingency table computed from the response set.

Table 4.2.1: *Frequency of Responses for Survey Item 22a: To Identify a Potential Romantic Partner*
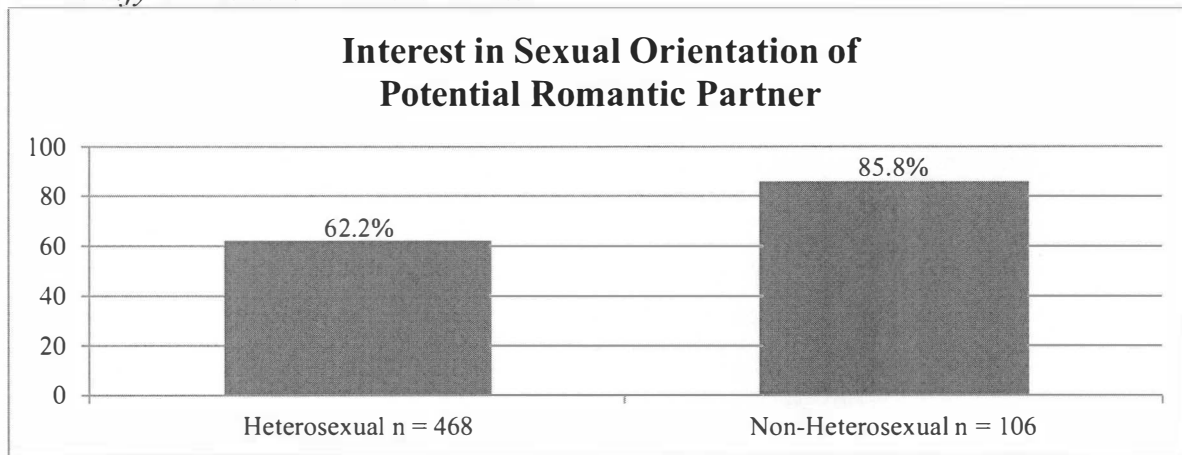
	Sexual Orientation Cohort	
Item 22a: To Identify Potential Romantic Partner	Heterosexual	Non-Heterosexual
Observed	291	91
Expected	311.5	70.5

There is a statistically significant association between sexual orientation and interest in another's sexual orientation to identify a potential romantic partner, $\chi^2(1) = 21.751, p < .0001$. From this, it is possible to conclude that the response for each sexual orientation cohorts did not occur by chance, and indicate a relationship between an individual's sexual orientation and their response to this particular question.

Chart 4.2.2, depicts the percentage of responses for each sexual orientation cohort. The results indicated that 62.2% (291) of participants in the heterosexual orientation cohort selected this option while 85.8% (91) of participants in the non-heterosexual orientation cohort selected

this reason. The chart clearly illustrates the significant difference in response frequencies of the two orientation sexual orientation cohorts. The majority of participants in each cohort indicated that they would be interested in another's sexual orientation to identify a potential romantic partner. However, the responses indicate that non-heterosexuals responded with a much greater frequency than did heterosexuals.

Chart 4.2.2: *Percentage of Responses by Sexual Orientation Cohort for Survey Item 22a: To Identify a Potential Romantic Partner*

As the chi-square test indicated, the response frequencies did not occur by chance. That is, there is a relationship between an individual's sexual orientation and their response to this survey item. However, the relationship is not necessarily predicative, nor does this test seek to determine the strength of the relationship. It does however, a relationship between an individual's sexual orientation and their response to this survey item. Moreover, although the majority of both sexual orientation cohorts did indicate the romantic partner choice, individuals in the non-heterosexual orientation cohort did so with greater frequency.

The second option that participants could select as a reason for interest in another's sexual orientation was to identify a potential sexual partner (Survey Item 22b). A chi-square test for independence was conducted between the sexual orientation cohort and the interest in another's sexual orientation to identify a potential sexual partner. Table 4.2.3 presents the

findings from the chi-square test. All expected cell frequencies were greater than five. There is a

statistically significant association between sexual orientation and interest in another's sexual

orientation to identify a potential sexual partner, $\chi^2(1) = 10.032$, $p = .002$. As such, the results

indicate a relationship between the two variables in question: sexual orientation and identifying a

potential romantic partner..

Table 4.2.3: *Frequency of Responses for Survey Item 22b:To Identify Potential Sexual Partner*

|	Sexual Orientation Cohort	
Item 22b: To Identify Potential Sexual Partner	Heterosexual	Non-Heterosexual
Observed	186	60
Expected	220.6	45.6

From this we can determine that the response frequencies of each sexual orientation cohort did

not occur by chance, but rather are because of a relationship between an individual's sexual

orientation and their interest in another's sexual orientation to identify a potential sexual partner.

However, this is not to say, that one sexual orientation cohort is more interested than the other in

identifying a potential sexual partner. That is, the relationship between non-heterosexuality and

the response frequencies does not indicate that non-heterosexuals are in any way more interested

in sex or a sexual partner than are their heterosexual counterparts.

Chart 4.2.4 depicts the percentage of responses for each sexual orientation cohort for this

survey item. The results indicated that 39.7% (186) of the heterosexual participants selected this

particular option while 56.6% (60) of the non-heterosexual participants chose this particular

reason.

As the chi-square test of independence indicated, there is a relationship between sexual

orientation and response frequencies. Chart 4.2.4, illustrates, the findings indicated that the

majority of non-heterosexual participants would become interested in another's sexual

orientation to identify a potential sexual partner while the majority of heterosexuals did not

indicate that their interest in another's sexual orientation would occasion their interest in

another's sexual orientation.

Chart 4.2.4: *Percentage of Responses by Sexual Orientation Cohort for Survey Item 22b: To Identify a Potential Sexual Partner*

Interest in Sexual Orientation of Potential Sexual Partner

Heterosexual n = 468: 39.7%
Non-Heterosexual n = 106: 56.6%
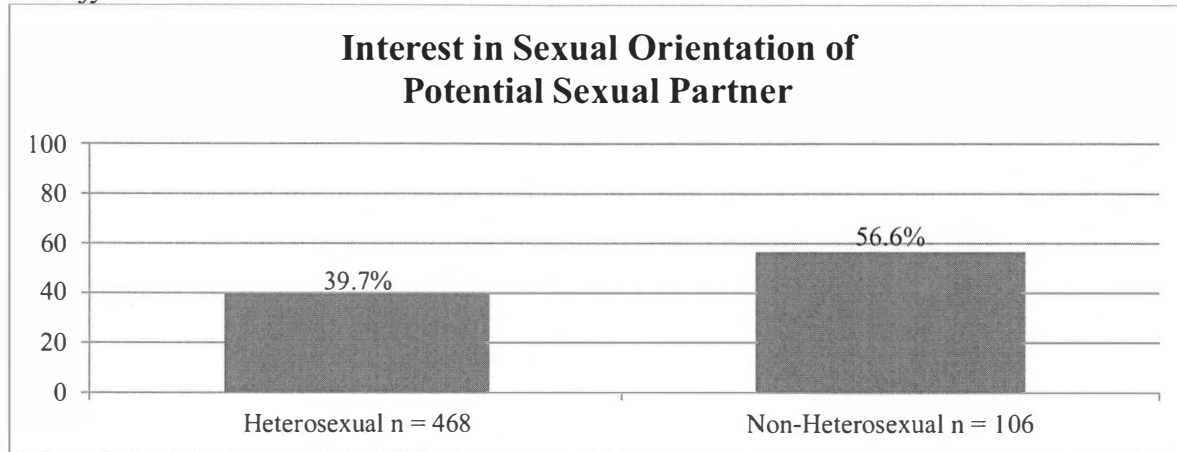
The difference between the response frequencies of each cohort across the two survey

items previously analyzed is interesting. On one hand, it seems that when seeking or meeting a

potential romantic or sexual partner the person of interest's sexual orientation would be relevant

(i.e., it is likely not advantageous to be romantically or sexually interested in individual with a

different sexual orientation). It is clear that non-heterosexual individuals reported that they

would become interested in another's sexual orientation to identify a potential romantic or sexual

partner with greater frequency than did participants in the heterosexual orientation cohort, and

from the chi-square test of independence we can conclude, that there is a relationship between an

individual's sexual orientation and their response patterns.

Theory and research on the significant influence of heteronormativity appears to provide

a useful analytical lens to explain these findings. Belonging to the dominant heterosexual

community affords heterosexuals a certain privilege in the social world. This particular area of

research further suggests that heteronormativity influences the everyday social lives of all

individuals and consequently results in heterosexuality being considered "normal" and (for the

most part) assumed (Martin & Kazyak, 2009). Consequently, heterosexuals' sexual orientation is less salient to them than to those with non-heterosexual sexual orientations. In other words, the privileged status of heterosexuality can mean that heterosexual individuals simply assume that the persons to whom they are romantically or sexually attracted are, like themselves, "normal" and, so heterosexual. However, those who are not heterosexual experience sexual orientation in a much different way and, aware of their own "non-normative" sexual orientation are also much more cognizant of the potential for other's non-normative sexual orientations.

Martin (2009) furthers this notion in a study exploring the ways in which mothers normalize heterosexuality with their children. The research suggests that although a great number of other sources (e.g. media, peers, and other adults) contributed to the socialization of heteronormativity, certainly primary caregivers play a very important role. The mothers Martin studied, from very early on, assumed that their children will grow up to be heterosexual and socialized their children to see romance, love, weddings, and marriage as heterosexual (p. 201). Of the 631 mothers that Martin interviewed, 62% of mothers made no statements about homosexuality or gay and lesbian individuals to their children. Thus, the mother reinforces the idea that heterosexuality is normal and, in effect, non-heterosexuality doesn't exist in the young child's social world. As noted above, children are socialized in a variety of ways and are likely to be exposed to a gay or lesbian individual at some point. However, the non-existence of non-heterosexuality in the child's social world supports the notion of heterosexuality being the "normal" and expected sexual orientation. As such, the socialization process of children often perpetuates dominant cultural values of heterosexuality, contributes to the taken-for-granted status of heterosexuality, and inadvertently socializes children to identify non-heterosexual orientations as deviant and abnormal. Furthermore, this socialization process of children affects

children who do, in fact, grow up to be heterosexual by making their particular sexual orientation expected. Hence, when these heterosexual children mature and are seeking to identify a potential romantic or sexual partner, sexual orientation is given less consideration because the assumption is that a potential romantic partner or sexual partner will be like them, which is heterosexual.

The hegemonic force of a dominant culture can, then, explain the lower reported responses of the heterosexual cohort since they generally assume heterosexuality on the part of a potential romantic or sexual partner. It also, illuminates the results of the non-heterosexual cohort. For non-heterosexual children raised in a heteronormative society their sexual orientation will necessarily be more salient to them because it differs from the "norm". In Martin's (2009) research of the 631 mothers interviewed, only 6% were preparing for the possibility that their child may not be heterosexual. The parenting strategies of these mothers included teaching their children to be more "open-minded" about sexuality and to not convey expectations of either heterosexuality or non-heterosexuality. Although these mothers actively communicated that there is no "right" or "wrong" sexual orientation, a much more common sentiment among Martin's sample was for these mothers to simply "hope for the best" (p. 203) (i.e., the "best" being to raise a heterosexual child).

Furthermore, these mothers tended to only passively introduce ideas and information into the child's social world about non-heterosexualilty. This passive strategy included addressing particular issues concerning sexual orientation only when a situation arose and, doing so in a manner that included explanations such as differing lifestyles or different types of love. The implication for the child remains, however, that while non-heterosexual individuals do exist, they are "different" and "unusual" from the heterosexual norm. Consequently, mothers "marked" non-heterosexuality as being deviant. Thus, for non-heterosexual children, the childhood

socialization process and living in a heteronormative world makes their sexual orientation and the sexual orientation of others more salient when seeking to identify a potential romantic or sexual partner.

As Cameron and Kulick (2003) argue:

> One of the privileges enjoyed by dominant groups in general is that their identities and modes of [behaviors] are rarely scrutinized in the same way as the identities and [behaviors] of subordinate groups. Subordinated groups are 'marked': thus we talk about 'women writers' but not 'men writers', 'Black politicians' but not 'white politicians', 'gay TV personalities' but not 'straight TV personalities'. Dominant groups, on the other hand, are 'unmarked': to be white/male/straight is the default standard for being human. (p. 153 – 154)

As such, the difference between the two sexual orientation cohorts interest in another's sexual orientation to identify a potential romantic or sexual partner makes perfect sense. As such, it is reasonable to expect individuals who are non-heterosexual (or [non]"default") to be more interested in another's sexual orientation when identifying a potential romantic or sexual partner than are heterosexuals.

The assumption of heterosexuality concerning a potential romantic or sexual partner was also very evident in the interview data. Many of the interview participants discussed how they are often assumed to be heterosexual and how this assumption is communicated in the most ordinary interactions. For the participants, there seemed to be a balance between understanding the social world within which they live and their awareness of their own sexual orientation. The participants struggled with others' assumption that they were heterosexual and how that assumption impacted both their personal and professional lives. The subsequent transcribed

segment comes from the interview with the 23-year-old female participant who self-identifies as

a lesbian and reports being completely comfortable with her sexual orientation.

>> Interviewer:
Right. Okay, for the next question. Please take a minute to think about times in your life when you wanted to communicate your sexual orientation to another person. What was the situation for the first one you think about – for the first one you remembered and why were you interested in communicating your sexual orientation?

.
.
.

>> Participant:
Okay, actually the first one that comes to mind um [Name omitted] one of the women that is the office-

>> Interviewer:
A person – a coworker that you work with?

>> Participant:
Yeah. Yeah she's uh basically the office secretary. We were doing a set of interviews of this new position at work and there was this – there were two women that interviewed and an older gentleman that interviewed and one young guy that interviewed. And she has like no idea, where all of the other people I work with are pretty much aware.

>> Interviewer:
Of?

>> Participant:
Of my sexuality. Umm and she is not, just because I'm not 100% sure what her stance on that is. I – I just don't know. So I don't know how to gauge what her reaction would be. So I haven't said anything about it yet. So this young gentleman is coming in for this interview. And she was telling me all about it saying "oh he looked pretty cute and all". I'm like you know. And I – I wanted to say something about it, but it was a professional setting because we were about to interview somebody and it's not exactly the time to say "oh yea no I'm not."

>> Interviewer:
So she was implying that because of how cute he was?

>> Participant:
Yeah. Yeah, she was trying to set me up with him. Basically. Like she said something like to me before she brought him in like "go brush your hair real quick."

>> Interviewer:
Oh, so she was telling you to go make yourself pretty, so he'd be interested?

>> Participant:
Exactly.

>> Interviewer:
So she's not aware.

>> Participant:
Yeah, and it wasn't the right situation to tell her I wouldn't be interested even if my hair was brushed.

This segment of interaction nicely illustrates the everyday assumption of heterosexuality by heterosexuals and the salience of "non-normative" sexual orientations by non-heterosexuals. In this case, the office assistant assumed the participant is heterosexual when she made the suggestion to the participant to "make herself pretty" in order to gain the romantic interest of the male job applicant who is also assumed to be heterosexual. The office assistant's assumption of heterosexuality is problematic for the participant because she is not heterosexual and it also suddenly makes her sexual orientation. As the participant stated, she believes the office assistant isn't aware that she is a lesbian. Consequently, the participant must now deal with this assumption of her sexual orientation in some manner. Hence, this segment reveals interactional challenges faced by individuals who are non-heterosexual are assumed to be heterosexual. The particular conversational exigency the participant must address typifies the dilemma Kitizinger (2005) describes: "For the 'normal' heterosexual participant, nothing special is happening" (p. 255). It is, then, not surprising that non-heterosexuals orient to another's sexual orientation much more frequently than do heterosexuals when seeking to identify a potential romantic or sexual partner because the assumption of heterosexuality is present in their ordinary lives.

Identify a Potential Friend

The survey results for the third option "To identify a potential friend" bear some resemblance to the first two options, with the majority of participants in each sexual orientation

cohort selecting this option. A chi-square test for independence analyzed the data from Survey

Item 22c: sexual orientation cohorts and interest in another's sexual orientation to identify a

potential friend. All expected cell frequencies were greater than five. Table 4.3.1 displays the

contingency table computed from the response set.

Table 4.3.1: *Frequency of Responses for Survey Item 22c: To Identify a Potential Friend*

	Sexual Orientation Cohort	
Item 22c: To Identify a Potential Friend	Heterosexual	Non-Heterosexual
Observed	244	77
Expected	261.7	59.3

There is a statistically significant association between sexual orientation and interest in another's

sexual orientation to identify a potential friend, $\chi^2(1) = 14.742$, $p < .0001$. The result from this

analysis conducted on Survey Item 22c suggest a relationship exists between the two variables in

question: sexual orientation and orienting to another's sexual orientation to identify a potential

friend. That is the participant's sexual orientation and response to this survey item are not

independent of each other, and the response patterns did not occur by chance.

The survey results indicate that 52.1% (244) of participants in the heterosexual

orientation cohort chose this particular option, while 72.6% (77) of the non-heterosexual

participants selected this choice. Chart 4.3.2, below, presents the frequency of responses for each

sexual orientation cohort for this survey item. Although the majority of each cohort selected this

option, non-heterosexual individuals selected this reason with greater frequency than did

participants in the heterosexual cohort. The difference between the two cohorts is of interest and

one promising line of research that offers insight into the large disparity of responses between

the two cohorts is research concerning friendships between individuals with differing sexual

orientations.

Chart 4.3.2: *Percentage of Responses by Sexual Orientation Cohort for Survey Item 22c: To Identify a Potential Friend*
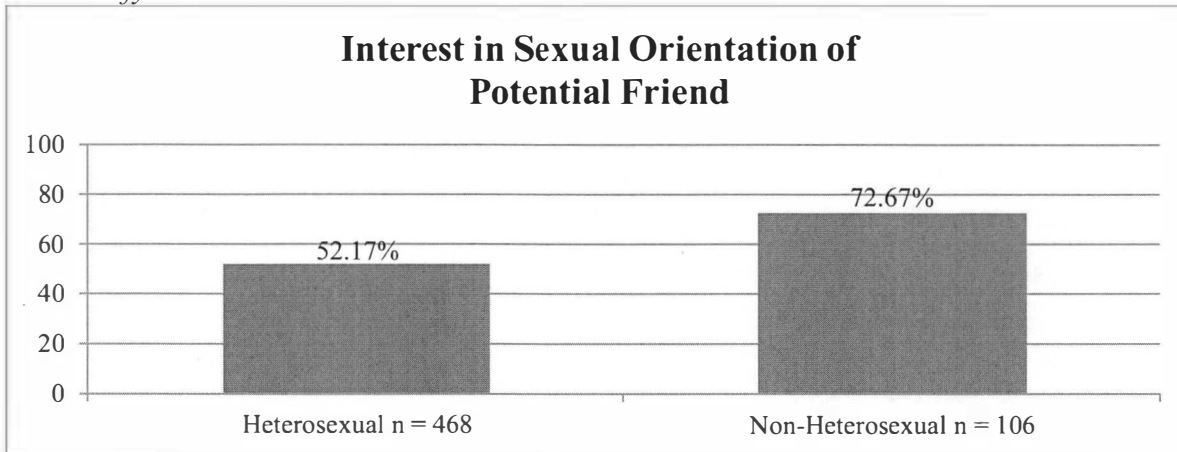
Friendships are unique interpersonal relationships that are distinguished from other types of relationships by the voluntary interdependence of the friends and its sole purpose is its own existence (Ferh, 1996; Sias et. al, 2008). Friends provide individuals with a means of fulfilling basic needs for intimacy and are related to many psychosocial benefits, such as, companionship, affection, social support, mutual assistance, intimacy, self-validation, social adjustment, and personal happiness (Buote et. al, 2007; Demir et al., 2011; Morman, Schrodt, & Tornes, 2013). Although there are clear advantages of having close friends, and noth men and women desire closeness in their friendships, the manner in which closeness is achieved is heavily influenced by perceptions of social appropriateness and normative behavior expectations (Swain, 1989; Wood & Inman, 1993). And while there is evidence that friendships exist across sexual orientations, they are relatively uncommon as there is a disproportionate tendency for individuals to develop interpersonal relationships with individuals who share the same sexual orientation because friendships in general are more likely to develop between individuals with similar characteristics (Duck, 1991). Research on homosociality also supports the notion that individuals prefer friends similar to themselves (Johnson, 1989).

As such, it is not surprising that both non-heterosexual and heterosexual individuals

sometimes orient to another's sexual orientation when identifying a potential friend because it may be perceived to be easier to maintain a friendship when each member is from the same cultural community. Additionally, as the dominant cultural community's values influence the manner in which closeness is achieved in a friendship, heterosexuals may intentionally avoid close friendships with non-heterosexuals out of concern for the way in which others perceive their own sexual identity in their cultural community (Glick et al., 2007; Marsiglio, 1993; Mohr & Sedlacek, 2000). That is, if heterosexuals initiate a friendship with a non-heterosexual individual, then they may have their own sexual orientation questioned by others. Consequently it may be advantageous to identify another's sexual orientation before becoming friends to avoid a relationship with another that may violate normative behavior expectations (Tropp, 2006; Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005). Hence, as Barrett (2013) suggested, the fear of being labeled "gay" is a powerful motivator and regulator which often influences our interactions. Moreover, should a friendship occur, the inter-group, or in this case, cross-sexual orientation friendship does not erase the status difference between the dominant heterosexual culture and marginalized non-heterosexual co-culture.

However, while this explanation does account for the small majority of individuals in the heterosexual orientation cohort, it doesn't explain the much higher percentage of non-heterosexuals selecting this option. This finding is perhaps best explained by membership in a non-dominant cultural community, specifically being a member of the non-heterosexual cultural community. For non-heterosexuals, seeking a friend with the same-sex orientations may be useful because it provides an opportunity for disclosing personal information which may not always be by members of the dominant heterosexual community. Previous studies have found that non-heterosexual individuals are burdened with the great deal of interpersonal relational

maintenance demands needed to maintain relationships with heterosexual friends (Anderson, 2002; Muraco, 2005). For example, non-heterosexuals may not discuss their romantic or sexual interests in another, avoid discussions about romantic or sexual lives, and limit physical closeness so as to avoid individuals from attributing their behaviors to their sexual orientation. The non-disclosure of information then inhibits an intimate relationship formation- or at least make it very one-sided. Additionally, when non-heterosexuals don't reproduce the heteronormative practices and assumptions of same-sex friendships, conflict can occur (Hekma, 1998). Thus, it is not surprising that non-heterosexuals do orient to another's sexual orientation to identify a potential friend with much greater frequency than heterosexuals as it serves very pragmatic purposes to help facilitate smoother interactions.

While the survey data illustrates that interest in another's sexual orientation to identify a potential friend is something that the majority of each sexual orientation cohorts selected, the interview data revealed how cultural membership, specifically sexual orientation, becomes relevant when identifying a potential friend. The transcript segment below comes from interview 9002 (see Appendix D) which was conducted with a 22 year old male identifying as exclusively gay, who reports being completely comfortable with his sexual orientation. In the segment below, the participant reports orienting to another's sexual orientation as a way to understand the possibility of some sort of relationship.

