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Growing up gay or bisexual: The experiences of young gay and bisexual men in Windsor and Essex County, Ontario

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GROWING UP GAY OR BISEXUAL: THE EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG GAY AND

BISEXUAL MEN IN WINDSOR AND ESSEX COUNTY, ONTARIO

by

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the experience of forming a stigmatized cultural identity within a particular social and historical context, specifically, gay and bisexual male (GBM) identity in Windsor and Essex County, Ontario, Canada. Savin-Williams' (1998) trajectory model of sexual identity development with milestones was utilized and issues identified in the research literature and significant problems confronted by GBMs were included. Sexual identity first milestones included attractions, self-labelling, disclosure, sex, love, and romantic relationships. Issues included harassment, HIV/AIDS, homelessness, use of mood altering substances, depression and suicide, and the sex trade. A mixed quantitative and qualitative method, sequential explanatory design, was used to collect occurrence and age data on milestones and issues significant to the development of GBM identities through an online survey, followed by a semi-structured interview. The 79 survey respondents and eight interviewees were GBMs, ages 17 to 26, who had lived in Windsor and Essex county for at least half of their lives. The trajectory model (with some alteration of the ordering of stages due to the influences of social, interpersonal, and intrapersonal contexts) was found to be useful in capturing the general sexual identity developmental progression of participants, while highlighting variability in occurrence, age of achievement, and order. Many of the issues identified in the literature were experienced by varying proportions of participants, with harassment being the most common and related to comparisons with others. Interviewees' narratives, analyzed for descriptive interpretative themes, highlighted the particular context of Windsor and Essex County in the development of their sexual identities and participation in and becoming part of a sexual community.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my families; I am very fortunate to have several. It is dedicated to my family of origin, who have stuck by me through thick and thin. This work would not have been possible without their unconditional support and encouragement. Both my mother and my father have been instrumental in supporting me and this effort. It is also dedicated to my family of friends who have helped me over the years in innumerable ways. I am lucky to have such a devoted tribe around me. Last, it is dedicated to the people who make up my adopted community. These strong and proud LGBT people and allies, through their support and examples, have given me the strength and desire to give something back. I hope that this gift may be worthy enough to contribute something to the community's well-being.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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North American gay men continue to face discrimination (Herek, 1986, 1991, 1992; Hicks & Lee, 2006; PBS, 2000). They have also developed and enacted strategies that allow them to navigate, survive, and even change a larger hostile environment (Adam, 1978; Chauncey, 1996; Minton, 2002). If the social and psychological consequences of being a member of a stigmatized group are context dependent (Dovidio, Major, & Crocker, 2001; Drasin, Beals, Elliott, Lever, Klien, & Schuster, 2008; Russell, Clarke, & Clary, 2009), then we should expect the responses to those consequences to be context dependent as well. Indeed, in some cases, the psychosocial consequences and responses are the same thing. This can be seen in the example of mimesis when a person deemed inferior adopts the values and manners of those dominating them in order to survive or gain advantage (Adam, 1978). Adam uses the term inferiorization to describe the ascription of an inferior or defective status to a particular group. However, he points out that the process can also have an effect unintended by the inscribers in that "Inferiorization ironically *liberates* creative, innovative potential among artists and intellectuals whose conflictual social situation explodes conventionality" (Adam, 1978, p.12, emphasis in the original). Most of the research on gay men has focused on adults in larger coastal cities in the United States. Noting that social conditions regarding homosexuality and bisexuality vary in different places and have changed over time, Rotheram-Borus and Langabeer (2001) and Savin-Williams (2005) have called for research to examine sexual minority youth's experience in more diverse geographical and different temporal contexts.

The research presented herein was designed to study the experiences of young gay and bisexual males (GBM) in the development of their sexual identities in the particular context of

Windsor and Essex County (WEC), Ontario. According to Graber and Archibald (2001), the experiences of GBM youth have begun to receive more, but not enough, research attention (e.g., Savin-Williams, 1995, 1998, 2005). These inquiries have typically examined youth living in large urban settings in the United Kingdom or the United States (e.g., Remafedi, 1994; Savin-Williams, 1995, 1998). Many of these studies have dealt with the experience of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth but, for the purpose of the current study, I will be focusing on the findings that relate to GBM youth. Much of this literature has examined the many ways GBM youth are at risk for victimization (Rivers & D'Augelli, 2001; Rotheram-Borus & Langabeer, 2001; Savin-Williams, 1998, 2005). While it is important to document the hardships faced by GBM youth, it is also vital that research record their capacities in dealing with a potentially hostile social climate.

To couch the current research in a historical context, I will begin with a summary of the medical, scientific, and theoretical history of conceptions of homosexuality. (I also have included a glossary of terms in Appendix A to help guide the reader who may be unfamiliar with certain concepts.) This history provides the backdrop of social context from which current theories of gay identity and its formation emerged and serves to contextualize both the model and the use of the model I adopted in structuring the current study. This history is full of what Gonsiorek (1982) characterizes as Kuhnian paradigm shifts in conceptualization. The increasing compilation of forgotten artifacts and analysis of this history problematized earlier social scientists' and sex researchers' privileged claims to truth in the same fashion that Kuhn's (1970) seminal work deconstructed the mystique of natural science. Epstein (1992) sees this history as less of a progression toward the truth of what homosexuality objectively is and more as products

of a process of social negotiation leading to increasing subjective self-definition by lesbian, gay, and bisexual people themselves.

I will then review the main findings in the literature concerning the emergence of same-sex eroticism and the formation of sexual identity in GBM youth, the types of hardships they face and their effects, and outline why GBM youth may be more vulnerable to victimization than GBM adults or heterosexual youth in dealing with the difficulties they face. Finally, I conclude with the rationale for my proposed study and include a section intended to situate myself as the researcher in the project. Since the focus of the study is how GBMs navigate a particular social and historical context, I will also provide a brief description of the study's location and, in particular, a summary of the available—though partial—history of the gay community in the area.

The Context of Windsor and Essex County, Ontario, Canada

        Geography, history, characteristics, and community demographics. Windsor is the southernmost city in Canada, located in Southwestern Ontario, and, as a border community, just southeast of Detroit, Michigan in the United States (US). The Detroit River separates the cities and acts as the international border, but both a tunnel and a bridge connect the two. Windsor is the largest city in Essex County, which includes the towns of Amherstburg, Essex, Kingsville, Lakeshore, LaSalle, Tecumseh, and the municipality of Leamington (County of Essex, 2010).

The area was originally home to the Huron, or Wyandot, and other First Nations for thousands of years before being settled in 1701 by French colonists, but significant settlement of the shores south of Detroit did not occur until 1748 (City of Windsor, 2011a). Today the region still boasts a vibrant and sizeable Francophone community on the Canadian side of the border. With the founding of the town of Sandwich (now part of Windsor) in 1797, the first significant

influx of English speaking people arrived and created the beginnings of a more urban community.

Windsor is often characterized as a blue-collar, union town. Like Detroit, it is a manufacturing city and known as the "Automotive Capital of Canada." In 1904, the Ford Motor Car Company opened up shop on the Canadian side of the border (City of Windsor, 2011a). Because of the expansion of the burgeoning automotive industry, Windsor grew rapidly from an amalgamation of smaller communities along the Detroit River into an industrial city beginning in the 1930s. Industry expanded even more rapidly as a result of World War II. For this reason, Windsor has also had a strong union presence. From 1921, Windsor grew from a population of 38,591 (City of Windsor, 2011b) to around 216,473 in 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2011a), making it Canada's 20th most populated municipality. In 2006, the population of the metropolitan area was 323,342 (City of Windsor, 2011b).

Windsor has a very ethnoculturally diverse population with 22,185 of its inhabitants immigrating between 1991 and 2001. In 2001, 35,350 Windsor inhabitants identified as visible minorities of various descents. Of these, the largest categories, in order, were Arab, Black, South Asian, Chinese, Southeast Asian, Filipino, Latin American, and West Asian. Because of employment opportunities, the influx of new immigrants, and sizable population of visible minorities, 2006 saw Windsor become Canada's 4th most diverse city (Statistics Canada, 2011b). In terms of religion (City of Windsor, 2011b), Windsor has a large population of, in order, Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, Orthodox Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, and Sikhs (City of Windsor, 2011b). For a city of its size, Windsor also has a very active, visible, vibrant, and tight-knit lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community.

A partial history of the Windsor LGB community. Canada has become a very different place for LGBT people over time. Before 1969, homosexuality was a crime, and in 1996 the Supreme Court of Canada ordered the federal government to add sexual orientation to the Canadian Human Rights Act (Warner, 2002). Nine years later, in 2005, Bill C-38 passed and gave Canada the distinction of being one of four countries in the world to recognize same-sex marriages (Windsor Pride Community, 2011a). Currently, most states in the US ban such unions. In addition to civil marriages offered by the city, there are marriage officiants who specialize in conducting same-sex marriages in Windsor for both Canadians and US citizens (Zarzosa, 2010).

Compared to other cities of its size, Windsor arrived early on the stage and has been quite progressive with respect to gay activism and the fight for equal rights. A brief history of the Windsor LGBT community can help to illustrate the local context in which current GBM youth find themselves and highlight some of the significant events that influenced its development. People involved in the movement in Windsor in the 1970s often point to the existence of a strong labour movement and union organizations as facilitating factors in the local fight for equality. In addition, the University of Windsor also provided fertile ground for early activists to meet and unite. These settings, structures, and institutions may have provided the means for the initiatives of early activists, but individuals--and not the organizations themselves--were the initiating agents who utilized these organizations to accomplish their aims.

In 1971, a small handful of student activists formed the University of Windsor Homophile Association (Warner, 2002). Through social gatherings like regular social support meetings, dances, community drop-ins, and a gay information phone line, the student group worked to create a sense of community. In the spirit of the times, the group changed its name to Windsor

Gay Unity and moved off campus in 1973 (Zarzosa, 2010). While homophile groups in the 1950s and 1960s often quietly and politely tried to reason with the larger world for understanding and better treatment (Blumenfeld & Raymond, 1993), Windsor Gay Unity mirrored the efforts and strategies used by the more confrontational, demanding, and militant gay liberation movement that became more vocal after the Stonewall Riots of June 28, 1969 (Zarzosa, 2010). In response to antigay discrimination in the city, the group held small marches and protests in addition to appealing to higher authorities and organizations.

Due to declining attendance, the dances and socials that took place at the University Student Centre were moved to local halls and bars. The proximity of Detroit is often cited as a double-edged sword for the Windsor gay community in that it provides adults access to a larger gay community with numerous gay spaces and organizations where Windsorites can be openly gay, but it also allows people to remain closeted or pass as straight in their hometown. This is seen as one of the hurdles that Windsor-based gay rights groups and social organizers continue to face when organizing local activities in Windsor, as in 2004, when Lesbian and Gay Pride Day was cancelled due to lack of involvement from the community (Windsor Pride Community, 2011a). Changes to US immigration law affected visitors from Canada in 2009 (Government of Ontario, 2009). Where before one only needed a birth certificate and a government issued photo identification, a passport or enhanced driver's license is now required, making travel between the two countries slightly more complicated. For decades, many gay adults spent time on either side of the border at night clubs, bars, and coffee shops, participating in community events, and seeing friends (Zarsosa, 2010). Minors are required to have a letter of permission from a parent to enter the US if unaccompanied by a parent (U.S. Department of State, 2011) so this may be less of an issue for youth.

Also of note is the case of John Damien, a racing steward, who was fired from Windsor Raceway in 1975 by the Ontario Racing Commission for being gay (Warner, 2002). In 1986, after an arduous and draining fight, and two weeks before Damien died from pancreatic cancer, a Liberal minority government with the support of the New Democratic Party added sexual orientation to the Ontario Human Rights Code (Zarzosa, 2010). The money Damien was awarded posthumously as a result of this legislation was put into a trust.

Through a long, convoluted path of organizational collapse and rebirth, community collaborations and splintering, and spin-offs and amalgamations, Windsor Gay Unity evolved into what is now known as Windsor Pride Community. Windsor Gay Unity ended in 1982 (Warner, 2002) making way for the Lesbian/Gay Community Service Group (Zarzosa, 2010). In 1985, the Condom Committee of the Lesbian/Gay Community Service Group became the AIDS Committee of Windsor. In 1991, filling the vacuum left by the University of Windsor Homophile Association, the Organization of Gay and Lesbian Students was formed and eventually renamed Out on Campus. In 1992, Windsor's first Gay Pride Day was held and a support group for lesbian and gay youth, One in Ten, was established at the AIDS Committee of Windsor. Eventually, One in Ten was renamed Young & Proud and continues today as a support group meeting weekly for gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans-gendered, and questioning youth between the ages of 14 and 29. In 1993, the Lesbian/Gay Community Service Group was organized to become the Lesbian/Gay Community Council whose member organizations included the ACW, Gay Phoneline group, Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee, Metropolitan Community Church, One in Ten, Out on Campus, Queer Radio, and Women's Phoneline.

In 1998, Windsor Pride succeeded the Lesbian/Gay Community Council and the Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee in organizing Gay Pride Day. Windsor Pride incorporated in 2006,

becoming Windsor Pride Community, and opened the Windsor Pride Community Education and

Research Centre in 2009 (Windsor Pride Community, 2011a). This provided a permanent space

from which Windsor Pride Community has been able to step up its pre-existing educational and

social support activities. These include support and social groups for youth, seniors,

transgendered people, and those of all ages who are coming out or in recovery; community

organizing, activism, education, and training of service providers; and seminars on topics from

adoption to retirement planning (Windsor Pride Community, 2011c).

In terms of public activism, small protests and community organization developed over

time into a diminutive, but still strong-voiced, 30 to 40 person gay pride parade in 1992 through

Windsor's downtown (Zarzosa, 2010). Currently, Windsor's Pride Festival has become a full

scale, weeklong series of events and "uses theatre, music, art and entertainment to raise

awareness of discrimination and the issues and difficulties affecting the lives of LGBTIQ people

around the world" (Windsor Pride Community, 2011b). The parade, cancelled in 2004 and

revived in 2005 (Windsor Pride Community, 2011a), which once ended in an event in a gravel

parking lot, now culminates in a day of events, entertainment, and exhibitions in a state of the

art, riverfront festival plaza in Windsor's downtown at the base of a large casino (Windsor Pride

Community, 2011b). Pride Week attracts approximately 7,000 people, mainly from Ontario,

Michigan, and Ohio, including journalists, entertainers, sponsors, and participants, but also

dignitaries including the Windsor mayor, police chief, fire chief, and provincial and federal

ministers.

Windsor Pride Community may be one of the more salient organizations currently working

on LGBTIQ equality, but it is not the only one. The AIDS Committee of Windsor (2011) still

runs the Young & Proud Youth Group and recently started a Gay Men's Sexual Health program.

In addition, the Service Alliance for Equality (2011) was founded in 2005 as an organization for

social service professionals to be a:

> Vocal agent for change by addressing discrimination, exclusion, ignorance, indifference,
> and lack of knowledge regarding . . . LGBTIQ . . . youth and their families . . . [and
> provide] resources for service professionals including: presentations (from 45 minutes to 3
> hours); DVDs, books, reports; pamphlets; training; intake and assessment tools.

Still, although things have become much better for the LGBTIQ community in Windsor in

terms of solidified, larger, and more numerous institutions and in the arena of human rights, there

still have been struggles, resistance, and setbacks. One of these recent struggles has been in the

establishment of gay-straight alliances (GSAs) in local schools. According to Fetner, Elafros,

Bortolin, and Dreschsler (2012, p. 189):

> Gay-straight alliances are a form of social support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender,
> and questioning (LGBTQ) high-school students that emerged in the late 1980s and early
> 1990s. These alliances are generally student-run social clubs akin to other high-school
> social groups, such as drama clubs, math teams, or yearbook clubs. However, one of the
> main purposes of gay-straight alliances is to provide support to LGBTQ students in
> difficult personal circumstances or in hostile school environments, and to advocate for
> LGBTQ students.

While the local establishment of GSAs at public English high schools was eventually

supported by the school board, the effort was initiated by students who approached and sought

the help of teachers, community activists, and organizations at both the local and national level

(Windsor Star, 2009a, 2009b, & 2009c). As recently as 2009, a principal and the local English

public school board resisted the attempt of a student at Walkerville Collegiate to start a GSA in

his school for students (Windsor Star, 2009a). This was in spite of a policy document from the

Ontario Ministry of Education (2008, p. 21) which clearly stated:

> In order to promote a positive school climate, where students are not subjected to gender-
> based violence, homophobia, sexual harassment, or inappropriate sexual behaviour,
> schools must . . . help teachers provide support to student-led initiatives such as
> Gay/Straight Alliances and other activities that promote healthy relationships; and engage
> school councils and student councils in supporting student activities such as Gay/Straight
> Alliances and any other activities that promote and encourage the understanding and
> development of healthy relationships.

On one hand, some of the resistance was due to having no local board policy in place or ready to

support GSAs and wishing to approach the issue cautiously. On the other hand, some of the

resistance was from players (e.g., principals and school board administrators) who did not want

to see the recommendations in the guidance documents ever implemented. Luckily, the student

had been provided with the document before meeting with the board officials who also had the

document (Windsor Star, 2009a). After a behind the scenes lobbying campaign; protracted

negotiations, involving local and national individual, community, and organizational supporters;

a lawyer; supporting teachers; community activists, parents (including a lawyer), media, and

supportive school trustees, administrators, and staff, the board relented (Windsor Star, 2009b).

Despite the initial fray, the English public board definitely has played a large role in the

proliferation of and institutional support for GSAs in Windsor and Essex County. Beginning in

May, 2011, the English public board in conjunction with Windsor Pride Community has

supported an annual GSA conference and invited participants from all four local school boards.

During each of these conferences, a play written, produced, and acted by local youth and

sponsored by Windsor Pride Community has been presented. *Waking Up Blue* (Windsor Pride Community, 2010), a play about homophobia, was shown the first year and *Interrogation* (Windsor Pride Community, 2012), a play about transphobia, was shown the second year and with the additional support of Windsor Police Services. The creation process for each play was captured by local documentary film makers and the documentary about the creation of *Waking Up Blue* (Windsor Pride Community, 2010), entitled *Just Because I Am* (Pescador & Pescador, 2011), was released and shown at the first GSA conference.

By the time of the first GSA conference in 2011, six English public high schools had GSAs (OurWindsor, 2011). Currently, GSAs exist at the English public school board and the French Catholic School board but not at the English Catholic school board or the French public school board (W. T. Cassidy, personal communication, March 8, 2012). By the time of the second conference in 2012, 13 out of 15 English public schools had GSAs. The local English Catholic board has continued to resist the establishment of GSAs in its school by students (Windsor Star, 2012). However, under provincial pressure from the Ministry of Education, the board began to allow "social justice equity clubs" in 2011 that address bullying inclusively without specifically focusing on the homophobic bullying of LGB students. It is not clear how active these clubs are, how well they are equipped to deal with homophobic bullying, or how supported by them LGB students feel.

In 2010, shortly after directing *Waking Up Blue* (Windsor Pride Community, 2010), originally created for International Day Against Homophobia, a young man was attacked, robbed, and brutally beaten by two assailants on the street on his way home (Windsor Star, 2011a). In 2011 and after an outpouring of support from the community and the youth who had worked on the anti-homophobia play, the two assailants were charged with and convicted of

assault and robbery, but not with a hate crime (Windsor Star, 2011a). About a month before the sentencing was announced, the Deputy Chief of Windsor Police Services announced that hate crime investigations were up locally and, according to statistics Canada, also up 42% nationally in 2009 (Windsor Star, 2011b).

A portion of the funds from the John Damien Education Trust was used to start *Outspoken*, a local gay and lesbian community newsletter, in 1991. Five years later, in 1996, a three part series in *Outspoken* entitled "The Way It Was in Windsor" appeared, detailing how gay life had evolved in Windsor from the 1930s to the 1990s, based on an extensive interview with a long-time resident (Mattson, 1996a, 1996b, & 1996c). The protocol for these interviews served as the basis for a local and historical story-telling project initiated in 2008 with lesbian, gay, bisexual, two-spirited, and transgendered (LGBTT) seniors which resulted in the first book-length collection of recollections of what is was like to be LGBTT in Windsor going back to the 1960s. In creating the book, *Out and Aging: Our Stories* (Zarzosa, 2010, p. 6), the contributors intended to:

> Give a historical overview of the local LGBTT community and act as an official
>
> benchmark which, to this point, has been missing in our area. This document would be
>
> valuable as one of the educational tools to be used in the diversity training that had recently
>
> been put into place. It could also serve as a resource for both old and young as they are
>
> processing their own coming out. We could clearly see that this tool would be of
>
> significant value not only to the gay community but to our families, friends and straight
>
> allies as well . . . it is a work in progress and a story that will continue to unfold.

This is the context within which the current study was conducted; a context in which a vibrant and active community has made significant progress but nevertheless still is confronted with

homophobia and whose members still experience homophobic violence.   Like the *Out and Aging: Our Stories* (Zarsosa, 2010) project, it is hoped that the current project will work toward serving the same ends, but for local gay and bisexual male (GBM) youth.

Models of Homosexuality: Illness, Identity, and Experience

The conceptual model of the development of sexual identity that was used in this study, Savin-Williams' (1998, 2005) trajectory model, did not emerge out of a vacuum. Its history is intimately tied with the social and conceptual history of homosexuality--of individuals, groups, and proposed theoretical formulations seeking to understand homosexuality and define its nature, attributes, and dynamics. D'Emilio and Freedman (1988) posit that the growth of the urban megapolis and the anonymity it provided, and the rise of capitalist economy allowing the trade of labour for wages, freed men and women from tight familial bonds, and provided the social and economic space for a diversity of same-sex sexual desires to condense into a personal identity at the end of the 19th century. This personal identity allowed for homosexual desires to be interpreted and experienced as a differentiating attribute and for the formation of a community of difference around sexual desire. Popularized and academic medical and scientific theories partly provided the terms by which to conceptualize this identity, although with a pervasive taint of morbidity, reinforcing, if not abnormality, a sense of typological difference for those experiencing and those observing the identity. Foucault (1978, p. 43) characterizes the conceptual state of affairs in which homosexuality had become enmeshed by the turn of the 20th century: "The sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species."

Medical models of illness. Minton (1987) characterizes the social scientific view of sexuality that emerged at the end of the 19th century as essentialist. The essentialist view holds that human sexuality has a true, universal, and unchanging essence, which is based or grounded

biologically in a drive that is satiated via heterosexual intercourse. Medical case studies of people who engaged in same-sex sexual activity began to appear with increasing frequency in the last third of the 19th century (Hansen, 1989). The impetus behind such records came from self-referring individuals who sought out the urban practitioners of the newly developed field of neurology in hope of finding a cure, but almost as often seeking knowledge to explicate their problematic attractions and behaviours. In addition, homosexual men began to be more publicly visible, especially in urban America, an emergence which soon could not escape the attention of medical and legal authorities (Katz, 1983).

Initially, these writings situated homosexuality as a biologically based deviation. Some of the earlier writings on homosexuality by homosexuals also promoted this view (Minton, 2002). Over time, physicians began to focus less on their patients' overt sexual behaviours and more on their patients' invariant impulses (Hansen, 1989). From a small number of such extremely detailed cases, physicians made sweeping generalizations in the effort to discover the defining feature of this supposedly extremely rare phenomenon. In its evolution, the defining feature came ever closer to the modern notion of sexuality.

Hansen (1989) cautions against thinking that physicians were inventing such concepts solely in their own minds. Rather, consulted physicians were pursuing their patients' suspicions that some inner characteristic was responsible for their presumably unique feelings. In this way, early self-referring patients acted more like unwitting co-conspirators than unwilling passive victims in what would become the keystone of the persecution of homosexuals in the next century: the homosexual diagnosis.

The science of sex, or sexology, was born at the end of the nineteenth century, created by those who proclaimed that the methods of natural science should be used to shed light on things

sexual (Weeks, 1985). In identifying a sexual instinct at the beginning of the twentieth century, researchers reformulated sexual discourse with a vocabulary and concepts that were decidedly medical (Minton, 1987). Theorists, scientists, and practitioners have often turned to humanity's technological creations for metaphors to understand nature, humans, and behaviour. Before the turn of the 20th century, the steam locomotive engine was one such impressive creation and served as a powerful analogy for those who, like Freud later, were seeking to explain sex. These early pre-sexologists began to formulate the taxonomy of pathological channels through which the newfound hydraulic sexual drive might seek release.

Degeneracy. Homosexuality had been subjected to scientific and medical scrutiny since before the turn of the century, most notably beginning in 1869 with Karl Westphal's notion of contrary sexual instinct and Krafft-Ebing's (1861/1931) *Psychopathia Sexualis* in 1886 (Katz,1983; Minton, 2002). Before the turn of the century, degeneracy theory had become a prominent explanation of nervous disorders and mental illness (Chauncey, 1989). Degeneracy theory was the product of an amalgam of Lemarkian and Darwinian evolutionary theory with the undercurrent of the biblical notion of the fall from grace. According to Krafft-Ebing's (1931) version of the theory, civilization is realized when the passions that run wild in a primitive society are held in check. The stability of a civilization is contingent on sexual relations occurring within monogamous and heterosexual arrangements. In the Darwinian sense, sexual relations outside of heterosexual monogamy represent degeneration to a more barbaric or primitive state on the evolutionary continuum. In addition, since acquired characteristics (like a giraffe stretching its neck to reach food) can be passed on in a Lemarkian way to children, transgressive sexual behaviour represented a threat to civilization itself, much like Adam and Eve's actions which--being against God's plan and rule--led them to be tossed out of Eden. It is important to note that Krafft-Ebing, a

Roman Catholic, believed that the goal of intercourse was procreation, which is why he also viewed masturbation as a vice which perverted the purpose of sex.

Given the scientific knowledge at the time in the field of genetics and the lack of the sociobiological idea of kin selection, one would be hard pressed to explain how homosexuality might be passed on to the offspring that it did not produce. Krafft-Ebing (1931), lest this flaw in his logic be exposed, was careful to point out that homosexuality itself was not inherited, but degeneracy is expressed in many ways of which homosexuality was merely one perverse form. In fact, he even linked early masturbation to the development of homosexuality later in life. At the same time, he also proposed that it was aberrant biological development in the embryonic and fetal stages that led to a sexual inversion of the brain, or "a defect in the cerebral centre [that] mediates the psychical and, indirectly, also the physical sexual characters" (p. 350). This type of reasoning would rear its head again with later theorists.

Chauncey (1989) notes that degeneracy theory sparked an array of anthropological studies on moral development with respect to social development. In looking at homosexuality among Pacific and Native American societies, these studies (e.g., Seligman, 1902) came to the conclusion that "primitive" cultures could indeed be characterized by their acceptance of such aberrant behaviour. Observations leading to conclusions like these worked to bolster claims like those expressed by Krafft-Ebing (1931) in the empirically-based scientific community.

Inversion. Like degeneracy theory, the inversion hypothesis did not refer to homosexuality specifically, but to a larger spectrum of cross-gender behaviour, of which homosexuality was merely a part (Chauncey, 1989). On the congenital nature of homosexuality and the importance of heredity in its etiology, both explanations agreed. But where the degeneracy theory of the previous century emphasized somatic or biological causes, the inversion hypothesis was more focused on

psychological abnormalities that caused perversion of the sex instinct. Simply put, inverts had the body of one sex and the psyche of the other sex. According to Foucault (1978), it was a certain type of sexual sensibility, rather than sexual relation, which characterized the sexologists' concept of homosexuality.

In the Victorian thought system, which many conservatives in the 1920s sought to maintain, women were conceptualized as asexual (or passionless) and passive objects of male sexual desire (Chauncey, 1989). In 1895, this conception of womanhood was entrenched enough in medical thought to lead Havelock Ellis (as cited in Chauncey, 1989) to note that many of his colleagues considered any expression of sexual desire by a woman to be verging on the pathological. This was true even if the woman's expression occurred within the context of her romantic life with a male partner. Sexual desire and initiation of sexual relations were considered to be a male province. By this logic, a complete psychical (and pathological) inversion of a woman's sexual nature was necessary in order for a lesbian encounter to occur (Chauncey, 1989). In short, sex without a man was so difficult for these middle class doctors to conceive that one of the women in a lesbian encounter would have to be a man in their theories, if not in body, then in mind. This was the foundation of logic on which research and theory concerning homosexuality in the 1920s was built. The same logic was also applied to men who exhibited same sex attractions.

In a 1920 article, one Dr. Rivers wrote that an "inverted" man had written Dr. Rivers a letter, indicating that he owned a cat and that his inverted friends had similar tastes in pets. Rivers (1920) took a list of famous inverts and tried to find evidence of cat-loving and a list of eminent cat-lovers and looked for clues of possible inversion. Four out of 31 inverts were found to be cat-lovers and several cat-lovers showed signs of inversion (Rivers, 1920). Dr. Rivers (p. 27) concluded that, "If

fondness for cats be entitled to a place among male homosexual traits, the reason will be that it is a woman's taste."

This engendered conception of human sexuality still does not fully explain why sexuality (or sexual identity) was so closely tied to dichotomized genders and why this problematic union endured for so long (still cropping up today). An oversimplified analysis might suggest that the construction of the inversion model was a top-down process, that is, a socially empowered class of medical professionals imposed its conceptions on a relatively disempowered marginal group. Greenberg (1988) and Chauncey (1989) both suggest that it was a theoretical means to protect male dominance from the perceived emasculating threat of feminists with aspirations of equality. This dominance was contingent on men's possession of qualities that clearly distinguished them from women. To maintain male dominance it would then be necessary to police males who did not exhibit these qualities and women who did possess them.

Such a linkage was also reinforced by the discovery that the sex organs of mammalian embryos did not become sexually differentiated until a certain point. It led many to posit that sexual sensibility (or gender role) was just as innate as the sex organs and, as in the case of sex organs, while a person has the possibility for both, one becomes superordinate. Inverts then become an extreme (of course, aberrant) example of what is latent in all people. This discovery and the resulting deductions are an example of what Weeks (1985) calls the power to naturalize with respect to gender roles.

To limit the possible reasons for this linkage of sexuality and gender to the above (top-down) reasons would be almost to fall into the same unidirectional model of causation that trapped the sexologists. It also blindly ignores the agency of homosexuals in defining themselves and their resistance by expressing those definitions. Many historians of sexuality caution against

downplaying too much the active role that homosexuals played in creating and adopting the sexologists' inversion model (e.g., Chauncey, 1989).

Some homosexuals seeking medical advice (the letter from the "inverted" man to Dr. Rivers being one such example), isolated from a community of others and living in the same cultural milieu as medical professionals, told their doctors that they experienced the kind of desire that was felt and expressed by the other sex (Greenberg, 1988). In addition, Smith-Rosenberg (1989) posits that lesbians (and, perhaps by extension to some extent, gay men) in the 1920s adopted the sexual discourse of the sexologists and physicians because their Victorian predecessors had failed to provide the lay women and men who came after with a sexual vocabulary.

With increasing urbanization, visible gay male communities emerged that publicly engaged in some of the activities with which the experts charged them (Chauncey, 1994). The large drag balls that were held in large cities like New York and reported on by tabloid newspapers were one such very public example. Still, the doctors, to whom homosexuals turned to for help, presented a rather selective representation of homosexuals (Greenberg, 1988) and provided a model that was stained with stereotypical characterizations, Victorian traditionalism, and biases with respect to its contents and assumptions (Faderman, 1991). As Chauncey (1989) relates, the sexological discourses did not create homosexuals but replicated the categories and prejudices of their own culture. However, the congenital model, which naturalized homosexual behaviour for inverts, provided a rationale for fighting legal and social persecution (Faderman, 1991; Minton, 2002).

This was not a new development. Karl Maria Kertbeny, in an 1869 pamphlet, had argued against the application of Prussian anti-sodomy laws in the North German Confederation, since homosexuality was inborn and unchangeable (Herzer, 1985; Katz, 2007). The German homophile movement's most visible leader, Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld, went even further when he claimed that

not only was homosexuality congenital, but that it was also a separate third gender (Adam, 1995). Hirschfeld argued in favour of forming an alliance with the medical profession in order to achieve the aims of the homophile movement, and his ideas were spread to the United States (US) by speakers from his Scientific Humanitarian Committee who gave open lectures in the United States as early as 1906 (Katz, 1976).

Psychoanalysis. While many supporters of the inversion hypothesis believed that the condition was congenital, many still believed that there was a form that was learned or acquired. The inversion model dominated medical, psychological, and sexological thought concerning homosexuality for many years (Chauncey, 1989). However, environmental explanations of homosexuality grew in prominence and by the 1920s were influential (Minton, 1987). These explanations were no less essentialist than the degeneracy theory and the congenital model of inversion. Those researchers and theorists who focused on environment still postulated at least in part some internal sex instinct that had been led astray through seduction, for example, hanging around the wrong crowd (Chauncey, 1989). Others believed that environments that made heterosexual relations difficult or impossible could be responsible for creating homosexuals as the strong sex instinct tried to find release through available channels. In the 1920s, the institution of the family and particularly the nature of the relationships and the role of women within the family came under close scrutiny. Doctors highlighted the role of the family in terms of preventing perversion. As the psychoanalytic movement and American interpretations of psychoanalysis grew in the United States, the role of family dynamics in the etiology of homosexuality became an even more salient issue (Minton, 1987).

Psychoanalysis made it possible to explain inversion and homosexuality in purely psychological terms (Greenberg, 1988). Its explanation of inversion presented a break from the

somatic focus of degeneracy theory and the congenital version of the inversion hypothesis. Freud could not accept degeneracy theory and was well aware that the theory had been used in anti-Jewish campaigns in Europe. Psychoanalysis placed homosexuality in the position of being a developmental disorder and removed it from the realm of being a specific biological condition, while reifying the biological basis of sexuality in general.

Because psychoanalysis problematized the formation of both homosexuality and heterosexuality (Chauncey, 1989), placing their development within family relations, and because it posited that all people go through a homosexual phase, it implicitly removed homosexuality from the realm of pathological aberration. However, it still reflected standards of normality. Its relegation of homosexuality to a more immature status still represented a negative value judgment. Additionally, the brand of psychoanalysis that spread in North America was often a mixed bag of positions and theories. American psychoanalysts and psychiatrists explained homosexuality by adding parts of the congenital view (e.g., by seeing heredity as playing a role), among others. When American psychoanalytic experts explained homosexuality, it often was not in purely Freudian terms.

Chauncey explains that Freud had made an important distinction between homosexuality (as a sexual object choice) and gender inversion (as a sexual aim or an engendered self-presentational style). However, the state of confusion of the period and the reluctance to abandon other explanations completely led doctors to continue to frame the phenomenon in a heterocentric way. Psychoanalysts still used explanations that assumed that all sexual relations involved masculine (active) and feminine (passive) roles. While Freud's theory of psychosexual development stated that only the sexual drive was biological in nature and both homosexuality and heterosexuality were products of psychodynamic family relations, North American psychoanalysts continued to frame it

in biological metaphor and as a diseased process. The weakening of gender roles, evidenced by the

increasing numbers of women who were working and indulging in premarital sexual relations,

allowed Freud's distinction between sexual object choice and gender identity to become more

widely accepted (Greenberg, 1988). However, psychoanalysts continued to reify more traditional

Victorian views on sexuality and gender. In spite of the conservative bent of American

psychoanalysis, Chauncey (1989) still credits Freud's (1905/1962) writings as representing a

major conceptual shift in explaining such phenomena psychologically in terms of sexual object

choice rather than gender role. This disentangled homosexuality from being a symptom of a

larger gender inversion and gave it conceptual space to exist as an entity in its own right

(Chauncey, 1989).

　　　The slow death of the medical model. The medical model of homosexuality began to

unravel with Alfred Kinsey's (1948) volume on sexual behaviour and Evelyn Hooker's (1957)

study of male homosexuality. Both Kinsey's (1948) and Hooker's (1957) studies also involved

participation by gay community activists (Minton, 1988, 2002). The researchers' methodologies

and findings served as catalysts for changing the techniques used in research process and the

movement to depathologize homosexuality in the 1970s. Kinsey (1948) used the interview

method to obtain information in as direct a way as possible. Kinsey's research findings revealed

that same-sex sexual behaviour was more widespread than commonly thought. His findings

regarding the prevalence of same-sex sexual behaviour seriously challenged the status of

homosexual behaviour as unnatural. Though he saw sexuality as being biologically rooted, Kinsey

rejected essentialism, believing sexual behaviour to vary along a continuum with no one natural

way of expression. In studying the mental health of homosexuals, Hooker (1957) departed from

previous research by using a non-psychiatric sample. Her sample was then matched with a group

of heterosexuals. Their life histories and results on personality tests were compared. The results

showed no detectable differences in mental adjustment. The unravelling of the medical model,

however, would take quite a long time. The works of Kinsey and Hooker were notable in how

innovative they were for their time and how influential they would later become.

Before and to a lesser extent during the 1970s, most psychological research on

homosexuals and homosexuality was preoccupied with developing diagnostic criteria to

differentiate homosexuals from heterosexuals. "A Study of Identification in Male Homosexuals"

(Chang & Block, 1960), "Galvanic Skin Response Studies of Sex Responsiveness in Sex

Offenders and Others" (Tong, 1960), "Attitudinal Differences Between Heterosexually and

Homosexually Oriented Males" (Kendrick & Clark, 1967), "Cardiac Activity and Verbal Reports

of Homosexuals and Heterosexuals" (Burdick, Stewart, & Adamson, 1974) are some of the titles

that reflect the various avenues (i.e., psychoanalysis, personality, behaviourism) that the

(presumably) heterosexual researchers used to reveal the differential essence of the homosexual

as an object. The bulk of research that came before 1974 also concerned whether or not

homosexuals were sick, delineated the causes of homosexuality, and in doing so presumably

sought a cure (Kitzinger, 1987).

What perhaps marks the shift from medicalizing and pathologizing representations of gay

people to more recent conceptions is the increasing authority and presence of gay and lesbian

persons in the definitive role with respect to the creation of new categories by which to divide

their own community into new types (Epstein, 1992). Changes in the focus of psychological

research exemplify this shift to a more autonomous role for homosexuals in self-definition and in

defining homosexuality.

The homophile and liberation movements and the development of gay identity. The early 1950s homophile movement constructed homosexuality as a condition anchored to an intrapsychic abnormality specific to certain people, whom the homophile movement hoped to assimilate into "normal" society (Adam, 1987; Seidman, 1993). The homosexual was viewed as having sexual desires that were fixed and constrained by something that we might refer to now as an orientation (Epstein, 1992). At the same time, homophiles emphasized their similarity to mainstream society and their heterosexual counterparts. In protesting in front of the White House, homophile activists staged a traditional (and extremely tame) picket against discrimination against homosexuals. They intentionally wore the appropriate conservative attire of their gender-typed heterosexual counterparts. The political message of such a protest was that homosexuals were like heterosexuals, even in (engendered) dress and sex roles, and therefore should be integrated, not excluded, from society and public life. This reflected the homophile movement's conception of the homosexual as sharing a fundamentally similar humanity and, therefore, equality to heterosexuals.

The homophile conception of homosexuality as a constraining abnormality that did not, however, erase a fundamental humanity shared with "normals" was rejected by lesbian feminist and gay liberationists starting in the 1960s (Seidman, 1993). Gay liberationists and lesbian feminists conceived of homosexuality as a conscious practice, one that did not make them essentially different from their heterosexual counterparts, except in a political sense. Briefly, lesbian feminists, defining a lesbian as a woman-identified woman, posited lesbianism as a condition specific to all, not some, women, but repressed by patriarchal power structures. Lesbianism was constructed as a political act that challenged male dominance.

Gay liberation, like social constructionism later, viewed all sexual typologies as fluid and social phenomena (Epstein, 1992). Until the mid-1970s, gay liberationists contextualized the homosexual subject as a social and historical product, ontologically reifying a polymorphous and bisexual, but essentialized and universal, human sexuality (Seidman, 1993). Like their homophilic predecessors, gay liberationists viewed homosexuals and heterosexuals as fundamentally similar, as even having a shared sexual essence. Unlike the homophile movement, they saw an element of choice in sexual "preference" (vs. "orientation") and argued for the conscious transcendence of all sexual typologies (Epstein, 1992).

Gay liberationists viewed the homosexual project as a struggle against sexism (Seidman, 1993), a project potentially unifying liberationists and feminists. Altman (1971), in a seminal gay liberationist text, argued for the destruction of both sexual and gender categories and the construction of a new person for whom such typologies would be irrelevant. Liberationists argued that the societal creation of a homosexual-heterosexual divide was anchored in the creation of a gender regime (Seidman, 1993). They located the maintenance of rigid sex roles in the mutually dependent interrelationship of the two genders. For example, liberationists charged that a man's masculinity depended on his sex-typed relationship with a feminine woman. Utilizing male supremacy and heterosexism, society oppressively channelled the essential human pansexuality into a narrow, genital-centred, and procreational heterosexuality.

Although gay liberation's agenda was sexual liberation for all from sexual typologies, in trying to advance the specific situation of gay people it undermined its own, more general goal (Epstein, 1992). The only way liberationists could stage a revolt against the hegemonic sexual order was by organizing around homosexuality and making it the foundation of their claim that

this category was arbitrary and socially imposed. Similarly, Epstein points out that Blacks could not attack the capriciousness of racial categorization except by banding together as Blacks.

Liberationists, on a social level, succeeded in changing the boundaries of what was considered normal. For example, in 1973, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) removed homosexuality as a pathological, or abnormal, condition from its diagnostic manual (Bayer, 1981). The renegotiation of homosexuality as "not abnormal" with medical and scientific practitioners was not based on empirically based observation. Such "evidence" (cf. Hooker, 1957) had been available for some time. What instigated the renegotiation of the "truth" of homosexuality was the forum in which such evidence was offered. Gay liberationists crashed and disrupted APA meetings until their demand that homosexuality be "depathologized" was seriously opened up to debate (Epstein, 1992). Although they ultimately sought the elimination of sexual distinctions, what liberationists succeeded in advancing was a redefinition of the meaning of homosexuality and legitimate sexual possibilities. This accomplishment resulted in the development of a paradox. While seeking everyone's sexual liberation, gay liberation's accomplishment in advancing an alternate conception of the homosexual and homosexuality worked to constitute homosexuals in the public mind as being a discrete social group with specific socio-political interests.

Stage models. These medical and pathology questions became increasingly irrelevant after what Gonsiorek (1982) characterizes as a Kuhnian paradigm shift to lifestyle and identity acquisition models. After Kinsey's (1948) ground breaking foray into human sexual behaviour, researchers began to realize that, while it was objectively useful to focus on sexual behaviour instead of types of people to avoid moralizing bias, homosexuality was wrapped in a layer that

affected experience on a level beyond mere behaviour: identity. The description of the adoption and experience of this identity is, in the 1970s, where the next generation of researchers turned.

During the 1970s and the 1980s, psychological research shifted to studying the subjective experience of homosexuals, and researchers turned to assisting their adjustment (Kitzinger, 1987). An explosion of articles explored the experiential process of becoming a homosexual. Questions of what caused homosexuality and how homosexuals could be distinguished from heterosexuals fell by the wayside. In their place, researchers began to ask the question, "How does one acquire a homosexual identity?"

Starting in the 1970s and reaching its height during the mid-1980s, sociologists and psychologists attempted to develop models of homosexual identity formation and acquisition, or coming out (Eliason, 1996). These developmental models of sexual identity are like Erikson's (1959) life span model of development. Each model describes a period of awareness, identification, or discovery of sexual orientation (Minton & McDonald, 1984). Each has a stage of confusion, comparison, and exploration. Finally, they all culminate in some kind of integration, achievement, or commitment to a sexual identity (Rotheram-Borus & Langabeer, 2001). According to Savin-Williams (1995), the particular theoretical orientation of its author forms the base of each particular model: classical and social learning (Storms, 1981); ego psychological (Minton & McDonald, 1984); interpersonal congruency (Cass, 1979, 1983/1984); and sexual scripts (Troiden, 1989).

The idea of acquiring an identity is a salient one when viewed within the cultural context of the ethnic minority model. Ethnic minority self-understanding, according to Epstein (1992), is a much looser form of essentialism than a biologically determined essentialist understanding. Epstein notes that an "ethnic revival" occurred in the United States during the 1970s, in which

(mainly) white European groups celebrated pride in their "rediscovered" heritages. The

significance of this new celebration of ethnicity was that ethnic groups were seen as being

instrumental, rather than just expressive. That is, the affective bond of the ethnic group was

combined with the pursuit of group-specific political and social goals. While the notion of the

homosexual as a "minority group" had been articulated at least by Donald Webster Cory in 1951,

it would not take root as the hegemonic self-understanding of gay people until homosexuals

systematically transformed their "deviant subculture" into "gay communities" with a more

developed institutional and cultural content (Epstein, 1992), global network, and national scope

(Mattson, 1994).

By the late 1970s, the flourishing of gay (male) ghettoes, or boystowns, in large urban

centres marked the institutionalization of gay (primarily male, but also lesbian) identity (Epstein,

1992). In the ghetto, sexual, recreational, commercial, and cultural wants could be satisfied

through gay-owned, operated, and frequented sites without leaving the gay village or

"gaybourhood." The separatist turn in gay and lesbian political activities combined with the gay-

specific cultural forms and institutions existing in the gay ghetto space served to support the

notion of a minority group identity. The commonalities between the new form of ethnicity (as

expressive and instrumental) and the gay and lesbian communities also served to bolster an

"ethnic" self and group-understanding among homosexuals. Both are: future-looking and state-

oriented in the sense that they seek to improve a specific group's social standing through

influencing social policy and securing social rewards; localist, organizing around a particular

community or using the control of a geographic space to influence urban political policy,

emphasizing anti-integration, more than assimilation, with respect to the larger population; and

apt to use already entrenched, hegemonic ideologies (e.g., "freedom from persecution,"

"equality," and "fairness") as the basis of their political demands. With these commonalities, it is hardly surprising that both lesbians and gay men came to present themselves as "ethnic" minority groups in the pursuit of their divergent projects.

Unlike the gay liberation conception of the homosexual and homosexuality, the ethnic minority model demanded that homosexuals view themselves as fundamentally different, in an enduring and fixed fashion, from heterosexuals as a group. Eventually, the unitary lesbian and singular gay male identity, based on the ethnic minority model, were called into question at three different sites by dissenting voices who felt suppressed and people who felt rendered invisible within each community (Seidman, 1993). At the site of race, people of colour questioned the racism in the lesbian and gay communities and in the conception of a unitary identity. If the ethnic identity model of gay identity viewed gay men and lesbians as discrete groups competing with others for limited societal resources, the notion of uniting with other groups became illogical. This set up a situation in which an individual's membership in other groups became both erased by its seeming irrelevancy and highlighted as a problematic site of competing allegiances and interests.

At the time, gay culture lacked the historical roots and standard transmission devices that are presumed in traditional ethnicities (Epstein, 1992). However, if ethnicity is seen as a combination of external ascription and chosen affiliation (which characterized the ethnic revival in the context of the 1970s), then to describe a non-essentialized gay identity as an ethnicity was not illogical and the identity acquisition literature was not incongruous. While research explored the stigmatizing effects of being labelled homosexual (e.g., Jacobs & Tedford, 1980; McLellan, 1978), it moved more towards exploring the formation of chosen affiliations and identities (e.g., Plummer, 1975).

An exploration of Cass's (1979) identity formation model is particularly instructive as it was one of the earliest proposed, more empirically tested, and most popular frameworks; in fact, it is still commonly used today. The Cass model is used, as one example, in describing guidelines for social service practitioners who work with LGBT youth in terms of assessing identity development and the particular issues a youth might be facing (e.g., Morrow, 2004). What also makes it quite exceptional is that it was one of the first models to explicitly make the heterosexism of the larger culture the source of the difficulties faced by homosexuals and not homosexuality itself. Cass (1979) proposed a six-stage, psychosocial model of active identity formation. Cass credits interpersonal congruency theory, with its interactionist perspective, as the overarching framework for her theoretical model. The two general assumptions at its base are "(a) that identity is acquired through a developmental process; and (b) that the locus for stability of, and change in, behavior lies in the interaction process that occurs between individuals and their environments" (p. 219).

Cass (1979, p. 220) states that:

> [The] theory is based on the assumption that stability and change in human behavior are dependent on the congruency or incongruency that exists within an individual's interpersonal environment . . . movement from one stage of homosexual identity formation to another is motivated by the incongruency that exists in P's [the person's] environment, the result of assigning homosexual meaning to P's own feeling, thoughts, or behavior. Growth occurs when P attempts to resolve the inconsistency between perception of self and others.

At each stage, the individual has multiple "alternative paths of development" or "strategies of action" (p. 220) which can be taken. One of the options at each stage is "*identity*

foreclosure . . . The individual may choose not to develop any further" (p. 220, emphasis in original). Cass makes a differentiation "between private (personal) and public (social) aspects of identity" whose development she sees as:

> [S]eparate but related processes. It is possible for P to hold a private identity as homosexual while maintaining a public identity of being heterosexual. With increasing identity development comes a growing consistency between the two identities, giving rise in the final stage to an overall and integrated homosexual identity . . . [which] is held to arise from the interaction between individuals and their environment. P acts in accordance with the way P perceives the surrounding world. The social structure establishes P's interpersonal environment by regulating the way others behave toward P. From this environment P develops a perception of how P is regarded by others. This perception plays a crucial role in the maintenance of behavioral patterns. (pp. 220-221)

The basis of stability and change in the process is the:

> [I]nterpersonal matrix. This consists of three elements: 1. P's own perception of some characteristic that P attributes to self (S). 2. P's perception of P's own behavior directly the result of that characteristic (B). 3. P's perception of another person's view of that characterization (O) . . . P strives to achieve congruency (both cognitive and affective) between S, B, and O. A state of congruency exists when both B and O are in accordance with S. Incongruency may be resolved by either the formation of a new (congruent) matrix involving a different perception of self or by restoration of the matrix to its original (congruent state) so that no change in perception of self is required. Resolution of incongruency may in turn prompt P to act in a way that will modify P's interpersonal environment. (p. 221)

Cass provides detailed descriptions of each stage, the various strategies used, and usually a question or statement or two which characterizes the stage. As mentioned, movement through the stages can be forward (except in the last stage), backward, or halt (as in foreclosure).

Stage 1: Identity confusion. In this stage, P becomes aware that P's thoughts, feelings, or behaviours could possibly be seen as homosexual. The question that is asked is "Am I a homosexual?" (p. 223).

Stage 2: Identity comparison. In this stage, P acknowledges that P may be homosexual and feels conflicted by that realization in light of the dominant and surrounding heterosexist culture. "I may be homosexual" (p. 225) is the provisional commitment made.

Stage 3: Identity tolerance. "I probably am homosexual" (p. 229) characterizes where P is at this stage, conflict is somewhat reduced, and P begins to seek out other homosexual people.

