JE Patrick Dilley

Which Way Out? A Typology of Non-Heterosexual Male Collegiate Identities

Although numerous studies over the latter half of the twentieth century examined the identities and development of students during their collegiate experiences (as summarized in Evans, Forney & Guido-DiBrito, 1998; and Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991), surprisingly few have focused specifically on students who were not heterosexual. Only within the past 15 years have major studies of identities of non-heterosexual youth been published (D'Augelli, 1994; D'Augelli & Patterson, 1995; Herdt & Boxer, 1993; Savin-Williams, 1990, 1998); a smaller number of studies specifically looks at non-heterosexual college students (Dilley, 2002b; Evans & D'Augelli, 1996; Love, 1999; Rhoads, 1994, 1997).

Most investigations of this student population have focused on three related elements affecting aspects of particular non-heterosexual identities. First, much of the research posits a static binary identity (in or out, gay or straight), drawn from contemporary student populations. Second, this research places a primacy on the social climates of postsecondary institutions for non-heterosexual students but often does not examine those climates historically. Finally, related to campus climates is the collegiate experience of gays' and lesbians' processes of admitting to self and others one's non-heterosexual orientation ("coming out") (Cohen &

Patrick Dilley is assistant professor of Higher Education and Qualitative Research and director of the College Student Personnel program at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. Correspondence should be addressed to pdilley@siu.edu.

Savin-Williams, 1996; D'Augelli, 1989a, 1989b, 1994; D'Augelli & Rose, 1990; Evans & Broido, 1999; Evans & D'Augelli, 1996; Love, 1997, 1999; Rhoads, 1995). A few researchers (particularly Cohen & Savin-Williams, 1996; D'Augelli, 1991, 1994; Rhoads, 1994, 1997; Savin-Williams, 1990, 1998) examined how these climates and experiences might affect individual identities.

A reader of this research could easily—and perhaps rightly—come to believe that there exists a singular "positive" or "healthy" gay identity that is attained progressively, with particular emphasis on coming out publicly (or, at least, in increasingly public stages). Theories of how college affects students' identities and how their identities develop (such as Astin, 1993; Chickering, 1969; Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Thomas & Chickering, 1984) imply that almost everyone in a given campus population (or sub-population) progresses along specific paths, toward more complete ideation of identity or fulfillment of potential. The primacy of coming out reflects (or begins to create) in understandings of non-heterosexual identity a very specific identity in particular relation to heterosexual identity; if all goes well, those students undergoing the process become progressively more committed to and public about a "gay" identity for themselves. In this regard, models of gay student development mirror those designed to reflect heterosexual student identity development.

Despite attempts to reframe understandings of student sexual identity in higher education research (including D'Augelli, 1994; Dilley, 2002b; Rhoads, 1994; and Savin-Williams, 1999), most conceptualizations of gay student identity development do not move beyond the normative presumptions of heterosexual models. Other researchers have presumed a fixed non-heterosexual identity fitting within the binary distinction between "normal" and heterosexual, and "different" or homosexual; one is either heterosexual or one is gay. Various stages or points of self-realization center on how and to whom to proclaim this difference. In this view, students (straight or not) develop from one identity (or understanding of their lives and relation to society) to another. But the path is singular, the outcome unquestioned, and that outcome unquestionably either achieved or not.

These colleagues calling for a reconceptualization of collegiate non-heterosexuality appear to me to be struggling with how to define the population and its experiences in ways that are understandable (and relatable) to heterosexual models. Yet, in building bridges between the normative heterosexual and the "queer" non-heterosexual, what we often do not convey is the multiplicity of non-heterosexual identities: the experiences and qualities of which do not match the "gay" student identity nor, perhaps, the experience of "coming out" in the ways previously explicated.

The pervasive traditional thinking depicts only one form of identity, one that is very particular, public, and easily positioned within the binary of straight or gay, normal or deviant. But as I shall show in this article, multiple non-heterosexual male collegiate identities exist. I use the term *non-heterosexual* purposefully both to draw attention to the binary nature of how sexual identity has been conceptualized and to include particular, diverse identities that are not heterosexual yet not necessarily conforming to *gay* or even *queer*.

Queer approaches to understanding and representing non-heterosexual identity (Chauncey, 1994; Dilley, 2002b; Mendelsohn, 1999) question those presumptions, paths, and identities in relation to the norms of heterosexuality and non-heterosexuality. In this article, I take this queered perspective to examine and explain the collegiate lives I have researched—both those that fit the traditional models and those that do not. I first outline the method and analyses comprising my qualitative, historical study. Then, in the Findings section, I delineate six identity types, providing evidence of different ways non-heterosexual college men identified in college from the 1940s to the present. Next, I summarize the distinctive elements that comprise each of these six types. Finally, I conclude with observations about how the six types complicate existing notions of identity development and non-heterosexual identity.

Method

Participants

For this study, I interviewed 57 men who were college undergraduates between 1945 and 1999. The participants' years of attendance were not concentrated in any single period of time but rather represented fairly equally each year of the 55-year period. The men attended over 50 different institutions (some attended more than one institution to complete their undergraduate education), located in 22 states across the U.S. The schools include public and private, religiously-affiliated and state-supported, smaller liberal-arts institutions and larger research universities. Racial diversity was less stratified: 48 of the respondents were Caucasian, two Hispanic, one Asian-American, one African-American, and five of international origin.

Procedure

The respondents were solicited primarily through direct contact with key informants from academic, alumni, and/or social groups (chiefly graduate/faculty/staff groups at the University of Southern California and the University of California at Irvine), as well as from non-hetero-

sexual social clubs (particularly the Phoenix, AZ, chapter of Prime-timers, a national organization for senior gay men), academic conferences, and establishments catering to non-heterosexual males. I also placed requests for participants in local publications with audiences matching the target population and postsecondary institutions' gay/lesbian/bisexual student and/or alumni electronic mailing lists. From those initial informants, I employed "snowball" or "network" techniques of recruiting interview respondents (Glesne & Peshken, 1992; Merriam, 1998). Snowballing, coupled with the response from initial respondents in the Los Angeles and Phoenix areas, helped me narrow the focus of the in-person interviews to those two metropolitan areas.

Interviews

I primarily conducted in-person interviews privately, one-on-one. Six couples were interviewed together, and in addition, I conducted one small focus group of three friends. The interviews were semistructured, in-depth, biographical interviews (Denzin, 1989; Johnson, 2002; Kvale, 1996; Warren, 2002) designed to elicit each respondent's educational life history.

In the interviews, I used a variety of question styles. Most often I employed a recursive questioning technique to address sensitive, potentially confusing, or distant events, approaching the topics through a number of redundant questions and varied vantage points—to probe a respondent's memories of his collegiate experience, his concepts (both past and present) of his identity and sexuality, and his analysis of the meanings and/or importance of each. To do so, I adapted the traditional phenomenological, three-pronged series of interviews (Seidman, 1998) into a single interview event. Within the interviews, I adopted a life-history or life-story approach (Atkinson, 1998, 2002; Denzin, 1989) to better understand (and later, to convey) changes that the individual felt concerning his ideation of himself and his collegiate experiences. This style allowed me to adopt both the respondent validation and constant-comparative (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1994) techniques: not only was I repeating respondents' terms and stories back to them for confirmation (and at times clarification), I also compared their beginning ideas and ideations about their identity with apparent changes (evident from their responses) that occurred during college (or, for a very few, soon after college). Further, I compared the respondents' ideations with those of other interview subjects, theories of gay and/or student development, and/or other published research, as well as their previously stated personal recollections and analyses. Each of these styles of eliciting data works within Garmezy's (1974) retrospective method of data collection.

Given the comfort, interest, and experiences of the individual respondents, the in-person interviews often deviated from the protocol, but they always focused on the men's self-concepts, concepts of sexuality, and college memories. Our meetings lasted between 45 minutes and 3 hours, depending upon the number of respondents being interviewed at the time, their time available for the interview, and the depth of our conversations. I tape recorded the interviews for later transcription. I also took field notes during and drafted interview summaries immediately following the interviews.

The remaining six interviews were conducted via electronic mail and consisted of three sets of questions posed to the informants. For those, I edited the interview protocol to two sets of questions (Goldman-Segall, 1995; Mann & Stewart, 2002). After receiving the respondents' second set of answers, I conducted a brief content analysis and followed up on their first two sets of responses in the third and final collection of questions. That set of questions included inquiries of veracity as well as questions chosen to probe for deeper, more analytical responses to the first sets of questions, utilizing recursive and comparative/contrast techniques.

