



12-2017

How Friendships between Heterosexual and Sexual Minority Counseling Psychology Doctoral Students Affect Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development

Amber L. Sylvan

Western Michigan University, amber.larson.sylvan@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/dissertations>



Part of the Counseling Commons, and the Gender and Sexuality Commons

Recommended Citation

Sylvan, Amber L., "How Friendships between Heterosexual and Sexual Minority Counseling Psychology Doctoral Students Affect Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development" (2017). *Dissertations*. 3181.

<https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/dissertations/3181>

This Dissertation-Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate College at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu.



HOW FRIENDSHIPS BETWEEN HETEROSEXUAL AND SEXUAL MINORITY
COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY DOCTORAL STUDENTS AFFECT
ANTI-HETEROSEXIST IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

by

Amber L. Sylvan

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University
December 2017

Doctoral Committee:

James M. Croteau, Ph.D., Chair
Eric Sauer, Ph.D., Chair
Mary Z. Anderson, Ph.D.
Mark St. Martin, Ph.D.

HOW FRIENDSHIPS BETWEEN HETEROSEXUAL AND SEXUAL MINORITY COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY DOCTORAL STUDENTS AFFECT ANTI-HETEROSEXIST IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Amber L. Sylvan, Ph.D.

Western Michigan University, 2017

As the field of counseling psychology strives to embrace diversity and social justice issues, sexual minority issues have flourished into an active area of study among scholars and an area of focus for LGBT-affirming practitioners. One area of emphasis has been on how heterosexual people develop Anti-Heterosexist Identities. Some studies have noted the importance of friendship as it relates to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development (Asta & Vacha-Haase, 2012; Duhigg, Rostosky, & Gray, 2010; DiStefano et al., 2000; Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995; Larson, 2012), however, no known studies have more deeply explored the role of cross-sexuality friendships. The purpose of this study is to examine the friendships between sexual minority people and heterosexual people in counseling psychology doctoral programs in order to gain an understanding of what impact close, interpersonal relationships have on heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.

To examine how cross-sexuality friendships impact Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development, I employed a qualitative methodology, called constructivist grounded theory (Bryan & Charmaz, 2007). A purposive sampling strategy was utilized and included the use of faculty informants and the distribution of recruitment materials to counseling psychology doctoral programs and social media. Twenty-four heterosexual and sexual minority individuals

that had experienced a close, cross-sexuality friendship during their doctoral program participated in 60-90 minute, semi-structured, in-depth interviews. Ten of those participants came back to participate in online focus groups in order to provide member-checking and additional information on certain topics that arose during the data analysis.

Employing constructivist grounded theory analysis while also adhering to the main tenets of critical theory, a theoretical framework of how cross-sexuality friendships influence heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity emerged. The theoretical model is comprised of four major themes and associated subthemes, including: History and Context, Description and Progression of the Friendship, Learning and Perception, and finally, Change and Action. The experience of heterosexual counseling psychology students in cross-sexuality friendships helped the participants in this study gain meaningful comprehension about sexual minority issues and people. The resulting theory holds implications not only for future research on this topic, but also for counseling psychology doctoral programs wanting to encourage their students to adopt Anti-Heterosexist Identities, by including a focus on the education about oppressive systems and heterosexism into the curriculum, by including experiential learning exercises, and by striving to achieve diversity among students, faculty, and staff.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This journey would have never been completed without the assistance of innumerable individuals. First, it is with sadness that I would like to thank my advisor, the belated James M. Croteau, Ph.D. for his teaching and guidance throughout the many years of my program. It was his course on LGBT issues and counseling that first sparked and led to an enduring passion for this topic of study and practice. He guided this study from its inception to the beginning of data collection before suddenly passing away. I think that he would have been satisfied with what I discovered through the end of this study, but I only wish I had gotten to share it with him.

I would next like to thank Eric M. Sauer, Ph.D., for stepping up to become my advisor in a time of sadness and uncertainty. The effect of your reassurance and enthusiasm for my study on my morale cannot be understated. I appreciated your willingness to take on an unfamiliar study during its messy data analysis process, and your patience and encouragement during the last pushes to finish everything. Next, I would like to thank Mary Z. Anderson, Ph.D., for your tremendous knowledge of research methods and genuine warmth towards the people that you work with. It has been a pleasure to be a student in so many of your classes, and an honor to have you serve on my dissertation committee. Finally, I would also like to thank Mark St. Martin, Ph.D., for always being a supportive, encouraging mentor to me.

Thank you to Maime Butler Gaiden for helping with the formidable audit of my data. Thank you to my diligent transcribers: Sahana Prasad, Whitney Broadbent, and Miranda Andrews.

Acknowledgments—Continued

While there are too many people to thank from my personal support network, I would like to thank a few by name here. First, I would like to thank my husband, co-parent, and partner in life, Jon. Thank you for your support throughout the years as I worked to complete this degree. Thank you for believing in me. I would also like to thank my closest friends from the program, as they have shared my triumphs and tears throughout this long process: Lindsey, Rebecca, Ray, Deidre, and Sophie. Thank you for always being there to listen to my rants, provide me with plenty of reassurance, and most of all, for helping me to laugh.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my daughter, Lyra. I recall being sick from morning sickness during my pregnancy while I defended my dissertation proposal and flying hundreds of miles with you while I interviewed at internship sites across the country. You have been patient, in the best way that a toddler and preschooler can be, while I spent time away from home, furiously writing at coffee shops. I hope that no matter what you decide to do in your life, you can feel the pride and accomplishment that I feel right now. I love you.

Amber L. Sylvan

Copyright by
Amber L.Sylvan
2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	ii
LIST OF TABLES.....	xi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Definitional and Conceptual Considerations.....	1
Problem.....	5
Purpose.....	6
Summary of Methodology.....	7
Grounded Theory and Critical Theory.....	7
Participants.....	8
Data Collection.....	10
Data Analysis.....	10
Results.....	11
Limitations.....	12
Implications.....	12
Summary.....	13
II. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	14
Historical Context.....	15
Heterosexism.....	17

Table of Contents—Continued

CHAPTER

Heterosexism: A System of Oppression.....	18
Heterosexual Privilege.....	22
Anti-Heterosexism.....	25
Heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.....	27
Heterosexual Identity Development Models.....	28
Heterosexual Ally Identity Development.....	38
Conclusion.....	46
Friendship.....	49
Definition of Friendship.....	49
Friendship across Dimensions of Diversity.....	52
Conclusion.....	56
Cross-Sexuality Friendships.....	57
Cross-Sexuality Friendship Literature.....	58
Cross-Sexuality Friendship Characteristics and Dynamics.....	65
Cross-Sexuality Friendship Challenges.....	67
Cross-Sexuality Friendship Benefits.....	69
Cross-Sexuality Friendships and Heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.....	71
Conclusion.....	72
III. METHODS.....	74

Table of Contents—Continued

CHAPTER

Research Questions.....	75
Use of Qualitative Methodology.....	77
Grounded Theory	82
Application of Critical Theory.....	87
Procedures.....	90
Participant Recruitment and Selection.....	90
Demographics Questionnaire.....	93
Participant Demographics.....	94
Individual Interview Protocol.....	96
Data Confidentiality.....	97
Data Analysis.....	98
Positionality of the Researcher.....	98
Memo Writing.....	100
Initial Coding.....	101
Focused Coding.....	101
Theoretical Coding.....	102
Data Saturation.....	102
Theoretical Sorting, Diagramming, and Memo Integration.....	103
Auditing.....	104
Focus Groups.....	104

Table of Contents—Continued

CHAPTER

Rigor.....	106
IV. RESULTS.....	112
Coding and Memoing.....	113
Theoretical Sorting, Diagramming, and Audit.....	114
Application of Constructivism and Critical Theory.....	115
Overview of Themes.....	116
Context and History.....	118
Perception of Attitudes/Thoughts/Behaviors towards Sexual Minority People.....	119
Context of Previous Sexual Minority Relationships.....	121
Description and Progression of Friendship.....	123
Context of Learning Sexual Orientation of Sexual Minority Friend.....	124
Reactions to Learning the Sexual Minority Friend's Sexual Orientation.....	126
Sexual Minority Friend's Attitudes and Behaviors in the Friendship.....	129
Heterosexual Friend's Attitudes and Behaviors in the Friendship.....	131
Experiences and Factors Contributing to a Close Relationship.....	134
Learning and Perception.....	137
Expanded Awareness and Learning of Sexual Orientation and Sexual Identity.....	137

Table of Contents—Continued

CHAPTER

Expanded Awareness and Learning of Specific Issues Pertaining to Sexual Minority People.....	139
Internal Processes Resulting from the Expanded Awareness as Caused by the Friendship.....	146
Metacognition of One's Own Learning.....	149
Change and Action.....	152
Internal Processes relating to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.....	152
External Processes Relating to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.....	157
Professional Development and Competency.....	160
Summary of the Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development as Influenced by Cross-Sexuality Friendships Model.....	161
V. DISCUSSION.....	164
Summary of Findings.....	164
Research Question #1.....	167
Research Question #2.....	168
Research Question #3.....	171
Research Question #4.....	173
Research Question #5.....	175
Research Question #6.....	176
Beyond the Research Questions.....	177
Racial and Cultural Identity.....	177

Table of Contents—Continued

CHAPTER

Religious Beliefs.....	180
Supporting Sexual Minority Children.....	181
Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development Among Participants.....	181
Context of Cross-Sexuality Friendships in Counseling Psychology Doctoral Programs.....	182
Key Themes.....	184
Limitations of the Study.....	185
Implications for Training.....	188
Suggestions for Future Research.....	191
Conclusion.....	193
REFERENCES.....	195
APPENDICES.....	208
A. Faculty Informant Recruitment Email.....	208
B. Potential Participant Recruitment Letter.....	209
C. Counseling Psychology Program Recruitment Email.....	211
D. Social Media Recruitment Message.....	212
E. Recruitment Poster.....	213
F. Implied Consent Document.....	215
G. Email Explaining the Demographics Questionnaire.....	220
H. Demographics Questionnaire.....	221