>> Interviewer:
If you could think about a time in your life when you wanted to determine another's sexual orientation, if you could please tell me about what the time was, what the situation was and why you were interested in determining their sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
Uh I guess sometimes it just trying to see if they're other people similar to me or like me. I mean sometimes it's maybe to see if they're be interested in me but it's kind of also about meeting others who are like me or maybe have the same interests as me because we're both gay. It's weird but it's nice not being the only one of something. It's kind of a

sense of belonging to something. I remember a time when I was the coffee shop I work at and [a male customer] he ordered something from me. There was a lot of eye contact. I mean a lot. Then he actually said something to me. I mean I was working but we rather struck up a friendship and it went from there.

>> Interviewer:
But it started from eye contact.

>> Participant:
Yeah then progressed into small talk and eventually [the customer] he asked me out on a date. But before he asked me out on a date the whole time I was trying to figure out if he was just a friendly person or what his intent was. I guess I needed to determine his sexual orientation to see where I could maybe lead the conversation to or maybe topics or I guess how uh I could accomplish whatever I wanted to at that time in our conversation.

In this segment, the participant indicated that he was originally was curious about the customer's sexual orientation after the customer maintained a great deal of eye contact with him, and while the participant doesn't infer any sexual or romantic interest, he did conclude that the customer was in some way interested. Moreover, the participant reports that his own interest in the customer's sexual orientation stems from interest in whether he and the customer might share similar interests because they're both gay. The participant continues to suggest that it's about feeling as if they both belong to a shared community and that "it's nice not being the only one of something". Hence, shared membership in a non-dominant cultural community can provide the groundwork for future friendship for this participant.

As noted earlier, research suggests non-heterosexuals utilize many communicative strategies to maintain relationships with heterosexual friends. In the transcript segment below, the 23-year old male participant, who identifies as exclusively gay. This segment reveals different communicative strategies used with his heterosexual friends in order to avoid conflict related to his sexual orientation and to ensure his heterosexual friends are comfortable around him.

>> Interviewer:
Do you think there are occasions when you want conceal your sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
Yes.

>> Interviewer:
Can you please describe that?

>> Participant:
Well it would like be because I'm in a new place that I uh- I didn't know anything about and I- you know I didn't know. So you know I didn't want to you know come out flaming and have that be that the wrong thing to do. Uh. But it's easier I ((pause)). I- I ((pause)) I hide my sexual orientation when I don't know the situation, the atmosphere, or what it's like. Or if I- if I know what it's like and coming out would cause- would cause unnecessary problems for me or cause problems for people I care about like my friends or whatever. Um or- uh if there- if there could be a threat to someone's safety. However, I don't think that I'm walking around announcing that I'm gay around uh- around every corner. So I guess I just become a lot more aware of my own sexual orientation and kind of- I kind of make sure I don't you know stand out or whatever. I uh. I just try to fit in and say what I need to in that scenario.

In this segment, the participant reports being aware of the potential for his sexual orientation to cause "unnecessary problems for people he cares about and, so, strategically changing his communicative behaviors to "fit in" and "say what I need to in that scenario". Again, this participant is revealing the communicative strategies that he employs to address relational and identity concerns. Additionally, the participant's acknowledgment that his sexual orientation could cause unnecessary problems for him and his relational partners suggests that he is routinely monitoring what he says, how he says it, and must assess each communicative situation independently. Also, the participant's acknowledgement that by communicating information that may inadvertently disclose his sexual orientation in unfamiliar environments illuminates the way in which the participant monitors his environment for personal safety threats. It's clear that he feels presented with very real pragmatic concerns that make his sexual orientation relevant. The segment below continues where the segment above ended. In this

excerpt, the participant, details specific strategies he uses to conform to the heteronormative

world.

>> Interviewer:
How do you do this?

>> Participant:
Hide my sexual orientation?

>> Interviewer:
Yes or conceal based on the specific situation you're in at that time.

>> Participant:
Change my body language. Change the way I speak. I try not to gesture. I may kind of uh
try to speak at a lower pitch. I kind of just adapt to the mannerisms and language of those
around me. Or of ((pause)) whatever is- well honestly I guess I'm going to try to become
straighter. For example, if a waitress walks by this time in a bar and these straight guys
are there and I'm trying to not disclose my sexual orientation – if they said something
like "man she looks really hot tonight" I may reply something like "yeah she looks pretty
good". But I wouldn't I uh- I wouldn't be the first to bring that up either.

>> Interviewer:
Do you feel like you have to adapt to your surroundings or the context?

>> Participant:
Yeah. I mean I can say "yeah she's hot or attractive" and not really uh- I can just be
commenting on the fact that a person is attractive. I don't know. It's weird. It's kind of a
pain in the ass sometimes. I can say- uh. Well sometimes it's tiresome.

The participant reports that he changes his body language, the way he speaks, and adapts

to the situations in an effort to reproduce heteronormativity. Moreover, the participant describes

these events as "tiresome" at times which supports the notion that friendships may be easier for

same-sexual orientations. That is, as the participant reports that conforming to heteronormative

behaviors requires a great deal of energy, he implies that being in the company of non-

heterosexuals is less tiresome. Furthermore, as discussed previously, both interactional parties

may deal with this issue with cross-sexual orientation friendships That is, for the heterosexual, it

may be burdensome as well, because they want to maintain their relationship with their non-

heterosexual friend, which results in similar efforts. As such, while heterosexuals may no orient

to another's sexual orientation with the same level of frequency as do non-heterosexuals, it

simply isn't necessary. Consequently, for the non-heterosexual individual orienting to another's

sexual orientation to identify a potential friend offers benefits that are not needed by members of

the heterosexual community.

Identify Shared Values/Worldview & New Social Networks

It would appear that both options Survey Item 22d and Survey Item 22e (to identify

another with shared values/worldview or to identify potential new social networks) concern

similar motivations, and so, these two options are analyzed together in this section.

The fourth option a participant was able to indicate as a reason for orienting to another's

sexual orientation was Survey Item 22d: To identify another who shares my values/worldview.

This option had a similar response frequency trend as the findings discussed in the preceding

sections. A chi-square test for independence was conducted between the sexual orientation

cohorts and the participant's interest in another's sexual orientation to identify another who

shares my values/worldviews. Table 4.4.1 displays the results of the 2x2 contingency table

computed from the response set.

Table 4.4.1: *Frequency of Responses for Survey Item 22d: To Identify Another who Shares my Values/Worldview*

Item 22d: To Identify Another with Shared Values/Worldviews	Sexual Orientation Cohort	
	Heterosexual	Non-Heterosexual
Observed	182	63
Expected	199.8	45.2

All expected cell frequencies were greater than five. There is a statistically significant

association between sexual orientation and interest in another's sexual orientation to identify

another with shared values/worldview, $\chi^2(1) = 14.911, p < .0005$. The result from this analysis

indicated that the response frequencies did not occur by chance and a relationship exists between the two variables in question: sexual orientation and orienting to another's sexual orientation to identify another with shared values/worldview.

The responses indicated that 38.9% (182) of participants in the heterosexual orientation cohort chose this option while 59.4% (63) of the non-heterosexual participants selected it. Chart 4.4.2, below, presents the frequency of responses for each sexual orientation cohort. The difference between the two sexual orientation cohorts' response frequencies is of interest and is discussed at detail.

Chart 4.4.2: *Percentage of Responses by Sexual Orientation Cohort for Survey Item 22d: Identify Another who Shares my Values/Worldviews*
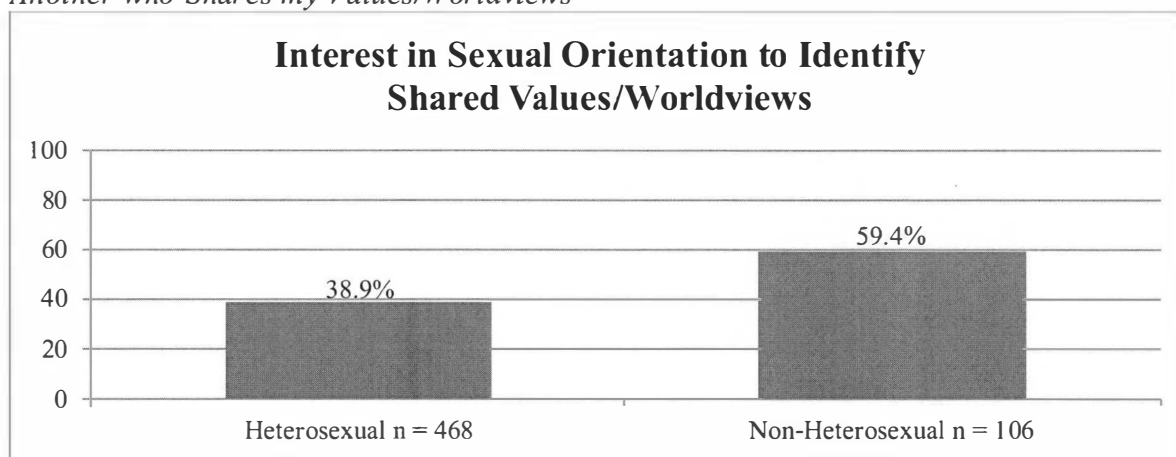
The fifth survey option explored was Survey Item 22e: To identify social networks I may want to join. This participate option concerns the participant orienting to another's sexual orientation to identify social networks that may have similar interests or shared values with the participant. A chi-square test for independence was conducted for Survey Item 22e. Results were computed using a 2x2 contingency table comprised of the sexual orientation cohort by the interest in another's sexual orientation to identify new social networks to join. All expected cell frequencies were greater than five. Table 4.4.3 displays the contingency table computed from the response set.

Table 4.4.3: *Frequency of Responses for Survey Item 22e: To Identify Potential Social Networks*

Item 22e: To Identify Potential Social Networks	Sexual Orientation Cohort	
	Heterosexual	Non-Heterosexual
Observed	89	29
Expected	96.2	21.8

There was no statistically significant association between sexual orientation and interest in another's sexual orientation to identify potential social networks, $\chi^2(1) = 3.682$, $p = .055$. That is, there is no relationship between the two variables in question, even though their response frequencies may differ.

Although, there is no relationship between the two variables the results are still interesting. The survey results for Survey Item 22e indicate that 19.0% of individuals in the heterosexual orientation cohort indicated this option, while 27.4% of individuals in the non-heterosexual orientation cohort chose it. Chart 4.4.4, below, presents the frequency of responses for each sexual orientation cohort.

Chart 4.4.4: *Percentage of Responses by Sexual Orientation Cohort for Survey Item 22e: To Identify Potential Social Networks to Join*
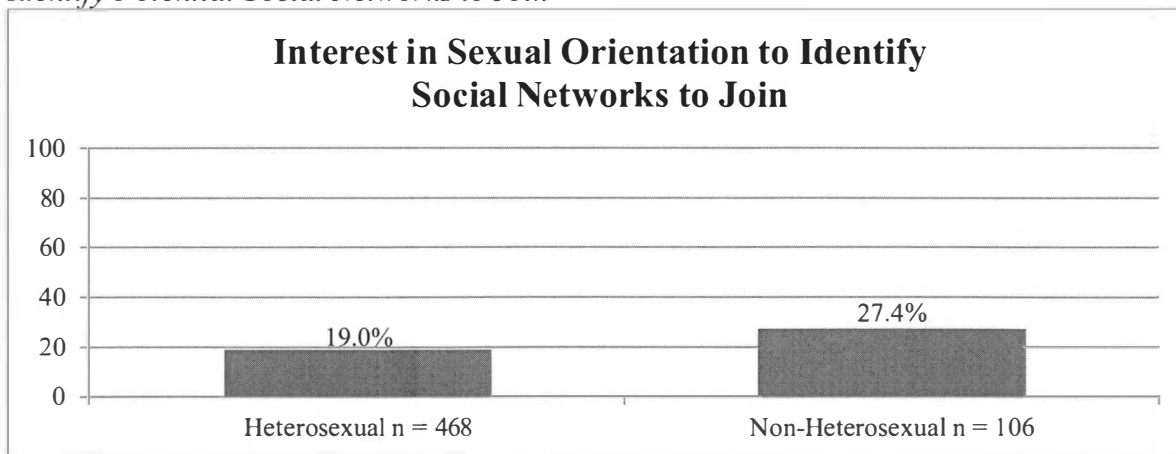
The difference of each cohort's response frequencies is interesting. The data reveals that while there is a relationship between sexual orientation and the participant's response for sexual orientation and to identify another with shared values/worldview, there is no relationship

between sexual orientation and social networks. From this it is clear that individuals do understand certain values and worldview as being shared by those with similar sexual orientations, the participants do not view the values and worldview of specific social groups being related to sexual orientation. That is individuals seem to orient to another's sexual orientation to identify people – not necessarily social networks as they may have many people with differing worldviews.

Theory and research supporting these findings explores concepts of community and solidarity- specifically in the LGBTQ community. A great deal of research links the LGBTQ community to the 'shared experiences of a transgressive sexuality' (Wilkinson et al., 2012), a more predominant and promising line of research focuses on shared values and worldviews of LGBTQ individuals within a particular community. This research refutes the notion that the reasons individuals belong to that specific community is because of their experience with sexual acts (Barrett and Pollack, 2005; Taylor and Rupp, 2006). That is, one's sexual partners and sexual practices don't indicate membership or identification within a particular community. For example, the idea that sexual practices don't necessarily indicate community membership is seen in research that describe 'men who have sex with men' (MSM) and 'women who have sex with women (WSW), as these individuals may never identify with a particular LGBTQ community (Rowe and Dowsett, 2008). As such, being a part of a community with shared values and a similar worldview has little to do with one's sexual behavior. Thus, individuals may orient to another's sexual orientation to identify similar values/worldviews, but not orient to another's sexual orientation to identify those groups (or social networks).

Wilkinson et al., (2012) further this notion in their study of 5062 non-heterosexual men and conclude that relevant personal communities are important to non-heterosexual men as

recognizing another with shared values and sharing a similar worldview helps to achieve basic

needs such as sex, love, friendship, belonging, and place. Thus, these communities provide a way

in which individuals are able to fulfill very basic needs. This notion is further supported by a

number of researchers who have explored a variety positive impacts communities of shared

values and sharing a similar worldview have on non-heterosexual individuals (Allan and

Phillipson, 2008).

The interview data also revealed information about why shared values/worldview

becomes important in the lives of non-heterosexual individuals. In this transcript segment (see

Appendix F), a 22 year old male, who identifies as exclusively gay reflected upon growing up in

a community who didn't share his values.

>> Interviewer:
As you know members of the heterosexual community develop understandings of their own sexual orientation very early. However, members of the LGBTQ community have fewer resources when developing an understanding of their own sexual orientation. So I'm wondering how you came to understanding your sexual orientation and how old were you.

>> Participant:
I don't really remember a certain age that I woke up and was like oh I'm gay today. I do remember when I was young I was involved in church a lot and some of my peers were starting to show interest in girls but I think I was showing interest in guys. So I think it was something gradual that I was like oh, I'm gay. Ironically, in the church I was involved with they teach that homosexuality is wrong, but they sure teach a lot about it. So I knew what being attracted to guys meant thanks to church.

>> Interviewer:
Do you think that your church's teaching was the only thing that helped you understand that you were gay, but how did you learn to communicate it to others?

>> Participant:
Well my church didn't really teach me that. (laugh) I guess from just living trying things out and experimenting. I don't know if I even still communicate it correctly. I guess it uh depends a lot of uh the situation.

This segment of transcript revealed how identifying others with shared values/worldview may be important in this situation. In this case, the participant is suggesting that his experience of with one religious organization negatively impacted his understanding of himself. The shared values / worldview of his church, taught him what being gay meant, but it also taught him that being gay is wrong. Thus, when he orients to another's sexual orientation it may he may assume they share similar beliefs or experiences.

Another transcript except that illuminates how identifying individuals with shared values/worldview is important because it allows individuals to find "common ground". The segment comes from an interview with a 34 year old female participant who identifies as exclusively heterosexual (see Appendix G). Her response reveals that when looking for people with shared values/shared worldview she orients to their sexual orientation because of her experience with the LGBTQ community.

>> Interviewer:
What do you think causes you- when you do have those moments that you orient someone's particular orientation? Because it's different and I think one of the important things for people to explore themselves- you've talked about dating a person of a different ethnicity, which is good. I think it's wonderful, because it gives you a broader world view. It helps you grow as a person and gives you a broader perspective of people.

>> Participant:
If I have to look at the majority of staff at EIU who I'm closest to, they are either African-American or they identify with the LGBTQA component of the LGBTQA group at EIU, and I think part of that is because of how I was raised. I was always friends with everybody, but I was always closest to those people who were the underdog type of people, and so for me it's kind of one of those things of being able to bond with them on a common ground. They've probably done things that I would do like if somebody called me from that core group and said, "Hey, there's going to be an amazing drag show here. Do you want to go with me?" That's the type of entertainment and those are the type of people I want to be with. If I feel like it's one of those where it's eating at me, I feel like probably I'm building that closer bond or connection with them and it's not like if they said, "Oh, I'm straight, I just enjoy this stuff too," then I'm going to write you off, but what that does tell me is if they're straight and in that arena, we've had similar life experiences, and so those are the people that I am looking to connect and bond with, because I don't want to be with people who aren't progressive to explore the world and

those options. Do I see myself climbing into bed with a woman? No, it's just not one of those things that is there for me, but if that's what a female friend of mine wants to do, then whatever. I know who I am, sexually oriented. I have a really good friend who refers to me as her ex-wife and I refer to her as my ex-wife. Am I ever going to stop referring to her as my ex-wife? No. Am I a lesbian? No. Do people who don't know us understand that? No. People who know us don't understand that.

The participant admits that the way in which she was raised has influenced the reason why she orients to another's sexual orientation as she links non-heterosexual orientations to particular activities/events that she too enjoys. Thus, she's orienting to a particular cultural community in an effort to experience part of the cultural events/rituals. Furthermore, her comment regarding "bonding" and "underdog" suggests that she recognizes the difficulties non-heterosexuals face from being a member of a non-dominant cultural community. In another segment of this same transcript, the participant reveals how while living in the "gay district" of Miami he wanted everyone to know his sexual orientation, but when he changed living locations he began not to "announce" his sexual orientation.

>> Interviewer:
Do you ever attempt to conceal your sexual orientation or become more open about it based on the environment you're in?

>> Participant:
Yes, I was in Miami last year and I was pretty open about my sexual orientation there kind of because I lived in the "gay district" so I wanted to make sure everyone knew I was gay. In concealing my sexual orientation well when I first came to school I tried to be a little more conservative about my sexual orientation.

>> Interviewer:
So when you first came to school people in your classes didn't know your sexual orientation.

>> Participant:
Yeah I didn't really see why I would really need to confirm or deny it. I guess I didn't try to conceal it but I didn't just announce it.

What is clear from this particular segment is that the community within which one resides may have certain shared values or a similar worldview that would enable the individual to

communicate his/her sexual orientation or not. As such, an individual may orient to another's

sexual orientation for community affiliation.

Interest in Sexual Orientation Just to Know

The final option participants were able to indicate as a reason they would orient to

another's sexual orientation was Survey Item 22f: Just to Know. Survey responses were analyzed

by conducting a chi-square test for independence between each sexual orientation cohort and the

responses for Survey Item: 22f. All expected cell frequencies were greater than five. Table 4.5.1

displays the 2x2 contingency table computed from the response set.

Table 4.5.1: *Frequency of Responses for Survey Item 22f: Just to Know*

	Sexual Orientation Cohort	
Item 22f: Just to Know	Heterosexual	Non-Heterosexual
Observed	203	41
Expected	198.9	45.1

There was no statistically significant relationship between sexual orientation and interest in

another's sexual orientation just to know, $\chi^2(1) = .790, p = .377$.

However, it is worth noting that this was the only option in that the heterosexual cohort

selected this choice with greater frequency than did non-heterosexuals. The results for Survey

Item 22f indicate that 43.4% (203) of individuals in the heterosexual orientation cohort indicated

this particular option, while 38.7% (41) of individuals in the non-heterosexual orientation cohort

chose this option. Chart 4.5.2, below, presents the frequency of responses for each sexual

orientation cohort.

Chart 4.5.2: *Percentage of Responses by Sexual Orientation Cohort for Survey Item 22f: Interest in Another's Sexual Orientation Just to Know*
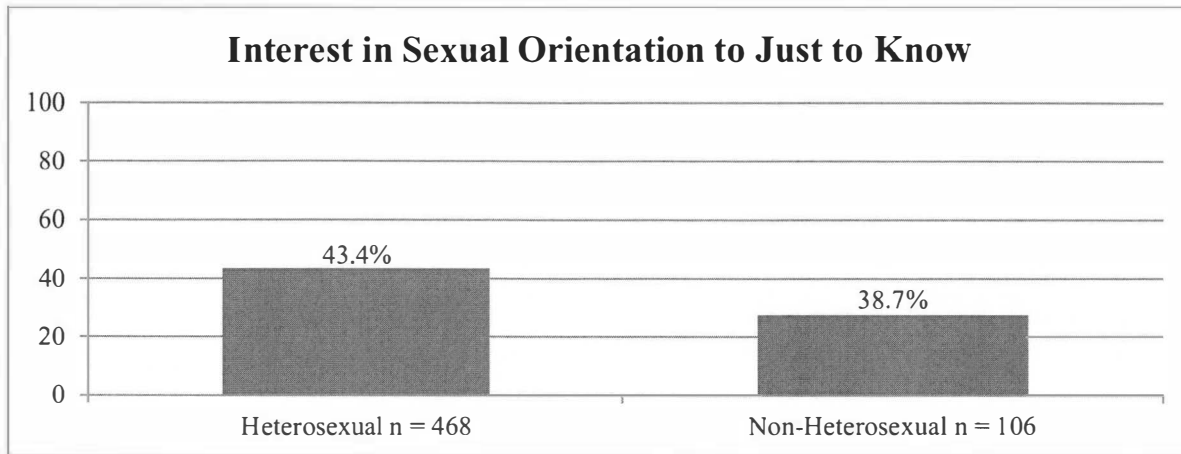
Moreover, although the chi-square test indicates the results are not significant, the results may further support that those in the dominant cultural community are less reflective about their own sexual orientation, considering it the norm, and their reason for orienting to another's sexual orientation is a result of uncertainty or deviation from heteronormativity.

The interview data reveled nothing about this option. However, there was a great deal of tension that was revealed by the participants. At times, they too just wondered about another's sexual orientation, but didn't want to come off as "being stereotypical". At other times, their curiosity about another's sexual orientation had little to do with their conversational partner, and more to do with practical concerns they faced being non-heterosexual.

The segment of transcript below, from the 23 year old female, who identifies as a lesbian, nicely illustrates this tension (see Appendix C).

>> Interviewer:
So do you think that some people are better at determining others' sexual orientation or do you think that some maybe are more expressive of their sexual orientation.

>> Participant:
Yes, I think that as you kind of go through life you just kind of learn how to understand or pick up on things that other gay or lesbian people are saying. I do think that some maybe are better at expressing their sexual orientation, but I think a lot of it depends on maybe how comfortable they feel with those they're talking with. It's kind of a paradox.