Data Analysis

I utilized a pragmatic approach throughout my analysis of the data, drawing from a number of analytic strategies, including constant-comparative (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), typographic (Lofland & Lofland, 1995), and narrative (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I also blended queer theory (Dilley, 1999; Jagose, 1996) and queer historiography (Bravmann, 1997; cf. Chauncey, 1994; Dilley, 2002b; Howard, 1999) into my examinations of the men's lives, particularly in how their sensibilities related to normative concepts of both heterosexual and non-heterosexual identities. In addition, the typological format of representation allowed me to represent collective patterns of individuals' lives.

As another non-heterosexual man, I was viewed by the respondents as an "insider" who shared many of the same formative questions of self-identity as the respondents; this helped to increase their levels of comfort and insight, since neither the respondents nor I had to confront layers of difference between us because of differing social norms (Coffey, 1999; Denzin, 1989; Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Merriam, 1998; Warren, 2002). I feel this identification engendered a sense of trust and openness in the responses of most of the men, causing them to feel less inhibited and less likely to "reinterpret" their experiences or ideas into a heterosexual context. To further safeguard for veracity of the respondents' narratives and experiences, I invited the respondents in this project to

provide a "member check" (Kushner & Norris, 1980–1981; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) by reviewing and commenting on the first draft of the manuscript of the data on a non-public website.

Using retrospective data collection methods requires one to address two issues of truthfulness: Did the data provided by the respondents actually happen or occur as the researcher presented it (*veracity*)? Second, did the respondents' analyses, as well as the researcher's, represent truthfully the data (*validity*)? Menneer (1978) proffered guidelines for assessing memory-based data:

- Is the subject matter sensitive to time errors?
- If so, will the errors be important to the study?
- Can erroneous data be corrected by comparing it to data from other existing sources?
- Can other, more mechanical (i.e., less human) methods be used to collect the data?

In planning this project, I determined that the understanding of changes in non-heterosexual male identities in the latter half of the twentieth century was not highly dependent upon respondents' perceptions of single events; as Gandara (1995) pointed out, "there is considerable evidence that the reporting of general attitudes and factual information is relatively stable over time" (1995, p. 20). Consequently, I examined, through the culmination of experiences, patterns of ideas about the respondents' self-identity. The project was consequently less vulnerable to distortion of respondents' experiences in college, for the interview questions could be answered with reference to events over time rather than to specific instances. Moreover, the typological model appears less susceptible to such distortions, as it based upon how a number of individuals experience the same kinds of events, emotions, or ideations, creating patterns of identity; by design, such patterns would not exist if multiple men did not have similar (and thus verifiable) experiences and meanings.

Findings

Identity is much researched and discussed in higher education, but it is rarely defined. I found that, operationally, I could define identity for non-heterosexual men in the U.S. over the latter part of the twentieth century as comprised of three elements: *senses*, or what an individual felt or perceived about himself and his contexts; *experiences*, or what and/or how he behaved or acted; and *sensibilities*, or the meanings he

ascribed to himself and his life concerning his senses and experiences, in juxtaposition to what he perceived as the normative values of the contexts of which he was a part. How an individual sensed himself and his world, behaved in different contexts, and created meaning of his life comprised the differences between the types which might best describe his collegiate identity. For some collegians in this study, identity was as much a matter of unbecoming as it was of becoming, a queer twilight time between what was considered "normal" for heterosexuals and what was often considered "normal" for non-heterosexuals.

As Figure 1 displays, these considerations framed the individual's concept of his identity. To understand what these men thought they could "be" as students and then "become" in their lives, we must understand both concepts of normality and the relation of those concepts to the lives of these men. No singular, monolithic "gay" identity existed, or exists, for U.S. college students; rather, several forms of understanding, of sensibilities, are evident. I have mapped six, although certainly more might exist.

The six identities were formed historically not only in juxtaposition to the concept of heterosexuality (or a heterosexual identity) but also in relation to the other forms of non-heterosexual identity. The identities appeared in particular contexts of social change, and the participants

FIGURE 1

Non-Heterosexual Male Collegiate Male Identity Typology—Late Twentieth Century

Years Most Evident	Identity Type
1940s to Late 1960s	*Homosexual*—acknowledged feelings/attractions, but did not necessarily tell others; sex and identity viewed as a very private matter. Engaged in clandestine socialization with other non-heterosexuals, if at all.
Late 1960s to Present	*Gay*—publicly acknowledged/announced feelings/attractions; often involved within institutional systems to create change. Publicly socialized with other non-heterosexuals.
Late 1980s to Present	*Queer*—very publicly deployed identity, in opposition to normative ("straight") culture; often tried to change mores and social systems.
1940s to Present	*Closeted*—recognized feelings/attractions to other males, and acknowledged to self the meanings of those feelings and attractions. Did not tell many others of his feelings (if anyone at all). Tried to avoid social contexts that might reveal his feelings/attractions.
1940s to Present	*"Normal"*—identified as heterosexual ("just like everyone else"); homosexual activity did not have an effect upon self-identity, and the dissonance between self-concept and deeds was not recognized.
1940s to Present	*Parallel*—identified and experienced as "straight" (non-homosexual) while within those situations and contexts, and as non-heterosexual in non-straight situations and contexts. The cognitive and emotional dissonance, if experienced at all, was compartmentalized, so long as the two worlds were kept separate.

conveyed that they understood their identities in relation to the changing concepts of what it meant to be a non-heterosexual. Just as homosexuality depends upon the concept of heterosexuality for its definition, so too the notion of gay needs homosexual as a contrast, and queer requires the concepts of all three to be understood. I will explore the six types in their apparent chronological sequence.

Homosexual

Some men knew at relatively early ages that their feelings of difference placed them in a category juxtaposed to "straight." In the words of one student from the early 1950s, "I knew I was gay, always, would be . . . [but thought] there aren't many people like me. At the time, it was harder for me to study, to plan for my life." In the mid-century, their ideations of how they could live, their relations to other people (both straight and non-straight), and their personal goals were constricted by their perceptions of others' concepts of sexuality. *Homosexual* collegians could find others whose feelings and experiences mirrored theirs, and with whom they could socialize more freely but not necessarily openly. Private gatherings and parties were the main form of socialization, and if sex were found, it was usually quick, anonymous, and secret.

The consequences for transgressing these boundaries—being too open sexually, socializing too frequently with homosexuals "known" by straight authorities—could be dire. Expulsions from college were not uncommon, nor were the possibilities of arrest or humiliation through publicity (Dilley, 2002b; Loughery, 1998; Sears, 1997). In almost all cases, homosexual collegians considered their sexuality not something publicly displayed or discussed, at most relevant (or revelatory) only to close friends (but rarely to family). In the words of an undergraduate in the early 1980s, "I had a very limited number of friends, certainly nobody I could talk to. I was so naïve, I didn't even know that a community existed, that social places existed, that there were books about gay people." Sexual identity was "a private, personal matter." Homosexual identities were juxtaposed to the public lives and emotions of heterosexuals; homosexuals not only were opposite in their sexual affections but also in their ability to enact (vocally or physically) those identities. The identity of the typical homosexual male student was formed as much by his desires as it was by the dissonance he experienced between those desires and the cultural norms he perceived. It was the intent, the emotional investment, of the desire to have sex with another man that primarily determined his homosexual identity. As Duchess stated,

> I guess back then, especially considering being nineteen, twenty years old, I think more than anything it was about the sex. It was the fact that I could

have sex with another guy. But I don't want to say that was what it was all about. . . . I couldn't fathom the idea that two men could live together like a married couple, like a heterosexual couple.

Duchess's sexuality "was an attachment to my life. My life didn't revolve around it. I think I still identified with having a heterosexual existence: work, professionally; the way I lived, socialized. Even when I was out with someone I liked, I became very straight-passing." That sense of isolation felt by homosexual-type collegians gave way to one of socialization for gay-type men.

Gay

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, the concepts of what it meant to be non-heterosexual had changed: the women's movement, the anti-war movement, the hippie movement, and a growing critique of what was "normal" prompted some collegians to question the social components of sexuality. While the "free to be you and me" attitude could promote a concept of pan-sexuality (an idea of sex not based upon a person's—or the desired person's—gender), it was soon overshadowed by a redefinition of the duality of sexuality. *Gay* replaced the term *homosexual*, both politically and ideologically. No longer was hiding one's sexual feelings the option of choice for many men.