Table of Contents—Continued

APPENDICES

J. Email Declining Use of Participant.....	223
K. Scheduling for the Initial Interview (Email Script).....	224
L. Scheduling for the Initial Interview (Phone Script).....	225
M. Directions for Online Conferencing.....	226
N. Confirmation of Initial Interview (Email).....	227
O. Reminder of Initial Interview Time (Email Script).....	228
P. Reminder of Initial Interview Time (Phone Script).....	229
Q. Initial Interview Protocol for Heterosexual Participants.....	230
R. Initial Interview Protocol for Sexual Minority Participants.....	234
S. Invitation to the Focus Group (Email Script).....	237
T. Invitation to the Focus Group (Phone Script).....	238
U. Focus Group Confirmation (Email Script).....	239
V. Focus Group Confirmation (Phone Script).....	240
W. Focus Group Reminder (Email Script).....	241
X. Focus Group Reminder (Phone Script).....	242
Y. Focus Group Protocol.....	243
Z. HSIRB Research Project Approval Letter.....	245

LIST OF TABLES

1. Participant Demographics.....	95
2. Focus Group Demographics.....	105

LIST OF FIGURES

1. How Friendships Between Heterosexual and Sexual Minority Counseling Psychology Doctoral Students Affect Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.....	117
2. Context and History.....	118
3. Description and Progression of the Friendship.....	124
4. Learning and Perception.....	137
5. Change and Action.....	152

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Psychology has made movement over time from actively participating in the oppression of sexual minority people by labeling homosexuality as a mental illness and promoting heteronormativity as the only option for social behavior (Silverstein, 2008), to promoting guidelines for the ethical treatment of sexual minority people (APA, 2011) and denouncing “gay conversion therapy” (Anton, 2010). As psychology has continued to embrace the importance of multiculturalism, diversity issues, and social justice, many scholars have tried to answer questions about how to best resist and dismantle oppressive systems. One area major area of focus has been on sexual minority issues. As we gain greater understanding of heterosexism and its impact (Peel, 2001; Smith, Oades, & McCarthy, 2012), we are able to better understand how people in the advantaged group can develop identities that challenge, resist, and dismantle oppressive systems.

It is important for heterosexual counseling psychologists to directly examine their role in systemic heterosexism and how to take responsibility for that role. By understanding how Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development works, counseling psychologists can better understand how to promote these identities among trainees and better structure their programs and curriculum to uphold anti-heterosexist values.

Definitional and Conceptual Considerations

My choice of terminology used throughout this document sometimes differs from prevalent vernacular used in scholarly and popular literature. Therefore, some explanation and justification for my use of these specific terms warrants explicit attention. First, I would like to

provide a rationale for the use of the term “sexual minority.” I have adopted this term from “gender and sexual minority” or “GSM,” which is sometimes used as an alternative term for LGBT (i.e., Lynne, 2010). The three primary reasons that I selected this term include specificity on sexual orientation-related identities, avoiding the use of cumbersome acronyms, and underscoring the marginalized status of sexual orientations other than heterosexuality.

Although gender identity and sexual orientation are often intertwined (Fassinger & Arseneau, 2007), I am focusing on sexual orientation for the purposes of this study, so I have dropped gender identity from my word usage. Next, the use of simply LGB would not be inclusive of the myriad of sexual identities that are adopted by those that belong to this population. Attempts to expand the acronym to make it more inclusive have made the use of it into a highly cumbersome alphabet soup—for example, using “LGBTQQIAAP” to describe lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, ally, and pansexual people (Barber, 2013). Moreover, the use of acronyms creates the potential problem of biases about what order these letters are placed in.

I am utilizing the term sexual minority to also underscore the imbalanced power between sexual minority people and heterosexuals. However, I would also like to acknowledge that the use of the term “minority” has many potential drawbacks. A critical analysis by the Sexual Policy Watch (2008) outlines several apprehensions related to the use of the term sexual minority. First, they argue that groups labeled as minorities by the majority group have historically suffered persecution and exclusion. Second, they contend that using the term minority implies that sexual orientations other than heterosexual are a statistical deviance and an uncommon occurrence. Third, they argue that through the assertion of the identity of sexual minority, other identities as intersections of identities (such as gender, race, class, etc.) will be excluded (Sexual Policy

Watch, 2008). Although an imperfect term, my intention in using the term sexual minority is to be inclusive of all marginalized sexual orientations and to highlight the power differential that occurs due to the oppressive systems that exist based upon sexual orientation.

Next, I would like to briefly address my use of the term heterosexism instead of homophobia. Although the term heterosexism has gained greater acceptance in academic discourse, it is still used widely in popular culture. A thorough review of the literature around the use of the terms homophobia and heterosexism was outlined by Smith, Oades, and McCarthy (2012) and revealed the evolution of the two terms over time. This review revealed that the term homophobia was first employed to describe fear and hatred towards sexual minorities, and was typically viewed as individual pathology rather than a societal dynamic. The term heterosexism began to gain popularity as describing societal mechanisms of discrimination and oppression towards sexual minority populations. Many scholars have attempted to differentiate the two terms and use them concurrently as two distinct constructs (e.g., Espelage & Swearer, 2008; Smith, Oades, & McCarthy, 2012; Syzmanski & Chung, 2003). However, it seems that heterosexism has replaced homophobia in academic literature.

Next, I will use the term “anti-heterosexist” in lieu of the term “ally” or “straight ally.” First, I will provide some definitions of the term so I can better illustrate why I am choosing to use an alternative term. Generally, heterosexual allies are described as being supportive towards the LGBT community (Asta & Vacha-Hasse, 2012). One frequently cited definition of ally was described by Washington and Evans (1991), who described an ally as “a person who is a member of the ‘dominant’ or ‘majority’ group who works to end oppression in his or her personal and professional life through support of, and as an advocate for, the oppressed population” (pg. 195). Broido (2000), in the higher education literature, described allies more broadly from a general

social justice standpoint as “members of dominant social groups (e.g., men, Whites, heterosexuals) who are working to end the system of oppression that gives them greater privilege and power based on their social-group membership” (pg. 3). Similarly, Getz and Kirkley (2003) describe allies as “[people] who [are] a member of the dominant or majority group who works in his/her professional and personal life to support and defend efforts to end oppression for an oppressed population” (pg. 6) Finally, Chase and Ressler (2009) provide an amalgamation of definitions based upon the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance, and other non-scholarly online sources. Specifically, they state that an ally is “a non-LGBT person who stands up for the rights of LGBT people. All those represented in the [LGBT acronym] also can be allies for each other” (pg. 23).

Although there is some consensus about what a heterosexual ally to the sexual minority population is, especially among the academic community, its usage is still often inconsistent and vague. For example, there is not always a clear explanation of what “ending oppression” (i.e., Broido, 2000; Washington & Evans, 1991) constitutes. In addition to these definitional issues, there is also the concept that someone either is an ally or is not an ally. This dichotomy is problematic because it does not allow for the heterosexist transgressions that are a part of systemic oppression nor does it account for anti-heterosexist development over time. Finally, there is the problem of “othering” that ally implies. Specifically, that there are sexual minorities and there are heterosexual allies, that these forms of sexual orientation and identity development are separate. The term ally maintains the splitting between persons who are attracted to the opposite sex versus other diverse sexual orientations. In response to these definitional and conceptual problems, I propose the term “Heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity” as a more accurate term that allows for conceptualizing heterosexual development within a system of

sexual orientation-based oppression. Again assuming that heterosexism is a system of oppression, similar to institutional racism, anti-heterosexism then describes beliefs, values, and actions that oppose systemic heterosexism. Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development will then describe the movement of heterosexual individuals into an identity that intentionally and actively opposes heterosexism.

Although far from being perfect, I hope I have provided sufficient reasoning for my usage of these conceptual terms. I will use these terms consistently throughout this document, although some referenced literature may have used an alternate term.

Problem

Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development is critical for heterosexual counseling psychologists who have a desire to resist individual heterosexism in their personal and professional life (Asta & Vacha-Haase, 2012; Mohr, 2002; Worthington et al., 2002). Professionally, it is important to resist heterosexism in order to adhere to APA's ethical guideline for the treatment of sexual minority individuals (APA, 2011). Simply stating that a person is an ally or is anti-heterosexist, however, is not sufficient and may impart a false sense of security to the heterosexual person that they cannot do anything that is heterosexist. This false sense of security may prevent the heterosexual person from engaging in self-analysis and critique of heterosexual privilege and personal heterosexism.

Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development is a complex, multilayered process. Some scholars have attempted to explain this process through heterosexual identity models (Mohr, 2002; Simoni & Walters, 2001; Worthington et al., 2002) and ally development models (Asta & Vacha-Haase, 2012; Dillon et al., 2004; DiStefano et al. 2000; Duhigg, Rostosky, & Gray, 2010; Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995; Getz & Kirkley, 2003; Washington & Evans, 1991). Despite the

existence of so many models, many of them are based upon sexual identity development or racial identity development models, with little research devoted to closely examining the factors that contribute to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. Some scholars have noted that the friendships between heterosexual people and sexual minority people may be a contributing factor towards the development of an anti-heterosexist identity among heterosexuals (Asta & Vacha-Haase, 2012; Larson, 2012; Duhigg, Rostosky, & Gray, 2010; DiStefano et al., 2000; Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995). Currently, it appears that no scholars have directly examined the role that cross-sexuality friendships plays in heterosexual understanding of sexual orientation.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine how cross-sexuality friendships in counseling psychology doctoral training programs effects heterosexual understanding of sexual orientation and heterosexism. Despite increased interest in sexual minority issues in counseling psychology, there continues to be a strong need for increased research (Smith, Shin, & Officer, 2012). Very little is known specifically about how heterosexuals can understand sexual orientation more effectively due to the influence of cross-sexuality friendships. Understanding of sexual orientation and sexual minority issues may in turn affect the practice of ethical therapy, training, and research in this field. Therefore, inquiry into this topic is warranted.

It was my intention to study Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development and what role cross-sexuality friendships play in that development not only for the benefit of counseling psychologist trainees in general, but for my own purpose of gaining a deeper understanding of anti-heterosexism that I have strived for during my own doctoral training. My research questions were strongly influenced by recognition of the impact that my personal cross-sexuality friendships had on my own development. I hope that by studying this phenomenon and its

processes, I have contributed an important piece to the literature that will allow for a fuller understanding of Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.

Summary of Methodology

To examine how cross-sexuality friendships impact Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development, I employed a qualitative methodology called Constructivist Grounded Theory (Bryan & Charmaz, 2007). Due to the subjective nature of the topic of this study, qualitative approaches are appropriate. This methodology allowed participants to share their full experience and reflections upon the topic. For the purposes of this investigation, subjective interpretation of the impact and meaning of the phenomenon was more important than an accurate historical account. Additionally, the concept of “researcher as data” was crucial for this study as well (Bryant & Cresswell, 2007), as my shaping of the research procedures, analysis, and interpretation of the data were based upon my own values and biases, which is a crucial part of this research approach.