In your case, maybe you picked up on the fact I would be comfortable with your sexual orientation so you were able to just be more open about yourself. I'm really not sure. But, sometimes there are some people who don't have these traits. Like if you're out at a bar, trying to meet someone, then I guess if you don't have those traits then it could be a real problem conveying that information to others. Ways that kind of allow other gay people to kind of have those traits then it could be a real problem conveying that information to others. I guess it could be too that some people maybe don't want to or just don't take on those traits because maybe that's just not their personality.

>> Interviewer:
Do you think there are certain strategies you could use to communicate your sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
Do you mean like in a bar or?

>> Interviewer:
In any context or setting?

>> Participant:
Like certain strategies with nonverbal cues?

>> Interviewer:
Nonverbal or verbal.

>> Participant:
Yeah I think so, I guess if you really want to. I think it depends a lot on the reason you want to communicate it. I think maybe for women regardless of the reason, but it can be, at least in my experience, in the women wear- which is pretty stereotypical I know. Like wearing masculine clothes, no makeup, and wearing your hair a certain way. I guess. You know ((pause)) trying to butch it up.

The participant's referral to traits is important. One on hand, she reports that non-heterosexual people have certain markers indicating their sexual orientation, but on the other hand, she is reporting that it's contextual and a learned process that depends on a great number of factors. Her example of wearing makeup and clothing supports the notion that certain artifacts may be attributed to certain sexual orientations, but relying solely on these items presents challenges because they fail to recognize the importance of interaction.

Additionally, the participants reveal a great deal about particular word choices/phrases

that may indicate another's sexual orientation. However, again there was this tension in being

perceived as stereotypical, and relying on what is said to identify another's sexual orientation. In

the interview segment below, a 22 year old male, who identifies as exclusively homosexual,

reveals this tension.

>> Interviewer:
When you were in these different occasions when you wanted to determine another's
sexual orientation how did you go about doing it? I mean what kind of information do
you use?

>> Participant:
I just sometimes quietly observe people. Their body language, word usage. And I uh I
kind of what they say. I don't know. It's hard to just say.

>> Interviewer:
What are some of the words you think they use?

>> Participant:
Well it doesn't necessarily have to be specific words. Maybe their conversations- what
they're talking about. But some words, I guess I don't know too many straight guys that
use the same words that I do. Like "girl" or "bitch" I mean they use those words but it's
kind of how they use them compared to how I use them. For example, I'd start my
sentence off with "Girl". I dunno. I guess I don't see straight guys playing with words the
way gay guys do.

>> Interviewer:
Okay, so if I was talking with someone and I said "Girl did you see that movie last night"
how would you interpret that?

>> Participant:
Well I think I'd feel like you were using that word outside of its intended meaning and I
maybe would become aware of you sexual orientation or maybe just kind of think hmm
maybe he's not straight. I dunno it's hard to say. I wouldn't necessarily uh make a
judgment about someone's sexual orientation based on a word, but I maybe uh may
become more aware of the possibility of their sexual orientation isn't completely straight.

>> Interviewer:
In your experience, do you think that certain words used in conversations may just denote
a closeness with that person's conversation partner?

>> Participant:
Yeah maybe, but I think there's a lot of context involved. I mean words carry many meanings and how they're used can carry even more meanings. It's just in my experience that straight guys don't really use certain words in certain ways. But LGBTQ individuals kind of talk or use words in similar ways.

In this segment, the participant reports that word choices carry certain meanings. In some ways, they mark one's sexual orientations, but again, the participant "doesn't want to sound stereotypical". Regardless, the participants seem to be conflicted about gaydar and report that of identifying another's sexual orientation by relying on physical characteristics and simple ways of talk are on one hand stereotypical, but on the other, an understanding and interpreting a variety of communicative cues can are a useful resource.

Additionally, besides the tension expressed by the participants, the interview data also revealed that non-heterosexuals oriented to other people's sexual orientation, not necessarily just to know, but for pragmatic reasons not discussed. One of the most predominant reasons was safety, comfort, and living conditions. In interview segment below, a 23 year old male, who self identifies as exclusively gay, discusses these pragmatic concerns.

>> Interviewer:
What about another time you were interested in communicating your sexual orientation. If you could tell me about the situation and why you were interested in communicating it to another. It doesn't have to be anything life changing just whatever comes into your mind.

>> Participant:
Um about two years. I think this would be about uh 2010 when I first came to Eastern Illinois University. Um I ((pause)) I uh ((pause)) On my floor ((pause)) I didn't come out uh- to other people on my floor. I had a room to myself so I didn't have a roommate that I had to come out to. But I didn't come out to the other people on my floor.

>> Interviewer:
Your floor mates?

>> Participant:
Yeah my floor mates. Uh for uh a few days or so. Maybe a week. I can't recall exactly, but um ((pause)) I finally did- when I did- I finally did come out to them uh when we

were walking- uh when we were walking back from lunch. I kind of uh made- I kind of made a joke about it. To kind of smooth the ice over kind of thing. And uh they were totally uh they were totally fine with it.

>> Interviewer:
Why did you want to communicate it?

>> Participant:
I ((pause)) felt the need- I felt I wanted to communicate it because I wanted them to know more about me and my life. They're friends of mine. I wanted them to know just for that reason. Also me personally if I'm going to be living – if I'm uh if I'm uh- if I'm going to be living with- If I'm going to be living in close proximity with other people, using the same shower room and sharing a private space I feel that I guess I do have a responsibility to at least let them know. I know that uh. I know that not every- not everyone would feel that way. But at least for me I guess that's why I felt I wanted to communicate my sexual- communicate that I'm gay to them. Just to let them know. Again, I understand that not everyone shares this view point and I don't hold it against them if they don't. But I guess I don't want to make people uncomfortable just- Uh just because I'm around and we're you know forced to share a shower room together.

>> Interviewer:
When you talk about that, actually you mention you have a responsibility.

>> Participant:
Yeah, they have a right to be comfortable in their own homes.

>> Interviewer:
Why do you think they wouldn't be comfortable?

>> Participant:
It's not so much that I thought that they wouldn't be comfortable. Again, I had been friends with them for a little while so- I guess I had some sense of who they were or what their feelings about certain things are. But ((pause)) uh- I mean- I uh- some people will always surprise you. It's uh- it's ((pause)) not so much that they wouldn't be, that's not the issue. That's not the issue. The issue is that it's something they should know- so I uh- I gave them the information.

The participant is discussing his experience first coming to college. He states that he didn't have

a roommate so wasn't concerned about coming out to that person; however, he felt he needed to

come out to his floor mates. It's possible that the joke served as a communicative strategy that he

could either deny or use to determine his floor mates' tolerance of non-heterosexuality. His

suggestion that he has a "responsibility" to tell people with whom he is sharing space with in

close proximity clearly buys into the notion that heterosexuals understand homosexuality is in some way a deviant sexual orientation. The idea of responsibility, suggests that it was his "job", as the deviant individuals to take correct actions to put the non-offenders at ease. And while he may be embracing his marginalized status, it is possible he's just doing what is necessary to prevent future problematic interactions. When asked if he thought his floor mates would be uncomfortable, the participant defended his friends by implying the question asked was inherently problematic. The repair reveals that he believes that heterosexual individuals should be informed about the orientations of non-heterosexuals. Ironically, through this implication he suggests that people are assumed to be heterosexuals. That is, it may not have been necessary to disclose his sexual orientation if they were all non-heterosexual. Thus, the participant's report clearly illustrates how heterosexuality is assumed and taken for granted by both heterosexuals and non-heterosexuals.

Conclusion

Research question one asked "What occasions interest in another person's sexual orientation, i.e. what makes the sexual orientation of another relevant to interactants in ordinary conversation?". The findings suggested that interest in another's sexual orientation is occasioned for a variety of reasons, but interest in another's sexual orientation is clearly situated in the interaction itself. Furthermore, the findings suggest that determining the sexual orientation of another, is relevant for different reasons based on the communicative goals.

With that said, the next chapter concludes this thesis. In the final chapter, the first section will present two broad conclusions concerning messages about sexual orientation. The second section addresses the present study's limitations. The fourth section will conclude this chapter and thesis with a discussion of future research directions.

Chapter V

Conclusion

The fourth chapter of this thesis is devoted to discussing two broad conclusions from the present study. This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section offers some broad conclusions about sexual orientation messages and their study. The second section discusses the research limitations of the present study. Finally, the chapter concludes with the third section which discusses future research directions for the study of messages concerning sexual orientation.

Sexual Orientation Messages and their Study

The findings discussed in Chapter IV provide great insight into the ways in which sexual orientation becomes relevant in interactions. Previous studies, discussed in the second chapter that have focused on physical characteristics and behavior cues that mark sexual orientation are often over simplistic. They imply sexual orientation is visible at all time if an individual simply knows what to search for. However, these studies fail to address how sexual orientation becomes relevant in a given interaction and at other times does not. Furthermore, these studies do not address what makes sexual orientation relevant. Of additional concern is many of these studies often, inadvertently objectify non-heterosexual individuals, suggesting that an individual's sexual identity is understood by mutable characteristics.

The findings from this study also support the notion that human sexuality is fundamentally a social phenomenon. That is, sexual orientation communicated in the presence of others. Thus, effective studies need to address the fundamentally social nature of this activity. A much more effective approach to the study of messages about sexual orientation should be

grounded/situated in the <u>real</u> lives of individuals in their <u>naturally</u> occurring conversations and relational lives.

Also the present study's findings provide evidence that supports the notion that non-heterosexuals go about their lives and communicate in similar ways as heterosexuals. That is, it's highly unlikely that either heterosexuals or non-heterosexuals are constantly considering their sexual orientation and the sexual orientation of others. An individual's sexual orientation doesn't become relevant until it does. However, as the findings suggest, heterosexuality is often overlooked and expected. Consequently, non-heterosexuals' may orient to their sexual orientation because they're communicating in a heteronormative world.

Finally, the findings from this research illustrate an important, yet undeveloped line of research. That is, non-heterosexuals communicate their sexual orientation for very pragmatic reasons, while heterosexuals do not. Thus, one group of individuals must learn to communicate / disclose information about themselves that the majority of the population does not. These pragmatic reasons can then present interactional difficulties which again, do not arise for the heterosexual population.

As such, if scholars continue to conduct social scientific research on both the heterosexual and non-heterosexual community, it may be advantageous to explore each group independently of one another. That is, heterosexual and non-heterosexual individuals have different experiences, thus comparing the two groups may not be the best method to understand or gain insight into their lives.

Limitations

A major limitation of the present study concerns the age of the sample size. Although college campuses provide a great venue in which researchers are able to access a large audience,

they do not necessarily have a representative sample. Furthermore, the descriptive statistics found that for a number of participants, they did not identify as exclusively heterosexual or homosexual. A great deal of the participants self-identified as something other. As such, it seems that sexual orientation is very fluid and that participants in the age range sampled are likely to be still developing their self-identities and sexual identities. Furthermore, a sample comprised of older adults would most likely yield different results. It could be that as one ages, certain things become less important. Another limitation in the present study concerns the participants of the in-depth interviews. A larger participant sample may yield similar or possibly a more complex corpus of data. Consequently, the interview data is in no way generalizable to a larger audience, but does begin to illuminate the academy's deficiencies in understanding messages about sexual orientation.

Future Directions

The findings of this study were interesting and illustrate the need for more research exploring the interactive nature of human sexuality. Researchers exploring this communicative phenomenon should explore how messages change across differing demographic variables. It may prove interesting to conduct a longitudinal study to see how messages about sexual orientation change over one's life span. Furthermore, the notion of heteronormativity was discussed at great length. Although we, as a society have made great strides in equality for LGBTQ individuals- specifically this year with the fall of DOMA and Illinois legalizing same-sex marriage, it's worth noting that heteronormativity is something that is so engrained in our social world, non-heterosexuals will likely still feel as if they must in some way conform to heteronormative expectations. Finally, as the institution of marriage will soon be extended to all Illinois families, it may be interesting to explore how same-sex families negotiate sexual

orientation identities and messages about sexual orientation since the state has just recently

legitimized their relationships.

References

Allan, G., & Phillipson, C. (2008). Community studies today: urban perspectives. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 11*(2), 163-173. doi: 10.1080/1 3645570801940889

Ambady, N., Hallahan, M., & Connor, B. (1999) Accuracy of judgments of sexual orientation from thin slices of behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 77(3), 534-47.

Anderson, E. (2002). Openly gay athletes contesting hegemonic masculinity in a homophobic environment. *Gender & Society, 16*(6), 860-877. doi: 10.1177/0891243022237892

Barrett, D. C., & Pollack, L. M. (2005). Whose gay community? Social class, sexual self-expression, and gay community involvement. *The Sociological Quarterly, 46*(3), 437-456. doi: 10.1111/j.1533-8525.2005.00021.x

Barrett, T. (2013). Friendships Between Men Across Sexual Orientation: The Importance of (Others) Being Intolerant. *The Journal of Men's Studies, 21*(1), 62-77. doi: 10.3149 /jms.2101.62

Bennett, J. A. (2006). In defense of gaydar: Reality television and the politics of the glance. *Critical Studies in Media Communication, 23,* 403-425. doi: 10.1080/07393180601 046154

Berger, G., Hank, L., Rauzi, T., & Simkins, L. (1987). Detection of sexual orientation by heterosexuals and homosexuals. *Journal of Homosexuality, 23,* 83-100.

Bogaert, A. F., & Hershberger, S. (1999). The relation between sexual orientation and penile size. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *28*(3), 213-221. doi:10.1023/A:1018780108597

Buote, V. M., Pancer, S. M., Pratt, M. W., Adams, G., Birnie-Lefcovitch, S., Polivy, J., & Wintre, M. G. (2007). The Importance of friends, friendship and adjustment among 1st-year university students. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 22*(6), 665-689. doi: 10.1177/0 743558407306344

Cameron, D., & Kulick, D. (2003). *Language and sexuality*. Cambridge, UK: University Press.

Carlston, D. E., & Skowronski, J. J. (2005). Linking versus thinking: evidence for the different associative and attributional bases of spontaneous trait transference and spontaneous trait inference. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 89*(6), 884. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.89.6.884

Carroll, L., & Gilroy, P. J. (2002). Role of appearance and nonverbal behaviors in the perception of sexual orientation among lesbians and gay men. *Psychological Reports, 91*(1), 115-122.

Creswell, J. W., Plano Clark, V. L., Gutmann, M. L., & Hanson, W. E. (2003). Advanced mixed methods research designs. *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research*, 209-240. Three Oaks, CA: Sage.

Demir, M., Özen, A., Doğan, A., Bilyk, N. A., & Tyrell, F. A. (2011). I matter to my friend, therefore I am happy: Friendship, mattering, and happiness. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 12*(6), 983-1005. doi: 10.1007/s10902-010-9240-8
doi: 10.1080/08934210701643750

Duck, S. W. (1991). *Friends for Life: Psychology of Close Relationships* (2nd ed). Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Fiske, S. T., & Neuberg, S. L. (1990). A continuum of impression formation, from category-based to individuating processes: Influences of information. In M.P Zanna (Ed.),

Advances in experimental social psychology (vol. 23, pp. 1-74). New York, NY: Academic Press

France, D. (2007, June 25). The science of gaydar. *New York Magazine, 40,* 98-99.

Gilbert, D. T., & Malone, P. S. (1995). The correspondence bias. *Psychological Bulletin, 117*(1), 21. doi: 10.1037/0033-2909.117.1.21

Glick, P., Gangl, C., Gibb, S., Klumpner, S., & Weinberg, E. (2007). Defensive reactions to masculinity threat: More negative affect toward effeminate (but not masculine) gay men. *Sex Roles, 57*(1-2), 55-59. doi: 10.1007/s11199-007-9195-3

Hekma, G. (1998). "As long as they don't make an issue of it…" Gay men and lesbians in organized sports in the Netherlands. *Journal of Homosexuality, 35*(1), 1-23. doi: 10.1300/J082v35n01_01

Huber, S. (1989). The impact of stereotypes on person judgment. P. Lang.

Johnson, K. L., & Tassinary, L. G. (2005). Perceiving sex directly and indirectly meaning in motion and morphology. *Psychological Science, 16*(11), 890-897. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9280.2005.01633.x

Johnson, K. L., & Tassinary, L. G. (2007). Compatibility of basic social perceptions determines perceived attractiveness. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 104(12), 5246-5251.

Johnson, K. L., Gill, S., Reichman, V., & Tassinary, L. G. (2007). Swagger, sway, and sexuality: Judging sexual orientation from body motion and morphology. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 93*(3), 321. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.93.3.321

Johnson, M. A. (1989). Variables associated with friendship in an adult population. *The Journal of Social Psychology, 129*(3), 379-390. doi: 10.1080/00224545.1989.9712054

Kahneman, D. (2003). A perspective on judgment and choice: mapping bounded rationality. *American Psychologist, 58*(9), 697. doi: 10.1037/0003-066X.58.9.697

Kitzinger, C. (2005). " Speaking as a Heterosexual":(How) Does sexuality matter for talk-in-interaction?. *Research on Language and Social Interaction, 38*(3), 221-265. doi: 10.1207/s15327973rlsi3803_2

Knöfler, T., & Imhof, M. (2007). Does sexual orientation have an impact on nonverbal behavior in interpersonal communication?. *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior, 31*(3), 189-204. doi: 10.1007/s10919-007-0032-8

Land, V., & Kitzinger, C. (2005). Speaking as a lesbian: Correcting the heterosexist presumption. *Research on Language and Social Interaction, 38*(4), 371-416. doi: 10.1207/s15327973rlsi3804_1

Linville, S. E. (1998). Acoustic correlates of perceived versus actual sexual orientation in men's speech. Folia Phoniatrica et Logopaedica, 50(1), 35-48. doi:10.1159/000021447

Lippa, R. A. (2005). Sexual orientation and personality. *Annual Review of Sex Research, 16*(1), 119-153. doi: 10.1080/10532528.2005.10559831

Lippa, R. A. (2008). Sex differences and sexual orientation differences in personality: Findings from the BBC internet survey. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *37*(1), 173-187. doi:10.1007/s10508-007-9267-z

Marsiglio, W. (1993). Attitudes toward homosexual activity and gays as friends: A national survey of heterosexual 15-to 19-year-old males. *Journal of Sex Research, 30*(1), 12-17. doi: 10.1080/00224499309551673

Martin, K. A. (2009). Normalizing heterosexuality: Mothers' assumptions, talk, and strategies with young children. *American Sociological Review, 74*(2), 190-207. doi:10.1177/000312240907400202

Martin, K. A., & Kazyak, E. (2009). Hetero-romantic love and heterosexiness in children's G-rated films. *Gender & Society, 23*(3), 315-336. doi: 10.1177/0891243209335635

McFadden, D., Lochlin, J. C., Lippa, R. A., Manning, J. T., & Rahman, Q. (2005). A reanalysis of five studies on sexual orientation and the relative length of the 2nd and 4th fingers (the 2D: 4D ratio). *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *34*(3), 341-356. doi:10.1007/s10508-005-3123-9

Mohr, J. J., & Sedlacek, W. E. (2000). Perceived barriers to friendship with lesbians and gay men among university students. *Journal of College Student Development, 41*(1), 70-80.

Morman, M. T., Schrodt, P., & Tornes, M. J. (2013). Self-disclosure mediates the effects of gender orientation and homophobia on the relationship quality of male same-sex friendships. *Journal of Social & Personal Relationships, 30*(5), 582-605. doi:10.1177/0265407512463991

Muraco, A. (2005). Heterosexual evaluations of hypothetical friendship behavior based on sex and sexual orientation. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 22*(5), 587-605. doi: 10.1177/0265407505054525

Newman, L. S., & Uleman, J. S. (1989). Spontaneous trait inference. In J.S. Uleman & J.A. Bargh (Eds.), *Unintended Thought* (pp. 155-188). New York, NY: Guilford Press

Nicholas, C. L. (2001). Gaydar: the communication of gay and lesbian ingroup identity (Doctoral dissertation, University of Oklahoma). Retrieved from http://www.worldcat.org/title/gaydar-the-communication-of-gay-and-lesbian-ingroup-identity/oclc/48844444

Nicholas, C. L. (2004). Gaydar: Eye-gaze as identity recognition among gay men and lesbians. *Sexuality & Culture, 8*(1), 60-86.

Nieto, D. S. (1996). Who is the male homosexual? A computer-mediated exploratory study of gay male bulletin board system (bbs) users in New York City. *Journal of homosexuality, 30*(4), 97-124. doi: 10.1300/J082v30n04_06

Pollick, F. E., Kay, J. W., Heim, K., & Stringer, R. (2005). Gender recognition from point-light walkers. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance, 31*(6), 1247. doi: 10.1037/0096-1523.31.6.1247

Rendall, D., Vasey, P. L., & McKenzie, J. (2008). The Queen's english: An alternative, biosocial hypothesis for the distinctive features of "gay speech". *Archives of sexual behavior, 37*(1), 188-204. doi: 10.1007/s10508-007-9269-x

Rieger, G., Linsenmeier, J. W., Gygax, L., Garcia, S., & Bailey, J. (2010). Dissecting "Gaydar": Accuracy and the role of masculinity–femininity. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 39*(1), 124-140. doi:10.1007/s10508-008-9405-2

Rowe, M. S., & Dowsett, G. W. (2008). Sex, love, friendship, belonging and place: Is there a role for 'gay community' in HIV prevention today?. *Culture, Health & Sexuality, 10*(4), 329-344. doi: 10.1080/13691050701843098

Rule, N. O., & Ambady, N. (2008). Brief exposures: Male sexual orientation is accurately perceived at 50ms. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 44*(4), 1100-1105. doi: 10.1016/j.jesp.2007.12.001

Rule, N. O., Ambady, N., & Hallett, K. C. (2009). Female sexual orientation is perceived accurately, rapidly, and automatically from the face and its features. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 45*(6), 1245-1251. doi:10.1016/j.jesp.2009.07.010

Rule, N. O., Ambady, N., Adams Jr, R. B., & Macrae, C. N. (2008). Accuracy and awareness in the perception and categorization of male sexual orientation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 95*(5), 1019-1028. doi:10.1037/a0013194

Schegloff, E. A. (1997). Practices and actions: Boundary cases of other-initiated repair. *Discourse Processes, 23*(3), 499-545. doi:10.1080/01638539709545001

Shelp, S. G. (2002). Gaydar: Visual detection of sexual orientation among gay and straight men. Journal of Homosexuality, *44*(1), 1-14.

Shelp, S. G. (2003). Gaydar: Gaydar. *Journal of Homosexuality, 44*(1), 1-14. doi:10.1300/J082v 44n01_01

Sias, P. M., Drzewiecka, J. A., Meares, M., Bent, R., Konomi, Y., Ortega, M., & White, C. (2008). Intercultural friendship development. *Communication Reports, 21*(1), 1-13.

Sirin, S. R., McCreary, D. R., & Mahalik, J. R. (2004). Differential reactions to men and women's gender role transgressions: Perceptions of social status, sexual orientation, and value dissimilarity. *The Journal of Men's Studies*, *12*(2), 119-132.