A gay identity connoted an open social life with others who felt similar sexual attractions; implicit in the term *gay*, too, was a willingness to identify publicly in solidarity with others with the same identity. For some gay students, the integration of sexual orientation into their identity fostered a need to become involved in the local community; others brought their sexual identity to the fore of their campus experience, through work in collegiate organizations and/or political movements.

The concepts of self-identity and life goals transformed accordingly. The recollections of James's first years in college are indicative:

I was attracted to my roommate. I was attracted to a lot of guys, and I just didn't know how to deal with it. But . . . the second year, 1969–70, I tried to organize a men's group. I put an ad on the opinion board, saying "This is not necessarily to deal with homosexuality but to deal with us as men." It was subconsciously a way of my wanting to come out.

Not all gay students necessarily associated with gay students in gay student organizations, however. Tim had started to come out prior to matriculation, in the early 1980s, while in high school. But in college he did not participate in campus gay activities, although he had attempted to become a part of his campus's gay student organization:

I did try to [join] the gay and lesbian student union, or whatever it was called. The first year, when I was trying to meet people or figure stuff out, I

went to that a couple of times. I found that really cliquish and not welcoming. I think I went maybe twice and didn't go back, because it was very insular.

Despite the opportunity to become socially involved with other non-heterosexuals on campus, Tim felt his sense of self did not mesh with those of students comprising the campus student organization. Nonetheless, other elements of Tim's identity fit strongly within the gay type. Tim had a boyfriend with whom he lived, off and on campus, during college:

> I guess I felt like the relationship with my boyfriend made me feel connected [to college life] in some way. . . . [Our relationship] didn't feel like it was anything that needed to be named, in some sort of special and different way. We were constantly around each other. Sharing the dorm room, it was like all the mutual free time, we were together. . . . In the Art Department, it wasn't a problem or an issue. I think I did a couple of paintings where that [homosexuality] was part of the painting or part of the subject matter, so I didn't feel like that was a big issue there.

Gene, who attended college in the early 1990s, became more involved primarily only with other gay students:

> Somehow I lost touch with straight friends, the straight scene, so to speak. If we'd bump into each other in the school cafeteria and stuff, we'd sit together and talk, but I don't think we'd be buddy-buddy friends. I had so much work to do, a work-study job, manage my personal things, so my social time was really limited, and I could not separate that between gay friends and straight friends. I had to combine everything into one, so gay friends seemed like the most practical way of utilizing my limited social hours for the maximum capacity.

Gay students understood their identity as a social one, not constructed in medical models of pathology as *homosexual* was (cf. Greenberg, 1988; Katz, 1995; Tierney & Dilley, 1998). Consequently, their interactions with peers and institutions differed from those of homosexual students or closeted collegians. Gay students' ideology was twofold. First, sexuality—in all of its permeations, including those not considered "normal"—was viewed as a more central (and visible) part of social life and thus far more "normal" than previously understood. Second, just as "other" sexualities were to be included in the spectrum of "normal" life, so too should gays be a part of regular social functions, whether as a part of the existing system (university governance, the curriculum, campus statements and missions) or separate (yet equal) functions that mirrored heterosexual (or "straight") functions (student organizations and gay dances being the two most obvious). These ideas brought larger numbers of non-heterosexual men to participate in public life on campus.

Queer

By the 1970s, a distinctly different identity, *queer*, became apparent. This identity was formed not just in juxtaposition to heterosexual concepts and culture, but also in relation to the concept of *gay*. *Queer* is something different from both the norm of straight culture and the norm of gay culture (although the concept had more in common with the latter than the former). Queer students tended not simply to join campus or community organizations, but instead attempted to subvert or to reinvent the structures of those very institutions. Whereas gay students working for change on a college campus might become involved in university or college governance, student politics, or campus activities, queer students might form groups to protest many of those very elements of campus life or might plan events that highlighted the social stigmatization they felt in a non-homosexual environment. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, queer became not only a marker of difference from normal but also a political and social rallying cry.

Jimmy was an undergraduate and graduate student in the 1970s. "From 1970 to 1976, I very consistently (and usually adamantly) identified as a gay man." That identification, however, did not align Jimmy with other non-heterosexual students on campus:

> I watched other gay people fleeing from me! I was so outrageously out as a freshman in college that most of the local gay community actively avoided me for guilt by association. There were a few brave souls who allowed their queerness to me (though there was only one who would be seen with me outside the safety of the Art Department halls). With my Betty Grable hairdo (though sometimes I did Carmen Miranda, replete with fruit and bobbles inserted in carefully coifed curls), gold lamé tank tops, and elephant bells that looked like some prom queen's formal, it was hard to miss me on campus. I didn't have to go out looking—I was a walking billboard for queerness.

Jimmy's sensibility—the meanings he made from his experiences and feelings—was queer, despite the fact that the term and concept for queer were not labeled as such until at least a decade after his collegiate experiences. This identity put Jimmy in conflict with both heterosexual and non-heterosexual students and identities: "I believe that my outward queerness during my undergraduate years was a real turn-off to most men and especially those in the closet."

Rad was an undergrad in the late 1990s who questioned the normative social markers of sexuality, a signifier of queer identity. He was a resident advisor, a columnist for his school paper, and an officer in his campus's gay and lesbian student organization. He too offered visible evidence of his questioning of the social norms of identity representation.

"I had really funky colored hair and [body] piercings." He deployed his identity by being open about his sexual identity in classes, both to students as faculty. "I was very involved in the gay group on campus, the newspaper, the mentoring program through the counseling center, trying to work full-time between two jobs, taking a full load of classes." He viewed his sexuality and sexual identity as central to his learning activities:

> I was getting more [involved] on the gay activism front, and it just occurred to me that my teaching assistant was talking about marriage or something, and it was just completely assumed that we were all straight. . . . It really hit me as bizarre. That's when I started raising my hand. I would ask, *Well, what about gay and lesbian relationships*?

Rad also deployed his identity to create change in his position in residence life:

> I ended up being the only out gay R.A. that year. I had a big rainbow flag hanging from my campus window. I told [my residents], "I'm gay, and I'm active in these groups on campus." I made it more of an example of what they could do to be active on campus. I wanted to set an example of being a positive, out role model, and I think I did that.

Part of Rad's queer sensibility is reflected in his desire for visibility, as well as in his aspiration to work with other student constituencies for programming and campus change:

> The first year I was involved, gay life on campus was . . . not visible, I think. Other than [National Coming Out Week] I don't remember ever seeing or being a part of anything that was public or offering visibility for the gay community. . . . Compared to the way things are now, I think it's changed, not dramatically, but I think for the better. I was amazed at the amount of support from other student groups. We were always pushing for that. When I was more active, my freshman and sophomore years, we would go to the black student assembly and the Hispanic students' functions. So I guess it's finally coming about, more equality in the student groups.

Queer collegians, like their homosexual and gay peers, envisioned their lives in opposition to heterosexuals'. But whereas homosexuals saw themselves as differing from straight people only in terms of their sexual activity (which was viewed as a private matter), queer students positioned their differences publicly; this differentiated their queer identity from *homosexual* and *gay*. Their sexuality was seen less as a variation of the norm and more as an agitator to the notions of normality. Where gay students strove to fit into the accepted campus formats and components of student government, organizations, and politics, queer students were more likely to buck the system, as well as to challenge the acceptance of those norms through actions and appearances.

Closeted

For the prior three types, coming out publicly—whether the students did so or not—was an act with great social and psychological power. But while some collegians were cautiously open about their sexuality during college, others feared the social disapprobation more than the isolation necessary to avoid society's stings of denigration. The term "living in the closet" served as a metaphor for denying, suppressing, or hiding one's non-heterosexual feelings or activities (Signorile, 1993; Tierney, 1997). Closeted collegians felt distanced from both heterosexual and non-heterosexual classmates, despite their efforts at joining social and living organizations. Some dated and even married women to prove (or to disprove) their sexuality to themselves and peers. Still others found sex, or at least symbolic substitutes, in the most conspicuous and seemingly heterosexual places. But the men in this type, who spent their college years evading, avoiding, or lying about their sexuality, were living, in the words of an undergraduate in the late 1970s, a life "on the fringes."