Stage 4: Identity acceptance. With sustained and more contact with other homosexuals, P begins to feel more positive and less conflicted about being homosexual, other homosexuals, and being around homosexuals. P now has answers to the questions "Who am I?" and "Where do I belong?" (p. 232) that arose in earlier stages. P begins to be more honest and open with others about P's homosexuality, though may still at times (actively or passively) pass as heterosexual.

Stage 5: Identity pride. P becomes more immersed in and committed to homosexual culture and other homosexuals. "These are my people" and "How dare you presume I am heterosexual" (p. 233) characterize this stage. In being more confrontational with the prevailing heterosexist milieu, P begins to manage the incongruency by devaluing and becoming angered by the dominant culture and heterosexist others while valuing the homosexual subculture and others as more significant. Increased disclosure brings P's public and private identities into more

congruence while increasing the possibility of conflict with nonhomosexuals. When reactions to this disclosure with heterosexual others are positive, movement into the next stage can occur.

Stage 6: Identity synthesis. Anger and the "us versus them" mentality are tempered in this stage and become reserved for unsupportive heterosexuals; supportive heterosexuals are valued and appreciated. Being homosexual becomes integrated with other aspects of P's global identity. Disclosure of P's sexual identity becomes less confrontational and more of a natural by-product of interpersonal interaction.

After detailing her theoretical model, Cass explicitly states that:

The model presented is a broad guideline for understanding how an individual comes to adopt a homosexual identity. It is not intended that it should be true in *all* respects for *all* people since individuals and situations are inherently complex. Further, it is expected that over time, changes in societal attitudes and expectations will require changes in the model. (p. 235)

However, theorists still criticized her model, and the other stage models, on this and a number of different grounds.

While much of the work done in the late 1970s and during the 1980s utilized the same symbolic interactionist perspective, researchers became mired in debates about specific definitions, the progression of identity acquisition, and the number and nature of particular stages. Such debates over details are common after the occurrence of a paradigm shift (Kuhn, 1970). Some examples of the titles of papers resulting from this shift are: "Homosexual Identity Formation: Testing a Theoretical Model" (Cass, 1984), "Variables Related to the Acquisition of a Gay Identity" (Troiden, 1980), "Homosexual Identity: A Concept in Need of Definition" (Cass, 1984), "Homosexual Identity Formation as a Developmental Process" (Minton & McDonald,

1984), and "Self, Self-Concept, Identity, and Homosexual Identity: Constructs in Need of

Definition and Differentiation" (Troiden, 1984/1985).

The identity acquisition models explored in these articles have a tendency to reify the

concepts of stages and progression. They encourage the impression that the individual hurtles

through a process of identity formation once one suspects that one could be homosexual and that

stopping before reaching the end point counts as a personal failure (Kitzinger, 1987). Kitzinger

also points out that the models contain an implicitly liberal humanist ideology. In Kitzinger's

view, Cass (1979) characterizes the end of development in such a way as to equalize

homosexuals with heterosexuals and depoliticize homosexuals. In Cass's model, the highest

stage is characterized by a loss of radical and activist impulses in favour of a tendency to view

heterosexuality and homosexuality as merely components of whole persons. Kitzinger (1987)

does not view this end point conceptualization as a sufficient basis alone for forming allegiances

and enmities.

Another criticism was that these theories universalized a process that could be radically

dissimilar for different people. The most vocal were those people who said these models did not

account for differences that may result on the basis of race, class, gender or sex. Some

researchers questioned the applicability of these models to the experiences of gay youth coming

out in different social historical contexts (Herdt, 1989; Savin-Williams, 1995, 2005). Others

wondered if these models developed from research with adults are projections that do not take

into consideration the qualitatively different ways that issues around coming out are approached,

coped with, and overcome by an adolescent (D'Augelli, 1998). D'Augelli speculated that the

different cognitive, social, and experiential resources available to different age groups rendered

these models too "adultocentric" (p. 192). Other researchers, like Ponse (1978), questioned the

whole notion of stages and instead posited conceptualizing the process in terms of trajectories. Accompanying these shifts was an increase in the number of openly homosexual researchers, the creation of the *Journal of Homosexuality*, and research that engaged in an historical analysis of homosexuality and the treatment of the homosexual by science. Increasingly, interviews trying to capture the subjective homosexual experience replaced standardized measurement, which tried to capture the objective diagnostic criteria of homosexuality.

        The trajectory model and experiential diversity. In the early trajectory model, people develop linearly but at any point can encounter a transition or turning point (a significant event that alters their life course), and their development can go off in other directions with unpredictable consequences. According to Steinberg (1995, p. 248), a developmental trajectory is a "probabilistic pathway through time and space" that is fashioned by intrapersonal, interpersonal, and societal characteristics and contexts. Turning points "create changes in our life's trajectory and alter our behaviour instead of accentuating or perpetuating it" (Rutter, 1992, p. 457). Turning points are events that necessitate restructuring at the formal level of behavioural change for some individuals (Rutter, 1994). The times most likely to be turning points of behaviour, often including changes in roles, are developmental transition periods (Graber & Brooks-Gunn, 1996). In later versions of research using the trajectory model, these turning points are called "milestones" (Rosario, Schrimshaw, & Hunter, 2008; Savin-Williams, 2005).

        Though generally thought of as events that affect an individual's life, Savin-Williams (1998) believes that turning points, or milestones, could have shared features among individuals. He posits that milestones can be understood at a communal level within a particular subculture by extracting common patterns from individuals' stories. These communal milestones are the

result of perceiving common experiences, a bond, or an identity with others who share a

stigmatized status in a particular culture. To the degree that individuals select their environments,

these milestones can also have some influence on their particular experiences.

In his own research with youth, Savin-Williams found that common milestones emerged

that affected identification as gay or bisexual and the disclosure of that identity to others.

Davies' (1992, p. 75) description of coming out as a gradual, continuous process does sound like

a trajectory with milestones: "a series of realignments in perception, evaluation, and

commitment." Savin-Williams (1998, p. 5) presents the following "general developmental

progression" of firsts: memories of same-sex attraction; labelling feelings and attractions; gay

sex; heterosexual sex; labelling self as gay or bisexual; disclosure to others; same-sex romance;

and self-acceptance as gay or bisexual.

In describing the linkages between these milestones, Savin-Williams (1998) prefers to

use the term differential developmental trajectories because:

> "Differential" names the variability within and across individuals, and "development"
>
> refers not only to specific events during particular moments of time but to the full range
>
> of milestones and processes that occur throughout the life course. "Trajectories"
>
> highlight forward movement and emphasize that future development will be influenced
>
> by past and current maturational episodes and their aftermath. (p. 9)

He also describes two main, seemingly paradoxical binaries to describe the characteristics of

GBM development to keep in mind when thinking about youth: similarities versus uniqueness

and discontinuities versus continuities. By holding both seemingly contradictory poles of this

binary in mind at the same time, Savin-Williams believes we can appreciate certain features of

GBM development while not obscuring others.

Discussing the similarity versus uniqueness dimension, he proposes that these two poles both describe GBM development. On one hand, sexual minority youth experience a life course that differs considerably from that of heterosexual youth. On the other hand, the development of sexual minority youth does not deviate all that significantly from that of heterosexual youth, it only deviates with respect to whom they eroticize, have sex with, and love. Savin-Williams (1998, 2005) sees each position as having both merits and deficits and argues that the exclusive adherence to one pole of this binary opposition (i.e., similarity vs. uniqueness) obscures the complexities of developmental issues. For example, like making a type I error in statistics where results of an analysis lead a researcher to wrongly state that a difference exists between two groups when no difference exists, seeing GBM youth as different from heterosexual youth takes attention away from how the individual developmental paths of sexual minority youth can differ significantly by reifying the categories of gay versus straight and blurring within group differences. Savin-Williams points to subgroups within the larger category of gay people that both share and do not share essential and defining characteristics with other gay subgroups.

As examples of the two poles of the discontinuities versus continuities binary, Savin-Williams cites the methods typically used to present GBM lives. An individualistic methodology typified by the collection and presentation of idiosyncratic coming out stories characterizes the discontinuity model. As examples of this tradition, he cites anthologies, which present a diversity of individual life stories without much overarching commentary, organization, or structure. The privileged voice of an external expert who acts like a hermeneut, making sense of the stories, is usually absent. Individual narrators are the empowered agents who make sense of their own story of development.

Researchers operating under the continuity perspective explore general features of development through combining and averaging data on developmental milestones. This was the particular model that led to the development of the theoretical coming-out models (which are typically presented as universal, linear, and comprised of orderly stages). This model allowed researchers to distil a very complex process and plethora of idiosyncratic life stories into a list of general sentiments, cognitions, and occurrences that commonly characterize gay lives—though not without value judgments (Kitzinger, 1987).

In Savin-William's (1998, 2005) view, individual lives are both common and distinct. Individuals may have certain developmental patterns in common with others. The stage models of identity formation highlight continuities in both method and results. The result is a simplified, linear, and orderly model of progression through a process that is at the same time complex, multifaceted, and disorganized. It is almost a given that no one person's life history is exactly the same as anyone else's. In light of this truism, Savin-Williams attempts to balance both perspectives by presenting quotations from the youth's individual narration within his running analytical commentary. While he determines the order of presentation of the milestones in discussing his results, the experiential descriptions of the milestones are garnered from his participants' stories.

Since the 1980s, there has been a growing research interest in the lives of GBM youth. Much of the work concerning GBM youth that preceded this period was either pathologizing or relied on the retrospective reports of adults looking back on their childhood and adolescent years (Herdt, 1989). The AIDS crisis and concerns about preventative safer sex practices made it imperative to examine the actual subjective experiences of GBM youth rather than adult projections. As more research was conducted, the results showed indications of relationships

between problematic behaviours reported by GBM youth: suicide (Remafedi, Farrow, & Deischer, 1991), homelessness (Savin-Williams, 1994), drug use (Rotheram-Borus & Langabeer, 2001), and unsafe sex (Remafedi, 1994). Additionally, GBM youth of non-European ethnicity described qualitatively and statistically significant different experiences than GBM youth of European ancestry, for example, in the rates of being physically attacked (Hunter, 1994). These findings among others made it clear that factors such as race, class, education, gender, and sex affected people in such different ways as to make their coming to and experiences with an identity very different (Savin-Williams, 1998, 2005). The models derived from this more recent research with GBM youth tend to emphasize developmental trajectories with milestones.

The Development of Eroticism and the Formation of Identity

The development of same-sex eroticism. Research on the development of sexual same-sex eroticism during the prepubertal years suggests that private consciousness of same-sex erotic feelings occurs early on. Herdt and McClintock (2000) suggest puberty has two separate but consecutive processes, adrenarche (adrenal puberty) and gonadarche (gonadal puberty). Adrenarche, occurring between the ages of six and 10, is theorized as one of the factors instigating attractions and sexual feelings that crystalize and become meaningful at around the age of ten. Gonadarche, or what has traditionally been thought of as puberty, along with the development of fertility and secondary sex characteristics, occurs later, at around 12 for boys.

Changes in cognitive development are also to some degree responsible for encouraging the crystallizations of these initial feelings (D'Augelli & Hershberger, 1993; Herdt & Boxer, 1996; Savin-Williams, 1990, 1998, 2005). Usually the process of sexual identity formation is described as being qualitatively different when it develops in youth than when formed as an adult (D'Augelli, 1998; Vaccaro, 2009). In general, childhood gender non-conformity seems to

reoccur as a central theme in the process for those whose awareness begins at the youngest ages (D'Augelli, 1998). Direct sexual attraction features more prominently as a theme for people who become aware and begin constructing an identity at older ages or as adults.

D'Augelli suggests that the same-sex erotic orientation may actually parallel the development of gender, but its expression is so socially sanctioned that it is repressed until adolescence. Hegemonic heteroerotic scripts are taught implicitly through the explicit parental or peer correction of homoerotic attachments (e.g., boys told they can't marry other boys even in play). It should be noted that gender nonconformity, or unconventional gender behaviour, is punished more severely in young boys than in young girls (Archer, 1984; Horn, 2007; Katz & Ksansnak, 1994).

While North American culture allows same-sex sociability, it is only within certain parameters with clear social scripts (e.g., through sports participation). Comments such as "that's so gay" or "you're such a fag" are examples of informal social control that transmit the direct message of the unacceptability of homoeroticism and, indirectly, the supremacy of heterosexuality and hegemonic gender roles, especially in response to unconventional gender behaviour (D'Augelli, 1998; Kimmel & Mahler, 2003; Phoenix, Frosh, & Pattman, 2003). Retrospective accounts include salient memories of corrective actions by family and peers to early signs of emerging same-sex orientation, often in response to the individual acting like the other sex in behaviour or in relating to the same sex (Brimmer, 1995; Due, 1995; Phoenix, Frosh, & Pattman, 2003). Early childhood discouragement of intense emotional attachments to members of the same sex, according to D'Augelli (1998), may be one of the earliest types of affectional victimization experiences to which almost all youth are exposed regardless of their present or future sexual identity.

According to Savin-Williams (1998, pp. 21-22, emphasis in original), GBM youth frequently "recall a vague but distinct sense of *being different* from other boys." This theme has already been described in many of the coming out models (Cass, 1979; Herdt, 1989; Plummer 1975; Troiden, 1980). In these models, this sense of otherness is posited as the beginning stage of the development of a GBM identity. In his own research, Savin-Williams (1998) found three sources for the feeling of being different in childhood: a captivation with masculinity, acting like a girl, and not acting like a boy.

For the vast majority of GBM youth, the main source of feeling different stems from a fascination with things and people associated with masculinity, though very few labelled themselves homosexual because of this interest. Mainly this fascination found its expression in an intense yearning to be around males. Those reporting this strong desire also describe a concurrent understanding that most other boys did not feel quite the same way and that it would not be proper or advisable to manifest it blatantly in front of family and friends. For many, this knowledge adds a degree of ambivalence to the intense yearning as it becomes commingled with fear and shame. Both the object of their fascination and the fascination itself can come to arouse fear and shame even as they at the same time stimulate desire.

"Acting like a girl" involved cultural definitions of gender, how a boy should not act, think and feel. These male youth did not wonder, "why am I gay" but "why do I act like a girl?" Many of these boys felt ambivalence over their same-sex attractions. Males were both enigmatic and unapproachable for them. The sources of this difference, according to Isay (1989), are seeing themselves as more sensitive than other boys (e.g., crying more easily and having feelings that are more easily hurt), and as having more aesthetically inclined interests in art or nature. While extremely feminine boys, almost without exception, eventually admit having a same-sex

sexual orientation, they do not comprise all gay men (Savin-Williams, 1998). While many gay men are not effeminate, men who are extremely feminine are usually gay. Other less gender atypical youth may still feel more girl-like than boy-like. They comprised about one third of Savin-William's sample. These boys felt more at ease either spending time alone or with women and girls because they felt more accepted by them and less self-conscious in their presence. When these youth had male friends, it was usually just one boy, typically another youth who disliked masculine activities. Savin-Williams is uncertain whether some youth's choice to spend time alone was volitional or the result of social ostracism, though he suspects the latter.

These boys were universally subject to often-daily harassment, and they report that this was the most difficult thing for them. The harassment took verbal and, though less often, physical forms which most youth described as deleterious to their self-concept and emotional well-being. Though harassment occurred in various social contexts, Savin-Williams notes patterns that reoccur in youth's descriptions. The harassment was predicated on the boy's acting too much like a girl. Other boys would usually be the harassers, either alone or in a group. While girls might join in, in none of Savin-Williams sample were girls the only ones who engaged in verbal abuse.

The reactions to abuse were mixed. The most commonly reported reactions were to ignore, retreat from, or to cry about it. However, Savin-Williams also notes that some boys did have other reactions. These alternative responses were innovative and often self-enhancing. One youth reported developing a network of bodyguards with whom he had sex and who also protected him. Another used his own intelligence and verbal acumen to turn the tables and embarrass his would be assailant, saying that he did like being with girls, and questioning aloud

why his assailant did not. In the main though, the verbal harassment led to increased social withdrawal, despondency, and self-absorption.

None in the sample believed that the labelling by others led to their becoming gay. In fact, many thought that the verbal abuse had influenced their own image of homosexuality in a negative direction, leading them to not come out until later. For boys who acted gender atypically, childhood was a traumatizing time. Few youth in the Savin-Williams study could recall any positive aspects of demonstrating unconventional gender behaviour. For many of these youth, girls became good friends and a safe harbour of emotional support.

Other boys, while not feeling like girls, did not quite feel like boys either. This feeling emanated from a lack of interest in or loathing of conventionally gendered activities. Not being very feminine or masculine, these boys spent more time alone or with one or several close male friends. Savin-Williams (1998, p. 35) states that these boys didn't ask themselves why they acted like a girl or "why am I gay?" Rather, they asked themselves, "why don't I act like a boy?" These boys avoided rough and tumble play, boys' games, athletics, and did not desire to grow up and be athletes or be like their fathers. That did not mean that these boys were not active, but that they were generally active in nonmasculine (i.e., gender neutral) ways that did not involve sports. They engaged in activities that would be seen in North American culture as suitable for both boys and girls, for example, imaginative play, theatre, music, or playing board games. The aversion cited for sports followed from a dislike of its physically antagonistic aspects. Even more common though were boys who spent a good deal of time alone, enjoying less physical activities. In all, combining the youth who felt like girls and those who just did not feel like boys, Savin-Williams reports that three-fourth of his sample felt their attributes or interests were not particularly masculine in the conventional North American sense.

About one in ten of the boys in the Savin-Williams sample reported being very gender conventional. These boys played sports, were typically popular, and passed (actively or passively) as heterosexual. These youth typically described themselves as asexual when young, had few recollections of any prepubescent erotic attractions, and developed an awareness of their attractions and came out later than the other groups of males. In the main, they passed as heterosexual whether on purpose or by default from living in a heterocentric culture that assumes that people are heterosexual.

In sum, according to Savin-Williams (1998, p. 43):

The vast majority of the gay/bisexual youths believed that they were different from other boys their age and that regardless of the source of that feeling, it was natural, instinctual, and an omnipresent aspect of themselves . . . consist[ing] of an overwhelming desire to be in the company of men.

In addition, "most ultimately recognized however that these feelings were not typical of other boys and that it would be wrong or unwise to express them because of family and peer prohibitions" (Savin-Williams, 1998, p. 43). While some of the youth interviewed reported initial experiences of same-sex eroticism occurring suddenly, what Davies (1992, p. 75) refers to as "the road to Damascus phenomenon," Savin-Williams (1998, p. 45) reports that "for the vast majority these feelings emerged as gradual, inevitable, and not particularly surprising." For most of the males in his sample, the initiation, formation, and adoption of a sexual identity was experienced as a slow unfolding of an innate predisposition or sexual orientation.

Sexual orientation and identity formation in GBM youth. According to Brooks-Gunn and Graber (1999, p. 158), sexual identity formation is "The process of mastering emerging sexual feelings and forming a sense of oneself as a sexual being." In describing this process,

most researchers utilize the terms sexual orientation and/or sexual identity. These terms

encapsulate two important and distinct aspects of sexuality. The definitions offered by Savin-

Williams (1998) are useful for discussing the distinction. Sexual orientation:

> Refers to the preponderance of sexual or erotic feelings, thoughts, fantasies, and/or
>
> behaviors one has for members of one sex or the other, both, or neither . . . considered
>
> immutable, stable, and internally consonant . . . not thought to be subject to conscious
>
> control, can exist separately or independently from sexual conduct and sexual identity,
>
> and may be dimensional—where gay and heterosexual may be merely the ends of a
>
> continuum on which we all fall and in which many individuals possess degrees of
>
> homoerotic and heteroerotic attractions and feelings--or categorical, in which we are
>
> classified as *either* heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual. (Savin-Williams, 1998, p. 3,
>
> emphasis in original)

Bell, Weinberg, and Hammersmith (1981) believe that sexual orientation is probably formed by

adolescence and generally remains constant. On the other hand, sexual identity:

> Represents an enduring self-recognition of the *meanings* that sexual feelings, attractions,
>
> and behaviours have for one's sense of self. This self-labeling occurs within the pool of
>
> potential sexual identities that are defined and given meaning by cultural and historic
>
> time in which one lives. It is symbolized by such statements as "I am gay" or "I am
>
> heterosexual" and thus a matter of personal choice. For some individuals, sexual identity
>
> remains fluid during the life course, probably not on a day-to-day basis, and is not
>
> necessarily consistent with sexual orientation, fantasies, or behavior. (Savin-Williams,
>
> 1998, p. 3, emphasis in original)

For the purposes of the current study, it is not necessary to question whether sexuality has a timeless, essential, universal reality; Foucault (1978) has already done that well enough. Sexuality is at least socially real and experienced as real by individuals. The distinction between sexual orientation and sexual identity mirrors the fact that sexuality or sexual behaviour has a biological or body component (since it is experienced or expressed through the body) and a social component (since it is usually carried out with other people or, at least, has social meaning). The distinction reflects two different theoretical perspectives (Weinrich, 1990).

The first is an essentialist camp that states that one's sexuality is driven unconsciously, innately, and, perhaps, even biologically (sexual orientation). The other is a social constructionist perspective that states that we have a certain amount of freedom from absolute biological determinism in how we think about and present ourselves sexually, though much of it is determined socially by our specific context (sexual identity). The distinction also reflects the supposition that a person's sexual identity does not necessarily neatly follow from one's sexual orientation or even behaviour. Perhaps most importantly, the distinction seems to reflect people's experience. That is, coming to a particular sexual identity (if only internally and privately) is, beyond some strategic or self-deluding purpose, typically the result of being as descriptively truthful as is possible about one's sexual desires.

One might ask whether compulsory heterosexuality and cultural heterocentrism lead most people into a heterosexual identity by default. Cultural heterosexism is defined as "the ideological system that denies, denigrates, and stigmatizes any nonheterosexual form of behavior, identity, relationship, or community" (Herek, 1995, p. 321). Compulsory heterosexuality is social discourse and practice that assumes and supports the assumption that everyone is heterosexual and promotes the perpetuation and maintenance of heterosexual

hegemony through privilege (Rich, 1983). The disjuncture between sexual orientation and identity in a context of cultural heterosexism and compulsory heterosexuality requires that to be gay (though not necessarily to engage in same-sex behaviour) one must at least come out to oneself.

Heterosexuality's position as the monolithic default identity sets up the conditions which make the sexual orientation and identity distinction necessary in the first place, that is, GBM people having to come into a GBM identity by coming out of a presumed heterosexual one. Coming out is a process of disclosure that D'Augelli (1998, pp. 191-192) calls a:

> Self-acknowledgement of homoerotic feelings, itself the end point of complex developmental process, instigat[ing] other processes of identity consolidation that are fundamentally social. Coming out to self usually leads to coming out to others. Ordinarily, telling another person for the first time is experienced as extremely difficult, and this disclosure may follow self-awareness and self-labeling by many years. The first disclosure then creates momentum for more disclosures. There are multiple, overlapping processes involved in removing others' presumptions of heterosexuality such as telling family . . . friends . . . and important others . . . these disclosure processes facilitate an exiting from heterosexual identity and its lifelong social expectations.

Coming out is then public disclosure to an increasing number of people, including and usually beginning with the self and expanding outward.

In sum, sexual orientation is often viewed in the literature as an ever-present, invariant, biological and psychological truth that instigates the process of forming a sexual identity, usually described as a historically and culturally situated social construction (Weinrich, 1990). The distinction and the conceptual separation of the two from sexual behaviour probably represent

more of a theoretical trifurcation than most people would consciously experience in their everyday lives. However, it is useful in clarifying some developmental issues of GBM people (e.g., people who pass or have not yet come out, who have same-sex sex without identifying, or who identify without ever having had sex).

The formation and experience of a gay or bisexual identity. Both the formation and experience of a sexual identity take place in contexts that range from those that are distal (societal) to proximal (interpersonal) to internal (intrapersonal). Sexual identities are fashioned at the level of social context by social norms, values, and controls (Graber & Archibald, 2001). On the level of the interpersonal, experiences in sexual or romantic relationships with others that directly affect behaviour or with parents and peers that may influence attitudes, beliefs, and anticipations about sexuality then mould sexual identities. At the level of the intrapersonal, a person amalgamates sexual feelings, experiences, and identities with the more integrated general identity they are forming. What follows is a brief discussion of these contexts that starts on the macro (societal) level and proceeds incrementally inward to the more micro (intrapersonal) level.

Societal. Rotheram-Borus and Langabeer (2001) lament that not enough research has focused on the shifting societal context in which GBM adolescents experience their youth. Clearly the changing cultural context has had some effect as more people become aware of sex orientation earlier, have access to a language and identity that can be used to articulate their feelings, come out at earlier ages, and find greater support from similar youth and families than ever before (Hammack, Thompson, & Pilecki, 2009; Herdt, 1989; Savin-Williams, 1990, 1995). In 2000, Kryzan (cited in Savin-Williams, 2005) found that the average age of self-labelling for young males (25 years of age and younger) in 2000 from a larger sample of 6,872 male and

female LGBT youth was 15.6. More recently, Floyd and Stein (2002) found, in a sample of 72 LGBT youth aged 16-27, the average age of first labelling was 16.14 with a range of 3-24.

The number of accessible models that can help GBM youth to manage their identity has proliferated (Rotheram-Borus & Langabeer, 2001). Television shows like *Queer as Folk*, *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, and *Will & Grace* depicted gay characters in gay situations with a gay cultural sensibility that is becoming more common and watched by larger and larger audiences (Hicks & Lee, 2006). While contemporary shows like *Modern Family* and *Happy Endings* have continued this tradition, other shows like *Glee*, *Desperate Housewives*, *United States of Tara*, *Ugly Betty*, *Degrassi*, and *Shameless* have included gay youth as central characters with storylines centred on the development of their sexual identities and experiences of sexuality, romance, and relationships.

In contrast to this increasing openness and frankness about sexual matters, the Victorian era has often been held up as an exemplar of a time of sexual repression and silence. Foucault (1978) took a contrary position by pointing out, instead, that it was actually a time of increasing preoccupation, discussion, portrayal, and obsessive regulation of sexuality. One of the possible lessons of Foucault's refutation of the "repressive hypothesis" suggests that sometimes it is better not to be talked about at all. What is meant by this is that increased public and societal visibility does not always necessarily indicate a more positive representation or supportive atmosphere. Though considered a breakthrough for having all gay characters, gay people criticized the motion picture *The Boys in the Band* (Crowley & Friedkin, 1970) for mockingly presenting them as a minstrel show of miserable gay stereotypes (Dynes, 1990). While some governments are more tolerant of gay people and their representation in the media, most still do not grant the same privileges of social membership that they do to heterosexuals, for example, being excluded from

the institution of marriage (cf. Adam, 1993). Many public figures still have strong reservations about publicly labelling themselves as gay (Rotheram-Borus & Langabeer, 2001). More public visibility can be helpful, but it is also a double-edged sword. For example, concurrent with the increased media coverage of GBM issues is increased controversy (Rotheram-Borus & Langabeer, 2001) and reports of an increasing number of hate crimes (Dauvergne, 2010; Herek, Gillis, Cogan, & Glunt, 1997).

Nevertheless, unlike earlier generations of gay people, the current generation is exploring and forming their identity in a context of gay pride rather than in a climate of total shame (D'Augelli, 1998; Hicks & Lee, 2006). The presence of a visible gay community provides individuals with the language to express their identities, models for coming out, and support from similar youth and families (e.g., Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays or PFLAG). This has meant that more gay youth come out earlier and are able to form strong identities (Herdt, 1989; Savin-Williams, 1990, 1995, 2005). The strength of these identities has also led to an increased assertiveness and a greater willingness to be confrontational (Leck, 1994; Linville, 2009; Schulman, 1994, Signorile, 1993). According to Rolfes (1989, 1994), these two factors can put gay youth into face-to-face conflict with peers, family, and institutions.

Interpersonal. Savin-Williams (1998) found that a greater percentage of youth in the 1990s were disclosing their sexual orientation/identity to their parents than in the 1980s. Remafedi, Farrow, and Deischer (1991) found that 70% in their sample of 14-21 year old GBMs were out to their parents. Parental response can range from extremely positive to a negation of the disclosure to emotional or physical abuse to expulsion from the household (Uribe & Harbeck, 1992). Of those who had disclosed, 60 to 80% disclosed to their mothers while one-third to two-thirds had told their fathers (Remafedi, Farrow, & Deischer, 1991).

Not everyone has the luxury of controlling knowledge or, at least, suspicion of their sexual orientation of identity through disclosure. There appear to be two types of individuals: those who are not able to hide their sexual orientation or identity, or pass, and those who are (Rotheram-Borus & Langabeer, 2001). The reasons that thwart passing can be mannerisms, dress, and very intense and obvious desires for same-sex bonding. Typically, these factors are manifestations of an unconventional gender style (Savin-Williams, 1998). Those who comprise this category often face a great deal of extreme prejudicial harassment from their peers (Remafedi, Farrow, & Deischer, 1991; Savin-Williams, 1998). Other categories of those who cannot pass are comprised of those youth who are discovered or outed (33%), or who come out (38%) and disclose to their parents on their own (Rosario, Rotherham-Borus, Reid, 1996). Finally, there is the category of GBM youth who can pass and have the option of disclosing their sexual identity or passing (generating a social image as heterosexual).

Intrapersonal. The hormonal and external changes of gonadal puberty promote an increase in sexual feelings, thoughts, and activities. Gonadal puberty serves as a transition or turning point when sexual identity changes, and many trace their GBM awareness to early adolescent years (Bell, Weinberg, & Hammersmith, 1981; D'Augelli & Herschberger, 1993; Gibson, 1989; Herdt & Boxer, 1996; Strommen, 1989). Many recall generalized feelings of difference from others (D'Augelli, 1998; Savin-Williams, 1990, 1998, 2005; Troiden, 1989).

While internal and external physiological changes can intensify a same-sex sexual orientation, the social pressures of adolescence and the larger society may inhibit expression of that same-sex orientation (D'Augelli, 1998). GBM youth may be emotionally and cognitively unprepared for feelings of same-sex sexual arousal and desire, channelling it into alternative

behaviours, expressions, or heterosexual activities (Savin-Williams, 1994a). This can lead to the

loss of age appropriate exploration and retard the expression of same-sex interests.

At any of these three levels (i.e., societal, interpersonal, or intrapersonal) a person can

experience anything from victimization to empowerment. The experience of being gay or

bisexual and living with a stigmatized identity is not all negative. Some authors have reported

advantages stemming from the experience of a same-sex sexual identity (Garnets & Kimmel,

1993), and even to being stigmatized (Adam, 1978; Minton, 2002). The victimization or

empowerment experienced can be received (actual) or just anticipated (projected) and still have

an effect on the person. Before detailing why GBM youth may be at greater risk for

victimization than GBM adults and non-GBM youth, I will discuss the literature on bullying and

hate crimes. Many of the recent findings on the victimization GBM youth come from these

literatures. I will follow this review with a brief discussion of the types of victimization and their

effects as reported specifically by GBM people and GBM youth.

Issues Problematized in the Literature

Bullying and hate crimes. Ross (1996) describes Swedish researcher Olweus (1978) as

the world's foremost authority on childhood bullying. According to Olweus (1992, p. 413),

bullying is defined as occurring when a person is "exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative

actions on the part of one or more persons." Bullying can range from "direct physical or verbal

aggression" to "indirect [aggression], such as threats and intimidation, exclusion or gossip"

(Charach, Pepler, & Zieglar, 1995, p.12). Dennis and Satcher (1999) explain that research on

childhood bullying has spread across the globe. Since Olweus's (1978) Scandinavian study,

research on childhood bullying has been conducted in Australia (Rigby & Slee, 1991), Great

Britain (Phoenix, Frosh, & Pattman, 2003; Stephenson & Smith, 1989), Ireland (O'Moore, &

Hillary, 1989), the United States (Charach, Pepler, Ziegler, 1995; Human Rights Watch, 2001;

Swearer, Turner, Givens, & Pollack, 2008), and Canada (Charach, Pepler, Ziegler, 1995; Taylor,

Schachter, Paquin, Beldom, Gross, & McMinn, 2008). Early research on bullying focused

primarily on the aggressor with attention eventually focusing more and more on the bully, target,

the two in relation, and bystanders (Bernstein & Watson, 1997).

Bullying seems to have both short and long term effects on the target child. In the short

term, the effects of bullying on the targeted individual are psychological and physical distress,

difficulty concentrating, and fear of going to school. In the long term, Olweus (1993) found that

boys who had been targeted in the sixth and ninth grades exhibited higher levels of depression

and negative self-evaluations when they were 23 and they were no longer being targeted.

Bernstein and Watson (1997) suggest that this finding indicates that victims have internalized the

negative evaluations to which they were once subjected.

According to Sharp and Smith (1994) and Whitney and Smith (1993), the most common

form of bullying among school children appears to be name calling. Name calling is defined by

Embry (1995) as the "act of teasing or referring to a peer with a label that may create unpleasant

or hurtful feelings" (p. 8). Garrity, Jens, Porter, Sager, and Short-Camilli (1996) have divided

name calling into mild (e.g., mocking and taunting), moderate (e.g., teasing about appearance or

dress), and severe (e.g., threats of violence). Bullying certainly does not just stop at name

calling. Name calling can escalate to include actual physical violence. Wessler (2001) states:

> I learned from seven years of investigating and prosecuting hate crimes in . . . schools
>
> that violence was never the *beginning* of anything. Rather the violence was the *end* of
>
> something, and that something was an escalating pattern of harassment that started with
>
> degrading language and slurs . . . if it appears acceptable to constantly denigrate and slur,

some students will conclude that it is acceptable to take words to the next level . . . words

do not exist in a vacuum. When left unchallenged, words create a culture and an

environment that appear to condone bias, prejudice, and violence. (p. 30, emphasis in

original)

While girls are more likely to be the victims of name calling and indirect aggression, boys are

more often the victims of name calling in combination with direct physical violence (Owens,

Shute, & Slee, 2000; Siann, Callaghan, Glissov, Lockhart, & Rawson, 1994). Even without any

physical aggression, homophobic language is a significant psychological stressor for young

GBM people (D'Augelli, 1996; Phoenix, Frosh, & Pattman, 2003).

The use of homophobic terms starts early during elementary school but evolves in both

frequency and meaning over time (Plummer, 2001). The use of homophobic words increases

until mid-high school and seems to fall off during young adulthood. The meaning attached to

homophobic taunts initially lacks a sexual overtone, which it gains later. Words like "gay" can

initially mean anything undesirable with no sexual connotation (Thurlow, 2001). Plummer

(2001) believes that the meaning of homophobic taunts is rooted in boyhood otherness.

Interestingly, this parallels the desexualized otherness described by many researchers, including

Savin-Williams (1998), that many GBM youth remember feeling as children. Specifically,

Plummer (2001) claims that the difference is not necessarily that boys who are targets are

feminine, rather:

A boy who is different, stands apart from the group, is a loner, is smarter than other boys,

who adheres to adult authority in preference to peer group codes and/or doesn't

participate in team activities can provoke homophobic targeting. (p. 21)

At earlier ages, gender role un/conventionality seems to be an important moderating variable in terms of harassment (Savin-William, 1998). "Poofters" and "faggots" do not occupy a space between male and female, but stand in opposition to a range of masculinities from macho to those that are less stereotypical, even feminized. The important factor is that these masculinities are differentiated from being the homosexual other. However, Plummer (2001) does not see homophobic taunting as unrelated to gender:

> Early homophobic references seem to be rooted in gender. In particular, homophobia targets boys who depart from the collectively authorized expectations of their male peers. Homophobia precedes and presumably provides an important context for subsequent adult sexual identity formation of all men. Ultimately, prejudice about homosexuality is founded on gender too—because homosexuality is by definition a reference not to particular sexual practices, which are often fluid, but to the gender of one's sexual partner. (p. 22)

Based partially on the work of Halperin (1991), Plummer (2001) makes the case that homophobia is a modern phenomenon which utilizes the notion of traditional values in such a way as to rationalize and eternalize itself as a timeless universal. Halperin (1991) shows how Classical Athens was an example of one social context where same-sex sexual behaviour was practiced and celebrated without eliciting much in the way of any social or at least systematic opprobrium. On the other end of the spectrum, while hatred and violence against one group or another has existed since the beginning of recorded history, it is only in the last 20 years that violence motivated by hatred of a group of people been viewed and called a hate crime (Jenness & Ryken, 2001).

D'Augelli and Dark (1995) suggest that GBM youth are often the victims of bias- and hate-motivated assaults. In these direct physical attacks, the perpetrator assumes, knows, or suspects that the target is GBM. Oddly enough, this definition brings with it the possibility that a homophobic hate crime can be committed on a heterosexually identified person, showing how heterosexism and homophobia can also directly impact non-GBM persons. Strangers are not always the perpetrators of these kinds of attacks. Such attacks also occur within contexts that are generally thought of as safe havens by most people. According to D'Augelli (1998), these attacks have been found to occur in community, school, and even family settings:

> In hostile contexts, internalized homophobia and social inhibition prevent the development of self-esteem and social integration. And for some lesbian, gay, and bisexual youths, diminished self-esteem and loneliness may lead to despair. Until we know which youths move toward adulthood with resilience and which slide toward self-erasure, which conditions encourage resourcefulness and which deplete it, it is crucial that we consider lesbian, gay, and bisexual young people to be potential targets of victimization who are in need of protection and support. (p. 206)

Taylor et al. (2008) found that roughly 25% of Canadian lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQQ) students reported being physically harassed because of their sexual orientation, compared to roughly 8% of their non-LGBTQQ classmates.

Victimization and its effects on GBM youth.

Victimization and resiliency. As an indicator of the difficult life situations faced in the U.S., Remafedi (1994) points to the finding that suicide rates have risen 17% in the general population since 1960 (National Center for Health Statistics, 1986). Adolescence has been characterized as a problematic time for many youth. In comparison to the 17 % increase in

suicide in the general population, teenage suicide rates have risen by more than 200% since 1960. Research that has focused specifically on gay and lesbian youth has found even higher rates of attempted suicide, estimated to be between 20 and 30% (Remafedi, Farrow, & Deischer, 1991; Schneider, Farberow, & Kruks, 1989). More recently, D'Augelli et al. (2005) found that about one third of their 528 lesbian, gay, and bisexual respondents reported at least one suicide attempt, with half being related to sexual orientation. The factors that distinguished youth reporting suicide attempts from those who did not attempt were higher parental psychological abuse and greater gender atypical behaviour in childhood. For males, sexual identity-related attempts were related to greater gender atypical behaviour, parental discouragement of that behaviour, and early disclosure.

The media publicized suicides of several GBM youth in 2010 led media personality Dan Savage to develop a national, Internet-based movement in the United States (US) to inspire LGBT youth who are dealing with harassment (It Gets Better Project, 2011). With the addition of almost 30 Canadian celebrities, the project became international (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2010). Though it is a time of difficulty, adolescence is also a time of growth, discovery, and the unfolding of the self. Savin-Williams cautions that all too often research on GBM youth portrays them as vulnerable, suicidal victims. This representation can serve to conceal the creative resourcefulness, fortitude, and resiliency of GBM youth. Indeed, it may be the product of the methodology most often used to study their experiences (Rotheram-Borus & Langabeer, 2001).

In many of the studies of GBM youth, participants are recruited from crisis or social service agencies. Because they are often not studied longitudinally, researchers are left with a picture of GBM youth experience that is more disturbing than might otherwise be the case or at

least may not be very representative of their everyday lives. Given the pervasive heterosexism these youth face, it is not surprising that some might find themselves in crisis from time to time. What is less noted, but perhaps more surprising, is how remarkably well GBM youth navigate smoothly through such an atmosphere on a day to day basis (Savin-Williams, 2005). Most likely, as before, their experience of being gay or bisexual is sometimes easy, sometimes hard, and at other times everything else in between. Nevertheless, being gay or bisexual is still stigmatized and punished in a variety of contexts and at the three previously mentioned levels (i.e., societal, interpersonal, and intrapersonal).

   Types of anticipated or received victimization and their effects. While GBM youth are in a different social position from adults, the types of victimization on all three contextual levels are very similar in the sense that they are the result of living in an environment infused with cultural heterosexism that inferiorizes GBM people of all ages. These inferioritizing and victimization processes (e.g., stigmatization, heterosexism, homophobia, and hate crimes) have been well documented for adults and GBM people in general (cf. Adam, 1978; Dovidio, Major, & Crocker, 2001; Goffman, 1963; Herek, 1991, 1998). A socially stigmatized identity affects those living with it, individuals perceiving it, and, subsequently, the dynamics of interaction between the stigmatized and nonstigmatized. The experience of living with a stigmatized identity has social, interpersonal, mental (intrapersonal), and even physical consequences for the individual (Herek, 1998). These effects are mainly reactions to external social stressors, but they can also be reactions to internal stressors such as when external social condemnation is mimetically reproduced within the individual as psychological heterosexism (i.e., internalized homophobia).

Societal. According to Herek (1986, 1991, 1992), heterosexism and the stigmatization of

gay men in Western culture creates a social climate for gay people characterized by

discrimination and rejection. As DiPlacido (1998) points out, homosexual people have to

contend with a heterosexist and homophobic environment that discriminates against them, rejects

them, and then often does not recognize them as a genuine minority group deserving of

protection. Under such conditions, members of a stigmatized group experience what Brooks

(1981) calls minority stress. Minority stress is stress that is caused by inferiorization. This

inferiorization "often precipitates negative life events for the minority member over which the

individual has little control" (Brooks, 1981, p. 71). These negative life events can include

systematic reduction in life chances as with employment, housing, and/or legal discrimination

(Adam, 1978), and daily hassles like being perpetually on guard or hearing gay jokes (DiPlacido,

1998).

Youth also have to be on guard against verbal and physical attacks by strangers. In

Rivers' (1995) sample, the majority of youth who had been victimized also recalled being bullied

outside of school on the way home, on a bus, or in shopping malls. Most youth are cognizant of

this reality. Pilkington and D'Augelli (1995) found that 55% of males in their sample tried to act

straight, and 31% deliberately avoided locations or situations where they felt vulnerable or could

be identified as gay. Herek (1991) concludes that dealing with these (perceived, potentially, or

actually) unsafe environments is bound to have to have effects on homosexual people's mental

well-being.

Interpersonal. While coming out can lead to crucial benefits (e.g., social support), it also

brings with it serious risks, even with friends and family (Rivers & D'Augelli, 2001). Remafedi

(1987) reports that 43% of youth in his sample experienced a strong negative reaction from their

parents to their coming out. Parental reaction can range from positive, to physical and verbal

attacks, domestic ostracism, and the withdrawal of emotional and financial support. Passing in

GBM youth is often used as a way to avoid serious negative sanction (Rotheram-Borus &

Langabeer, 2001).

Adolescents in general create what Harter, Marold, Whitesell, and Cobbs (1996) call

false selves to avoid criticism or sanction from significant others. These false selves are used by

adolescents to experiment with roles, test parental support, or generate social support. Rivers

and D'Augelli (2001) describe this creation of false selves as parallel to a GBM youth passing as

heterosexual. Passing comes at a cost, however. In order to pass, the youth has to act

strategically, widening the gap between their public and private identity, creating feelings of

inauthenticity, and intensifying social vigilance. Ultimately, Rivers and D'Augelli posit, this

cycle creates more and more social withdrawal from significant others. The stressors that GBM

youth experience have been shown to manifest as physical symptoms in studies of adult GBM

people. Stress in general and especially daily hassles have been related to headaches, coronary

heart disease, cancer, and other physical symptoms (DiPlacido, 1998). Antoni and colleagues

(1991) found a link between stress and the immune response of HIV-positive and negative gay

men. There is a physical strain in hiding a stigmatized identity (Herek, 1998).

Intrapersonal. While gay men may not differ from heterosexuals in psychological

adjustment (Gonsiorek, 1991; Hooker, 1957), numerous clinicians (e.g., DiPlacido, 1998;

Gonsiorek, 1988) concur that negative societal attitudes are related to adverse mental health.

Allport (1954) explains, "One's reputation, whether false or true, cannot be hammered,

hammered, hammered, hammered, into one's head without doing something to one's character"

(p. 142). Ross (1990) reports emotional distress to be related to stigma related life events. In a

study examining gay men and minority stress, Meyer (1995) found that greater mental health problems are related to discrimination and experiences of negative social treatment. For people in general, negative life events are related to depression, while daily hassles have been associated with schizophrenic symptomatology and negative mood (DiPlacido, 1998). Inferiorized people experience alienation from having to live in a world not of their own choosing and with a social identity not completely of their own making (Adam, 1978). Desubjectivization, a truncation of the sense of self, results from being defined, limited, targeted, and used symbolically by external social agents and forces.

Through the internalization of cultural heterosexism, some GBM youth can become their own worst tormentors. Psychological heterosexism, the individual manifestation of cultural heterosexism, is like an internal passing that ultimately leads to an alienation from self (Herek, 1995). Victimization and alienation in childhood and adolescence can be associated with mental health problems for GBM adults (Buhrich & Loke, 1988; Gonsiorek, 1988; Remafedi, Farrow, & Deischer, 1991; Rivers 1995; Shaffer, Fisher, Hicks, Parides, & Gould, 1995; Shidlo, 1994). For GBM youth, the combination of received and anticipated punishment for having same-sex partners is associated with a more depressed affect (Rotheram-Borus, Rosario, Van Rossem, et al., 1995) and lowered self-esteem (Hetrick & Martin, 1987). Some GBM youth fear their romantic and sexual feelings because these feelings may link them to a culturally stigmatized group (Savin-Williams, 1998). All these factors and situations can lead to numerous psychosocial problems: substance abuse, chronic depression, school failure, early relationship conflicts, homelessness, risky sexual behaviours, and suicidal feelings and behaviour (Bontempo & D'Augelli, 2002; Gibson, 1994; Hequembourg & Brallier, 2009; Human Rights Watch, 2001).

The amplification of vulnerability for GBM youth.

At any age coming out can generate negative reactions; however, Rotheram-Borus and Langabeer (2001) believe that such events can be even more exigent for adolescents because they are concurrently developing their personal and social identities, have less elaborated coping mechanisms, and do not yet have the independent resources and educational status that adults typically have. Rotheram-Borus and Langabeer see this as resulting in a situation that makes youth more vulnerable to heterosexism and its resulting effects.

GBM youth as more vulnerable than adults.

Societal. An increasing number of youth identify as GBM (Deischer, 1989; Remafedi, Resnick, Blume, & Harris, 1992; Savin-Williams, 1990). While these youth may have access to a less censored and more visible gay culture, they are also less independent and more vulnerable than older persons are. Gay youth are more at risk to be victimized than adults (D'Augelli, 1998). Adolescents of all types are more likely to be the targets of violence than adults (Hammond & Young, 1993; U.S. House of Representatives, 1989; Whitaker & Bastian, 1991). Urban gay youth in particular are more likely to experience violence because they are more likely to be in contexts where violence based on sexual orientation is more likely, that is, in gay neighbourhoods, around gay establishments, or at gay events (D'Augelli, 1998). Herek and Glunt (1988) posit that the association of HIV/AIDS with gay people has led to an increase in victimization of gay youth. Additionally, the increased visibility of gay people has been seen to result in a backlash against gay people that also affects gay youth (Berrill, 1990; Hunter, 1994).

A positive gay identity and social support may give contemporary gay youth the resilience to weather or defend themselves from the victimization that may result from being openly and unabashedly gay (D'Augelli, 1998; Williams, Connolly, Pepler, & Craig, 2005). However, the younger age of these gay youth and the different nature of the victimization they

experience are hypothesized to put them in peril for psychological harm different from that experienced by previous generations of GBM people who generally came out as adults. Rotheram-Borus, Hunter, and Rosario (1995) have found that the effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic have added to these risks because of its deep impact on the development of gay youth.

Interpersonal. For those under 19, access to and participation in the gay community is limited and problematic (D'Augelli, 1998). Where youth groups do exist, youth can experience logistical difficulties in linking up with them, for example, not having a car. Other gay people may be hard to find at school if one is unwilling to risk exposure.

Intrapersonal. GBM youth may not have a great deal of experience from which to draw. GBM youth may not have a strong sense of self-confidence or self-esteem (Hetrick & Martin, 1987). In addition, they have a great deal of other changes (e.g., physiological, psychological, and social) occurring in their lives (Rotheram-Borus & Langabeer, 2001; Savin-Williams, 1994b,1995).

GBM youth as more vulnerable than non-GBM youth. Though puberty can be a difficult time period for all youth, Savin-Williams (1994b,1995) finds that the shifts (i.e., social, psychological, and physiological changes) experienced in adolescence can make articulating an affirmative gay identity more onerous. This is especially true in contexts that are generally heterosexist, whether they are proximal (e.g., peers, parents, family, and teachers) or distal (e.g., community or national). The challenge of forming a positive identity in such environments, under such developmental circumstances, heightens the social vulnerability faced by gay youth.

Societal. A nonheterosexual sexual identity is so socially stigmatized that being called gay is reported in a national study of harassment in high schools in the United States as being the most psychologically upsetting of 14 different types of sexual harassment (including physical

abuse) for boys (American Association of University Women, 1993). Similarly, "poofter" and "faggot" are reported to be the worst insults available to boys in Australia (Plummer, 2001, p. 21). In a qualitative study conducted with male heterosexual youth from several local high schools in Windsor, Bortolin (2010, p. 209) found that the phrase, "that's so gay" was found to be equivalent to the terms "stupid" and "lame" and used generally to indicate a dislike "all the time, in any and every place or space." The verbal harassment against males who were or were perceived to be gay, though covert, was reported to occur in almost every school and most often in hallways, creating a chilly and hostile institutional climate for GBMs. Adam (2007, p.76) relates that calling something "gay" has become one of the most pervasive insults in Canadian schools "despite the fact that it almost never refers to anything that is characteristic of gay worlds or sensibilities."

In Bortolin's (2010) research, respondents stated that homosexuality was never brought up by teachers in school, regardless of whether the school was public or Catholic. If it was brought up by students, teachers would shift to another topic and not really address the question. Sometimes, physical education teachers would even make a joke about it. A religion teacher at a Catholic school, according one respondent, "bashed 'em [homosexuals] . . . He basically said everything about, 'They should all go die of AIDS' things like that'" (p. 214). In this light, tension, feelings of exclusion, devaluation, and loneliness resulting from discerning others' views (whether individual or institutional) as hostile and socially distancing are certainly understandable as GBM youth become aware of the nature of their difference.