Grounded Theory and Critical Theory

Grounded theory seeks to generate theory from participant data (Fassinger, 2005) and focuses on processes, such as experiences over time or phenomena that change over time (Morse & Field, 1995). The specific type of grounded theory that I employed for this study was constructivist grounded theory, which asserts that reality is socially constructed, contextual, and approximated (Hays & Woods, 2011). This approach assumes that individual experience of the same phenomenon will differ, and that the data collected from participants are inherently subjective (Fassinger, 2005). This approach also accepts that values are important and are welcomed into the research process (Morrow, 2007). Additionally, due to the constructivist nature of therapy, this paradigm is particularly useful for counseling psychology research

(Morrow, 1997), which denotes that this approach is a good fit for the current study. This methodology is appropriate for this topic of study because there has been very little research regarding cross-sexuality friendships and no formal theory has been generated on how these types of friendships influence Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. This approach is also a good fit for the research topic because it concerns how cross-sexuality friendships change the identities of heterosexual people.

The constructivist nature of this study also focuses on how heterosexual people develop identities that counter an oppressive system—heterosexism. Therefore, I also applied elements of the paradigm of critical theory to this study. Critical theory focuses on the empowerment of oppressed groups, including sexual minority people (Morrow, 2005; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The application of the broad tenets of this paradigm to this project was important because this study explored the role of cross-sexuality friendship in changing the identities of members of the oppressive group to someone who challenges the oppressive system. Although this study did not focus on the oppressed group, it led to a better understanding of how the factor of cross-sexuality friendship can contribute to the development of anti-heterosexism among members of the dominant group.

Participants

This study utilized a purposive sampling strategy, which is the intentional selection of participants in an attempt to generate specific data determined by the researcher (Cresswell, 2007). Criteria for participation included being in a close, cross-sexuality friendship for a minimum length of 1 year during their counseling psychology doctoral program. The selection of counseling psychology doctoral students in lieu of a broader participant selection allowed for more focused conclusions to be drawn in terms of making suggestions for counseling psychology

training programs. Heterosexual people and sexual minority people were both eligible for participation, and both members of the friendship dyad did not have to participate in order to qualify. My first recruitment method asked members of my dissertation committee to identify potential participants from their knowledge of current and past students and to identify other potential faculty informants who might also suggest potential participants. When my first recruitment method did not generate enough participants, I developed two more recruiting strategies. My second recruitment method included emailing program directors of accredited counseling psychology doctoral programs in the United States and requesting that they distribute my recruiting materials to their students. My final method of recruitment was to post a recruitment message to Facebook. Included in the recruitment materials was an implied consent document and a recruitment poster that included criteria for participation and information about incentives. People who were interested in participating contacted me and were given a demographics questionnaire in order to determine their eligibility for the study.

I continued to recruit participants until data saturation was achieved, ultimately recruiting a total of 24 participants from 8 different counseling psychology Ph.D programs across the United States. One participant had to be excluded from the data analysis due to recording errors during their individual interview. The sample included 18 students and 5 psychologists. All participants identified as cisgender, with 17 holding a woman/femme gender identity and 6 holding a man/masculine gender identity. Concerning sexual orientation, 13 identified as heterosexual, 1 identified as gay, 2 identified as lesbian, and 1 identified as queer. Concerning racial identity, 13 participants identified as White, 4 identified as African American or Black, 4 identified as Asian national, 1 identified as Asian American, and 1 identified as Biracial. Although not formally collected on the demographics form, 4 participants identified that they

were international students. Nationalities disclosed included Chinese and Vietnamese. Friendship lengths ranged from 1 year to 30 years and 2 months. The group average friendship length was 6 years and the median was 3 years and 2 months.

Data Collection

I conducted individual, 60-90 minute, semi-structured interviews for all participants utilizing audio or video online conferencing. I utilized two different interview protocols depending on whether the participant identified as heterosexual or sexual minority identity. I asked a series of open-ended questions that allowed participants to freely provide a description of their experiences, and asked probing or clarification questions as needed. Individual interviews were transcribed, and all participants were assigned a code to keep the data confidential. Names and specific places disclosed during the interview were also altered to protect confidentiality.

After the data were analyzed and audited, all participants were invited back to participate in online, audio-only focus groups. Focus groups can be used as a way to enhance the rigor of the study by engaging in member checking (Boeije, 2010; Morrow, 2005). These focus groups included follow-up questions that I had for participants based upon my own question after the data analysis had concluded as well as questions suggested by the auditors. Additionally, all participants were asked to comment on any information that appeared to be a misrepresentation of their experience or to share any significant information about their experience that appeared to be missing from the theoretical structure. I took notes during the focus group and integrated this information into my analysis and interpretation.

Data Analysis

I conducted data analysis concurrently with data collection, which first began with immersion into the data. Second, I conducted initial coding, which occurred quickly and was

focused on simplicity and precision (Charmaz, 2006). Third, I conducted focused coding on the first set of open codes. This phase of coding focused on the most significant pieces of data and were based upon categories of thematic similarity (Charmaz, 2006; Saldaña, 2009). Fourth, I conducted theoretical coding, which was directed at forming a theoretical structure and describing relationships between themes (Saldaña, 2009). Throughout the process, I took memos in order to summarize my thoughts about the data and analysis, and these memos were integrated into my analysis. Fifth, I utilized theoretical sorting in order to establish theoretical links between the categories of data, then used diagramming in order to provide a visual representation of the theoretical structure (Charmaz, 2007). At the end of the analysis process, auditors reviewed the data and provided feedback. This feedback was integrated into the analysis and the theoretical structure was changed as needed.

Results

The theoretical model that emerged from the data included four major themes and their respective sub-themes. The first theme was Context and History, which described the foundation upon which the cross-sexuality friendship occurred. This theme also included a description of past attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors towards sexual minority people and an account of any previous cross-sexuality friendships. Description and Progression of the Friendship describes the beginning of the friendship and the resulting interpersonal dynamics found within the friendship. Learning and Perception, as influenced by the nuances of the friendship dynamics, describes the learning that occurred about sexual orientation, sexual minority issues, and internal processes connected to that learning. Lastly, Change and Action was prompted or extended by the increased learning occurring due to the friendship, and describes personal and professional changes as they relate to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.

Limitations

There are a few important limitations to note about this study. First, it is important to understand that the entire study and my interpretations of the data were grounded in my own personal values and biases. A few of these biases include my belief that oppressive systems exist and the importance of trying to understand and resist those structures. I am limited in my interpretation of the experiences of marginalized identities that I do not belong to as a White, heterosexual, cisgender woman. Although typically included together with sexual orientation, gender identity was not included within the scope of this study. It is also important to note that there was no evaluation of the heterosexual participants' anti-heterosexism, so assertions about being "accepting" and "affirming" are individually subjective. The sample of this study was predominantly white and if a religious identity was stated, it was Christian. Further research that includes more people of color and people from different religious backgrounds would be helpful.

Implications

This study elaborates upon the role that close, cross-sexuality friendships play in helping heterosexual counseling psychology doctoral students develop anti-heterosexist identities. To fully adhere to the tenets of diversity and inclusion, counseling psychology doctoral programs must directly address heterosexism and how to help their students form these anti-heterosexist identities. Programs should address oppressive systems in general, as well as addressing issues regarding heterosexism. Curriculum that integrates experiential learning activities may be particularly helpful (LaMantia, Wagner, & Bohecker, 2015). Programs should endeavor to represent different types of diversity among faculty, staff, and students, including sexual orientation so that cross-sexuality friendships can occur. As an overall paradigm, counseling

psychology programs should take care to teach that those from the advantaged group should not adopt an attitude of being a “parent” or “hero” to the oppressed group. Self-analysis and self-critique should be encouraged, and those from the privileged group should seek input from the oppressed group in order to avoid acting out oppressive power dynamics (Russell & Bohan, 2016). Both of these approaches can be facilitated by cross-sexuality friendships.

Summary

In this chapter, I described the impetus for this research study, a brief description of the research problem, a description of the purpose for this study, and included the main research question, which was, “how is Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development among heterosexuals influenced by close, cross-sexuality friendships occurring during counseling psychology doctoral programs?” In Chapter 2, I provide an overview of the literature pertinent to this topic and the research questions, including relevant historical context, heterosexism, Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development, friendship, and cross-sexuality friendships. In Chapter 3, I provide an overview of the methodology, including a description of the research questions, rationale for the use of qualitative methodology, constructivist grounded theory, and the application of critical theory, a description of the research procedures, and a description of the data analysis protocol. In Chapter 4, I include the results of the analysis, including how constructivist grounded theory and critical theory shaped the analysis. Finally, in Chapter 5, I provide a discussion of the results, address the original research questions, reviews strengths and limitations of the study, discuss implications for training, and make suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Although researchers in counseling psychology have becoming increasingly interested in sexual minority issues, there continues to be a strong need for increased research (Smith, Shin, & Officer, 2012). The implications of studying this population have numerous consequences for ethical therapy, training, and research in our field, and its importance has spurred an increase in articles published on this topic over time (Smith, 2009). Despite the important discoveries and contributions that have been made to furthering the study of this population (e.g., Croteau, Bieschke, Fassinger, & Manning, 2008), many gaps in knowledge still exist.

One topic of interest is how heterosexual counseling psychologists develop identities that resist or oppose the destructive force of heterosexism and heterosexual privilege (Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995; Getz & Kirley, 2003; Mohr, 2002; Simoni & Walters, 2001; Washington & Evans, 1991; Worthington et al., 2002). Heterosexism damages not only sexual minority populations (Feigenbaum, 2007; Swim, Pearson, & Johnston, 2007), but also heterosexual people (Israel, 2011; Black & Stone, 2005; Sears, 1997), and is therefore a significant area to study further due to its impact on everyone. Some researchers and authors have noted that the friendships between heterosexual people and sexual minority people may be a contributing factor towards the development of an Anti-Heterosexist Identity among heterosexuals (Asta & Vacha-Haase, 2012; Larson, 2012; Duhigg, Rostosky, & Gray, 2010; DiStefano et al., 2000; Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995). Currently, no scholars have examined specifically the role that cross-sexuality friendships play in the development of heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.

Over the proceeding sections, I will provide more in-depth information to topics and concepts relating to how cross-sexuality friendships may contribute to Anti-Heterosexist Identity

Development. Literature from psychology, sociology, feminism, and other social sciences will be used throughout this chapter. Specifically, I will review: (a) historical context for this topic, (b) heterosexism, (c) heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development, (d) friendship in general, (e) cross-sexuality friendships, and finally, (f) a rationale for this study.