Smyth, R., Jacobs, G., & Rogers, H. (2003). Male voices and perceived sexual orientation: An experimental and theoretical approach. *Language in Society, 32*(3), 329-350. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0047404503323024

Stein, E. (1999) *The mismeasure of desire: The science, theory and ethics of sexual orientation.* Oxford; Oxford University Press.

Swain, S. (1989). Covert intimacy: Closeness in men's friendships. *Gender in intimate relationships*, 71-86.

Tannenbaum, I. J. (2006). The impact of social contest on the conceptualization of sexual orientation: a construct validity investigation (Doctoral dissertation, Ohio State

University). Retrieved from https://etd.ohiolink.edu/ap:10:0::NO:10:P10_ACC

ESSION_NUM:osu1153031007

Taylor, V., & Rupp, L. J. (2006). Learning from drag queens. *Contexts, 5*(3), 12-17. doi:

10.1525/ctx.2006.5.3.12

Tropp, L. R. (2006). Valuing diversity and interest in intergroup contact. *Journal of Social

Issues, 62*(3), 533-551. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-4560.2006.00472.x

Tropp, L. R., & Pettigrew, T. F. (2005). Relationships between intergroup contact and prejudice

among minority and majority status groups. *Psychological Science, 16*(12), 951-957. doi:

10.1111/j.1467-9280.2005.01643.x

Wilkinson, J., Bittman, M., Holt, M., Rawstorne, P., Kippax, S., & Worth, H. (2012). Solidarity

beyond sexuality: The personal communities of gay men. *Sociology, 46*(6), 1161-1177.

doi: 10.1177/0038038511435064

Wong, F. Y., McCreary, D. R., Carpenter, K. M., Engle, A., & Korchynsky, R. (1999). Gender-

related factors influencing perceptions of homosexuality. *Journal of Homosexuality,

37*(3), 19-31. doi: 10.1300/J082v37n03_02

Wood, J. T., & Inman, C. C. (1993). In a different mode: Masculine styles of communicating

closeness. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 21*(3), 279-295. doi: 10.1080/0

0909889309365372

Woolery, L. M. (2007). Gaydar: A social-cognitive analysis. *Journal of homosexuality, 53*(3), 9-

17. doi: 10.1300/J082v53n03_02

Appendix A

Research Survey
Greetings,
Thank you for your time and for assisting me with my research regarding interpersonal communication and intercultural communication. My name is Clinton L. Brown and I am an honors' undergraduate student majoring in communication studies with an option in interpersonal communication. I am currently pursuing this research as part of the honors' research and thesis hours requirement for my degree. This research is under the supervision of Dr. Shirley Bell, Professor of Communication at Eastern Illinois University. Your honest responses are greatly appreciated and will contribute to our understanding of interpersonal communication and intercultural communication.

The results of my study depend on the open and honest participation of people like you. Your participation is strictly voluntary and your answers are confidential. Once again, thank you for your personal contribution. Should you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at ciucmnresearch12@gmail.com or contact Dr. Shirley Bell at sabell@eiu.edu.

Q1: I have read the above and understand my rights as a research participant.
- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

Q2: My sex is:
- ☐ Female (1)
- ☐ Male (2)

Q3: My age is (indicate in years): _____

Q4: English is the predominant language spoken in my home.
- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

Q5: My personality can best be described as (choose one from choices below):
- ☐ Very Introverted (1)
- ☐ Somewhat Introverted (2)
- ☐ Somewhat Extroverted (3)
- ☐ Very Extroverted (4)

Q6: My religious commitments can best be described as (choose one from choices below):
- ☐ Not Religious (1)
- ☐ Slightly Religious (2)
- ☐ Moderately Religious (3)
- ☐ Very Religious (4)

Q7: My sexual orientation can best be described as (choose one from choices below):
- ☐ Exclusively opposite-sex attracted (exclusively heterosexual) (1)
- ☐ Mostly opposite-sex attracted (mostly heterosexual) (2)
- ☐ Bisexual (3)
- ☐ Mostly same-sex attracted (mostly homosexual) (4)
- ☐ Exclusively same-sex attracted (exclusively homosexual) (5)

Q8: I actively consider (i.e. think about) my own sexual orientation when interacting with people (rate your level of agreement):
- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Most of the Time (4)
- ☐ Always (5)

Q9: I am comfortable with my own sexual orientation (rate your level of agreement):
- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- ☐ Agree (4)
- ☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q10: When interacting with someone I am able to accurately determine his or her sexual orientation (rate your level of agreement):
- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Most of the Time (4)
- ☐ Always (5)

Q11: When interacting with another person I assume for the most part that they are like me in sexual orientation (rate your level of agreement):

☐ Strongly Disagree (1)

☐ Disagree (2)

☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)

☐ Agree (4)

☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q12: For me, determining if someone is homosexual (i.e. gay or lesbian) from talking with them is (rate your level of ease):

☐ Very Difficult (1)

☐ Difficult (2)

☐ Neutral (3)

☐ Easy (4)

☐ Very Easy (5)

Q13: For me, determining if someone is heterosexual (i.e. straight) from talking with them is (rate your level of ease):

☐ Very Difficult (1)

☐ Difficult (2)

☐ Neutral (3)

☐ Easy (4)

☐ Very Easy (5)

Q14: My experiences are different from most other people because of my sexual orientation (rate your level of agreement):

☐ Strongly Disagree (1)

☐ Disagree (2)

☐ Neither Disagree nor Agree (3)

☐ Agree (4)

☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q15: I spend time thinking about how my sexual orientation affects my interactions with others (rate your level of agreement):

☐ Strongly Disagree (1)

☐ Disagree (2)

☐ Neither Disagree nor Agree (3)

☐ Agree (4)

☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q16: In general, heterosexual (straight) people share certain behaviors / behave in similar ways (rate your level of agreement):

☐ Strongly Disagree (1)

☐ Disagree (2)

☐ Neither Disagree nor Agree (3)

☐ Agree (4)

☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q17: In general, homosexual (gay or lesbian) people share certain behaviors / behave in similar ways (rate your level of agreement):

☐ Strongly Disagree (1)

☐ Disagree (2)

☐ Neither Disagree nor Agree (3)

☐ Agree (4)

☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q18: My sexual orientation influences the ways in which I communicate with others (rate your level of agreement):

☐ Strongly Disagree (1)

☐ Disagree (2)

☐ Neither Disagree nor Agree (3)

☐ Agree (4)

☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q19: When I was growing up I learned appropriate ways to express my interest to a potential romantic partner (rate your level of agreement):

☐ Strongly Disagree (1)

☐ Disagree (2)

☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)

☐ Agree (4)

☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q20: Please list a few conversational and / or behavioral cues that may cause you to become aware of another's sexual orientation

1._____ (1)

2._____ (2)

3._____ (3)

4._____ (4)

5._____ (5)

Q21: When I interact with someone of my same sex for the first time, I pay attention to cues about his / her sexual orientation (rate your level of agreement):

☐ Never (1)

☐ Rarely (2)

☐ Sometimes (3)

☐ Most of the Time (4)

☐ Always (5)

Q22: When I interact with someone of the opposite sex for the first time, I pay attention to cues about his / her sexual orientation (rate your level of agreement)
- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Most of the Time (4)
- ☐ Always (5)

Q23: The reasons why I would become interested in another's sexual orientation are (check all that apply or fill in your own response):
- ☐ To identify a potential romantic partner (1)
- ☐ To identify a potential sexual partner (2)
- ☐ To identify a potential friend (3)
- ☐ To identify someone who shares my values / world views (4)
- ☐ To identify new social networks I may want to join (5)
- ☐ Just because I want to know (6)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (7) _____
- ☐ Other (please specify) (8) _____

Q24: Generally, I assume that males I meet are heterosexual (rate your level of agreement):
- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Neither Disagree nor Agree (3)
- ☐ Agree (4)
- ☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q25: Generally, I assume that females I meet are heterosexual (rate your level of agreement):
- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- ☐ Agree (4)
- ☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q26: When I think that a relatively new acquaintance, which I connect with, that has the same sexual orientation that I have, I consider how I might further the relationship (rate your level of agreement):

☐ Strongly Disagree (1)

☐ Disagree (2)

☐ Neither Disagree nor Agree (3)

☐ Agree (4)

☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q27: When I think that a relatively new acquaintance, which I connected with, that has a different sexual orientation that I have, I consider how I might further the relationship (rate your level of agreement):

☐ Strongly Disagree (1)

☐ Disagree (2)

☐ Neither Disagree nor Agree (3)

☐ Agree (4)

☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q28: If I don't think that my conversational partner would be comfortable with my sexual orientation I try to adjust or adapt to them (e.g. avoid some topics, change topic, be more quiet) (rate your level of agreement):
☐ Strongly Disagree (1)

☐ Disagree (2)

☐ Neither Disagree nor Agree (3)

☐ Agree (4)

☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q29: I have avoided talking about my romantic partner or romantic interests because I thought it might make others uncomfortable (rate your level of agreement):
☐ Strongly Disagree (1)

☐ Disagree (2)

☐ Neither Disagree nor Agree (3)

☐ Agree (4)

☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q30: Sometimes I wish I could talk more about my romantic or sexual partner in my conversations (rate your level of agreement):

☐ Strongly Disagree (1)

☐ Disagree (2)

☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)

☐ Agree (4)

☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Q31: Sometimes I wish I could talk more about my sexual orientation (rate your level of agreement):

☐ Strongly Disagree (1)

☐ Disagree (2)

☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)

☐ Agree (4)

☐ Strongly Agree (5)

Thank you for your participation in this survey.

Appendix B

Interview Protocol

Interviewee ID #:_____

Age:_____

Sex: M   F

Occupation:_____

Primary language spoken in your home:_____

How do you describe your sexual orientation?
_____Exclusively Straight
_____Exclusively Gay
_____Bi-Sexual
_____Still Exploring
_____ Or please describe:_____

1.   Please explain how comfortable you are with your sexual orientation and how public you
        are about it. For example, are open about it in all areas of your life (e.g., work, school,
        social groups, family, and friends) or are there areas in your life where you keep your
        sexual orientation private?

2.   Please take a minute to think about the times in your life when you have wanted to
        communicate your sexual orientation to another person. What was the situation for the
        first one you remembered and why were you interested in communicating your sexual
        orientation? Okay what about another time when you were interested in communicating
        your sexual orientation—what was the situation and why were you interested in
        communicating it. (Continue for other instances the interviewee recalls).

3.   On those occasions when you wanted to communicate your sexual orientation, please
        describe the verbal and non-verbal cues or behaviors you used to send that message.
        (Potential Prompt: What things did you say? Non-verbal cues are behaviors like eye
        contact, body language, facial expressions, tone of voice, etc.)

4.   Have there been occasions where you wanted to conceal your sexual orientation? If so,
        please describe the situation, why you wanted to conceal it, and how you did that.

5.   Please take a minute to think about the times in your life when you have become
        interested in determining what another person's sexual orientation might be. What was
        the situation for the first one you remembered and why were you interested in
        determining their sexual orientation?

6.   Okay what about another time when you became interested in determining another's sexual orientation—what was the situation and why were you interested? (Continue for other instances the interviewee recalls).

7.   When you were in these situations where you wanted to determine another person's sexual orientation, please describe the verbal and non-verbal cues or behaviors you used to determine it. (Potential Prompt: For example, did you pay attention to things the person said or particular words they used or didn't use? Did you pay attention to what the person was wearing or mannerisms, body language, tone of voice, things like that?

8.   As you know, because the heterosexual community is the dominant cultural community, heterosexuals begin to develop understandings about their own sexual identity very early—by watching their parents if they are heterosexual, friends, siblings, and from the media. Members of the GLBTQ community, however, have many fewer resources for coming to understand their own sexual orientation. So I'm wondering how you came to this understanding. How old were you when you recognized it, did you have people in your life whom you knew were GLBTQ members, did you talk to anyone about sexual orientation or see media portrayals of GLBTQ members?

9.   How did you learn how to interact with potential romantic partners? Can you describe some examples of times when you thought something like "Oh. Now I see how this works" or "Well how are same-sex people supposed to connect?"

10.   What do you think about gaydar? Do you think you are good at identifying fellow GLBTQ members if they haven't "come out?" How do you think you developed this competency?

This concludes our interview. I would like to thank you again for your time and for participating.

Appendix C

Interview ID 9001

Sex: Female
Age: 23 years old
Sexual Orientation: Lesbian
Informed Consent: Yes. On file, signed with permission to record.

 >> Interviewer:
This is interview ID number 9001, we're going to go ahead and start.
I wanted to ask could you please explain how comfortable you are with your sexual orientation.
How public you are about it. For example are you open about it in all areas of your life, like
work, school, social groups, family friends, or are there areas in your life where you keep your
sexual orientation private?

>> Participant:
I personally am extremely comfortable with my sexual orientation. I think I realized fairly early
on um as far as what aspects of my life where I'm open with it ((pause)) that's a little ((pause))
like a little complicated. Well, I'm out pretty much to anybody who asks me or wants to know uh
except to my father. And other certain members of my family. It's weird. My mom knows, my
brother, my sister knows, both my siblings are younger than me. All cousins know, my mom's
sister knows, my grandparents don't. Neither set of grandparents know. So like there's this whole
extended family like all these people have kept the secret for me.

>> Interviewer:
Oh, so they're just not telling you, so you can tell when you're ready.

>> Participant:
Yeah, right, they're totally in the mentality that when she's ready to tell she will, but they don't
think it's their information to tell. But at the same time, I feel bad asking them to keep this
information almost a secret. Like for example, my brother made some silly comment, when we
were just joking around about getting another cat. He made some comment to my dad like "Oh
yeah, they're thinking about getting another cat" and my dad was like who's "they".

>> Interviewer:
Oh, meaning the two of you- you and your partner?

>> Participant:
Yeah, yeah.

>> Interviewer:
Okay, so your brother, would know that you and your partner have cats together.

>> Participant:
Yeah, but my dad doesn't. So there's that extra of them having to be careful of what they say around my immediate family. When for they- when for the most part our family is completely open.

>> Interviewer:
But do you feel like your brother has to keep from saying "they" so he doesn't out you.

>> Participant:
Right. So now it's a real weird dynamic. They would never out me, but I would never ask them to lie for me.

>> Interviewer:
Right. Okay, for the next question. Please take a minute to think about times in your life when you wanted to communicate your sexual orientation to another person. What was the situation for the first one you think about - for the first one you remembered and why were you interested in communicating your sexual orientation.

>> Participant:
Like the very first time I wanted to tell someone or just an instance?

>> Interviewer:
An instance.

>> Participant:
Okay, actually the first one that comes to mind um [Name omitted] one of the women that is the office-

>> Interviewer:
A person - a coworker that you work with?

>> Participant:
Yeah. Yeah she's uh basically the office secretary. We were doing a set of interviews of this new position at work and there was this - there were two women that interviewed and an older gentleman that interviewed and one young guy that interviewed. And she has like no idea, where all of the other people I work with are pretty much aware.

>> Interviewer:
Of?

>> Participant:
Of my sexuality. Umm and she is not, just because I'm not 100% sure what her stance on that is. I - I just don't know. So I don't know how to gauge what her reaction would be. So I haven't said anything about it yet. So this young gentleman is coming in for this interview. And she was telling me all about it saying "oh he looked pretty cute and all". I'm like you know. And I - I

wanted to say something about it, but it was a professional setting because we were about to interview somebody and it's not exactly the time to say "oh yea no I'm not."

>> Interviewer:
So she was implying that because of how cute he was?

>> Participant:
Yeah. Yeah, she was trying to set me up with him. Basically. Like she said something like to me before she brought him in like go brush your hair real quick.

>> Interviewer:
Oh, so she was telling you to go make yourself pretty, so he'd be interested?

>> Participant:
Exactly.

>> Interviewer:
So she's not aware.

>> Participant:
Yeah, and it wasn't the right situation to tell her I wouldn't be interested even if my hair was brushed.

>> Interviewer:
You mentioned your work. Are there other co-workers who are aware of your sexual orientation? Do you think you're open about it or discuss it at work?

>> Participant:
You know, it's not really discussed. It's an open environment, but not really discussed. I work in an office full of men. But I've never gotten any impression from them that it's something they're uncomfortable with. And it's sort of one of those situations that instead of coming out and saying "He guys I'm gay" It was more of like they talk about their home life a lot, and I sort of slowly started mentioning my girlfriend and I do this, or [Name omitted] and I went and did this thing. Or we're going here.

>> Interviewer:
So you didn't explicitly tell them.

>> Participant:
No.

>> Interviewer:
Just sort of conversationally.

>> Participant:
Yeah, just kind of in the conversation at work.

>> Interviewer:
So you said you used the term girlfriend.

>> Participant:
Yeah- well it doesn't necessarily mean a sexual partner. So I kind of used it as a tester. I threw it out there and waited for a reaction. So I used it at different times and in different conversations to see how they'd react and eventually we had a thing on a Saturday. A thing that we went over to my boss's house. It was just a thing that we all went – kind of a family cookout type of work thing. But I brought her with me.

>> Interviewer:
Uh huh.

>> Participant:
And it was completely like, normal. They were all like "hey we've heard about you." Blah, blah. So it wasn't really an issue. They just kind of accepted her and accepted me. But it wasn't some big formal acceptance it was just in the "this is no big deal or just like this is our everyday life."

>> Interviewer:
Well that's exciting.

>> Participant:
Yeah.

>> Interviewer:
You mentioned earlier that you use a lot of terms when interacting with your coworkers to kind of judge their reaction, and you got a sense of how they felt before bringing your partner to this event. What do you do if it's a new person at work. Do you have to start all over, even though the others you work with currently know?

>> Participant:
Yeah, well actually we just got a new staff member. And I'm not totally sure if he knows - or I'm not. Well he worked in a different office on campus. So he was already really good friends with some of the people in our office. And he's really good friends of our boss because they've known each other for years.

>> Interviewer:
Okay.

>> Participant:
So, it's one of those situations where it's like, and still I don't' totally know he knows. I wouldn't be uncomfortable mentioning it in front of him. It's just like I haven't had the opportunity to mention anything in front of him about it yet.

>> Interviewer:
Yeah, it's not something that -

>> Participant:
Yeah it's not something like you just walk up to someone and stick out your hand and say Hi I'm [Name omitted] and I'm gay.

>> Interviewer:
Okay, uh um well can you tell me about. Uh can you tell me about another time what about another time you- that you were interested in communicating your sexual orientation. What was the situation and why were you interested in communicating it? What's another time you wanted to communicated it and why- why did you want to?

>> Participant:
Well I guess hmm ((pause)) one of the main reasons I would want to communicate it is well for lack of a better way to say it like I want to ((pause)). I want to be included. I maybe ((pause)) feeling like I'm included. I mean they talk about their families so I want to talk about mine. I guess I'm not trying to communicate my sexual orientation but I guess if on some level I'm supposed to ask about their families, since I'm part of the conversation that involves them talking about them, so I guess I would like them to ask about mine. Does that make sense?

>> Interviewer:
Yeah. Your significant other is a significant part of your life.

>> Participant:
Right.

>> Interviewer:
So that's why you want to talk about it with them?

>> Participant:
Yeah I mean I spend 40 hours per week with them, so it's not like I can just not talk about something in my life. Especially in the type of office I work in, it would be almost more difficult not to talk about it. I mean with my family, I guess it's different. I don't spend as much time with them - so it's more manageable.

>> Interviewer:
Do you think the range of ages matters in your immediate office?

>> Participant:
Well we have a decent age range. I mentioned our department secretary. She doesn't work in the same physical location that we do. So it's- she's not a part of the day-to-day conversation I have with my immediate co-workers. Plus, our department is pretty spread out. I don't know everyone in the whole department that well, so I don't feel comfortable telling them. I doubt they care, but really I don't care what their orientation is so I guess there's no need to really talk about it.

>> Interviewer:
That makes sense. So we just talked about conversations that occur at your work place, so in that occasion, when you wanted to communicate your sexual orientation, what are the verbal and

non-verbal cues and behaviors you used to do so. So what did you say or nonverbal cues did you use.

>> Participant:
Well I guess there's- it's just how I say it in conversation. Maybe the words I use. It's sometimes difficult. It seems like I'm constantly paying super close attention to other's people's conversations so I can see if, or make a judgment about how they'd react to me saying something about my sexual orientation or my partner. Sometimes in conversations, even when I know they're fine with it, there's still a brief moment of hesitation - before I say something.

>> Interviewer:
Have there been occasions where you want to conceal your sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
Well at times when I'm around my family. I pretty much ((pause)). Well I've never gone so far as to like make up a relationship with someone of the opposite sex. I've never said to anyone stop asking me about who I'm dating. I guess if I'm asked if I'm dating someone by a person who I am concealing it to, then I maybe will say I'm not dating anyone. I mean when my dad or grandparents have asked me why I don't have a boyfriend yet. I've responded that I just don't have time for a relationship yet. Even like [Name omitted] at the office will joke about how because I'm single I have all of this free time. I just respond that I can't even think about being in a relationship right now.

>> Interviewer:
Is it hard for you since you do have a partner? I mean for myself I understand, even though I'm with someone that I'm happy with and would tell anyone who asks me, sometimes it seems like people feel like you're pushing your sexual orientation down their throat if you mention something about your significant other.

>> Participant:
Oh yeah. It's very difficult because it may seem like you're ashamed of the person. Even though you're not. Not at all. But then if you do talk about them, then others may say something that would make you feel bad about yourself or even that person. So it's easier just to not talk about them. I don't know. It's like you feel like you're keeping them a secret, making up a lie. I feel a little bit bad about that. Maybe it's being selfish, I'm not sure, but kind of just something you learn to manage or deal with it.

>> Interviewer:
If you could take a minute to think about times in your life when you were interested in determining another's sexual orientation. What was the situation for the first one you remember and why were you interested in determining their sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
Uh actually the one that comes to mind is well I go to the gym a lot, and well this was a couple of years ago. But I used to see these same girls at the gym together a lot. And they were both very attractive. And they're now, funny enough two of my really good friends. But at the time I

didn't know them, didn't know anything about them but I just saw them there all of the time. And especially being a woman who spent a lot more time in the "men's section" of the gym, and they were the only two young women that I also saw in that section. So part of it was an interest in- I just wanted to get to know these people err because they're interested in something that I'm interested in. But also I just kind of got a vibe from them.

>> Interviewer:
What is that vibe?

>> Participant:
It's um, it's really hard to describe. Uh, you know that whole gaydar thing. Who knows what totally qualifies. But I guess for one of them, she had a certain walk and a way that she held herself that was a little more masculine. And was sort of using, I hate to assume things about people, but I guess it was something like that. Like, she was giving off more of like a dominate personality and that like, for me when I recognize other women with those traits or with those "tells" in my opinion. So that was like the first time I can really think of that I wanted to know. I guess part of the reason that I wanted to know was just because I was really curious. Like it's nice to know that there are people who are like me and interested in the same things I'm interested in. I mean you see someone you find interesting or even cute, but then you watch. Just for a minute you do the little steps in your head, just to see if you maybe could strike up a conversation or talk to them.