Some closeted students did not reveal themselves for fear of being arrested, expelled from college, or forced to undergo therapy (Dilley, 2002a, 2002b); for others, the impetus was more internal than instrumental. Rick, who matriculated in 1958, recalled:

> My recollection of [myself] is someone who was withdrawn, not real frightened but not real sure of himself. . . . Did my sexual orientation affect [my self-confidence and collegiate performance]? I suppose so, looking back. I was always so afraid that someone would find out, that I never really wanted to reveal my whole persona, sit down and chat with somebody about it. I was just having to learn to deal with that as well. Probably the worst thing you could be, when I was in college, was gay. It was frowned upon. It was barely talked about, if it were talked about at all. The gay man of that time was a Clifton Webb-type—a fussy interior decorator or hairdresser. We didn't have a benchmark by which to go from.

> I had a couple of gay experiences when I was in high school, with friends who were also in high school. Not a serious thing, but just a physical kind of thing, just an exchange of physical-ness. I had that, but when I went to college, I put that away in locked chest. I never looked, never did anything. Now, if the opportunity had come up, I might have, but I was very careful.

> I always knew what I was, but I put this away in a closet. What I didn't do is important. I never married because of that. I did not want to hurt someone else because I couldn't face up to who I was. Definitely I had an identity.

> But that identity was of a person divorced from his senses of emotion, desire, and community.

Juan, an undergrad in the mid-1980s, provided another example of the

closeted collegiate identity. "I knew I was attracted to men. . . . I had never acted on the feelings in high school, but I knew subconsciously they were there." The one gay person whom Juan knew, a friend of his brother, advised him, "'You don't want to be gay. It's, like, the worst thing. You don't want to do it.' It was really hard for him to be gay, horrible. I think that pushed me back . . . [because] he encouraged me to be straight."

Like other former students in this study, Juan found another, more accepted climate on campus to enjoy being with men. "I joined a fraternity. I think I joined because I wanted the social outlets of it. Over the years I've come to realize that I joined the greek system to prove to myself that I wasn't gay. My being a fraternity member would alleviate anyone's doubts, if they thought I was gay."

The fraternity environment, though, allowed him eventually to experience furtive sexual encounters with one of his fraternity brothers. The first time it happened, in Juan's senior year, "It was great; it was like, Oh my gosh. I wasn't scared; we weren't nervous. We stayed together that night. I got up early the next morning, because it was his room. I snuck out and went back to my room. And we never talked about it. It was this awkwardness between us." Despite the awkwardness and the need to keep their activities secret, Juan and his fraternity brother did have sex a few more times throughout the rest of the year:

> Alcohol was always involved. We never really talked about it. It just happened, then we moved on and continued our distance as we always did, because we didn't hang out in the same circles. In some ways I did [want to spend more time with him], because I wanted to explore this more, but I also didn't want to, because I didn't want other people in the house to think something was weird.

"Normal"

Concurrent with these identity types, a number of collegiate men defied the norms of both the straight and the non-straight cultures. They did not identify socially, personally, or politically as gay, homosexual, or queer; indeed, they did not seem to undergo the process of "finding" or "establishing" an identity, the "unbecoming" that many of their non-heterosexual peers experienced, an act that those who are non-homosexual (or not a member of other minorities) often never experience. Yet at the same time as they were not questioning their identities, these men were engaging in homo-sex, often quite frequently. While they were not denying to themselves that they enjoyed the sex, it had no correlation to whom they were, to how they viewed themselves in relation to their (straight) peers; indeed, many of these peers were their sexual partners.

At the time, these men found no dissonance between their actions and their "selves": they were "just like everybody else"; they were *"normal."* These categories move even further away from the binary master categories of *heterosexual* and *homosexual*, blurring the lines of demarcation while conversely corroborating those classifications as well. This paradox is evidence of the diversity in collegiate non-heterosexual identification, a diversity that is lacking in the identity development theories currently existing for students and gay men.

For some students, collegiate life, like that of earlier education, was dominated by peer pressure to conform, to be "just like all the other guys." The pressure was not to be so conscripted to a limited role in campus life: an effeminate gay; "catty, backstabbing, bitchiness"; a weak queer. In the words of an undergraduate in the 1970s:

> Homosexual did not equal normal—and I wanted more than anything to be normal—regular—one of the guys. Being gay or homosexual back then was still filled with the negative stereotypes of the limp-wristed, effeminate, lisping hairdresser. I wasn't that, so I decided I couldn't be homosexual or gay. . . . My homosexuality back then was just about sex, nothing more.

Sexuality for "normal"-type students, at least in terms of a social identity, was neatly divorced from sexual activity. One could have sexual thoughts about other males, even engage in sexual activity with them (which many "normal" guys did, frequently), but such actions did not necessarily have any bearing upon one's identity. A 1980s undergraduate summarized the experience:

> I never really considered [my sexuality]. I mean I remember having sexual thoughts about men as far back as eighth grade. And in high school they were there constantly. But I just never considered being gay. I think the main reason for this (besides my natural inclination to suppress it) was because I literally did not know one gay person. Or, you know what I mean, anyone identifying himself as gay. I mean growing up I thought maybe, just maybe Liberace and Jim Nabors (as so many said) were gay. And I didn't identify with them AT ALL. Nor did I want to. . . . It was just an insult really.

On the other hand, "normal" students had no concept of themselves as "other" or bad; in some senses, their identity integrated all of their behaviors into a fairly cohesive whole. The importance of being "just like everyone else," however, prevented the "normal" students' sensibilities from incorporating the fact that their senses and experiences did not match the presumed (and promoted) norm of heterosexual identity (which was based upon a lack of homo-sexual desire and/or activity). These men were not in denial; instead, it would be more accurate to view their collegiate identities as distinct. They clearly acknowledged—and

even acted upon—the behavioral aspects of homosexuality, considered those activities in relation to their perceived ideas of non-heterosexual identity, and rejected the notion that they were anything but "just like everybody else." Their sexuality had no bearing upon their social identity (presented to others) or personal identity (as understood by themselves at the time).

These young men could not fathom an identity as anything other than that of their friends and peers. This concept of self-identity framed the collegiate activities and sensibilities for "normal" guys. Instead of finding (or creating) a meaning of their homo-sexual behavior based upon difference from heterosexual-identifying peers, "normal" students viewed their sexual actions as having no bearing upon how they self-identified nor upon their social, academic, or extracurricular activities. Ralph, who attended college in the late 1940s and early 1950s, expressed this view:

> I never had any feelings like that [guilt over sexual activity] at all. My feelings were, anything that was beautiful, I loved it, and I didn't give a damn what anyone thought about it. [But] I didn't want to get caught at all, because it would just be too much. What I would do was to sneak around and do things. I would sneak in the bathroom and play around under the stalls, you know. In the library, [there were] those big study tables. We'd sit and put our feet in the other person's crotch, under the table. I had several different guys that we would sit across from each other, so we could play footsie under the table. They were guys in my classes. Some of them were in the religious groups I was in. But we never talked about it.
>
> My college experiences definitely lead me into the idea that I was going to have a family and that I was going to stay married all of my life and all that, and have children (which I did; I had five). But sex, although it was very prominent in my life, never figured in my plans. I never planned for the sexual part of my life; I just figured that would come naturally.

Chris was a college student and fraternity member in the 1980s. "Within my fraternity, my closest five or six friends were also gay but had not called themselves that yet. . . . In high school I was the school queer; the other guys were very astute at figuring out what I liked, even though I had a girlfriend and things like that. I didn't have to deal with a lot of that in college, because I had a safety net of my gay friends who did not know they were gay, either." Despite not talking about homosexuality, he did experience it. "I first started off, in college, in bookstores, because that was my experience in high school. And then learning the bathroom system; the undergrad bathroom was the meeting point for all of that. I just kind of happened upon that one time at the library. And then reading the bathroom walls, figuring out where everyone else went. There was a whole system and a mechanic to the whole thing: where to

go to meet someone, where to then go to have sex with that person, where the hot guys hung out."

Chris applied the same standards to both greek life and tearoom sex:

> [The bathrooms] were the whole system; that's where we [fraternity men] all went. The funny thing is, it was a title thing as well. Just like a girl dating a Beta at school was considered really cool, if you were able to do a Beta in the bathrooms you were a very cool bathroom guy. . . . There were people that I'd have sex with more than once; there was never a schedule to it, but more than once. There were some guys that I only saw once and never saw [there] again. But I would see them later on [elsewhere on campus] with their fraternity letters on.
>
> It was important for people to know I was greek. My goal was to get other fraternity guys. That was my element of fun. And really, that game and that community became my group. I mean, we never spoke, of course, but I at least knew that there were other people out there who were young, attractive and hot, who also liked doing the same things I did.