Interpersonal. According to Uribe and Harbeck (1992), gay youth describe the process of coming out with no social support as intensely distressing. Many gay youth exploring their sexual identity feel they cannot turn to their families, peers, teachers, physicians, or religious

leaders for support. Unlike ethnic minority youth, sexual minority youth usually do not have a

parent to turn to for advice and support who has been through their own process. Research

conducted in the local context (i.e., Windsor, Ontario) has indicated that heterosexual male high

school students fear associating with gay male classmates because they fear being seen as gay

and because they fear they might be "hit on" (Bortolin, 2010, p. 200). Many gay and lesbian

teachers and administrators are unable to reveal their sexual identity for fear of harassment,

getting fired, or being accused of recruiting or sexual exploitation (Lyons & Atwood, 1994;

Rotheram-Borus & Langabeer, 2001; Sanford, 1989; Uribe & Harbeck, 1992). However, some

teachers are willing to speak out against harassing language:

> One notable teacher (at a Catholic high school [in Windsor, Ontario]) was said to actually
>
> educate students as to their improper use of the term "gay"—he would stop them in the
>
> halls and tell them not to equate the term "homosexual" with something that is stupid, or
>
> "lame." According to the respondent, this teacher was well liked in the school.
>
> (Bortolin, 2010, p. 215)

In the main, however, discussions about homosexuality (and therefore homophobia) are absent or

only take place limitedly in connection with the life-threatening disease, AIDS. Beyond those

classroom discussions and in the official curriculum, homosexuality, as an educational topic, is

notably absent.

Intrapersonal. An often repeated theme in research on GBM youth are early experiences

of feeling different, at the time experienced through the lens of gender and retrospectively as an

early sign of their sexual identity or developing sexual orientation. Their earliest

phenomenological experience is a sense of difference or otherness, isolation from those who feel

similarly, messages that homoerotic feelings are worthy of shame. In response, many, with good

reason, withdraw or try to act straight. These reactions reduce the possibility of linking up with social support and leave the individual even more isolated and painted into a corner.

About the Research

This research endeavour was one that is academic; about a particular group, a community, and set of individuals; and very personal. I have attempted to situate the topic, the sexual minority group, and the community within the research literature and local context. It is appropriate that I also situate myself theoretically, personally, and socially--lest my particular perspectives come off as bias obscured through the authorial invisibility and objective tone encouraged by the discursive techniques often used in social scientific writing. In this light, let me tell you a little about myself.

The researcher. I was born and grew up in St. Paul, Minnesota. I am White and grew up in a working-class neighbourhood of apartment complexes with families headed by single mothers. I first began to realize I was gay at around 11 and I was sure of it by the time I was 13. I was not particularly feminine, nor was I particularly masculine. I was somewhere in between. In short, like some of the participants in Savin-Williams' (1998), I "wasn't like a girl" and "I wasn't like a boy."

I first came out to a friend when I was 14 while I was attending a non-residential, all male, Catholic military school in Minnesota. By the time I was 16, my sexual identity was no longer a secret, but I encountered very few problems as it was a very tight-knit school. When I was 16, I became active in a social support group for LGBT teens in Minneapolis. Our group was one of those that had been recruited in the 1991 Remafedi study on gay and bisexual youth and suicide. I was a participant and the experience intrigued me as I had already had an interest in pursuing psychology. It made me realize that there was room to study gay and lesbian issues

within the field, and so I made that my plan. I continued with another social support group at my college, which eventually became not only very political but also one of the largest groups on campus by my final year. We became activists. We went from a quiet group of four to over 120 members. I helped recruit more participants for the Remafedi study when I went there. Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota had a very open and accepting atmosphere, and I took full advantage of it by finding a gay angle of study in most of the courses I took. I also discovered the burgeoning field of the history of sexuality and the theoretical perspective of social constructionism, which tempered the presentist bent that an ahistorical psychology initially imparted.

I originally came to Windsor in 1992 to pursue graduate studies in Applied Social Psychology with a research focus on the history of sexuality and gay and lesbian issues and was lucky enough to be able to work with an extremely learned faculty member before his retirement and several other brilliant professors from a variety of disciplines who worked on and researched gay and lesbian issues. Unfortunately in the late 1990s, I experienced a series of brutal homophobic physical assaults, one of which left me with a metal plate and six bolts in my arm and the other which left me unconscious in a parking lot with a facial scar and a large calcified lump on my skull. In the first case, the police investigation was not particularly thorough or rigorous and the second I never reported due to the futility of reporting the first. My graduate career was suspended, so I went to work teaching on contract at the university. Although I had already been very active in the gay and lesbian community through several working groups, I stepped up my community engagement wherever I could, joining the Service Alliance for Equality (SAFE), which sought to provide resources and training for people in organizations that, knowingly or unknowingly, worked with LGBT youth and their families.

I eventually landed a health promotion and community education job at the AIDS Committee of Windsor, where I was lucky enough to be able to co-facilitate the Young & Proud social support group. For three years, we supported each other and shared our stories on the trials, tribulations, and wonderful experiences of becoming and being LGBT. The job also allowed me to do educational training on LGBTIQ issues, work with committees with the same goals, and meet even more people, of all types and ages, in the community. The year after the Windsor Pride festival was cancelled, a group of my friends made the move to revamp it, and I joined them in their efforts to bring back the festival and the organization with plans to make it "more than just a party in the park." We wanted to use the money generated from the festival to fund support services, programs, and open up a community centre. Two years ago, Windsor Pride Community opened the first LGBTIQ community centre in the region and I am proud to have played a very small part in it.

Ontologically, I am pretty sure there exists a physical reality outside of our attempts to know it. Epistemologically, I think that our various attempts to know and our particular vantage point only reveal it to us in part. After all, a model of something is not that something (like Magritte's "Ceci n'est pas une pipe")—it is just a model, but it could be a model that might be useful. At one point, I was an extremely ardent proponent of qualitative methods. Over the years and from teaching a variety of courses, I've become more eclectic, seeing value and deficiencies in any theoretical perspective or methodology. Now I am probably more of a pragmatist who views methods as tools and is always glad to have an array of choices depending on the job. Over the years my theoretical perspectives have shifted from psychoanalysis, Skinnerian behaviourism, Freudo-Marxism, to symbolic interactionism and social constructionism. While never an essentialist, I now see a lot of value in an interactionist

perspective when it comes to matters of human sexuality. As a student of social psychology, I am generally more initially drawn to social explanations, but I would never deny that we exist and participate in a social context as biological creatures with bodies. If sexuality is biologically determined, why does it manifest itself in so many different forms? If it is totally and completely socially constructed, why is it that only certain patterns—rather than infinite variations—always seem to pop up over time and place? I do not really see the forces described by these two theoretical perspectives as at odds with one another nor their effects as merely additive; rather they function together to produce results that are multiplicative and more than the sum of their parts. The components of a mechanical pocket watch lying in isolation on a table will not keep time, but assembled and interacting with each other in a particular way they can.

One example of this kind of interactionism with biological and social factors and described by Hyde, DeLameter, and Bryers (2012) is Daryl Bem's (1996) Exotic Becomes Erotic theory. Bem posits that biological factors (i.e., genes, prenatal hormones, and brain neuroanatomy) do not directly determine sexual orientation, but influence childhood temperament and lead to the preference for sex-typical or sex-atypical friends and activities. The result is that the child feels different from same-sex peers, who become unfamiliar and exotic and provoke a general autonomic arousal. This general arousal becomes increasingly eroticized and specified, leading to the development of a same-sex sexual orientation.

Like the participants, I have now lived in Windsor for about half my life, and it is a community of people to which I have grown much attached. Beyond just the currently popular platitude of "it gets better" (It Gets Better Project, 2011), I have seen a lot of hard working people effect some amazing and transformative changes in this city and region. It is my hope that I am able to do what I can to help with those efforts to make Windsor and Essex County a

supportive incubator of its LGBTIQ youth, a great place to be queer, and a place where no one of any age feels they do not have support, someone, or someplace to turn for help at the times when they need it the most.

Reflexivity. Charmaz (2006, p. 188) defines reflexivity as:

[T]he researcher's scrutiny of his or her research experience, decisions, and interpretations in ways that bring the researcher into the process and allow the reader to assess how and to what extent the researcher's interests, positions, and assumptions influenced inquiry. A reflexive stance informs how the researcher conducts his or her research, relates to the research participants, and represents them in written reports.

Especially, being a member of the community, I knew that I was part of the social world that I was investigating.

In both the process of interviewing and going over the transcribed interviews to code them, I endeavoured to maintain an internal dialogue where I questioned what I know and how I came to know it (Berg, 2007). I reminded myself to maintain an empathic stance whereby I appreciate what I was being told rather than correct it—even if I might disagree with what I was being told. In the coding process, this was assisted by making notes of my subjective reactions with memoing notes attached to the categories or nodes. A significant part of this process was trying to see if there were alternate explanations to my initial reactions and understandings of the data and critically evaluating which explanation appeared to be more plausible. One way this was accomplished was by searching the transcriptions for negative instances of the emerging patterns (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Another way I attempted to be reflective occurred early on in the research design process where, in developing the interview protocol questions, I answered them for myself (Bernard & Ryan, 2010). While this had been mainly to make sure

the questions made sense and had a logical flow, it ultimately helped by providing insight into

my own understandings and experiences. As one example, my own reflection as to how I

thought HIV/AIDS had impacted my life came from having been alive and going through my

coming out process before HIV/AIDS had been discovered. My participants' lives had been

different. In their lives, HIV/AIDS had always been a reality.

My past readings in social constructionism imparted the understanding that a researcher

can never really capture the essence of another's viewpoint (Geertz, 1973). Rather, the

researcher constructs an interpretation of what she or he thinks the research participant is saying.

It is a best guess and limited, but one rooted in the social lives of the participants and informed

by the surrounding text constructed, together, in the interview process and then, again, in the

interpretation (Esterberg, 2002).

Narrative and analysis. One of the consistent issues in dealing with narrative data is the

question of what the data really are. It is an important question, one that researchers who employ

qualitative methods should ask of themselves. It often occurs when the question of the veracity

of a text or a story is raised (Clandinn & Connelly, 2000). Did the events related actually occur?

How does either the story teller or the listener really know? According to Parker (2005, p. 82):

> Narrative research does not discover what the empirical truth is, but rather how someone
>
> makes sense of an event that they may have had some difficulty in describing so that it
>
> becomes true to them. . . . perhaps the appearance of something incomprehensible, and
>
> the attempt to make sense of it by integrating it into narrative, is the closest qualitative
>
> research can get to the 'the real'.

Narrative inquiry assumes that we construct our realities, and ourselves, through the

telling and retelling of stories (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). These tellings are said to function,

not only as a way to understand our self, but also to construct a sense of that self. Stories always

involve a selection and emphasis of some events and interpretations to the exclusion of others in

the context of an interaction with a teller and an audience (Esterberg, 2002). With a different

audience, variations in selection and emphasis will most likely occur. A different teller, with

different experience and vantage point, will most likely tell a different story. Given these

factors:

> You can never hope, then, that any particular story (or any analysis of it) will tell "the"
>
> one truth. In conducting a narrative analysis, your goal is to try to interpret the possible
>
> meanings of the narrative. Thus you hope that the analysis is plausible. (Esterberg,
>
> 2002, p. 195)

In that light, Reissman (1993) suggests that narrative analyses be evaluated in terms of their

persuasive power, their correspondence to the tellers' understandings, their coherence, and their

utility, while the narrative itself "is the performance of the self as a story of identity" (Parker,

2005, p. 71).

Research focus. The current project explored the experience of forming a stigmatized

cultural identity within a particular social and historical context. Without proposing a static and

universal process, an understanding of the ways in which stigmatized identities are constructed

and experienced in a particular context will help to formulate a more complex understanding of

both human agency and the process of identity formation. The general question this research

sought to answer is, "What is it like growing up as a gay or bisexual male in Windsor and Essex

County?" In order to answer that question, other questions arose from a review of the literature.

Do GBM youth in Windsor follow a particular general developmental progression like the one

suggested by Savin-Williams' (1998) model? Do GBM youth in Windsor experience the issues

problematized in the literature? If so, what are those patterns of common experiences, at what ages do they occur, and what are some of the instigating, moderating, and transforming influences?

In light of the admonitions given by Savin-Williams (1998, 2005) that a sole focus on generalized common experiences can work to create a difference-erasing, monolithic impression, other balancing questions are important to ask. Within and outside of these common experiences, how much variability occurs and what are some of the idiosyncratic events experienced socially, interpersonally, and intrapersonally by some, only a few, or even by just an individual? For this reason, I utilized Savin-Williams' (1998) trajectory model with specific attention to the three contexts in which he and other researchers see the formation and experience of a sexual identity occurring. Attention to contextual influences is important for both understanding the experiences of GBM youth and postulating ways in which the cultural context could be changed or enhanced that could help enhance their well-being.

The recently progressive Canadian context and increased efforts in Windsor provided a fascinating opportunity to examine how the formation and experience of a sexual identity might be affected by national and local cultures that are making more efforts to be inclusive and less heterosexist. Most of the research in English to this date has concerned the experiences of adult gay and lesbian people in large, urban, and coastal cities in the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom. Through the use of an online and primarily quantitative survey, the current study collected data from GBM youth living in Windsor and Essex County to create a general picture of the experience of growing up gay or bisexual in Windsor and Essex County. Survey questions collected demographic data as well as information about the age at which each milestone in the Savin-Williams was met, earlier and current comparisons with others, whether

or not problematic issues described in the literature have been experienced and at what ages, the

extent of disclosure and levels of openness with a variety of audiences, and some general open-

ended questions. By interviewing local GBM youth, taking their words, and placing them into

interpretive context, the current study endeavoured to present an experiential portrait of what

growing up gay or bisexual is like in this physical, temporal, and social context. In doing so, I

wanted to capture some of the participants' unique and common experiences, both their

difficulties and resilience.

         With these things in mind, it was hoped that the results of this study would be of use to

local social service providers, community groups, and educational organizations who deal with

GBM youth, or who recognize that they need to be more informed and conscientious about

dealing with GBM youth. Working with local organizations and their employees over several

years, I was impressed with how much they wanted to help and how thirsty they were for local

data. It was also hoped that that the results could be used to inform local diversity training

programming and resource materials to not only give a general sense of the experiences of GBM

youth, but also the specific; individuals' narratives can be powerful tools in promoting

heightened consciousness, understanding, and compassion. Having designed and run workshops,

given invited presentations, and lectured on the topic clearly showed me the power of sharing

personal stories to drive more abstract concepts home, make them memorable, and illustrate their

importance. Last, it was hoped that the presented data would be useful to local social service

providers, community groups, and educational organizations pursuing funding and grants to

address local gaps in services and programming. Being familiar with the writing and necessity

of grants to provide programming and interventions, I know the importance of having local,

baseline data to build a stronger case when there is need.

Hypotheses. The following section first outlines hypotheses related to data collected in the online survey. The survey methodology was designed and used to attempt to describe quantitatively the experience of growing up as a GBM in Windsor by capturing information about the age and order of occurrence of the milestones proposed in Savin-Williams' trajectory model of GBM identity development and the issues problematized in the literature. Furthermore, the survey collected information regarding Savin-Williams's proposed poles of similarity/dissimilarity (to others, boys, and girls) found in Savin-William's data to moderate the age of occurrence of those milestones. Hypotheses have been generated regarding how comparable such experiences and moderating influences are in the current sample versus in the previous literature.

Online quantitative survey. As Savin-Williams (1998, 2005) and many others have pointed out, GBM youth tend to experience common milestones in the process of becoming aware and making sense of their sexual feelings and forming their sexual identity—and they are doing so at earlier ages. Again, the milestone firsts reported by Savin-Williams (1998) are, in order: attractions, labelling feelings and attractions, sex with a male, sex with a female, self-labelling, disclosure, romance male, and self-acceptance as gay (or bisexual). If contextual forces and shifts do indeed impact the development of a sexual identity, there may be differences in the general developmental progression through milestone events. Given that the wider societal and, in particular, the Canadian context has become more accepting over the decade (as evidenced by legal reforms and shifts in attitude), combined with this increasing visibility of LGBT people, organizations, and cultural products, the ages of hitting sexual identity milestones should currently exhibit the decades long trend of occurring at earlier ages.

While the timing of certain milestones, especially those that are more intrapersonal like unexpressed attractions, may not change that much, those that are more interpersonal, like disclosure, should change the most and in the direction of occurring earlier. I hypothesized that these interpersonal milestones would be more susceptible to wider changes in social context with respect to acceptability and generations becoming increasingly more tolerant, accepting, and even celebratory. Because these generational shifts in attitude, I bifurcated disclosure by audience into disclosure to friends and family, hypothesizing that, in the main, disclosure to friends would occur first and then proceed to family members.

In his own research, Savin-Williams (1998) found gender a/typicality also had an influence in the timing of milestone events, with those who were "like a girl" going through them earlier, followed by those who were "not like a boy" and then by those who were "like a boy." Within the local context of Windsor and Essex County, I hypothesized that these engendered comparisons would most likely continue to hold true in terms of their effect on milestone ages. Indeed, a growing sense of being different from other people and other males is almost always cited as a major part of instigating the process of identity formation. Conversely, I hypothesized that evaluations of similarity to females and other gay and bisexual males would also be related to reaching milestone ages earlier.

Earlier and current comparisons with others. Sex, gender, and sexual identity are related, but researchers like Savin-Williams have posited that it is not in the way once promulgated by supporters of the inversion hypothesis. That is, engendered behaviour considered atypical for one's sex does not necessarily lead to homosexuality per se, but can lead to the earlier labelling by others (often through harassment), recognition and adoption of a gay or bisexual identity, its earlier disclosure to others, and passing through the other milestones at

earlier ages. If gendered expression is more of a moderating variable, with respect to the age of

reaching milestones and the occurrence of harassment, those who identify more similarity with

females and dissimilarity with other males should self-label, disclose, have sex earlier, etc. and

experience harassment more than those who see themselves as equally similar and dissimilar to

males and females. Those who see themselves as most similar to other males and dissimilar to

females should reach milestones later and report experiencing less harassment. Such similarity-

dissimilarity comparisons are not necessarily static. I hypothesized that initial feelings of

difference and dissimilarity from others, other males, females, and other GBM, would decrease

over time most likely due to more interactions with more people, disclosure experiences, and

meeting more LGBT people (as feelings of isolation give way to feelings of belonging). I also

suspected that these shifts might not be extremely drastic, as more contact with more people can

often lead to a greater appreciation of the diversity in members of any particular group.

     In order to assess self-perceived differences and similarities, I planned on asking

respondents to assess how they compared to other people, males, females, and other gay and

bisexual males both earlier and currently in their lives. To see how these four earlier and later

comparisons were related to each other and to assist with interpretation, exploratory correlation

matrices were to be calculated as a preliminary analysis.   One reason for doing this was to see

how the subgroup (i.e., other males, females, and other GBMs) comparison ratings were each

related to the ratings of the generalized category of "other people" and each other.

     Milestones. Identity formation occurs in and is influenced by internal (intrapersonal),

proximal (interpersonal), and distal (societal) contexts (Savin-Williams, 1998). While an

individual is always within and influenced by these contexts, one or a combination of levels can

be more or less salient at any particular time. For example, having a private attraction toward

someone is clearly intrapersonal, but it is also still interpersonal at least in terms of there being

another person and societal in terms of understanding that it is an attraction and what that means.

Table 1 presents an overview of the milestones adapted from those proposed by Savin-Williams

and under examination in the current sample.

Table 1: Milestones, Significant Others Experienced with, Sphere of Occurrence, and Types of Questions Asked in Order to Generate Hypotheses about Trajectory Model					
Milestone & significant others		Sphere of occurrence (X) or influence (~)			Questions
Milestone	Significant other	Intra-personal	Inter-personal	Social	Type asked
		Internal	Proximal	Distal	
1st Attraction	Female	X	~	~	Y/N & Age
1st Attraction	Male	X	~	~	Y/N & Age
1st Self-Labelling		X	~	~	Y/N & Age
1st Sex	Female		X		Y/N & Age
1st Sex	Male		X		Y/N & Age
1st Disclosure	Friend		X	~	Y/N & Age
1st Disclosure	Family		X	~	Y/N & Age
1st Love	Female	X	X		Y/N & Age
1st Love	Male	X	X		Y/N & Age
1st Romance	Female		X		Y/N & Age
1st Romance	Male		X		Y/N & Age

In order to hypothesize how the timing and order of milestones would be affected by shifts in

context, I used the categories of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and societal to conceptually

categorize the various milestones in terms of what context(s) would be most salient or influential

(though not to the complete exclusion of any of the others). Questions as to whether or not a

milestone event had occurred and at what age were deemed critical in testing the generated

hypotheses.

Attractions. In the main, I hypothesized that first attractions would come first for

most and, being mostly intrapersonal (at least initially), may be more highly influenced by

biological and hormonal than social factors. Keeping in mind the findings with respect to

adrenarche and gonardarche, I speculated that first attractions should occur at an average age of 10 or 11, with lower reports occurring much earlier. I divided attraction into male and female attractions.   If such attractions are more influenced by biological and hormonal factors, I hypothesized that there would be no difference in the ages of first attractions to females and males in those who experienced both and that they would vary together.   If attractions are more socially influenced, I hypothesized that attractions toward females would occur sooner than those toward males as they are more socially acceptable, supported, assumed, visible in the wider culture and publicly displayed by the heterosexuals around GBM youth.

Self-labelling. Next, I suspected that the intrapersonal milestone of labelling feelings and attractions leading to first thinking about oneself as gay or bisexual would on average occur after these attractions. While the act of self–labelling is internal, clearly the labels, meanings, and valences are still societal and often driven home by direct and indirect interpersonal interactions. With more public visibility of LGBT people, cultural products, and issues, I hypothesized that self-labelling would be reported at earlier ages and occur shortly after gonadarche (around 12 years old for boys) as feelings and attractions become more sexualized.

Sex. While sexual experiences with another (i.e., male or female) might lead to consolidation or increased commitment to a gay or bisexual identity, this intimate interpersonal interaction may not be as necessary as a prerequisite in the context under study, where and as described above, there has been a proliferation of LGBT visibility and access to online materials. For this reason, I postulated that (for those who had experienced sexual milestones), first sex might occur after first self-labelling. For those who had experienced the first sex milestones with both females and males, I hypothesized that first sex with a female would generally occur before first sex with a male, due to the influence of our largely heterocentric society. Savin-Williams

(1998) found the opposite order in his study, where 93% of his sample had experienced sex with

a male about a year earlier (at around 14) than the 52% who had sex with a female. If, as

hypothesized, first self-labelling is occurring increasingly earlier, I expected that a smaller

percentage of gay-identified youth would have experienced the milestone of first sex with a

female milestone in the current study and, by 15, would probably already be thinking about

themselves as gay if not already calling themselves gay. Of course, adoption of or commitment

to a gay identity does not necessarily preclude also having sex with women and the study also

included bisexuals, though I suspected that they might be represented in smaller numbers.

It seemed plausible that bisexual males would, if they had experienced them, go through

milestone events that involved women (i.e., attraction to a female, love with a female, romantic

relationship with a female, and sex with a female) sooner than those with males. The basis for

thinking this way was that these events are generally viewed as more social acceptable than

when they are experienced with a male. For that same reason, I did not hypothesize that they

would go through milestone events sooner than the gay males that also had experienced them.

Disclosure. Savin-Williams found that disclosure occurred at around the age of

18 with friends and then about a year later with family and occurred after first sex and first self-

labelling. I hypothesized that the mostly interpersonal act of first disclosure to another would

also follow first sex with another or occur earlier after first self-labelling. Based on the premise

that in this increasingly more tolerant social context with attitudes toward homosexuality

becoming more accepting, both in general and among younger cohorts, an interpersonal

milestone like disclosure is hypothesized to occur earlier on average. Given that younger people

are generally more accepting, I posited that the order of disclosing to friends and then to family

would probably still hold true, but that the time between them might shrink as the attitudes of a

cohort of parents more contemporary than those in the Savin-Williams' sample should be at least slightly more tolerant and accepting.

Love. Savin-Williams did not report asking about love outside of asking about romantic relationships but, since first loves are usually very memorable to and profound for people, I wanted to know when these were experienced. Additionally, a first love can be very intrapersonal in that it can be kept private, where a first romantic relationship is decidedly more interpersonal as it necessitates the participation of another person. Again, due to differences in social acceptability, I believed that first love with females would precede first love with males in the general developmental progression, but that fewer participants would have experienced first love with a female than those who had experienced it with a male.

Romantic relationships. Though Savin-Williams found first same-sex romance occurred between disclosing to another and to family, I hypothesized that these disclosures might occur more closely together making first romantic relationships (with a male) occur later, relatively speaking. Again, I separated first romantic relationships by sex and reasoned that first relationships with females, if they occurred at all, would occur earlier than those with other males for the reasons given in the discussion of the other milestones that I bifurcated by sex. Being an interpersonal milestone, though intimate and sometimes not publicly shared, it seemed likely that the age of first romantic relationship would occur at an earlier average age.

Positive sexual identity. Finally, Savin-Williams asked his respondents when they had achieved a positive sexual identity. Although I endeavoured to stay close to the milestones he posited and asked about, I did not include this question. Beyond being assessed at one time using a value-laden scale, coming to a positive sexual identity seemed more like a life-long process, varying in quality as salient issues change over time, and something better discussed in

the context of an interview. Part of this understanding also came from working with the LGBT

seniors' group at Windsor Pride. In sum, I was trying to avoid some of the criticisms that were

levelled against Cass's (1979, 1983/4, 1984) use of a *final* stage of identity synthesis. I also

expected that this would emerge in the interview process.

 Issues problematized in the literature. The online survey also sought to gather

information designed to answer the research question regarding whether and how GBM in

Windsor and Essex County were experiencing the various issues that have been problematized in

the literature, as described above. Table 2 provides an overview of the issues covered, the types

of questions asked to gather information on these issues, as well as the contexts considered to be

relevant for each issue.

Table 2: Issues, Sub-Issues, Sphere of Occurrence, and Types of Questions Asked in Order to Generate Hypotheses about Issues Problematized in the Literature					
Issues Problematized in the Literature		Sphere of occurrence (X) or influence (~)			Questions
Issue	Sub-Question	Intra-personal	Inter-personal	Social	Type Asked
		Internal	Proximal	Distal	
Harassment					
	School?		X	~	Y/N, Age, & Related?
	Ever?		X	~	Y/N, Age, & Related?
	Affect Where Go & Act?	X	X	X	Y/N
HIV/AIDS					
	Affect Life?	X	X	~	Y/N
	First Tested?	X	X		Y/N & Age
	Status?	X	X	~	Serostatus
Homelessness					
	Homeless?		X	~	Y/N, Age, & Related?
Mood Altering Substances					
	Use?	X	X		Y/N & Age
Depression					

	Felt really down?	X	~	~	Y/N, Age, & Related?
Suicide					
	Suicidal Thoughts?	X			Y/N, Age, & Related?
	Suicide Attempt?	X			Y/N, Age, & Related?
Sex Trade					
			X		Y/N

Harassment. One of the areas that Savin Williams (1998) found to be most affected by gender a/typicality was that of harassment. I hypothesized that those GBMs who saw themselves as most dissimilar to other people and other males, especially, would report more harassment than those who did not and at younger ages. I also hypothesized that those who saw themselves as more similar to females and other GBMs would report more harassment and, again, at younger ages.

HIV/AIDS. With respect to HIV/AIDS, I hypothesized that the respondents would perceive that HIV/AIDS had impacted their lives--though this is coming from the perspective of a researcher where HIV/AIDS was unknown during his childhood.

Homelessness. As homelessness can be an issue for many GBM youth, I wanted to see if any youth had reported being homeless and if it was related to their sexual identity. As many parents can have difficulty with their child's coming out and being gay or bisexual, I expected some to report that their being homeless was related to their sexual identities. Some youth in the youth groups that I facilitated had been kicked out of their homes when their parents found out about their sexual identities.

Mood altering substances. The greater use of mood altering substances by GBM youth has been indicated in the literature, but I was curious as to the extent of their use by local

GBMs. Again, from facilitating the youth group and the literature, I expected that the majority would report some use of mood altering substances.

Depression and suicide While many adolescents experience depression and suicidal thoughts, I wanted to know what proportion was related to GBMs' sexual identities and what proportion lead to suicide attempts. Because it is frequently mentioned in the literature and from my facilitation experiences, I expected some GBM to both report depression, suicidal thoughts, and suicide attempts and that they were related to their sexual identities.

Sex trade. I also hypothesized that GBMs who reported having been homeless would also report participating in the sex trade more often than those who did not.

Semi-structured, in-person interview. While traditional hypotheses are not entirely customary in qualitative work, my past research focus, life experiences, and facilitating a weekly LGBT youth group for three years in Windsor meant that I was not approaching the current study entirely naively. I expected a lot of the GBMs to face struggles early on in their development and contemporary difficulties with parents, friends, loves, dating, and school, for example. I also knew there would probably be positive stories of victories and comfort in those same areas.

Earlier and current comparisons with others. I expected that some of my participants may be flamboyant and describe gender unconventionality currently and in their youth. I expected them to have come out earlier and probably faced more harassment and most likely at school. I also expected that there would be some "that you would never suspect," who likely came out later. Some of those might talk about the others, "giving us a bad name," and I would have to hold my tongue and just listen, while others, in that same set, would take a more supportive "different strokes for different folks" perspective. In terms of gender presentation, I

also expected there to be GBMs in between. I expected to see class differences, too, not only in terms of self-presentation, but in their discourse and language.

Milestones. Although Savin-Williams (2005) has more recently talked about "post gay" youth who evade labels and evince a more fluid sexuality, I did not really expect that to be a major part of the participant pool, though I tried to be open to the intriguing possibility and in designing the methodology and trying to keep it as open as possible. I expected their narratives generally to be more essentialist than my own views (thanks in small part to Lady Gaga and "Born This Way"). I also expected technology and the Internet to be as persistent a presence in their narratives as it was in the youth group where I would have to tell them to put their devices away while other people were talking. After all, it is through these constant electronic companions that they meet and keep in touch with each other (whether friends, lovers, dates, or sex partners) and get information from the outside world.

Issues problematized in the literature. In addition to some describing harassment and others not, I expected some stories to describe problems at various times and to different degrees, partly because I chose the questions, but also because of what local youth had chosen to talk about in youth group: parties with drug and alcohol use; feeling down and sometimes like giving up; fighting with or being kicked out by their parents; and wanting to leave Windsor for bigger, more exciting climes. I also expected narratives to have contents with the opposite valence. Both the participants and their stories were likely to be a diverse bunch.

METHOD

The current research uses a mixed method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods. Because of the nature of the sample (e.g., unknown population size, lack of much pre-existing local data, and difficulty accessing less open or closeted GBMs), the mixed

methods approach was deemed preferable to either a completely quantitative or completely

qualitative approach in order compensate for the limitations of each method on its own. An

online survey was used to maximize the number of participants (especially to reach those youth

who were closeted or not part of the gay community) and provide a basic, general picture of the

experiences of growing up gay or bisexual in Windsor and Essex County. The semi-structured,

qualitative interview of some of the online survey participants was designed to capture some of

the context, depth, and variation of the experiences of local GBM youth.

The mixed methods approach adopted was Creswell's (2006) sequential explanatory

design. In this method, quantitative data are collected first, analyzed, and then used to inform the

subsequent collection of qualitative data to either explain or add depth to the quantitative results.

This version of the design is known as the follow-up explanations model. Because all online

survey respondents who met the inclusion criteria were given the opportunity to participate in the

semi-structured, in-person interview on a first come, first serve basis, the follow-up explanations

model of sequential exploratory design best describes the procedure that was utilized. The

survey program used, called FluidSurveys, generates graphical reports, and so response patterns

were examined on a weekly basis before interviews were conducted in order see what lines of

questioning to pursue more deeply in the interview phase.

Given my theoretical inclination toward the social, I endeavoured to make sure I did not

lose sight of individual and internal processes by consciously building in a focus on the

intrapersonal for balance. I relied on multiple and conflicting researchers and their perspectives

to more broadly frame this research endeavour and determine the questions asked. Most of these

questions led to rather factual responses, i.e., did something happen or not and at what age? I

used the aggregate data from the online survey and interviewees' individual responses to guide

the questioning in the in-person interview. I consciously reminded myself that even if I thought I

knew their stories, I really only knew a part, but still realizing that, in the interview setting, the

narratives were being dialectically constructed together. I was also conscious that, as the

researcher, it was not an interaction completely devoid of power. Through my position as the

researcher, I had some privilege -- not only that of receiving their stories, but status; after all,

though guided by previous research, I had chosen the questions.   Through the gift of their

stories, the participants had some power, too.

        Since the questions had been already developed by me from my review of the literature, I

reminded myself to at least interfere as little as possible with their responses. I endeavoured to

maintain a nonjudgmental attitude by doing more listening while being supportive, though not

overly enthusiastic, while the interviewed youth told their stories and explained their viewpoints

in their responses, which did not always coincide with my own. I tried to see the differences in

what might look like similarities with my own story and vice versa.

        Some of the youth I knew from the Young & Proud group participated in the survey

portion of the present study and, while none of them participated in the interviews, I know some

of the interviewees' friends. Having been away from the group for three years, there were also a

lot of participants whom I have never met, do not know, or only know tangentially by name or

face. I knew six of the eight interview participants before the interview. Two of the interview

participants I've worked with on community projects through organizations with which I have

been affiliated, and I know their stories. One of those I know personally and very well. Four of

the interviewees I know from seeing them around the city or being introduced briefly by mutual

friends. Two interviewees I neither knew nor had ever seen before. As interviewees related in

their narratives, Windsor's gay community is much like a tight-knit small town—even if you

have not met someone, there is a good chance you know at least her or his first name. Because this was a study of a community being conducted by a researcher who is also a member of the community, I knew it was unlikely that I would not know at least some of the respondents, their stories, or the people they talked about. On one hand, such a position can give one insight, but it can also be potentially blinding. As a practised interviewer, I tried to make sure I followed the interview protocol and reminded myself that, even if I thought I knew someone's story, there is always more to it or more stories I had not heard. Indeed, even with the interviewee who continues to be a good friend, I learned a lot I did not know and had never heard about before.

Quantitative Online Survey

     Participants.   In all, 139 males responded to the online survey, but 60 gave disqualifying answers regarding their sexual identity, age, or not living in Windsor or Essex County for at least half of their lives. Respondents who did not meet these criteria were screened out by the online survey. In the end, there were 79 qualifying male respondents ranging in age from 16-26 years, who described their sexual identities as gay or bisexual (with one "undecided"), and had lived in Windsor and Essex County for at least half of their lives. The data collected from disqualified participants were deleted. The undecided respondent was retained as he responded to a study of gay and bisexual youth and did not label himself as straight.

     A recruiting statement, poster, and a flyer (all in Appendix B) were used to contact prospective participants. The participants were recruited through the Internet (i.e., PlentyofFish.com, Manhunt.net, Squirt.org, and Gay.com), social media (i.e., Facebook), gay mobile phone applications (i.e., Bender, BoyAhoy, Grindr, Jack'd, Manhunt, Plenty of Fish, Scruff, and SKOUT), social networks, local youth social service agencies, gay-straight alliances,

support groups for GBM youth, and places frequented by youth (i.e., coffee shops, community centres, and bars). All potential participants were directed to a website (www.professormattson.com) that contained the recruitment statement (Appendix B), the Letter of Information (Appendix C), a copy of the recruitment flyer (Appendix B), the Community Resources List (Appendix C), and a link to the online survey (Appendix D). In addition, all qualified participants were given the opportunity to be entered into a draw for two prizes of $100 awarded at the conclusion of data collection. Those who did not meet the qualifications for participation, were excluded by the survey logic early on, taken to a termination page, and their contact information was not collected. The winner of the raffle draw was decided by an online random number generator.

　　Materials. The questions in the online survey (Appendix D) were developed and organized along the same tripartite conceptual framework (i.e., societal, interpersonal, and intrapersonal) that was applied to the contexts that affect a person's construction and experience of a GBM identity. Table 1, in the Hypotheses section, depicts the milestones used in the current study, the context in which they mainly occur or could be influenced by, and the types of questions asked. This table was used to generate hypotheses about milestones.

　　While pragmatic concerns precluded being able to construct a longitudinal study, questions were structured so as to highlight the developmental processes though which GBM are seen to go in previous research. The online survey also served the purpose of selecting potential interview participants who met the inclusion criteria of the study with respect to sexual identity (i.e., gay and bisexual males), age (i.e., 16-26 years of age), enculturation (i.e., having grown up and lived in Windsor for at least half of their lives), and the desire to participate in the in-person, semi-structured interview. The online survey protocol was pilot tested by the researcher

repeatedly before being piloted with two individuals who did not meet participation requirements. These two individuals and their responses to the online survey later helped with pilot testing the interview procedure and making sure the digital recording equipment worked.

The first part of the protocol consisted of demographic background questions (i.e., age, sex, place of birth and current residence, ethnicity and cultural background, language(s) known and used, religion, employment, sexual identity, and education). Respondents were asked in which school board(s) they attended schools and if they had experienced harassment in school. Next respondents were asked to assess how they compared to others. They were presented with a five point Likert scale and asked to make comparisons of dissimilarity and similarity with other salient groups of people their age (i.e., people in general, other males, females, and gay or bisexual males). The response categories on the Likert scale were: very dissimilar (1), mostly dissimilar (2), equally dissimilar and similar (3), mostly similar (4), and very similar (5). This question occurred twice in the survey, once to indicate earlier comparisons (i.e., "When you were younger, how do you think you compared to . . . your age?") and, again, to indicate current comparisons. The five point Likert scale was used in case the "very" and "mostly" ratings had to be collapsed (due to small cell sizes) for statistical analysis, resulting in the three categories of dissimilar, equally dissimilar and similar, and similar.

The online survey also asked for information in categories based on Savin-Williams' (1998) trajectory model. Participants were asked whether they had experienced the various milestone events (i.e., attractions, sex, disclosure, love, and romantic relationships) identified in the literature and at what age and in what order they had been first experienced. Similarly, questions were asked regarding whether or not the participant had experienced or engaged in the problematic events or activities (i.e., questions regarding harassment, HIV/AIDS, homelessness,

depressed affect, suicidal thoughts and behaviour, and participation in the sex trade) identified in the literature and at what initial ages (with the exception of the sex trade question). Table 2, in the Hypotheses section, depicts the issues used in the current study, how they were categorized in terms of which context they mainly occur or could be influenced by, and the types of questions asked. Again, this table was mainly used to generate hypotheses about these problematized issues and may be useful to the reader. A question regarding the number of LGBT friends was included to act as an indicator of immersion in the gay community.

The next set of questions concerned coming out and disclosure processes. The Outness Inventory scale (Mohr & Fassinger, 2000) was included in the online survey to measure the extent and depth of disclosure to significant others in different spheres of life. In addition to overall outness, the inventory contains three subscales that were validated and supported by factor analysis in Mohr and Fassinger's study. These subscales are outness to world, family, and religion. In their own research to develop the Outness Inventory, Mohr and Fassinger found that the items relating to religion were only answered by about half of the gay and lesbian people they surveyed. Mohr and Fassinger (p. 86) advise that others may use the full scale or individual subscales depending on their research questions because "the three factors were found to load on a second order factor that represented general level of outness."

The last part of the online survey protocol contained questions eliciting open-ended responses. Respondents were asked when they first realized and what convinced them that they were gay or bisexual, and if there was anything about their life or experiences being gay or bisexual in Windsor and Essex County that they felt was important. The final question solicited interest in participating in the in-person, semi-structured interview which led either to their creating a unique participant code and being taken to the first and then the second landing page

(for interview and raffle participation) or to just to the second landing page (for raffle participation only).

      Procedure. After securing clearance from the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board, participants were recruited in the manner described above. Recruitment occurred over a three month period from December 2011 to March 2012. Participation began upon accessing the online survey. After an initial page soliciting consent to participate, participants were asked to respond to the screening questions regarding the inclusion criteria of the study. Those whose responses disqualified them from participating (i.e., not consenting to or understanding the background information for the study, identifying as "straight," not being 16-26 years of age, or not living in Windsor or Essex County for at least half of their lives) were taken to an ending page which stated, "Based on the information you provided, you are not eligible for this survey. If you have arrived at this page in error, please return to the survey by using your browser's back button."

      Those participants whose answers qualified them were given access to the rest of the survey. At the end of the survey, respondents were asked if they wished to participate in the in-person, semi-structured interview. Those who indicated that they wished to participate were asked to create a unique participant code to link their data and then taken to Landing Page One: Interview Participation, which collected their contact information and unique participant code to link their survey responses. All participants were taken to Landing Page Two: Online Survey Raffle Participation and asked if they wished to participate in the raffle for one of two awards of $100. If they indicated that they wanted to participate in the raffle, their contact information was collected. After completing and submitting on the raffle page, all respondents were given the message, "Thank you for participating in this survey! All materials for this study, including

contact information and the Community Resource List, can be found at

www.professormattson.com." All collected data were secured and password protected with only

the researcher having access. The data residing on the secure university server were downloaded

into a spreadsheet format by the researcher onto a password protected computer. All data

residing on the server were deleted by the researcher at the conclusion of the study.

Analysis. Using SPSS and Q-Q Plots, data from continuous variables were screened for

abnormality, nonlinearity, heteroscedasticity, and outliers. The Q-Q Plot showed that responses

to the question of number of gay, bisexual, and trans friends were not normally distributed due to

some extreme outliers. Missing data were also examined. Responses to the online survey were

subjected to descriptive statistics procedures to generate means, standard deviations, ranges, and,

in the case of reported ages, modal responses. In addition, age data for milestones allowed for

the construction of a general developmental trajectory model specific to the current sample.

Hypothesized relationships between variables were tested using crosstabulations and chi-squares

and Phi and Cramer's V. Significant differences in means were assessed through t-tests and one-

way ANOVAs. Relationships between variables were also explored through Pearson product-

moment correlations.

The more open-ended responses to questions (i.e., those regarding what made

respondents first realize they were gay or bisexual, what convinced them they were gay or

bisexual, and if there was anything else they felt was important about their experiences being gay

or bisexual in Windsor-Essex County) were categorized using a simple content analysis

procedure and open coding. That is, related categories were subsumed under higher order

categories where possible and some statements were placed under multiple categories if their

content reflected more than one category. Tables were constructed to help the researcher with analysis and make the results more comprehensible.

Qualitative Semi-Structured, In-Person Interview

  Participants. Because the online survey screened out participants with disqualifying responses, all eight interview participants already fit the criteria of identifying as not straight, being 16-26 years old, and living in Windsor or Essex County for at least half of their lives. The eight interviewees were all White, gay, and ranged in age from 18-25.

  Forty-four online respondents indicated an interest in being interviewed. All of these respondents were contacted and given a link to the Interview Scheduling Page (Appendix D) in order to schedule an interview on a first come, first serve basis with the caveat that they might not be selected if another person had already signed up for the interview slot. All interview participants were offered $30 for their participation in addition to being able to participate in the online survey raffles. Of the 44 interested online respondents, 21 completed the required information on the Interview Scheduling Page. Twelve interviews were scheduled on a first come, first serve basis, with this number chosen as a benchmark to balance time constraints with methodological considerations regarding "saturation." According to Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006, pp. 59 & 65):

> Purposive samples are the most commonly used form of nonprobabilistic sampling, and
> their size typically relies on the concept of "saturation," or the point at which no new
> information or themes are observed in the data . . . Saturation can be of various types,
> with the most commonly written about form being "theoretical saturation."

Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 65) describe theoretical saturation as the point at which:

No additional data are being found whereby the (researcher) can develop properties of the category. As he [sic] sees similar instances over and over again, the researcher becomes empirically confident that a category is saturated . . . when one category is saturated, nothing remains but to go on to new groups for data on other categories, and attempt to saturate these categories also.

In their own experiment, Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) found that saturation occurred within 12 interviews (i.e., 92% of the total codes were created by the time they had analyzed a dozen interviews) though larger themes had emerged by six interviews. In previous research on gay identity in the 1930s, Minton and Mattson (1998) found that category saturation occurred at about 12-13 cases.

In all, nine of the 12 interviews were conducted. Of the three scheduled interviews that were not conducted, one participant failed to show up, one cancelled on the morning of the scheduled interview time, and one interview was cancelled shortly before being conducted. In the latter case, the participant indicated when confirming the interview time that he had just been diagnosed as HIV positive. It was mutually felt, given the topics covered in the interview, that he might be too vulnerable to participate. Of the nine interviews conducted, the interview data from one interviewee was removed from the analysis. On the survey he had indicated he was bisexual, however, during the interview he stated that he identified as straight although his sexual history was bisexual. With his exclusion, the data from eight interviews were used and analysed. Time constraints limited the scheduling of additional interviews and, balanced with the large number of online survey respondents, it was not deemed necessary. After the conclusion of the interview portion of the study, those who had responded to schedule an interview but were not

selected were sent an email thanking them for their interest but informing them that the study had concluded.

Materials. In order to help guide and anchor the semi-structured interview, a printout of each interviewee's responses to the online survey was reviewed before each interview. Each printout was annotated with notes to guide more in-depth questioning based on the interviewee's online survey responses and to make sure that all topics were covered in the interview. Using the materials this way was pilot tested with the two previously mentioned individuals who had pilot tested the online survey. Their responses to the online survey were also printed out and annotated for use in their interviews.

Procedure. Participants were interviewed in a setting of their choice. All chose to conduct the interview in the researcher's home. Upon arrival at the interview location, participants were first given a paper copy of both the Letter of Information and the Community Resource List to keep. After participants read the Letter of Information, were asked if they had any questions, and verbal consents were given and recorded, the interviews began. Recorded verbal consent was recommended by the Research Ethics Board in order to minimize threats to privacy by having paper consent forms. The annotated printout of the interviewee's responses to the online survey was used by the interviewer to guide the interview and in order to seek additional information about their responses. A digital recorder was used to record the interview for later transcription. All participants were assigned pseudonyms and were asked if they had particular ones that they would like used. Since no participants expressed any preference for a particular pseudonym, a random online name generator was used to assign them.

Analysis. The digitally recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim into a Microsoft Word 2010 document. In transcribing, pauses (indicated by ellipses and em dashes, in the case

of interrupted speech) and filler words were included (Bernard & Ryan, 2010). Additionally, laughter, sighing, crying and other behavioural actions by the interviewer or interviewee were indicated by being enclosed in brackets. Once complete, each transcription was uploaded into Nvivo 9 for coding and analysis.

The narrative analysis of the interviews was carried out in two consecutive steps: a descriptive analysis and an interpretive analysis (Minton & Mattson, 1998). The purpose of the descriptive analysis was to identify the most pervasive and relevant themes in the interviews with respect to the construction and experience of a homosexual or bisexual identity. In the interpretive analysis, the themes identified through the descriptive analysis were contextualized utilizing historical and theoretical sources to construct a story about the experiences of the particular group of young men. In sum, the descriptive analysis distilled common themes from stories while the interpretive analysis condensed these common themes under a core theme into an overarching story (Polkinghorne, 1988, 1994).

Descriptive analysis. The procedure utilized in the descriptive analysis was based on guidelines suggested in grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) and developed by McCracken (1991), Rennie, Phillips, and Quartaro (1988), and Rennie (1992). The role of a hermeneut, or interpreter, is to descriptively condense content and construe meaning (Kvale, 1983) and the procedure adopted was designed to do this in successive steps while using the original interview for constant comparison.

Step 1: The identification of meaning units. Rennie and colleagues (1988, p. 142) define meaning units as the "individual concepts conveyed by interviewees." Each utterance (in this case, the interviewer's question and, separately, the interviewee's answer) was inputted into Nvivo and treated as a separate meaning unit.

Step 2: The creation of categories. Each meaning unit was read and coded twice for categories (or, what are called in Nvivo, "nodes"). The relationship between connected or similar meaning units was recorded as a category. A category refers to a description of content that is coherent across meaning units, and its name should closely reflect the language used by the participant. The relational connection existing between meaning units can be one of similarity or contradiction. Meaning units may also be grouped under more than one category or cluster. For this reason, the process is known as open categorization. The categories (or nodes) to which a meaning unit belongs were indexed by Nvivo.

Step 3: The creation of case specific themes. The third stage of descriptive analysis involved focusing attention away from the main body of the interview and on to the categories. Nvivo utilizes a node organizing system that allows the researcher to indicate relationships among categories or nodes. These interconnected categories result, conceptually, in the generation of a more complex formation (or "themes"). The original text was consulted as a way to further confirm or disconfirm the evolving connections between categories in order to further confirm the themes gradually emerging within each case.

Lower order themes or categories that could be subsumed into a superordinate theme became an example or property of the higher order theme. For example, if an early attraction toward a male appeared to feed into the development of a sexual identity and to have homosexual meaning or relevance to his homosexual identity, then this attraction would be subsumed under "sexual identity." The categories were then analyzed collectively for consistent or contradictory patterns. This was accomplished by elaborating the general themes (or most centrally/densely connected categories) suggested by each cluster of categories, using the best formulation of the themes by removing those that were redundant and less clear.

Step 4: The creation of across case themes. In the last stage of the descriptive analysis of the interviews, the themes from each individual narrative were examined to identify patterns of themes across heterogeneous narratives. In developing themes across cases, some were broadly represented while others were specific to particular interviews.

Interpretive analysis. The descriptive analysis attempted to present developed themes that were internal to the interviews. In order to evaluate the themes developed from the descriptive analysis, sources external to the texts of the interviews were used to provide a contextually grounded interpretive framework. In the interpretive analysis, the themes developed from the descriptive analysis were interpreted through the application (or prism) of the interpretive categories. These interpretive categories were derived from the literature on homosexual and bisexual identity, GBM youth, and historical analyses of the local LGBT gay community.

RESULTS

The demographic descriptions of study participants will be presented first. In order to situate the themes and thematic structure of the qualitative analysis, the general and overarching results of the descriptive and interpretive analysis will be presented immediately after. After those presentations and in general, results of the quantitative analysis for the online survey will be described first and followed by those from the qualitative analysis of the semi-structured interviews within the specific areas of interest (i.e., comparisons, milestones, issues, and the local context).

Demographics

Online survey. For brevity, more detailed breakdowns and tables of demographic information are available in Appendix F. In the main, respondents were gay; in their early 20s;

born and living in Windsor and Essex County; White, European, and Canadian; knowers of

multiple languages, nonreligious or Christian; working; and well-educated and former attendees

of English or Catholic public school. The majority of the 79 respondents identified themselves

as gay (87%, n = 69). Nine (11%) identified as bisexual and one (1%) identified as "other" and

clarified by specifying "undecided." The 79 male respondents to the online survey ranged from

17 to 26 years of age with an average age of 21.72 (SD = 2.42; see Figure 3, Appendix F).

Respondents were asked where they were born and where they currently live (see Table 26,

Appendix F). In all, 82% (n = 65) reported being born and 86% (n = 68) currently living in the

Windsor and Essex County region making it a very local sample with respect to birth and current

residence.

Because the respondents were allowed to fill in responses to the question, "What is your

cultural or ethnic background?" there was considerable variation. Because categorization was

open and multiple, 93 categorizations were derived from 79 respondents. The descriptors that

respondents used and how they were handled can be found in Figure 4, Appendix F. Suffice it to

say that White (n = 34) was the largest racialized category, while European (n = 34) and

Canadian (n = 17) were the largest ethnic or geographic categories supplied by respondents.