Historical Context

Initially, psychology and psychiatry have historically institutionalized heterosexism within the field of mental health while promoting heteronormativity (Silverstein, 2008). Homosexuality was assumed to be a socially deviant, pathological condition. So-called treatments such as “ex-gay reparative therapy” or “conversion therapy” were utilized on willing and non-willing sexual minority individuals in an attempt to change their sexual orientation (Bright, 2004). However, it has become increasingly apparent through scholarly research that non-heterosexual orientations are not inherently pathological, but that its supposed dysfunction is instead stems from heterosexist bias (Bright, 2004; Silverstein, 2008). Silverstein recounts a time in the early 70’s when gay activist successfully lobbied for the de-pathologization of homosexuality within the field of mental health. As a result, homosexuality was formally removed from the DSM-III as a mental disorder. Since that time, counseling psychologists have become increasingly aware of the importance of studying anti-gay stigma and its effects on mental health.

The initial force that generated the pathologization of homosexuality was heterosexism, a system of oppression that operates on granting unearned power and privilege to those with perceived heterosexuality (Moore, 2008). Psychologists have, particularly in the past, wrought harm upon their sexual minority clients by endorsing heterosexist assumptions about sexual orientation. These assumptions have upheld morally-based assumptions about what “natural”

sexual behavior encompasses while imposing assertions that non-heterosexual behaviors and identities were diseased. As a result of this pathologization, psychologists found the need to invent treatments to “correct” a sexual minority individual’s sexual orientation to heterosexuality. However, these forms of “therapy” were found to be largely ineffective, with claims of “curing” one’s homosexuality remaining dubious in their authenticity. The trend of rectifying the bias against sexual minorities within psychology began picking up momentum as scholars discussed and researched the harm of heterosexism against sexual minorities and the special needs of sexual minorities within a counseling setting. This reversal culminated in the American Psychological Association increasingly making statements that were affirming of sexual minority individuals and releasing guidelines for psychotherapy with sexual minority clients (APA, 2011). The APA now condemns sexual orientation conversion therapies as being both ineffective and harmful to sexual minority populations.

The majority of the counseling psychology profession seems to have—at least on the surface—moved towards the belief that non-heterosexual sexual orientations are not a disease to be cured, but rather a point of vulnerability and special concern due to societal stigma and prejudice that a sexual minority identity generates (Garnets and Kimmel, 2003). As part of the recognition of heterosexism within the field of counseling psychology, the spread of “LGBT affirmative” therapy and the development of “LGBT affirmative counselors” has increased. This type of therapy seeks to address the concerns and needs of the sexual minority population by attempting to avoid stigmatizing sexual minority sexual orientations and instead affirming these sexual orientations as being healthy and normal (Matthews, 2007). Therapy affirming of all sexual orientations is not employed only when working with an individual who identifies as a sexual minority person, because sexual orientation is not always readily apparent. Matthews

argues that affirming therapists have the responsibility to establish grounds in which it is safe to explore sexual identity, to avoid heterosexism by trying to prevent heteronormative assumptions, and to continually educate themselves about sexual minority issues and experiences to increase their overall competency.

The landscape of sexual orientation issues has changed dramatically over time, moving from a time when sexual minority identities were beginning to become de-pathologized, up to the present day where therapies that affirm sexual minority people is the norm. Despite this positive movement within the counseling psychology field, however, there is still much progress to be made. For example, Smith, Shin, and Officer (2012) reasoned that microaggressions relating to sexual orientation as well as the use of heteronormative language are major concerns. These authors suggested that advances must be made by shifting the emphasis from counseling psychologists changing individuals to combating oppressive social contexts, to engage in activism at multiple levels, and to integrate inclusive and affirming language (Smith, Shin, & Officer, 2012). However, the widespread influence of heterosexism in the profession continues to be a growing concern.

Heterosexism

In order to understand how someone can develop an identity that is anti-heterosexist, the concept of heterosexism must first be explained. In this section, I will broadly review literature pertaining to heterosexism in order to define this concept and illustrate its existence as a system of oppression. Next, I will review literature relating to heterosexual privilege, which is a key component to understanding heterosexual identity. Finally, I will expand upon the meaning of anti-heterosexism and why this concept is important. Through these different areas of focus, I hope to present current theories on how heterosexism relates to Anti-Heterosexist Identity

Development in the context of cross-sexuality friendships.

Heterosexism: A System of Oppression

Smith, Oades, and McCarthy (2012) conducted a critical review, primarily from psychological literature, of the usage and development of the terms homophobia and heterosexism over time. Their review indicated that the use of the term homophobia was problematic because it focused on individual cognition, affect, and behavior of heterosexual people, rather than simply a fear of gay people. The authors also contended that the use of the term homophobia created additional difficulties because it emphasized the similarity between sexual minority people and heterosexual people, which they argued reinforced heteronormativity. This theory was expanded upon by Peel's (2001) conceptualization of heterosexism, which compared feminist understandings of sexism to the concept of heterosexism. In her conceptualization, she argued that one type of heterosexism, "mundane heterosexism," is based upon a "false equivalence" between sexual minority people and heterosexuals, which serves to strengthen heteronormative assumptions. In contrast to homophobia, the term heterosexism encompasses the idea of a system of oppression against sexual minority people, which takes the emphasis off of individual heterosexual people and into the context of a system where everyone is a participant and everyone is harmed in some way by this system (Smith, Oades, & McCarthy, 2012).

To expand upon the definition of heterosexism, Moore (2008) conducted an interdisciplinary literature review of heterosexism as it relates to racism. This author stated that heterosexism is a system of power based upon sexual orientation wherein heterosexual people are granted unearned privilege over sexual minority people. The author further posited that heterosexism is similar to other systems of oppression such as sexism, racism, or classism in that

it is “the exercise of social domination based on a negative evaluation of social difference” (Moore, 2008). This author explained that heterosexism pertains to specific oppression from a variety of variables, including physical sex, sexual orientation, sexual identity, sexual behavior, romantic preference, gender identity, gender roles, and gender expression that fall outside the realm of societal heteronormativity. Smith, Oades, and McCarthy (2012) highlighted the absence of a universal definition of heterosexism by creating an amalgamation of definitions from their literature review. This amalgamation of definitions indicated that heterosexism is “1) a display of homophobia in society, 2) the promotion of a heterosexual lifestyle, 3) a system that stigmatizes and non-heterosexual [sic] form of behavior, 4) a system that operates on an individual and cultural level, 5) the ideology that maintains prejudice against sexual minorities, and 6) a system that posits the superiority of heterosexuality over homosexuality.”

Smith, Oades, and McCarthy’s (2012) description of existing definitions of heterosexism illustrate that some conceptualizations view heterosexism as an individual phenomenon, a social phenomenon, or some combination of the two. However, the authors identify several potential problems with existing definitions. First, they argue that these definitions lack empirical data to support the theoretical assumptions of heterosexism. The authors go on to contend that existing definitions of heterosexism often have no connection to a theoretical framework, although some researchers have established theoretical underpinnings for heterosexism (e.g., Bernstein, Kostelac, & Gaarder, 2003; Lyons, Brenner, & Fassinger, 2005; Smith & Ingram, 2004; Waldo, 1999). The authors explain that these issues lead to a validity problem for researchers endeavoring to explore this topic. Despite the drawbacks surrounding the term heterosexism as it is currently understood in the literature, the use of heterosexism as a concept has the advantage of conceptualizing social inequality, the repercussions of oppression and discrimination towards

sexual minority people, and understanding how heterosexual privilege and identity operates within this system (Smith, Oades, & McCarthy, 2012).

An important construct in systems of oppression are microaggressions. This construct was initially used in the description of racism, but it can be extended to describe microaggressions in sexism, classism, ableism, or heterosexism (Sue & Capodilupo, 2008). Drawing from theories on racist microaggressions, Sue (2010) extends this concept to heterosexism. He explains that microaggressions in general are “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial, gender, sexual-orientation, and religious slights and insults to target the person or group” (Sue, 2010). This author also proposed that microaggressions can be classified into three major categories: microinsults, microassaults, and microinvalidations. He explained that microinsults are often unconscious and are characterized by some communication that expresses prejudice or insensitivity that demeans a person’s minority identity. Microassaults, on the other hand, are often conscious, blatant, subtle or explicit biased attitudes, behaviors, or beliefs that are communicated to the minority group through verbalizations, behavior, or environmental cues. Finally, microinvalidations are often unconscious and are categorized by verbalizations or environmental cues that devalue the minority person’s experience and identity (Sue, 2010).

Sue (2010) outlines several different types of sexual orientation-based microaggressions. He outlines seven heterosexist microaggressions against sexual minority people, including oversexualization, the fear of becoming gay (“homophobia”), heterosexist language and terminology, religious-based sinfulness of sexual orientations other than heterosexual, the assumption of abnormality, the denial of individual heterosexism, and the endorsement of

heteronormative culture and behaviors. The multitudes of heterosexist microaggressions that exist against sexual minority people hold many negative consequences for this population. These costs to sexual minority people include the promotion of invisibility of sexual orientation, internalized heterosexism, identity development disruption, and psychological distress. Unfortunately, when heterosexual people commit heterosexist microaggressions, they are often unaware that they have done something that harms others (Sue, 2010).

Smith, Shin, and Officer (2012) draw upon Sue (2010) taxonomy of microaggressions in their conceptualization about heterosexism and heteronormativity in the counseling psychology field. These authors focus on microinvalidations, which are the type of microaggressions that invalidate a marginalized person's experience. They offer a couple of examples that typify heterosexist microinvalidations. The first is of a mental health clinic that contains magazines depicting only heterosexual couples in their waiting room. The second example describes a counselor during an intake session asking a lesbian client if she has a husband or boyfriend after assuming the heterosexuality of the client. These microaggressions are problematic because they strengthen heteronormativity while subtly invalidating the sexual minority person's feelings, thoughts, identity, and life experience. Smith, Shin, and Officer (2012) also emphasize the idea that good intentions from heterosexual people is not sufficient for combating heterosexism because heterosexist microaggressions are often not committed consciously.

As illustrated, heterosexism is a destructive force that operates within society (Moore, 2008; Peel, 2001; Smith, Oades, & McCarthy, 2012; Sue, 2010). It is important for counseling psychologists, particularly heterosexuals, to become aware of and avoid heterosexism in order to help circumvent unintentional harm towards sexual minority peers and clients. As Smith, Shin, and Officer (2012) state, heterosexuals must actively work to combat heterosexism.