Those things included frequenting straight bars with fraternity friends, dating girls, and becoming engaged. "I was not gay but I did gay things. So the behavior was gay, not necessarily the essence. I had my regular life and my sex life. . . . There was no conflict within me at all." At the time, Chris considered his life in college "pretty normal."

"*Normal*," as Greg, another respondent, pointed out, is an unconsidered position, a concept so self-evident that to even question its qualities is to call into question one's own normality: "When you're straight, you normally don't have terminology about your sexual identity; you just kind of associate that you're just like everyone else. I thought of myself exactly like everybody else." Each of the "normal" respondents made it clear that the terminology, the concepts, of non-heterosexual identity were available. In each case, though, the markers of identification were not necessarily sexual activity but social roles ascribed and decried by heterosexual peers.

Parallel

In contrast to the integration of homo-sexual activities into their sensibilities and concurrent lack of consideration of meaning of those acts to one's self-concept experienced by the "normal" students, other male collegians keenly felt the disjuncture of the homo- and the hetero-experiences. For these men who exemplified the *parallel* type, the undergraduate years were a combination of distinctly different sets of cultures, acquaintances, and behaviors. By day (usually, but not always so, though), these collegians attended class, worked on or off campus, spent time with friends from school, or participated in home or family life. But by night (usually, but not always confined to those hours), they engaged

in different behaviors. They led "this secret, shadow life," cruising bars, parks, or other sexualized spaces, looking for male sexual partners; they took great pains to ensure their anonymity (at least as far as beyond those sexualized settings). Unlike Chris's sensibility, these men did not think of their lives as normal nor see their behavior mirrored in their peers; unlike Greg, they considered their sexual activity as sex, and not simply fooling around or reaching an orgasm. These parallel collegians ensured that the two social milieus in which they were maneuvering never converged. In the words on one student from the late 1940s, "I felt I was leading two lives"; another student from the 1970s stated, "My life . . . became separated into sort of parallel lives." For most of these men, being a public non-heterosexual man (be that called *gay*, *queer*, or *homosexual*) was not something that was a part of campus life; it was an aspect of off-campus life. When the two worlds intersected, the student would feel uncomfortable in both student/straight and citizen/sexual roles: as one said, "The two worlds, I knew, couldn't mix." This discomfort fostered in these men barriers between not only the two cultures but also their emotions and the people they knew in each culture.

Dennis attended college during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

> Socially, I would hang out with a crowd, so I wouldn't be attached with any particular person. During the week I would study my head off. I didn't have time to do anything socially. But predominately on the weekends I had my own little private life. On Friday after class, I would get on the bus . . . and go into the city. And [I] would cruise the train station to find some old man to spend the weekend with. Now, when I say 'old man,' I was seventeen, he was probably thirty, you know? I'd find some older business guy on the way home from work, [who would] pick me up in the men's room in the train station. And I'd spend the weekend with him.

On campus, Dennis lived a very different kind of life.

> I think a lot of people suspected, but I was not out, and no one knew. I did not share these feelings with anyone except the strangers I would meet and get to know, off campus and in the city. . . . Even once I met other people on campus who were gay, there was nothing sexual about that. Sexuality was expressed with older men. Older men were outside of my way of life. Even if I ran into a younger man outside of that [in the city], that was too close to my real life.

Dennis's reflection upon his identity—then and now—reflects the distinctions both in definitions of commonly unconsidered terms of identity and in how male non-heterosexual collegians could distinguish between different forms of non-heterosexuality.

> I would say I was gay [in college], but differently than I use that word today. *Gay*, meaning my sexuality, ruled my every movement, thought and

interaction with people. I was either trying to flaunt it to those I wanted to know, or to hide it from those I didn't. But not like I would say today *gay*, meaning a whole complete person who is gay. Most academic situations, I would try to hide it. That was a conscious effort. But the minute I got away from that, in my own time, I was using it to my best ability to get what I wanted: sex. I was very preoccupied with sex. Lots of things, lots of achievements that I may have made or would have liked to have made, I didn't, because they took time away from what I saw was my personal life, or my sexual life. And it came first.

Pete joined a fraternity when he transferred from a two-year to a four-year institution. Like Dennis, he kept his homo-socialization separate from his campus activities:

I definitely knew I was gay, and I was having relationships with other men. But I did not do that my first semester in the fraternity. I was incredibly busy. The first semester I was completely immersed in the fraternity. That was my first and second semesters. I was an officer, and I took that responsibility seriously. Then I started going downtown to the bars and stuff, and I decided that was a better life for me, personally.

For over a year Pete lied to his fraternity brothers to conceal that he was spending the night—and more and more of them—with male sexual partners. Eventually he left the fraternity, without coming out to the membership:

I just think that [gay socialization] was more of who I was. I was having sex, and I decided I was done with the fraternity scene. I didn't want to have that experience my whole undergraduate life. Essentially, I saw something I wanted to do more. And that was to be downtown and experience the gay life fully, to be in the clubs, to dance, meeting and making a new network of people, local people. The two groups, I knew, couldn't mix. I couldn't bring my gay friends I was meeting in the clubs to meet the people in the fraternity house, nor the other way around.

Distinguishing Between Types

Specific differences between the types of non-heterosexual male collegiate identity are evident within six key areas of sense, experience, or sensibility. More might exist, but within this study, the six primary domains I have found relevant to the understanding of identity of non-heterosexual college males are: experiences within campus environments; involvement (or not) with student organizations; involvement (for some) in fraternity life; sexual experiences; consideration of a concept of peer "normality"; and the display and handling of emotions. These differences are summarized in Figure 2. Each domain reflects specific influ-

ences upon non-heterosexual identity for the collegiate males in this study. Figure 3 depicts how those influences differed across the types; the differences are key to distinguishing between the types.

Campus Environments

The constraints and the opportunities of particular campus environments impacted non-heterosexual identity—positively and negatively. Men seeking other men—for sex, for companionship, for identification with others who are like themselves—found ways to do so in every campus community. In the 1940s, Walter knew of a "gay cruising area in a park," as well as private social gatherings in faculty members' homes. Tim and his boyfriend shared a dorm room as an openly gay couple. Chris and Ralph found sex in the public spaces of campus, while Juan found sex in his fraternity house with a fraternity brother. Jim attempted to form a men's discussion group using his campus opinion board to find others who were "like" him.

The importance of these experiences for these men is more than just being in a context with other adolescents who might share their inclinations (although that certainly happened, as many of the respondents' conveyed), for through the experiences, the men discovered another aspect or quality against which to compare themselves and their identities. Clearly, from the narratives, over the last half of the twentieth century non-heterosexual students found more opportunity for social (not

---

FIGURE 2

Elements of Distinction Between Non-Heterosexual Collegiate Identity Types

Campus Environments. The constraints and the opportunities of particular physical and social campus environments did impact non-heterosexual identity—both positively and negatively.

Gay Student Organizations. The formation of a gay student organization on campus provided some benefits to some non-heterosexual collegians, but simply having such an organization was not enough to provide social and/or developmental opportunities needed for positive identity development.

Fraternity Life. A sense of "common background and instant rapport" that enriched interpersonal relationships—albeit usually in non-overtly sexual ways—was a theme in the life stories of members of greek-letter organizations.

Sexual Activity. Sexual activity was very important in the identity development of non-heterosexual male college students, moreso than represented in either student identity development models or gay identity development models.

The Goals of Being "Normal." Being "normal"—or at least considered by others as such—was an early goal of many students who later identified as non-heterosexual.

Emotional Attractions. While the physical act of sex with another man might be seen as a clear sign of not being heterosexual, often emotional attractions to other men were the first indications to non-heterosexual men of their difference.

necessarily sexual) gatherings on college campuses in the U.S. A number of respondents reported being a part of—either socially or as an active member—gay and lesbian student organizations, and historical reflections from non-members indicated a direct, positive attitudinal and climatic impact of such groups upon campuses.