Seven respondents also provided the descriptors that were categorized as Middle Eastern, Mixed,

Asian, or Native American. The other 72 respondents used some combination of White,

European, or Canadian to describe their background. While English was spoken by all 79

respondents, 11 other languages are also spoken (see Table 27, Appendix F). In sum, almost half

(42%, n = 33) of the sample were polyglots, with 22 (28%) of the respondents knowing at least

two languages, 9 (11%) knowing three, and two (3%) knowing four. The majority (98%, n =

77) reported speaking English most often, with two reporting Croatian or French.

In all and at the time of taking the survey, the sample was not a particularly religious one. Of those who were, Christian faiths were most often cited. Forty-five (58%) of respondents were brought up in a religion or spiritual path, while 32 (42%) were not. When asked in which faiths the 45 were raised, 27 responses were categorized as Catholic, 18 Protestant, and one Greek Orthodox. The majority (77%, $n = 60$) of participants reported not currently practicing a particular religion or spiritual path. Eighteen (23%) reported practicing Christianity (8%, $n = 6$), and Catholicism (6%, $n = 6$). Five respondents (6%) gave responses that were not clearly part of any specific organized religion.

Respondents were asked if they were working, whether or not they were currently in school, and about their educational background. The majority (70%, $n = 55$) of respondents reported working and 22 (28%) were not working. While 33 (42%) reported not being in school, the majority (58%, $n = 46$) of respondents reported currently being in school. Of those in school, one (1.5%) was in an apprenticeship program and one (1.5%) was working toward completing a final high school credit, six (8%) were in high school, eight were in college (10%), and 30 (38%) were in university. Notably, a large majority (73%, $n = 58$) had at least some post-secondary education (see Figure 5, Appendix F). In Windsor and Essex County, schools are public, Catholic, or private. There are also both English and French-speaking schools in each of those previous categories. Because it is possible for a student in Windsor and Essex County to attend more than one type of school in their educational career for a variety of reasons, the online survey asked about attendance in each kind separately (see Table 15 under Harassment) with statistics for harassment at school. The 79 respondents gave 97 answers concerning what types of school they had attended.   One respondent had had attended three different types of schools. Sixteen had attended two different types of schools. The other 62 respondents had attended one

type of school. The majority reported attending English public (62%, *n* = 49) and English

Catholic schools (47%, *n* = 37), followed by much smaller numbers reporting French Catholic,

French public, and private schools (14%, *n* = 11).

       Semi-Structured interview. Eight interviews were retained in the final analysis.

Mirroring the demographics of the respondents to the online survey in which they had also taken

part, all eight of the male interviewees identified themselves as gay. None of the gay-identified

interviewees problematized the label of "gay" as not fitting their sexuality or used other terms for

additional clarification. Any other terms, like "queer" or "homo" were seen as additional terms

relating to the label gay and not really an alternative identity. Interviewees' ages were similar to

those of online respondents with an average age of 21 and a range of 18 to 25. Seven of the eight

interviewees were born in Windsor, and one was born in Leamington in Essex County. Six

interviewees lived in Windsor, one lived in the immediately adjacent community of LaSalle, and

one lived in Lakeshore, a nearby Essex County community.

       Although the interviewees had categorized themselves in the online survey in a variety of

ways (White: *n* = 1; European: *n* = 6; Canadian: *n* = 3, all described themselves in the interview

as being of European ancestry. Interviewees all reported speaking English first (*n* = 8), with two

also knowing French, two knowing German. Four interviewees were brought up in a particular

religion or spiritual path, including one brought up as Catholic and three brought up as Christian;

four were not. Seven of the interviewees currently do not practice, but one still goes to Catholic

Church as a requirement of living in his parents' house. The majority of interviewees (*n* = 6)

reported working. Three interviewees each had some university and some college. One had

completed high school and another other had not in terms of the highest level of education

completed. Five interviewees reported currently being currently in school. Three were in

university, and one was in college. Interviewees reported having attended only English public

schools (*n* = 4); only English Catholic schools (*n* = 2); both English public and Catholic schools

(*n* = 1) and English public, Catholic, and private schools (*n* = 1). No interviewees reported

attending French Catholic or French public schools.

Results of the Descriptive and Interpretive Qualitative Analysis

A priori themes "come from characteristics of the phenomena being studied" (Bernard &

Ryan, 2010, p. 55). In this case, the questions covering issues developed from the literature

review resulted in answers that contained these categories as a product of the participant

responding to the question. For example, specific milestones (e.g., first attractions and

disclosures) and behaviours problematized in the literature (e.g., harassment, suicide, and

homelessness) emerged as themes (or categories, in grounded theory) as a result of having been

asked about. These descriptive categories were found within an individual's set of responses and

developed further through examination across individuals' responses. Thus, out of the

discussion of their experiences in relation to these a priori categories utilized in the interviews,

other descriptive categories, some common and some unique, emerged.

These categories were used to develop descriptive thematic categories. Because

individual descriptive categories could be matched with their dual opposites within and across

cases, they were grouped together. These binary descriptive thematic categories with respect to

the development of a sexual identity in general were: Alienation versus Belonging, Fear of

Exposure versus Disclosure, Victimization versus Empowerment, and Isolation versus

Community. Other interpretative thematic categories were more specific to particular milestones

within the development of a sexual identity. For example, with sex, the thematic categories

found were: Ignorance versus Knowledge, Secret versus Open, and Awkward versus

Comfortable. With romantic relationships, the dominant thematic categories were: Unfaithfulness versus Trust, Dissatisfaction versus Fulfillment, and Secret versus Public. Table 3 represents a hierarchical outline (or map) of the various categories that emerged from the qualitative analysis of the interviews.

The overall category was the Development of a Sexual Identity. Again, a priori and descriptive categories emerged as a function of the questions that were asked and led to the development of descriptive thematic categories that were found in the narratives of individuals and across narratives, collectively. Where one of the components of the descriptive thematic categories represented a starting point, in some cases and after narrating their historical experiences, the other represented an endpoint contemporary with the interview or in viewing the narratives as a whole. It is not always the case that the two poles of the descriptive thematic categories represent a progression from one to the other, both tensions could be present to varying degrees, but often they do exhibit a progression both in terms of an interviewee's personal story and creating an overarching collective story from the individual narratives.

Table 3: Hierarchical Outline of Qualitative Analysis Categories from Interviewees' Narratives			
Overarching Category	A Priori Categories		Descriptive Thematic Categories
Development of a Sexual Identity	Comparisons	Others, Males, Females, Gay and Bisexual Males	Dissimilarity versus Similarity
	Milestones	Attractions	Fascination versus Indifference
		Self-labelling	Conflict versus Commitment
		Disclosure	Incremental versus Complete
			Trauma versus Support
		Sex	Ignorance versus Knowledge
			Secret versus Open
			Awkward versus Comfortable
		Love	Unrequited versus Mutual
		Romantic Relationships	Dissatisfaction versus Fulfillment

			Unfaithfulness versus Trust
			Secret versus Public
Issues Problematized in the Literature	Harassment		Feared versus Actual
			Avoidance versus Confrontation
	HIV/AIDS		Stigma and Ostracism versus Support
			Ignorance versus Understanding
	Mood Altering Substances		Escapism versus Medicine
	Depression and Suicide		Isolation versus Support
	Sex trade		Self-Commodification versus Self-Value
The Context of Windsor and Essex County	General		Alienation versus Belonging
			Fear of Exposure versus Disclosure
			Victimization versus Empowerment
			Isolation versus Community

The overarching unifying theme present in the interviewee narratives was the development of a sexual identity. In developing a sexual identity, interviewees described the comparisons they made with others, whom they viewed as dissimilar, similar, and sometimes both on various dimensions. The interviewees described how they had experienced or not experienced specific milestone events and, if they had experienced them (as most did, at least with the male-related milestones), how they dealt with them. Sometimes their experiences and how they dealt with them were unique, but often common patterns can be seen. The issues seen as problematic and identified in the research literature impacted their developmental progression greatly, to some extent, or not at all. When probed or without instigation, their narratives also touched on general themes related to their sexual identity, usually their contemporary views or opinions.

In describing the development of a sexual identity, interviewees related initial attractions to and differences from others that initially left them feeling alone and different. Concurrent were fears of being discovered, revealed, and harassed. For some, these fears were eventually

realized. However, over the course of their narratives, there was often at least a partial shift from alienation to a sense of belonging, from a fear of exposure to taking an active role in disclosing their sexual identity, from being (or seeing others) victimized to utilizing their capabilities and the resources around them to stand up for themselves (or others). In meeting and interacting with other LGBT people and organizations their initial isolation was transformed into having a sense of being part of a community. Such a transformation was not always complete. Rather, it was sometimes additive, in the sense that differences still existed or were perceived occasionally, even in comparison with other gay and bisexual males. Such shifts in in feelings were also described sometimes as more a matter of degree.

Earlier and Current Comparisons with Others

Online survey. In order to assess self-perceived differences and similarities, participants were asked how they felt they compared to other people when they were younger (see Table 4). On the five point Likert scale, ranging from very dissimilar (1) to very similar (5), participants were asked to rate how they compared to other people their age, males their age, females their age, and other gay or bisexual males their age. When they were younger, respondents felt most similar to other females and most dissimilar to other males. It is important to note that the range of means for all of these comparisons was 2.15-3.14, or about one point, which almost represents "mostly dissimilar" to "equally similar and dissimilar" on the scale. However, at least some respondents did choose ratings in each category of the scale.

Table 4: Earlier and Current Comparison to Others as Reported by Survey Respondents						
Time Period	Comparison Group	Mean	SD	Mode	Min.	Max.
Earlier	Others	2.83	1.12	4	1	5
	Males	2.15	0.95	2	1	5
	Females	3.14	0.96	3	1	5
	Gay & Bi Males	2.76	0.95	3	1	5

Current	Others	3.35	0.93	4	1	5
	Males	2.81	1.14	2	1	5
	Females	3.39	0.95	3	1	5
	Gay & Bi Males	3.16	1.09	3	1	5

Though I did not hypothesize that there would be any differences between gay and bisexual males in their mean earlier and current comparison scores, exploratory independent samples t-tests were conducted with the two groups and no significant differences were found.

Participants were later asked how they felt they compared to other people now. On the same five point Likert scale, participants were asked to rate how they compared to the same categories of people, but currently (see Table 4). At the time of the survey, respondents felt most similar to females and others and most dissimilar to other males. Again, it is important to note that the range of these means for all of the comparisons was 2.81-3.39, which represents about half a point on the scale centred around "equally similar and dissimilar."

To see how these four earlier and later comparisons were related to each other and to assist with interpretation, an exploratory correlation matrix was calculated (see Table 5) as a preliminary analysis. The highest correlation of earlier ratings was between other people and males, and it was both positive and strong.   The correlation of earlier ratings between other people and females was positive but considerable weaker, suggesting that when making comparisons to "other people" respondents may have not been thinking in as gender neutral or inclusive terms as intended. However, within current comparisons, the correlation coefficients with respect to other people and males and females were more equal (in addition to being both positive and strong).   There were no significant negative correlations, suggesting that respondent did not think of comparator groups as unidimensional opposites. Although they exhibited covariation with each other, earlier and current comparisons for each subgroup were often

positive and strong. However, they did not exhibit a 100% correspondence with each other and so shifts in these ratings were explored. Anything less than a 100% correlation between the earlier and current comparison rating with the same comparator group would be a potential initial indicator of a change in comparison ratings warranting further exploration and testing through other statistical procedures to assess whether there was a shift.

Table 5: Correlations among Earlier and Current Comparisons For Survey Respondents								
Comparisons		People Earlier	Males Earlier	Females Earlier	GBM Earlier	People Now	Males Now	Females Now	GBM Now
People Earlier	Pearson		.70**	.29*	-.05	.48**	.44**	.05	.12
	Sig.		0	.011	.661	0	0	.672	.309
	n		78	78	78	76	76	76	76
Males Earlier	Pearson			.02	-.10	.41**	.57**	-.12	.25*
	Sig.			.873	.388	0	0	.311	.029
	n			79	79	77	77	77	77
Females Earlier	Pearson				.26*	.31**	-.04	.45**	.23*
	Sig.				.019	.007	.703	0	.046
	n				79	77	77	77	77
GBM Earlier	Pearson					.06	-.12	.17	.45**
	Sig.					.582	.32	.13	0
	n					77	77	77	77
People Now	Pearson						.57**	.43**	.40**
	Sig.						0	0	0
	n						77	77	77
Males Now	Pearson							.07	.16
	Sig.							.537	.16
	n							77	77
Females Now	Pearson								.39**
	Sig.								.001
	n								77
GBM Now	Pearson								
	Sig.								
	N								
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level 2-tailed.								
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level 2-tailed.								

Respondents did see themselves currently as more similar to others in all four categories (see Table 4). The greatest shifts occurred, in order from largest to smallest, with other males (0.67), other people (0.53), other gay and bisexual males (0.39), and females (0.23).   In order to assess whether or not these shifts in seeing themselves as more similar to others were statistically

significant, paired samples t-tests were conducted using both earlier and current comparisons. Indeed, the shifts were significant with respondents seeing themselves as more similar now than in the past to other males, $t(76) = 5.84$, $p < .001$; other people, $t(75) = 4.31$, $p < .001$; other gay and bisexual males, $t(76) = 2.05$, $p = .002$; and females, $t(76) = 3.17$, $p = .043$. Perhaps increased contact over time with other people, in general and in these subgroups, might lead to many respondents feeling slightly less alienated or different from and more similar to others and on average. In any case, the sense of otherness and difference that is often cited as one of the initiators of the development of a gay or bisexual identity appears to have been, on average, present in the early lives of this sample and to have been lessened slightly over time. A series of hypotheses were also made regarding how feelings of dissimilarity and similarity to the four reference groups would affect or interact with the age of occurrence of certain milestones. The testing of these hypotheses will be discussed in turn as we explore each relevant milestone.

Semi-Structured interview. Interviewees' scores, on average, displayed a similar pattern on the online survey as the larger pool of respondents where similarity with females was assessed the highest and similarity to other males was the lowest (see Table 6). Interviewees felt most similar to females and other gay and bisexual males, about equally similar and dissimilar to other people, and most dissimilar to other males their age when they were younger.

Table 6: Earlier and Current Comparison to Others as Reported by the Interviewees					
Time Period	Comparison Group	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.
Earlier	Others	2.75	0.89	1	4
	Males	1.75	0.64	1	3
	Females	3.88	0.54	1	5
	Gay & Bi Males	3.38	1.25	1	5
Current	Others	3.00	0.84	2	4
	Males	2.75	1.36	1	5
	Females	3.38	0.76	3	5

	Gay & Bi Males	3.00	1.60	1	5

According to interviewees, the source of intrapersonal, initial, and growing feelings of isolation and difference from others and (especially) other males stemmed from comparisons with and how they were sometimes treated by others when they were younger. From their descriptions of how they compared to others earlier and currently, the theme of Dissimilarity versus Similarity was prominent. A few had salient memories that were tinged with feelings of isolation, being bullied, and depression with a growing sense of being different. It was not always first understood as having relevance to them as sexual beings, especially when interviewees were younger. For Jamie, elementary school was where he first heard the word gay, though his sense of isolation did not come from seeing it as personally relevant to him:

> I was so isolated in elementary school. I mean, I was the smart kid . . . and I'm trying not
>
> to toot my own horn, but I mean, I was isolated in that sense because I was the only one
>
> who got sent to the gifted school, and I was the one who was always finishing tests in
>
> five or ten minutes, and that kind of thing . . . I don't think a lot of people at that age
>
> knew what being gay really was. I think they just knew that it was an insulting word that
>
> you could throw around that meant something negative.

Shaun was a lot smaller than the other males at elementary school, and that difference was one of the things that made him feel vulnerable and afraid:

> I'd just be scared to go to school because there was a lot of kids at school. Grade school
>
> was like, I don't know if it is like that anymore, but the grade school I went to, it was
>
> scary . . . There was a lot of big kids there. I was a tiny kid and I was like, oh my god,

these kids are fucking huge. They're built like shit brick houses and they're like ten years old. They've got deeper voices than my dad.

Because of money issues, Steve's family moved him from a small, private Christian school, characterized by close bonds, and where he was never bullied, to a public elementary school at grade five, where his close associations with girls were regarded as suspect by other boys. His experience in public school was:

> Totally different. That was when I learned what swear words were. That was when I learned really what gay was . . . in the public system, which is when, again, closer with the girls than—that's when the gay specific derogatory words came out.

Daniel's sense of being different from and fascination with other males began to burgeon in elementary school:

> [I]t was when we were out in the schoolyard and we were all playing, and all the guys would want to go and play their football and soccer and all that, and I didn't want to play that but I was attracted to them playing it, and then I would go and play with the girls on the jungle gym or go walk around the track or something and that's when I first started to realize that I was drawn to their appearance.

Like Daniel, for Mathew certain other males were an object of fascination, "[Laughs] Yeah. No, I was smitten with him. I'm sure he probably knew, because I was so effeminate as a child, you know." These other males were so different from him: "When other boys were playing sports," he described himself as "doodling in my textbook drawing stilettos and evening gowns. Yeah. Some really cute gowns and really cute shoes, I must just say." During this time, he mainly hung around with three girls and his older sister, who was often his protector. Though

most of his friends were girls, Mathew did have some male friends early on who were gay and whom he felt similar to, without it ever being explicit:

> They weren't out. None of us were out. But, when I was in grade school, in like grade six, seven, and eight, there was, there were a few other kids, the two that stick out the most now are out of the closet . . . Those two guys they stick out the most in my mind. They were clearly queerly [i.e., gay or bisexual]. And I knew that we had that in common. I mean, we never discussed it. We didn't have to. We just knew that we could, you know, be silly and flamboyant and have a good old time.

Daniel was able to form a friendship with one of the boys who was one of his favourites: "We were like best friends in grade school I'd say. . . Okay, he was similar to me. He didn't like the sports and the things like that. . . . He [pause], he was more similar than different." But eventually: "Then, we completely split. It was like we didn't want to hang around with each other, didn't want to have anything to do with each other. I don't know what it was." Somewhat paradoxically, even though differences from other boys could lead to feelings of dissimilarity, sometimes they could also be the basis of bonds of similarity with like others, which ultimately and for some, led to feelings of alienation and isolation being lessened.

Not all interviewees described high gender atypicality in their youth in comparison to other boys. For some it was slight in comparison to others, described as gender neutrality or even balance. Mike found that he could:

> [R]elate to both male and female and . . . there'd be girl things like cooking, obviously, I like to cook, that guys didn't do, but then at the same point they'd go play soccer, I'd go kick a ball around, so it was kind of—I kind of dabbled in both sides.

Jamie was happy to leave elementary school and his schoolmates behind on his way to a different high school with a gifted program: "Just the people in elementary school going into high school who you realize like, oh, they're losers, they're getting into drugs, most of them are homophobic . . . that kind of thing." In fact, showing that the sense of being different could change over time and over different contexts, Jamie found more similarity with others when he entered his gifted high school program:

> I went to a good high school . . . As far as high schools go in this city, it's pretty accepting and open-minded . . . Lot of smart kids. Gifted program, you know . . . that's why I went. So I met a lot of good people. I said I was equally similar and dissimilar because there was such a wide variety of people there that I couldn't . . . like, there were people I identified with and there were people I didn't. . . . As far as other guys go . . . I wasn't the jock who was into all the same things that everyone else was . . . but, I *was* on certain teams and that kind of thing. So I wasn't similar, but I wasn't a complete alien.

High school also provided him with other outlets and access to males whom he felt more similar to and females he could relate to both cognitively and affectively:

> I joined the band and stuff . . . and there were other guys in the band, but not the macho guys, you know. So . . . I'm a bit dissimilar there. But where a lot of my interests did fall with like, my female friends I just found them easier to talk to . . . not necessarily because we were interested in the same things, but we had more similar thought patterns. We were both more emotionally secure . . . or in tune, I guess. So I suppose I just found it easier to relate that way.

Daniel also felt less dissimilar to others when he entered high school:

> [I]f we're talking about high school, it would be more similar. We . . . had common

interests let's say, besides your sexual identity. Like they were, the gay men that were in

um, the music programs that I [was] in, the drama programs, the arts.

While some interviewees reported feeling different earlier on and in elementary school,

some, like Mike, did not. Of those who did, some, like Steve and Mathew, saw their difference

as based on the classmates with whom they preferred to associate (i.e., girls); the activities they

preferred to engage in, like Mathew and Daniel; their abilities, like Jamie's intelligence and

scholarship; their keen interest, like Daniel's, in other boys who seemed so different and

intriguing; or, as in both Daniel and Shaun's cases, sexual activities to which they had been (in

their own opinions) prematurely exposed. But, in the main, high school was the setting in which

such differences became highlighted with a growing understanding that these differences meant

something about them as sexual beings. For some, this awakening occurred toward the end of

elementary school, for some, early in their high school careers, and, for others, it would be later.

In terms of current comparisons, the online survey respondent pattern where similarity

with females was assessed the highest and similarity to other males was the lowest was displayed

in interviewees' online responses (see Table 6). Like the scores of online respondents, there was

a shift in interviewees seeing themselves, on average, as now more similar to other people,

males, and gay and bisexual males their age. Of these shifts, seeing themselves as more similar

to other males was the largest, and this was a (1.00) shift from "mostly dissimilar" to "Equally

dissimilar and similar." However, interviewees, unlike the larger pool of total online

respondents and on average, saw themselves as now slightly less similar to females, with a (.50)

shift from mostly similar on the scale (from 3.88 to 3.38 or between equally dissimilar and

similar). Interviewees' earlier comparison scores were initially almost a full point higher than

those of the larger pool of online respondents. Part of the explanation may lie in a regression to

the mean in a smaller subsample that did see themselves as even more similar to females when they were younger. Another part of the explanation may be that, over the years, especially in high school, and according to their narratives, they just had the opportunity to a greater variety of people with similar interests independent of sexual identity.

Milestones

Online survey. In order to get a sense of the general order of progression of the important milestones in the formation of a sexual identity, respondents were asked if significant events identified in the literature had occurred for them and, if so, at what age they had occurred. Table 7 lists the milestones in order of the average ages reported in the current study. It is important to remember that milestones represent the particular developmental events and that trajectory references the movement and direction between them. Again, and in general, these first milestones and their general developmental progressions as reported by Savin-Williams (1998) were: attractions, labelling attractions, sex, labelling self, disclosure to others, romance, and self-acceptance. The mean ages and standard deviations reported by Savin-Williams can be found in the last columns of Table 7. The mean ages in the current sample are lower than the ones he found save for first attraction to a male, sex with a male, and, to a small degree, romantic relationship with a male. Within these milestones and where it made sense, respondents were also asked if the milestone had occurred with a male and if they had occurred with a female and at what ages. The milestone questions that were bifurcated by the other person's sex were attraction, sex, love, and romance.

Table 7: Milestones and Ages Reported by Number and Percentage of Survey Respondents									
Milestone 1sts	N	%	*Mean*	*SD*	Mode	Min.	Max.	S-W *M*	S-W *SD*
Attraction Female	39	50	11.07	2.81	10	4	16	--	--

Attraction Male	78	99	11.61	3.46	12	3	19	8.97	3.0
Self-Labelling	79	100	14.46	4.16	13	5	25	16.87	3.0
Relationship Female	25	32	15.25	1.36	16	13	26	--	--
Love Female	22	28	15.77	2.14	16	12	20	--	--
Sex Female	26	33	15.88	2.27	16	11	21	15.14	3.1
Disclosure Friend	77	97	16.96	2.90	17	11	26	17.89	2.5
Disclosure Family	68	86	17.42	2.91	16	12	26	18.72	2.5
Sex Male	68	86	17.53	3.44	18	6	25	14.11	4.1
Love Male	66	84	18.53	2.97	21	13	26	--	--
Relationship Male	59	75	18.81	2.69	19	13	26	18.33	2.7

Based on the averages of respondents' reported ages, the general developmental (see Figure 7) progression for the current sample in terms of these first experiences was: attraction to a female, attraction to a male, labelling self, love with a female, romantic relationship with a female, sex with a female, disclosure to a friend, disclosure to a family member, sex with a male, love with a male, and romantic relationship with a male. This presents a slightly different general linear progression than Savin-Williams (1998) originally proposed. Several of these differences support the current study's hypotheses regarding each milestone; these will be discussed in turn. Before those differences are discussed individually, it is important to get a general, overall sense of the variability of and relationships between these milestones.

As is more easily visualized in boxplot depicted in Figure 1, it is important to note that there was still considerable variability in first attractions, self-labelling, and almost all of the ages in which a milestone occurred. This variability shows that, for some, the developmental trajectory for hitting certain milestones occurred much earlier for some of the sample and much

later for others.

Figure 1: All Milestone Ages as Reported by Percentage of Respondents
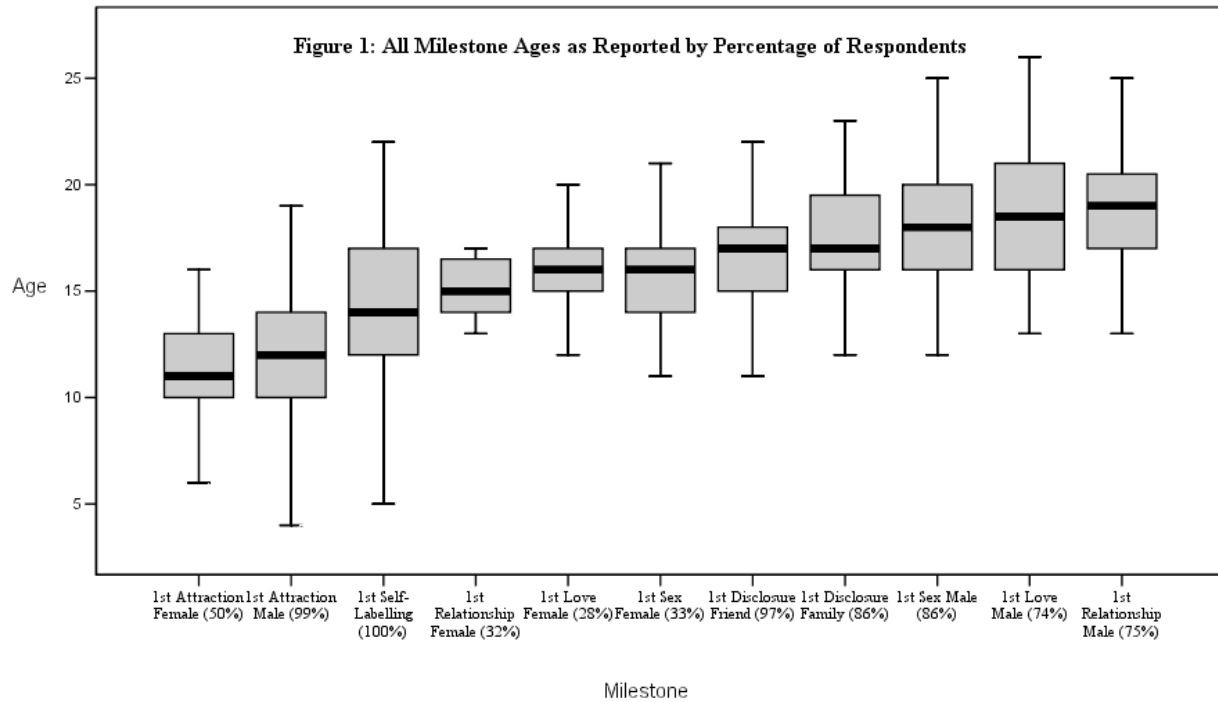
The percentages below each milestone represent the portion of the total sample that indicated having experienced the milestone. These vary most widely in terms of milestones experienced in relation to females, which is to say that some in the sample had milestone experiences with females and half or more did not. This is not particularly surprising as bisexually-identified males (11%, $n = 9$) and one "undecided" (1%) were in the sample, but it is important to note that some, though not the majority, of gay-identified respondents had also had these experiences. The more condensed variability with respect to milestone events involving females may reflect the fewer number of respondents who reported these milestones, that these milestones generally occur within shorter age ranges, or both.

In order to see if the general developmental progression differed between gay and bisexual respondents, independent samples t-tests were conducted using age data from the

milestone questions. Only one significant difference in mean ages was found between gay and bisexual respondents. The eight bisexual respondents who reported being in love with a female reported that it occurred earlier ($M = 14.14$, $SD = 2.04$) than did the 29 gay respondents ($M = 16.53$, $SD = 1.77$) who reported experiencing this milestone, $t(20) = 2.8$, $p = 0.011$. With all other milestones, the average ages at which they occurred did not differ significantly between gay and bisexual respondents.

A correlation matrix was calculated and examined to explore other potential relationships between milestone age variables. This was done to see and verify which milestone ages tended to vary or hang together. Examination of the correlation matrix (see Table 8) revealed no significant correlations between any of the female-related milestones (i.e., attraction, sex, love, and romantic relationship with a female) meaning that the ages at which these milestones occur with females did not vary together for the respondents that reported them.

There was only one significant correlation, $r(36) = .35$, $p = .013$, in age within specific milestones (i.e., attraction, but not sex, love, and relationships), between those reached with females and those reached with males for about half of the sample (48%, $n = 38$). The ages at which first sex, love, and relationships occurred with a male versus a female were not related. The average ages reported for both first attractions to females (11.07) and first attractions to males (11.61) was just after the age of 10 when Herdt and McClintock (2000) posit that such attractions become more stable and memorable and right around the average age (11.5, with a range of 9-15) of puberty for males. Of those milestones directly related to females and the non sex-specific milestones of disclosure, only the age of first love was found to be significantly, strongly, and positively correlated, $r(15) = .53$, $p = .02$, with first disclosure to a family member for the 17 (22%) respondents who had experienced both, meaning that the ages for both tend to

vary together. All of the male-related first age milestones exhibited significant strong, positive

correlations with each other. The age of first attraction to another male was also strongly and

positively correlated with the age of first self-labelling. Both are intrapersonal events and

generally occurred early in the process of sexual identity formation.

While milestones like attractions and self-labelling occur on the intrapersonal level, the

other milestone events (e.g., disclosure, sex, and relationships) occur on an interpersonal level,

where one might suspect that social dynamics, norms, and mores would have the potential to

exert even more of an influence. In light of that hypothesis, an interesting result is that, in

general, after initial attraction to a male or a female, the trajectory to a first sex, love, and

relationship, appears to occur in reverse when the other person is a female—it also occurs much

earlier. Given the social opprobrium toward homosexuality, the initial lack of access to social

support before disclosure or coming out, and the differential socialization of young males and

females this would make sense. When the partners were females, the milestone progression was

more likely to be romantic relationship, love, and then sex. Though also a cultural stereotype,

initial sex with other males occurs generally before (and therefore without) first being in love or

having a romantic relationship with another male. The first sex, love, and relationship (with

another male) milestones are not unrelated, as the ages at which these milestones occur exhibit

strong and significant positive correlations with each other. They tended to occur at similar and

most often later ages for the 52 (66%) respondents who had experienced both (see Table 8).

The strongest positive correlation was found between the ages of first disclosure

milestones (i.e., told a friend and told a family member) showing that the ages at which they

occur vary together. Floyd and Stein (2002) had a very similar finding between the age of first

disclosure to a parent and to a generic "someone." The age of first telling a friend was also

strongly correlated with first sex, love, and romantic relationship with a male, suggesting that it

is a key turning point or milestone in sexual identity development. Occurring even before sex

with another male, disclosing to another was usually the first action taken in the outside,

interpersonal world as a GBM.

Table 8: Correlations among Non-Female-Related Milestone Ages For Survey Respondents							
Milestone 1sts		1. Attract. Male	2. Self-Label	3. Disc. Friend	4. Disc. Family	5. Sex Male	7. Love Male	8. Romance Male
1. Attract. Male	Pearson		.46**	.27*	.19	.38**	.13	.33*
	Sig.		0	.02	.132	.002	.313	.013
	n		76	76	67	66	65	58
2. Self-Label	Pearson			.55**	.53**	.59**	.57**	.44**
	Sig.			.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	n			76	68	67	65	59
3. Disc. Friend	Pearson				.86**	.64**	.60**	.72**
	Sig.				.000	.000	.000	.000
	n				68	67	66	59
4. Told Family	Pearson					.57**	.64**	.62**
	Sig.					.000	.000	.000
	n					61	58	55
5. Sex Male	Pearson						.63**	.62**
	Sig.						.000	.000
	n						57	54
7. Love Male	Pearson							.73**
	Sig.							.000
	n							52
8. Romance Male	Pearson							
	Sig.							
	n							
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level 2-tailed.								
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level 2-tailed.								

For ease of presentation in terms of the general linear progression, the results regarding

milestones are presented in the order experienced first by the majority and with respect to other

males (Figure 2) in the following order: Attraction, Self-labelling, Disclosures, Sex, Love, and

Romantic Relationships.

Figure 2: Male-Related Milestone Ages as Reported by Respondents

Semi-Structured interview. Interviewees' responses to milestone questions on the

online survey are displayed in Table 9. Worthy of note, but perhaps not all that surprising, is that

none of the all gay-identified interviewees had ever been in love with a female.

Table 9: Milestones and Ages Reported by Number of Interviewees					
Milestone	n	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.
1st Attraction Female	1	13.00	--	13	13
1st Attraction Male	8	11.50	4.28	6	18
1st Self-Labelling	8	14.50	4.24	6	19
1st Relationship Female	1	17.00	--	17	17
1st Love Female	0	--	--	--	--
1st Sex Female	2	15.00	1.41	14	16
1st Disclosure Friend	8	16.50	1.85	13	19
1st Disclosure Family	8	16.50	2.33	13	19
1st Sex Male	8	15.88	4.45	6	20
1st Love Male	7	18.43	2.44	17	21
1 Relationship male	8	18.00	1.93	14	20

In general, the trajectory of progression through the milestones mirrored the pattern found with the larger set of survey respondents, with the exception of first love with a male occurring on average a year before a first relationship with a male (but still in the same order). In addition, all interviewees had disclosed to both a friend and a family member, but at the same age, on average.

    Attractions.

    Online survey. All respondents reported having been attracted to someone, male or female, and some at ages as young as three or four (see Table 7). Given these ages, it is important to note that the question did not specify that this attraction was sexual in nature. This was purposive as the initial attractions and fascinations before puberty, during adrenarche and described in the literature (e.g., Savin-Williams, 1998, 2005) are not always overtly sexual in nature, often described more as fascinations and yearnings, and take on more of a sexual meaning after gonadarche and in retrospect. Again, that is not to say that children are not sexual beings or do not have sexual feelings, but these feelings are often labelled with more sexual or sexual identity significance later. All but one respondent reported being attracted to a male. Only 39 of the 79 respondents reported being attracted to a female. The mean ages reported for first attractions for females was 11.07 years ($SD = 2.81$) and for males was 11.61 years ($SD = 3.46$). These finding support the hypothesis that attractions and sexual awareness do become memorable between adrenarche and gonadarche (Herdt & McClintock, 2000). The wide range gives credence to the idea that the pubertal process, sexual development, and sexual identity development may occur over a much longer period of time, not solely in adolescence.

    To test the hypothesis that first attractions to females would occur before first attractions to males, a paired-samples t-test was conducted using the reported age data for the 38

respondents who experienced both. The mean age reported for first attraction to females was

11.11 (SD = 2.85) and for males was 12.18 (SD = 3.30). This difference of about a year earlier

for first attraction to a female was not statistically significant, $t(37)$ = 1.89, p = .67. To test the

hypothesis that attractions may be more biologically or hormonally influenced, a correlation was

calculated to see if there was a relationship between the ages of first being attracted to a female

and a male. This hypothesis was based on the speculation that retrospective reports of first

attractions to females may be remarked earlier than first attractions to males because the social

climate makes it more acceptable to have and remark upon heterosexual attractions. It is

interesting to note, in reference back to Table 8, that there was a strong positive relationship

between age of first attraction to female (M = 11.07, SD = 2.81) and to males (M =11.61, SD =

3.46), $r(36)$ = .35, p = .013. This may suggest then that the age of these first attractions relate

more strongly to biological or hormonal states rather than social influences.

These reported attractions were important instigators of the very beginning, tentative

steps toward first and fully committing to a sexual identity label. Respondents were asked what

made them *first realize they might be* gay or bisexual. A summary of the categorized content

found in their responses is in Table 10. The most commonly reported sources of these first

realizations were attractions and a consciousness of the meaning of what respondents were

drawn to. These attractions were reported as general, attentional, sexual and physical,

comparative, and, in one case, guilt inducing. For the majority, it was just being drawn to or

paying attention to males, for others it was a sexual and physical attraction, and for others it was

that their attractions were stronger to males or were noticeably in contrast to what other males

generally exhibited. The other commonly reported source was characterized as less being drawn

to males, but having a sexual arousal response to other males, sexual materials depicting males,

or sexual interactions with other males. Smaller portions of respondents cited the source of their

first musings as coming from (nonsexual) interactions with others, just always knowing, and

their particular interests.

Main Categories	Subcategories	n	Illustrative Example
Table 10: Summary of Categorized Content of Survey Participants' Responses to What Made Them First Realize They Might Be Gay or Bisexual			
Attractions		39	
	General Attraction	21	"I was attracted to men."
	Attentional Attraction	12	"Paying more attention to men."
	Sexual & Physical Attraction	8	"Sexual attraction to boys during gym class"
	Comparative Attraction	7	"No attraction to women"
	Feelings about Attractions	1	"My feeling of guilt for being attracted to the same sex"
Sexual Excitement, Materials, & Interactions		21	
	Sexual Excitement & Arousal	10	"an erection thinking of my best friend at the time"
	Sexual Material (Pornography)	8	"I had come across gay porn on the internet and was extremely aroused by it."
	Sexual interaction	3	"I liked sucking cock"
General Interactional		5	
	Friends	2	"My self and friends."
	All Female Friends	1	"All of my close friends were females . . ."
	Asked	1	". . . asked the question and I thought about it"
	Harassment	1	"People Teasing Me"
Just Knew		5	
	Just knew	4	"I just always knew, to me it felt like it was the natural thing to do"
	Wanted a Man in My Life	1	". . . .I had always known I just wanted to have a man in my future."
Interests		2	
	Music Theatre	1	"music theatre"
	Tendencies	1	"tendencies"

Semi-Structured interview. Like survey respondents, who reported general, attentional,

and physical attractions as the early sources leading to the tentative initiation of self-labelling,

initial attractions to other males and indifference to girls (as anything other than activity mates

and companions) spurred many interviewees in the early development of their sexual identity.

At earlier ages this was not necessarily experienced as sexual, but these general attractions could

exert a very strong pull, nevertheless. Capturing these dynamics was the theme of Fascination

versus Indifference. Mathew remembered a very strong attraction and fascination at the age of

six:

> My biological father had a lot of different girlfriends and one of his girlfriends had a son
>
> who was probably like 18 or 19. I think he was 18 years old . . . He was really, really,
>
> really cute, tall, slender. Just a gorgeous guy and I remember going over to my dad's for
>
> a weekend and it was the first time I had met that girlfriend . . . But her son . . . I needed a
>
> t-shirt to sleep in, so she got a shirt from her son and I had met her son, just briefly . . . for
>
> maybe like a half an hour or an hour and I knew like right away, I was just like, I love
>
> him, and the t-shirt that I got of his smelled like him. And the smell of his t-shirt was like
>
> driving me wild all night. Like I spent the entire night, I think I actually took the shirt off
>
> and put it on the pillow case and like slept just in my underwear with his t-shirt
>
> underneath my head just so I could I like breathe in the t-shirt all night. I wish I could
>
> remember that smell.

Others experienced burgeoning feelings and attentional captivation toward the end of elementary

school. Steve began to have his own suspicions in grade six that the derogatory and homophobic

words he heard used on the elementary school playground might have some personal sexual

relevance:

> I think that was when, uh, I first kinda realized it would be--I think that's about grade six.
>
> Grade six, I think that's the first time you really start using the change rooms in gym

class, so the first time I really experienced, it's when you start--it kinda started to click

and you start to feel things.

For others, high school would be the setting in which their attention turned toward other males. In his own case, Jamie relates:

Just coming into high school . . . The first time I walked into a guy's changing room I was

like "Well, damn. Okay!" [laughs] *At least* bi was my sexual orientation at that point.

Kinsey three, then four, then five, then six.

Exhibiting far more ambivalence than Mathew or Steve, Jamie related how he had tried being

attracted to females: "I've forced myself to try to feel attracted to a female . . . but it never

worked. And never naturally attracted to one, no." While Jamie may have tried to be attracted

to females, it was not anything he had to force with respect to males and, in fact, it crept into his

dreams:

[It] was in about grade five and I distinctly recall having a dream one day, of like, kissing

a guy . . . and waking up and going "well, that was weird!" and then thinking, "Oh, I

guess everyone has those dreams!" and then just brushing it off. And then, you know . . .

that's grade five, and then grade seven rolls around and you accidentally stumble across .

. . you know, an adult website or something like that and you go, "Oh, okay, so I'm *not*

looking at the girl." And it just kind of pieces itself together from that.

Others did not try to force their indifference into interest. For Shaun, his lack of attraction to

females was never in question:

I always thought that they were pretty . . . But, never, never, never. Like, girls liked me

in high school and they knew I was gay but I mean it was just weird, they were like, "So

you don't think I'm hot or anything?" and I'm like "I think you're a good looking girl,

like I'm not attracted to you," you know?

Not every interviewee had been completely indifferent to females nor did they have to force an attraction. However, these attractions toward females served as a comparative foil for their attractions to males. Thomas (20) described the time before he had more firmly labeled himself gay and just after things had broken off with another young male with whom he was sexually intimate:

'Cause he didn't know if he was gay or not and he didn't want to come out because his parents were like old school, very old school, right, and he was ashamed of being gay and I didn't quite know . . . that's when I had started also liking girls, sexually and [pause] in grade 11 I had my first girlfriend and that didn't last [laughs] um, yeah . . . [A]t one point in my life I was undecided. I did like women, and I did like men . . . I was kinda trying to find what I liked more, and I did have a girlfriend at one time, but it didn't last because, I was still trying to figure out what I want and, when I was 18 . . . Yeah, it was a weird year.

At 17, Mike noticed that he looked at men and women differently but did not assign any particular meaning to the comparative dissimilarity in his attention:

I didn't know it. Like, I would look at men differently than women and I would tend to look at men more but I didn't really consider anything . . . I just kinda thought I was just looking . . . just, you know, kids at school. I'd look, check 'em out.

Within the year, however, he would.

While half (*n* = 39) of the online respondents reported attractions to females, only two interviewees did. Attractions, as hypothesized, do occur as the first milestone in the development of a sexual identity. These first attractions, whether to a female, male, or to both

occur at similar ages, at around 11 years old. Data from interviewees confirms the finding that

first attraction to males was a significant first milestone in their gay identity development, related

closely to first self-labelling.

   Self-labelling.

   Online survey. As previously noted, the majority of respondents to the online survey

identified as gay (88%, *n* = 69), followed by bisexual (11%, *n* = 8) and undecided (1%, *n* = 1).

The average age of first making that identification was 14.46 (*SD* = 4.16) with the most

commonly reported age of 13 and a considerable range of 5-25 years old (see Table 7). The

hypothesis that GBM youth would be self-labelling shortly after gonadal puberty was confirmed.

GBM youth also reported self-labelling earlier than previous samples. The current sample shows

that male youth from Windsor and Essex-County, on average but with a lot of variability, are

self-labelling about a year sooner than the Kryzan (*M* = 15.6; cited in Savin-Williams, 2005)

sample and about a year and half earlier than the Floyd and Stein sample (*M* = 16.14; 2002)—

though the latter sample exhibits similar variability with respect to age ranges (3-24). As

predicted, self-labelling occurred before first sex with a female (by about a year and half) and

male (by about three years), and several respondents mentioned sexual material found on the

internet as the source of instigating their realization that they may be gay or bisexual (see Table

10).

   One way analyses of variance were conducted using first self-labelling age data and the

recoded earlier comparison categories of dissimilar, equally dissimilar and similar, and similar to

test the hypothesis that individuals who felt that they were dissimilar to other males, similar to

females, or similar to other gay and bisexual males their age self-labelled earlier than those who

felt conversely. Contrary to the hypotheses, no significant main effects were found for these

variables with respect to reported age data. In other words, age of first self-labelling was not found to be related to participants' earlier feelings of difference or similarity toward others, $F(2, 74) = 1.03$, $p = .364$; other males, $F(2, 75) = 0.24$, $p = .787$; females, $F(2, 75) = 1.63$, $p = .202$; or other GBMs $F(2, 75) = 3.01$, $p = .055$.

As a follow-up question to when they first started to realize that they might be gay or bisexual, respondents were asked what *convinced them that they were* gay or bisexual. A summary of the categorized content found in their responses is in Table 11. Again, attractions were prominent, both generally and comparatively, but sexual arousal (to sexual interactions, other males, sexual materials, and in comparison) figured more prominently. As with before, some respondents became convinced from interacting with others or never had any doubts. What is markedly different is the increased emergence of romantic feelings, relationships, and aspirations as the reported source of a firmer commitment to self-labelling. Finally, a few respondents cited their acceptance of the meaning of their attractions and responses to other males as the source of their conviction, rather than the attractions or responses on their own, indicating the resolution of a struggle.

Table 11: Summary of Categorized Content of Survey Participants' Responses to What Convinced Them They Were Gay or Bisexual			
Main Categories	Subcategories	n	Illustrative Example
Attractions		28	
	Comparative Attraction	21	"constantly thinking about boys and having no interest in girls sexually or romantically"
	General Attraction	7	"continued attraction to other males"
Sexual Excitement, Materials, & Interactions		30	
	Sexual Interaction	17	"After my first sexual encounter with a male."
	Sexual Excitement & Arousal	8	"when i would get a boner looking at hot guys"
	Sexual Material (Pornography)	3	"After discovering gay porn online . . ."

	Comparative Apathy	2	"i didnt like vagina"
General Interactional		3	
	Talking with Others	3	"I started chatting with gay guys"
Just Knew		7	
	Just knew	6	"Nothing I just knew"
	Born That Way	1	"Nothing convinced me, I was born that way ;)"
Romantic Feelings, Relationships, & Aspirations		12	
	Romantic Feelings	7	"when i fell in love, real love for the first time with a guy"
	Romantic Aspirations	4	"saw myself growing old with a guy"
	Relationship with a Male	1	"relationship with a male"
Acceptance		3	
	Accepted	2	"My acceptance that it is not a choice and that it was not my fault"
	Was Not Going Away	1	"Therapy and prayer were not changing me like they said they would"

Keeping in mind that attractions were reported to begin at around the age of 11 (the beginning of gonadarche) and self-labelling around three years later at 14, it is not surprising to see the instigating source of the initial and then more committed self-labelling shift. This shift is one from being more general (and less clearly sexual in nature) and intrapersonal to being described in more clearly sexual ways and increasingly as the result of interpersonal sexual interactions and romantic desires. The firmer intrapersonal commitment to self-labelling, which for many was increasingly accomplished with the interpersonal acts of exploring their sexual desires with others, served as the basis for later interpersonal revelations of their sexual identities to significant others.

It should be noted that the open-ended responses, with respect to self-labelling conviction, echo the quantitative comparison results (with respect to the age of self-labelling) in that neither feelings of isolation or dissimilarity from others and other males and similarity to

females and other GBMs are central themes. Though respondents did cite comparisons to others

in initially and then in firmly committing to self-labelling, these appeared to be secondary to the

attractions and desires (and the sex of the object of those attractions and desires) and described in

most participants' open ended responses (see Tables 10 and 11).   One online respondent's input

is particularly illustrative:

> When I was a little boy, I thought that since I was a man I was supposed to grow up, get a
>
> job, have a wife and kids. In the back of my mind, however, I always found myself
>
> wishing I could be the woman just so I could have a husband. A lot of people would
>
> think that maybe I wanted to be a girl, but I mostly blame this way of thinking on
>
> childhood innocence. You see, I wanted to be the woman because I had no idea what gay
>
> was, I had always known I just wanted to have a man in my future.

Lacking the vocabulary and concepts to explain or understand the early attractions and desires of

his intrapersonal world, the respondent pulled from what was available in his social world until,

in that same world, he found something he felt was more fitting.

Semi-Structured interview. The age range of first self-labelling for interviewees was

quite disparate, anywhere from six to 19 years old. The theme of Conflict versus Commitment

figured prominently in interviewees' narratives of first self-labelling. The valence of the conflict

could range from inner turmoil to something as low level as avoidance. For several reasons—

derogatory use of the word gay on the playground, his family background, and having no one to

talk to about his feelings toward other males--Steve wrestled intrapersonally with the label and

its interpersonal and social ramifications:

> The struggle with it. Coming to terms with it, with my family's background . . . it was all
>
> internal . . . like a lesser person, to be honest because of the whole second-class citizen

thing. Just I knew growing up that it was wrong. It had been drilled into my brain that it

was wrong. Just because of the age I was, I didn't understand most of the time anyways,

but I feel like . . . I know my father was very against it. My mum's told me since I've

come out that he wanted me playing with Tonka Trucks and not Barbie dolls. He didn't

want me to turn out gay. Just kind of things like that.

Although he really did not feel any genuine attraction toward women, Jamie self-labelled as

bisexual to himself as an initial identity weigh station before using the word gay:

I'd say I first . . . I've always known I had an attraction to men, I first identified it as

"exclusively" an attraction to men at about 19.

Self-labelling was not completely an intrapersonal process with a vocabulary and

meanings derived from the distal social world. For some respondents, sometimes events in their

interpersonal world led to a greater self-appraisal and understanding of their attractions and

desires and led to a more firm commitment later. For Daniel, first self-labelling occurred at six

when his cousin came out and his parents informed him:

Then my parents told me about it. They explained it to me and I thought, okay that must

be what I am. So . . . I never *told them* until 17, 18 years old . . . I had a very hard time

coming to terms with the word. Ummm, it might have been when I was, honestly when I

was 17 years old. It's always been in the back of my head on the back burner.

For Mike, the avoidance was less about self-labelling at 17 and more a conscious and motivated

decision about acting on it:

Nothing too crazy. . . . I didn't dive right into trying to get my hands on another guy. I

waited for, you know, I didn't just want a casual hook-up or anything like that. I wanted

a relationship with someone and I wanted that to be meaningful.

Interviewees who self-labelled relatively early often reported conflict before or even after committing to a sexual identity label, often because they had no one to talk to about it in their interpersonal world and were fearful because they knew the opprobrium that existed in the larger social one. Even Daniel, whose parents were open about the matter, did not disclose to them until six years later. Those who came out later generally did have people to talk to and felt more comfortable doing so.

Disclosure.