Heterosexism is an important concept for understanding how a heterosexual person develops an anti-heterosexist identity. Another key component of heterosexism is heterosexual privilege, which is also often not consciously acknowledged by heterosexual people.

Heterosexual Privilege

Privilege is an important component to the overall idea of any social oppressive system. In this subsection, I will review the basic concept of privilege and review literature pertaining to heterosexual privilege specifically. Black and Stone (2005), in a multicultural counseling-based literature review, defined privilege as a special advantaged that is not common or universal, that is granted and unearned, that is an entitlement related to a preferred status, and is exercised for the benefit of the person with privilege at the exclusion and disadvantage of others. The authors go on to specify that social privilege is “any entitlement, sanction, power, immunity, and advantage or right granted or conferred by the dominant group to a person or group solely by birthright membership in prescribed identities” (Black & Stone, 2005). Israel’s (2011) presidential address of privilege in counseling psychology arrives at a similar definition. She states that privilege works to reinforce dominant, social power structures. She states that privilege works through the dimensions of societal structures, systems, and daily interactions. Furthermore, she indicates that privilege maintains itself both structurally and systemically by facilitating a lack of awareness about the benefits and costs of privilege to the dominant group.

Israel (2011) explains that this lack of awareness about privilege by the dominant group occurs in several ways. First, she explains that people in U.S. culture generally believe that people gain rewards through hard work and desirable personal qualities. Conversely, if someone does not achieve or succeed, it is often perceived to be due to a lack of hard work or even a lack of deserving the accomplishment. Limited contact to people in the non-dominant group may also

lead people in the dominant group to remain blinded to their own privilege. When people are exposed to their own privilege, Israel explains, they often feel dissonance and discomfort, which leads to avoidance of exploring privilege further. She explains that often, people in the dominant group who are faced with their privilege will deny its existence, will react with anger or defensiveness, or will fall back on personal or religious values to justify their privilege. People may also react with “false envy,” or making it seem as if the minority group has a special advantage that they want. Related to this, people may also react to privilege by feeling resentment for their own marginalized status or what they perceive to be privileges granted to the minority population. For these reasons, privilege maintains itself and keeps people in the minority population from exploring and recognizing their own privilege (Israel, 2011).

The experiences of sexual minority people in relation to the effects of heterosexism have been relatively well described (i.e., Croteau, 2008; Garnets & Kimmel, 2003; Swim, Pearson, & Johnston, 2008; West, Syzmanski, & Meyer, 2008). However, there is much less discourse in the scholarly literature about heterosexual privilege and how heterosexual people experience their own heterosexual privilege. Modeled from McIntosh’s (1989) list of white privilege, lists have been created to detail heterosexual privilege. Privilege surrounding social, identity, economic, institutional, and political issues are outlined in order to help heterosexuals see the ways in which they are privileged based upon their sexual orientation (“Daily effects of straight privilege,” 2002). In a feminist account of heterosexual privilege from a lesbian’s viewpoint, Feigenbaum (2007) states that heterosexual privilege is so deeply rooted that it is automatically understood and functions to uphold a set of exclusions to protect heterosexist prejudices. She explains that these exclusions are seen through a substantial amount of social and economic protections and advantages only afforded to heterosexual couples. Simoni and Walters’ (2001) examination of

heterosexual privilege revealed that heterosexual privilege is a reflection of a heterocentric world view. The authors explain that heterosexuals are privileged because they don't have to think of themselves as having a sexual orientation. In other words, heterosexuals typically think of themselves as "normal" while anyone who is not heterosexual is the "other" (Simoi & Walters, 2001). Feigenbaum echoes the same sentiment, stating that she has not felt fully accepted by her heterosexual friends and is often relegated to the role of "quirky gay friend."

Although the ways in which heterosexual privilege harms sexual minority people may be obvious, there is also evidence that shows that heterosexual privilege harms heterosexual people as well (Black & Stone, 2005; Israel, 2011; Sears, 1997). Black and Stone's review revealed that people who have privilege live in a distorted reality and have a distorted sense of self. For example, a privileged person may believe that they have somehow "earned" or are deserving of their rank, status, or benefits that are actually unearned. The authors argue that the belief in superiority is antithetical to healthy intellectual and emotional development. As elucidated above, heterosexuals must rely on immature defensive reactions and a sense of superiority in order to maintain their heterosexual privilege (Black & Stone, 2005). Israel echoes many of the same disadvantages to privilege, stating that it leads to a distorted sense of self. She also states that heterosexuals must "work" to maintain their privilege by conforming to standards of heteronormativity, which may lead to physical or emotional harm upon sexual minority people through adherence to heterosexism. She argues that heterosexual privilege creates rigid roles that are assigned by gender, which constrains self-expression and creativity (Israel, 2011).

I have reviewed how heterosexism is a destructive system of oppression (Moore, 2008; Peel, 2001; Smith, Oades, & McCarthy, 2012), where heterosexuals hold unearned privilege over sexual minority people (Israel, 2011; Feigenbaum, 2007; Black & Stone, 2005; Simoni &

Walters, 2001). It is also clear that heterosexism is destructive to sexual minority people and heterosexuals alike (Israel, 2011; Moore, 2008; Swim, Pearson, & Johnston, 2007; Black & Stone, 2005; Simoni & Walters, 2001). What this literature suggests is the need for heterosexism to be addressed generally and also within the field of counseling psychology. The following section will review the concept of anti-heterosexism, particularly from the standpoint of how heterosexuals can become anti-heterosexist.

Anti-Heterosexism

Utilizing a case example of a failed interaction between a heterosexual counselor and a sexual minority client, Smith, Shin, and Officer (2012) argue that counseling psychologists must make a paradigm shift in order to move forward on sexual minority issues in the profession. The authors contend that being “affirming” of sexual minority populations is not adequate, particularly for heterosexual people. Specifically, they explain that adopting an attitude of being affirming to the sexual minority population is problematic because the heterosexual person may assume that their “welcoming” approach will be appreciated by sexual minority people. The main problem, the authors clarify, is that being affirming does not give heterosexual people any impetus to explore and challenge their own heterosexual privilege. Smith, Shin, and Officer (2012) go on to argue that counseling psychologists perpetuate heterosexism by overemphasizing changing individuals rather than the oppressive forces that affect their sexual minority clients. The authors suggest that counseling psychologists should reflect more upon how dominant processes in the profession uphold oppressive power structures and adopt a position of “antiheteronormativity” rather than an affirming identity (Smith, Shin, & Officer 2012). For heterosexuals, this may include not only reflecting upon how heterosexism negatively affects sexual minority people, but what role heterosexual privilege plays in their lives.

Very similar to Smith, Shin, and Officer's (2012) call for antiheteronormativity is the concept of anti-heterosexism. In order to help explain the idea of anti-heterosexism, I would like to apply Barndt's (2007) "power analysis" of racism. Barndt explains that there are three levels of power within the system of racism: disadvantage for people of color, privilege for white people, and at its deepest level, racism's power to destroy the humanity of everyone. This model's broadness allows for the direct translation of this system to the language of heterosexism. At its broadest level, heterosexism has the power to impose disadvantages over sexual minorities (Moore, 2008; Peel, 2001; Smith, Oades, & McCarthy, 2012), as discussed above. The next level of power includes unearned advantages and privilege for heterosexuals (Israel, 2011; Feigenbaum, 2007; Black & Stone, 2005; Simoni & Walters, 2001), also described above. Finally, the deepest level of heterosexism is heterosexism's power over everyone—namely, the destructive cycle of oppression and hurt that dehumanizes everyone (Barndt, 2007). This level of power controls both those that are disadvantaged by heterosexism and those who benefit from heterosexism. Some authors and researchers have commented on how heterosexism has been dehumanizing to sexual minority people (Croteau, 2008; Garnets & Kimmel, 2003; Swim, Pearson, & Johnston, 2008; West, Syzmanski, & Meyer, 2008) and heterosexuals (Black & Stone, 2005; Israel, 2011), respectively.

Despite this, there is less literature on how heterosexuals experience heterosexism and heterosexual privilege. This is a major gap in the literature because less is known about how heterosexuals react to the concept of heterosexism, how they explore and respond to heterosexual privilege, and how they adopt Anti-Heterosexist Identities. If counseling psychologists are to progress in the area of addressing and resisting heterosexism through the development of Anti-Heterosexist Identities, this is a crucial area to research. In the next section, I will discuss what is

currently known about Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development by exploring heterosexual identity development models and ally identity development models.

Heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development

As previously noted, heterosexism is a highly problematic force within society and the field of counseling psychology. Not only does heterosexism harm sexual minority populations (Swim, Pearson, & Johnston, 2008), but heterosexual privilege frequently goes unnoticed and unacknowledged by heterosexual people (Smith et al., 2012). As explained in the introduction of this chapter, I am proposing the term heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development as an alternative to the term ally development as a more accurate term that allows for conceptualizing heterosexual development within a system of sexual orientation-based oppression. Again assuming that heterosexism is a system of oppression, similar to institutional racism (Black & Stone, 2005), anti-heterosexism then describes beliefs, values, and actions that oppose systemic heterosexism. Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development will then describe the movement of heterosexual individuals into an identity that intentionally and actively opposes heterosexism.

Currently, the literature offers two major types of conceptual models relevant to understanding Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. The first of these are heterosexual identity development models, which seek to understand the identity, behaviors, and attitudes of heterosexuals, who form the power majority group (Worthington & Mohr, 2002). These developmental models are generally concerned with the power and privilege that heterosexuality confers (Mohr, 2002; Simoni & Walters, 2001; Worthington et al., 2002), and are thus helpful for understanding Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. Next, several conceptual models for heterosexual ally identity development exist (Getz & Kirkley, 2003; Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995; Washington & Evans, 1991). I will provide a review of some of the major heterosexual identity

development models and heterosexual ally development models in order to present what is currently known about Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development and to explore the gaps in the existing literature as it relates to this study.

Heterosexual Identity Development Models

In this section, I will be reviewing several models and other conceptual pieces important to understanding heterosexual identity development. In a theoretical conceptualization, Worthington and Mohr (2002) explain that heterosexual identity development models arose from the need to understand identity development from the standpoint of majority individuals. Existing models are inspired by white racial identity models, such as the White Racial Identity Model (Helms, 1995), which sought to understand the development of racially privileged individuals. Heterosexual identity models are important in order to understand how heterosexuals come to discover that they hold a sexual orientation and that other sexual orientations exist. Notably, heterosexuals in early stages of heterosexual identity development do not think of themselves as even having a sexual orientation with the assumption that heterosexuality is the only possibility (Simoni & Walters, 2001). These models will be helpful for better understanding Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development by describing the processes that heterosexuals experience when confronting their own expectations of heteronormativity. In this subsection, I will review the work of (a) Eliason (1995) and Sullivan's (1998) initial conceptualizations of heterosexual identity, (b) Simoni and Walters' (2001) model of heterosexual identity development, (c) Worthington et al.'s (2002) model of heterosexual identity development, and (d) Mohr's (2002) heterosexual identity model as applied to heterosexual psychotherapists.