Gay Student Organizations

Gay student organizations operating on campus provided some benefits to some respondents, but this alone was not enough to provide the myriad social and/or developmental opportunities needed for positive identity development. Older respondents, having attended college before court rulings in the 1970s allowed non-heterosexual student organizations the right to assemble on campus, frequently mentioned their desire to have had such a group on campus. The creation of the organizations—and the concurrent resulting interpersonal and personal development for non-heterosexual students—provided opportunities for growth named on traditional student development models that, possibly, these collegians would not have had. Non-heterosexual students involved in non-heterosexual campus organizations found some new friends and relationships; the majority reported having, on the whole, negative experiences with the student organizations, although the involvement in campus student organizations for some (Duchess and Rad, for example) did facilitate relationships, friendships, and development along the tenets of traditional student development theories.

Gay student groups, by themselves, did not mitigate social stigmatization for non-heterosexual students; some students, such as Tim, found such organizations "cliquish" and "very insular." Tim's encounter with gay campus organizations pointed out an incongruity in these organizations that many non-heterosexual men described: a conflict between personal goals (usually for socialization) and political goals (usually for inclusion of and equity for non-heterosexual students). On the other hand, Rad, a queer type, wanted to be active in efforts at social (political, yet still personal) change in the non-heterosexual student activities and organization at University of Southern California. He, too, found his time with the organization less than fulfilling; in his view, the efforts were not as "visible" or integrated with the other aspects of student life as he would have hoped them to be.

Whatever their motives for wanting to become part of the campus organizations for non-heterosexuals, clearly the students in this study did not find fulfillment of their needs or goals through such organizations. In this sense, their abilities to connect socially with other non-heterosexuals was as limited as that expressed by this student from the 1980s:

I didn't really meet any other gay people in college—I mean there were other gay people I met, but it wasn't openly discussed (besides the gossip/specula-tion of other dorm members), so I didn't know they were gay. It wasn't like now, where sexuality brings a certain common background and instant (if not lasting) rapport.

Fraternity Life

A sense of "common background and instant rapport" that enriched interpersonal relationships—albeit usually in non-overtly sexual ways—was a theme in life stories of certain collegiate non-heterosexu-als: members of greek-letter fraternities. Indeed, fraternity life greatly influenced the homo-emotional experiences of several respondents in this study. Juan found his fraternity brothers a source of companionship and friendship. Chris also reported that being a fraternity member pro-vided a sense of "fitting in" on campus; Pete echoed this and added that he viewed greek-letter life as an opportunity to be "very socially active," a personal goal for his collegiate experience after leaving community college.

Interestingly, the respondents involved in non-heterosexual student organizations often reported alienation and isolation within those groups, while those who were members of greek-letter fraternities found camaraderie and friendship within those organizations (albeit while not publicly acknowledging their sexuality). This runs counter to the intu-itive belief of the older non-heterosexuals in the study (as well as my own belief) that involvement in campus organizations would create bet-ter environments for establishing identities with non-heterosexual peers. I also caution that, despite the data presented in this article, not all re-spondents in greek-letter organizations had positive experiences. While these analyses of the benefits of greek life and its related social world are not novel, they are most striking when coming from non-heterosex-ual men.

Sexual Activity

Perhaps not surprisingly, and confirming prior studies (Savin-Williams, 1999; Howard, 1999; Sadownick, 1996), sexual activity was quite impor-tant to the respondents' concepts of their identity. The meanings, however, of those sexual acts upon their identity were not necessarily tied to the self-concept of a non-heterosexual identity; for some, the distinctions be-tween heterosexual and non-heterosexual were not created by sexual ac-tivity but in social roles and identifications. The "normal" type men pro-vide a clear example of students engaging in homosexual activity without necessarily thinking of themselves as anything other than heterosexual.

In many instances, the subcultural, clandestine activities engaged in by non-heterosexuals influenced how those non-heterosexuals pictured their identities, both personally and as members of a campus. Gathering large numbers of post-adolescent males onto campuses with public "private" facilities fostered many opportunities to explore the physical side of non-heterosexual identities. As Chris stated about being at the University of Illinois in the 1980s:

> It was just a perfect situation for me to find the type of sex I enjoyed at the time, without feeling any guilt. . . . There's a lot of people who are jealous of my college experiences, because I had so much sex in college, and the type of sex and the type of guy I had sex with. U of I definitely enabled that, definitely allowed that to happen.

Sex was crucial to the respondents, both in terms of their eventual understanding of their identity and in much of their collegiate lives. One student indicated sex "was important. At the beginning, I needed to know whether I was really gay. Then, it became an affirmation of self-worth." Some students hid from situations where they might be physically attracted to men, while others sought it out. Others engaged in activities with a great number of sexual partners, while others had no sexual activity during college. A few collegians believed that their sexuality was central to their identity, while others thought it was a "private, personal matter." "It was not intended to become a way of life—merely sidelines and detours. It was just something I did; it just wasn't me."

In contrast to this view, sexual activity was viewed by most of the respondents—particularly by those whose narratives I included as representative of the types—as important, even if they did not identify as an "other" type (say, *gay* or *homosexual*). In the words of Greg, "Once I found the sex part, it all made sense." Indeed, many of the respondents reported engaging in numerous sexual encounters and activities, even in repressive environments and contexts. For most of the respondents, sex was always available in college, if not on campus then close by (in what surely was never intended to be classified as "town and gown" relationships). But whether they were running from it or toward it, sex was a dominant concept affecting self-understanding (knowing one's self) and, consequently, self-identity (presenting one's self).

The degree of importance of sexual activity, however, varied. To some non-heterosexual men, particularly those who were closeted or leading parallel lives, the impact and importance of the sex was relegated to a non-existent role in their identity: "My homosexuality back then was just about sex, nothing more." Another student classified as "normal" summarized his contemporary views of homo-sex: "In college, being

gay meant just having sex with another guy." It certainly did not create a sense of identity for him.

But for men in the study who do not fit into the "closeted" or "homosexual" types, particularly those who attended college after the early 1970s, sex played a more primal role in their daily lives and in their self-concepts of identity. Many of them engaged in sexual activity at quite young ages; such early sexual activity has only recently begun to be addressed by gay identity development theorists (Savin-Williams, 1998) and has not been discussed at all by student identity development theorists. "Having sex with boys was not the same as being gay" (Savin-Williams, 1998, p. 56). This is certainly the case for the students classified as "normal," but some collegians who engaged in sex prior to college (or high school) made a direct connection between their (homo-) sexual behavior and their identity. As Tim's story conveyed, he felt different from his high school and college peers "maybe because I lost my virginity at a very early age." In Cliff's estimation, sex opened up ways of not only understanding himself but also allowed him "to become a good [theater set] designer." Another respondent agreed on the importance of sex upon his understanding of his identity: "Yes! It was exploring and learning what sex was. It was a novelty. It was exciting. My first top, bottom, three-way, hustler, etc. It was all uncharted, new experiences. It was mostly fun, but a bit superficial. Something was always lacking; I think it was the romance." For others, like Dennis, romance was sometimes evident, even if an on-going relationship was not desired. In any event, though, sex—the thought of, the search for, the experience of, and the consequences afterwards—profoundly affected the identities of the collegians in this study.

The Goals of Being "Normal"

Sex was not the only objective of non-heterosexual collegians; in their quests for understanding "who" they were—and to whom they were similar—they also hoped to prove that they were like the majority of their peers (be they straight, homosexual, gay, or queer). Being "normal" was a goal of many students who later identified as non-heterosexual. Even if they were engaging in homo-sexual activity, the respondents perceived the identity formation process in relation to the societal norms of the time. That the norms favored heterosexuality and sanctioned against homosexuality was no surprise in the 1940s and 1950s. One e-mail respondent commented:

> Homosexual did not equate normal—and I wanted more than anything to be normal—one of the guys. Being gay or homosexual back then was still filled with the negative stereotypes of the limp-wristed, effeminate, lisping

> hairdresser. I wasn't that, so I decided I couldn't be a homosexual or gay. There weren't any images of regular homosexual men to refer back then. . . . For a long time—and certainly at that time—I considered the possibility of being homosexual to be a terrible curse—something evil had happened to me—and I was determined that it would go away if I denied it long enough. I wanted to be regular and normal. At that time, the idea that I could be gay and normal was an absurd thought.

This paradox is the essential point of non-heterosexual college identity. One respondent viewed himself as "Normal. All the kids in school were like me. At the same time, the idea that I could be gay and normal was an absurd thought."