Online survey. In general, more respondents had come out first to a friend (97%, *n* = 77) than to a family member (86%, *n* = 68; see Table 7). On average, they also came out to a friend slightly sooner (M = 16.06 years, *SD* = 2.90) than they did a family member (M = 17.42 years, *SD* = 2.91).   As hypothesized, this is slightly earlier than what Floyd and Stein found with LGBT youth whose first disclosure to someone occurred at an average age of 17.32 and, to a parent, at 18.06. Sixty-eight participants had disclosed to a both a friend and to a family member. As hypothesized, they disclosed to a friend earlier (*M* = 16.72, *SD* = 2.79) than to a family member (*M* = 17.43, *SD* = 2.91) and this difference was significant, *t*(67) = 3.84, *p* < .001.

In order to get a picture of the degree to which local GBM youth have or have not come out, to what salient audiences, and to what extent they are open with these audiences, online survey respondents completed the Outness Inventory Scale. Results are presented in Table 12.

Table 12: Disclosure Audience and Level of Openness Reported by Percentage of Survey Respondents

Do they know? How open?	Def. not Not	Might Never	Prob. Never	Prob. Rarely	Def. Rarely	Def. Sometimes	Def. Openly	NA NA
Mother	5	6	8	1	12	15	51	1

Siblings	5	1	8	3	16	19	41	8
Father	18	11	4	1	23	13	25	5
Extended Family	19	13	8	13	15	15	15	3
OLD Straight friends	5	9	11	10	9	16	39	0
NEW Straight friends	17	8	1	5	6	17	46	0
Work peers	11	11	9	5	8	16	27	13
Stranger	22	18	10	11	14	10	15	0
Work Supervisor	18	10	9	6	12	3	29	13
Religious community	13	6	4	5	3	3	5	62
Religious leaders	13	8	5	1	4	1	5	63

By combining the percentages in the three response categories which indicate that the audience "definitely knows" (regardless of how they found out and the degree to which it is openly talked about) it is possible to extrapolate the percentage of respondents who are out (in one way or another) to that audience. Those percentages appear in the leftmost column of Table 13. The outness scores ranged from 1-7. A score of 0 meant that the person had selected "not applicable."

Table 13: Level of Outness Reported by Survey Respondents Overall, by Sphere, and by Component							
Outness . . .	Sphere	Component	Mean	SD	Mode	Min.	Max.
Overall			3.88	4.48	5.2	1	7
Overall (nonreligious)			1.39	1.54	4.8	1	7
% Out to . . .	Family		4.71	1.69	5.0	0	7
78%		Mothers	5.48	2.08	7.0	0	7
76%		Siblings	4.24	2.43	7.0	0	7
61%		Fathers	5.20	2.23	7.0	0	7
45%		Extended	3.91	2.21	1.0	0	7
	World		4.30	1.77	5.2	1	7
64%		Old straight friends	5.15	1.98	7.0	1	7
69%		New straight friends	5.05	2.41	7.0	0	7
51%		Work peers	4.04	2.61	7.0	0	7
39%		Strangers	3.70	2.15	1.0	1	7

44%		Work supervisor	3.57	2.67	7.0	0	7
	Religion		1.15	1.96	0.0	0	7
11%		Religious community	1.20	2.04	0.0	0	7
10%		Religious leaders	1.10	1.95	0.0	0	7

From the individual outness inventory items, level of outness was calculated in the following categories (Table 13): family, world, religion, overall, and overall (nonreligious). The mean score for overall outness (including religious questions) was affected by only 58% (n= 45) of respondents being raised in a particular religion or spiritual path and much fewer (33%, $n =$ 19) continuing to or participating in one at the time of the survey. Of those 19, five had listed items (i.e., agnostic, belief in God, esoteric, paganism, and spirituality and meditation) that are not clearly indicators of participation in an organized religion or religious community. Additionally, the majority of respondents indicated that the religious items on the outness inventory were not applicable to them (see Table 12). Given those reasons, a nonreligious overall outness was calculated by excluding the religious items (see Table 13).

The figures in these tables tell us, on average, how out and open respondents are in a variety of contexts to a variety of people in their interpersonal worlds. What is perhaps most striking is the level of complete outness with mothers, new friends, siblings, and old friends reported by large portions of the sample. In the context of the family, respondents reported being most out and open with their mothers, but siblings and fathers come in a close second and third--as it was in Savin-William's (1998) research and at roughly the same rates. Friends figure prominently in the current study, but few respondents were out or open in religious settings, partially because they never started or they stopped participating in organized religion. Given the negative social view of same-sex sexual behaviour promulgated by many churches and faiths,

it is surprising that some are as out and open as they are. Still, what these tables do not tell us is what the experience of disclosure and openness in these interpersonal contexts is like.

Semi-Structured interview. The themes of Incremental versus Complete and Trauma versus Support characterized interviewees' descriptions of disclosing, or coming out, to others. Disclosure in the narratives of interviewees could be incremental or complete in terms of what was disclosed, the composition of the audience that was disclosed to, and how it was disclosed. At the same time, the disclosure could be traumatizing or liberating depending on the audience's reaction and the resulting consequences. Interviewees' first committed disclosures to another occurred anywhere from the age of 13 to 19. However, Mathew remembered:

> When I was very young, maybe somewhere around the age of seven or eight, I might
>
> have said to my sister, I like boys. And my sister brushed it off, and she's like "You'll get
>
> over it. You'll grow out of it." And my sister's a few years older than me and I
>
> remember, vaguely, having that discussion with her and thinking, from what she said,
>
> "Oh, maybe because it's because I haven't hit puberty yet that I'm dealing with this."

He did not more firmly commit to a gay identity through disclosure until he was 14. In all but that instance and for Daniel, the other interviewees told a friend before they told a family member.

> *Disclosure to friends.* In disclosing to friends, many interviewees described

positive and supportive interpersonal experiences. Jamie explained that he tested the waters by provisionally identifying as bisexual in college as an incremental waypoint to identifying as gay:

> I had been identifying as bisexual for a little while, just because . . . I dunno. I guess
>
> internally I figured it was kind of easier to be half a freak than, you know, a complete
>
> freak. So, some kind of internalized homophobia I guess, in retrospect. But, I was just in

conversation and my best friend was in the program with me and he already knew about

my perceived [bisexual] sexual orientation, and somebody else kind of made a comment

asking me if I had a girlfriend, and I said "No, I'm gay," and then I went, "Oh, I'm gay!"

He was surprised by the unexpected positive reactions from some of his friends:

Well, I have friends that are Christian and are very accepting and some of the best people

I ever met . . . and, yeah, actually I was quite afraid to tell him for exactly that reason.

But they were great. And they're members of the Salvation Army . . . which is a church

that openly doesn't support homosexuality. But they [best friend's family] do. So, I was

very, you know, off-put at the idea of having to talk to all of them and basically their

reaction was just kinda like "Eh, God made you that way." So, you know, it was very

easy.

A few interviewees also described disclosures that went beyond positive, to the superlative.

Some of Shaun's friends were even enthusiastic when he came out at:

Thirteen [or] fourteen. It was in-between the two. I remember I told first my best friend

Samantha. Well, actually, she asked, . . . "Why can't you just tell me?" Like that, right?

And I was really like caught off guard and . . . I was like, "Okay, I think you already

know," 'cause it was time. . . . And then she's like, "Oh, my God, I knew it. I love it, I

love it, I love it!" And she was just going on and I remember that whole night she called

me like six times, the next day we hung out the whole day, went down by the river, and

she's asking me what she thinks of this guy and this guy. I was like a fucking lapdog. I

mean, I swear to God, I'm like a fucking accessory.

Nathan also enjoyed a great deal of popularity or status in his high school: "Before I came out

there was the harassment that a lot of kids go through, but after that, no. I found I controlled

respect and my popularity had sky-rocketed." Coming out as gay or bisexual no longer

necessarily translates into a complete loss of status and popularity or inevitably portends social

ostracism, even in school. That does not mean, as will be discussed later under harassment, that

it is always easy for all, but the intrapersonal and social context has certainly shifted in direction

in comparison to decades past.

Not all interviewees described being out to all of their friends and while they do not

actively hide it by making-up pretend girlfriends, for example, they described not actively and

unequivocally disclosing either. For example, Thomas is out to everyone but his best friend, to

whom he gives hints but with whom he maintains, basically, a "don't ask don't tell policy:"

> [We've] been friends . . . for 13 years and . . . we're two peas in a pod. He doesn't know
>
> I'm gay but . . . still, how I feel about it is that he [pause] hasn't approached me. I think
>
> he knows. I've been giving him all kinds of signs. I don't really need to tell him, so I
>
> think he knows and I think he doesn't have a problem with it so he's not gonna bring it
>
> up and I don't feel the need to bring it up either because we're friends regardless . . . I
>
> don't have to hide it from anybody besides my best friend, but I'm not really hiding it
>
> from him, I'm just not, I don't feel I need to tell him.

Disclosures were not always so subtle or tightly managed as Thomas's. The consequences were

also not always as positive and supportive as they were for Jamie, Shaun, and Nathan.

Some experiences can only be described as traumatizing. According to Mathew, during

the summer after graduating from his English Catholic elementary school:

> I was 14 when I officially came out of the closet . . . I came out to everyone first and
>
> then, obviously, in a small town, in [the county] where I grew up, I had to immediately

hurry up and get home and explain that news to my mother before it got back to her . . .

Word travels fast in a small town.

The context of his public disclosure was less than optimal and involved the disappearance of a memento from a deceased relative from his house at the tail end of a party at his house where he had sex with the alleged thief, who had a girlfriend:

I was in a relationship with, just a physical relationship, with someone who was straight in quotations. Then he ripped me off . . . and there was no replacing it. So I paged him . . . and I told him and I threatened him with, you know, "Return that jewellery . . . or shit's going to hit the fan and I'm going to be the one throwing it and I know your girlfriend's phone number and I have no problem telling her just how good you really can be in bed." And he said he would--he threatened me with physical violence and I told him, "Well, you got to catch me first." And that's how I came out of the closet. I immediately got on the phone with his girlfriend . . . and away we went!

Mathew's initial, complete, and public disclosure had ramifications that eventually spun out of his control (and these will be discussed later under harassment). His disclosure of his own sexual identity (and the outing of another's sexual behaviour) led to a string of events that culminated in two assaults. One of these assaults led to an academic expulsion in the context of a school system that was not prepared to deal with sexual identity and issues of harassment, beyond sending him away to a residential educational facility in a different school board that he described as "Basically, a prison for kids." While the staff there was supportive, the issue of his sexual identity was never directly addressed or supported in any systemic way. What did make him feel more "normal" was a matter of degree; many of the other kids had much more severe problems—and without the extremely supportive family that he had.

Disclosure to family. Interviewees described disclosure experiences with their families that were sometimes extremely positive and supportive, to those like a benign neglect where certain topics are avoided, and others that were and continued to be tumultuous and upsetting. Sometimes mothers were described as most supportive, sometimes both parents, and in other cases fathers or stepfathers. However, no interviewees described, at the time, being completely rejected or thrown out of their familial homes. Shaun's family disclosure experiences have been extremely positive for him, though it probably did not hurt that he had an out gay uncle, now deceased, who had been very close to his mother:

My family is totally supportive. My mum's one of my biggest, biggest supporters. She loves it, like she loves, she always asks me. I remember I told her I was gay and she told me to get in the car because we were going to the mall. She's like, "I always wanted one!" [laughs] And I'm like, okay. That's cool, like I love it. I love that you're like that.

Experiences have even been positive and supportive with much older extended family members:

I was worried about my grandma and she, my grandma and grandpa, and they're older, right, they're in their eighties, so you gotta think, like it's an older generation right? But no, my grandma and grandpa were amazing. They were so supportive of me and they wanted to know what was going on, if I had a boyfriend or, you know, if we went to a family function they'd be like, "Oh, if you want bring your boyfriend, whatever you want." It was nice. It was nice to go into because they know, I wouldn't say what it's like, but love is love.

Daniel reported being out to both of his parents, who weren't all that shocked--just concerned for his well-being:

My parents? They were upset. They were more concerned, or so they say they were

more concerned, for my protection in the society and how society would react to it, but

they said that they knew ever since I was young, which I don't understand, but they did . .

. Yes, they are the best that I want them to be. We'd talk about it when I had my

boyfriend for a little while. My dad said to me, "Oh well, how about I bring you and him

out for dinner and I can get to know him better and we can talk," . . . So--we broke up

before that happened, it happens . . . [O]n my mom's side, overall, everyone is really

good with it. Right now, my grandparents don't know because they're strict Catholics,

but my dad told my uncle who is a priest and he's fine with it, which I was completely

shocked at.

Like the other respondents, interviewees were most likely to tell their mothers before their

fathers. Jamie had told his mother, but not his father, for whom the subject is touchy:

Good question, that requires more explanation . . . I told my mom . . . Originally, I told

her I was bisexual because I was still questioning. Afterwards, it became common

knowledge, and she always took it well. That was never really a struggle. I still haven't

told my dad but I get the feeling--he has strongly implied that he's aware . . . It's just that .

. . he was sexually assaulted when he was a child, and so I noticed growing up that he

was always sort of homophobic. But I think it was just misdirected hatred. So, I think as

he's gotten older and he's probably realized that I'm gay he's sort of slowly re-shaped

his views and--I've just noticed, in things like, topics about gay people used to be sort of

taboo in our house. Dad would always change the channel or something like that. He

would never openly express disdain, but you could tell he was uncomfortable.

Thomas's mother had reportedly taken his disclosure well, but it still continued to be a struggle

with his father, who is a retired factory worker:

[W]ell my dad had already begun to take notice because he had found . . . gay porn on

our computer, websites and shit . . . "What the fuck is this?" You know what I mean? . . .

I went home the next day and my dad's like, "You better not be gay," and . . . bringing up

all this prejudice because that's the way he is and I was like, "No, I'm not gay," 'cause I

didn't want to bring it up because it was eating at me, but I didn't have the strength to

like say to him, well like, this is who I am.

Without coming out to his parents, Thomas moved in with a man he was seeing at the time. The

relationship quickly went sour and, after a month, he had to move back in with his parents:

I came home after breaking up with my boyfriend and they were like, "Oh, so you're

moving back home?" and I was like, "Mom and dad, I'm gay," and oh, my God . . . Who

was the nurturing one? . . . [M]y mom was the nurturing one obviously because moms

are usually more empathetic and my dad was very [pause], you know, he couldn't deal

with it sort of thing, and he still can't deal with it, even though he says he's okay with

that, I know, I know he isn't . . . when he first heard it he . . . blew up like a fucking

volcano, but then he started to calm down, started to . . . He was saying, "Oh, I can't

believe you're gay," you know what I mean, it was sort of portraying me as less of a

human because I was gay . . . It's rarely talked about although he has been opening his

mouth up about it recently.

Steve accidentally came out to his family during a confrontation with his sister:

My sister, she was much like my grandmother. She, to this day, is still very against

homosexuals, and so growing up she was kind of one of my biggest bullies, and I

remember one day she was just angry with me for some menial thing and she yelled at

me, "Why don't you go take it up the ass?!?" . . . So I think, just at that point I had taken

too much, the straw that broke the camel's back and I yelled out at her, "My sexuality is none of your business!" and standing behind me on the steps behind me was my mom and my brother and right above me, my parents' bedroom, where my step-dad was laying down on his bed.

Steve's mother was taken aback and stunned:

Oh, God, yeah. And so she uh, I think she said something along the lines of, "What do you want me to say?" She was kind of taking it personally, I think that she was a bad mother, and I think that was all that was said. She went back upstairs and she, I guess she kind of filled my step-father in on what happened, because obviously, he heard the yelling, and so, she came back down ten minutes later. She asked me for a hug, so I stood up and hugged her. She probably cried onto my shoulder for about five minutes, just standing there hugging and then we both sat back down on the couch and we just talked about it, which is when she filled me in on a lot of my grandmother's feelings and the one specific thing . . . I don't think I've ever actually said to her, "Mom, I'm gay."

In Steve's case, it was his stepdad that helped calm the situation down. Although his stepfather has been supportive all through Steve's coming out process, it has taken his mother a bit more time. The fact that she really liked his second boyfriend helped:

Oh, so I think what I was getting with that, the whole my mom's comfort level, and so now that she knows Nathan she loves Nathan, she takes us out for dinner all the time and we have family dinners and one of the things, she never let us sleep over, but now she actually, I can say to my mom, "Oh, I'm gonna sleep over at Nathan's." "Oh, okay, have fun, be good." She loves him and I think it is because it took the very mature, very ambitious person that Nathan is to show her that I'm gonna be okay, and that I can be

successful, and I can be everything that she wants from me. And she's very okay with it

now, me being gay.

Mike had come out to his friends, his mother and father, and a few members of his extended

family, but his activism in establishing a GSA at his school gained a momentum that was far

beyond what he had anticipated and had some personal ramifications for which even he was not

totally ready:

> So, after the meeting I ended up having an interview with the [newspaper] and we did the
>
> interview and they sent a photographer to take my picture a couple times, so I knew I was
>
> going to be in the paper. I knew my picture was going to be in it. What I didn't know
>
> was that it was going to be front page news. . . I'm on my way to school and my mom
>
> calls me and . . . she's like, "Oh my God, do you know what you did?" And I'm like,
>
> "No?" She was vulgar. She was in the gas station . . . She goes, "You're on the f— front
>
> page of the [newspaper]!" . . . So I got to school and I ran to the library . . . and sure
>
> enough there was ten papers laid out on a table . . . and on each one of those papers was
>
> my face on them, above the fold. Like, the first thing anybody saw when they read the
>
> paper that day was my face. Not expecting that. . . . So that happened and then that's
>
> how most of my family found out and that's really how I came out.

All interviewees described familial disclosure experiences where at least one parent was

supportive and accepting. Sometimes one parent was not accepting or supportive. Sometimes

that parent needed more time to adjust to the initial disclosure and often with the help of the

more supportive parent. In those familial contexts where another member had previously come

out parental reactions were described as more supportive by interviewees. Since moving out of

his father's house and moving in with his boyfriend, Mike has not really seen his father, whom

he described as saying a variety of homophobic things. He and his boyfriend spend time with his

mother. In Thomas's case, at the time of the interview, his father had still not come around and

was getting increasingly negative and abusive, making Thomas want to leave home again, but he

was having difficulty finding a job to support himself.

Coming out can be slow and over time to one or just a few people, as it was for Jamie. In

other cases, like Mathew's, it can be immediate and total. In some cases, disclosure is almost

completely under the discloser's control and he may keep it almost completely private, save for

the few individuals with whom he has had sex. In other cases, like Mike's, the person has so

little control of the disclosure that it does not even really make sense to call him a "discloser,"

but perhaps an "initiator," instead.   It can also be traumatic, as it was initially for Mathew or

liberating, as it was for Shaun, but what can be horribly traumatizing with one audience can be

extremely liberating and assuaging with another--as it was when both told their mothers.

Between all these more extreme or exceptional polarities are all the varied graduations populated

by experiences of people like Thomas, Daniel, Nathan, and Steve.

Sex.

Online survey. Respondents were asked if they have had sex. The majority (87%, *n* =

69) reported that they had sex, while 10 (13%) reported that they had not (see Table 7). Unlike

the Savin-Williams (1998) sample, they generally had sex after disclosing to another person.

Sex also tended to occur at younger ages in the Savin-Williams sample, with sex with a male

occurring at around 14 years of age and sex with a female at around 15. For participants in the

current study, the average age when they first had sex was 16.60 years (*SD* = 3.21), the most

commonly reported age was 18, and the range of ages reported was 6-23 years of age. About a

third of respondents (33%, *n* = 43) had sex with a female at an average age of 15.88 (*SD* = 2.27;

see Table 5). The majority (86%, *n* = 68) of the total sample reported that they had sex with a

male. The average age when they first had sex with a male was 17.53 (*SD* = 3.44). To test the

hypothesis that sex with a female would occur before sex with a male, a paired samples t-test

was conducted using the age responses of the 25 participants who had experienced both. The

mean age of first having sex with a female was 15.88 (*SD* = 2.32) and 17.52 (*SD* = 4.07). This

difference of slightly over one year was not statistically significant, *t*(24) = 1.97, *p* = .061.

> *Semi-Structured interview.* Though it involves other people, and is therefore technically

interpersonal, sex is generally more private than the act of disclosure. The themes of Ignorance

versus Knowledge, Open versus Secretive, and Awkward versus Comfortable were found in the

interviewees' narratives about their first sexual encounters. Ignorance could take different

forms, from not knowing whether or not sex would be enjoyable, to not knowing much about

sex, especially homosexuality, in general, and to not really knowing how to negotiate a sexual

encounter or talk about it afterward. With sexual experiences and talking with others,

interviewees became more knowledgeable in these arenas. Some sexual encounters, especially

early on and with certain people, were shrouded in secrecy and awkwardness while others were

characterized by openness and comfortableness.

> Only two interviewees had had sex with a female. Mathew described his first time at 14

when he had sex to see if he would like it:

> [Laughs] Oh no, you know what, she was a friend's cousin and she was staying with her
>
> cousin. She was from out of town and ah, I don't know, I figured give it a shot, I can't
>
> say, "No, I don't like girls," until I at least, you know . . . It was just kind of shooting in
>
> the dark. [laughs] For lack of a better term.

Only Mathew and Thomas followed the pattern of the original Savin-Williams (1998) sample of having had sex with a female before firmly self-labelling.

All of the interviewees had had sex with another male. Shaun described his first time at the age of six with an 11 or 12 year old whose family was staying with his. Though his memory of the mechanics was a little spotty, his memories of the awkwardness and awkwardness of discovery were vivid:

> I remember we were sitting on the couch watching TV or whatever and we saw, what was it, it was two women kiss, I forget which movie, two women, and I'm like what about two men? So like, I asked him if he wanted to kiss and then we kissed, and then I sucked his dick at six years old and I'm just like, oh, my God. . . . I can't explain it but I knew that it wasn't right. Not so much, not right. But like, I knew that we were too young to do something like this. It was more . . . I was afraid, like, if I heard a noise I jumped up because like if someone caught me— I knew in that aspect that it wasn't supposed to happen . . . We went downstairs one time and he tried fucking me and then like, I don't know if they knew something was going on upstairs 'cause . . . it was like my brother . . . his sister and they were going downstairs . . . They heard something. We didn't hear it. They came in the back room and he was fucking me and it was really . . . I was really scared. I didn't know what to do.

As with other interviewees, when parsing out the definition of what actually constitute sex, there was some fuzziness:

> It was more or less because the first time I actually had sex, because at six you really don't know what you're doing, right? So I'm thinking sex, that was just something that, we really didn't know what was going on, we were just like, "'kay, like stick it in," like,

you know? I don't even know if it went in me. I don't know at that time. So I was just

like, whatever.

Shaun did make a distinction between his early activities with this boy and the second time he

had sex:

So then at 14, I had sex . . . We were in the same class together . . . [My mum and I] had

an apartment, and she was at work all the time . . . I texted him because he didn't live too

far away from me . . . we were texting back and forth and I was like, "Oh, come chill or

whatever," right? He came over, whatever, we watched a movie and then he grabbed my

dick and then he put my head towards his, I started sucking his dick, and then he fucked

me and then . . . we did talk about it after. He was a little bit uncomfortable about it. I

wasn't because I'm like this is what I'm supposed to do, right? This is what I'm built for

. . . he was on the football team, like grade nine football team. That's what I'm saying; in

high school I screwed a lot of straight boys in high school. It was all straight boys.

Even though Shaun was openly gay at school, most of his sexual partners were not or identified

publicly as straight, so he had to keep secret about their activities together.

Mathew's first time with another male at 15 was with the male who later physically

assaulted him because he didn't keep it a secret:

Well, yeah, but it's not like we had discussions about it, it was just kind of like,

everybody is passed out at a house party one night and . . . you know, things happen.

Circumstances allowed for it and ah away we went . . . Oh, God, it was passionate. The

sex--that was the first time I ever got any physical contact with another male, let alone, a

dick in my ass, which was fucking brutal, by the way. Back then, I was tight like a nun.

So it--ouch, but he was like a perfect gentleman about it, you know, until of course, shit

hit the fan and he turned into the biggest psycho dickhead asshole on the face of the earth. While Mathew's first sexual experience was initiated and physically negotiated without words, interviewees also described events where verbal negotiation, albeit somewhat indirect and awkward, did initiate and play out through their encounters. Nathan's first experience was also at 15, but with entirely different consequences than Mathew's, with a long-time friend. It was initiated in his parent's hot tub:

I had a friend over. I'd known him since I was [pause] 10, and we was in the hot tub, no drinking, too young . . . on one seat there's six jets . . . He sat in the one with six and he turned around, pulled the front part of his bathing suit down and he's like, "Oh, this feels really good" . . . Previous to that I *had* thought about guys before but nothing had ever happened to confirm that . . . and then he turned to me and he asked, "Have you ever wondered what it's like being gay?" And there was a thought in my head and then there was the response. The thought in my head was, "Yes," my response was [pause], "I don't know?" That timid [laughs] reaction. So we just started hand jobs in the hot tub and then that was it and it was weird because we went back up to my bedroom and did it again and we timed each other [laughs]. Not like to see who goes first but just like, "You're allowed three minutes, I'm allowed three minutes." Yeah, and that was it. After that our relationship just kind of fizzled out just because it kinda got awkward at school after that.

Nathan and his friend were together a few more times, but after they were discovered in the back of a van at a high school dance the friend moved out of province where, according to Nathan and his Facebook profile, he eventually married a woman.

These early mid-teenage encounters were characterized by much awkwardness, in their initiation, how they played out, and in interactions or lack of interactions afterward. In some

cases, it was because they were just one-time physical explorations, the continuation of the

intimacies had too many social implications and became too internally conflicting for one or

more of the actors, or the individuals were just at different places in their developmental process.

Not all interviewees had sexual encounters during their teenage years, but the majority did.

Mike had waited to act on his attractions and had sex for the first time at 20 with another

gay male with whom he felt very comfortable, in the context of a romantic relationship:

> That's my current boyfriend actually. We had been dating for a couple months . . . We
>
> met at work. We worked together and he didn't know I was—well, he knew I was gay
>
> because everyone, you know when people would say "that's gay" or when they would
>
> drop the, drop the f-bomb, I would say something, so everyone knew I was gay. I didn't
>
> know he was gay at the time, and uh, when I found out, we kinda set a couple dates and
>
> started hanging out and we ended up dating.

Interviewees' first sexual encounters, while initially inexperienced, awkward, and often

secret, gave way to others that were more deft, comfortable, and open. These three themes (i.e.,

Ignorance versus Knowledge, Secretive versus Open, and Awkwardness versus Comfortable) are

often intertwined, with awkwardness stemming from a lack of experience in sexual negotiation,

from fear of discovery while having to keep the sexual encounter secret, or inability to process

the encounter with the other person later. Even if awkward or secret, these experiences led to

interviewees' confirmation of desires and increasing commitment to a gay sexual identity.

Love.

Online survey. The majority of respondents (89%, *n* = 70) had been in love with either a

male, female, or both, while a minority (11%, *n* = 9) had never been in love with either (see

Table 7). The average age for first falling in love was 17.37 (*SD* = 2.79), with the most common

age being 16, with a range of 12-25. Twenty two (28%) had been in love with a female at an

average age of 15.77 (see Table 7), and 66 (84%) had been in love with a male at an average age

of 18.53 in terms of the first time it occurred with that sex. Eighteen respondents had reported

both first love and the ages at which they occurred with a female (*M* = 15.94, *SD* = 2.16) and a

male (*M* = 19.28, *SD* = 3.63). This difference of 3.4 years was significant, *t*(17) = 3.42, *p* = .003.

As hypothesized, for those who had experienced both love with a female and a male, first love

with a female occurred first.

Semi-Structured interview. The theme of Unrequited versus Mutual was found in

interviewees describing their first loves. No interviewees reported being in love with a female.

This is not particularly surprising in an all gay-identified sample. All but Daniel reported having

been in love with another male. In terms of being unrequited, the love could be kept private and

from the person loved. Sometimes the person was not capable, interested, or available to return

the love that the interviewee held for him. Sometimes first loves were powerful and immediate

and sometimes interviewees described them as slowly unfolding mutually over time.

Thomas described his first love, an unrequited experience with someone whom he dated

very briefly and, although it ended very quickly, he still has feelings for the young man:

When I was first in love with a male, yeah, 19. [pause] . . . his name is Doug . . . four

days . . . but, I still love him though to this day. People laugh when I tell them that . . .

[he broke] up with me but we weren't really together, you know what I mean. I started

seeing him and then I told him that, oh, God . . . Looking back on it, it's like why did I

even say that? . . . And I still feel it to this day. To this day I feel it.

Shaun described a complicated and conflicted first love that was kept under wraps

because the other young man was closeted and had a girlfriend, which inspired jealousy:

He had a girlfriend at the time too that this stuff was going on. I mean like, in my sense I was like okay, bitch, I really don't care because at the end of the day I'm getting mine, so [laughs]. I don't care if you're going over there and then coming to me after because it doesn't bother me, but I mean like, at the end of the day it really does. It really does bug you. . . . I would get jealous. I'd get pissed. Like, you know what. I can't do this because, this is the situation that I put myself in and like . . . he is claimed as straight.

In that context, the mutual feelings that were shared privately inspired frustration:

Like, say if we were alone or something right? It'd be totally different. We'd be talking about, like if he would ever come out and all this stuff and like, massages, like, it would be cute, but when you go out you can't be the same way, right? Because he's with his girlfriend . . . He used to buy me things all the time. He used to like, we'd go out for dinner and he'd buy it. Like, it's cute. Like cute things, like he would bring me home something. . . .[W]e used to sleep in like the same bed and shit. It's cute, like, he was adorable and he was hot as shit. . . . It was romantic for sure.

Shaun eventually cut all ties with him, but still thought of him often.

Steve's first love was at 17 with another young, out gay male, Jared. Steve was very happy to have a gay companion, but Jared, who was two years older, did not treat him all that well:

The first person I fell in love with, um and then he broke my heart . . . he was very harsh to me. He . . . didn't really bully me but he belittled me in an indirect way, just sort of things he would say would hurt me. . . . [I]t was like he was ashamed of me, to be with me, which he actually did say to me at one point--that he was embarrassed to be seen with me.

Steve took a break from dating him, but then got back with him because he still had feelings for him. After they got back together, Steve went with Jared's family to see him in a theatrical performance where he finally had enough of being dismissed:

> Yeah, and so I went to give him a hug and a kiss afterwards and I went [to whisper] in his ear, "You did such a good job," and he walked right past me and went and talked to other people. The entire time afterwards . . . I stood there alone . . . and at the end of it, walking back to his car, he took me down a complete secluded hallway. He was actually walking in front of me, not with me, walking back to his car. I was just fed up with him so I said, "Go fuck yourself. I'm not doing this anymore."

Jamie's first love developed over the course of a year and still continued. Although he has had sex, he and his older dating partner both decided to wait and see how things developed before they became physical:

> Well, yeah, that'd be the guy I'm still in love with! . . . He's older . . . He's 31. So he's about nine years older than me . . . [It's been] about a year. Just over. And it's gotten to the point now where I've told him how I feel and he's sort of re-evaluating the situation at the moment, so--it's pleasant. And more importantly, he makes me happy, so, whether he's my friend or my boyfriend, I win either way! . . . I was instantly attracted to him but, I think the love came when I got to know him better, and the more we hung out the more compatible we became. We just have a rapport I've never--well, I've never been in love before this guy. I've been attracted to a lot of guys, but this is like . . . in a way, that's almost better. Because we didn't ruin it. It had time to grow without being interrupted by something that primal, so, yeah. I'm happy with how it turned out.

Some unrequited loves were immediate within a short lived dalliance, like Thomas's. Others, like Steve's, developed over time. Still, both loves endured after the relationships were over. Some unrequited loves were private and shared with no one else. Other mutual loves, like Shaun's, were hidden from public and only shared in private between the two. Sometimes loves were mutual but not along the same dimension, leading to discord and frustration. Whereas, in disclosure to others, interviewees shared their feelings by talking about them to someone, in love, they often shared their feelings by enacting them with another with varying degrees of success and at various speeds and over heterogeneous lengths of time.

Romantic relationships.

Online survey. In response to asking whether they had ever had a romantic relationship, 66 (84%) said yes and 13 (16%) said no. The average age for their first romantic relationship with anyone was 17.58 ($SD = 3.00$) with a range of 10-25 years of age. Forty two (53%) of the respondents reported not currently being in a relationship, while twenty four (30%) said they were. Twenty three (29%) were seeing a male and one (1%) was seeing a female. On average, the length of these current relationships was 13.04 months ($SD = 16.73$) with the most commonly occurring length being one month and with a range of 0-60 months. The modal length of one month may suggest serial monogamy and have implications for testing for sexually transmitted infections, though number of relationships was not asked.

Twenty five respondents (32%) reported having been in a romantic relationship with a female, and 54 (68%) had not. Fifty-nine (88%) reported having been in a romantic relationship with another male and 20 (12%) had not. The first age of having a first relationship with a female ($M = 15.25$, $SD = 1.36$) was about three years earlier than having a first relationship with a male ($M = 18.81$, $SD = 2.69$). To test the hypothesis that a relationship with a female would

occur earlier than one with a male, another paired samples t-test was conducted with using the ages reported by the 20 respondents who had experienced a first romantic relationship with a female (M = 15.36, SD = 1.42) and with a male (M = 19.10, SD = 2.57). This difference of 3.74 years was significant, $t(19)$ = 6.57, p < .001. Fifty-five respondents had both disclosed to a family member (M = 17.56 years, SD = 2.91) and had a romantic relationship with another male (M = 18.71 years, SD = 2.57). The hypothesis that disclosure (to a family member) would occur before a romantic relationship with another male was supported by the significant difference of slightly over one year (1.15), $t(54)$ = 3.53, p = .001.

   Semi-Structured interview. Within narratives offered by interviewees on their first romantic relationships were the themes of Dissatisfaction versus Fulfillment, Unfaithfulness versus Trust, and Secret versus Public. Again, these themes related to each other. The secrecy of Shaun's romantic relationship with his straight-identified schoolmate left him dissatisfied even though the times they shared in secret gave him fulfillment and made him happy. The public display of his unfaithfulness to Shaun stirred up intense jealousies. The accumulation of these romantic relationships for some allowed them to be able to compare and contrast the relationship dynamics and the resulting feelings. In some cases, this led to increasing appreciation of their current relationship and, in others, perspective on the dissatisfaction engendered by those in the past. For others, past relationship experiences cast a shadow into their current relationships or appraisals of future relationships that made it incrementally more difficult to trust current or future partners as easily. Still, some interviewees, like Mike and Jamie, appreciated their current relationship without having past ones to use as a gauge.

   Steve's dissatisfaction with his relationship with Jared led to him feeling fulfilled with Nathan in comparison:

[A] couple weeks passed . . . and I just thought to myself, "Oh, I wonder what Nathan's

doing?" So I texted him and I said, "Hi, how are you?" . . . [T]he entire time I was dating

Jared the second time I had feelings for Nathan and I knew that . . . he had feelings for

me, too, and I knew that when I had called it off that he was hurt by it. And so . . . he

texted me back, "Oh, I'm sleeping at a friend's house in Lasalle . . . I'm in your town . . .

[can I] stop by?" And I said, "Yeah of course." I left the house . . . I'm just sitting in the

driveway in his car . . . but we talked for like two hours and by the end of it we decided to

pick up from where we left off and ten months later, nine months later technically, been

dating ever since. Changed my life. Treats me amazingly, like a proper boyfriend

should.

Nathan had also just come out of a dissatisfying relationship with David, a young out male, after

a string of a few relationships in which his partners, like David, had been unfaithful:

Yeah, David. It was [pause] me and him had fought a lot . . . I yelled at him so much for

being too promiscuous. . . . I caught him I don't know how many times going behind my

back with other guys and I, broke my heart . . .

These experiences characterized by unfaithfulness, especially David's repeated transgressions,

continue to impact Nathan internally but also interpersonally in his relationship with Steve:

"[David] broke my trust for people, and I'm sorry to say, Steve does bear the brunt of that

sometimes. I'm always around him like, 'What's going on?'" Though Nathan and David had

met online, inherent in Nathan's description of repeated broken trust, the Internet figured as both

contributing to the frustration of unfaithfulness and the means of finding out about it:

[But my relationship with David] Oh, boy, um, that was, it was just kind of, a shit-pile

growing. . . . Like, I mean he was very affectionate and stuff, but um, [pause] every time

> I'd come home from school or something it's me walking into the room and there's him
>
> jacking off on cam with some other guy, and I came home from training . . . and I open
>
> up his computer to do some homework because my laptop was broken at the time, and I
>
> open up the Skype conversation to the weekend with him in a hotel room with him and
>
> another guy named Pat . . . I don't know why I just didn't call it off then, it was only a
>
> month in . . . so, yeah, even after that I forgave him and then [pause] the relationship just
>
> got so childish.

There was increasing discord in the relationship due to David's repeated unfaithfulness, which

made the issue of trust loom large as a problem in their relationship. David would cite the

resultant discord to excuse his continuing extracurricular activities:

> I was always yelling at him, he was always yelling at me, but it was always [pause] his
>
> excuse to cheat was because I'm abusive but verbally and . . . "My misunderstanding to
>
> that was you were the one who made the first move, therefore, I yell at you, explain that."
>
> He was like, "You never trusted me from the beginning," I was like, "David, you don't
>
> just go into a relationship trusting someone right away. You have to earn it." And, I
>
> dunno, I felt like I was bringing up a child. So one night . . . we broke up . . .

It was shortly after that when Nathan met Steve through a gay mobile phone application:

> Well, I mean, it's kind of weird. Steve and I had our up and down I guess you could say,
>
> but not willfully. We, yeah we just talked on Grindr one time. I respected the way he
>
> was talking. . . . So I was just like, "I need to know what you sound like," and we talked
>
> on the phone for three or four hours that night and I was just like, wow, getting through
>
> an entire phone conversation, we didn't even have to talk about sex once. You're 18 . . .
>
> at the time--that's amazing.

So they set up a date. After about two weeks, and eight months before the interview, Steve sent his fateful text message, which, according to Nathan was fortuitous because, "I was actually thinking of getting back together with David that time, but then [pause] . . . [I got the text]."

In addition to trust issues and unfaithfulness present as themes in interviewees' narratives, mentions of technology and, especially, the Internet are woven throughout. As a tool, it appears to be a bit of a double-edged sword. On one hand, as with early attractions, the Internet can be a place of sexual, social, and romantic exploration, especially for younger people who are not old enough to get into bars or those who are still closeted. On the other hand, it can be a source of frustration in negotiating relationships where one partner is unfaithful. Both edges are present when Nathan described how he broke up with David and met Steve.

Mathew had what he thought was going to be a perfect relationship until he encountered problems as a result of being outed for his HIV status:

> After all of that took place it was a year or two later where I started to get back, get back
> on my feet a little bit. All that shitty situation also led to ending what I thought was a
> perfect relationship, you know, I thought it was going to be my white picket fence. [The
> relationship was just] shy of three years. And I was, we had lived together for two of
> those years. I was pretty happily "married," I thought. When all that took place, I
> became very depressed and before I knew it my partner wasn't sleeping with me
> anymore. He was sleeping with everybody but me. That just, you know, dug the hole
> even deeper for me.

Since then, he has had only brief dalliances, but nothing permanent. He related how being open about his HIV status in a small community can be a major stumbling block in more ways than one.

At the time of his interview, Mike and his live-in partner, whom he had met at his previous job, had been together a year. It was both Mike's first relationship and the person with whom he had first had sex. Mike explained that they try to spend as much time together as they can because they both work so many hours, now at different workplaces. He described their relationship as very romantic and, even though they are very public, they've never encountered any problems:

> Sometimes him and I will go walk the dog and sometimes a group of friends will go out for dinner or lunch or something, and you know, we both believe in, if a heterosexual couple can do it, why can't we? . . . But, like I said, for the most part we go out to dinner, we walk around, we walk the dog, we go out, we've gone downtown, we've gone to Abar's, we've gone to the mall, we've gone place . . . Like, I'm not, I'm not a very, um, obvious person people would assume is gay. Like I said, I'm somewhat masculine, but even walking around town with my boyfriend, holding hands or, you know, public displays of affection would start generating, "[gasp] Oh, no!" Even then, we've never really had any problems.

Not all interviewees described being so fortunate but, as will be discussed later, harassment was most likely to be described when the target was without a companion.

Issues problematized in the literature. Some issues loomed larger for all participants, whether indicated by the numbers reported in the online survey or the length of the responses they generated in the in-person interview. Others were more idiosyncratic and experienced with varying degrees of intensity by a few and often from different vantage points. Of these issues, the issue that figured most prominently was harassment, whether feared or actual and whether

experienced directly or indirectly. Table 14 depicts these issues, the number and percentage of

respondents who reported them, and other descriptive statistics.

Table 14: Issues Problematized in the Literature, Affirmative Answers and Ages Reported by Number and Percentage of Survey Respondents								
Issue	Question	n	%	Mean	SD	Mode	Min.	Max.
Harassment								
	School?	44	56	--	--	--	--	--
	Ever?	53	67	13.54	4.52	14	3	20
	Affect?	45	57	--	--	--	--	--
HIV/AIDS								
	Affect Life?	37	47	--	--	--	--	--
	First Tested?	52	66	19.73	2.38	18	16	25
Homelessness								
	First Homeless?	3	4	15.00	2.00	13	13	17
	Sexual Identity Related?	2	3	--	--	--	--	--
Mood Altering Substances								
	Mood Altering Substances?	64	81	15.89	2.09	16	10	19
Depression								
	Feeling Down?	67	85	13.71	4.45	12	5	25
	Sexual Identity Related?	36	46	--	--	--	--	--
Suicide								
	Suicidal Thoughts?	43	54	14.02	3.41	12	6	24
	Sexual Identity Related?	23	30	--	--	--	--	--
	Suicide Attempt?	13	16	14.30	3.33	17	6	18
	Sexual Identity Related?	7	9	--	--	--	--	--
Sex Trade								
	Sex Trade?	11	15	--	--	--	--	--

Harassment.

Online survey. The majority (56%, *n* = 44) of respondents reported being called names,

picked on, physically attacked, or otherwise harassed for their sexual identity at school. Table 15

also breaks down responses to the question of harassment by type of schools respondents

reported attending. Because respondents were not asked at what type of school the harassment

occurred, it was only possible to ascertain whether a person who attended one or more types of

schools had experienced harassment at school, but not at what type of school the harassment

occurred. In that light, caution must be exercised in interpreting Table 15.

Table 15: Number and Percentage of Survey Respondents Reporting Attending Various Types of Schools and Harassment Based on Sexual Identity and School Type						
	Attendance Reported		Harassment Reported			
School Type	Attended (n)	Attended (%)	Yes (n)	Yes (%)	No (n)	No (%)
English Public	49	62	27	55	22	45
English Catholic	37	47	23	62	14	38
French Catholic	5	6	2	40	3	60
French Public	3	4	3	100	0	0
Private	3	4	1	33	2	67
Total	97		56		41	

When asked if they had ever been harassed (verbally or physically) for their sexual identities, the

majority of respondents said yes (67%, $n = 53$; see Table 14). For 57% ($n = 45$) of the sample,

the threat of harassment affects where they go and how they act. Although earlier comparisons

to other types of people were not found to affect the ages of first self-labelling, it was also

hypothesized that dissimilarity and similarity would be related to reports of harassment.

Furthermore, it was also hypothesized that dissimilarity and similarity would impact where

respondents go and how they act. Initially, respondents' unrecoded comparison ratings were

used. Specifically and again, it was hypothesized that dissimilarity to others and other males and

similarity to females and other GBMs would be related to whether or not harassment was

reported both at school and in general.

First, t-tests were conducted to see if the mean early comparison scores to other people, other males, females, and other GBMs differed among those who reported harassment at school and those who did not. The mean scores differed significantly with those reporting harassment having lower similarity scores to other people and other males and higher similarity scores to females and other GBMs (see Table 16). The mean differences in earlier comparison ratings were highest with the comparator groups of other people and other males (i.e., around one point on the scale) and lower with females and other GBMs (i.e., around a half a point). It may be that GBMs who experienced harassment at school see their earlier selves as more different than their perpetrators (who are more likely to be male), that the harassment occurs more frequently because of their (albeit self-reported and retrospective) dissimilarity, or some combination of both.

Table 16: Differences of Means and t-Test Results of Earlier Comparisons by Whether or Not Harassment at School Was Reported								
Comparator Group	At school, harassed?	N	M	SD	M Diff.	t	DF	*Sig. (2-tail)
People	Yes	44	2.45	1.02	-0.87	3.64	76	.001*
	No	34	3.32	1.07				
Males	Yes	44	1.68	0.64	-1.06	5.41	54.70	.000*
	No	34	2.74	1.01				
Females	Yes	44	3.34	0.99	0.46	2.18	77	.032*
	No	34	2.89	0.87				
GBMs	Yes	44	2.98	0.98	0.49	2.39	77	.020*
	No	34	2.49	0.85				

A second round of t-tests was conducted to see if mean early comparison scores to other people, other males, females, and other GBMs differed among those who reported any harassment for their sexual identity. With respect to harassment ever occurring, only the mean differences in earlier comparisons with other people and males were significantly different (see Table 17).

Those who reported harassment had significantly lower similarity ratings with respect to both other people and other males.

Table 17: Differences of Means and t-Test Results of Earlier Comparisons by Whether or Not Harassment Was Ever Reported								
Comparator Group	At school, harassed?	N	M	SD	M Diff.	t	DF	*Sig. (2-tail)
People	Yes	53	2.64	1.11	-0.60	2.30	77	.026*
	No	25	3.24	1.05				
Males	Yes	53	1.91	0.86	-0.75	3.42	77	.002*
	No	25	2.65	1.02				
Females	Yes	53	3.17	0.94	0.093	0.403	77	.688
	No	25	3.08	1.02				
GBMs	Yes	53	2.89	0.09	0.387	0.089	77	.697
	No	25	2.50	0.95				

With respect to respondents' current comparisons and whether or not they reported harassment related to their sexual identity occurring at school or ever, only the mean comparison scores with respect to other males showed any significant difference (of 0.59) between those who reported harassment ever occurring (see Table 18) . Those who reported harassment had significantly lower similarity ratings with respect to other males.

Table 18: Differences of Means and t-Test Results of Current Comparisons by Whether or Not Harassment Was Ever Reported								
Comparator Group	At school, harassed?	N	M	SD	M Diff.	t	DF	*Sig. (2-tail)
People	Yes	53	3.23	0.93	-.40	1.77	75	.081
	No	24	3.63	0.95				
Males	Yes	53	2.62	0.93	-.59	2.15	75	.035*
	No	24	3.21	0.88				
Females	Yes	53	3.51	1.11	.38	1.67	75	.100
	No	24	3.13	1.10				
GBMs	Yes	53	3.21	0.95	.17	0.62	75	.539
	No	24	3.04	0.90				

Similarly, only the mean current comparison scores with respect to other males differed (by 0.67)

between those who reported that the threat of harassment affects where they go or how they act

and those who reported that it did not (see Table 19). Those who reported that the threat of

harassment affects where they go or how they act had significantly lower similarity ratings with

respect to other males. In this and the previous case, the mean differences did not amount to a

full point on the scale, so the differences are very slight.

Table 19: Differences of Means and t-Test Results of Current Comparisons by Whether or Not Harassment Affects Where Respindets Go and How They Act								
Comparator Group	At school, harassed?	N	M	SD	M Diff.	t	DF	*Sig. (2-tail)
People	Yes	45	3.28	0.88	-.16	.76	75	.45
	No	34	3.44	0.99				
Males	Yes	45	2.51	1.06	-.67	2.65	75	.01*
	No	34	3.18	1.14				
Females	Yes	45	3.37	0.98	-.04	.18	75	.48
	No	34	3.41	0.93				
GBMs	Yes	45	3.09	1.07	-.14	.57	75	.64
	No	34	3.24	1.13				

A chi-square test was conducted to test the hypothesis that five point ratings of

dissimilarity and similarity to comparator groups would be related to reports of harassment. An

unacceptable number of cells had an expected count of less than five and so a valid chi-square

test could not be calculated using the original five dissimilarity and similarity categories. As

mentioned, these five categories were collapsed into three categories (i.e., dissimilar, equally

dissimilar and similar, and similar). This procedure bore significant results. The percentage of

respondents reporting harassment at school differed by their earlier comparisons to others, $X^2(2,$

$N = 78) = 17.76$, $p < .001$, with 71% of the dissimilar, 76% of the equally dissimilar and similar,

and 23% of the similar reporting such harassment (see Table 20).

Table 20: Crosstabulation of Respondents' Ratings of Earlier Comparisons with Others and Reporting Harassment at School			
Category	At school, were you ever called names, picked on, physically attacked, or otherwise harassed for your sexual identity?		Total
	Yes	No	
Dissimilar	22	9	31
Equally Dissimilar & Similar	16	5	21
Similar	6	20	26
Total	44	34	78

When the earlier comparator group was other males, the percentages of the dissimilar (75%),

equally dissimilar and similar (7%), and similar (11%) reporting harassment at school also

differed significantly, $X^2(2, N = 79) = 29.08, p < .001$ (see Table 21). Among those who

reported harassment at school, respondents were more likely to categorize their earlier selves as

dissimilar or dissimilar and similar to other males than those who self-categorized as similar.

Table 21: Crosstabulation of Respondents' Ratings of Earlier Comparisons with Other Males and Reporting Harassment at School			
Category	At school, were you ever called names, picked on, physically attacked, or otherwise harassed for your sexual identity?		Total
	Yes	No	
Dissimilar	42	14	56
Equally Dissimilar & Similar	1	13	14
Similar	1	8	9
Total	44	35	79

Earlier comparisons to females did not reveal significant group differences in reporting

harassment at school among those categorized by dissimilarity and/or similarity. When the

earlier comparator group was other GBMs, the percentages of the dissimilar (41%), equally

dissimilar and similar (57%), and similar (80%) reporting harassment at school also differed

significantly, $X^2(2, N = 79) = 6.06$, $p = .048$ (see Table 22). Among those who reported

harassment at school, respondents were more likely to self-categorize their younger selves as

dissimilar and similar or similar to other GBMs than those who self-categorized as dissimilar.

Table 22: Crosstabulation of Respondents' Ratings of Earlier Comparisons with Other GBMs and Reporting Harassment at School			
Category	At school, were you ever called names, picked on, physically attacked, or otherwise harassed for your sexual identity?		Total
	Yes	No	
Dissimilar	11	16	27
Equally Dissimilar & Similar	21	16	37
Similar	12	3	15
Total	44	35	79

In terms of harassment at school, what distinguishes those reporting from those not reporting is

more and earlier dissimilarity to other people and other males. More and earlier similarity to

other GBMs appears to have the opposite effect, with those who self-categorized as dissimilar

from GBMs being less likely to report being harassed at school.