Among the earliest formal scholarship of heterosexual identity development, Eliason (1995) conducted a qualitative analysis of essays written by heterosexual college students about

their personal sexual identity development. The author theorized the results in terms of Marcia's (1987) identity development theory, which included four identity states characterized by high or low identity commitment and identity exploration (specifically, identity achievement, identity foreclosure, identity moratorium, and identity diffusion). Eliason found that most participants fit within the foreclosure state and a significantly large proportion of participants fit within the diffusion state due to confusion about their sexual identity. Among participants assigned to the achieved identity state, the researcher found that male participants arrived at this status by largely rejecting a sexual minority identity. All participants classified into the moratorium state were female. Although limited because of the small scale of the study, this research represents some of the earliest work on the topic of heterosexual identity development.

Another early piece on heterosexual identity development was Sullivan's (1998) conceptualized developmental model that was drawn from white racial identity development models. Unlike Eliason's (1995) categorization of identity status that was based upon high or low levels of identity exploration and identity commitment, this model presents a developmental process with a logical progression from less-evolved stages to more mature stages of identity development. The first stage, naivete, is described as having little to no awareness of sexual orientations other than heterosexuality. After integrating the contradictory social messages of the first stage, heterosexual individuals move into the acceptance stage. The third stage, resistance, encompasses an emergent awareness of heterosexism and begins to view sexual minority people as an oppressed population. The fourth stage, redefinition, heterosexual individuals attempt to move towards an identity that rejects heterosexism and the final stage, internalization, is an integration of the heterosexual person's surfacing identity into all facets of their life (Sullivan, 1998).

Similarly to Sullivan (1998) due to its borrowing of concepts of white racial identity development, Simoni and Walters (2001) proposed a model of heterosexual identity development based upon the White Racial Identity Attitude Scale (WRIAS) (Helms & Carter, 1990) in order to shift the focus from oppressed sexual minority people to privileged heterosexual people (Simoni & Walters, 2001). To develop their model, these researchers utilized the Attitudes toward Gays and Lesbians scale (Herek, 1988) and a modified version of the WRIAS (Helms & Carter, 1990). The researchers ran hierarchical regression analyses to confirm hypotheses regarding the associations between developmental stages of identity and a reduction in heterosexist attitudes. The developmental stages are drawn from Helms' (1995) White Racial Identity Model and include contact, disintegration, reintegration, pseudo-independence, and autonomy. The focus of their study was descriptive and was intended to determine if heterosexual attitudes had a relationship with the stages outlined in the White Racial Identity Model (Simoni & Walters, 2001).

The stages proposed by Simoni and Walters (2001) revolve around the attitudes that heterosexual people hold toward sexual minority people and the awareness of heterosexual privilege. The first stage offered is Contact, which describes a nearly complete blindness towards sexual orientation issues. In this stage, there is no awareness of one's own heterosexual privilege. The next stage, Disintegration, deals with the confusion and turmoil that heterosexuals experience when they first begin to become aware of heterosexual privilege. The resulting attitude adopted is ambivalence about what it means to be a sexual minority person versus a heterosexual person. The next stage, Reintegration, is a reaction to the cognitive dissonance experienced in the previous stage. In it, heterosexuals deny their heterosexual privilege, idealize heteronormativity, and passively and actively approve of heterosexism. If a heterosexual

individual experiences positive movement past this stage, they move to the Pseudo-Independence stage. In this stage, the heterosexual person's sexual orientation is acknowledged and a partial recognition of the sociopolitical status of sexual minority people is acknowledged. Heterosexual individuals often feel a great deal of guilt about discovering heterosexual privilege, and, as a result, minimize their conscious acknowledgement of it. The last and most "evolved" stage is Autonomy, wherein a heterosexual person fully acknowledges heterosexual privilege and develops a positive, integrated Anti-Heterosexist Identity (Simoni & Walters, 2001).

Although Simoni and Walters' (2001) model suggests development and movement through the stages, it does not elucidate how or why movement might occur. It also makes no suggestions about whether heterosexual people may exist in more than one stage at the same time. More recent models of heterosexual identity development, described next, attend to these substantial problems.

To build upon earlier work done on heterosexual identity, including Eliason (1995) and Sullivan (1998), Worthington et al. (2002) proposed a multidimensional model of heterosexual identity development. Although this identity development model is explained as being developmental and having a certain logical progression through the stages of development, the authors are careful to note that there is often a normal revisiting and circularity that occurs in identity development, which is contingent upon each individual. They posit that progression through the processes described in their model is influenced by biological, psychological, and social factors. Specifically, these factors encompass biology, culture, gender norms and socialization, microsocial context, religious orientation, and systemic homonegativity, sexual prejudice, and sexual privilege. Heterosexual identity development, grounded within the various biopsychosocial contexts, have two "parallel, reciprocal processes" including individual identity

development and social identity development. The individual identity process includes the heterosexual individual's recognition and acceptance of their sexual orientation identity, sexual values, preferred modes of sexual expression, perceived sexual needs, preferred sexual activities, and the preferred characteristics of sexual partners, while the social identity process includes group membership identity and attitudes toward sexual minorities (Worthington et al., 2002).

Past the description of the specific components of heterosexual identity processes, Worthington et al. (2002) provides a conceptualization of the "developmental statuses" of heterosexual identity development. Similarly to Eliason's (1995) study, these authors also base their developmental statuses strongly on Marcia's (1987) identity development theory. These different statuses also allow for fluidity and describe the ways that a heterosexual person might shift between the various developmental states (Worthington et al., 2002).

The first state that Worthington et al. (2002) describes is unexplored commitment, which is often the initial status where heterosexual identity begins. In this status, it is unlikely that a heterosexual individual will have thought about their own sexual identity or perceived themselves as even having a sexual identity. From an individual identity perspective, this developmental status is described as commitment to heterosexual identity without any self-exploration into this identity. The authors explain that this developmental status is strongly influenced by societal and familial expectations of compulsory heterosexuality. The authors clarify that heterosexuality is often culturally prescribed and although people at any age range may exist in this developmental status, pre-adolescent children are often in this status because have very little reason to question the assumption that they are heterosexual. From a group development perspective, heterosexual individuals within this developmental status align themselves with heteronormative attitudes, values, and behaviors. Individuals in this status are

more likely to understand sexual minority people at a crude, stereotypical level and they are more likely to assume they do not know anyone who is a sexual minority person. Once a person moves out of this developmental status, they authors state that they cannot return because their initial naivety is typically gone (Worthington et al., 2002).

From the unexplored commitment stage, a heterosexual person may then move into either the active exploration, diffusion, or deepening and commitment statuses (Worthington et al., 2002). From an individual identity standpoint, the active exploration status is characterized by active and purposeful exploration of sexual orientation, sexual values, sexual needs, and desired partner characteristics. The authors explain that the type of exploration, depth of exploration, and duration of this exploration may vary among individuals and are largely derived from that person's own contextual factors. From a group identity perspective, this developmental status may move more towards a heterosexual affirming their privileged status or calling their privileged status into question. The authors assert that there is a greater likelihood that a heterosexual individual who is in this status is more likely to hold a positive outlook towards the sexual minority population than the unexplored commitment stage.

Another status, diffusion, may stem from any of the other identity statuses (Worthington et al., 2002). The authors explain that this state often follows some sort of "crisis" and is characterized by a lack of purposeful exploration and a confused identity. Worthington et al. assert that the only pathway out of this identity state is through active exploration. From this, a heterosexual person may enter the deepening and commitment stage, which is achieved when a heterosexual person makes a greater commitment to their individual identity, either through a high degree of exploration or through developmental maturation. From a group identity perspective, a heterosexual person should create a realistic outlook towards sexual minority

people, including developing a clear sense of heterosexual privilege and oppression towards sexual minorities. A heterosexual individual in the deepening and commitment state may move back to active exploration, experience a crisis of identity and move into the diffusion status, or move on to what Worthington et al. (2002) describes as the most “mature and adaptive” status, synthesis.

The synthesis status only follows from the deepening and commitment status and represents correspondence between individual identity, group identity, and the biopsychosocial developmental processes (Worthington et al., 2002). The authors explicate that this developmental status also synthesizes other layers of identity, including gender, race, and religious identity. Due to the sheer number of factors, processes, and co-occurring identities that must be synthesized in order to achieve this status, the authors explain that very few individuals ever reach this identity state. The authors further explain that because active exploration lends to more flexible thinking, the synthesis state can only follow the deepening and commitment state, rather than following directly from unexplored commitment. Worthington et al. go on to state that a heterosexual individual may leave the synthesis state by returning to active exploration or entering the diffusion state due to an identity crisis.

Worthington et al.’s (2002) model made a significant contribution to the literature on heterosexual identity development by creating a model that accepts the complexity, multidimensionality, and circularity of identity development. At the same time, Mohr (2002) developed a theory of heterosexual development with a focus on heterosexual psychotherapists. Unlike other models of heterosexual identity development, this model does not describe any stages of development, but rather provides an explanation of the factors that create heterosexual identity and discusses identity “states.” He postulates that his proposed model is based upon the

way heterosexual therapists respond to sexual orientation issues and heterosexual privilege. Namely, a heterosexual's way of responding to sexual orientation is determined by their attempt to construct a positive identity. For example, Mohr explains that a heterosexual person might avoid sexual orientation issues all together due to the fear of offending a sexual minority person. He also notes that heterosexual individuals are typically unaware of their heterosexuality as an identity, and that there is an underlying assumption of compulsory heterosexuality. Moreover, the author explains that heterosexual identities may differ across different social spheres, with some of these identities being contradictory to each other. For example, a heterosexual trainee in counseling psychology may adopt a professional identity that is affirming of sexual minority individuals, but still go back to heterosexist values in family life. Contradictory identities such as this may result in a great deal of cognitive dissonance, confusion, and lack of cohesion for the heterosexual person (Mohr, 2002).