The process of comparing one's experiences to the (perceived) identities of others was ongoing and extended to other non-heterosexuals as well as heterosexuals. This comparison between self and others, however, did not always bring about acceptance of one's sense of self as different. For many respondents, such comparisons fostered behavior and ideation—at least for a time—that mirrored the closet or parallel types. Here is a telling comment from one collegian: "I was very uncomfortable with the idea and reality of being gay when I was in college. It was a burden then—something to hide." His perception of his sexuality in the absence of sexual activity is also distinguishing. While the physical act of sex with another man might be seen as a clear sign of not being heterosexual, often emotional attractions to other men were the first indications to non-heterosexual men of their difference. He hid his "idea and reality" of being gay, and effected a facade of being "normal."

This identification as "normal" highlights the dilemmas of using gay identity development theories in the way educators use student development theory. Should the student development practitioner program activities and experiences for the "normal" student, or for those in the closet or in denial, that challenge their concepts of their own sexuality, in the hopes of progressing that understanding to more closely align with their sexual impulses or affections? On the other hand, should practitioners not address these issues through programming or advice, thereby perpetuating the feelings that form the closet and facilitate denial?

The issues are made murkier when one considers that, as the narratives corroborate, identity is neither stable nor fixed. How students conceptualized themselves (vis-à-vis their sexuality)—and how they allowed others to conceptualize them—fluctuated during their collegiate years. The parallel types formulated two almost disparate identities, based in relation to what was considered customary for different contexts; some students self-identified as "gay" while exhibiting qualities, behaviors, and sensibilities that are classified by others as "queer"; the

homosexual students (like Duchess) made it clear that acting "too gay" was something they avoided, even though, in private, they might want to behave in those fashions.

Such is the untenable position student programmers and advisors find when confronted with counseling non-heterosexual male college students. Rather than progress through orderly stages of development, non-heterosexual male identity is situational, adapted by individuals to suit the needs (and desires) they have to perform (or live) in different contexts. The sense of being "normal, just like all the other kids" changes accordingly, as does the students' individual impressions of what is considered befitting the non-heterosexual identities.

Emotional Attractions

How the respondents managed the expression of their emotions to themselves and to others is a final distinctive element of each type. Tim's relationship with his boyfriend of the time was a given among their friends: "The group of people that I was in perceived us as being a couple. So we were a couple." Dennis, a parallel student, "would hang out with a crowd, so I wouldn't be attached with any particular person. . . . I did not share these feelings with anyone except the strangers I would meet and get to know, off campus and in the city." Chris, a "normal" student, "didn't think that an emotional relationship with a man was possible; I figured that it was all sexual." Chris finally began to define his experience and identity as gay when he developed feelings of affection towards men instead of women. While the (multiple) physical acts of sex with other men might be seen as a clear sign of not being heterosexual, often emotional attractions to other men were the first indications to non-heterosexual men of their identity difference.

Concluding Observations

The concepts of identity—along with the interpersonal behaviors and communications that deploy those concepts into practice—for the men in this study are far less static than the existing identity development models (both student and gay) depict. While on the one hand most of the respondents depicted knowing, confidently, that they were truly non-heterosexual, on the other hand they often had difficulty conceiving how they could "be" non-heterosexual while "being" themselves. It is important to remember that the classifications in this typology are neither prescriptive nor proscriptive; individuals might slide between type classifications, based upon their own definitions of their sexuality, the specific actions they undertake, and (in instances) the motives behind both the

definitions and the actions. Or perhaps individuals will remain firmly fixed within a particular type.

For non-heterosexual collegians, self-identity was not a process particularly of "unbecoming" straight or of "becoming" gay or queer; rather, their paths to self-identity were (fairly) continuous negotiations of self and other, of straight and non-straight, of activities of varying meanings and meanings with varying activities. Some students moved swiftly from one identity to another and remained fairly secure in their comprehension of their place in campus societies; they might engage in social and interpersonal communications and activities that placed them in opposition to the norms of heterosexuality, or they might remain publicly aligned with the center while trying to understand how they could feel disconnected from that center. Others played (or frayed) at the margins, attempting to calibrate their sense of self with the views of others (both straight and non-straight).

A proponent of stage models could argue that different ideations represented individual stages of progression through identity development; *queer*, for instance, could be a phase of rebellion, an affectation of youth

FIGURE 3

Elements of Distinctions Across Identity Types

	Campus Environments	Student Organizations	Fraternity Life
Homosexual	Felt oppressed by campus	Rarely; participated in social events, if at all	If a member, usually not out to other greek members
Gay	Challenged campus oppression; viewed campus as site for social inclusion	Formed student organizations and participated in existing campus activities	If a member, usually not out to other greek members
Closeted	Felt oppressed through campus institutions	Did not join or participate in social activities	If a member, usually not out to other greek members
Queer	Saw campus as site of public disruption for contesting social norms	Involved more in loose-knit social action groups, rather than traditional or gay student groups	Viewed as repressive, normalizing constructs
"Normal"	Campus viewed as non-politicized in public, but often very sexual in private or semi-public campus locales	Usually not involved in gay student or community organizations, as these students did not identify as non-heterosexual	Members often experienced homo-affectional and occasional homo-sexual experience with other fraternity members
Parallel	Campus seen only as a heterosexual (and homo-sex-less) environment	Usually not involved in non-heterosexual campus or community organizations	If involved in greek system, separated sex from greek life; might experience homo-affections for other greek members

FIGURE 3 (*continued*)

Elements of Distinctions Across Identity Types

	Sex	"Normality"	Emotions
Homosexual	A private matter, even if conducted in semi-public places	Did not consider themselves normal	Did not display emotions publicly
Gay	Viewed sex as less a private matter and more as a human right	Viewed themselves as virtually normal, differing only in gender of sexual partner and society's perceptions of them	Posited and displayed emotions in public, but not usually confrontationally
Closeted	Rarely experienced, if at all	Tried to appear normal (i.e., heterosexual)	Felt homo-affections but did not reveal them to others
Queer	Publicly deployed sexuality, to demonstrate social stigmatization	Normality seen as oppressive and opposite of queer	Emotions deployed in public to disrupt social norms
"Normal"	Viewed homo-sex as normal activity, not as signifying homosexuality (or gay or queer) as an identity	Viewed themselves as normal; experienced a disjuncture between homosexual acts and homosexual identity	Often no emotions involved in homo-sex relations; emotions often involved in hetero-sex relations
Parallel	Homo-sex seen as separate from hetero-sex	Heterosexual aspects seen as normal, homosexual aspects as not	Experienced a disjuncture between homo-affections and self-identity

(or desired youth) to attempt to create change while on a "quest" or "journey" towards a normative concept of self-identity. But the data from this study belie the singular outcome (either for gay males or for college students in general) on which existing stage-development models are based. None of the men I studied felt they were "underdeveloped" when they "grew up"; even when they remembered desiring to be more publicly open about their identity or not feeling "like" the other non-heterosexuals they viewed in their historical social context, no one suggested that his development was inherently of a lesser quality than those of other non-heterosexual men.

Specific college environments—social, temporal, and geographic—most certainly impacted both the process (ways and/or manners to self-identify, as depicted as elements of distinction in Figure 3) and the product (identity as label or term used for self-understanding and presentation to others) of these men. Postsecondary institutions created environments (both positive and negative), provided structures for socialization and organization, gathered together like-minded peers, and offered the idea(l) of not only the prerogative to determine through

college experiences whom one was but also, in time, the right to do so openly and publicly. This relationship has deepened within the last half-century, as witnessed by the increasing number of respondents who found not only their time in college easier in regards to their sexuality but also encouraging (in ways intentional and not) of their examination of the possibilities of—and opportunities for—not being a heterosexual.

The value of previous developmental theories and models is not nullified by this complexity of identity; those theories and models are, however, limited in their ability to reflect fully non-heterosexual male collegiate identity. As identity is neither fixed nor stable, the types I proffer are not based solely upon the essentializing concept of identity determined by a set "out"-come. Neither is non-heterosexual identity exclusive because of the specific contemporaneous cultures of the individuals (a constructionist view of identity); many forms of being non-heterosexual can exist, understood against the norms of heterosexuality and the concurrent norms of other forms of non-heterosexuality. Not all of the forms need to have "coming out" as an objective.

If student identity development theories reflect a particular progressive process of public proclamation, a progressive element is also evident in some of the stories of the men in this study. That progression of understanding, however, did not occur in college for many respondents, especially those who led parallel or closeted lives and those who, at the time, thought of themselves as "just like everybody else." Coming out was not a "goal" for their concept of identity nor their experience; nonetheless, the identity of members of each type were affected (and perhaps effected) as a result of differed levels and forms of social and campus involvement.