>> Interviewer:
You mention steps could you tell me what steps you take or explain these steps?

>> Participant:
Well maybe steps is the wrong word. ((pause)). Like uh ((pause)) you know you watch the other person, you watch how they react, how they hold themselves, kind of how they interact with other people. I guess in my opinion there's certain girlish behaviors that a lot of lesbians like don't do. Like maybe, I don't know, kind of how they act around guys. I guess you just watch for those traits maybe. I guess I just mean it's just kind of a process of being observant and watching how people interact with each other. I mean without being too stereotypical I do think there are certain traits or maybe how other lesbian or gay people ((pause)) kind of how they interact that if you're watching or if something sparks your interest that allows a person to just tell or at least allows for more traits to identified.

>> Interviewer:
Obviously, you are aware of my sexual orientation. But, when you first met me, did you go through this process.

>> Participant:
Uh, yes. ((laughs)) I think I probably knew right after I talked to you.

>> Interviewer:
So do you think that some people are better at determining others' sexual orientation or do you think that some maybe are more expressive of their sexual orientation.

>> Participant:
Yes, I think that as you kind of go through life you just kind of learn how to understand or pick up on things that other gay or lesbian people are saying. I do think that some maybe are better at expressing their sexual orientation, but I think a lot of it depends on maybe how comfortable they feel with those they're talking with. It's kind of a paradox. In your case, maybe you picked up on the fact I would be comfortable with your sexual orientation so you were able to just be more open about yourself. I'm really not sure. But, sometimes there are some people who don't have these traits. Like if you're out at a bar, trying to meet someone, then I guess if you don't have those traits then it could be a real problem conveying that information to others. Ways that kind of allow other gay people to kind of have those traits then it could be a real problem conveying that information to others. I guess it could be too that some people maybe don't want to or just don't take on those traits because maybe that's just not their personality.

>> Interviewer:
Do you think there are certain strategies you could use to communicate your sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
Do you mean like in a bar or?

>> Interviewer:
In any context or setting?

>> Participant:
Like certain strategies with nonverbal cues?

>> Interviewer:
Nonverbal or verbal.

>> Participant:
Yeah I think so, I guess if you really want to. I think it depends a lot on the reason you want to communicate it. I think maybe for women regardless of the reason, but it can be, at least in my experience, in the women wear- which is pretty stereotypical I know. Like wearing masculine clothes, no makeup, and wearing your hair a certain way. I guess. You know ((pause)) trying to butch it up.

>> Interviewer:
Do you think that's context specific?

>> Participant:
I do think it's pretty contextual. Especially with clothing. Determining if someone is gay when interacting with them for a lack of a better term is almost an art form. And it's like, I don't mean that like ((pause)) well I don't mean that like gay people have some magical gift. I just think that if you are gay it seems that from experience you just have a little more insight into- what how people act in different ways and different mannerisms. It's something that you just learn to pick up on.

>> Interviewer:
We were talking about situations when you want to communicate your sexual orientation. Earlier you mentioned clothing and suggested that in your experience many lesbian women wear masculine clothing. Do you think the reverse is true - that maybe some gay men wear effeminate clothing. Let me clarify ((pause)). During every day normal life, do you think a man wearing something more feminine may indicate a non-heterosexual orientation?

>> Participant:
Well I think that women can wear men's clothing depending on the situation and it wouldn't necessarily mean that she's a lesbian er ((pause)) like some women maybe who are on sports teams. God I sound really stereotypical. (Laughs). But I mean men's styles are really changing. So I think that uh ((pause)) there is a lot of factors really in play ((pause)). Er ((pause)) I guess it means more about everyday style. I mean this is just from my observation. This is something that I tend to have very little patience with. This is sometimes the mentality in the lesbian community. If you get a large collection of us (h) I feel that there is sometimes this need to out butch each other.

>> Interviewer:
 Really?

>> Participant:
Yes, it's this little bit of like masculine dominant mentality. Like who can prove that they are more masculine. I can remember one time sitting around with a bunch of my friends and they were saying like they knew how to weld and I instantly, I didn't say it, but I wanted to say I know how to weld too! Or things like I own a tool set or shit like that. And it's ((pause)) it's stupid.

>> Interviewer:
Is that fun though? Do you have fun doing it?

>> Participant:
I- I don't. I mean I get very irritated with it. Uh part of that is because I think that I could play in a competition like that. If it's really a competition. I mean I grew up with a dad who likes fixing things and I learned a lot, but I just don't see why it's a competition. I guess I don't need to project that. I don't need to do that. But it irritates me that ((pause)) they feel that need to project that. Like it's uh ((pause)) almost like a small man's syndrome or mentality. It just irritates me that I have to- I somehow have to prove that I am a lesbian through my butchness or tool set.

>> Interviewer:
Does that always happen when you are in the company of other lesbians.

>> Participant:
No, no-. No, I think that honestly that we have been friends with more masculine minded women anyway. So, it just was heightened by the masculine personalities that had anyway.

>> Interviewer:
There's a lot of cultural norms at play here. For example, I'm a male. So if I converse or act in a certain way that obviously communicates something. In your opinion what do you think such constructs of masculinity or femininity communicate?

>> Participant:
Well, I mean uh ((pause)) I guess well I think ((pause)) I'm not sure how to answer this without sounding like a terrible person.

>> Interviewer:
You're not a terrible person, just answer as honest as you can or as truthful as possible. If you don't want to answer it, that's okay too. I know it's a difficult topic.

>> Participant:
Yeah ((laughs)). Well, like uh ((pause)). Okay so these are just my observations about life and while I don't even believe what I'm about to say, I guess the point is when uh like ((pause)) when you're gay or lesbian you uh you have to know how to live in two worlds at once. So uh it doesn't mean that I think these are truths I'm just saying that I uh ((pause)) as a lesbian woman am aware of I guess the- uh how gay people kind of have a foot in two worlds at once. So uh to answer the question ((pause)). If you're a male and you communicate in what is- in a feminine manner then people, who may not know you super well, or maybe who um have I guess limited minds so to speak, well then they maybe- err probably may think or at least wonder, even for a second if you're gay. But if they maybe already know you're gay, then uh they may judge you to I guess be the woman in your romantic relationships. And uh for women, I think there's not as much as how you necessarily communicate, but more so in your actions - again I don't necessarily - uh think that it really indicates everything, but I think that if you're super butch that it is uh if you're a lesbian and people know then it kind of - well then people assume that you're the guy or the top in the relationships. And you're the one that who does all things a guy does.

>> Interviewer:
Can you explain what top means.

>> Participant:
Well I think it probably means the same for gay men. I mean it's not talking about oral sex more but uh (.) of sex acts that involve penetration. So more of this dominant role during sex. ((Laugh))

>> Interviewer:
Really? I just learned something new.

>> Participant:
I mean lesbians I don't think that has all of the different terms that gay men have, like versatile top, versatile, versatile bottom etc. But one term I can think of is pillow princesses. It's like uh a women who just lays there and expects everything to be done to her.

>> Interviewer:
So she's not reciprocal?

>> Participant:
Exactly. Well it's sometimes we all like to be treated like a princess, but I mean this term is used exclusively like this person never reciprocates. But I guess it- it's kind of how they get labeled. It's not really derogatory, but you know this is - um this is something that is kind of communicated in the lesbian circles. Also, the idea butch on the street bitch in the sheets or vice versa.

>> Interviewer:
I think that gay guys use that phrase too. Have you noticed that in the gay community there is a lot of play on words. You mentioned earlier that lesbians like to out butch each other in their conversations. Do you think there is a lot of word play or just having fun in conversations among members of the lesbian community?

>> Participant:
I don't think there's as much in the lesbian community, at least in my experience, as there is as much in the gay male community. I do think that sometime women in general play with words more than straight men do.

>> Interviewer:
Alright, the next question I have, is as you know, the heterosexual community is the dominant cultural community. Heterosexual youths develop understandings of the own sexual identity very early by watching their parents, if they are heterosexual etc. Members of the non-heterosexual community really have fewer resources to understand their own sexual orientation identity.

>> Participant:
Oh yeah.

>> Interviewer:
So I'm wondering how you came to understand your own sexual orientation and how old you were you recognized it. Did you have anyone in your life that you maybe talked to about your sexual orientation or what did you rely on to come to this understanding of yourself.

>> Participant:
I grew up in a very small town. There were like uh about 100 people in my high school class. So I didn't really have a lot of like um like it just wasn't even a thought or an option. Like growing up. But right around the time when I got into high school. My mom is a classical musician so she's part of a very large supporting community that's pretty diverse. So she had a diverse group of friends. So I guess back to the school I went to there wasn't really anyone as a role model or friends that were within the community. But because of my mom's friends she had a couple of- of friends who were in same-sex relationships for several years. So I guess I did have that as an example, but I didn't really uh I guess understand my own sexual orientation or what it meant until I was about 16. I mean I thought girls were pretty before then but I guess I didn't realize that

it was something beyond just recognizing that someone is uh attractive. I mean uh: for girls ((pause)) it seems like for a lot of girls they recognize a woman is pretty not because they want to be with her, but because maybe they want to emulate her. I think that's true for everyone really, but I think it's more accepted for women to recognize and acknowledge another female's beauty.

>> Interviewer:
Right, you're saying that person is attractive, not because I want to be with them.

>> Participant:
Exactly, so I can remember I was like 16 and it was New Year's Eve and I got way- way too drunk and uh ((pause)) I was at my friend's house. And there was another girl there who also came out later on. But we both got too drunk and did the whole New Year's kiss thing and then I remember saying "I think I'm gay when I'm drunk".

>> Interviewer:
Just when you're drunk?

>> Participant:
Yeah ((laughs)). Just when I'm drunk! And that was sort of like uh admitting it to myself thing But I remember kind of reflecting on the kiss and realized I like it, more than I should of kind of thing.

>> Interviewer:
You know we talked throughout this whole interview about how to communicate your sexual orientation in a kind of roundabout way, but how do you think you learned how to communicate your sexual orientation.

>> Participant:
Well it does seem like I kind of learned it. I mean it wasn't really until college that I even learned how to use the verbiage. Like am I gay, am I bi, am I a lesbian. I didn't even know how to tell people. But I remember in college, when I first started coming out to people it- it was really well it uh it wasn't subtle at all. I remember once I was sitting around in, well I was an RA [Resident Hall Assistant] for a couple of years. So can remember during RA training sitting with those girls that I knew I was going to have to be close with because we just worked together and- and lived together all of the time and I can just remember saying to them hi uh "just so you all know I'm gay". And being in the housing environment I guess I didn't think it would be a problem because we're taught to be really accepting of everyone and everything. But with my friends, I was thinking well this could go differently. I mean even in my first year of college I was thinking about my roommate and how to go about telling her. I mean I didn't want her to uh to think that well I didn't want my roommate to be like oh great, it's my first year in college and great I got stuck with a lesbian. That could be very uncomfortable.

>> Interviewer:
Why?

>> Participant:
Actually I um think that's something that I've always been aware of. Well- like there was a situation in like my high school where we were in gym class and we had to change. And well, we also had to change from a regular bra into a sports bra. And well I uh ((pause)) I left my bra in my locker. So I had to go back and get it. And I came back and this really creepy kid was kind of staring at me and I was like uh what are you doing and she was like uh I just like your bra. I mean I guess when I say creepy there were other reasons that it was creepy, but I kind of was uncomfortable with the whole thing and I really well I didn't want to just assume that she was gay. But because of the high school environment, but I was always very hyper-conscious of
>> Participant: continued:
making sure I didn't come off as checking out people. I mean our gym teacher was suspected of being gay and people always made comments like she was always checking out girls in the locker room.

>> Interviewer:
So you thought that in your high school that people thought if a person was attracted to members of the same sex, they would be attracted to anyone of that particular sex- no matter what?

>> Participant:
Yes. Yeah exactly. Exactly. So a freshman in college, I didn't know this girl before I didn't want to come off as being a lesbian and her think that I was instantly attracted to her just because I'm a lesbian. Plus I wasn't 100% sure about it myself I didn't want to really even deal with that yet with someone I didn't even know.

>> Interviewer:
So how did you learn to interact with potential romantic partners. Can you describe to me times when you thought "oh now I see how this works". How did you learn to interact with romantic partners?

>> Participant:
I don't know. Unfortunately a lot of it was alcohol. I guess I was really nervous and I like (h) I just well I don't know. I don't know if I ever learned. It's just- it was such a long process, but you know, I know, I don't know how I know. I mean I guess I know how I'm in a relationship so I guess I learned at least how to find a romantic relationship. But I think it's still a process that it's kind of uh ((pause)) it's just continual. But I guess if I was interested in a person- romantically I guess, I always thought to myself how do you know straight people proceed? I mean that's really the only knowledge that I had. You know, I have a theory on this. Women, when a straight women is interested in a guy her friends will tell her all of the time like to back off, don't get too attached you know play it cool. And I can speak to this because both of my siblings are straight and I've watched this. My brother is starting to date and my sister has more men that I care to (laughs). I mean anyway I have a little more of an input on this. But it seems like men are a little more cautious. So when you have a relationship like that it seems like you have a guy to kind of balance it out so as to not get attached too quickly but then you have the girl who helps to bring out the emotion in the guy. But when you have two men or two men it's different. You don't have that opposite type of thing. So not to buy in to stereotypes but I've seen a lot of women who

are just so ready to jump in and commit to a relationship and when you have two men you have the stereotype that there's no commitment they're just after the sex - they are scared to commit. So when I sort of go about uh ((pause)) I mean if I was going into a relationship a new one. I mean I just go into like thinking like both sexes thinking what is the normal amount of time to get attached. It well I think maybe uh ((pause)) that it could be my overly cautious nature. But I think I-I guess that I'm sort of learning how to interact with someone of the same-sex in a romantic way is well I don't know it's a learning thing - kind of trial and error. I think that it's just a part of growing and learning gay or straight. You have to learn how to be in a relationship. I don't think it's easy for anyone. I just think that uh some relationships have different challenges than others.

>> Interviewer:
Do you think there is a big difference between straight people and gay people as far as relationships go?

>> Participant:
I think maybe it kind of depends ((pause)) I think again that there is different challenges. But really I think that at the end of the day it's as much about learning about yourself as well as how to interact with another person. This is for both gay people and straight people. For example, sometimes you're in relationships and it just works out better as a friendship. You have to try it out some. I don't think it's something you ever really wholly learn how to do. It all depends on the other person. There's no right way or wrong way to interact with a potential romantic partner because each situation is uh unique and different as people are all different.

>> Interviewer:
For my final question. What do you think about gaydar?

>> Participant:
The term gaydar?

>> Interviewer:
Well what do you think about being able to identify LGBTQ individuals just from interacting with them.

>> Participant:
I don't know. It's kind of (h) I mean I have a lot of friends I called- I mean uh not to them- But I called their sexual orientation before they admitted it or even publically disclosed it. I uh don't mean that I went around and told people, but I'm saying I kind of became aware that they weren't straight just from hanging out with them. I guess I think it's a sense of almost like observing learning etc. I don't think it's a psychic ability. But honestly it's almost comforting to be able to recognize another gay individual - regardless of the reason. So maybe I just try to find similarities between myself and other people to be comforted. I guess it's just from interacting, I don't immediately have a reaction from other gay or lesbian people just because they're attracted to members of their same-sex. ((pause)) Does that make any sense?

>> Interviewer:
It makes perfect sense. Alright, well that concludes my questions. Do you have anything you'd like to ask of me or about this study?

>> Participant:
Nothing that I can think of.

>> Interviewer:
Great, and again I did have your permission to record this interview and you have been given the informed consent form and you understand your rights as a research participant.

>> Participant:
Yes.

>> Interviewer:
Fantastic, well again thank you for your participation in this project and please contact me with any additional questions or concerns you may have.

Appendix D

Interview ID 9002

Sex: Male
Age: 22 years old
Sexual Orientation: Exclusively Gay
Informed Consent: Yes. On file, signed with permission to record.

>> Interviewer: Interview ID 9002, 22 YO Male Exclusively Gay

>> Interviewer:
So First I just want to start off by asking you a quick question. If you could please explain how comfortable with your sexual orientation and how public you are about it. For example, are you open about it in all areas of your life or are there areas of your life where you keep your sexual orientation private?

>> Participant:
 I am very open about my sexual orientation. I'm not private about it in any area of my life.

>> Interviewer:
 If you can take a minute to think about a time in your life where you have wanted to communicate your sexual orientation. What was the situation for the first one you remember and why were you interested in communicating it?

>> Participant:
Uh ((pause)) I mean there are many times in my life before I was completely open about it you know with friends or family. I don't think I ever really did anything intentional to act like I was something or someone that I'm not. Maybe I just didn't come out and say that I'm not straight. Looking back I guess I've always tried to be who I am.

>> Interviewer:
Do you have another time in your life or a specific instance where you wanted to communicate your sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
I guess there's a certain instance that I remember where I started to tell more and more people and even though I wasn't completely public are started telling more and more friends so I kind of started looking forward to seeing different friends and being able to tell them about it.

>> Interviewer:
How do you think you went about telling people what was it like for you?

>> Participant:
Well for me it was a little awkward. I mean the culture that I grew up in really didn't accept being gay as just a part of who I am. They're uh- They're pretty religious and they didn't really associate or accept me being a homosexual. So one of the hardest things for me even before I

told people was simply accepting that I am gay. Then it was somewhat hard to figure out what words to use when I wanted to tell people.

>> Interviewer:
On those occasions when you wanted to communicate your sexual orientation, can you describe the verbal and non-verbal cues or behaviors you used to communicate it?

>> Participant:
Uh. ((pause)). When I did communicate it?

>> Interviewer:
Yes, for example what are some of the things you said or maybe specific behaviors that you employed to communicate your sexual orientation.

>> Participant:
Well I mean I've used eye contact sometimes with friends I just said guy's I'm gay. It depends really. It's really kind of hard to identify something specific. But I know a lot of times I did just come out and say I'm gay.

>> Interviewer:
You mentioned eye contact. How did you use eye contact to communicate your sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
Well, I guess I use eye contact to communicate my interested in them and I kind of uh ((pause)) look to see if they're interested in me. It's hard to say. I guess I kind of feel like if you're using eye contact to communicate sexual orientation there is a lot of sustained eye contact.

>> Interviewer:
So they eye contact is prolonged?

>> Participant:
Yes.

>> Interviewer:
When you use eye gaze, what is it for?

>> Participant:
It can be really multiple reasons, maybe I'm just communicating my interested or I'm just interested in them as a person. Or I want to know if they're part of the family or have sugar in their tank.

>> Interviewer:
What do you mean by "part of the family"

>> Participant:
Part of the family is something that the gay's use to mean as being part of the gay or homosexual lifestyle.

>> Interviewer:
Do you mean gay men or women?

>> Participant:
Well I think I mostly use it in reference to other gay men. But yeah, uh it would also mean gay people in general.

>> Interviewer:
What do you mean by "sugar in the tank"?

>> Participant:
So sugar in the tank. Hmm A little pep in their step. Something in their body language that suggests that they're gay or something. You know a little pep in their step. I guess it's uh a nice way of saying of they might be gay.

>> Interviewer:
 Have there even been occasions when you wanted to conceal your sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
 Uh. I'm trying to think. Well I obviously concealed it for 19 and a half years. Uh And I wanted to conceal it for even long, but I was found out. So after I was found out by my parents I uh I guess I haven't had a time that I wanted to conceal it (pause) ever since that barrier has been broken I guess I didn't need to conceal it anymore.

>> Interviewer:
You mention a barrier was broken

>> Participant:
Basically someone told my parents and I didn't really have control of the information anymore so I just told them.

>> Interviewer:
Do you ever attempt to conceal your sexual orientation or become more open about it based on the environment you're in?

>> Participant:
Yes, I was in Miami last year and I was pretty open about my sexual orientation there kind of because I lived in the "gay district" so I wanted to make sure everyone knew I was gay. In concealing my sexual orientation well when I first came to school I tried to be a little more conservative about my sexual orientation.

>> Interviewer:
So when you first came to school people in your classes didn't know your sexual orientation.

>> Participant:
Yeah I didn't really see why I would really need to confirm or deny it. I guess I didn't try to conceal it but I didn't just announce it.

>> Interviewer:
If you could think about a time in your life when you wanted to determine another's sexual orientation, if you could please tell me about what the time was, what the situation was and why you were interested in determining they're sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
Uh I guess sometimes it just trying to see if they're other people similar to me or like me. I mean sometimes it's maybe to see if they're be interested in me but it's kind of also about seeing other who are like me or maybe have the same interests as me because we're both gay. It's weird but it's nice not being the only one of something. It's kind of a sense of belonging to something. I remember a time when I was the coffee shop I work at and he ordered something from me. There was a lot of eye contact. I mean a lot. Then he actually said something to me. I mean I was working but we rather struck up a friendship and it went from there.

>> Interviewer:
But it started from eye contact.

>> Participant:
Yeah then progressed into small talk and eventually he asked me out on a date. But before he asked me out on a date the whole time I was trying to figure out if he was just a friendly person or what his intent was. I guess I needed to determine his sexual orientation to see where I could maybe lead the conversation to or maybe topics or I guess how uh I could accomplish whatever I wanted to at that time in our conversation.

>> Interviewer:
Is there another time that you can remember when you wanted to determine another's sexual orientation and tell me about the situations and why you wanted to determine their sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
Well, all of them have always happened at work. Well not always... maybe I don't know I guess those are the major ones. I mean there's always just seeing someone or meeting them in different situations and when I want to just know. Maybe I'm nosy but sometimes I just want to know. I mean I'm not the type of person who makes determining someone else's sexual orientation is ever the main focus of my day or conversations. But I mean it's kind of just people watching and you kind of get a feeling ((pause)) again you kind of see a pep in someone's step.

>> Interviewcr:
When you were in these different occasions when you wanted to determine another's sexual orientation how did you go about doing it? I mean what kind of information do you use?

>> Participant:
I just sometimes quietly observe people. Their body language, word usage. And I uh I kind of what they say. I don't know. It's hard to just say.

>> Interviewer:
What are some of the words you think they use?

>> Participant:
Well it doesn't necessarily have to be specific words. Maybe their conversations what they're talking about. But some words, I guess I don't know too many straight guys that use the same words that I do. Like "girl" or "bitch" I mean they use those words but it's kind of how they use them compared to how I use them. For example, I'd start my sentence off with "Girl". I dunno. I guess I don't see straight guys playing with words the way gay guys do.

>> Interviewer:
Okay, so if I was talking with someone and I said "Girl did you see that movie last night" how would you interpret that?

>> Participant:
Well I think I'd feel like you were using that word outside of its intended meaning and I maybe would become aware of you sexual orientation or maybe just kind of think hmm maybe he's not straight. I dunno it's hard to say. I wouldn't necessarily uh make a judgment about someone's sexual orientation based on a word, but I maybe uh may become more aware of the possibility of their sexual orientation isn't completely straight.

>> Interviewer:
In your experience, do you think that certain words used in conversations may just denote a closeness with that person's conversation partner?