Mohr (2002) describes three major components that describe his model: precursors of adult heterosexual identity, determinants of adult heterosexual identity, and determinants of identity states. As defined by Mohr, identity states include conscious or unconscious strong emotions towards sexual minority people, thoughts regarding sexual minority people, and motivations for behavior toward sexual minority people. Precursors of adult identity, the author explains, may originate from childhood and adolescence and includes a heterosexual's experiences with their individual sexuality (e.g., their attraction to others, their romantic and sexual fantasies, and their sexual experiences) and their societal exposure to information about sexual orientation (i.e., from family, peers, media, and other areas of social exposure). The precursors of adult heterosexual identity lead into the determinants of heterosexual identity, which includes what Mohr describes as "working models" of sexual orientation as well as core

motivations.

The working models of sexual orientation, states Mohr (2002), are a heterosexual person's basic comprehension of sexual orientation. There are several working models that heterosexual people may individually hold. He explains that if a heterosexual person adheres to the compulsory heterosexuality working model, then they believe that heterosexuality is the only moral and socially acceptable sexual orientation. In this working model, sexual minority sexual orientations are typically viewed in terms of behavior and lifestyle "choice." Democratic heterosexuality is largely synonymous with "color-blind" attitudes towards race and assumes that all sexual orientations are the same except for the sexual attractions and differences in lifestyle attributed to sexual minority people. Generally, these differences are assumed to be nonsignificant with little to no attention paid to heterosexual privilege or oppression towards sexual minority populations.

Mohr (2002) goes on to describe the politicized heterosexuality working model, which focuses on the sociopolitical consequences of sexual orientation. This working model pays more attention to sexual minority oppression and heterosexual privilege. However, this working model is problematic in that there is a rigid view that one is either affirming towards sexual minorities or is homophobic, which, among other complications, makes it difficult for the heterosexual person to more easily examine their own heterosexism. Finally, Mohr describes what he terms an integrative heterosexuality working model. This cognitive framework asserts that all individuals, whether they are heterosexual or sexual minority individuals, participate in the oppressive system of heterosexism. Although all sexual orientations are assumed to be essentially similar, heterosexuals using this framework acknowledge the oppressive power differential that exists.

In addition to the working models of sexual orientation, Mohr (2002) posits the "core

motivations” of social acceptance and psychological consistency that contribute towards adult heterosexual identity. The core motivators are presented as being tied to general individual psychological and social needs for wellbeing. Socially, a heterosexual person may feel motivation to express beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that are congruent with the various social groups that they identify with. Mohr goes on to theorize that internally, a heterosexual person will also be motivated to express a well-defined, consistent self-concept. The working models of sexual orientation and core motivations interact to form a heterosexual individual’s adult heterosexual identity, which is comprised of an internal, personal identity and a publicly expressed identity. Similarly to Worthington et al. (2002), Mohr asserts that heterosexual identity is not rigid and linear, but that it instead shifts depending on the complex interaction of personal and environmental variables.

Worthington et al. (2002) and Mohr’s (2002) models of heterosexual identity development in particular suggest that more evolved states of identity development are naturally more affirming of a diverse range of sexual orientations and generally move towards a stance of opposition towards heterosexism. More recently, the scholarly literature has focused on creating conceptualizations of heterosexual ally development (Asta & Vacha-Haase, 2012; Bieschke, 1996; Dillon et al., 2004; DiStefano et al., 2000; Duhigg, Rostosky, & Gray, 2010; Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995; Washington & Evans, 1991). Although similar to heterosexual identity development, heterosexual ally development is distinguished by its emphasis in identities that are affirming of sexual minority people and work against heterosexism. Major conceptualizations, theories, and models of heterosexual ally identity development are described in the following section.

Heterosexual Ally Identity Development

As previously identified in the “Definitional and Conceptual Considerations” section of Chapter 1, a heterosexual ally is defined as “a person who is a member of the ‘dominant’ or ‘majority’ group who works to end oppression in his or her personal and professional life through support of, and as an advocate for, the oppressed population” (Washington & Evans, 1991). In this subsection, I will review some of the major conceptualizations and models of heterosexual ally development. Specifically, I will cover (a) DiStefano et al.’s (2000) study of heterosexual ally experiences, (b) Dillon et al.’s (2004) exploration of ally development within the context of counselor training, (c) Duhigg, Rostosky, and Gray’s (2010) description of experiences contributing to ally identity development, (d) a phenomenology of factors leading to ally identity development by Asta and Vacha-Haase (2010), (e) Washington and Evans’ (1991) model of ally development, (f) Gelberg and Chojnacki’s (1995) model of GLB-affirmative heterosexual career counselor development, and (g) Getz and Kirkley’s (2003) heterosexual ally identity development model.

Although not a formal theory of ally identity development, a qualitative study by DiStefano et al. (2000) describes how their heterosexual participants experienced themselves as being allies to the sexual minority population and how sexual minority people reacted to their attempts to be a heterosexual ally. In their study of heterosexual ally experience, their participants described experiences in their personal and professional lives and across their experiences with peers, supervisors, and mentors. Most significantly, they found that participants frequently named participation in or the delivery of programming or training that was affirming of sexual minority populations. Participants also frequently displayed visible symbols that they were allies to sexual minority people, such as stickers, brochures, and books. Supportive

interpersonal relationships with sexual minority people, challenging heterosexist comments, participation in affirming sexual minority organizations, and advocating for institutional change were also described as being significant parts of these participants' ally experience (DiStefano et al., 2000). The reaction of others towards the participants' identification as an ally was described in diverse ways. Generally, participants described the reactions of sexual minority individuals as being "appreciative," "supportive" and sometimes "surprised." The participants' ally identities were met with a range of reactions from other heterosexual individuals, from positive and supportive reactions to a range of negative or hostile reactions.

Dillon et al. (2004) conducted qualitative analysis utilizing a research team of counselors-in-training in order to explore how they challenged their heterosexist attitudes and biases. This study is not presented as a developmental model, but is rather described as a set of salient processes that occurred among participants. Ten heterosexual counselors-in-training were recruited via flyers to participate in this research team in order to investigate heterosexual attitudes towards sexual minority people. The researchers found 10 significant themes that emerged from the data gathered from the research participants. Out of these significant themes, there are some specific areas that are pertinent to heterosexual ally development. First, the researchers found that general and family socialization of attitudes and values were highly important. Participants expressed a range of different socialization experiences, with some experiences being more or less affirming of sexual minority people (Dillon et al., 2004). Although it may be more obvious as to how participants could adopt an ally identity from receiving messages that were affirming, there was no explanation offered about how participants receiving non-affirming messages via socialization continued on to adopt an ally identity.

The participants in Dillon et al.'s (2004) study reported a range of motivations for

participating on the research team, and they were generally all concerned with becoming more affirming of sexual minority individuals. For most participants, the research team itself served as an important critical event that pushed the participants toward facing their own heterosexism. For example, participants felt enough anxiety about participating on this team that each individual verbally stated their heterosexuality on the first day. This anxious self-consciousness about being perceived as gay persisted for many as they engaged in discussion with others outside of the research group. Significantly, many participants also began to reflect on their own sexual identity as a heterosexual person and they began to become aware of their own heterosexual privilege. Even among participants who described themselves as being affirming of sexual minority populations prior to joining the research team, everyone communicated that they experienced growth and felt committed to continuing to develop their ally identity (Dillon et al., 2004).

Duhigg, Rostosky, and Gray (2010) conducted a qualitative study utilizing consensual qualitative research that also identified some major themes that contributed to heterosexual ally identity development, although it was not a formal model of identity development. These researchers utilized purposive sampling and recruited their participants by asking recommendations by sexual minority leaders in local organizations in their community for the names of people who were heterosexual allies. Like Dillon et al. (2004)'s findings, these researchers also found that family socialization, or "modeling," was significant for ally identity development. Both negative modeling that was derogatory to sexual minority people and modeling that was affirming of sexual minority people were identified by participants. These socialization experiences, the participants explained, helped make them aware of social stratification along the lines of sexual orientation. The participants in this study described an awareness of groups of people who were unfairly marginalized, with this awareness often

stemming from childhood. Participants went on to identify specific events where they became aware of heterosexual privilege and oppression towards sexual minority people. Other participants noted their own personal experiences with oppression as an impetus for empathizing with other oppressed groups, such as sexual minority people. All but one participant in this study cited interpersonal relationships with a sexual minority person as being important. Specifically, the participants became aware of some kind of oppression that the sexual minority person had experienced as a result of their sexual orientation (Duhigg, Rostosky, & Gray, 2010). All participants in this study described their own reactions to the recognition of their heterosexual privilege and the existence of oppression towards sexual minority people. These reactions included emotional responses (e.g., guilt, sadness, and anger), the desire to take personal responsibility to become more involved to work against heterosexism, and other specific actions and engagement in activities, such as participating in PFLAG (Duhigg, Rostosky, & Gray, 2010).

Participants of this study additionally explained several attitudes and values that they believed helped to shape their identity as heterosexual allies (Duhigg, Rostosky, & Gray, 2010). Namely, they identified affirming attitudes about a diversity of sexual orientations, valuing equality and diversity in general, comfort in one's own sexual identity and sexual orientation. For a few participants who had a strong Christian identity, they stated that they drew upon the value of loving people from the perspective of their religion as important, but rejected messages that marginalized sexual minority people on the basis of religious values. Participants additionally described outside reactions from others regarding their work as heterosexual allies. They described reactions as usually positive and supportive of their efforts, but a significant number of participants also described negative reactions from family members, coworkers, neighbors, and their local community at large. Additionally, some participants reported negative responses from

the sexual minority population which treated their ally work with suspicion and a questioning of their motivations. Finally, participants described specific rewards they experienced from their work as heterosexual allies, including a sense of purpose, rewarding friendships and connections, personal and professional recognition, and a sense of personal fulfillment (Duhigg, Rostosky, & Gray, 2010).

Most recently, Asta and Vacha-Haase (2012) conducted an interpretive phenomenology studying using 14 heterosexual psychologists and pre-doctoral psychology interns who self-identified as allies in university counseling centers about their experiences and development surrounding ally work towards the sexual minority population. As with the preceding studies, this research was not the formulation of a specific model of heterosexual ally development, but it was rather intended to provide a description of factors that influence ally identity development. The researchers identified five major themes that emerged from the data about the participants' reflections on their identity and development as allies to the sexual minority population. These themes included ally meaning and essence, ally growth and development, ally challenges relationship between social justice and training, and diversity within the LGBT community (Asta & Vacha-Haase, 2012).