For all intents, these students would not be thought of by most educators on campus as homosexual, gay, or queer. Parallel, closeted, and "normal" students would not typically be found in gay student organizations or campus activities, let alone as participants in political or social functions for campus change. They are hidden populations, experiencing circumstances and constructing meanings of their senses in manners that neither student identity development theories nor gay identity development theories address. The norms that postsecondary educators and practitioners see in visible non-heterosexual populations do not translate to other types of non-heterosexual collegians; neither do the tenets of the stage-models used to depict and understand that visible gay (and/or queer) student identity.

The non-public types of non-heterosexual identity create dilemmas for educators and practitioners who use student development theories. Should we program activities and experiences for the "normal" student,

the parallel student, or the closeted student, activities that would challenge their concepts of their own sexuality and identity, in the hopes of progressing that understanding to more closely align their sexual impulses or affections with the more public, dominant identities? On the other hand, should we not address these issues at all in our programming or interventions, thereby perpetuating feelings that keep students from associating with others? What is our level of commitment to respecting the primacy of students' abilities to define their own lives, experiences, and identities? Whatever one's answer is to those questions, understanding the nuances of non-heterosexual collegiate identities will allow researchers to avoid the trap of extrapolating from only the visible elements or actions of a diverse population; further, practitioners might be better prepared to provide more precise interventions and programming for their non-heterosexual students, out or not.

References

Astin, A. W. (1993). *What matters in college?: Four critical years revisited*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Atkinson, R. (1998). *The life story interview*. Qualitative Research Methods Series No. 44. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Atkinson, R. (2002). The life story interview. In J. F. Gubrium and J. A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of interview research: Context and method* (pp. 121–140). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Bravmann, S. (1997). *Queer fictions of the past: History, culture, and difference*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Chauncey, G. (1994). *Gay New York: Gender, urban culture, and the making of the gay male world, 1890–1940*. New York: Basic Books.

Chickering, A. W. (1969). *Education and identity*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Chickering, A. W., & Reisser, L. (1993). *Education and identity* (2nd Ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Coffey, A. (1999). *The ethnographic self: Fieldwork and the representation of identity*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cohen, K. M., & Savin-Williams, R. C. (1996). Developmental perspectives on coming out to self and others. In R. C. Savin-Williams & K. M. Cohen (Eds.), *The lives of lesbians, gays, and bisexuals: Children to adults* (pp. 113–151). Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace College.

D'Augelli, A. R. (1989a). Homophobia in a university community: Views of prospective resident assistants. *Journal of College Student Development, 30*, 546-552.

D'Augelli, A. R. (1989b). Lesbians' and gay men's experiences of discrimination and harassment in a university community. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 17*(3), 317–321.

D'Augelli, A. R. (1991). Gay men in college: Identity processes and adaptations. *Journal of College Student Development, 32*, 140–146.

D'Augelli, A. R. (1994). Identity development and sexual orientation: Toward a model of lesbian, gay, and bisexual development. In E. J. Trickett, R. J. Watts, & D. Birman (Eds.), *Human diversity: Perspectives on people in context* (pp. 312–333). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

D'Augelli, A. R., & Patterson, C. J. (Eds.). (1995). *Lesbian, gay, and bisexual identities over the lifespan: Psychological perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press.

D'Augelli, A. R., & Rose, M. L. (1990). Homophobia in a university community: Attitudes and experiences of heterosexual freshmen. *Journal of College Student Development, 31*, 484–491.

Denzin, N. K. (1989). *Interpretive biography*. Qualitative Research Methods Series No. 17. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Dilley, P. (1999). Queer theory: Under construction. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 12*(5), 457–472.

Dilley, P. (2002a). 20th Century postsecondary practices and policies to control gay students. *The Review of Higher Education, 25*(4), 409–431.

Dilley, P. (2002b). *Queer man on campus: A history of non-heterosexual men in college, 1945–2000*. New York: RoutledgeFalmer.

Evans, N. J., & Broido, E. M. (1999). Coming out in college residence halls: Negotiation, meaning making, challenges, supports. *Journal of College Student Development, 40*(6), 658–668.

Evans, N. J., & D'Augelli, A. R. (1996). Lesbians, gay men, and bisexual people in college. In R. C. Savin-Williams & K. M. Cohen (Eds.), *The lives of lesbians, gays, and bisexuals: Children to adults* (pp. 201–226). Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace College.

Evans, N. J., Forney, D. S., & Guido-DiBrito, F. (1998). *Student development in college: Theory, research, and practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Gandara, P. (1995). *Over the ivy walls: The educational mobility of low-income Chicanos*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Garmezy, N. (1974). Children at risk: The search for the antecedents of schizophrenia. Part I, Conceptual modes and research methods. *Schizophrenia Bulletin, 8*, 14–90.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory*. Chicago: Aldine.

Glesne, C., & Peshkin, A. (1992). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction*. White Plains, NY: Longman.

Goldman-Segall, R. (1995). Configurational validity: A proposal for analyzing ethnographic multimedia narratives. *Journal for Educational Multimedia and Hypermedia, 42*(2–3), 163–183.

Greenberg, D. F. (1988). *The construction of homosexuality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Herdt, G., & Boxer, A. (1993). *Children of Horizons: How gay and lesbian teens are leading a new way out of the closet*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Howard, J. (1999). *Men like that: A southern queer history*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Jagose, A. (1996). *Queer theory: An introduction*. New York: New York University Press.

Johnson, R. (2002). In-depth interviewing. In J. F. Gubrium & J. A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of interview research: Context and method* (pp. 103–120). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Katz, J. N. (1995). *The invention of heterosexuality*. New York: Dutton.

Kushner, S., & Norris, N. (1980–81). Interpretation, negotiation, and validity in naturalistic research. *Interchange on Educational Policy, 11*(4), 26–36.

Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Lofland, J., & Lofland, L. H. (1995). *Analyzing social settings: A guide to qualitative observation and analysis*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Loughery, J. (1998). *The other side of silence: Men's lives and gay identities: A Twentieth-Century history*. New York: Henry Holt.

Love, P. G. (1997). Contradictions and paradoxes: Attempting to change the culture of sexual orientation at a small Catholic college. *Review of Higher Education, 20*(4), 381–398.

Love, P. G. (1999). Cultural barriers facing lesbian, gay, bisexual students at a Catholic college. *The Journal of Higher Education, 69*(3), 298–323.

Mann, C., & Stewart, F. (2002). Internet interviewing. In J. F. Gubrium & J. A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of interview research: Context and method* (pp. 603–628). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Mendelsohn, D. (1999). *The elusive embrace: Desire and the riddle of identity*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Menneer, P. (1978). Retrospective data in survey research. *Journal of Marketing Research, 20*, 182–195.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (1991). *How college affects students: Findings and insights from twenty years of research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Rhoads, R. A. (1994). *Coming out in college: The struggle for a queer identity*. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.

Rhoads, R. A. (1995). The cultural politics of coming out in college: Experiences of male students. *Review of Higher Education, 19*(1), 1–22.

Rhoads, R. A. (1997). A subcultural study of gay and bisexual college males: Resisting developmental inclinations. *Journal of Higher Education, 68*(4), 460–482.

Sadownick, D. (1996). *Sex between men: An intimate history of the sex lives of gay men postwar to present*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco.

Savin-Williams, R. C. (1990). *Gay and lesbian youth: Expressions of identity*. New York: Hemisphere.

Savin-Williams, R. C. (1998). *". . . And then I became gay:" Young men's stories*. New York: Routledge.

Sears, J. T. (1997). *Lonely hunters: An oral history of lesbian and gay southern life*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Seidman, I. (1998). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (2nd Ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.

Singnorile, M. (1993). *Queer in America: Sex, the media, and the closets of power*. New York: Random House.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1994). Grounded theory methodology: An overview. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 262–272). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Thomas, R., & Chickering, A. W. (1984). *Education and identity* revisited. *Journal of College Student Personnel, 25*, 392–399.

Tierney, W. G. (1997). *Academic outlaws: Queer theory and cultural studies in the academy*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Tierney, W. G., & Dilley, P. (1998). Constructing knowledge: Educational research and gay and lesbian studies. In W. F. Pinar (Ed.), *Queer theory in education* (pp. 49–72). Manwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Warren, C. A. B. (2002). Qualitative interviewing. In J. F. Gubrium & J. A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of interview research: Context and method* (pp. 83–102). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.