Harassment at school also seemed to be related to current comparisons, but only with

respect to other males, $X^2(2, N = 77) = 9.72$, $p = .008$. Among those who reported harassment at

school, they were more likely to see themselves as currently more dissimilar (75%) or equally

dissimilar and similar (57%) to other males than similar (33%) to them (see Table 23). The sex

of the harassers was not asked in the online survey.

Table 23: Crosstabulation of Respondents' Ratings of Current Comparisons with Other Males and Reporting Harassment at School			
Category	At school, were you ever called names, picked on, physically attacked, or otherwise harassed for your sexual identity?		Total
	Yes	No	
Dissimilar	24	8	32

Equally Dissimilar & Similar	12	9	21
Similar	8	16	24
Total	44	33	77

In sum, respondents' self-characterizations of earlier dissimilarity or dissimilarity and similarity to others and to other males distinguished those who reported harassment occurring at school from those who did not. Only current comparisons to other males distinguished those who reported harassment at school from those who did not.

The percentage of respondents reporting harassment ever occurring differed according to their earlier comparisons to others, $X^2(2, N = 78) = 6.26$, $p = .044$, with 81% of the dissimilar, 71% of the equally dissimilar and similar, and 50% of the similar reporting such harassment (see Table 24).

Table 24: Crosstabulation of Respondents' Ratings of Earlier Comparisons with Others and Reporting Harassment Ever			
Category	Have you ever been harassed (verbally or physically) for your sexual identity?		Total
	Yes	No	
Dissimilar	25	6	31
Equally Dissimilar & Similar	15	6	21
Similar	13	13	26
Total	53	25	78

Among those who reported harassment ever occurring, respondents were more likely to self-categorize their younger selves as dissimilar or dissimilar and similar to others than similar. Earlier comparisons to other males, females, or other GBMs did not reveal significant group differences in reporting harassment ever occurring among those categorized by dissimilarity and/or similarity. None of the current comparisons (to others, other males, females, or other GBMs) distinguished those who reported harassment from those who did not.

Last, one-way analyses of variance were conducted using recoded comparison categories to determine if mean ages of first reported harassment differed among groups. With respect to earlier comparison with others, a main effect was found for categorizations of dissimilarity and similarity on the age reported for being first harassed, $F(2, 50) = 3.77$, $p = .03$. Those who saw themselves dissimilar from other people ($M = 12.20$, $SD = 4.69$) reported harassment first occurring about four years earlier than those who saw themselves as similar ($M = 16.23$, $SD = 4.29$). A main effect for categorizations of dissimilarity and similarity on age was also found with respect to earlier comparisons for other males, $F(2, 50) = 4.49$, $p = .02$. Those GBMs who saw themselves dissimilar from other males reported harassment first occurring about five and half years earlier ($M = 12.77$, $SD = 4.41$) than those who saw themselves as similar ($M = 18.25$, $SD = 3.86$). In all of the above cases, there were no main effects for categorizations of dissimilarity and similarity on age between the equally dissimilar and similar group and those who were dissimilar or similar. In addition, no main effects for categorizations of dissimilarity and similarity on the age reported for being first harassed were found for the other earlier comparator groups (i.e., females and other GBMs) or among current comparisons categories.

Semi-Structured interview. In responding to questions about harassment, the themes of Feared versus Actual and Avoidance versus Confrontation repeatedly manifested in the narratives of interviewees. Harassment not only took different forms in the narratives of the interviewees, whether it was actual or feared, avoided or confronted, but also had different targets. At times, harassment might be personally directed at them, other people, or just negativity about the topic of homosexuality in general. Most of the actual or feared harassment described by interviewees took place in school, but there were other contexts, as well. These included family settings, work contexts, commercial venues, and on the street. Some harassment

did not centre on homosexuality per se, but concerned HIV/AIDS and came from other gay or

bisexual people. Still, school environments were definitely a site of harassing words and

bullying behaviour.

Daniel was also targeted by the neighbourhood bully, who also went to his school: "Well,

all throughout grade school, there was the bully of the school and he would call me names in

front of everyone. It was pretty embarrassing." Some described harassment that was relentless

and brutal. In Mathew's case, the harassment started at age 11 and led to devastating

consequences, including escalating persecution, violence, institutionalization, and, later, the

premature end to a high school education. Though he is ethnically European-descent, his

tormentors started taunted him in elementary school with the epithet, "the fat Chinese girl,"

ostensibly due to his more exotic looking features, a label which eventually carried over into

high school. After Mathew came out through also outing his erstwhile sexual partner, the

former partner made good on his threat:

> And the person who I was sleeping with when I came out, that person, who I had, you
>
> know, started singing about, basically. He did at one point get a hold of me and broke
>
> my nose and beat me to a pulp. . . . Obviously, I was conscious for a few seconds before I
>
> hit the asphalt. And nobody ever got charged. The cops said that there was nothing I
>
> could prove. There was a bag over my head. So he got away with that, but I knew it was
>
> him. I mean, it's not rocket science.

In an effort to avoid additional persecution resulting from his very public disclosure and with the

help of his mother, Mathew transferred to an English Catholic high school in a neighbouring

town before the school year began. However, this did not protect him from continued torment in

his hometown in the county. In fact, the harassment he experienced continued. Though his

mother had tried to protect him from seeing it:

> [W]hen out of the front door, I walked around the side of the house to find the word
>
> "faggot" spray painted in lime green spray paint down the side of our house . . . I knew
>
> that, obviously, that was there for me and, obviously . . . I went to school that day . . . I
>
> don't think I spoke a word all day to anybody, which, I mean, when I got to high school
>
> it's not like there were a lot of people for me to talk to anyways. Even though I was out, I
>
> wasn't quite living out loud. I was, you know, basically paralyzed with fear in public
>
> settings and situations because I just figured everybody knew--and in small communities
>
> like Windsor-Essex County, everybody does know. Word travels fast, like wildfire and it
>
> wasn't that long into my high school, second semester, it wasn't that long into second
>
> semester when I was kicked out . . .

Word can travel fast in smaller communities and it can also travel fast between those

communities. Moving to the high school in the neighbouring town ultimately did not protect him

from being harassed there either:

> A girl who had heard the stories, she started to question me on it in fourth period math
>
> class. And I said, I turned around, and I said to her, "I don't think that's any of your
>
> business." And she said, "So it is true, you're a faggot?" And I said, "You know, I don't
>
> know if you know who my big sister is, but . . . she'll beat the shit out of you if you
>
> continue to run your mouth like that . . . So maybe you should just shut the hell up and
>
> leave me alone." She's like, "Oh, you got to get your sister to fight your battles for ya, do
>
> ya? Of course you do, faggot." And that's when I took it into my own hands with my
>
> textbook and belted her upside the head and got expelled. . . . After I got removed from

school for something that I didn't feel I had done wrong, I immediately thought, "Why am I bothering? Why do I live?" And that's when I got really suicidal. I was hospitalized for a few weeks.

Before he came out and in elementary school, Shaun dreaded going to school for fear that his earlier discovered same-sex behaviour would be revealed and he would become a target:

> I remember every day I'd be scared to go to school because I didn't know if anyone knew about what happened about that. It was so weird. . . . I mean, like I was just so nervous . . . I hated the first day. I hated to go on the first day of summer vacation because like, oh my God, I just know I'm gonna walk in and someone's gonna say something. Like, they know about it, and it really scared me.

His limited sense that something was wrong about his discovered activities was brought on by the sister's initial reaction and the jokes and innuendo she and his brothers would make that were initially mostly beyond his comprehension. But, as he got older, his comprehension grew, and so did his understanding of potential consequences. In describing that process:

> As I'm getting older, I'm thinking, as I'm getting older, I know I hear kids like, "oh faggot" or something. Like, you hear it more, and you're like, oh my God, like this is going to be scary. There was, I want to say, that I never, I'm almost positive I didn't think about suicide, but I'm, at that time, I'm just like oh, my God if someone found out I don't know what I would do, I really don't. . . . Like you know, at that point I'm not comfortable with anything so it was really scary for me, for sure.

While Shaun's secret was never disclosed on the schoolyard, allowing him to evade being labelled by others for his activities, others were not so lucky. He carried his fear until the

summer before he went to high school, when he decided to come out because he knew he would

have allies:

> I had a lot of family at the school that I went to. . . I mean it was hard, obviously, but I
>
> mean, the school that I went to I had my brother and my sister there, and a lot of friends
>
> and I mean, like, I knew a lot of their friends and they called me pretty much their little
>
> brother, you know? So going into that school, I really figured, you know what, if I want
>
> to do it, this would probably be the time to do it, and I mean to kinda like be true to
>
> myself at that point and I came out then.

When asked if he ever was the recipient of actual harassment, Shaun related he was occasionally.

While classrooms were places of safety, the hallways could be a different story. Still, these

incidents did not tarnish his experience of high school:

> I'm not going to say no because, I mean . . . you could [be] Mohammed Ali and . . .
>
> you're still going to get made fun of . . . There was times where I got called fag and stuff,
>
> but I mean, you have to take it with a grain of salt because you just look at them, like, tell
>
> me something I didn't know. Like, that is what I am. . . . Other than that, I never felt
>
> threatened. There was, I mean, there was a few times that, like, you would see a kid, say
>
> if I walked by or something and the kid called me a fag or something and I mean, I went
>
> in a class . . . but then say I come out of class and he's walking in the hallway and we're
>
> the only two, right? I mean, it gets a little nervous because you don't know what's going
>
> to happen and you don't know your reaction when it happens, right? So I mean, other
>
> than that like, I had a pretty decent--high school was pretty good for me. I have really no
>
> complaints. I loved high school.

Instead of a great deal of harassment, Shaun enjoyed a great deal of popularity and had a lot of friends. In his senior year he was crowned prom king. Being popular and having a lot of friends spared Shaun from having to deal with the difficult fallout he had earlier feared as a result of being out or being outed. He also had supportive teachers whom he felt comfortable talking to and supported by, including one gay teacher.

Mike had a similar experience in terms of having a teacher to turn to, but also being popular and having a lot of supportive friends. But in spite of his good fortune, he did take notice of the harassment to which others were harshly subjected. He used his popularity to try to directly address the plight of others:

> [T]hey did set their sights on other kids . . . I was trying to start [a] Gay Straight Alliance [GSA] . . . the year before there had been so many issues with uh, a gay student . . . He freaked out at school . . . one day he just snapped and he ended up running around the halls . . . And, you know, people were harassing him but also making it sound friendly, so he thought they were friends, but they weren't. They were just making fun of him. And he ended up running around the halls in his underwear screaming and yelling and slamming things, and um, after that, you know, it was kind of like a wake-up call.

Even after the student had been forced to leave the school, homophobic taunting continued and other students became the new targets. Already having a lot of friends as allies, Mike turned to one of his teachers for advice:

> When I came out, um, [pause] he came out to me, pretty much. So, it was like a mutual thing, so I knew he was gay. The students didn't. The teachers did. So, I approached him about starting a Gay Straight Alliance and he said that he probably wasn't the best

person to be the sponsor . . . there had been issues previously with him and [the GSA

issue] . . . So he directed me to another teacher, who said, who was good on the issues.

Mike did not experience harassment from his fellow students in trying to start the GSA. Instead,

he found himself to be the target of intimidation tactics from the principal, and he was called in

for a meeting: "I remember this meeting because she called me down and not the teacher

sponsor. Like, I was there by myself . . . it was a scare tactic. You know, I'm a high school

student, she's a principal. She had the power." But Mike, unlike a few who had tried before him,

did not back down or give up: "So, uh, after that we went over her head, um, to the school

board."

A movie had just been released that gave Mike and his friends even more inspiration for a

little old fashioned and grassroots gay liberation activism and make a very public, symbolic

statement:

[A] couple friends and I, we went and saw *Milk*, 'cause that had just come out, so we

went and saw *Milk* and my friend Lisa in the middle of the movie when he was making a

speech in front of everyone, he had an arm tag on with an upside down pink triangle so

my friend Lisa decided, came up with the idea, "Why don't we make some of these?

Pass them out at school. That way, it will show the principal how much support we

have."

It turned out to be an extremely time consuming task, but in the end they made 160 armbands,

which were quickly snapped up by students and teachers alike in two days. After staging the

quiet symbolic protest, Mike decided to be less quiet, put out a call through word of mouth and

on Facebook for students to gather and hold a rally in the school library. About 120 students and

teachers showed up. He had a simple message for his fellow students that: "If they hear people

saying 'that's so gay,' to get them to stop. To stand up and say something." With the library

filled to capacity, the principal, who had denied the granting of club status to the GSA, showed

up and stood behind him, furious.

After the rally she demanded that he go and meet with her in her office. Mike took a

rather confrontational stand by refusing: "I'm not going unless I have a teacher present. Unless

[the teacher] is there. I'm not talking to you . . . I'm not talking to you until this gets done." The

principal agreed to meet with him with the sponsoring teacher present. Unlike students who had

tried before unsuccessfully to start a GSA, Mike made it clear to the principal that he would not

be giving up--and he also had a succession plan. Even if the school board and the principal tried

to stall him, he had organized other students in earlier grades to pick up the mantle and continue

the effort:

> She was again put off and speechless. She didn't know what to say, 'cause I think that
>
> was the point where I took the power from her and I think that's the point where she
>
> realized that there was nothing that was going to stop me or get in my way short of
>
> expelling me . . . Which, deep down, really, if, if being expelled probably would have
>
> been even better.

The front page newspaper story that outed him to his entire family and the whole city was

published shortly after several meetings with school board administrators. For these meetings,

Mike strategically invited his teacher sponsor, supportive members from the community

(including his friend's father who was a lawyer), and representatives from community

organizations, which had been started and fostered by the earlier activists mentioned in this

paper's introduction. The day after the newspaper story was published, he received a phone call

from the principal. For Mike and his fellow students, it was good news. The GSA was approved.

Mike's efforts to make things better for people in more vulnerable positions were very notable. His strategic efforts at social, institutional change, with the help, advice, and support of numerous classmates and their parents, mentors, school board members, community activists and groups, a national organization, and the local media, were profoundly effective where others previously had been stalled--and ultimately thwarted. He improved his school's climate (which, arguably and at least among his fellow students and their teachers, was already better than most), but he also formalized and institutionalized a structure to provide the support for others that he already had for himself in guise of good friends and mentors. Not everyone got involved in the fray or joined up with the newly established GSA, but they knew it was there.

According to his schoolmate, Thomas:

Well, I knew that I was attracted to men, and I know that when you're attracted to men, you're gay, so, you know what I mean. I didn't really know anybody—I knew the GSA at [our school] was starting out, I was just graduating and whatnot . . . I didn't go to any because I wasn't open and I wasn't, you know what I mean, comfortable telling people who I was because I wasn't exactly sure and I didn't want to come out and be like, "Hey, I'm gay," and it was still, like, how to say, it was still like don't ask don't tell at school. . . . Nowadays, it isn't.

In Thomas's opinion, things have improved even more over time since the establishment of the GSA at his alma mater; people are freer to be open about who they are, and they have a support system to fall back on if someone else has a problem with it. Other local research on the GSAs specifically (e.g., Fetner, Elafros, Bortolin, & Dreschsler, 2012) may give clues as to the impact

on incoming students of already having established GSAs when they arrive on their first day as opposed to getting ready to graduate.

The impact of Mike's campaign was not just felt and noticed at his school or by students currently attending local high schools. In fact, in thinking about their own experiences and what was available to them at their own schools, it highlighted for other gay students the fact that their own schools had neglected them, leaving them alone and isolated, even if it wasn't intended. Jamie reflected:

There was no GSA. There was no, "if you're gay and you feel like you need help, come to the guidance counselor!" There was none of that . . . I knew that the Teen Health Centre existed . . . found out about it in high school. But I never went and sought counseling there or anything, because I didn't know what services it offered--we didn't have a GSA or anything in high school. I didn't know any other gay people in high school . . . the one guy I did know, ended up dropping out and we weren't friends. I just . . . I found that there was a lack of outreach. And, while I didn't feel necessarily harassed, I also didn't necessarily feel catered to. I mean, it was kind of a very lonely place to be in a sea of 1,500 presumably straight people, many of whom I've since realized were not.

Jamie's English public high school now does have an active GSA:

Well, they have a GSA now, that's a start. I feel like it's just something that needs to be talked about. I feel like, when another kid walks up to somebody and says "You're a fag" at recess in elementary school or in the hallway in high school, a teacher needs to step up and say "Principal's office, that's not acceptable." A lot of people are afraid of doing that because you might offend their religious beliefs or you don't want to get in trouble, your

job is on the line, that kind of thing but where does it stop? When does dignity become

the priority?

When asked about GSAs, Mathew opined about his own experiences in and being expelled from

the English Catholic system:

I didn't have that luxury growing up, but that is definitely something that I can tell you

right now is going to save a lot of people a lot of heartache . . . a lot of trouble, a lot of

pain. I didn't have a safe place. I was out in the county. There was no such thing as a

gay-straight alliance when I grew up, unfortunately . . . it was like nobody cared and . . .

they wanted to pretend it wasn't happening and they didn't want to deal with it. So they .

. . just stuck to what they knew, kind of. Like, at school, when I got kicked out of high

school because . . . I belted that girl across the head with the textbook, knocked her off

her desk, and I understand, not a good solution to the problem. She was basically poking

me from behind, calling me a faggot repeatedly and laughing about it and she had a

couple of people around her listening that found it hilarious as well . . . The Catholic

School Board. They fucking ruined me. Just when I thought I couldn't take any more,

they just stuck that knife in and twisted it just a little further.

Regarding the English Catholic school board, Daniel found it ironic that he received more

support from the priest at his Catholic church than he did in school:

[T]hat is one that isn't very helpful, the Catholic board, because they're so into what the

church believes that they don't want to [pause] . . . have the gay straight alliance, which

apparently is against the law. They're just not helpful in that way. The teachers aren't

able to come out there in the Catholic school board or apparently they'll lose their jobs.

And that could really help, I think. So that is one subject in particular that really doesn't

> help a lot . . . [my] church is more supportive than the board, surprisingly. My priest is
>
> very supportive of me.

Without any kind of institutional support, interviewees, with varying degrees of success, had to

try to find support outside the English Catholic school system. While those in Windsor had more

access to services and organizations, like the gay youth social support group Young & Proud,

those in the county had little to fall back on that was geared to helping them specifically.

Schools were not the only sites of harassing words or behaviour. According to Daniel,

the harassment he experienced was not always on school property:

> Well in grade school and high school I've been called gay, faggot, those type of things,
>
> that type of slang, but I've never actually been—actually I have been physically, not
>
> attacked let's say, but I was at a party a few times and, there's this certain group of
>
> people that, I dunno, would come up and push me down or whatever. Like when we're
>
> drunk they'd really come up and push me to the ground and then walk away laughing
>
> 'cause they thought it was funny and humorous.

Some harassment, as in the case with Steve's sister, took place in interviewees' family settings

from family members and mostly involved verbal harassment or the expression of homophobic

or heterocentric attitudes.   In Mathew's case, his stepfather's harassment was both verbal and

physical and his two options were to get away from him and deal with it directly with his mother

later:

> [H]e was an alcoholic. He was abusive. Verbally abusive. Physically abusive. Mainly to
>
> me. I got called a fag a lot by him. Yeah, that helps. He used to call me girly man. "Oh,
>
> girly man. Oh, girly man!" in his drunken stupor . . . He was horrible. I put up with a lot
>
> of shit from him, and then when I finally worked up the balls to tell my mother what was

going on when she was at work, he was, you know, getting drunk and calling me a fag.

He kicked me a couple of times, actually. When it happened, I was banged up by him

pretty bad. . . . So when I went to run away from him, he kicked me like up the stairs and

my ass cheek swelled up to the point I couldn't sit down.

A few interviewees also described limited harassment at work, though these situations

were often quickly resolved in a variety of ways. In Steve's case, the indirect verbal harassment

took place on the first day of his first job and came from his supervisor. Though Steve decided

not to deal directly with the situation, a schoolmate and co-worker decided to intervene on his

behalf:

My supervisor was showing me around, giving me the tour um and a lot of the other guys

were working, he was saying things like, "Oh, these guys are fags, ignore them," because

they were joking around in the back . . . I mean, I've been out for a couple years so it's

just one of those things, I know a lot of gay people and so I was very comfortable in my

skin, but when people kind of say things like that I never really thought twice about it. I

had been exposed to it in high school. It was one of those things where it just happened; I

never really processed it in a negative way.   I knew that he was kind of joking around

about it, like I knew, so I wasn't offended by it. So I went out afterwards and I left and I

was back on the floor doing my job.

A short while later his supervisor approached him and asked:

 "Are you gay?" And, obviously, I'm not gonna deny it . . . But if you ask me I'll be like,

"Sure, I'm gay," whatever . . . and he said, "Oh, I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to offend

you," . . . This guy that I went to high school with, who obviously knows I was gay, after

I had left the back of the store, he went up to my supervisor and he's like, "You can't say

things like that around him," and he, my friend, well, not really my friend, he was a year younger than me but I'd known him since grade five and this guy lost it on my supervisor. He said, "You can't do that around him."

The situation tuned out to have a very positive resolution:

[W]e had half an hour talk about his homosexual brother, and that he didn't mean any of it, and we had this big long talk about people that we had in common and my coming out story and his brother's coming out story, and we got very personal and very close. It was actually my first day at work there and it was probably one of my favourites.

Mike had similar experiences of indirect harassment at restaurants at which he worked. Through his experience of setting up a GSA at his school he learned that, "In my experience if anybody does speak up to a bully then the bully's just going to retreat, and I know that." In one case, he chose not to address the free floating and indirect verbal homophobia directly and instead got a job at a different workplace. When it occurred again at his new job, he decided to tackle it directly by speaking up:

It's not really *harassment*, it's more, vocabulary people choose to use such as "faggot" or "that's gay" or stuff like that. I'm not one to just let that slide or brush it off. I'm definitely one to address that issue immediately. [The first employer] didn't know that at the time, but I did go out, get a new job and . . . had to address that issue there, but fortunately the staff, the management there, took it very seriously, so any harassment or abuse, verbally or physically was not tolerated at all. Actually, there was several people fired for that. It was not something that the owners, the management, that any of the staff tolerated.

Other harassment described by interviewees in public spaces or commercial venues was

more directed. According to Daniel:

> There's been a few times . . . the very first time that I've ever been called a faggot out
>
> loud, out in the open. I was walking my dog around my block actually and these people
>
> just drove by and yelled it. I don't know if they would have known me, or known of me,
>
> or known of me being gay, but that hit hard for the first time thinking like, "Wow, this
>
> actually happens," . . . and another time I've been called a faggot, as well, . . . when I was
>
> walking downtown by myself, and it was on my way to school, actually . . . It was nine
>
> o'clock in the morning. I wouldn't say I was dressed openly gay, but . . . I was wearing a
>
> coat. I was wearing Ugg boots, and so they yelled it out. It was a little uncomfortable
>
> but I just keep walking. I'm not going to turn my head. Why waste my time on that?

Alone, Daniel decided to avoid confronting or even making eye contact with the group of

harassers:

> I was walking and they were coming at me. It was a group of them . . . and I just put my
>
> head down and I just walked. There were other people around, so I'm sure they weren't
>
> going to um, physically attack me or anything.

Shaun recounted being harassed, not on the street, but in a commercial establishment:

> I remember I went downtown . . . we were at the gay bar [before]. . . . So we went
>
> downtown and I was in my gay attire because we were out to the gay bar, and it's not
>
> only at the gay bar I wear that, I wear it everywhere, but, I mean, I remember there was a
>
> guy. I went to the bathroom, I went to the boys' bathroom because like, I'm sorry, as
>
> much as I may be gay as shit, I still am a boy and my cock is still hanging between my
>
> legs, and so I remember I heard, "What is this fag doing in here?" Right? So I'm like,
>
> whatever, so I took a piss . . . went back downstairs and I saw the guy again talking to his

friends or whatever, so I remember he wanted to fight me at the straight bar. He wanted

to fight me.

Being with a friend, Shaun decided to address the harasser directly:

"I don't give a fuck. I will fight you. If you want to fight me over some stupid ass shit

like this, I will go outside and fight you." . . . [A]fter that happened . . . after I said all

that, the whole night 'kay, he bought me and my friend drinks. It was so weird. . . . I

think he was gay, that's exactly it. I don't know what the fuck it was, at the end of the

night he bought us drinks and we just went our separate ways. . . . I've seen him at the

straight bar before again and he's never said anything to me.

Not all interviewees managed potentially negative attention from others through direct

confrontation. Mathew recounted a few positive experiences while being on the streets of

downtown, which could have gone the other way. In one instance he used humour to address a

bouncer who was staring at him while he was in drag for Halloween:

I've actually been downtown Windsor in full drag before with my business taped to my

asshole and a mini skirt that, by rights, is a t-shirt. I've been, I've had issues before where

people get confused and think, "Wow! She's cute. She's working out, obviously. Look at

the calf muscles on her!" I made a comment to a bouncer and I said, "Does this skirt

make my dick look fat?" And, luckily, I survived that night. I was clearly inebriated.

They found the humour in it, luckily for me. But there's, that's obviously, that's not

something I am ever going to do unless I've got somebody on my arm. Somebody with

me.

The interviewees described both feared and actual harassment in the contexts of school,

families, work, public, and commercial spaces. Their strategies in dealing with both kinds

ranged from avoidance to confrontation. In school, as an individual, quickly getting to a safe

classroom or escalating and fighting back might be the chosen courses of action. With the

support of allies and resources, organizing to make the hallways and entire school safer might be

another.   The same could be said of the family or work contexts (where power differentials also

exist) and one more accepting parental ally helped the other or a co-worker intervened. In public

and commercial spaces, getting to safety, safety in numbers, or using humour might be the

strategies chosen. Sometimes the strategies worked, initially or eventually, and sometimes they

failed or backfired. Due to their age, how they are perceived, lack of support, scant resources,

the absence of allies, unequal social power, or just being in the wrong place at the wrong time,

some GBMs may be more vulnerable to be the targets of harassment, but they are also

particularly adept at avoiding, preventing, or stopping it at times by developing ways or utilizing

what they do have to tip the scales more in their favour. Verbal and physical harassment is not,

of course, the only issue they might be likely to confront.

HIV/AIDS.

Online survey. Slightly more than half of the respondents (53%, *n* = 42) do not think that

HIV/AIDS has affected their lives in any way (see Table 14). It must be kept in mind that with

an age cap of 26, respondents have never known a world without HIV/AIDS. Notable, is that 27

(34%) respondents have not been tested for HIV while 69 (87%) have had sex. Overall, 73

(92%) respondents reported being HIV negative, three (4%) reported not being sure about their

status, two (3%) reported being HIV positive, one person (1%) did not answer the question, and

none reported waiting for test results. Given these reported numbers, 13 respondents reported

being sexually active but being HIV negative without having an HIV antibody test.

Semi-Structured interview. Out of the interviewees' responses to the question about HIV/AIDS, the thematic categories of Stigma and Ostracism versus Support and Ignorance versus Understanding were found. While Mathew was the only interviewee who had received a positive HIV-antibody test result, three of the interviewees felt that HIV/AIDS had impacted their lives in some way. For Mathew, the harassment he described continually facing is not always homophobic and often comes from other gay or bisexual people: "Because I'm public with my HIV positive status, that makes it very difficult to relate to people, because they treat me like a leper, even the gay people. They treat me like a leper." Mathew has found this harassment in the form of stigmatization, ostracism, and gossip to be more hurtful and unnerving, especially given the source:

> [O]n numerous occasions, I see people point. I see people say things and then I see . . . you know, somebody finds me attractive at the bar and they're staring at me like, you know, fresh meat. Then you can always--I know when somebody's looking at me because it's not like it happens very often. 'Cause everybody knows the story. Everybody knows, you know, "Dodge that one. He's got, you know, three letters trying to kill ya." When somebody does find me attractive, I am aware . . . It instantly goes south. Always. Every time. Somebody always comes up to them and gives him the heads up, "Don't bother. He's got AIDS."

Shaun, whose uncle had died from AIDS-related complications, described being tested at 16 with a female friend, but also related how he received very little education on HIV/AIDS and its transmission in high school:

> I, actually, I listened to this song on YouTube and it was something about HIV and it said some of the symptoms I thought I had, right, so . . . I called her . . . I freaked out . . .

'Cause I don't know, like, oh, my God, I'm 16, I've had sex with boys, and at the time,

I'm not gonna lie, I thought HIV could be generated, like, you could have ass sex and [it

just] makes [AIDS], you know? . . . I had a health class but it was more or less like

women's pregnancy and shit like that so I was just like, okay. I knew more about a

woman's vagina than I did my own penis, you know? Yeah, and I freaked out.

School may not have prepared Shaun for navigating a world with HIV, but his friend Mathew

(also in the study) acts as a resource:

I have friends that have it and I'm a very loyal friend. I mean like, there is a friend . . .

and I don't know what I'd do. I seriously don't know what I'd do without him. I talk to

him about everything like he's my big sister. . . . I don't even want to think about it . . . I

mean, like, it just sucks . . . that's why I like him, [because] he's so positive about things

and educates.

Finding out that he was HIV positive at 18 from the very supportive family doctor who

had delivered him, Mathew decided to try to make a difference and speak at the World AIDS day

Youth Conference:

I had just found out I was positive and it was very much a fresh wound for me. I was up

there at that podium for maybe a minute and a half before the tears started pouring and I

was like gasping for air. Luckily, my very supportive mother was there to, you know,

keep me going and it was tough. I remember the one thing that really sent my message

home was telling the people that the hardest thing I ever had to do was explaining to my

mother that I was HIV positive and because I was too drunk or too stoned or whatever

and too cool for condoms, I now had a life threatening disease that could kill me if I don't

take care of myself. Afterwards, I got a lot of really, really amazing positive feedback. It

made me feel really good about what I had done.

But, just as his very public disclosure at 15 about being gay came back to bite him:

A year or so later, I applied to make-up school at [a local college]. A girl recognized me

in my make-up class from the Youth AIDS Conference and she says, "Well, how could I

forget you. Look at those bitchy eyebrows." And I said, "Well, great, I'm glad to know

that the message that I was trying to deliver that day really sank in and that all you

remember is my eyebrows," and, obviously, nothing about we talked about [at the

conference] because she went out of her way to tell the teacher, "Oh, that guy has AIDS

and I don't want him touching my face."

The teacher called Mathew at home and informed him that he would have to wear latex gloves in

class from now on and also have to get his own makeup subjects for class because the other

students did not want him touching them. His classmate not only told the teacher, she told the

whole class. When he explained that these were unnecessary precautions, she informed him that

these were the directives given to her by her department head. Mathew asked for the department

head's number and called her:

And the second she got on the phone, she said, "Oh, Mathew, I'm so sorry." And I said,

"You know you're not. You don't know what sorry is. I'm sorry that it has come to this,

but I am contacting a lawyer. You're telling me that because of this, I will be treated

differently." "Well, no, no, that's not at all what we are saying." "Well then, why is it

that . . . the teacher told me that I have to wear latex gloves?" "Well, you know, the rest

of the class has obviously been informed by the student who raised the issue."

After being singled out and told that he would have to wear latex gloves in order to continue

participating in class, Mathew decided to initiate legal action under the Ontario Disabilities Act.

Upon his return to class, the atmosphere changed drastically and he was marked and ostracized

by his fellow students. He described how his classmates treated him the day he came back:

> Like a leper. I got a lot of dirty looks and all the people that loved me because I was the
>
> only guy in the class and I was clearly queerly, suddenly I was a leper and nobody gave a
>
> shit that I was there . . . I wasn't allowed to participate, first of all. They had told me that
>
> if you don't want to wear latex gloves, can you just get a note from your doctor telling us
>
> how we should handle this because you're telling us that we're not handling it properly.
>
> And I said, "Oh, you call yourselves educators, do ya? You want me, your student, to
>
> educate you now . . .? . . . That's great. I would love to."

Disgusted, his doctor did write the note:

> "Mathew poses no threat to the public. He may provide services for his colleagues in his
>
> make-up class. HIV is primarily transmitted through intravenous drug use and
>
> unprotected sexual intercourse, and I certainly hope that these things are not taking place
>
> inside your make-up class. Please contact me . . . at the HIV and AIDS Care Clinic for
>
> further information and education. Kind Regards . . ."

But no one ever contacted Mathew's doctor--or any of the other organizations he provided, for

that matter--to deliver the much needed education about how blood borne infections (most

notably, hepatitis) could potentially be spread in cosmetology and hair salon settings and what

measures are sufficient to guard against transmission:

> They never contacted the ACW [AIDS Committee of Windsor]. And I went out of my
>
> way, [my doctor] said you can contact the ACW or you can contact the Health Unit or
>
> you can contact the HIV Care Clinic, and I went out of my way to go in there with

business cards from HIV Care Clinic, the ACW . . . [my doctor's] card and pamphlets

and flyers and information. HIV and the risks and just books of terms and all sorts of

jazz. I took time out of my life which, at that time, was upside down. I got a cab all the

way to [the school] and I walked in and dropped all that off on the desk of [the Director

of Continuing Education], who I had spoken with on the phone a few times.

At that point in time, Mathew had been on Ontario Disability and had recently paid his tuition.

With little money to pay for a lawyer, he contacted and got a lawyer through the HIV/AIDS

Legal Clinic Ontario (HALCO). After a year of going back and forth with phone calls, giving

statements, feeling exhausted, and eventually getting sick:

I threw in the towel and I gave up and I said, "I want my tuition back. I want a written

apology." And they also will give me a piece of paper that said I wouldn't go to the

newspaper about it. . . . I just threw in the towel. I gave up. And I'm like . . . All I want

is my tuition back. Maybe an apology and for them to go and get the education that they

clearly need.

He eventually got his tuition reimbursed and:

I got a written apology signed by--*stamped* by [the Director]. Yeah. It was *stamped* with

a signature . . . It's just total, total, total disregard for, you know, me. I'm a human being,

too. I paid my tuition. I bought the make-up kit. I show up every day on time. I got

100%, except for one test, I got 98%. . . . I was the teacher's pet. I was the biggest brown

noser. And that was the first time I really got into an education setting and *loved* it

because it was something that I love doing. It was the happiest I've ever been for those

few short weeks.

Significant sources of support and understanding for Mathew during this difficult time were his

family (i.e., his mother and sister), friends, and the HIV Care Clinic where his doctor worked: "[H]is office, which has turned into a total fortress of solitude for me. I can go in there and have privacy and peace and safety. A little sanctuary."

While the majority of the responding youth do not feel that HIV/AIDS has affected their lives, the stigma and ostracism that people living with HIV face in both the larger community and within the LGBT community can make it exceedingly difficult for people who use their own positive status to try to make it more personally relevant to others. Even when they do step forward to educate, unrealistic transmission fears and stigmatization can make the message not heard. Fortunately, there are places of safety, support, and information available for people to avail themselves of—but they have to be interested enough to request them, seek them out, or listen.

Homelessness.

Online survey. Three respondents (4%) reported having been homeless between the ages of 13 and 17 (see Table 14). For two (3%) of the respondents, becoming homeless was related to their sexual identity. Chi-square tests could not be conducted due to small cell sizes. No main effects were found for earlier or current comparisons on age for first becoming homeless.

Semi-structured interview. None of the interviewees have been homeless, for any reason, including their sexual orientation. No interpretative thematic categories were developed from respondents' narratives.

Mood altering substances.

Online survey. As shown in Table 14, 64 respondents (81%) had used a mood altering substance (e.g., alcohol, marihuana, or street drugs). In order to get a sense of the role substances played, the extent of their use, and types used, interviewees were queried.

Semi-structured interview. The thematic descriptive category of Escapism versus Medicine was developed from the interviewees' narratives concerning the use of mood altering substances in terms of the functions they described them playing in their lives. Among the interviewees, six of the eight reported on the online survey that they had used mood altering substances. Of the two who had not reported using them, when questioned further, only one reported not actually using mood altering substances, including alcohol. Jamie quipped, "Well, if chocolate counts as a mood-altering substance that's about it." The seven others reported substance use in the interview that varied in degree and legality.

On the legal end of the spectrum, Mike reported that he will:

[H]ave a beer after work. Um, you know, if I'm at a party, I'll have a couple. I don't usually drink excessively. I don't drink every day. I don't consume large amounts of alcohol on a frequent basis. It's more of just one here and there and sometimes I'll have a few more . . . It's too expensive.

Steve has used marihuana once and drinks about once a month. Daniel explained that his alcohol usage has increased recently: "It's been more frequent lately, because, well I don't know, I've been going out a lot . . . and I'm 19, so it's been more frequently, so a few times a week," though he's "done marihuana every now and then." Nathan reports drinking about four times a week and smoking marihuana four times a year, mushrooms twice in his life, and, accidentally and once, cocaine, "It was laced in the weed," which almost gave him a panic attack.

Shaun, though he reported not using mood altering substances on the online survey, drinks about once a week and has used marihuana, speed, ecstasy, and though he uses cocaine about twice a week, "I'm not into coke like that. I'll do it once in a while but I mean like, I'm not gonna sit at home and fucking snort my life away, like I said."

Mathew had been to drug rehabilitation during his later teenage years. When asked when

he was most likely to use mood altering substances, he explained:

When I'm depressed. When I'm miserable. And, you know, I feel like throwing in the

towel. It's an escape thing. That's a known fact. It's an escapism thing. It's a mini-vaca

for the mind. And then you wake up one, two days later, hung over like a dog. Thinking

to yourself, "What the fuck am I doing?"

In order to keep his weight and appetite up, his doctor recommended marihuana, "I've rehabbed

for a long time. I still--I dabble [in mood altering substances]. I smoke pot on a regular basis. I

don't have a prescription for marihuana. My doctor is well aware of my marihuana habit."

Depression and suicide. Intrapersonal feelings of depressed affect were reported by the

vast majority of all participants and slightly fewer than half of these reports were related to

sexual identity. This indicated that sexual identity, for a sizeable percentage, is just an additional

source of the depressed feelings that many non-GBM adolescents and young adults experience.

Online survey. A majority of respondents (85%, *n* = 67 versus 15%, *n* = 12), reported

having felt "really down" (see Table 14). Of those who reported they had felt really down, 36

(54%) reported that it was related to their sexual identity. The average age of first feeling really

down was 13.71 (*SD* = 4.45). This is about a half a year before respondents, on average,

reported self-labelling. Forty-three (54%) had thought about suicide. Twenty-three (54%)

reported that these thoughts about suicide were related to their sexual identity. Of those who had

thought about suicide, the average age of first thinking about it was 14.02 (*SD* = 3.41), with 12

being the most common, and within a range of 6-24 years old. Thirteen respondents (16%) had

attempted suicide. Of those 13 who had attempted suicide, seven (9%) reported that it was

related to their sexual identity. The average age for a first suicide attempt was 14.30 (*SD* =

3.33), most commonly at 17, and ranged from 6-18 years of age.

Semi-Structured interview. From interviewees' responses to question regarding feeling

down and suicide, the thematic category of Isolation versus Support was developed. All but one

interviewee had felt really down at some point in their lives. For five of the seven, it was related

to their sexual identity. For Steve, his year of sadness stemmed from his isolated and internal

struggle with coming to terms with his sexual identity. Mike knew his father was not very gay

positive. His sadness and minor suicide musing stemmed from his family, and especially his

father's negativity:

> Yeah, there were a couple times where living at my dad's and seeing his attitude and
>
> thinking about . . . how would he react if I told him, what would my life be like? It's
>
> crossed my mind once or twice, but never seriously, and like I said, I've never acted on it.
>
> I've had friends who have tried, so I know that it's not [pause] it's not a way out.

Of those five who had thought about suicide, two had thought more seriously about suicide. For

Nathan, his contemplation of suicide was the product of a more global existential crisis and not

directly related to his sexual identity--he had not yet experienced an attraction to another male or

self-labelled at 11. However, for Mathew, his contemplation was directly related to his sexual

identity, and he made an attempt at 14. When asked what he had taken, he replied:

> Everything. I emptied out my mom's medicine cabinet. She had fibromyalgia
>
> medication . . . she had a lot of pain killers because of her lower back pain and stuff so
>
> there was probably about sixty Percocet. I had had ingested . . . I had skipped out of
>
> school and came home . . . I can't remember what set me off that day. I just said fuck it
>
> and went home. I was alone. I just really wanted somebody to talk to. I was alone at the

house and there was no one to talk to and I'm like fuck this. I'm gone. And I took a bunch

of the pills and when I felt it kicking in, that's when I went out the back patio door and I

fell down the stairs of the back deck. I broke one of my teeth out.

Debilitated by the pain killers, he related:

Just lying there and I couldn't move and I was just lying there. It was terrifying. 'Cause,

I mean, you feel like you're spinning and you know you're not moving and you can't

control your body and you're throwing up like hard-core. I think I actually pissed myself

a little bit. I remember hearing the truck. I couldn't see it, but I remember hearing the

truck pulling into the driveway. Everything was red. There was blood everywhere. I

remember hearing the truck, my stepfather's pick up, pulling into the driveway. Hearing

him scream my name.

His second (non-abusive) stepfather found him, having come home from a job a day earlier than

expected. His stepfather's early return, a harrowing trip, and a stay at the hospital saved his life.

Although he was combative, the hospital staff was able to detoxify him, even though he was

yelling at them to let him die, "They didn't. Thankfully, they didn't. Obviously, I have a lot

more shit that I have to accomplish in my life, you know?"

Sex trade.

Online survey. Eleven respondents (15%) reported that they have exchanged sex for

material things, including money or a place to stay (see Table 14). Unlike other questions, the

age of this first occurring had not been asked due to possible reporting concerns. A chi-square

test was conducted to see if homelessness and participation in the sex trade were associated but,

again, some cell sizes were too small. Given the few respondents who reported being homeless,

it was important to query further to see what role exchanging sex for material things played in the lives of some of the participants who reported it.

Semi-Structured interview. Of the eight interviewees, three had responded on the online survey that they had engaged in exchanging sex for material things. In querying Thomas, he explained that he said yes in reference to his first boyfriend when he moved in with him to get out of his parents' house, but that it had not really been a negotiated transactional arrangement. In the narratives of the other two interviewees, Mathew and Shaun, the theme of Self-Commodification versus Self-Value was found. Mathew's involvement was far more extensive than Shaun's and was directly related to exchanges of sex for money. For Shaun, it was not for money or borne out of desperation:

> It was our coke dealer, my coke dealer at the time, and um, he like, I used to do stuff for coke all the time. I was really into it. I did it probably almost every day. It wasn't that I was down, it was just I don't have this huge miraculous story that I was fucking raped, you know, it was just like me, I just did it because I thought it was fun. It was a good high and I mean I don't have some fucking huge depressing story that my dad beat me across the room. But yeah . . . he said that he'd get us the suite at the thing . . . for

Windsor Pride, a suite at the casino, and I screwed him and we got it, so I was like sweet.

Mathew's initial foray was also borne out of drug use, but combined with desperation over a dwindling money supply. Shortly after he prematurely left the residential educational facility before receiving his high school diploma but before he entered rehab, Mathew received a trust fund from a deceased relative. He spent the trust on buying an inexpensive house. The remainder went quickly as he spent it on:

> Ecstasy, cocaine, lots of ecstasy and lots of cocaine. Suddenly my, that forty grand that I

had and I'm looking at my bank account and there is five thousand dollars there. And I'm

like, fuck! Like, I'm fucked. It's like a week worth of partying there, you know what I

mean? That's nothing, right? And I knew that I could easily spend five thousand dollars

in an hour on drugs, you know what I mean? I've got to go to two different drug dealers,

three different drug dealers and I can totally get rid of that and buy them out and be done

those drugs in fuckin' two days. Call three people and be like, "Hey, party at my house.

Let's do this." Because misery loves company. So I got panicked . . .

Using the one resource he had left, himself, he:

[S]tarted batting my lashes for cocktails . . . Yeah, and pick up and, you know, I was

obviously partying like a rock star so I had a 28 waist and I was cute and skinny little

twinky boy all toss-able and loveable and stupid. Or so they thought. I was really good

at playing the dizzy bitch card, stupid twink, which is like pick of the litter for most gay

men. And I milked it and I ran with it. I found out I could make copious amounts of

money.

Eventually, he found himself a regular client:

I landed myself a sugar daddy. He was putting me either on a train to Toronto or we

were driving to Toronto once or twice a month where I would make a thousand dollars

and all I had to do was probably just sleep with him once, maybe twice in a weekend and

then the rest of the time he'd give me five or six hundred bucks to go out and party for the

night and go have some fun. I would, and then of course I'd come back home all fucked

up and when you're all fucked up you don't really mind that you're sleeping with someone

who's fucking forty years old and not attractive at all . . . But yeah, I did that for a while

and then, when I rehabbed, I cut off all contact with those people.

While Shaun regarded his few experiences with some flippancy, "I was going to have sex anyways," the experience of being involved with the sex trade and his dependency and overdosing on drugs landed Mathew in the psychiatric ward of the hospital for detoxification. The staff members, and especially the nurses, were kind to and supportive of him. In his estimation, they helped him see himself as a salvageable person:

[F]or the longest time I treated myself like a piece of meat, and I objectified myself and I abused myself with chemicals and turning myself into some slut trashcan that spreads like hot butter, they gave me a sense of humanity back. . . . and [that] I could come out of all of that [dropping out of high school, drugs, suicide attempts, and the sex trade] . . . I had put myself through, and I could still come out of that and still do something constructive.

Of all the interviewees, Mathew was the oldest at 25 and described the toughest road. Given the multiple issues that he has had to deal with, being harassed and assaulted, expelled from school, institutionalized, living with HIV, stigmatization and ostracism, and drug problems, it is also important to note that he frequently expressed a great deal of appreciation for his family and the staff at several organizations for being supportive and, on a number of occasions and a variety of ways, both literally and figuratively saving his life.

The Context of Windsor and Essex County.

Online survey. Near the end of the online survey, respondents were asked if there was anything else that they felt was important about their lives or experiences as a GBM in Windsor-Essex County. In all, 66 respondents provided feedback to the question. Table 25 summarizes their categorized responses. Twenty-three responses contained personal reflections or referred to their personal development, and the responses were varied. Seventeen responses included

descriptions of the positive aspects of their experience, while an almost equal number of

responses proffered negative ones. The most commonly mentioned positive aspects concerned

the accepting climate they had encountered as they developed and experienced their sexual

identities and the acceptance they had received from others. One merely mentioned the parade

downtown that is part of the annual Windsor-Essex County Pride Festival, but another offered a

counter opinion to the impression that there are few resources for people in the area.

Table 25: Summary of Categorized Content of Survey Participants' Responses to If There Was Anything Else Important About Their Life or Experiences as a Gay or Bisexual Male in Windsor-Essex County			
Main Categories	Subcategories	n	Illustrative Example
Personal Reflection & Development		23	
	Reflection	19	"it was very easy"
			"Living in this area is hard, but strengthens you as a person"
			"Knowing that there are other people like you; it's quite reasuring for your confidence."
			"I felt my life didn't begin till the day i came out. That's when life started to get interesting!"
			". . . My biggest obstacle was coming to terms with it myself and feeling like I could be open and honest with myself."
			"I feel like i haven't started that my life at a gay male yet, and i can't wait till i do, it just feels weird to join something that i still feel like i don't fit in to."
			"Keeping it inside of you brings no happiness. I would know, because I haven't felt happiness yet"
	Personal Development	4	"MY Sexuality and pride of being myself."
Positive Aspects		17	
	Accepting Climate	5	"I found that I had a very open and accepting coming out. I had never experienced any negative reaction to my sexuality . . . Windsor-Essex County seems to be quite accepting of homosexuality."
	Accepting Others	4	"I had a very supportive and structured coming out.

			My family and friends were there for me every step of the way, which likely contributed to my mental stability today."
	Events	1	"pride parade"
	More Resources	1	"Windsor is generally a very accepting place, with many more resources than people think"
Negative Aspects		16	
	Negative Climate	8	"I would say that growing up in this area might be more challenging for a gay youth than in other parts of Ontario due to the blue collar town atmosphere and strong influence from the USA."
			"the narrow mindedness of people in the county"
	Negative Feelings	4	"it can be lonely"
	Lack of Support & Resources	4	"Growing up in Leamington is difficult for anyone who is gay or bisexual because of the ethnic and religious diversity and lack of resources/education for LGBT people. "
			"Neither my elementary school nor my high school had a GSA or anyt resources made avilable to people like me who were questioning"
Mixed		6	
	Mixed	6	"Yes, moments in my life have lead to unique experiences. Moving out on my own at a young age forced me to come to terms with my sexuality since living in my family home with a dissapproving family made me hide it from myself. Moreover, my parents became divorced alowing me to have an incredibly open relationship with one half and a secret to be hidden from the other half because of the different attitudes of my parents."
			"i survived."
No Additional Details		16	
	No	12	"Not really"
	Affirmative, No Explanation	4	"Yes."

Other responses addressed the less positive and more negative aspects of attitudes in the county or the "blue collar" atmosphere of the area or the older generation not being as accepting of the LGBT community as in other places. Others referred to their feelings of loneliness,

disappointment, or fears: "I am deathly afraid of someone I know finding out about my

sexuality." An equal number of responses cited lack of support and resources or, in one case,

resources that were available but did not work for them:

> I really didn't feel like there was anywhere for me to go, when I came out.   No one to
>
> talk to. There was the Windsor AIDS Committee, that had a [support] group for young
>
> gays but I had nothing in common with anyone.

Several of the responses were mixed, and one hints that it is still a context that must be

navigated with some degree of self-management:

> I'm lucky enough that I've never really felt the need to deny or defend who I am for safety
>
> or other reasons. I'm not exactly "obvious" though, and don't try to be, so that might be a
>
> part of it.

Semi-Structured interview. Interviewees were probed more deeply in light of the

responses to the last open-ended question in the online survey. In addition to the questions

regarding the social context of Windsor and Essex County and if there was anything else they

felt was important about their lives as gay men in the area, they were asked what things had

helped them, what things did not, and what things might be improved. They were also asked if

they had any words of advice for other young people in light of their experiences in developing

and living with a sexual identity and any final words. In these responses, the larger theme of the

Development of a Sexual Identity loomed largest with the subthemes of Isolation versus

Community, Alienation versus Belonging, Victimization versus Empowerment, and Fear of

Exposure versus Disclosure. These themes were also quite interwoven with each other.

Interviewees appreciated their own initial fears and those of others who had not come out yet,

but they also pointed out that without coming out, there is really no way to access the resources of organizations and receive the support of the LGBT community around them.

The context of Canada. When asked about the best and worst things about being gay or bisexual in Windsor-Essex County, Jamie pointed to the rights that Canadians enjoy:

> Well, the best thing is that, well, I don't know about Windsor, but I'm in Canada. So I have essentially equal rights . . . to an extent, if you factor out the blood ban and that sort of thing. I mean, I don't feel vilified by where I'm living.