>> Participant:
Yeah maybe, but I think there's a lot of context involved. I mean words carry many meanings and how they're used can carry even more meanings. It's just in my experience that straight guys don't really use certain words in certain ways. But LGBTQ individuals kind of talk or use words in similar ways.

>> Interviewer:
When you have tried to determine another's sexual orientation have you ever used clothing or other things of a physical nature.

>> Participant:
Sometimes I mean I know several gay guys who you could never tell based on what they're wearing and some you can immediately tell. I mean sometimes I wear super flashy accessories that scream gay and other days don't.

>> Interviewer:
What about the person's tone of voice?

>> Participant:
Well I know some gay guys that have a very effeminate voice and others don't. Uhh I mean they're tone of voice may kind of uhh play into at least me becoming aware that they may not be straight, but I don't think it would really determine or I guess give me enough information to make a crr a judgment.

>> Interviewer:
As you know members of the heterosexual community develop understandings of their own sexual orientation very early. However, members of the LGBTQ community have fewer resources when developing an understanding of their own sexual orientation. So I'm wondering how you came to understanding your sexual orientation and how old were you.

>> Participant:
I don't really remember a certain age that I woke up and was like oh I'm gay today. I do remember when I was young I was involved in church a lot and some of my peers were starting to show interest in girls but I think I was showing interest in guys. So I think it was something gradual that I was like oh, I'm gay. Ironically, in the church I was involved with they teach that homosexuality is wrong, but they sure teach a lot about it. So I knew what being attracted to guys meant thanks to church.

>> Interviewer:
Do you think that your church's teaching was the only thing that helped you understand that you were gay, but how did you learn to communicate it to others?

>> Participant:
Well my church didn't really teach me that. (laugh) I guess from just living trying things out and experimenting. I don't know if I even still communicate it correctly. I guess it uhh depends a lot of uh the situation.

>> Interviewer:
Do you think that dating a individual of the same sex is different from dating a member of the opposite sex or at least trying to date a member of the opposite sex from your experiences from growing up in a hetero-normative environment?

>> Participant:
I don't know if it's necessarily that much different. I mean at first I did feel a little nervous meeting other openly out people for the very first time. I as like "oh my goodness" but I guess I wasn't completely out or totally out at the time so maybe that's why I was nervous. I thought that

everyone else would assume that I was gay or something because I was associating with someone who is openly gay, but I'm not sure. It's kind of strange. I mean it was exciting. But I still don't know if I know how to date or do it right. I guess for the longest time I just didn't want to be the only one like this and so even if I was nervous about meeting people it was nice to be able to connect to another who is like me. Maybe that's what straight people think to, they just wanted to connect to another person's who's like them so maybe it's difficult or nerve wracking for everyone.

>> Interviewer:
The next question I have for you, how did you learn to interact with potential romantic partners? Was there any time in your life that you can remember that you realized "oh, now I see how this works".

>> Participant:
Um:m I think it was trial and error. I mean showing interest and then seeing what works kind of goes from there. I mean there's a lot involved. I mean if it's initial interaction that was definitely trial and error. If you're talking sexually, well I think sexual partners just learn from each other. I mean it's about being responsive to your sexual partner. It doesn't seem like there's that much difference between sexual orientations. I guess it may be a little more difficult because you have to kind of be aware of the situation and of course your own safety like you don't want to hit on the wrong person), but interacting with gay people or other gay people is kind of like interacting with straight people. We're all just people sometimes we kind of screw up our conversations and sometimes we don't. But I don't think that my primary reasons for wanting to know or figure out if someone is gay or not or even to communicate my own sexual orientation is to try to get them into a romantic or sexual relationship.

>> Interviewer:
What do you think about Gaydar?

>> Participant:
I believe well in a way I believe it's real and in a way I believe it's not. Hmm how do I saw this. My gaydar has been, I don't know I think it's I don't believe in it 100%. I do think it's faulty I know mine has been, but I do think maybe it's about being observant it's not one certain thing, but maybe like a mixture of different things. It's not like I just look at someone's picture and be like person is clearly family (unless it's a picture of a hot guy in a pride parade). But I can't really go in a room and close my eye and point to the nearest gay guy. So I guess uhh, well it's just about observing and being aware of individuals and the situation and kind of monitoring things.

>> Interviewer:
Okay well that concludes my questions do you have any questions you would like to ask me at this time?

>> Participant:
No.

>> Interviewer:
Well I want to thank you for participating in my study and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Appendix E

Interview ID 9003

Sex: Male
Age: 23 years old
Sexual Orientation: Exclusively Gay
Informed Consent: Yes. On file, signed with permission to record.

>> Interviewer:
Alright, so this is interview ID number 9003; 23 year old male, graduate assistant, English as the primary language and exclusively gay. So I'm going to basically ask you a series of questions and you're just going to respond, and you don't have to answer any of the questions. You know how this goes, right?

>> Participant:
Yeah, mm hm.

>> Interviewer:
Cool. Please explain how comfortable you are with your sexual orientation and how public you are about it.

>> Participant:
Completely comfortable and completely public. I've been out since I was thirteen, so I've had a long process to, ten years, to get comfortable with myself.

>> Interviewer:
Ok, so you're open about it in all areas of your life?

>> Participant:
Correct, yes.

>> Interviewer:
Are there any areas of your life that you keep your sexual orientation private or not immediately disclosed?

>> Participant:
During job interviews when you're first getting to know people, I won't go up to you and introduce myself as, "Hi, I'm [Name omitted]. I'm gay." If you ask, I will answer yes or no, but I won't just--

>> Interviewer:
Say?

>> Participant:
Right. I won't go ahead and just disclose that information if it's not necessary.

>> Interviewer:
Ok. If you could please take a minute to think about a time in your life when you've wanted to communicate your sexual orientation to another person, what was the situation for the first one that you remembered and why were you interested in communicating your sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
I think the most impactful one was when I wanted to tell my grandma, because I had finally found the person that I wanted to be with and start a serious relationship with, but she was dying. So I didn't know how she was going to take it, so it was an interesting situation because she was in a fragile state, but I did want her to die knowing who I was and knowing that I was happy, comfortable with who I was, but I also didn't want to ruin our relationship if she needed that adjustment period or that time to accept or understand what that meant for me and what that meant for our relationship.

>> Clinton
Sure. Do you have another time when you were interested in communicating your sexual orientation, that you can think of?

>> Participant:
Probably any roommate situation where you're first meeting your roommate, because I've always had male roommates in residence halls until this past year and it's always an interesting thing to tell a roommate, "Hi, I'm [Name omitted] and I'm gay", when you're first trying to build that relationship, but at the same time, it's not something you want to keep hidden, because it's going to eventually come out. It's going to eventually have to be known in order for me to feel comfortable in the room and them to feel comfortable in the room.

>> Interviewer:
Ok. On those occasions when you wanted to communicate your sexual orientation, can you please describe the verbal and nonverbal cues or behaviors that you used to send the message? Like, you mentioned the first situation that we just talked about was grandmother, so obviously it seems like you negotiated this process in your head, right?

>> Participant:
Right.

>> Interviewer:
So in that situation, you probably explicitly told her.

>> Participant:
Right, right.

>> Interviewer:
But maybe with the roommates is there--it's always--I mean I know exactly what you're talking-- you know, I understand that, and so how do you--because you said you don't want to say, "Hey, I'm this person," so did you leave--was there behavioral or nonverbal stuff that you may have employed?

>> Participant:
I mean, nonverbal stuff as in I have a rainbow flag on my computer, I have a lot of gay symbols or gay icons, gay activists that I have posters of or pictures of and things of that nature, Ellen DeGeneris-I have a picture of her, because she's like one of my role models, because she's such a strong advocate in the community-things of that nature, just music that I listen to. All of those can be considered nonverbal communicators of or indicators of being homosexual. Obviously not every homosexual male or female is going to do these things, or just because you do these things doesn't mean.

>> Interviewer:
Right, I should probably clarify. There's all these cultural stereotypes in the gay community. There are stereotypes. They're not bad. It depends on how, I guess, they're used.

>> Participant:
Right. The stereotypes were there for me, so it kind of gave them the opportunity to ask those questions if they wanted further clarification or if they were curious and wanted to know.

>> Interviewer:
Sure. Have you ever said--you know, obviously I've done a couple of, well more than a couple and a lot of surveys and all type of things, folks, about this particular topic. Are there other cues--you know, we talked about using these different symbols. What about maybe not with the roommate, but in a different situation like if you were at a bar and you were interested in someone, maybe you wanted to date them or whatever, how do you communicate your sexual orientation to--?

>> Participant:
I think eye contact with people. Some people say that eye contact is kind of one of those things where males don't typically make eye contact with each other or try to avoid it, because it's viewed as more of an intimate thing, so with me, it's heavy eye contact or looking for gestures, inflection of the voice, seeing if that's there. Typically, gay men have certain talk with their hands more.

>> Interviewer:
More expressive, like physically?

>> Participant:
Exactly. Even to the clothes that they wear, which is very stereotypical, but gay men typically dress a little bit better than straight men. That's kind of changing now a little bit, because of pop icons and all.

>> Interviewer:
Metrosexuals, it's confusing. ((Laughs)). It is-

>> Participant:
Ri:ght. But it was typically seen and still, I believe, is gay men dress a little bit better or at least different than straight men.

>> Interviewer:
Ok, but you think the eye contact is something important?

>> Participant:
For me, that's the most important, yes.

>> Interviewer:
What about, because that would be if you're trying to distinguish or communicate your sexual orientation to another male, do you think that works with homosexual women, the lesbian community?

>> Participant:
Since I'm not a lesbian, I can't really identify with that, but I can say from my lesbian friends that that is definitely not what they do. They typically look for signs of being "butch", if you will, so to be masculine, I believe, is to have little to no eye contact (from my experiences).

>> Interviewer:
Ok. Have there been occasions, obviously you mentioned job interviews a little bit ago, so have there been occasions where you wanted to conceal your sexual orientation, and if so, could you please describe the situation and why you wanted to conceal it?

>> Participant:
Yeah. One of those instances would probably be when I went on any of my--I interviewed for over forty positions when I was looking for graduate assistantships. I didn't want that to be a key factor playing into the role of me getting a position or not. Clearly, there's still kind of a stigma or there's still some prejudice against homosexuals-not everywhere, but still some places or some offices.

>> Interviewer:
 At this campus even?

>> Participant:
Yeah, I believe so. Actually, I'm doing my thesis on satisfaction rates at Eastern of the LGBTQ community.

>> Interviewer:
Oh, then you should've interviewed me. ((Laughs)).

>> Participant:
Probably, and so yes, strongly on this campus, in particular some of the offices (I don't want to name any), but in particular, some of the offices that I interviewed for-certain members of those offices (key members of those offices) seemed to be homophobic, if you will.

>> Interviewer:
Sure.

>> Participant:
So I definitely wanted to try to keep that to a minimum. If they could tell that I was, that was fine (obviously those verbal and nonverbal cues that we were talking about).

>> Interviewer:
What do you think they used to tell if you were?

>> Participant:
People have told me that just my expression and--

>> Interviewer:
You mean that this cultural group, this community with other cultural groups, un-specific, some marginalized groups-whether that is based on the color of their skin or their specific ethnicity, there are specific identifying factors, right?

>> Participant:
Right.

>> Interviewer:
And so the LGBTQ community is so diverse. Yes, they have the common factor, commonality of their sexual orientation, right? But there aren't always these outward factors that say, yes, I am a member of this group or not, so it's kind of interesting, but you said--so if they could tell, you think that--

>> Participant:
I was always told I'm very overly expressive and that's usually a sign of being homosexual, but one thing that I am not is I'm not very--I'm very messy. I'm not very clean or organized. I'm clean, but you know, in the sense of being organized.

>> Interviewer:
Oh yeah, I'm not. I understand that.

>> Participant:
But that's usually a sign of being homosexual is to be very organized and neat whereas that kind of throws people with me sometimes, but my hand gestures, they say the way that I talk and move. I've even noticed gay men usually have a little bit more of a swish to them when they walk as opposed to a straight man who kind of walks with their legs a little bit more spread apart and very like bold and single steps, whereas gay men kind of swish or like sway a little more when they walk.

>> Interviewer:
Ok, so when you were wanting to conceal your sexual orientation in these situations, how did you do that?

>> Participant:
I just tried to remain professional and if that topic came up, I tried to veer from it or tried to, instead of answering the question directly about my sexual orientation, I would be like, "Well, at this time, I would not like to disclose any of that information", or something along those lines where they could make assumptions if they wanted to, but I feel like a heterosexual person could do the same exact thing if they were interviewing for--

>> Interviewer:
Were you more or almost like sexually androgynous type of-

>> Participant:
Right, right. Almost like asexual.

>> Interviewer:
But you actively did this? This is something you actively thought about to make sure that--

>> Participant:
Right. It never came up luckily, but it was something that I was prepared to deal with if it came to that.

>> Interviewer:
Ok. Can you please take a minute to think about times in your life when you've become interested in determining another's sexual orientation, what's the first one that you remember?

>> Participant:
Besides homosexuality?

>> Interviewer:
No. Just anything.

>> Participant:
Well, I played around with the idea of bisexuality at first, because I believe that there is a such thing as bisexual. You can be objective to both men and women. I firmly believe in that. Some people say that it's a gateway into homosexuality. That's not the case at all. I can look at a woman and say that they're pretty, but I never see myself doing intercourse or intimate activities with them.
>> Interviewer:
Ok.

>> Participant:
When I started playing around with this idea, I started leaning heavily towards men, so that's where the homosexuality portion of it came from, but I identified as bisexual for a good year or two and then I felt bad when I completely switched over to gay, because it kind of fed into that stereotype of bisexual is just a transition period or an easier way to break the ice, and I feel like that was a disrespect to the bisexual community, but at the same time, sometimes you do have to go through that step when you're a homosexual, because you don't know yet.

>> Interviewer:
Right, so that's more of the process of coming out, right?

>> Participant:
Right.

>> Interviewer:
Ok, so when you finally came out, obviously again, it's not--the community doesn't always wear some kind of outward symbol, right? And so, you maybe wanted to date someone and obviously if you're looking at dating a member of the same sex, you have to determine are they interested in me.

>> Participant:
Right.

>> Interviewer:
And I have to figure out their sexual orientation. Do you have situations like that? Or maybe it was just a friend, maybe you just wanted to--

>> Participant:
I actually started with online dating, because I didn't really know how to go about finding a same sex partner at that time. I was going from eighth to ninth grade, so right in that transition period between middle school and high school and I really didn't understand the whole concept of being gay yet. It wasn't something that was talked about. I come from a very religious background. My family is very religious, so it's something we didn't talk about, so I had to go and explore a lot of things myself and then I stumbled upon online dating and I thought well it's worth a try. I met two or three people that way and one of them I finally decided to date, but something that I promised all of my friends was I would never go alone. I would always take one of them with me, so that's how I actually started dating. After I came out at school, it followed with a lot of other guys deciding to come out and so there was a little circle of gays that kind of inter-dated, because something that I joke about is always when a straight female or male tries to set a gay or lesbian male or female up with a partner it's always like, "Oh, I know this gay person that you might really be interested in."
>> Interviewer:
Right, why?

>> Participant:
It's never a commonality other than that. It's just because you're gay and they're gay, so it's going to happen.

>> Interviewer:
So, obviously there are situations that you have wanted, besides the online dating, where you explicitly say, "This is my sexual orientation and this is yours." Are there others, maybe in the classroom, that you'd just be like, "Oh, there's a gay person in here"? I choose a classroom as just a quick example.

>> Participant:
Well what's funny is I'm kind of going through that. I'm in a cohort of twenty-four and there's only six men-me being one of them. I believe one of the other men in the cohort is a homosexual and it's kind of becoming one of those things where we're trying to look for the cues and symbols that are there, but what's fascinating about this situation is he has a gay brother, so we're not sure if he's such an advocate for the community because of his brother, or if he actually has these feelings. Another interesting aspect of it is his best friend, if you will, he calls him his best friend, but there's speculation about this, is also a homosexual. So it's a very interesting situation and it's something that me and a couple of my friends are really tossing the idea, but no one just wants to blatantly ask him.

>> Interviewer:
What cues have you used to determine or make these assumptions like verbal and nonverbal cues about his sexual orientation? You've obviously said that his brother is gay, his best friend is gay.

>> Participant:
Right, so those are some of--they're both verbal and nonverbal.

>> Interviewer:
So his associations with other people and his family are of interest?

>> Participant:
Right. He has a very advocate point of view for the LGBTQ community, so that's something that you don't typically see in heterosexual men. They might be fine with it, but they're not necessarily an advocate. Also, little things like his Facebook; he celebrated National Coming Out Day. He has a rainbow as his cover photo. He always posts articles about landmarks of the LGBTQ community; things of that nature, just very interesting things that he says and does or advocates for.

>> Interviewer:
Ok, so as you know, because the heterosexual community is the dominant cultural community, heterosexuals begin to develop understandings about their own sexual identities very early just by watching their parents if they're heterosexual, their friends, their siblings, and they do this from the media as well. However, members of the GLBTQ community, we have fewer resources. Like you mentioned coming out and you didn't know how to do it. So how did you come to this understanding of your own sexual identity, as well as how to communicate it or know that someone else is gay, if you recognized it? How old do you think that you were when you started recognizing this process?

>> Participant:
I did a lot of reading. I read about famous gay activists, people who were speculated to be gay and how those speculations were made. I even read fiction and nonfiction books about homosexual men-nothing erotic or anything like that, but just simple gay stories and things that let me know this was a culture, this was a group and by reading these characters and reading about these people, I quickly learned that I do not have to act in a certain way. I can just be myself, so the coming out process was I was actually "outed", so someone found out and went

and told my parents, so it made that situation really fuzzy and very blurred, because I never got to formally say anything to them, so someone did it for me, which was not how I anticipated that going. So, it was the coming out process for me, I didn't actually get to go through, so after it happened I didn't read much more about it, but I helped a couple of friends through it and it's just really a lot of having mentors. I believe that mentorships in the homosexual community, I've read a lot, it's called guardian angels where an older homosexual man will partner up with a younger man and they'll kind of walk them through what it means to be gay, what the culture is, things to look out for. There was a couple of good studies that I've read for my thesis about it.

>> Interviewer:
I haven't heard of that. I'll have to check that out actually. I think one of the things that's really interesting is, that's really insightful, that you know you can partner up with someone, because you don't know. You mentioned online dating and online chat rooms and for me, that was one of the ways I learned about the community and so there was questions. I remember one time-this was several years ago-because I noticed the community-there's a lot of (for me at least) I've noticed a lot of play on words, right? There's a play on words and there's these multiple meanings and if you aren't exposed to that, you don't know what certain things mean, and so one of the questions I had been asked one time, and I use this, because I find it humorous, but it was like, "Do I like water sports?" And I was like, "Well yeah! I love to go, like I like swimming, I like boating, all that stuff." Well, that's obviously not the meaning of it in that specific context, and so I found from an early age that when I gave my response, "Well sure, where do you like to boat at?" Obviously, I learned quickly that that's not what that meant. So I learned that word playing is something that we do or we have multiple meanings for different contexts. Do you think that that is the case?

>> Participant:
It's very, very true. Even within the LGBTQ community, there's subgroups within that. There's bears, there's cubs, there's straight, there's the derogatory "fag", which is a subgroup in the gay community, there's queer, there's all of these groups and it goes kind of into in-group, out-group language. Like you said, "water sports", the LGBTQ community usually knows what that means whereas the out-group thinks it's boating, or swimming, or whatever, although it's sort of leaking out into the heterosexual world as I like to call it. There's so many. Or in the 70's, they'd ask you, "Are you a friend of Dorothy?" Things of that nature where if you're not a part of the community, you don't know what it means. It's definitely that in-group, out-group language, but there's no one there to teach you that.

>> Interviewer:
Right.

>> Participant:
It's very--that's where a lot of the Googling or Urban Dictionary (a lot of those non-reliable sources), but things that help you discover.

>> Interviewer:
Where you may just use it as a reference/just be like you can learn the context.

>> Participant:
Right.

>> Interviewer:
Ok. There is a really interesting-and I think that this came out in the 80's, but it may be the 90's-but it's called "Gay Speak". [It's] a book and I've read it in reference to this particular project that I found really interesting. I was like, "Oh yeah, that's true, that's true." Also, you're talking about this in-group, out-group thing. There was, it was called the "hankie" codes or handkerchief codes, and that was prevalent in like the '70's and '80's. I'm not sure now, but--

>> Participant:
Well, that even goes in the jail community. The sagging of the pants typically means--

>> Interviewer:
You know, that's really interesting that you brought that up. Right. That's where that type, the behavior came from.

>> Participant:
Right, and if people would know that, I think it would change a lot.

>> Interviewer:
How they wear their clothing.

>> Participant:
But, you know, in the jail community you just know that that's what that means, where that's not really the homosexual community, but like you said the handkerchief and even in the gay community, little things like that can target or if you go to a leather bar, you know where you're going and you know what group or dynamic is going to be there.

>> Interviewer:
Ok, so the cues that you use may well depend on the group that you're in or the context?

>> Participant:
Right.

>> Interviewer:
Ok. So you started dating. You found somebody through online means in high school, so how did you learn how to interact with potential romantic partners? Like just interaction.

>> Participant:
I mean, it's as simple as watching porn, I believe.

>> Interviewer:
Oh no, I'm not even talking about sex.

>> Participant:
Oh no, that's just where I learned that it's ok to kiss, it's ok to hold hands.

>> Interviewer:
But I think that's really insightful.

>> Participant:
Right. I mean it's unfortunate. Now I don't think it's the same way, because we have so many television shows that are really trying to have more of the positive gay characters come out and be in successful relationships.

>> Interviewer:
Versus the flighty--I mean, when I was a teenager, the big one was like "Will and Grace", and so the difference that I see between "Will and Grace" then and what we have now is they were always on successful relationships, they always took on these specific gender roles in relationships, and one was over sexualized, and there was this huge difference.

>> Participant:
Like in "Glee" for example, Kurt and Blain and Santana and Brittany, there's no defining roles for either of them. They're homosexual or in the case of Brittany and Santana, they identify as bisexual, but regardless--

>> Interviewer:
They're in a same sex relationship.

>> Participant:
Right. They're in this same sex relationship and there's no identifying roles and so I'm really, really glad those types of characters are being developed and being shown in television shows now, because it's making the gay community or modern family with the two dads, just things like that show positive gay role models, ways that you can be gay and it be ok and this is how to act, and this is ok to act like this, as opposed to, I believe, the twenties generation now, the Generation X or whatever we're in. I don't remember all that, but oh, no, we're millennial students. The millennial generation didn't have that many characters. Like you said, "Will and Grace"-I don't even remember, there might have been a few episodes where they showed same sex couples kissing even. You don't really see a whole lot of that. You know that they're gay, but it's not like you see those intimate actions being done.

>> Interviewer:
Right. When you were learning to interact with romantic partners, was there ever just a moment where you were like, "Oh, this is how it works." Or do you think that your interaction on dates is similar to how heterosexual couples interact on dates?