But he also felt that those rights are kind of a double-edged sword because they can make people complacent and forget there is still work to do:

> I just find it interesting that in certain employment forces there aren't really any resources if a gay person needs more help, or they feel like they're being discriminated against I feel like they're kind of being swept under the rug, but then again I've only had part-time jobs at small little places, so I've never needed those kinds of resources. But, I guess, that's something that we could work on.

The context of Windsor and Essex County. In reference to Windsor and Essex County specifically, Mike commented on the second class status that Windsor is often given not only in the eyes of people from other places, but sometimes from its own citizenry:

> The worst thing is that . . . and I find this with Windsor as a city in general, it just kinda gets ignored. I mean, in a big city like Toronto you have all sorts of resources . . . . And I just feel like . . . the city has so many other things it needs to focus on right now with economic downturn and all that kind of stuff, that . . . human rights, because we're in Canada, seems to get a little neglected. . . . My friend who moved to Waterloo, she always comes back, she's just like, "Oh my God, Windsor's--it's a diamond in the rough.

It's a hidden gem that no one really knows about because the reputation's so terrible," but

really there's a lot of stuff going on . . . I think people need to give Windsor a chance.

As positives, Mike started his list with the youth of Windsor:

Yeah, it's, a lot of the young people. I've definitely seen a lot of young people who have

been very open and supportive. I've seen young people who are straight who have shirts

that say, "Some People Are Gay, Get Over It!" I've seen people wear their shirts and

I've seen them stand up for people getting harassed and abused.

He continued by citing and acknowledging the numerous organizations and the LGBT

community itself, which supported him in his fight to establish the GSA at his former high

school, organizations that he has subsequently joined and with which he has worked:

I think that . . . in Windsor, there's a lot more for the LGBT community than people

think. Like, we have the community centre downtown, the AIDS Committee, we have

SAFE [Service Alliance for Equality], there's a lot of people working to make Windsor a

better place for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender people. I think that, over the years

since I've come out anyways, that they've all worked hard and they've all made progress

and they've gotten their message out to other people. I don't know if it's gotten as far as

Essex, but I know that in Windsor there has been a definite impact on what they have

done and the work that they're doing.

Daniel cited the size of the community as a positive:

I don't know any different, so from this area I do like the smaller community because

more people know each other. I like how it's not like Toronto's gay area where they

have the whole village and you're almost bombarded with all of that. That's from what

I've heard of Toronto and from what my cousin has told me.

Thomas also appreciated the size and cohesion of the community, in addition to individuals whom he has gotten to know and spend time with, as factors that have helped him grow:

> As opposed to being somewhere else?   I think being in this community, which is sort of small, tight-knit, everybody knows everybody sort of thing, it's [pause] I like it more, and it's . . . helped me to grow as a person. I mean, I have so many influential people in my . . . like Frank, George who has helped me through so much, Dan, all these people . . . where we've been, we've shared drinks, we've laughed, we've cried, you know what I mean, sort of, blood, sweat and tears sort of thing.

Interviewees were also asked if there were anything that could be done locally to improve the situation for gay and bisexual people. Jamie, displaying a characteristic Windsor modesty and not knowing yet about several OK2BME social support groups being conducted by Windsor Pride Community, suggested:

> Is there anything that wouldn't? [sigh, then laughter] Well . . . resources like the Teen Health Centre have been great, but those have an age cut-off. And . . . Young & Proud has an age cut-off. And I feel like there needs to be a central focus on how this is a vulnerable population, the LGBT community, and you know . . . maybe the AIDS committee can help with stuff to do with AIDS, and Young & Proud can help young people, but what about the rest of the people who are on the outskirts?

Steve offered improvements to safety in the downtown area:

> There are times when I feel safe, where like I'll hold my boyfriend's hand around the city or do things like that, especially during Pride; I don't have any problem with that. But there's certain times, later at night when I'm walking around, especially in the downtown area, when I'm around an area that I know isn't the safest I tend to kind of shush that

stuff, kind of shove it under the carpet for a bit.

Though many efforts have indeed focused on the city, the full narratives of some interviewees

also express that more needs to be done in the county area of Windsor-Essex.

    What helped? In terms of their own personal journeys and development and in

light of their difficulties and vulnerabilities, interviewees were also asked what had helped them,

specifically and in general, as gay males. Mathew responded:

> I've got a very good support group with a lot of really great friends that, I mean, at the
>
> drop of a hat, I can turn to any one of my friends and say, "Look, this is what I'm going
>
> through, this is what's frustrating me. I'm fucking lost and I just need--" even if you just
>
> need a hug, you know? Sometimes it's good just to have someone there just to give you a
>
> hug.

In addition to his very supportive family, he also referenced organizations and several key

people, many of whom were in the healthcare sector, with which he has multiple and extended

points of contact. Some of these were: the AIDS Committee of Windsor, the HIV Care Program

Clinic, and the Hotel Dieu-Grace hospital. In his narrative, places that made him feel, safe,

supported, acknowledged, and understood made very memorable impressions on him:

> The [HIV] Care Clinic helped the most out of anything. Once I found I was positive--I
>
> mean, it's not just the HIV positive issues. It's all my issues. I go there and those people
>
> have seen every sort of person from every walk of life, whether they are a junkie who got
>
> HIV from, you know, intravenous drug use, those people are so realistic and so down to
>
> earth and so sweet and they make you feel so safe. I mean it took me a long time to get
>
> to a place where I could feel that way.

Shaun cited his school and the teachers he met there: "I'd say school. School. . . . And . .

. those teachers I swear to god were some of the nicest people I've ever met in my life." Steve also cited teachers at his school:

> Certain teachers at my school. I think being in certain classrooms, around certain
>
> teachers. I'd always make (unintelligible) my teachers, and so I think I would know
>
> certain teachers' very specific opinions about things, especially the drama teacher at my
>
> school. I knew that going to her I could talk to her about anything. . . . But yeah, just
>
> certain classrooms, certain teachers, I knew that was basically my safe zone. I could go
>
> to them, I could talk to them about anything.

He also mentioned an annual local conference put on by Teachers for Global Awareness: "I think it was in grade ten I attended this, it was the— the student, (pause). The year they did it, it was Sexuality, Gender, Equality and whatnot. It was a student conference for high school students." When pressed further, he added that the conference made him feel less alone:

> I think, 'cause at that point in my high school . . . I was out at that point to specific
>
> people, I think going to that, growing up in high school with a lot of people, I think we
>
> had just under 1,000 people at my high school, I think that I knew of there was maybe
>
> three other people at that point who were out, and, going to that and seeing the amount of
>
> people that went and seeing the amount of people that were open about their sexuality,
>
> and . . . when we were split up into smaller groups and there'd be people who'd say, "Oh,
>
> I'm gay!" and duh duh duh duh duh! I think just realizing how many people there were,
>
> helped a lot.

Although Thomas didn't go to the newly formed GSA at his school in his last year, he did go to the Young & Proud social support group housed at the AIDS Committee of Windsor. Though he was not attending much at the time of the interview:

Not really anymore because, because I'm comfortable with who I am and my parents

aren't as unforgiving as, not unforgiving, but . . . unaccepting . . . as they were and I

surround myself with people who are accepting of it and I do talk to a lot of people who

are accepting of who I am and who they are and whatnot. Mainly positive people . . . I

don't feel the need to go down there on a Tuesday night all the time.

     Words of advice for young people. Near the end of the interview, participants

were asked if they had any words of advice for other young gay and bisexual youth. Daniel

replied, reifying the importance of disclosure and engaging with others:

[T]hat . . . the community is very supportive, and there's a lot of groups and associations

that can help, so I would recommend coming out. It doesn't even have to necessarily be

to your parents or someone that can bring danger to your life, but there are people out

there that will help with your situation.

Clearly, messaging from the larger social context is reaching youth and it can be seen in

the very phrases and ideas which reverberate with the experience and reflection of the

interviewees as when Mathew advised:

I hate to say it. It's such a cliché, but the It Gets Better Campaign, you know? It does get

better if you allow it to get better. You can spend the rest of your life, walking around,

waiting for death to come. Inviting it and abusing yourself and treating yourself like

garbage because you think that's all you're worth, but, I mean, that's somebody else's

opinion. . . .That's the opinion that's been forced upon you. Somebody else's idea or ideal

that you've been told so many times and now you fucking believe it and it's not the case.

It's not the truth. . . . I'm living proof that . . . it does not matter how many times you've

been beaten down and beaten into submission and backed into a corner, to where you are

literally trying to off yourself. It does not matter how many times you have to go through

that, it will get better. It will change if you have the time and if you have the patience to

ride it out and to get through it. Shed your tears. Do what you must. Release the

emotion. Let it out and soldier on, because when you come out the other end, it is--the

light is that much brighter and life is so much better. So much more worthwhile.

Shaun recommended being authentic and strong and pointed to the importance and examples of

his friends:

Yeah, I mean, you have to be yourself. You can't . . . people can't really dictate what

goes on around you. . . . no matter what people are going to say, take it with a grain of

salt because there's going to be people like that all the time and if you're out for everyone

to like you, you're going to have a rough ass time. . . . [K]eep the people close to you,

who accept you and stuff like that because . . . not everyone is going to accept you, and

it's hard. . . . [Y]ou just gotta really be. . . . I have my support line, yeah, but I'm the

person with it and it all depends on how you handle it. . . . I know this sounds really

corny and you might have heard it on the thing, it really does get better. I've seen a lot of

people been through some rough ass shit, but, I mean, they made it.

Steve, who felt so isolated before he came out, recommended that youth put themselves

out there and seek support, highlighting the importance and tightness of the community:

Not being shy. There's a lot of support in Windsor, something that I think isn't really,

um, out there in a lot of other cities in Canada. So I think, don't be shy. You can

definitely get out there and meet a lot of people and there's a lot of help available . . . It's

like a brethren. Everyone knows everyone. There's always people you can talk to. Once

you kind of put yourself out there, you can make a lot of friends very easily. You can

very quickly learn who to stay away from, who to trust. It's a good brethren. It's like a

brotherhood.

Mike echoed Steve's sentiments about the cohesion of the community and how welcoming it is:

"[It]'s definitely a very tight-knit community and it's very welcoming for people who are trying

to come out of their shell and find out who they are." Thomas also recommends seeking support

from others and organizations in the community:

> Don't think for one second that you aren't entitled to human rights, to say this is who I
>
> am, and to like constantly beat up on yourself, saying that, "Oh, I'm gay," . . . when you
>
> don't really know what you are, I mean I went through it . . . just because your sexual
>
> orientation differs from anyone else, and like, [pause] don't, don't be afraid to seek
>
> advice or seek help in the community because there are organizations, obviously, that can
>
> help you with your coming out and whatnot and, and there are some people who never
>
> come out, who stay in the closet their whole lives, but [pause] you know, there are people
>
> in this community who aren't prejudiced, who can help you overcome that fear of coming
>
> out . . . and you should utilize it because if you remain in the closet it constantly eats at
>
> you and you drive yourself crazy . . . and it's not good for— it's not healthy.

Mike made specific recommendations along the same lines:

> You know, I know growing up gay is tough, but you know, like I said, there's a lot of
>
> things in Windsor . . . Especially for a population the size of how big we are, there's so
>
> much here for resources and support. I think that all you gotta do is ask. Like I said,
>
> there's the [Windsor Pride Community] centre downtown that's a great resource. All
>
> you need to do is find one and then all the rest will just line up.

Anything else about your life? Finally, interviewees were asked if there was anything about their lives or experiences as gay or bisexual males in Windsor-Essex County that they thought was important. Mathew offered the following ardent reflection at the end of his interview:

Being HIV positive I can advocate, not only for young people, but for HIV positive people, for gay people. I have something that needs to be fought for that I am capable of doing. That gives me a sense of fulfillment. The fact that I have to fight for it is definitely the downside. The fact that regardless, as it stands right now, I'm going to continue to have to fight for these things I believe in. I'm going to continue to have to stick up for my rights as a human being, not just a gay person, but as a human being. My right to live my life the way I was born to live it. I have to defend that, which is not right. I shouldn't have to defend that. It should come naturally. I don't question anybody else. . . . I don't question people who get married and have a white picket fence and a couple of kids and a retriever, whether they're gay or straight. I don't question that. That's what they want to do. That's what drives them. That's what makes them happy. So be it. Make yourself happy. Live your life. The fact that, you know, that I might not want to fall in love with a woman, you know, that's debatable to some people, that, you know what I mean, that makes it, in some people's minds, that's wrong. I have to stick up for that. I have to tell people, you know, gay is not a choice. I didn't choose to be gay. When did you choose to be a hetero? That's the hard part there, having to defend those things. It shouldn't be contested. It shouldn't even be brought up.

 While there may be more organizations and resources available in much larger cities like Toronto, interviewees also clearly indicated a profound appreciation of the features of a smaller

city and being able to be part of a tight-knit community that has more resources and

organizational support than even some of its other residents seem to know about. They also

expressed an appreciation of some of the downsides. It can be harder for people who are closeted

and the region's smaller size and cohesive LGBT community can mean, in one online

respondent's opinion: "Most people know a lot about other people's business. Words get around

very easily and quickly."

Many of the responses of all participants reflect the complexity of the social world and

region around them. While many acknowledged difficulty and hardship, many also highlighted

the support and resources around them, whether messaging campaigns that through the Internet

have become international or local organizations that were built by earlier activists and sustained

by older community members. In seeking information for, assistance with, and support for their

own hardships several of the interviewed youth have joined the ranks of these community

organizations, in turn, to help them in their work. As many of their narratives describing the

events and issues experienced in the development of their sexual identity have turned from

describing fear of exposure, alienation, victimization, and isolation to the inclusion of

descriptions of disclosure, belonging, empowerment, and increasing social participation, they

present a contemporary picture of the workings and continuing development of a sexual

community.

DISCUSSION

This study represents the largest survey of GBM youth in Windsor and Essex County's

history. As such, it contains useful baseline information regarding the timing and occurrence of

important milestones and issues in the development of a gay or bisexual identity. These general

data are important to make sure that support and services are available to youth at time periods

when they are likely to be encountering issues. These numbers take on even more importance

and contextual richness when viewed as a statistical backdrop to the very personal narratives

offered by interviewees and captured for the historical record.

The current study began with the main question: What is it like growing up as a GBM in

Windsor and Essex County? This question led to a set of other questions: Do GBM youth in

Windsor and Essex County follow a particular general progression in the development of their

gay or bisexual identity development and, if so, what does it look like? What are the patterns,

ages, and influences? Similarly, a second set of questions concerned whether or not GBM youth

in Windsor and Essex County experience the issues problematized in the literature and, if so,

what are the patterns, ages, and influences? In order to answer these questions several tools were

utilized. The first was a conceptual framework, Savin-Williams' (1998) trajectory model, a

flexible model of sexual identity development. The next tools were quantitative and qualitative

methodological devices used to capture, explore, and organize the experiences of GBM youth in

a particular social, historical, and physical context. Both the model and the combination of tools

chosen lend themselves well to creating a generalized portrait while allowing for the inclusion of

uniqueness and details.

The Development of a Sexual Identity

While Savin-Williams' trajectory model of sexual identity development can be used to

create a general development progression, it is not intended to be static or universal; it was

proposed to allow for the ways that identity development occurs in and is influenced by

intrapersonal, interpersonal, and social contexts through commonly experienced and reported

milestones. Research has shown that the ages at and order in which these milestones are reached

has fluctuated, and the model, unlike previous ones, is flexible with respect to allowing these variations in a dynamic world of individuals, relationships, and culture.

Though he does not present his findings by dividing and comparing the responses based on whether or not his 180 GBM youth labelled themselves as gay or bisexual, Savin-Williams (1998) does present their self-ratings on the Kinsey Scale. To participate in Savin-William's study, a youth only had to identify himself as gay or bisexual. Each youth also rated himself on the Kinsey (1948) Scale. The scale and the percentages of GBM youth who rated themselves in particular categories were: 6 (*Exclusively homosexual*) 61%, 5 (*Predominantly homosexual, only incidentally heterosexual*) 23%, 4 (*Predominantly homosexual, but more than incidentally heterosexual*) 10%, 3 (*Equally heterosexual and homosexual*) 4%, 2 (*Predominantly heterosexual, but more than incidentally homosexual*) 1%. This means that 84% of the Savin-Williams (1998) were Kinsey Scale 5 and 6s.

Savin-Williams deemphasizes the importance of the particular Kinsey (1948) categories when he explains that, for his purposes, the categories are less important than the stories which describe how GBM youth arrived at their sexual identity. It is also important to note that Kinsey used his scale specifically for assessing sexual behaviour and not sexual identity, which do not always correspond as neatly as one might assume. For example, a person may identify as heterosexual, but also have had several same-sex experiences. A gay man may also have had sexual experiences with women, but not identify as a bisexual. A person may have had no sexual experiences, but still identify as bisexual. Still and with a bit of assumptive extrapolation (i.e., the assumption that a sexual identity label should roughly correspond to sexual behaviour), the two samples are fairly similar with respect to the proportion of the number of gay and bisexual males that participated.

Comparisons. In order, and earlier in life, GBMs felt most dissimilar to other males, other people, other GBMs and females. As hypothesized, over time, GBMs felt that they were more similar to others than they had been before. According to the interviewees, having positive experiences of increased personal authenticity stemming from disclosure and increased contact with the LGBT community were some of the things that led them to feel less different and alienated. Unlike the Savin-Williams' sample, estimations of dissimilarity and similarity did not differentiate between those who reached milestones at earlier or later ages, but were more related to whether or not harassment was reported and at what ages. While these feelings of dissimilarity and similarity may not have impacted the timing of milestone events in terms of the ages at which they occurred, they were often described as influencing the initiation of and central to the process of identity formation.

Milestones. In terms of ages of reaching milestones and the order in which they were experienced, the general developmental progression found in the current sample in Windsor and Essex County did vary a bit from the one Savin-Williams (1998) originally found. In keeping with trends, the average ages of reaching some of these first milestones (i.e., self-labelling and disclosures) continued to decrease. Others, however (i.e., attraction to a male and sex with a male) occurred at later ages. While general patterns can be seen, with each milestone there is still considerable individual variability. For example, Mathew had sex before he came out very publicly and Mike waited to have sex until he had fallen in love and been in a romantic relationship for over a month, though he had also come out very publicly earlier. Given this variability, it is important in making decisions about the availability of support or educational programming, to temper awareness of the general development progression with the understanding that it can be idiosyncratic and that there can be wide ranges.

The order in which the milestones were experienced in the current study exhibited a

configuration mostly similar to that reported by Savin-Williams, but still unique. The

progression for Savin-William's sample was: attractions, labelling attractions, sex, labelling self,

disclosure to others, romance, and self-acceptance. In the current sample, the progression was:

attractions, self-labelling, disclosure, sex, love, and romantic relationships. The main differences

then, in the current sample, were that self-labelling was found to occur shortly after the

experience of same-sex attractions, while disclosures preceded first sex with a male. With the

proliferation of LGBT visibility and (especially) sexual content on an increasingly accessible

internet since the Savin-Williams study, actual, non-virtual sexual experiences with another

might not be as necessary in terms of instigating initial self-labelling as it may have been for

previous generations of youth and adults.

Attractions. First attractions (whether to males or females) were found, as hypothesized,

to occur on average near the onset of gonadal puberty, though with considerable variation

lending credibility to the idea that biological and hormonal variables, though influential, are also

impacted by social influences in reaching this mainly intrapersonal milestone. While these

general and attentional attractions and fascinations with males were, in the main, not initially

described as overly sexual, they were characterized as the sources that led to the initial and

tentative self-labelling. While some interviewees described the changing rooms at school as the

site where they began to take notice of their attractions, respondents also frequently mentioned

sexual materials available online as provoking theirs and their initial and tentative self-labelling.

Self-Labelling. Accompanying a more firm commitment to self-labelling as gay or

bisexual were descriptions that became more sexual and romantic in nature.   Though

comparisons to types of people did not seem to distinguish statistically between those who self-

labelled earlier and those who did so later, taking note that their interests and attractions differed from those of most other boys was described as a factor involved with coming to a gay or bisexual identity. The process of self-labelling was characterized as conflictive by some, especially those who did so earlier and had no one to talk to. As hypothesized, first self-labelling occurred earlier than in the Savin-Williams sample, which is a continuation of an already noted trend. This finding is not surprising in an era where there is more LGBT visibility in the media, accessible on the Internet, and in the public sphere. As more youth self-label and come out at earlier ages, they also serve as role models and people to talk to for those in the beginning stages of their own process. Another important difference with the current sample is the increasing pervasiveness of communication technology and continued proliferation of LGBT-specific channels and virtual gathering places online or through mobile phone applications; they were frequently described as being accessed and used by many in the current study. There are probably not that many youth in Windsor and Essex County who do not know what the words gay or bisexual mean, at least to some extent and, if they do not, it is no longer very difficult to access a wealth of information on the topic extremely easily and quickly.

   Disclosure. Coming out and disclosure are important milestones for mitigating the effects of feeling alone and isolated. They are almost essential for seeking any kind of help with sexual identity issues and gay or bisexual-positive help with some of the issues problematized in the literature. After coming out, interviewees described having more gay and bisexual friends who were helpful as role models or people to talk to. In light of increasingly more accepting social attitudes, the interpersonal act of disclosing to another was hypothesized to occur at earlier ages than in the Savin-Williams's sample. That hypothesis was confirmed and, unlike the Savin-Williams sample, self-disclosure happened before having sex with another male. As

hypothesized, disclosures were made to friends first and then to family members. The extent of the disclosure, the nature of the audience, and the consequences varied quite widely among GBMs and these things were not always completely under their control.   As described by some interviewees, such disclosures can put them in conflict with others at earlier ages where they may have difficulty dealing with the ramifications on their own and with little institutional social support in school, from their friends, or from their families. However, as societal attitudes change and as more supports and resources have become available, this situation is beginning to change, too.

As evidenced in the reports of interviewees, some parents are supportive, others are not, and some take more time. Some parents have a difficult time with their child's disclosure. What did emerge in the interviewees' data was how important it was to the individual when their parents were able to be or become supportive. Support services, like Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), can be a very important resource for families to aid GBMs in their positive identity development, if these services are known to and accessed by families of GBMs. There is a PFLAG group in Windsor, but unfortunately at this time, it is not particularly active. Groups like Windsor Pride Community and the Service Alliance for Equality should work together to develop support services for parents who are dealing with their children coming out. At this writing, Windsor Pride Community's (2011c) Parent, Friends, Family, and Allies (PFFA) is on hold until a facilitator is found. The current study found that mothers are often more and more deeply disclosed to; they may be a good target population for initiating a strengthening of the local PFLAG and PFFA. Parents may also have issues that are not public and that limit their ability to be immediately supportive of their children, which heightens the importance of having GSAs and groups like Young & Proud to offer support and guidance for youth, particularly in

light of the findings that GBMs in this sample were more likely to first come out and disclose to peers.

Sex. Sex with a male occurred at a later reported mean age (of 17.53) in the current sample than in the Savin-Williams' sample (14.11). Occurring after disclosure to friends and family members, this may leave young GBMs more time and opportunities to process their thoughts and feeling about sex with others than previous generations who more often explored sex on their own before disclosure. The later age of first sex also provides more time for sexual education to occur. This is particularly important given the presence of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

It was hypothesized that the influence of heterocentric society would lead to sex with a female occurring earlier than sex with a male (among those who had experienced both); the data were supportive of this hypothesis, but the age difference was not statistically significant. There was considerable variation in ages with some people engaging in sexual activity at very young ages with only very limited knowledge and others much later, sometimes described as a conscious choice. Often these first encounters were described as clumsy and awkward. Sometimes they were kept secret because the other partner was not out. Given that, on average, disclosure preceded sex in the current sample, first sex may not be as central as it once was in committing to a gay or bisexual identity, both internally and by revealing it to others.

Love. As hypothesized, first love with a female occurred earlier that it did with a male and by about three years. While most respondents reported experiencing being in love, sometimes this love was unrequited and sometimes it was mutual. Still, first loves were described as intense and memorable experiences whether they were kept private or shared with the object of their affection.

Romantic relationships. Like love and as hypothesized, the experience of a romantic relationship with a female also occurred before that with a male, but at about four years earlier. The vast majority of respondents had experienced the milestone. These initial relationships were sometimes very positive experiences characterized by fulfillment, trust, and openness. At their worst they were characterized by dissatisfaction, unfaithfulness, and a need to keep them secret. Whatever their valence, they could be used to judge or impact the romantic experiences with others later.

Issues problematized in the literature.

Harassment. The majority of respondents reported being harassed (67%) and harassed at school (56%) for their sexual identity. School was an important and salient setting in interviewees' lives. For many, school was where their awareness of themselves as sexual beings grew via comparison. School was where they learned the language, which was often pejorative, to begin thinking about themselves. Most of the interviewees did not have access to a GSA when they were in high school either because GSAs did not exist or the GSA was too new and the person was not out yet or comfortable enough to attend.

Many interviewees did report some support in high school from friends, straight teachers, or gay teachers. However, this support was generally haphazard and not institutionally formalized. Some interviewees also sought support from services, like Young & Proud, offered by local community organizations, like the AIDS Committee of Windsor, where available and accessible. These are important services, even if high schools have GSAs, as not all youth feel comfortable attending GSAs, especially before they have come out. For those interviewees from the county, such services were not accessible without a car, which is not an option for those without a driver's license. Even if a family car is available, it may be difficult to obtain,

especially in terms of explanation, if one is not out to one's parent(s). Given these issues, it is

important that youth have access to support and services both in school and in the community, so

that youth without access in one venue, for whatever reasons, do have somewhere to turn.

The most commonly reported age for the beginning of harassment was 14, when most

adolescents are either in or about to enter high school. Looking at the types of experiences

described by interviewees, the components in their stories that seem to have made a big

difference were straight teachers, gay teachers, being popular, having allies and other students, or

family members in the school. The stories told by Mike and Mathew are particularly illustrative

in contrast. Mathew may have had stronger support at home, but he did not have as much

support at school. Mike described one student who had "freaked out at school" after having been

the target of harassment from other students and indicated that this incident helped spur him to

try to form a GSA; the school's response to the situation had been to allow the student to return,

but only if he took medication. Given the student's erratic behaviour and the story of Mathew's

reaction to harassment in class, having a GSA could work to indirectly protect other students

from such escalations.

Teachers are an important source of support, and local efforts by the Service Alliance for

Equality (SAFE), Windsor Pride Community, and the GSA for Staff to bring awareness,

education, and the anti-homophobia training developed by the Ontario Secondary School

Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) and the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) are

extremely important to give teachers the necessary support for them to be effective agents of

anti-homophobia efforts and support to students. Gay teachers were also mentioned as sources

of support and role models. In the English public board, the GSA for Staff is important. Its

membership is open to teachers from all the boards. Staff GSA members not only help to

provide training and put on a yearly conference on student GSAs, but also act as an important

forum for sharing news, resources, and support at their monthly meetings. Having out and

supported gay and bisexual teachers is an especially important resource, as most youth do not

have gay parents and do not always have a gay relative; even if they do, they may not have

developed or disclosed a gay identity to the relative. Interviewees mentioned how important it

was for them to have adults that they could talk to, and parents are not always receptive or

informed enough to be of assistance. The threat of harassment, in any context, is great enough

that 57% reported that it affects where they go and how they act.

Harassment was one area where dissimilarity and similarity to other comparator groups

was related to significant differences in the age of first occurrence. GBMS who saw themselves

as dissimilar from other people when they were young reported harassment first occurring about

four years earlier than those who saw themselves as similar. Also, GBMs who rated their

younger selves as dissimilar from other males reported harassment first occurring about five and

a half years earlier than those who saw themselves as similar. In general, those GBMs who saw

their younger selves as similar to others and other males were less likely to report harassment at

school than those who were dissimilar or equally dissimilar and similar to those comparator

groups.

Some experienced harassment within their family, while others talked about public

spaces like the street or commercial venues. The responses to harassment, whether actual or

feared, range from using disengagement, humour, a safety in numbers strategy, and direct

confrontation. Individuals coming out at earlier ages and being more open about themselves and

open in terms of confronting expressions of homophobia can lead to more potential

confrontations in the public sphere. Fortunately, recent initiatives like the Report Homophobic

Violence Period initiated between Windsor Pride Community, Windsor Police Service, and Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere (EGALE) provide sensitivity training for police and encourage community members to come forward to report crimes. Windsor Police Services is the first police service in Canada to mandate such training among its officers. These kinds of initiatives need to continue to address the safety concerns of GBM youth in the public sphere.

HIV/AIDS. Although the majority of participants have been tested, a sizeable portion does not see HIV as affecting their lives. Sexual education needs to be comprehensive and not just limited to reproduction; though reproduction is still important, as about one-third reported having sex with a female at an average age of 15.88 which is about two years earlier than the majority of respondents reported having had sex with another male at 17.53. It is important that sexual health education cover all transmission routes including both same-sex and other-sex sexual behaviour. As evidenced in the narratives of interviewees, even youth who are straight-identified may engage in same-sex sexual behaviour, and gay youth may also engage in other-sex sexual behaviour. For this reason, niche-teaching to only people with particular sexual identities and avoiding topics not seen as relevant will not be effective for all. The Windsor-Essex County Health Unit's Comprehensive School Health Team offers in-class sexual health presentations in conjunction with the Windsor Essex Community Health Centre and the AIDS Committee of Windsor to grade eight and nine students.

It is also clear from the interviewees' narratives that supposedly monogamous relationships are not always so and that social stigma may be powerful enough to make individuals not always comfortable with being completely honest or open about their sexual activities and sexual health histories. With individuals, on average, having sex several years before getting tested, they may not even know whether or not they have a sexually transmitted

infection. In addition, and according to Health Canada (2007), a person can have a sexually

transmitted infection, pass it on to others, but fail to display any symptoms. The World AIDS

Day Youth Conference is held every year and may help make issues surrounding HIV/AIDS and

other sexually transmitted infections seem more relevant to youth. Even though a slight majority

of respondents did not think that HIV/AIDS has affected their lives in any way, about two thirds

have been tested for HIV beginning at an average age of 19.73. Clearly, encouraging testing at

earlier ages needs to be a priority to address this two-year gap and when the age group of 15-24

is at most risk for sexual infections.

Homelessness. For two of the three respondents who reported being homeless, it was

because of their sexual identities. At this time, Windsor does not have any residential facilities

geared toward young men, let alone a gay and bisexual positive-space. What spaces do exist put

youth with adults, some of whom are also coping with substance use issues. Currently, the

Windsor Residence for Young Men (2012; WRYM) is seeking monies to open a residential

facility for men 16-20 which would be gay and bisexual-positive.

Mood altering substances. The majority of respondents disclosed using mood altering

substances, including alcohol. Besides the internet, gay bars in Windsor are one of the safer

social venues for gay and bisexual young men where they can be open and authentic. The

opening of the Windsor Pride Community Education and Resource Centre does provide a social

gathering place with activities that are not centred on alcohol. Windsor Pride Community

(2011c) also offers Rainbow Recovery which is, though not youth-centred per se, a weekly

meeting for people dealing with substance use issues. Data from interviewees indicate that at

least some substance misuse is related to difficulties surrounding their sexual identity. This

further suggests that efforts made to aid GBMs through their identity development milestones can potentially reduce some of the substance use occurring in this vulnerable population.

Depression and suicide. The majority of respondents (85%) reported "feeling really down" at some point, and a large minority (46%) of those linked it to their sexual identities. Although it is important to note that depression was not formally assessed or screened in this study, a strong indicator of serious depressive affect, namely suicidal ideation, was reported by more than half (54%) of the sample and 30% of those also linked it to their sexual identities. Windsor Pride Community currently offers OK2BME peer support groups for people of all ages, and the AIDS Committee of Windsor continues to offer the Young & Proud social support group. There are also gay and lesbian positive counsellors and therapists who are mainly accessed through word of mouth. As not all interviewees knew about these groups, more community outreach may be necessary.

Sex trade. A fraction of respondents (15%) reported having exchanged sex for material things, including a place to stay. Three interviewees reported having done so for drugs, money, a place to stay (though not because he was homeless), or some combination. Again, these responses highlight the importance of gay and bisexually sensitive treatment programs for people dealing with substance use issues that may lead them to turn to the sex trade to fund their habits.

The Experiences of Young Gay and Bisexual Men in Windsor and Essex County, Ontario

In terms of what helped them in the process of developing and dealing with their sexual identity, interviewees often listed certain organizations and also specific people in the gay and bisexual community. In order to access these resources, interviewees advised other young people to not be shy and to actively seek help. Organizations should continue to make sure that they have a presence at local conferences where youth are present in order to conduct outreach to

those who are having difficulties. The ideas behind the It Gets Better campaign have clearly

been noticed by some interviewees, and it may be useful for local organizations to piggy-back

onto these national campaigns.

The context of Windsor and Essex County. Windsor and Essex County were seen as

having unique characteristics that were interpreted as positive by some interviewees and negative

by others. First, its smaller size was noted as a positive by several, who saw that as less

overwhelming and also facilitating close friendships, but three others also noted that the size can

be an issue in terms of privacy. Windsor was seen as an accepting place, with a lot more to offer

the LGBT community than one might expect for a city of its size. One of the problems appears

to be people knowing that those resources and programming exist for them, and organizations, in

partnership, may have to do a better job or determine better ways to inform people about them.

The development of a sexual community. Through comparisons to others, experiences

of milestone events, and coping with difficult issues, interviewees' individual tellings and the

collective narrative describe the development of a sexual identity. This development is

characterized by themes of Victimization versus Empowerment and Isolation versus Community.

Victimization can be seen in the many and varied experiences of harassment, free-floating and

directed, in numerous contexts. It can lead, as it had for Mathew, to feelings of isolation and

alienation acutely at times and chronically for stretches. It can also spur attempts at

empowerment and, with enough critical energy from individuals like Mike, and enough

community support to give it critical mass, effect significant change to transform paralyzing fear

of exposure to active disclosure, alienation to belonging, and sexual identity to sexual

community. The work of activists in the past set up local organizations that, even though they

may have changed in name and composition, years later provided the support to facilitate and

empower change that was previously and multiply thwarted. And, in that sense, it has gotten better.

The main goal of this research was to explore and document the experiences of forming a stigmatized cultural identity within a particular social and historical context. Using a mixed methods approach, it attempted to collect some basic demographic data and create a general picture of the experience of growing up gay or bisexual in Windsor and Essex County. The descriptive statistical data in this report is intended to establish baselines for local gay and bisexual male youth in terms of when, on average, they experience certain milestones in the development of a gay or bisexual identity. Again, it is hoped that these results will be of use to local social service providers, community groups, and educational organizations that deal with GBM youth and are trying to be more informed and conscientious in dealing with their needs.

Attention to contextual influences was also deemed vital for understanding the often variable experiences of GBM youth and conceiving of ways in which interventions might be tailored to address needs and assist their well-being. An semi-structured interview was seen as the best method for capturing and documenting these sometimes similar and sometimes divergent experiences of GBM youth. Interviewees' narratives contain stories of disempowerment and empowerment, their hardships and also their capacities in dealing with what, at times, can be a hostile climate. It is hoped that, as a companion piece to *Out and Aging: Our Stories* (Zarzosa, 2010), the narrative results from the interviewees will be used in local diversity training programming and resource materials to heighten consciousness, understanding, and compassion for GBM youth. It is also hoped that the data from both methods will be used by local social service providers, community groups, and educational organizations to pursue funding and grants to address local gaps in services, programming, and need.

As recommendations to local social service providers, community groups, and educational organizations, there are a few initial steps beyond a review of the current study's findings that can be taken. As one interviewee remarked, in seeking help, he was not sure whether an agency was LGBT positive or not. One simple, but important way is to indicate that your service or organization is LGBT positive is by letting people know explicitly. A very easy way to indicate this is by putting up a symbolic visual marker, like a rainbow pride sticker, on the door of your service or in a prominent place in your waiting room. Before doing so, however, it is vitally important that your organization has done the background work to ensure that the symbol is an accurate representation of the organization's climate, policies, and procedures by first conducting a personal and organizational assessment. The results of such an assessment can be used to decide what kind of additional sensitivity and cultural competency training may be required. One such tool is offered by the Ontario Public Health Association (2011) in their *A Positive Space Is A Healthy Place* training manual. It also contains suggestions for policies. In terms of outreach, make sure that local LGBT organizations have a supply of pamphlets from your organization. Finally, if you have out, openly LGBT staff, they can be a very important resource with respect to cultural competency. Their very presence and ability to be open can be a very good indicator with respect to the climate of your organization.

Women were not included in the study, and it is not completely clear how the findings of this study would generalize to them. There are a number of reasons for this caution with respect to generalizability. Diamond and Savin-Williams (2000) point out that coming out models, with their sequencing of events, feelings, and experiences that lead to the development of a sexual identity, contain some elements which are alien to some women. These elements, like early gender atypicality, same-sex attractions in late childhood and adolescence, the absence of sexual

interest in the other sex, followed by sexual experimentation with the same-sex, and sexual

identity self-labelling in late childhood and early adolescence, are not always elements in all

sexual minority women's narratives. For some of these women, the stability and early

appearance of same-sex attractions are not a reality.

Diamond and Savin-Williams point to three reasons they see as explaining these

differences in the developmental trajectories of women. First, there is considerable variation in

both the context of women's attractions and in their quality due to the attractions often being

nonexclusive and fluid over time. Second, the quality, exclusivity, or stability of their attractions

is not systematically related to the timing of their first same-sex attraction. Last, the interaction

of environment and personal characteristics is a better predictor of variation in women's

sexuality development. As examples, Diamond (2007) points to women who experience abrupt

and novel erotic feelings that emerge in specific contexts as evidenced by the use of the terms

"LUG" (i.e., "lesbian until graduation") and "hasbians" (i.e., women who enter into relationships

with men after being with women). Some initially lesbian-identified women also move to

becoming "unlabelled" as they experience attractions and relationships with emotional intensity

that are not based on the other person's sex. These discontinuities call into question the linearity

and stability of sexual orientation with respect to women. They suggest that sexual identity

development is a life-long process for some and not always something which appears early and

unfolds in a predictable way over time. Diamond's longitudinal study of women may shed light

on the within group variation exhibited in the experiences of same-sex attracted women.

There have been great strides in the implementation of GSAs in local English public

schools. While part of the efforts to set them up in schools was captured in the current study,

future research will need to explore the role established GSAs are playing in schools for LGBT

students. Clearly, past and current students recognize their importance, and assessment should be examined by future research. In addition, the influences of class and education were not examined with any great depth, and future research should attempt to assess the roles that these variables play in the development of a sexual identity.

As for its other limitations, this study fell short in capturing more of the ethnocultural diversity that can be found in Windsor and Essex County. Future research would do well to focus on and access members of these communities to get a better sense of the individual and general patterns and issues faced by gay and bisexual men of non-European descent in the development of their sexual identities. Such an endeavour may be facilitated if done by researchers who are already insiders in these communities. Though bisexuals participated in the online survey, more intentional sampling of bisexuals and having bisexuals participating in interviews may well give future research insight into their unique and common experiences. Finally, there has been little research and documentation of the local transgender community. While their participation was encouraged, and there has been more local community organizing, their experiences were not captured in this study and will have to be left for someone in the future to pick up in order to impart a more comprehensive picture of what LGBT life is and has been like in Windsor and Essex County.

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APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Note. This glossary is used widely across Canada and comes from Asking the Right Questions 2 (Barbara, Doctor & Chaim, 2007, pp. 55-60). It has been lightly edited and additions have been made by Scott Mattson to the glossary to reflect the ideas that while men and women are similar in some ways and different in others, they are not opposites, they are only two sex or gender categories that people experience or identify themselves as being, and for use in training sessions with social services providers by the editor and Windsor Pride Community. The changes and additions made are in italics. Otherwise, it appears as verbatim, though formatting changes have been also been made.

THE DISCOURSE AROUND LGBTTTIQ ISSUES AND THE DEFINITIONS IN THIS GLOSSARY WILL CHANGE OVER TIME.

Changes in thinking and attitudes toward sexual orientation and gender identity are continually taking place in society as a whole and within the LGBTTTIQ *(lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgendered, two-spirit, intersex, and queer)* communities. These terms and definitions are not standardized and may be used differently by different people and in different regions.

ASEXUAL: a word describing a person who is not sexually and/or romantically active, or not sexually and/or romantically attracted to other persons.

AUTOSEXUAL: a word describing a person whose significant sexual involvement is with oneself or a person who prefers masturbation to sex with a partner.

BIPHOBIA: irrational fear or dislike of bisexuals. Bisexuals may be stigmatized by heterosexuals, lesbians and gay men.

BI-POSITIVE: the opposite of biphobia. A bi-positive attitude is one that validates, affirms, accepts, appreciates, celebrates and integrates bisexual people as unique and special in their own right.

BISEXUAL: a word describing a person whose sexual orientation is directed toward men and women, though not necessarily at the same time.

CISGENDER: *is an adjective used in the context of gender issues and counseling to refer to a class of gender identities formed by a match between an individual's gender identity and the behavior or role considered appropriate for one's sex. Cisgender is used to contrast "tansgender" on the gender spectrum.*

COMING OUT: the process by which LGBTTTIQ people acknowledge and disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity, or in which transsexual or transgendered people acknowledge and disclose their gender identity, to themselves and others (See also "Transition"). Coming out is thought to be an ongoing process. People who are "closeted" or "in the closet" hide the fact that they are LGBTTTIQ. Some people "come out of the closet" in some situations (e.g., with other gay friends) and not in others (e.g., at work).

CROSSDRESSER: A person who dresses in the clothing of the other sex for recreation, expression or art, or for erotic gratification. Formerly known as "transvestites." Crossdressers may be male or female, and can be straight, gay, lesbian or bisexual. Gay/bisexual male crossdressers may be "drag queens" or female impersonators; lesbian/bisexual female crossdressers may be "drag kings" or male impersonators.

DYKE: a word traditionally used as a derogatory term for lesbians. Other terms include lezzie, lesbo, butch, bull dyke and diesel dyke. Many women have reclaimed these words and use them proudly to describe their identity.

ESSENTIALISM: A philosophical view that posits that there are properties or characteristics of a group (of, for example, things, people, or ideas) that are universally inherent to members of that group and not dependent on context. With respect to sexuality, essentialists would view sexual orientation as a core, defining, "built-in," and biological aspect of an individual. It assumes that there exists a reality which is independent of the knower.

FAG: a word traditionally used as a derogatory term for gay men. Other terms include fruit, faggot, queen, fairy, pansy, sissy and homo. Many men have reclaimed these words and use them proudly to describe their identity.

FAMILY OF CHOICE: the circle of friends, partners, companions and perhaps ex-partners with which many LGBTTTIQ people surround themselves. This group gives the support, validation and sense of belonging that is often unavailable from the person's family of origin.

FAMILY OF ORIGIN: the biological family or the family that was significant in a person's early development.

GAY: a word to describe a person whose primary sexual orientation is to members of the same gender or who identifies as a member of the gay community. This word can refer to men and women, although many women prefer the term "lesbian."

GAY-POSITIVE: the opposite of homophobia. A gay-positive attitude is one that affirms, accepts, appreciates, celebrates, and integrates gay and lesbian people as unique and special in their own right.

GENDER: *"The socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women" (World Health Organization, 2011). Examples include androgynous, feminine, masculine, and undifferentiated.*

GENDER CONFORMING: abiding by society's gender rules, e.g., a woman dressing, acting, relating to others, and thinking of herself as feminine or as a woman.

GENDER IDENTITY: a person's own identification of being male, female or intersex; masculine, feminine, transgendered or transsexual. Gender identity most often corresponds with one's anatomical gender, but sometimes people's gender identity doesn't directly correspond to their anatomy. Transgendered people use many terms to describe their gender identities, including: pre-op transsexual, post-op transsexual, non-op transsexual, transgenderist, crossdresser, transvestite, transgendered, two-spirit, intersex, hermaphrodite, fem male, gender blender, butch, manly woman, diesel dyke, sex radical, androgynist, female impersonator, male impersonator, drag king, drag queen, etc.

GENDERQUEER: this very recent term was coined by young people who experience a very fluid sense of both their gender identity and their sexual orientation, and who do not want to be constrained by absolute or static concepts. Instead, they prefer to be open to relocate themselves on the gender and sexual orientation continuums.

GENDER ROLE: the public expression of gender identity. Gender role includes everything people do to show the world they are male, female, androgynous or ambivalent. It includes sexual signals, dress, hairstyle and manner of walking. In society, gender roles are usually considered to be masculine for men and feminine for woman.

GENDER TRANSITION: the period during which transsexual persons begin changing their appearance and bodies to match their internal identity.

GENDERISM: the belief that the binary construct of gender, in which there are only two genders (male and female), is the most normal, natural and preferred gender identity. This binary construct does not include or allow for people to be intersex, transgendered, transsexual, or genderqueer.

HATE CRIMES: offences that are motivated by hatred against victims based on their actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.

HETEROSEXISM: the assumption, expressed overtly and/or covertly, that all people are or should be heterosexual. Heterosexism excludes the needs, concerns, and life experiences of lesbian, gay and bisexual people, while it gives advantages to heterosexual people. It is often a subtle form of oppression that reinforces silence and invisibility for lesbian, gay and bisexual people.

HETEROSEXUAL: term used to describe a person who primary sexual orientation is to members of *another* gender. Heterosexual people are often referred to as "straight."

HETEROSEXUAL PRIVILEGE: the unrecognized and assumed privileges that people have if they are heterosexual. Examples of heterosexual privilege include: holding hands or kissing in public without fearing threat, not questioning the normalcy of your sexual orientation, raising children without fears of state intervention or worries that your children will experience discrimination because of your heterosexuality.

HOMOPHOBIA: irrational fear, hatred, prejudice or negative attitudes toward homosexuality and people who are gay or lesbian. Homophobia can take overt and covert, as well as subtle and extreme, forms. Homophobia includes behaviours such as jokes, name-calling, exclusion, gay bashing, etc.

HOMOSEXUAL: a term to describe a person whose primary sexual orientation is to members of the same gender. Most people prefer to not use this label, preferring to use other terms, such as gay or lesbian.

IDENTITY: how one thinks of oneself, as opposed to what others observe or think about one.

INTERNALIZED HOMOPHOBIA: fear and self-hatred of one's own sexual orientation that occurs for many lesbians and gay men as a result of heterosexism and homophobia. Once lesbians and gay men realize that they belong to a group of people that is often despised and rejected in our society, many internalize and incorporate this stigmatization, and fear or hate themselves.

INTERSEX: a person who has some mixture of male and female genetic and/or physical sex characteristics. Formerly called "hermaphrodites." Many intersex people consider themselves to be part of the trans community.

LESBIAN: a female whose primary sexual orientation is to other women or who identifies as a member of the lesbian community.

LGBTTTIQ: a common acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgendered, two-spirit, intersex and queer individuals/communities. This acronym may or may not be used in a particular community. For example, in some places, the acronym LGBT (for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered/transsexual) may be more common.

MSM: *An abbreviation for a* man *(or men)* who has sex with men, refers to any man who has sex with a man, whether he identifies as gay, bisexual or heterosexual. This term highlights the distinction between sexual behaviour and sexual identity (i.e., sexual orientation). A person's sexual behaviour may manifest itself into a sexual identity, but the reverse is not always true; sexual orientation is not always reflective of sexual behaviour. For example, a man may call himself heterosexual, but may engage in sex with men in certain situations (e.g., prison *or* sex work).

OUT OR OUT OF THE CLOSET: varying degrees of being open about one's sexual orientation or gender identity.

PASSING: describes transgendered or transsexual people's ability to be accepted as their preferred gender. The term refers primarily to acceptance by people the individual does not know, or who do not know that the individual is transgendered or transsexual. Typically, passing involves a mix of physical gender cues (e.g., clothing, hairstyle, voice), behaviour, manner and conduct when interacting with others. Passing can also refer to hiding one's sexual orientation, as in "passing for straight."

POLYSEXUAL: an orientation that does not limit affection, romance or sexual attraction to any one gender or sex, and that further recognizes there are more than just two sexes.

QUEER: traditionally, a derogatory and offensive term for LGBTTTIQ people. Many LGBTTTIQ people have reclaimed this word and use it proudly to describe their identity. Some transsexual and transgendered people identify as queers; others do not.

QUESTIONING: people who are questioning their gender identity or sexual orientation and who often choose to explore options.

SEX: *"The biological and physiological characteristics that define men and women" (World Health Organization, 2011). Examples include intersex, male, and female.*

SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR: what people do sexually. Not necessarily congruent with sexual orientation and/or sexual identity.

SEXUAL IDENTITY: one's identification to self (and others) of one's sexual orientation. Not necessarily congruent with sexual orientation and/or sexual behaviour. *Examples include asexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and pansexual. It "represents an enduring self-recognition of the **meanings** that sexual feelings, attractions, and behaviors have for one's sense of self" (Savin-Williams, 1995, p. 3, emphasis in original).*

SEXUAL MINORITIES: include people who identify as LGBTTTIQ.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION: a term for the emotional, physical, romantic, sexual and spiritual attraction, desire or affection for another person. Examples include *asexuality,* heterosexuality, bisexuality*,* and homosexuality. *It "refers to the preponderance of sexual or erotic feelings, thoughts, fantasies, and/or behaviors one has for members of one sex or the other, both, or neither" (Savin-Williams, 1995, p. 3).*

SIGNIFICANT OTHER: a life partner, domestic partner, lover, boyfriend*,* or girlfriend. It is often equivalent to the term "spouse" for LGBTTTIQ people.

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM: *A sociological theory of knowledge that assumes people construct knowledge that is influenced by the social context of their inquiry. With respect to sexuality, social constructionists maintain that individuals accept a particular sexual identity or label because their culture encourages them to interpret their own feelings or behaviours in a particular way.*

STRAIGHT: a term often used to describe people who are heterosexual.

TRANS and **TRANSPEOPLE** are non-clincial terms that usually include transsexual, transgendered and other gender-variant people.

TRANSGENDERED: a person whose gender identity is different from his or her biological sex, regardless of the status of surgical and hormonal gender reassignment processes. Often used as an umbrella term to include transsexuals, transgenderists, transvestites (crossdressers), and two-spirit, intersex and transgendered people.

TRANSGENDERIST: someone who is in-between being a transsexual and a transgendered person on the gender continuum, and who often takes sex hormones, but does not want genital surgery. Transgenderists can be born male (formerly known as "she-males") or born females (one called he/shes"). The former sometimes obtain breast implants and/or electrolysis.

TRANSITION: the process (which for some people may also be referred to as the "gender reassignment process") whereby transsexual people change their appearance and bodies to match their internal (gender) identity, while living their lives full-time in their preferred gender role.

TRANSPHOBIA: irrational fear or dislike of transsexual and transgendered people.

TRANSPOSITIVE: the opposite of transphobia. A transpositive attitude is one that validates, affirms, accepts, appreciates, celebrates and integrates transsexual and transgendered people as unique and special in their own right.

TRANSSENSUAL: a term for a person who is primarily attracted to transgendered or transsexual people.

TRANSSEXUAL: a term for a person who has an intense long-term experience of being the sex opposite to his or her birth-assigned sex and who typically pursues a medical and legal transformation to become the other sex. There are transmen (female-to-male transsexuals) and transwomen (male-to-female transsexuals). Transsexual people may undergo a number of procedures to bring their body and public identity in line with their self-image, including sex hormone therapy, electrolysis treatments, sex reassignment surgeries and legal changes of name and sex status.

TWO SPIRITED: *a native tradition that anthropologists have been able to date to some of the earliest discoveries of Native artifacts. Much evidence indicates that Native people, prior to colonization and contacts with European cultures, believed in the existence of three genders: the male, the female and the male-female gender, or what we now call the Two-spirited person. The term Two-spirited, though relatively new was derived from interpretations of Native languages used to describe people who displayed both characteristics of male and female.*

Traditionally the Two-spirited person was one who had received a gift from the Creator, that gift being the privilege to house both male and female spirits in their bodies. Being given the gift of two-spirits meant that this individual had the ability to see the world from two perspectives at the same time. This greater vision was a gift to be shared with all, and as such, Two-spirited beings were revered as leaders, mediators, teachers, artists, seers and spiritual guides. They were treated with the greatest respect and held important spiritual and ceremonial responsibilities (Windsor Pride Community, 2011c).

APPENDIX B: RECRUITING STATEMENT, FLYER, & POSTER

Department of Psychology
University of Windsor
401 Sunset Ave.
Windsor, ON   N9B 2P4

Dear potential participant,

There has been a growing amount of research done on the experiences of gay and bisexual youth, but most of it has been done in the United States and in the largest cities. What makes this study different is that it will look at the experiences of Canadian male youth in Windsor and Essex County.

By participating and sharing your experiences in an online participant survey or an in-person, open-ended interview, you can make a valuable contribution to both the historical record and our social future. Because the results of this study will be publicly available, its findings have the potential to influence social policy and be used to train people who work with youth. Any information provided will be kept in the *strictest confidence* and any quotation will be done as to keep it *anonymous*. You will be given $30 for your participation to help make up for any transportation costs if selected for an interview. In addition, you will have the opportunity to be entered into a draw for one of two awards of $100 at the conclusion of the study. All respondents to the online participant survey will also have the opportunity to be entered into the draw. The draw for the raffle will be decided by a random number generator.

I am looking for young gay and bisexual men (16-26 year of age) of all backgrounds and ethnicities who are or have been romantically or sexually attracted to other males. You don't need to have had sex yet. You only need to live or have lived in Windsor or Essex County now or at least until 2009 and for half of your life.

If you know of any other young men that you think might be interested in participating, please feel free to have them contact me or go to www.professormattson.comfor the Letter of Information for this study. To set up an interview, please contact me via email at professormattson@gmail.com or go to www.professormattson.comfor more information.

Thank you very much for your time,

     Scott Mattson, MA (PhD candidate)

     University of Windsor

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board

Surveying and interviewing men:

- 16–26 years old
- Living in Windsor or Essex County, Ontario now or until 2009 and for at least half of your life.
- Who are or have been romantically or sexually attracted to other males.
- You do not need to have had sex to participate.
- You will be asked to complete a brief online survey (two $100 draws) and may be selected for an in-person interview ($30 for participation).

We are interested in your life experiences as a gay or bisexual male.

Your participation will be kept strictly confidential.

To participate, please contact:

Scott Mattson, Principal Investigator

University of Windsor

professormattson@gmail.com

www.professormattson.com

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board.

Gay & Bi Men 16-26

2011-2012

*A chance to win one of two $100 awards for participating in an online survey; $30 for participating in an in-person interview.

For more information on the study go to www.professormattson.com or contact:

professormattson@gmail.com

Gay & Bi Men 16-26

2011-2012

*A chance to win one of two $100 awards for participating in an online survey; $30 for participating in an in-person interview.

For more information on the study go to www.professormattson.com or contact:

professormattson@gmail.com

Surveying and interviewing men:

- 16–26 years old
- Living in Windsor or Essex County, Ontario now or until 2009 and for at least half of your life.
- Who are or have been romantically or sexually attracted to other males.
- You do not need to have had sex to participate.
- You will be asked to complete a brief online survey (two $100 draws) and may be selected for an in-person interview ($30 for participation).

We are interested in your life experiences as a gay or bisexual male.

Your participation will be kept strictly confidential.

To participate, please contact:

Scott Mattson, Principal Investigator

University of Windsor

professormattson@gmail.com

www.professormattson.com

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board.

Gay & Bisexual Men
(16-26)

We are interested in your life experiences as a gay or bisexual male in Windsor and Essex County.

A chance to win one of two $100 awards for participating in an online survey; $30 for participating in an in-person interview.

**Surveying and interviewing men:
16–26 years old**

Living in Windsor or Essex County, Ontario now or until 2009 and for at least half of your life.

Who are or have been romantically or sexually attracted to other males.

You do not need to have had sex to participate.

You will be asked to complete a brief online survey (two $100 draws) and may be selected for an in-person interview ($30 for participation).

Your participation will be kept strictly confidential.

For more information on the study go to www.professormattson.com or contact professormattson@gmail.com

**Scott Mattson, Principal Investigator
University of Windsor**

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board.

professormattson.com professormattson.com professormattson.com professormattson.com professormattson.com professormattson.com professormattson.com professormattson.com professormattson.com professormattson.com professormattson.com professormattson.com professormattson.com professormattson.com
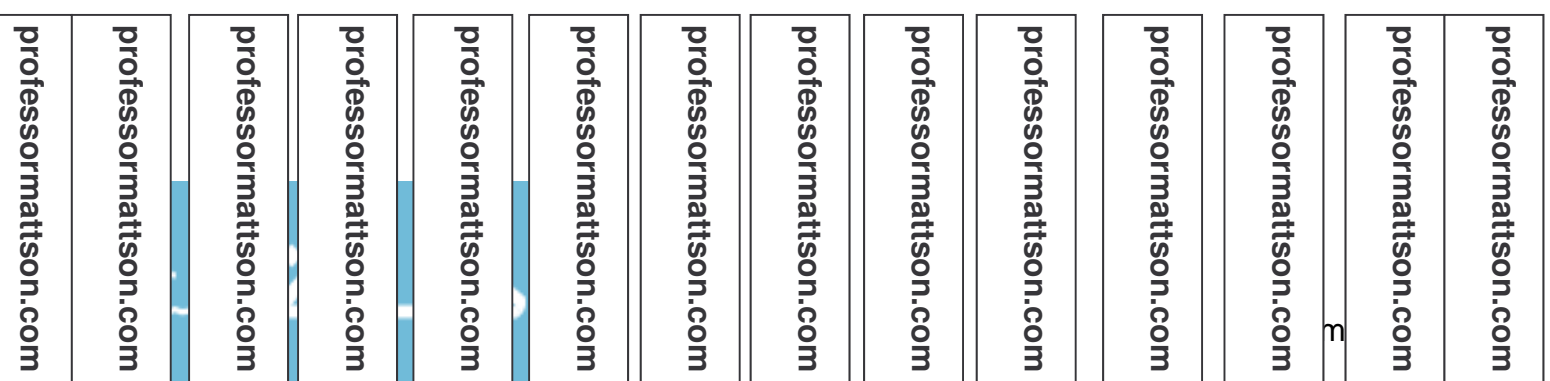
APPENDIX C: LETTER OF INFORMATION & COMMUNITY RESOURCE LIST

LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

GROWING UP GAY OR BISEXUAL: THE EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN IN WINDSOR AND ESSEX COUNTY, ONTARIO

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Scott Mattson, under the supervision of Dr. Jill Singleton-Jackson, Department of Psychology, University of Windsor. The results of this study will contribute to the completion of Scott's PhD degree. If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel to contact Scott, (519) 253- 3000 ext. 2217, smattson@uwindsor.ca, Dr. Singleton-Jackson, (519) 253-3000 ext. 4706, jjackson@uwindsor.ca, or the Research Ethics Coordinator at (519) 253-3000, ext. 3948, ethics@uwindsor.ca.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research is to examine the experiences of young gay and bisexual males living in Windsor and Essex County. This will be done through an online survey and 6-12 open-ended interviews.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

Online Survey

Please read this entire letter of information. Fill out the confidential, online survey which is linked at www.professormattson.com. The survey should take under an hour, depending on how much you are able to contribute. If you are interested in being interviewed in person, please check that box in the online survey. You can also participate by only doing the online survey.

In-Person, Open-Ended Interview

If you are contacted and decide to participate in the in-person interview, you will be asked to set up an interview time and be asked to pick a private meeting spot from a list of options, including one of your choosing. At the interview, you will be asked questions about your background and experiences growing up gay or bisexual. Your answers will be digitally recorded. The interview will be one to three hours long. Some of these questions are very personal ones about your life and sexual, emotional, and romantic experiences. Later, your recorded interview will be typed into a written version for analysis. All information that could personally identify you or anyone else (like names) will be removed from the written version and changed by the researcher.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

Because some of the questions are very personal ones about your life and sexual, emotional, and romantic experiences, they may bring up issues for you. At the beginning, middle, end of the online survey and at the end of the in-person interview, you will be given or given access to a community resource list describing and giving contact information for social service agencies and organizations through which you can seek help, support, and advice. At the end of an interview, you are also free to ask the researcher for advice on what social service agencies or organizations might be most helpful.

Although any information shared with researcher must be kept in the strictest of confidence (or confidential) by him, you may already know the researcher, Scott Mattson. If you do not want him or anyone at all to know your identity you can still participate in the online survey, but providing your contact information for either the raffle or interview participation will mean that you are no longer anonymous to the researcher. **If you wish to remain completely anonymous, do not provide any identifying information in the online survey**.

In deciding on whether or not to participate in the in-person interview, keep in mind that your participation and data will be kept private, confidential, and password protected by the researcher. However, someone could see you go into a particular building or community agency, so you will want to choose a place for the interview that corresponds to your level of comfort.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

This study will document the hardships faced by and record the capabilities of gay or bisexual male youth in a Canadian context. Participants may not directly personally benefit from participation, but may benefit indirectly through obtaining the community resource list and becoming aware of support services and organizations. Some people also find it rewarding to tell their stories or talk about their life. The study's results will contribute to the understanding of the experience of and process of how male youths form a gay or bisexual identity in a medium-sized Canadian border city in light of its unique social and historical context.

PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

All participants in the online survey will be entered into a draw for one of two prizes of $100 awarded at the conclusion of the study. The draws for the raffle will be decided by a random number generator. If selected for the in-person, open-ended interview, you will be offered $30 for your participation, time, and transportation.

CONFIDENTIALITY

      Online Survey

The survey is anonymous. The record kept of your survey responses does not contain any identifying information about you unless a specific question in the survey has asked for this and/or you provide it. Your IP address will not be recorded. Your responses will reside on a secure server until downloaded to a password protected computer. Providing your contact information for either or both further participation or the raffle will mean that you are no longer anonymous. **If you wish to be considered for an interview**, you will be asked to provide information which **will link your responses to the survey to your identity**. **If you only enter the raffle, your other responses to the survey will still be anonymous** as they are not linked to your identifying information. In either case, **your identity will only be known to the researcher**, Scott Mattson, but will be kept confidential and not shared with anyone else. **If you wish to be *completely anonymous*, do not sign up for the in-person, open-ended interview, to be emailed a link to the final report, or for the raffle.**

      In-Person, Open-Ended Interview

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential. The recordings will not be labelled in any way that could be linked to you. Only the interviewer and a transcriber (a person who listens to the audio of the interview and types it into text) will have access to the recordings, which will be stored securely with a password. After the conclusion of the research, these recordings will be deleted. All data will be stored, encrypted, in secure and password protected files. At the conclusion of the study, all identifiable information linked to your data will be deleted. Non-identifiable, anonymous data will be retained in an encrypted, password protected file and may be used for future analysis.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may exercise the option of removing your data from the study. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact: the Research Ethics Coordinator University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca.

      Online Survey

To withdraw and withdraw your data from the research, select "Discard responses and exit" which can be found in the lower left hand corner. In that case, you will not be eligible to be entered into the draw as there would be no way to contact you. To be eligible for the draw, you must at least indicate your consent and that you have read the Letter of Information, answer a few mandatory questions, submit the response that you would like to be entered into the draw, and fill out the contact information for the raffle.

      In-Person, Open-Ended Interview

If selected for the in-person interview, you can withdraw from participation at any time during the interview and still receive $30 to compensate you for your time and transportation. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so (e.g., you become too upset to continue) but you will still be offered $30 and the opportunity for the raffle.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE SUBJECTS

The results of this study will be made available in five different ways. The results of the research will be available in a PhD dissertation available in both the Department of Psychology and the Leddy Library at the University of Windsor, Windsor Pride Community, and the AIDS Committee of Windsor. A copy of the results and a reader friendly summary will also be available at www.professormattson.com. You may also sign up to have a link to an electronic copy sent to you. If you do not have Internet access, you may ask that a hard copy of the report be mailed to you. Web address: www.professormattson.com. Date when results are available: 2012 NOV 01

SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

This data may be used in subsequent studies.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, please contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

2011 SEP 15

_____   _____

Signature of Investigator   Date

Revised February 2008

Community Resource List

Young & Proud

http://aidswindsor.org/cms/young-proud/ACW-Information/Services/young-proud/menu-id-85.html

Young & Proud is a group for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and questioning youth between the ages of 14 and 26. We meet every Tuesday evening from 7p.m. - 9p.m. New members are always welcome. The group involves discussion about various topics including relationships, coming out, safer sex, HIV/AIDS. We also plan social nights every month where you can invite your LGBTQ positive friends for movies, games, and other great activities. Meeting are held at the:

AIDS Committee of Windsor

http://aidswindsor.org
511 Pelissier St., Windsor, ON N9A 4L2
519-973-0222 or 1-800-265-4858

Provides support, health promotion, advocacy, research, and community mobilization for people with HIV/AIDS and those affected by AIDS.

Alive! Canada

http://www.alivecanada.com/
Jeanne Mance Bldg
1030 Ouellette Ave, 1st Fl., Windsor, ON N9A 1E1
519-973-4411 ext 3265
519-973-4423
Crisis phone: 519-973-4435

Provides education and information concerning suicide awareness, suicide prevention and community crisis resources * presentations and training programs are available to professionals and the general public

Can Am Friendship Centre of Windsor, Inc.

1100 University Ave. West, Windsor
519-253-3243
Aboriginal cultural program, provides cultural education along with social and recreational programming

Community Crisis Centre of Windsor-Essex County

Jeanne Mance Bldg
1086 Ouellette Ave, 1st Fl., Windsor, ON N9A 1E1
(519) 973-4435

Professional crisis workers provide immediate risk assessment, stabilization, safety planning, crisis follow-up and referral services through: 24 hr crisis telephone line * 24 hr walk-in service available at Hotel-Dieu Grace

Hospital Emergency Room* Mobile crisis response service monday through friday, 7am - 11pm and weekends, 3-11pm * Walk-in service at main office in Jeanne Mance Building during office hours.

Situations may include substance abuse * feelings of intense sadness or depression * sleeping or eating problems * anxiety * thoughts of suicide or self harm * severe distress related to relationship issues * family problems * grief * job loss * financial problems * anger * aggression * symptoms of mental illness and more.Distress Centre of Windsor-Essex County

http://www.dcwindsor.com/index.html
PO Box 2025, Windsor, ON N8Y 4R5
519-256-5000 12 noon - 12 midnight (365 days a year)

Exists to provide emergency crisis intervention, suicide prevention, emotional support and referrals to community resources by telephone, to people in Windsor and the surrounding area.

FREE, ANONYMOUS, AND CONFIDENTIAL
Caring volunteers provide EMOTIONAL SUPPORT, CRISIS INTERVENTION,
SUICIDE PREVENTION and COMMUNITY REFERRALS by telephone.

Downtown Mission of Windsor

http://downtownmission.com/ecom.asp?
664 Victoria Ave., Windsor, ON N9A4N2
519-973-5573

Provides food for the body, nurture for the spirit and opportunities for human growth and development.

Drouillard Place

http://drplace.mnsi.net/
1102 Drouillard Rd., Windsor, ON N8Y 2R1
519-253-1073

Youth drop-in centre * offers social and recreational activities * learn alternatives to anger management * confidential group or individual discussions on issues and concerns related to self, family, low self-esteem * explore educational difficulties and staying in school * provides use of computers for job searching * help with resume writing * access to Internet * referrals to community services or programs * Homework program 4 days a week.

Service Alliance For Equality: A Gay-Straight Alliance (SAFE)

http://www.safewindsor.com/
1215 Ouellette Ave. POB 52004, Windsor, ON N8X 1J0
519 253-8481 ext 248

Professionals advocating for the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and questioning children, youth, and their families in Windsor-Essex County.

Salvation Army

http://www.salvationarmy.ca/
Windsor Community and Rehabilitation Centre
355 Church St., Windsor, ON N9A 7G9
519-253-7473 (519)253-7478

Provides individuals with personal and family assistance in many areas of need.

Sandwich Teen Action Group

3735 King St., Windsor, ON N9C 1P7
519-254-6999

Community youth centre * responds to the identified needs of youth within the community by providing programs for positive life experience * peer support counselling * drop in centre * recreational and fun activities * one-on-one counselling for job search and resume skills

Sexual Assault Crisis Centre

http://www.wincom.net/~sacc/
1407 Ottawa St., Unit G, Windsor, ON N8X 2G1
519-253-3100

Provides sexual assault crisis services, intervention, and counselling.

Sexual Assault Treatment Centre

http://www.satcontario.com/
Windsor Regional Hospital
1995 Lens Ave, 4th Fl East, Windsor, ON N8W 1L9
519-255-2234

Provides medical treatment and support for survivors of sexual assault, rape kits, testing and treatment for STIs, and liaison with agencies and police departments.

Teen Health Centre

http://www.teenhealthcentre.com/
1585 Ouellette Ave., Windsor, ON N8X 1K5
519-253-8481

Provides mental health, psychological, counselling, medical, substance misuse, anger management, self-esteem, parental support, prenatal, and youth employment services

Windsor-Essex County Health Unit: Sexual Health Clinic

http://www.wechealthunit.org/sexual-health
Windsor Essex County Health Unit
1005 Ouellette Ave., 2nd floor, Windsor, ON N9A 4J8
519-258-2146 ext. 1200 or 1201

Provides HIV testing (Anonymous or Confidential) * Testing and treatment for Sexually Transmitted Infections * Free Hepatitis B Immunization for eligible adults * Free Condoms * All services are provided in a confidential, relaxed, and non-judgmental atmosphere.

Windsor Pride Community

http://www.windsorpride.com/cms/
422 Pelissier St., Windsor, ON N9A 4L2
(519)973-4656.

Community Centre: Promoting public awareness and understanding of the diversity of sexual orientation * Encouraging respect for and support of the rights and dignity of persons in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and two-spirited community * Develop and implement programs and initiatives with regard to the purposes of these objectives * Organize and oversee an annual Pride Festival.

OK2BME: http://www.ok2bme.ca/windsor
(519) 254-3426

Social support and coming out groups for teens, adults, and family members.

Windsor Regional Children Crisis Services

3901 Connaught Ave., Windsor, ON N9C 4H4
519-257-5215

Walk-in clinic * allows families, with children from 0 to 17 yrs, to access services on an immediate basis * offers assessment and short-term counselling

Youthline.ca

1-800-268-9688

The Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line is a toll-free service provided by youth for youth. We're here to offer support, information and referrals specific to your concerns.

APPENDIX D: ONLINE PARTICIPANT & INTERVIEW SELECTION SURVEY

Growing Up Gay or Bisexual: The Experiences of Young Gay and Bisexual Men in Windsor and Essex County, Ontario

Online Participant Survey

Thank you for your interest in the study Growing Up Gay or Bisexual: The Experiences of Young Gay and Bisexual Men in Windsor and Essex County, Ontario. Before you begin the survey, please read and print or download the Letter of Information. Please make sure that you understand the information before you begin. Next, please download or print the Community Resource List. This page contains the descriptions and contact information for organizations and social service agencies where you can find help if you would like more information or to seek assistance with many of the issues contained in this online survey.

A Note on Privacy

This survey is anonymous. The record kept of your survey responses does not contain any identifying information about you unless a specific question in the survey has asked for this and/or you provide it. Your IP address will not be recorded. Your responses will reside on a secure server until downloaded to a password protected computer.

Signing Up for a Potential Interview and Entering the Raffle

After you submit your survey, do not close your browser window. You will be taken to a separate, unlinked web page. If you are interested in participating in the in-person, open-ended interview please also select that option and provide the requested information. Again, after you submit, do not close your browser as you will be taken to a third web page. If you would like to be emailed a link to access the final report when it is complete and/or entered into the raffle for one of two $100 prizes, please select the options, include your contact information, and submit. After you have submitted your survey and provided contact information for further participation, study information, and/or the raffle, you will be taken to a final thank you page. At that point, you may close your browser.

How Entering the Raffle or Signing Up for an Interview Affects Your Privacy

Providing your contact information for either or both further participation or the raffle will mean that you are no longer anonymous. If you wish to be considered for an interview, you will be asked to provide information which will link your responses to the survey to your identity. If you only enter the raffle, your other responses to the survey will still be anonymous as they are not linked to your identifying information. In either case, your identity will only be known to the researcher, Scott Mattson, but will be kept confidential and not shared with anyone else. If you wish to be completely anonymous, do not sign up for the in-person, open-ended interview, to be emailed a link to the final report, or for the raffle.

Withdrawing From the Online Participant Survey

To withdraw and withdraw your data from the research, select "Discard responses and exit" which can be found in the lower left hand corner. In that case, you will not be eligible to be entered into the draw as there would be no way to contact you. To be eligible for the draw, you must at least indicate your consent

and that you have read the Letter of Information, answer a few mandatory questions, submit the response that you would like to be entered into the draw, and fill out the contact information for the raffle.

Consent

I have read the Letter of Information for the study GROWING UP GAY OR BISEXUAL: THE EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN IN WINDSOR AND ESSEX COUNTY, ONTARIO. (If you haven't, please do so now and save or print it for your records.)
○   Yes

○   No

I understand the information provided for the study GROWING UP GAY OR BISEXUAL: THE EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN IN WINDSOR AND ESSEX COUNTY, ONTARIO as described in the Letter of Information. I agree to participate in this study.
○   Yes

○   No

Demographic and Background Questions

How old are you?

○   15 or younger

○   16

○   17

○   18

○   19

○   20

○   21

○   22

○   23

○   24

○   25

○   26

○   27 or older

What sex are you?

○   Female

○   Intersex

○   Male

○   Trans female (male to female, MTF)

○   Trans male (female to male, FTM)

○   Other, please specify: _____

Where were you born (country, province/state, and city)?

None   [   ]

Where do you live now (country, province/state, and city)?

None   [   ]

Do you live in Windsor or Essex County now or did you until 2009?
○   Yes

○   No

How many years have you lived in Windsor or Essex County?
○   7 or less

○   8

○   9

○   10

○   11

○   12

○   13

○   14

○   15

○   16

○   17

○   18

○   19

○   20

○   21

○   22

○   23

○   24

○   25

○   26

What is your cultural or ethnic background?

None [   ]

What languages do you speak?

None [   ]

What language did you first speak?

None [   ]

What language do you most often speak now?

None [   ]

Were you brought up in any particular religion or spiritual path?
○   Yes

○ No

Which one(s)?

None ⬚

Do you currently practice any particular religion or spiritual path?
○ Yes

○ No

Which one(s) do you still practise?

None ⬚

Are you working now?
○ Yes

○ No

How would you describe your sexual identity?
○ Gay

○ Bi

○ Straight

○ Other, please specify: _____

How old were you when you were first started to describe your sexual identity that way to yourself?

None ⬚

School Experiences
Are you in school now?
○ Yes

○ No

Are you in high school, college, or university?
○ High school

○ College

○ University

○ Other, please specify: _____

What is the highest grade level you've completed?
○ Some Elementary

○ Elementary

○ Some high school

○ High School

○ Some college

○ College

○ Some university

○ University

○ Other, please specify: _____

Were the schools you attended:
☐ English Catholic

☐ English public

☐ French Catholic

☐ French public

☐ Private

☐ Other, please specify: _____

At school, were you ever called names, picked on, physically attacked, or otherwise harassed for your sexual identity?
○ Yes

○ No

Earlier Comparisons

When you were younger, how do you think you compared to:

	Very dissimilar	Mostly dissimilar	Equally dissimilar & similar	Mostly similar	Very similar

People your age?	○	○	○	○	○
Males your age?	○	○	○	○	○
Females your age?	○	○	○	○	○
Gay or bisexual males your age?	○	○	○	○	○

Early Experiences

Have you ever been attracted to a male?
○ Yes

○ No

How old were you when you were first attracted to a male?
None [   ]

Have you ever been attracted to a female?
○ Yes

○ No

How old were you when you were first attracted to a female?
None [   ]

Have you had sex?
○ Yes

○ No

How old were you when you first had sex?
None [   ]

Have you had sex with a male?
○ Yes

○ No

How old were you when you first had sex with a male?
None [   ]

Have you had sex with a female?

○ Yes

○ No

How old were you when you first had sex with a female?

None

Issues

Have you ever been harassed (verbally or physically) for your sexual identity?
○ Yes

○ No

How old were you when you were first harassed (verbally or physically) for your sexual identity?

None

Does the threat of harassment affect where you go or how you act?
○ Yes

○ No

Do you think HIV/AIDS has affected your life in any way?
○ Yes

○ No

Have you ever been tested for HIV?
○ Yes

○ No

How old were you when you were first tested for HIV?

None

As far as you know, are you:

[For more information on HIV, AIDS, or HIV testing please contact the AIDS Committee of Windsor 519-973-0222, HIV Care Program 519-254-6115, or the Sexual Health Clinic of the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit 519-258-2146 ext. 1200. For additional information, please also consult the Community Resource List.]
○ HIV negative

○   HIV positive

○   Waiting for test results

○   Not sure about status

Have you ever been homeless?
○   Yes

○   No

How old were you when you first became homeless?

None

Was your becoming homeless related to your sexual identity?
○   Yes

○   No

Have you ever used any mood altering substances (for example, alcohol, marihuana, or street drugs)?
○   Yes

○   No

How old were you when you first used any mood altering substances?

None

Have you ever felt really down?
○   Yes

○   No

How old were you when you first felt really down?

None

Was it related to your sexual identity?
○   Yes

○   No

Have you ever thought about suicide?
[For more information on suicide please contact Alive! Canada 519-973-4423. If you are in crisis or thinking about suicide, please contact the 24 hour hotline of the Community Crisis Centre of Windsor-

Essex County at 519-973-4435. A list of other groups that can help can be found in the Community Resource List.]

○   Yes

○   No

How old were you when you first thought about suicide?

None [   ]

Was it related to your sexual identity?
○   Yes

○   No

Have you ever attempted suicide?
○   Yes

○   No

How old were you when you first attempted suicide?

None [   ]

Was it related to your sexual identity?
○   Yes

○   No

Have you ever exchanged sex for material things, including money or a place to stay?
○   Yes

○   No

Interpersonal Relations

Have you come out or told anyone in your family about your sexual identity?
○   Yes

○   No

How old were you when you first told someone in your family about your sexual identity?

None [   ]

Have you ever come out or told any of your friends about your sexual identity?

○ Yes

○ No

How old were you when you first told a friend about your sexual identity?

None [   ]

Do you have any friends who are gay, bisexual, or trans?
○ Yes

○ No

Are most of your friends gay, bisexual, or trans?
○ Yes

○ No

About how many of your friends are gay, bisexual, or trans?

None [   ]

Use the following rating scale to indicate how open you are about your sexual identity to the people listed below. Try to respond to all of the items.
This person . . .

	definitely does NOT know about your sexual identity	might know about your sexual identity, but it is NEVER talked about	probably knows about your sexual identity, but it is NEVER talked about	probably knows about your sexual identity, but it is RARELY talked about	definitely knows about your sexual identity, but it is RARELY talked about	definitely knows about your sexual identity, and it is SOMETIMES talked about	definitely knows about your sexual identity, and it is OPENLY talked about	not applicable to your situation; there is no such person or group of people in your life
Mother	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Father	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Siblings (sisters & brothers)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Extended family & relatives	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

My NEW straight friends	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My work peers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My work supervisor(s)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Members of my religious community (e.g., church or temple)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Leaders of my religious community (e.g., church or temple)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Strangers & new acquaintances	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My OLD straight friends	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Romance

Have you ever been in love with a male?
○ Yes

○ No

How old were you when you first fell in love with a male?
None [   ]

Have you ever been in love with a female?
○ Yes

○ No

How old were you when you first fell in love with a female?
None [   ]

Have you had a romantic relationship?

○   Yes

○   No

How old were you when you first had a romantic relationship with another?

None   ┌─────────────────┐
       └─────────────────┘

Have you had a romantic relationship with another male?
○   Yes

○   No

How old were you when you first had a romantic relationship with another male?

None   ┌─────────────────┐
       └─────────────────┘

Have you had a romantic relationship with a female?
○   Yes

○   No

How old were you when you first had a romantic relationship with a female?

None   ┌─────────────────┐
       └─────────────────┘

Are you in a romantic relationship now?
○   Yes

○   No

For how many months have you been in your current relationship?
(For less than one month, put "0".)

None   ┌─────────────────┐
       └─────────────────┘

Is your current relationship with a:
○   Female

○   Male

○   Trans female

○   Trans male

Current Comparisons to Others

Now, how do you think you compare to . . .

	Very dissimilar	Mostly dissimilar	Equally dissimilar & similar	Mostly similar	Very similar
People your age?	○	○	○	○	○
Males your age?	○	○	○	○	○
Females your age?	○	○	○	○	○
Gay or bisexual males your age?	○	○	○	○	○

Developmental Milestones

Please rank (number) the following events in the order in which they happened in your life. Put a "1" next to the event that happened first, "2" next to the event that occurred second, and so on. If an event did not occur, put "0".

Attraction to a female

None [ ]

Attraction to a male

None [ ]

Being in love with a female

None [ ]

Being in love with a male

None [ ]

Coming out to a family member

None [ ]

Coming out to a friend

None [ ]

Coming out to self

None [ ]

Coming out to a stranger

None [ ]

Romantic relationship with a female

None [ ]

Romantic relationship with a male

None [ ]

Sex with a female

None [ ]

Sex with a male

None [ ]

What first made you realize that you might be gay or bi?

None [ ]

What convinced you that you were gay or bi?

None

Open-Ended Catch-All

Is there anything about your life or experiences as a gay or bisexual male in Windsor-Essex County that you think is important?

None

In-Person, Open-Ended Interview Participation

I would like to be considered for the in-person, open-ended interview part of this study:
○ Yes

○ No

In order to use your responses to this survey in preparation and selection for a potential interview, some unique information is required. If you provide this information, your responses to this survey will no longer be anonymous but linked to you through a code; your survey code, identity, and your answers will only be known to the researcher (Scott Mattson) who will keep them to himself (that is, confidential or secret). Please provide the year and number of the month you were born, the last four digits of your phone number, and the initials of your first and last name in the following format: YYYYMMPPPPII.   (Help: For example, the survey code for John Smith born in May, 1992 and whose phone number is 555-1234 would be: 1992051234JS. You will be asked to input this survey code again when you are asked for your contact information to participate in the in-person, open-ended interview)

None

Reminder: If you haven't already, please download or print the Community Resource List now

Landing Page One: Interview Participation

Growing Up Gay or Bisexual: Interview

I would like to be considered for the in-person, open-ended interview part of this study, my name is:

My survey code is:
[Help: Please provide the year and number of the month you were born, the last four digits of your phone number, and the initials of your first and last name in the following format YYYYMMPPPPII. For example, the survey code for John Smith born in May, 1992 and whose phone number is 555-1234 would be: 1992051234JS.]

Please contact me by (select all that apply):

☐   Email

☐   Phone

☐   Text message

My email is:

My phone number is:

My texting number is:

Landing Page Two: Online Survey Raffle Participation

Growing Up Gay or Bisexual: Raffle

I:

☐   DO NOT want a copy of the results of this study sent to me

☐   Would like a link with the copy of the results EMAILED to me.

I would like a chance to win one of two $100 awards for my participation in this online survey:

☐   Yes

☐   No

My name is:

[ ]

Please contact me by (select all that apply):

☐   Email

☐   Phone

☐   Text message

My email is:

[ ]

My phone number is:

[ ]

My texting number is:

[ ]

Interview Scheduling Page

Growing Up Gay or Bisexual: Interview Scheduling

Congratulations! You have been selected for scheduling an interview. Interviews will be scheduled on a first come, first serve basis. Unfortunately, due to time constraints, not everyone who is selected will be able to be interviewed. The sooner you sign up, the more likely you will be one of the 6-12 interviews conducted. You will receive $30 for your participation at the conclusion of the interview to compensate you for your time and transportation.

My name is:

☐

Please contact me by (select all that apply):

☐   Email

☐   Phone

☐   Text message

My email is:

☐

My phone number is:

☐

My texting number is:

☐

Please provide your survey code (i.e., the year and number of the month you were born, the last four digits of your phone number, and the initials of your first and last name in the following format: YYYYMMPPPPII.)
(Help: For example, the survey code for John Smith born in May, 1992 and whose phone number is 555-1234 would be: 1992051234JS.)

☐

Please indicate what days and times you are available to be interviewed. The more you indicate, the more likely you will be interviewed. Other times may also be arranged.

☐   WED, FEB 08, 4:30-7 p.m.

☐   THU, FEB 09, 4:30-7 p.m.

☐   FRI, FEB 10, 4:45-7 p.m.

☐   SAT, FEB 11, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

☐   SAT, FEB 11, 1-3 p.m.

- ☐ SAT, FEB 11, 3-6 p.m.
- ☐ SUN, FEB 12, 10-1 p.m.
- ☐ SUN, FEB 12 1-3 p.m.
- ☐ SUN, FEB 12, 3-6 p.m.
- ☐ MON, FEB 13, 4:30-7 p.m.
- ☐ TUE, FEB 14, 4:30-7 p.m.
- ☐ WED, FEB 15, 4:45-7 p.m.
- ☐ THU, FEB 16, 4:30-7 p.m.
- ☐ FRI, FEB 17, 4:30-7 p.m.
- ☐ SAT, FEB 18, 10-1 p.m.
- ☐ SAT, FEB 18, 1-3 p.m.
- ☐ SAT, FEB 18, 3-6 p.m.

Please also indicate what days and times are your top three choices by labelling your first, second, and third choice.

	WED, FEB 08, 4:30-7 p.m.	THU, FEB 09, 4:30-7 p.m.	FRI, FEB 10, 4:45-7 p.m.	SAT, FEB 11, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.	SAT, FEB 11, 1-3 p.m.	SAT, FEB 11, 3-6 p.m.	SUN, FEB 12, 10-1 p.m.	SUN, FEB 12 1-3 p.m.	SUN, FEB 12, 3-6 p.m.	MON, FEB 13, 4:30-7 p.m.	TUE, FEB 14, 4:30-7 p.m.	WED, FEB 15, 4:45-7 p.m.	THU, FEB 16, 4:30-7 p.m.	FRI, FEB 17, 4:30-7 p.m.	SAT, FEB 18, 10-1 p.m.	SAT, FEB 18, 1-3 p.m.	SAT, FEB 18, 3-6 p.m.
First Choice	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Second Choice	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Third Choice	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

If you are selected for an interview time, you will be contacted as soon as is possible to make arrangements. If someone else cancels, you may be contacted to take their place. If you need to cancel, please give 24 hours' notice if possible so other arrangements can be made as interview

times are very limited. Again, thank you very much for your participation, interest, and your contribution to the local community. Please feel free to contact me if you have any additional questions: <u>professormattson@gmail.com</u>.

I have read and understood the paragraph above.

◻ Yes

◻ No

APPENDIX E: SEMI-STRUCTURED, IN-PERSON INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Growing Up Gay or Bisexual: The Experiences of Young Gay and Bisexual Men in Windsor and Essex County, Ontario

Online Participant Survey

Thank you for your interest in the study Growing Up Gay or Bisexual: The Experiences of Young Gay and Bisexual Men in Windsor and Essex County, Ontario. Before we begin the interview, please read the Letter of Information. Please make sure that you understand the information before we begin. Next, please look over and take the Community Resource List. This page contains the descriptions and contact information for organizations and social service agencies where you can find help if you would like more information or to seek assistance with many of the issues contained in the online survey and this interview.

Consent

I have read the Letter of Information for the study GROWING UP GAY OR BISEXUAL: THE EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN IN WINDSOR AND ESSEX COUNTY, ONTARIO.

I understand the information provided for the study GROWING UP GAY OR BISEXUAL: THE EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN IN WINDSOR AND ESSEX COUNTY, ONTARIO as described in the Letter of Information. I agree to participate in this study.

Demographic and Background Questions

How old are you?

What sex are you?

Where were you born (country, province/state, and city)?

Where do you live now (country, province/state, and city)?

Do you live in Windsor or Essex County now or did you until 2009?

How many years have you lived in Windsor or Essex County?

What is your cultural or ethnic background?

What languages do you speak?

What language did you first speak?

What language do you most often speak now?

Were you brought up in any particular religion or spiritual path?

Which one(s)?

Do you currently practice any particular religion or spiritual path?

Which one(s) do you still practise?

Are you working now?

How would you describe your sexual identity?

How old were you when you were first started to describe your sexual identity that way to yourself?

School Experiences

Are you in school now?

Are you in high school, college, or university?

What is the highest grade level you've completed?

Were the schools you attended:

At school, were you ever called names, picked on, physically attacked, or otherwise harassed for your sexual identity?

Earlier Comparisons

When you were younger, how do you think you compared to:

People your age?

Males your age?

Females your age?

Gay or bisexual males your age?

Early Experiences

Have you ever been attracted to a male?

How old were you when you were first attracted to a male?

Have you ever been attracted to a female?

How old were you when you were first attracted to a female?

Have you had sex?

How old were you when you first had sex?

Have you had sex with a male?

How old were you when you first had sex with a male?

Have you had sex with a female?

How old were you when you first had sex with a female?

Have you ever been harassed (verbally or physically) for your sexual identity?

How old were you when you were first harassed (verbally or physically) for your sexual identity?

Does the threat of harassment affect where you go or how you act?

Do you think HIV/AIDS has affected your life in any way?

Have you ever been tested for HIV?

How old were you when you were first tested for HIV?

As far as you know, are you HIV . . .?:

Have you ever been homeless?

How old were you when you first became homeless?

Was your becoming homeless related to your sexual identity?

Have you ever used any mood altering substances (for example, alcohol, marihuana, or street drugs)?

How old were you when you first used any mood altering substances?

Have you ever felt really down?

How old were you when you first felt really down?

Was it related to your sexual identity?

Have you ever thought about suicide?

How old were you when you first thought about suicide?

Was it related to your sexual identity?

Have you ever attempted suicide?

How old were you when you first attempted suicide?

Was it related to your sexual identity?

Have you ever exchanged sex for material things, including money or a place to stay?

Interpersonal Relations

Have you come out or told anyone in your family about your sexual identity?

How old were you when you first told someone in your family about your sexual identity?

Have you ever come out or told any of your friends about your sexual identity?

How old were you when you first told a friend about your sexual identity?

Do you have any friends who are gay, bisexual, or trans?

Are most of your friends gay, bisexual, or trans?

About how many of your friends are gay, bisexual, or trans?

How open are you about your sexual identity to the following people:

Mother

Father

Siblings (sisters & brothers)

Extended family & relatives

My NEW straight friends

My work peers

My work supervisor(s)

Members of my religious community (e.g., church or temple)

Leaders of my religious community (e.g., church or temple)

Strangers & new acquaintances

My OLD straight friends

Romance

Have you ever been in love with a male?

How old were you when you first fell in love with a male?

Have you ever been in love with a female?

How old were you when you first fell in love with a female?

Have you had a romantic relationship?

How old were you when you first had a romantic relationship with another?

Have you had a romantic relationship with another male?

How old were you when you first had a romantic relationship with another male?

Have you had a romantic relationship with a female?

How old were you when you first had a romantic relationship with a female?

Are you in a romantic relationship now?

For how many months have you been in your current relationship?

Is your current relationship with a [sex]?:

Current Comparisons to Others

Now, how do you think you compare to . . .

People your age?

Males your age?

Females your age?

Gay or bisexual males your age?

Developmental Milestones (if not covered)

Attraction to a female

Attraction to a male

Being in love with a female

Being in love with a male

Coming out to a family member

Coming out to a friend

Coming out to self

Coming out to a stranger

Romantic relationship with a female

Romantic relationship with a male

Sex with a female

Sex with a male

What first made you realize that you might be gay or bi?

What convinced you that you were gay or bi?

Open-Ended Catch-All

Is there anything about your life or experiences as a gay or bisexual male in Windsor-Essex County that you think is important?
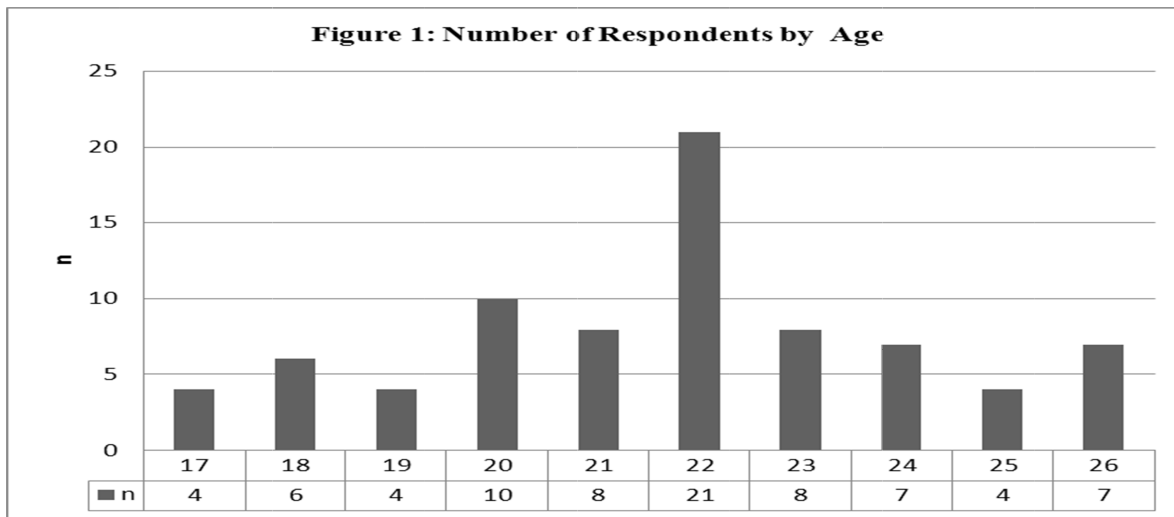
APPENDIX F: DEMOGRPHIC FIGURES, TABLES, & GRAPHS

Figure 1: Number of Respondents by Age

Age	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
■ n	4	6	4	10	8	21	8	7	4	7

Table 26: Respondents reported place of birth and current residence				
Country	Province	City	n	%
Reported place of birth				
Canada			75	95%
	Ontario		72	91%
		Windsor	55	72%
		Leamington	7	9%
		Essex	1	1%
		LaSalle	1	1%
		Tecumseh	1	1%
		Other	5	6%
	Other		3	4%
Other			4	5%
Reported place of current residence				
Canada			79	100%
	Ontario		72	91%
		Windsor	50	63%
		LaSalle	4	5%
		Leamington	4	5%
		Tecumseh	3	4%
		Amherstburg	2	3%
		Belle River	2	3%
		Kingsville	1	1%
		Lakeshore	1	1%
		Woodslee	1	1%
		Other	8	10%
	Other		7	9%

Figure 2: Classification of Ethnic & Cultural Background Reported by Respondents

	White	European	Canadian	Middle Eastern	Mixed	Asian	Native American
n	35	34	17	3	2	1	1
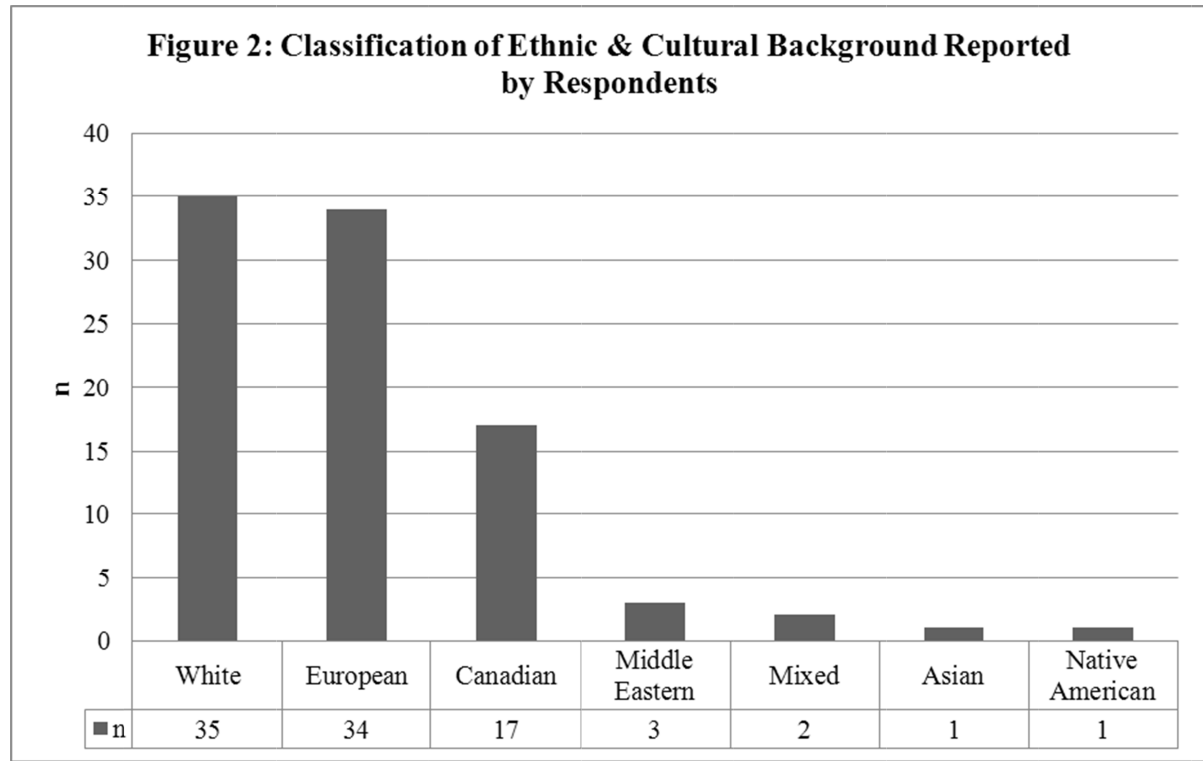
Table 27: Languages Spoken in Order Reported by Survey Respondents					
Language Reported	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
English	76	2	1		79
French	1	14	3		18
German		1	2		3
Spanish			3		3
Italian		2			2
Arabic		1			1
Cambodian		1			1
Catalan				1	1
Croatian	1				1
High German				1	1
Low German	1				1
Serbian		1			1
Total	79	22	9	2	112

Figure 3: Respondents' Highest Level of Education by Percent

- Other, please specify: 1%
- University 14%
- Some university 37%
- Some high school 10%
- High School 15%
- Some college 5%
- College 18%
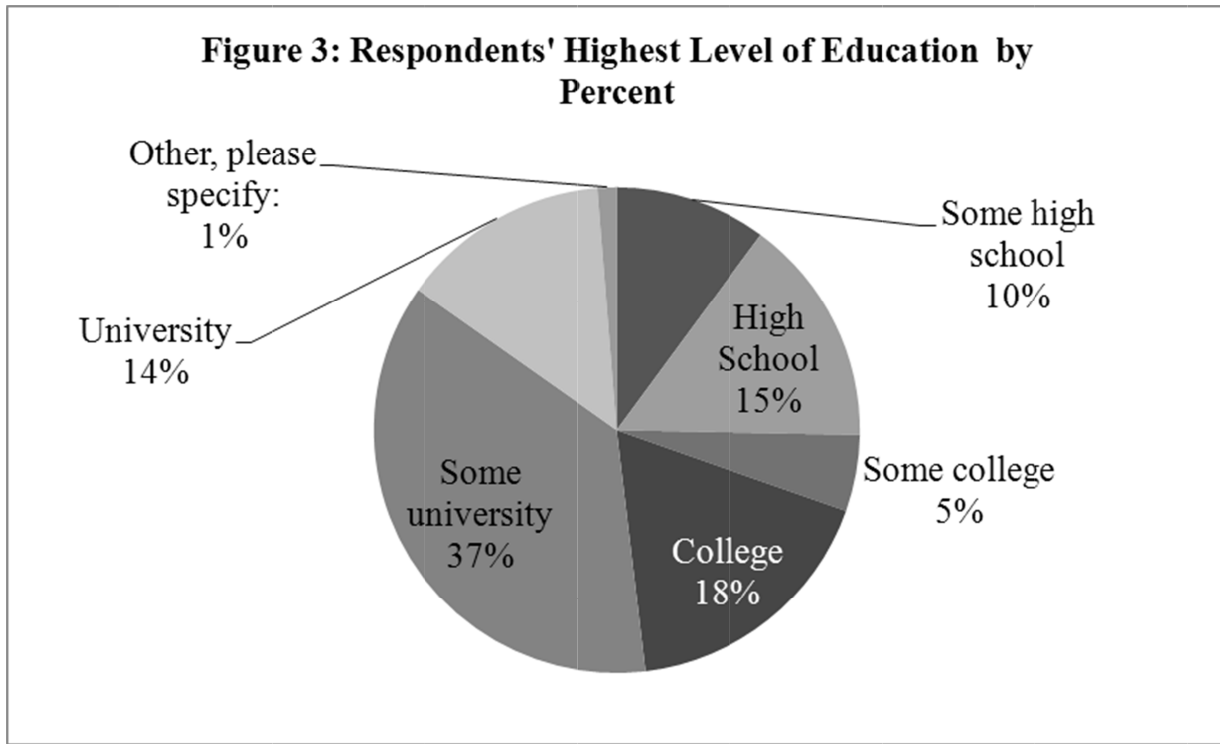
VITA AUCTORIS

Scott Mattson was born in 1970 to his parents Susan and Robert, in St. Paul, Minnesota. He graduated from Garlough Elementary in West St. Paul, St. Thomas Aquinas Military Academy in Mendota Heights, and Carleton College in Northfield, where he received his B.A. in Psychology *cum laude* in 1992. In 1994, he received his M.A. in Applied Social Psychology from the University of Windsor. After working several years in academic and community education, health promotion, program evaluation, and quality assurance, he hopes to graduate with his Ph.D. in Applied Social Psychology in Fall 2012.