>> Participant:
I definitely think it was a lot of trial and error to figure that out, especially being in public on dates. It was one of those things, "Well, can I hold his hand? Can I give him a hug? Is it appropriate to kiss? Is it not appropriate to kiss?" Just because we're in that hetero-normative

society where hetcrosexuality is the norm, so there was a lot of first having to be comfortable with yourself, then having to be comfortable with the relationship you're in, and then defining those norms within a relationship. From heteroscxual couples that I'm good friends with, I've actually seen the same thing happen to them. I just think the whole entire idea of P.D.A. in general is something that you have to be comfortable with, but as far as behind closed doors, it was definitely one of those things where, "Oh, you can do this too, because just because we're gay doesn't mean we can't kiss or doesn't mean we can't just--I think the gay community often times is viewed as just having sex, just having intimate--

>> Interviewer:
It's over-sexualized.

>> Participant:
Right. You can't just kiss, or cuddle, or hold hands.

>> Interviewer:
Hang out on the couch.

>> Participant:
Right. It's always assumed you're having sex.

>> Interviewer:
Right. What do you think about "gaydar"?

>> Participant:
Personally, I joke about it existing, but you can't actually rely on gaydar, because it doesn't actually exist. As we talked about a lot of the nonverbal and verbal cues of being gay, there's nothing set in stone. I believe that when two gay people meet, there's often that instant connection with just words said or just simple conversation, but there is no such thing as gaydar. I believe that some people are better at spotting it than others, but you're never going to be right 100% of the time.

>> Interviewer:
Do you think that you are good at identifying fellow--?

>> Participant:
Usually, actually yes. Just by identifying those verbal and nonverbal cues.

>> Interviewer:
What if they haven't come out?

>> Participant:
That's when it gets tricky, because you almost want to tell them that it's ok, but you don't want to overstep that boundary, because let's say that they're not and you're just making that assumption, you don't want to ruin a relationship or just even embarass someone like that.

>> Interviewer:
Ok, so you don't think that gaydar itself doesn't exist, but you think that maybe conversational cues or certain communicative competencies that you're able to pick up on?

>> Participant:
Often times I think it's just the connection, just there's something when you see someone it's almost like, oh yeah, they are. But I don't believe that "gaydar" exists, because of the simple fact that I think people base it off so many stereotypes, as opposed to feelings about people.

>> Interviewer:
Sure. So let's change the word. How did you develop the competency of being able to get a feeling for people?

>> Participant:
It started out by hanging out with other homosexuals, getting to know them, getting to know commonalities and common mannerisms that most homosexuals have-like I said, being well dressed is typically associated, being overly expressive. I found that most homosexual men surround themselves with more females than males-things like that, and then to go to the lesbian community, they dress more butch or they typically--there's the term "love sick lesbian".

>> Interviewer:
I am smiling, sorry, because I have interviewed some members of the lesbian community and you're saying what they say. They try to out butch each other.

>> Participant:
Right.

>> Interviewer:
It's funny. I'm not smiling--

>> Participant:
Yeah, it's one of those things that lipstick lesbians are actually very rare in the community.

>> Interviewer:
Because they try to have butch parties like butching each other, and then the gay men are like, "What are you doing?" I'm perplexed by it. I'm like really?

>> Participant:
That's why I feel that, this kind of goes off topic, but that's why trans-sexuality is so hard to come by in the lesbian community, because sometimes people get confused that, "No, I'm very happy being a woman. I just like to dress this way."

>> Interviewer:
I think that that's a really valid point, because I can't even explore those notions, because it does and I think that the gay men and lesbian women are even themselves confused by trans-sexuality.

>> Participant:
The only way you fully understand it is to be trans-sexual, I believe.

>> Interviewer:
Right, because it's perplexing to me. There was a couple that got engaged at the White House and I'm not--because the individual is a post-opp trans-sexual now a male, has female re-assignment, identifies as a lesbian, but is male. The partner, his partner, is female, so it's--

>> Participant:
It's complicated. Yes.

>> Interviewer:
It is very complicated, I know, and so I tried to have--I'm not sure, so anyway--

>> Participant:
It's something that if you're not a part of that community--

>> Interviewer:
It's difficult, yeah, it's hard to--

>> Participant:
You could read as many articles as you want until you--

>> Interviewer:
Right, and understand when I'm asking questions about sexual orientation, my own belief is that it is a continuum. I identify this way and this is what I'm attracted to, so kind of back to your thing, I don't know, so just asking.

>> Participant:
Right.

>> Interviewer:
Ok, well that actually concludes our interview, so I would like to thank you for your participation. Are there any questions you have for me?

>> Participant:
No, not right now.

Appendix F

Sex: Female
Age: 34 years old
Sexual Orientation: Exclusively Straight
Informed Consent: Yes. On file, signed with permission to record.

>> Interviewer:
Alright, so I do have your permission to record?

>> Participant:
Yep.

>> Interviewer:
This is Interview ID 9004, female, age 34, and identifies as exclusively straight. Can you please first explain how comfortable you are with your sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
I'm 100 percent comfortable with my sexual orientation, but I appreciate all sexual orientation.

>> Interviewer:
Ok. How public are you about it? For example, does your sexual orientation come up in all aspects of your life, or is it influential in all aspects of your life?

>> Participant:
I think it's influential to me personally in all aspects of my life. However I don't try to hide it. If somebody asks or if someone sees me with my significant other, I'm not like "Oh I don't want these people to know". At the same time I think because I've been such an ally to my friends and family in the LGBT community that I've learned to respect that there are certain levels of where it's appropriate and not appropriate for them or where they've had struggles. I guess appropriate is not the right word. And so I just don't publicly walk in say hey I have a boyfriend and this is our status and things of that nature. Though I am comfortable with my orientation I don't necessarily make it- I'm not a walking display board of my relationship.

>> Interviewer:
Can you take a minute to think about a time in your life when you wanted to communicate your sexual orientation to another person? What was the situation for the first one you remembered and why? I also want you to know that this is going to be a little bit more of a difficult interview for you, but that's good for this.

>> Participant:
Right. I think. I guess I was with my family. I had an uncle who was openly gay in my family and even with my family, so not just necessarily in my work or things of that nature am I super open about my relationship, and so even though I dated in high school and college, I was never the type to come home and be like oh, this boy is so cute or those types of things, and so I guess for me, it was in telling my family, because my uncle was gay and because I didn't talk a lot about my relationships, I think there was a lot of presumptions that I was a lesbian from my

family. I just remember telling them that I had a boyfriend and my bigger concern at the point was that my boyfriend was of a different race than I was, and so that was the hurdle-how do I present this to my family, and telling them and it being more like well, we're just glad you're straight versus their being concerned necessarily with his race. It was a quandary for me, because I'm trying to determine how to tell my family about this guy and I was kind of challenged by how do I explore the race component to it and my family then responds to it like well you're straight, whatever and kind of moved on, so that was a difficult time for me, because I was more concerned about the race component.

>> Interviewer:
Ok. What about another time when you maybe were looking for a romantic partner? Obviously you have to determine their sexual orientation, but more importantly, they need to know that you're available and that you are heterosexual. How do you communicate that, or do you?

>> Participant:
I think for me, people I was interested in I just always approached them, and started talking to them, and just kind of saw where things went. I think just communication, like hey you want to catch a movie, some of those types of things, especially if I met them in a group of people or saw them in a group of people, trying to create those exclusive one-on-one opportunities with the individual versus the whole group and kind of trying to pull that out. If I was in a situation where I wasn't sure what that other person's orientation themselves was, then I might opposed to going from a group of ten people to just one-on-one, I might scale it down to a group of three or four people where the conversation could be a little more intimate or things of that nature.

>> Interviewer:
Sure.

>> Participant:
To be honest though, that's really only happened like once or twice. Most of the time when I've found people, I've had some of that background knowledge because there was like a mutual friend or someone who was kind of like hey I have this friend, blah, blah, blah.

>> Interviewer:
Ok. On the occasions that you wanted to communicate your sexual orientation, whether it was to your family or even in an office setting, what are some of the nonverbal and verbal cues or behaviors that you use to send the message? For example, verbal cues would be like what did you say? Like in the family, I know you said "This is my boyfriend," so you're explicitly stating. This is a challenge to think about, because we live in this one particular--

>> Participant:
I think, for me, I feel like I'm in a unique situation, because when I was very little up until I was about three or four, my uncle was married to a female and I had an Aunt Diane, but it was a situation for my uncle where he was living in a lifestyle that was not him. He had gone away to college, he was openly gay, but he lived in a small rural community, and so it was not appropriate for him to come back and be openly gay and things of that nature, and so he got married and did the whole what you were supposed to do at that time frame that was the norm in

this community. My uncle finally decided enough is enough by the late '70's/early 80's. He was kind of like I'm done living the life of who I'm not, so he and my Aunt Diane got divorced and I know I wasn't over the age of five, but all of a sudden I have my Uncle Dan and now I have Uncle Joe. I feel like, for me, one of the things I feel very privileged and blessed to have is that from a very young age, I've been able to understand and interact with sexual orientations that were not my sexual orientation. For me, it's not that I've necessarily tried to hide my anything, but in a work place the words significant other or partner have always been a part of my vocabulary, and so even though people who know me know that I have a boyfriend and those types of things, I still use significant other or partner when I'm talking about James. This is my partner, this is my significant other, because my current boyfriend just met my dad this past weekend and I introduced him as James, my partner. For me, because significant other and partner are kind of my background and my language, I actually think that I probably create more mystery about my sexual orientation for myself and let people wonder-especially with my involvement with LGBTQA advisory committees and, advising student groups, and things like that I a lot of times, get guilty by association. I will have people who—when I ran my residence hall, my partner at the time was leaving and we were coming out rather late and someone was like, "That's a guy coming out of Dana's apartment." Then, somebody finally just had the courage to be like, "We thought you were a lesbian," and I was like, "Why?" They were like, "Well, you advised Davinci," which was like the equivalent to EIU's Pride. I was like, "Why would you make that assumption though?" So for me, for my sexual orientation, it's like I feel like it's a great thing of being so young and having those experiences with my uncle. I was very close to him, we did a lot of stuff together. I was the ten year who had seen our drag show, because it was appropriate for my uncle to take me to those things. For me, sexual orientation was what you do in your bedroom with that person is what you do and who you are. I understood it, but I just--

>> Interviewer:
So you learned from an early age that sexual behavior and how you identify with your sexual orientation isn't indicative of the person. It gave you a broader world view. It is interesting the verbal messages you use like 'partner'. If you are in an office with different people and you have a partner and I have a partner, then we're equal, so if I have a partner and you have a partner, then we're equals right? It doesn't determine—so I think that's really interesting, which is really good in my opinion.

>> Participant:
Well it is interesting, because a good friend of mine on this campus was talking and they had said something about their partner and I had said something. They were like, "I thought you knew." I said, "I could have made and assumption based on things you've said and done, but you've never shared with me your sexual orientation, so therefore I just assumed that when you were ready to tell me, you'd tell me, if you ever felt it my business. If you have a significant other, you have someone that you love and care about a lot and hopefully who loves and cares about you too. If you tell me you have a partner, my next thought is great, I hope they treat you the way you want to be treated-whether it's a male or a female is your business unless you decide to tell me." I was pretty close to this person, but they said, "Wow, you really do live this life." I was like it wasn't imperative of how we created our bonds together. If I brought my significant

other and you brought your significant other together, it wouldn't have changed how we interacted.

>> Interviewer:
And again, your uncle was still your uncle. You said though, until they actually said to you, "This is my orientation", you could have made assumptions and assumptions are what they are and stereotypes are what they are, but we all do them. I mean people make those judgments. What do you think that you used, or in this particular case with this person, what were some behavioral cues or nonverbal cues you used to make that assumption?

>> Participant:
I think for me with that person, it was the importance and relevance of some of the committees we had sat on and how passionate they became about specific or particular topics and for me it was one of those things where we could be in one meeting and I could see person x as this, but then we'd be in another meeting and I was like they could be this. For me, it was like when I had this conversation with the person, my thought was more I could have taken the time to sit down and make those assumptions, but the work we were doing together was more important to me than their sexual orientation and I agree with you. I think that we all do—like I'll see a student and wonder if they are this or that, whether it's my work with the LGBTQA areas or one of the minority areas and things. You have those wonders, because you see them do certain things and it's just natural curiosity. For me, I have a selfish ulterior motive when I'm trying to make those assumptions about someone's sexual orientation, because I see a powerhouse behind somebody and I think, "If I could get them to speak up for this--." When I'm trying to determine something so important about somebody, it's because you have something I need right now to make an impact for campus. I think it's because a lot of the relationship choices I've made in my own personal relationships by dating outside of my race and seeing how my uncle was treated by immediate family to extended family, how I saw friends in my uncle's circle be treated, I really try to not base something on sexual orientation. Like when people see a guy come in in all these flaming colors, people are like he has to be gay. I'm that person who is like why do you say that? We'll be somewhere and someone is like he has to be gay and I'm like does he? I'll stop and ask myself why does it matter? But when I'm in that selfish ulterior motive mode, it does matter, because I'm trying to accomplish a certain goal and I need this person to do this.

>> Interviewer:
What do you think causes you- when you do have those moments that you orient someone's particular orientation? Because it's different and I think one of the important things for people to explore themselves- you've talked about dating a person of a different ethnicity, which is good. I think it's wonderful, because it gives you a broader world view. It helps you grow as a person and gives you a broader perspective of people.

>> Participant:
If I have to look at the majority of staff at EIU who I'm closest to, they are either African-American or they identify with the LGBTQA component of the LGBTQA group at EIU, and I think part of that is because of how I was raised. I was always friends with everybody, but I was always closest to those people who were the underdog type of people, and so for me it's kind of one of those things of being able to bond with them on a common ground. They've probably

done things that I would do like if somebody called me from that core group and said, "Hey, there's going to be an amazing drag show here. Do you want to go with me?" That's the type of entertainment and those are the type of people I want to be with. If I feel like it's one of those where it's eating at me, I feel like probably I'm building that closer bond or connection with them and it's not like if they said, "Oh, I'm straight, I just enjoy this stuff too," then I'm going to write you off, but what that does tell me is if they're straight and in that arena, we've had similar life experiences, and so those are the people that I am looking to connect and bond with, because I don't want to be with people who aren't progressive to explore the world and those options. Do I see myself climbing into bed with a woman? No, it's just not one of those things that is there for me, but if that's what a female friend of mine wants to do, then whatever. I know who I am, sexually oriented. I have a really good friend who refers to me as her ex-wife and I refer to her as my ex-wife. Am I ever going to stop referring to her as my ex-wife? No. I am a lesbian? No. Do people who don't know us understand that? No. People who know us don't understand that.

>> Interviewer:
I think that's funny. I can relate to that, because my very best friend-we've known each other for years and we were actually just at a conference in November at Disney World, and so we're on this bus and I'm sitting with my arm around her. She's talking to her husband on the phone and they're getting ready to buy a house. So she gets off the phone and a lady on the bus goes, "Oh, you guys are buying a house together?" My friend responds, "Oh, yeah, my husband is working on this deal right now." Well, everyone sees me with my arm around her and this little boy goes, "Well, who's that?" She said, "He's my friend." Now assumptions get made. The cues that you use to determine another's sexual orientation-what are they? Do you use any other cues besides the social groups they belong to? Obviously, you're not using them in a negative type of way.

>> Participant:
I'm to that point in my life where I used them, but--. I remember-this is one of the other life lessons I've learned. It was my senior year, there was a guy on the cheerleading team who I was friends with and I was just like the guy is gay, so we had been friends since third grade and the co-captain of the cheerleading team sat in front of me and her boyfriend sat behind me. It was a big day for me. Stacy and my friend Levi are passing notes to me. Stacy's note said, "I think I'm pregnant by Josh and we just broke up." Levi's note is, "I just want you to know that I'm gay." So on Levi's note I'm like, "I know, thanks for telling me," and then I pass it back. On Stacy's note I wrote, "Ok, you're pregnant, what can we do about it? You and Josh break up every other day." Levi sent a note back that said, "What do you mean you know?" I was like, "I've known. This is not new news to me." Now I realize as I'm helping students through the coming out process that I totally just stole his moment of coming out. At that point when it wasn't kosher to be gay in high school, he's like well if you know, then who else knows? You know, all those things that are sort of taboo and you don't want people doing. When I talked to him, he was like, "What do you mean you knew?" and I was like, "I don't know-maybe it's because of some of the things you do and say like usually guys hang with other groups of guys, but you hang one-on-one with other guys. I don't know-maybe it's because of my uncle who was gay." He was like, "Oh, but you're ok with it." I was like, "I'm totally ok with it." That's back when everybody was claiming, "Oh, you just have really good 'gaydar'." But I can usually just feel it. Sometimes I'm right and sometimes I'm wrong, but it doesn't matter.

>> Interviewer:
You mentioned 'gaydar'. What do you think about it? Obviously, you've been through a lot of training. When I use the term, I'm using it in quotes.

>> Participant:
I don't know. I think that there are traits like when I was talking to my friend; I picked up on traits that he was spending a lot of time individually with other guys, which were clearly not traits of heterosexual men. Back then, everybody was talking about who they were screwing and who they weren't screwing, so I guess I would coin the term situation cues. Do I really think that it's 'gaydar'? No. I think it's some of that scientific elimination of these are the activities that they are or are not doing, so maybe you could put it towards what their sexual orientation is. I think because of how taboo the topic can be, it can be more harmful than good, so if someone is playing the gaydar game and someone thinks you're a gay or a lesbian, most people can't take all of the guilty by association that I've dealt with, and so I think that if someone is playing the gaydar game and labels you as lesbian, or gay, or bisexual and if the word gets out and that's not what you are, then you have to deal with some of that guilty by association. I think it can be harmful to students or if people aren't ready to come out.

>> Interviewer:
Again, you've talked about the process of coming out. Don't steal someone's—

>> Participant:
Thunder.

>> Interviewer:
Right. It's there story to tell. What about 'straightdar'? (Telling if people are straight). Same mechanism.

>> Participant:
Yeah, again, because I've done so much work with minority groups, I think it kind of depends on the situation. If you're making assumptions that people are straight and you're forcing straight habits or tendencies on them, you could be doing more harm than good, because you could be forcing them further into a closet. You're telling them that you're not an ok person for them to come out to, because you're like, "Oh, well where's your girlfriend/ where's your boyfriend?"

>> Interviewer:
It's almost like the label has been sort of self-destructive.

>> Participant:
I'm not going to lie; I've been typically more with my LGBTQA friends and I've had the most fun at gay bars trying to figure out are they on your team or my team? And I think that there are times and places where the 'gayday/staightday' are appropriate so to speak.

>> Interviewer:
No, I would agree. It's contextually—

>> Participant:
Right, because if you and I are close enough that we're going to go hang out at a bar together, and pre-game at one of our places before and we've got that rapport and relationship, then we know where the level and those lines are with each other. Where if I just met you today, "Oh, let's go sit on a park bench and play with each other," it's highly inappropriate, because we don't know that much about each other. I've been around my students that I advise and they're like what do you think about this and I'm like I don't know, because again time and place-time and place to do that with my friends versus my students.

>> Interviewer:
Right. There's a big difference. I agree with that completely. I think also (although this isn't on the protocol) that you make a really good point about being guilty by association of whatever and that's something that's hard for anyone to stand up in that group with a lot of stigmas attached, because we see that in a lot of different aspects where there are a lot of stigmas attached.

>> Participant:
What's funny is those guilty by association happen from outside and inside.

>> Interviewer:
Oh, absolutely.

>> Participant:
The last institution I was at, I had really good a friend who was going from M to F. We came to the institution about the same time, we had worked on several programs together, kind of saw this person through the whole transition, we had that moment of the coming out of the whole transition, blah, blah, blah. It was one of those things like we were more than acquaintances, but we weren't quite friends. We knew enough about each other, like yeah we might grab lunch together, but it would be a work related lunch. That individual saw me with a partner and they were like—(they didn't say anything), but the next time I saw them, they were like, "Were you with--?" I was like, "Yeah, what's wrong with that?" They were like, "Totally thought you were lesbian." It's hard for me not to like--. They were like, "You seem offended," and I'm not offended, but like a lot of the time some of the people who made those assumptions and followed up, I would have thought they knew. I'm like you're on my educational committee. How can you be on there when you're making these assumptions yourself? It's one of those things and I remember my 'Boss' student group that I advised-they were a non-disclosure group so you could use aliases by your name if you didn't want to identify and things of that nature. You could walk in and say, "Hey, I'm Dana and I'm lesbian or I'm Dana and I'm straight," or I could be Sally. We couple of students that I couldn't keep track of their names, because they would change names at every meeting and I'm like could you please choose a first and a middle name and don't interchange them, because I'm trying to identify and get to know you. "Hey you" does not work for me. I would tell them to explore their education. People can support you and not be 100% on that team. So I think in doing those educational committees, I found that you just have to find those that will support you in that community.

>> Interviewer:
I think that it's interesting, because you mentioned one of your colleagues at different institution went through this transition. I think that sometimes we within the LGBTQA community—there are a lot of misunderstandings. Sometimes we within our own groups don't even understand some of the dynamics that are at play here. It's complex. There was an individual who (I'm not sure), but they got engaged at the White House. The individual identifies as a lesbian, but is a post-opp male, so was a female who went through re-assignment surgery and now is living as a male, but identifies as a lesbian. His partner is a female who is a lesbian as well. I had to draw myself a board, because I was confused. This is huge and I think it was in November or December, or maybe it's October or November; somewhere in there. To me, I was confused and I got on my tangent about labels. Again, I was confused, but it's like you said, it doesn't matter what your preference or sexual orientation is if you have someone who makes you happy and you make them happy. But I was confused. I was confused.

>> Participant:
What you do in your bedroom doesn't matter. As long as it's human-to-human and age appropriate human-to-human. I just can't get into the dog, the cat. Don't know that we can hang out together. As long as it's age appropriate human-to-human, do what you do.

>> Interviewer:
Right, but with the whole labels it became confusing, so I'm like people are people.

>> Participant:
To me, that person would identify as now straight, because you're a man dating women, though you used to be a woman. Then like you said, you label yourself and that's the label people should understand. If you told me you were a lesbian and I'm sitting across from you thinking, "Clearly this is a guy," if you told me you're a lesbian, who am I to be like, "You're not a lesbian."

>> Interviewer:
That's where if we look at sexual orientation it gets interesting, because it's a label. If a person has a lack of sexual behavior, that person has no sexual orientation. A nun, for example, or a priest who is not having sex, are they without sexual orientation? I don't know, so it's kind of a conundrum. Anyway, that concludes the interview process. Thank you very much.

>> Participant:
Not a problem.

>> Interviewer:
And I have your consent to record?

>> Participant:
Yeah.

>> Interviewer:
Great. Ok, so do you have any questions for me?

>> Participant:
No.

>> Interviewer:
Great. Well I want to thank you for participating in my study and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Appendix G

Sex: Male
Age: 23 years old
Sexual Orientation: Exclusively Gay
Informed Consent: Yes. On file, signed with permission to record.

>> Interviewer:
This is interview ID 9005, 23 year old male, primary language English and self identifies as exclusively gay. Do I have you permission to record?

>> Participant:
Yes.

>> Interviewer:
First if you could please explain how comfortable you are with your sexual orientation.

>> Participant:
Uh. Very comfortable.

>> Interviewer:
How public are you about it?

>> Participant:
I am public.

>> Interviewer:
Okay so, when you say public would you say you're open about it in all areas or aspects of your life?

>> Participant:
I'm open about my sexuality in all areas of my life. Um at work, at home, at school, in classes, in my dorm. Just about everywhere that I can think of.

>> Interviewer:
Are there any areas in your life where you keep your sexual orientation private?

>> Participant:
No.

>> Interviewer:
Please take a minute to think about a time in your life when you have wanted to communicate your sexual orientation to another person. What was the situation for the first one you remember and why were you interested in communicating your sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
Just to clarify, the first time I can recall or..

>> Interviewer:
Sure.

>> Participant:
That would be when I was 16 years old, when I first found out I was attracted to men. I wanted to communicate it to my best friend at the time. And I did. ((pause)) It went very well cause ((pause)) well she was in the same- she was in the same boat essentially.

>> Interviewer:
What about another time you were interested in communicating your sexual orientation. If you could tell me about the situation and why you were interested in communicating it to another. It doesn't have to be anything life changing just whatever comes into your mind.

>> Participant:
Um about two years. I think this would be about uh 2010 when I first came to Eastern Illinois University. Um I ((pause)) I uh ((pause)) On my floor ((pause)) I didn't come out uh- to other people on my floor. I had a room to myself so I didn't have a roommate that I had to come out to. But I didn't come out to the other people on my floor.

>> Interviewer:
Your floor mates?

>> Participant:
Yeah my floor mates. Uh for uh a few days or so. Maybe a week. I can't recall exactly, but um ((pause)) I finally did- when I did- I finally did come out to them uh when we were walking- uh when we were walking back from lunch. I kind of uh made- I kind of made a joke about it. To kind of smooth the ice over kind of thing. And uh they were totally uh they were totally fine with it.

>> Interviewer:
Why did you want to communicate it?

>> Participant:
I ((pause)) felt the need- I felt I wanted to communicate it because I wanted them to know more about me and my life. They're friends of mine. I wanted them to know just for that reason. Also me personally if I'm going to be living - if I'm uh if I'm uh- if I'm going to be living with- If I'm going to be living in close proximity with other people, using the same shower room and sharing a private space I feel that I guess I do have a responsibility to at least let them know. I know that uh. I know that not every- not everyone would feel that way. But at least for me I guess that's why I felt I wanted to communicate my sexual- communicate that I'm gay to them. Just to let them know. Again, I understand that not everyone shares this view point and I don't hold it against them if they don't. But I guess I don't want to make people uncomfortable just- Uh just because I'm around and we're you know forced to share a shower room together.

>> Intcrviewer:
When you talk about that, actually you mention you have a responsibility.

>> Participant:
Yeah, they have a right to be comfortable in their own homes.

>> Interviewer:
Why do you think they wouldn't be comfortable?

>> Participant:
It's not so much that I thought that they wouldn't be comfortable. Again, I had been friends with them for a little while so- I guess I had some sense of who they were or what they're feelings about certain things are. But ((pause)) uh- I mean- I uh- some people will always surprise you. It's uh- it's ((pause)) not so much that they wouldn't be, that's not the issue. That's not the issues. The issue is that it's something they should know- so I uh- I gave them the information.

>> Interviewer:
On occasions when you wanted to communicate you're gay, can you please describe both the verbal and nonverbal cues or behaviors you used to send this message?

>> Participant:
Verbal cues, I said I was- I am gay.

>> Interviewer:
Do you ever use non-verbal cues? For example, if you're in a situation that you wanted to meet someone that may be of the same sexual orientation that you are, but you're not totally sure and you don't know if they know about your sexual orientation. But you want to let them know and didn't want to just come out and say you're gay. Sometimes maybe it's not possible to directly ask them their sexual orientation.

>> Participant:
That's true.

>> Interviewer:
Do you read into certain behaviors or certain other things attempting to determine their sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
Uh yes. I do read into body language - yeah mostly body language.

>> Interviewer:
What kind of body language?

>> Participant:
Well a lot of times it's the way I hold myself. So I guess maybe I look at uh. Maybe I look at people's body language. I mean uh- Or if I'm trying to meet someone I like I may try to hold eye

contact longer than would be generally normal. I uh- may try to sit or stand closer to them. So kind of uh. Well kind of things I would do- I kind of uh. I look for it in other people too.

>> Interviewer:
So using these cues what occasions would you use them for? Is it just to express interest in someone?

>> Participant:
I guess I'd use these cues uh ((pause)). Well if I was attracted to someone. I mean uh- Well the ones just mentioned. I mean there's all sorts of things and for different reasons. Like uh- I'd use for people that I want to maybe just be friends with and for people who may have a similar orientation that I don't to be romantically involved or sexually involved with I uh- Well before I would explicitly just ask the person I guess I kind of want to "test the water".

>> Interviewer:
So do you think if you're trying to "test the water" you primarily use non-verbal cues?

>> Participant:
Not really. I uh- I well- I probably just- well generally use verbal cues. Not just stated questions. Not uh- Not just coming out asking if they're gay. I may talk about my likes / dislikes and see if they kind of pickup on uh on what I'm saying. Or, maybe like if I'm in a restaurant and a hot waiter walks by I may uh I may say "oh, he's cute".

>> Interviewer:
Meaning you may explicitly say something.

>> Participant:
Yeah. I guess. I'm uh. I- I'm more or less trying to judge their reaction.

>> Interviewer:
Do you think that, in your experience, people of the same sexual orientation use language in a certain way that may cause you to think, "Oh, they may be gay".

>> Participant:
Yes.

>> Interviewer:
Can you tell me about that?

>> Participant:
It's uh it's kind of hard to give specifics. I guess it's not something you think about a lot. Well you do obviously ((laughs)).

>> Interviewer:
I've probably thought about it too much ((laughs)).

>> Interviewer: Okay, well you mentioned being in a restaurant and seeing or meeting a hot waiter. Do you think that you'd pay attention to the way the individual speaks or words they use?

>> Participant:
Well I mean certain words or phrases. Kind of uh- they kind of make a light go off in my head.

>> Interviewer:
What kind of words?

>> Participant:
Like the word "partner". It just seems that everyone so often says boyfriend, fiancé, or husband or sometimes ex-husband if they're female or girlfriend, fiancée, bride, wife, or ex-wife if they're male. I don't know. These words have a lot of meaning. I mean at least right now I can't say this is my fiancé or this is my ex-husband. But I can use the word uh "partner". So I- uh. I think that um the word partner would kind of make me think that the person speaking is gay like me. It's kind of weird, but I mean I could say this is my husband (even if it's not legally true here) but clearly that's going to announce to the world that I'm a male calling someone my husband and I've now- well I guess you could say I let the rainbow out of the bag. I don't know. Uh it's- it kind of depends on the situation. I mean. I'm kind of always thinking about a million things. Like kind of uh- kind of making sure I'm not uh I- I don't want to say the wrong word to misunderstand what someone has said for well ((pause)) I don't I don't want to come off like an- like an idiot. But I uh I- well there's also a concern about safety. Maybe I uh ((pause)). Maybe I just heard them the wrong way and then uh maybe they used what I said to kind of ((pause)). Uh kind of to hurt me in some way. Either physically or just try to- uh I don't know. Maybe uh- or kind of ruin my reputation or make me- uh. Make me look like someone I'm not.

>> Interviewer:
Do you think this is something you worry about often?

>> Participant:
Not really. More like uh. More like I'm just aware of what I'm saying. What others are saying kind of uh ((pause)). Kind of how people are acting. Sometimes whom I'm with or what the situation is.

>> Interviewer:
Do you think there are occasions when you want conceal your sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
Yes.

>> Interviewer:
Can you please describe that?

>> Participant:
Well it would like be because I'm in a new place that I uh- I didn't know anything about and I- you know I didn't know. So you know I didn't want to you know come out flaming and have that

be that the wrong thing to do. Uh. But it's easier I ((pause)). I- I ((pause)) I hide my sexual orientation when I don't know the situation, the atmosphere, or what it's like. Or if I- if I know what it's like and coming out would cause- would cause unnecessary problems for me or cause problems for people I care about like my friends or whatever. Um or- uh if there- if there could be a threat to someone's safety. However, I don't think that I'm walking around announcing that I'm gay around uh- around every corner. So I guess I just become a lot more aware of my own sexual orientation and kind of- I kind of make sure I don't you know stand out or whatever I Uh I just try to fit in and say what I need to in that scenario.

>> Interviewer:
How do you do this?

>> Participant:
Hide my sexual orientation?

>> Interviewer:
Yes or conceal based on the specific situation you're in at that time.

>> Participant:
Change my body language. Change the way I speak. I try not to gesture. I may kind of uh try to speak at a lower pitch. I kind of just adapt to the mannerisms and language of those around me. Or of ((pause)) whatever is- well honestly I guess I'm going to try to become straighter. For example, if a waitress walks by this time in a bar and these straight guys are there and I'm trying to not disclose my sexual orientation - if they said something like "man she looks really hot tonight" I may reply something like yeah she looks pretty good. But I wouldn't I uh- I wouldn't be the first to bring that up either.

>> Interviewer:
Do you feel like you have to adapt to your surroundings or the context?

>> Participant:
Yeah. I mean I can say "yeah she's hot or attractive" and not really uh- I can just be commenting on the fact that a person is attractive. I don't know. It's weird. It's kind of a pain in the ass sometimes. I can say- uh. Well sometimes it's tiresome.

>> Interviewer:
My next question, do you have any experiences where you personally wanted to learn or find out about another's sexual orientation? Can you describe the first instance you think of and describe the reasons why and what you did to go about learning about their sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
Um ((pause)). Well the first one I can remember, would be in high school. I was attracted to a guy and I uh ((pause)). I was 99.99 percent sure he was gay.

>> Interviewer:
Why?

>> Participant:
Uh ((pause)). I- I uh- I'll admit he fit every stereotype. The closest approximation to his mannerisms- how he acted was Jack McFarland from Will and Grace. And well I was uh- I was almost certain, but I didn't want to assume. So I uh. I just asked around. I eventually asked him directly of course, I mean after we had you know started talking for a while and I just came right out and asked him. We started dating then shortly after that.

>> Interviewer:
Do you know why you were initially interested in his sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
I guess I was romantically and sexually attracted to him. So I guess I kind of wanted to find out to see if it was even a possibility that we could be uh. Maybe be involved. Well, I guess maybe I was sexually attracted or well just attracted to him at first and then well uh the romantic attraction and sexual attraction I guess came later. I mean- I'm uh not sure if it's possible to be romantically attracted to someone before you even get to know them.

>> Interviewer:
Do you have another time you can remember when you wanted to determine another's sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
Um here's a good one. A relative of mine. Actually uh a close relative of mine. A female relative was uh ((pause)). Had uh ((pause)) had a lot of mannerisms and actions that suggested to me that she might be a lesbian.

>> Interviewer:
Um hm. What were those?

>> Participant:
Um. She had boyfriends in middle school. But that's boyfriends in finger quotes. I mean you go out- but really where do you go? I mean I had girlfriends quote in quote in middle school too, but that doesn't really count. At least not in my mind. But I hadn't heard, when we were both in college. I hadn't heard from here in quite some time whether she was in a relationship with- with anyone or any men for quite some time. In addition she had been quite tom boyish- which isn't that uncommon in today's society given that heterosexual women either of course. But specifically she was involved with an athletic sport that well uh- that uh-

>> Interviewer:
So she was involved in an organized sports team?

>> Participant:
Lacrosse actually. I mean it's not softball. I mean I'm not being stereotypical or trying to be, but sometimes they exist for a reason. I mean- if I meet someone who likes softball I guess I kind of become aware that they might be a lesbian. I'm kind of like "oh, you like softball. How much?" Anyway, she always liked to talk about her female friends, occasionally her male friends, but

they were- uh they were almost incidental to the story. She was always closest with her female friends. I admit I wondered how close. And, well this was after I had come out. I guess I felt that if she was a lesbian that well maybe there would be a connection there or at least she could feel comfortable coming out to me if she needed to. I mean- I would hope that she would have felt comfortable enough to tell me. And- well uh ((pause)). Uh we were uh actually grabbing lunch together one day. And well when we were driving there I flat out- well I kind of said "You know if there's anything that- you know you haven't gone out- I mean you haven't talked about a lot of boyfriends. If there's anything you want to tell me it's okay." I kind of told her you know I'm open with our family and it's gone very well. I've gotten very lucky with them um and I wanted her to know that if there's anything- if you are- I mean. I basically wanted to say to her "if you are homosexual or at least just not heterosexual that's okay.

>> Interviewer:
Were you trying to support her?

>> Participant:
Yeah. I just wanted her to feel supported no matter what. Or at least know that I uh supported her and that she could come to me. Anyway she said, "Oh! thank you but I'm not". She's- well still at least as far as I know, still a heterosexual. I guess there was enough signs there that I wanted to be supportive even if I was wrong. As it turns out I was wrong. But I wanted to be there to express support to her because she is a close relative who was supportive of me when I came out.

>> Interviewer:
What about another time when you wanted to determine another's sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
Not that I can think of directly. I mean. I do kind of pay attention to situations and how people interact and how they behave. I kind of uh I guess I use cues or something. Like if you were to uh show me 100 people who are having conversations with one another, I could maybe kind of become aware of sexual orientations that are different from the typical straight person just in the way that they converse with others. I don't know. It's not really a science. I uh. I guess it's about being observant or kind of just people watching. I mean- I'm not saying I could just look at a picture and tell. Sometimes it's about what people are saying or Uh what they don't say. Not really meaning the pitch of their voice - although sometimes that kind of plays into, but I just kind of become aware. It's not one or another kind of thing, but, I maybe may just be like "hmm maybe they're gay". Then I'd investigate further.

>> Interviewer:
Earlier you mentioned clothing. Can you please describe how you use clothing as maybe something that may cause you to become aware of another's sexual orientation?

>> Participant:
Well, I mean it's hard. Clearly women can wear men's clothing without raising eyebrows. But a guy really can't wear a dress without people wondering. Although, it would be helpful if you're chafing. But you know certain clothing can kind of tell a little bit about a person. Not even like shirts though. Accessories are kind of important too. I mean if a guy is accessorizing in certain

ways well I may at least become aware of him and maybe if I was interested for some reason even just to be a friend I may Uh I may try to learn more and then see if he is gay or not.

>> Interviewer:
You mentioned you kind of pay attention to words people say and don't say. Can you elaborate on the words that people use or don't use?

>> Participant:
I don't think I use words all of the time I kind of monitor conversations. I mean sometimes it's just self-preservation. I don't know. All of this is sometimes complicated. There's this blur between gender and sexual orientation. They're different but sometimes not. Like if a girl is going to wear jeans - no big deal right. But if a guy wears a skirt - then it's intentional and it's done so because maybe to make a statement or to be noticed. Regardless though it doesn't necessarily mean that person is gay. But for me I would kind of at least become aware of him.

>> Interviewer:
Heterosexual individuals learn from a very early age how to express interest in a romantic partner and be in a romantic relationship.

>> Participant:
Yeah. Saying stuff like "oh she's going to break all of the boys hearts" or "he's going to have girls chasing after him". It seems we do it all of the time just in ordinary life. We kind of teach or at least communicate that boys like girls and vice versa. It makes it confusing trying to figure out what to do when that's not the case. So I. Uh. I don't know. I guess it's hard when you do make-uh or understand what your own sexual orientation or sexual identity is then you have to make sense of it. I mean for me I learned a lot of watching TV. Specifically Will and Grace. I mean for me it was my first exposure to gay people. I think I was like in 7-8th grade when I started watching it. Although that was before I found out I was attracted to men. But I was at least being exposed to different people through the media early on. It's still a little different than real life. But it was something I guess.

>> Interviewer:
Can you please explain what you mean by saying you found out you were attracted to men?

>> Participant:
Uh well. ((pause)) I um. I well- a friend of mine had let me borrow a set of novels called the Anita Blake Vampire Hunter series.

>> Interviewer:
I've read those.

>> Participant:
The one main character is a vampire named Jean Claude. And you know incredibly sexy, masculine, desirable and just all out sexual. Anyway, I think it was probably about book three or four when I was reading and I found myself thinking "wow he's really hot". It's kind of embarrassing but I guess I kind of found myself become aroused by this character. And well I

had never really uh- had actually become aroused by a female before. So yeah. So I guess you could say I opened a book and found out I was gay.

>> Interviewer:
Can I quote that directly?

>> Participant:
Yeah! ((laughs)) It's not a great story. And I mean I realize it's not like I read it in the encyclopedia and said "hm I think I'm gay". But yeah. I mean I kind of realized that I was attracted to guys through a book. Maybe before that I hadn't given it much thought - or maybe I was just a late bloomer or Uh or something.

>> Interviewer:
How did you learn to interact with potential romantic partners?

>> Participant:
That ((laughs)) that's implying that I know.

>> Interviewer:
Okay, so have you had romantic partners?

>> Participant:
Yes.

>> Interviewer:
And have you ever been interested in a person romantically?

>> Participant:
Yes. Many, many times.

>> Interviewer:
How did you learn how you should interact with them.

>> Participant:
((laughs)) That was really just some self-depreciating humor.

>> Interviewer:
I appreciate that.

>> Participant:
((laughs)) I uh. I um- the way I learned to interact with romantic partners is well maybe through my parents. I mean. Well just here's how you treat someone you're in love with or at least you care about. I mean. I guess caring about someone is the same for straight people too. And love is love right? So I guess I treat or interact with my romantic partners in uh in ways that are similar to my parents. Also, some of the things are just social niceties. You know holding the door open for people. I mean. I make sure to hold the door open for my date. Or uh. Well unless they're

holding it for me then I'm like thank you. I uh. I also consider myself more masculine than feminine. So if I'm going on a date well I'd pay for both of us. At least I won't go on a date unless I can pay for both of us. I guess maybe not a date but out for dinner. I mean you can go on dates that don't cost. Sometimes walking around campus or going to a park or something. And just talking is the best date. But I also don't mind if a date doesn't mind paying for me. I also don't really mind splitting a check. Especially if it's a bad date. So while I have these ideas about how my parents did things, I guess I kind of just go with the flow. So the idea that if a date is uh- is buying my dinner makes me more feminine I don't buy into that. I don't think that money or buying a meal or even fixing a car is really what makes a person masculine or feminine.

>> Interviewer:
For me, if it's a bad date I'd always let them pay.

>> Participant:
((Laughs))

>> Interviewer:
In your opinion and experience, do you think there's lot of word play or humor used in the gay community?

>> Participant:
Oh yeah. We love humor and word play.

>> Interviewer:
Do you have any examples?

>> Participant:
Jokes about. Uh you know. Baseball pitcher and catcher jokes.

>> Interviewer:
What do you mean by pitcher and catcher?

>> Participant:
By pitcher I mean the active or penetrator in anal sex. And by catcher I mean the individual being penetrated in anal sex. But you hear all kinds sexual puns- made up terms etcetera. It's kind of like our own little private language or code. We kind of take ordinary things and gay them up. I'm not sure why. Maybe it's just for fun or something.

>> Interviewer:
There's a difference in sexual orientation and sexual behavior. For example, a straight male can receive anal penetration from his partner - and although many believe that anal penetration is mostly a gay thing, this particular action is not exclusive to a specific sexual orientation. Yet, often in heterosexual relationships the male is seen primarily as the active sexual partner and the female is the passive sexual partner.

>> Participant:
Yeah the male is the one doing it then female is the one receiving. Kind of what the people against same sex marriage refer to as biological plumbing.

>> Interviewer:
Now in non-heterosexual relationships if people have the same anatomy then this assumption can't really exist as it does for heterosexuals. So do you think this is important in gay relationships? Do you think this is something that has to be worked out with a romantic partner or potential sexual partner?

>> Participant:
I mean. Uh for me. Well I guess- well if it's a romantic relationship and it's headed towards the bedroom then it's okay to straight up ask or kind of learn about each other's bodies through you know foreplay. But if it's just a sexual partner then I think it's okay to straight up ask. I mean if we're just after sex then why waste each other time. Straight people don't have to worry about that I don't think. I don't know. Also you can kind of read signs too. Read people's body language if things are getting heated.

>> Interviewer:
Why do you think this type of conversation is important?

>> Participant:
Well for me. Uh- I Uh well ((pause)) I guess if I'm going to have a romantic relationship it would probably have some sort of sexual component to it. I mean sex is an intimate expression with a romantic partner. It doesn't define the relationship but it's important. So I guess we'd want to make sure that our needs and desires are met and fulfilled. If it's just a sexual encounter then it's important to make sure everyone has a good time. Besides who likes clumsy sex. Why not work out the logistics beforehand.

>> Interviewer:
Have you ever had an ah ha moment. Like you thought oh this is how it works with gay people.

>> Participant:
Yeah. Hmm ((pause)). Now that you say it I don't really have an example. But yeah I've had them before. It seems that it's always just trial and error. So I guess that my interactions with different people are different. It uh- it depends on the person and the situation. Plus I mean it uh- it sometimes seems like I have one foot in one world and the other in another world. It's uh ((pause)). It's sometimes a constant juggle between myself and the situation etcetera. I don't know it's weird I guess.

>> Interviewer:
The final question I have for you is what do you think about gaydar?

>> Participant:
Gaydar. I uh- I think- I think well. I think gaydar exists. It's useful but I do think it plays off some stereotypes. But usually the more positive ones or the more uh- more neutral ones. You

know gay people do x. I guess it's kind of a resource or something that we learn along the way. I'm not sure it's an ability that exists just because I'm gay. But kind of something I've learned by observing etcetcra.

>> Interviewer:
Do you think you can determine if someone is gay when they haven't come out by using gaydar?

>> Participant:
Um well. I can say from experience that I've never been wrong. I mean I don't out people. But I have said "hm I bet someday that person will come out". Well uh. I guess now that I think about it I have been wrong. I was wrong about my cousin. But for men who weren't out I've called it a couple of times. Meaning I've said they were gay before the came out. Here's the thing though. I uh. I don't think I just go around like a ballistic missile with radar looking for other gays. I mean. It's kind of situations or more from the interaction I don't know. It- it has a purpose but it also depends on my goals in that specific time and place. I don't walk around saying I'm gay and constantly looking for gays. Uh yeah. Anyway, gaydar is more like a resource or something that kind of is situational. I think. I mean. What's the point of being able to identify another's sexual orientation if I honestly don't necessarily care about it at that particular moment.

>> Interviewer:
Well that concludes all of the questions I have for you. Do you have any questions that you would like to ask me at this time?

>> Participant:
Not that I can think of.

>> Interviewer:
Okay great, well again if you do have any questions please feel free to contact me. Again, I do have your questions to record?

>> Participant:
Yes and you can use the information from this interview however you best see if.

>> Interviewer:
Well, with that our interview is now concluded. I wanted to let you know that I really appreciate your participation in this study and I will make sure to provide you a copy of the disseminated results.