The participants in Asta and Vacha-Haase's (2012) study provided a description of heterosexual ally identity development, including relationships effecting ally growth, how outside reactions to ally work shaped their ally identity, how supportive and affirming responses shaped their ally identity, and the variation and fluidity found within ally identity development. Participants described interpersonal relationships with sexual minority people, from childhood through adulthood, as important relationships which led to attitudes and actions that were affirming of the sexual minority population. Responses from family members, colleagues, and

members of sexual minority communities resulted in a strengthening of the participants' affirming behaviors and ally identity, often regardless of whether they were positive or negative comments. A potential drawback of this study was that the researchers relied on the participants to define what an ally was and assumed that because they identified as an ally, that this assertion was automatically valid. Additionally, the researchers placed the burden on participants to think about their heterosexual ally identity as a developmental process, again allowing the participants to freely define their own development process. These two issues may have helped to create a lack of clarity about what heterosexual ally identity development is, which the researchers identified as "variation" and "fluidity" (Asta & Vacha-Haase, 2012).

Some older models of ally development helped to form more recent works on this topic. Washington and Evans (1991) described an early four-stage model of heterosexual ally development from the viewpoint of purposefully forming an ally identity. The author's first stage, Awareness, states the importance of self-awareness and awareness of sexual minority issues. The authors suggest that interactions with sexual minority people, reading literature about sexual minority people, and attending workshops may be helpful during this stage of development. The authors state that the second stage is Knowledge, which is involved with acquiring knowledge about sociopolitical concerns surrounding sexual minority issues. The third stage, Skills, describes the ability to communicate acquired knowledge. Washington and Evans note that this stage is challenging for many heterosexuals due to a lack of mentorship and supports. The authors describe the final stage of their model, Action, and the most important stage of heterosexual ally development. They state that specific actions are important for meaningful change towards a sociopolitical climate that is more affirming of sexual minority people (Washington & Evans, 1991).

Gelberg and Chojnacki (1995) created a model of “GLB-affirmative” development for career counselors based upon their own observations of their personal and professional development. They based their model upon Cass’s (1979) homosexual identity model, reasoning that this model was comprehensive because it paid heed to cognitive, behavioral, affective, and social factors. Although some rewording of terminology was applied, Cass’s original six identified developmental stages were generally preserved and translated over to this model of heterosexual ally development (Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995). The first stage, awareness, describes the realization that sexual minority issues are important and that there is a need for heterosexuals to become professionally, personally, and politically active in this area. The authors describe an initial anxiety and confusion experienced about how to begin to become more effective allies to sexual minority communities. This led the authors into the next stage, ambivalence, which describes a sense of doubt about their preliminary attempts to become allies. The authors described anxiety and depression which stemmed from an incongruity between their goals to become allies and their actual behaviors. The isolation that the authors described experiencing was lessened through support of sexual minority professionals at national conferences. Additionally, they stated that through self-disclosures to local sexual minority individuals about their goals to be heterosexual allies were met with support, which further helped to reduce the authors’ feelings of isolation (Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995).

As the authors continued to gain support for their efforts at both national and local levels, they moved into what they termed the empowerment stage (Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995). They described feeling encouraged by their observed progress and experienced greater levels of self-efficacy and self-value as heterosexual allies. Their disclosure of their sexual minority affirming goals moved from having a general purpose to having a focused emphasis on specific issues

related to becoming more effective heterosexual allies. In the fourth stage, activism, the authors found themselves more highly engaged with social and political activism at the local and national level. In the fifth stage, pride, the authors found themselves feeling proud of their personal and professional accomplishment while concurrently experiencing increasing estrangement from individuals who made heterosexist remarks. The authors described the final stage as integration, which was characterized by increasing integration of heterosexual ally work into more arenas of their lives. Generally, the authors reported that they felt a greater sense of personal and professional integration of their values as heterosexual allies (Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995).

Gelberg and Chojnacki's (1995) model is limited for a number of reasons. First, this model is based upon the author's own development and is not a research study, so its implications for use are tenuous. Next, because this model is based on the experience of the authors, they seem to make the assumption that they have completed all stages of their model, which they based upon Cass's (1979) model. Finally, although the authors state that individuals may cycle back through their model, this developmental model does not consider the complexity of identity development and seems to assume a clear, linear path of development.

Getz and Kirkley (2003), working within the context of higher education, conducted a qualitative study that followed 20 participants over the course of three years. These participants were community educators in a sexual minority awareness program and identified as heterosexual allies. From their data, they generated a five-stage developmental model based most closely on Gelberg and Chojnacki's (1995) model of heterosexual ally identity development and Hardiman and Jackson's (1992) model of racial identity development. The first developmental stage identified by the Getz and Kirkley is the entry phase, which is largely synonymous with Gelberg and Chojnacki's (1995) awareness stage. The authors described the next phase of

development as “fear of the unknown,” as their participants engaged in introspection about their motivations, purpose, and anxieties surrounding being a heterosexual educator about sexual minority issues. The next stage described by their heterosexual participants was an acknowledgement of their own heterosexual privilege. As the participants went through the educator program, they were faced with information that challenged their initially held heterosexist beliefs and values (Getz & Kirkley, 2003).

The next developmental phase described by Getz and Kirkley (2003) was engagement. This stage was characterized as an increasing security of the participants’ identity as heterosexual allies. Finally, the authors described the final stage as “conscious self-identification as allies/advocates.” They explained that this stage was identified by an increased internal self-congruity of identity for the participants as well as a deepening sense of connection with the other educators that participated in this study (Getz & Kirkley, 2003). Similar to Gelberg and Chojnacki’s (1995) pride stage, this developmental state was also characterized by the participants’ increasing sense of pride about their identity as heterosexual allies. The limitations of Getz and Kirkley’s heterosexual ally identity development model are similar to the limitations of Gelberg and Chojnacki’s (1995) model in that it describes a linear path of development that does not give consideration to the complex dynamics of identity development or to the influence of environmental factors on a person’s identity development.

Conclusion

The existing research and models of heterosexual identity development and heterosexual ally identity development provide helpful insights into how heterosexuals might develop Anti-Heterosexist Identities. In order to conceptualize previous work as it relates to how I am conceptualizing Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development among heterosexuals, I have reviewed

models of heterosexual identity development (Mohr, 2002; Simoni & Walters, 2001; Worthington et al., 2002) as well as conceptualizations and models of heterosexual ally identity development (Asta & Vacha-Haase, 2012; Dillon et al., 2004; DiStefano, 2000; Duhigg, Rostosky, & Gray, 2010; Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995; Getz & Kirkley, 2003; Washington & Evans, 1991). Although many of these models are somewhat simplistic and linear (Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995; Simoni & Walters, 2001; Washington & Evans, 1991), others models pay heed to the complex and fluid nature of Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development among heterosexual people (Worthington et al., 2002 and Mohr, 2002).

One major disparity in the literature is the lack of attention on how heterosexuals process their own sexual identity, their awareness of sexual orientations other than heterosexuality, and how they manage reactions to learning about heterosexual privilege. Mohr's (2002) proposed developmental model of heterosexual identity for therapist trainees does pay some heed to these issues, but few scholars pay attention to these specific processes besides to say that heterosexuals usually do not think of themselves as having a sexual orientation identity (Mueller & Cole, 2009; Simoni & Walters, 2001). Another major problem in the literature is the lack of attention paid to overlaying diverse identities, particularly racial identities. Among the reviewed literature, only Asta and Vacha-Haase (2012) paid any meaningful attention to the intersection of racial identity with heterosexual ally identity. Specifically, participants of color in this study noted that their racial identity added a layer of complexity to their ally identity development process as compared to the white participants. This lack of attention to racial identity underscores the need to elicit data from a participant sample that is not overly saturated with white participants.

Clearly, Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development is critical for heterosexual counseling psychologists who have a desire to develop a healthy, cohesive identity that resists individual

heterosexism in their personal and professional life (Asta & Vacha-Haase, 2012; Mohr, 2002; Worthington et al., 2002). Simply stating that one is against heterosexism and oppressive systems that marginalize persons who are not heterosexual is not sufficient because this attitude avoids the acknowledgement and management of heterosexual privilege (Asta & Vacha-Haase, 2012 and Smith, Officer, & Shin, 2012). As Asta and Vacha-Haase reason, a heterosexual counselor stating that they are affirming of sexual minority people often gives them a false sense that they can do no wrong to sexual minority populations, which gives them an excuse to not examine their own actions and assumptions more critically. These researchers urge heterosexual counseling psychologists to adopt an antiheteronormative paradigm. I propose that antiheteronormativity is one important aspect of anti-heterosexism, which describes the deliberate opposition of heterosexism, which in turn includes opposition of heterosexual discrimination against sexual minority people, awareness and opposition against heterosexual privilege, and challenging heteronormativity. As is explained in the multitude of heterosexual identity development models (Mohr, 2002; Simoni & Walters, 2001; Worthington et al., 2002) and ally development models (Asta & Vacha-Haase, 2012; Dillon et al., 2004; DiStefano, 2000; Duhigg, Rostosky, & Gray, 2010; Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995; Getz & Kirkley, 2003; Washington & Evans, 1991), anti-heterosexist identity development is a complex, multilayered process.

However, less is known about the catalysts to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. Namely, what factors instigate and contribute towards a heterosexual person's movement through the developmental process? Among the literature that I reviewed, multiple researchers identified close, interpersonal relationships as a crucial factor in heterosexual ally identity development (Asta & Vacha-Haase, 2012; DiStefano et al., 2000; Duhigg, Rostosky, & Gray, 2010). This

literature influenced the development of my study because it highlights the problematic nature of heterosexism for everyone, including counseling psychologists, and provides a body of research that explores the many different facets of heterosexual anti-heterosexist identity development. The reviewed literature provides a foundation for exploring how cross-sexuality friendships might influence anti-heterosexual identity development among heterosexual counseling psychologists in doctoral programs. This point leads into the next two sections of this chapter that focus on what friendships are and what friendships between heterosexual people and sexual minority individuals look like, what effects they have, and how they are ultimately meaningful.

Friendship

Before attending to the topic of cross-sexuality friendships, it is important to first explain the concept of friendship more generally in order to establish a framework for better understanding this construct. In this section, I will review a working definition of friendship and describe what specific components encompass friendships. I will conclude by reviewing literature on the topic of friendships across different dimensions of diversity—specifically, when a friendship dyad is formed between someone in a dominant group with someone in a minority group.

Definition of Friendship

Friendship is a term that is used widely, yet its meaning is often abstract and may change in specific definition across cultures (Hruschka, 2010). Interdisciplinary literature reviews by Hruschka and Hays (1998) define friendships as voluntary interpersonal, interdependent relationships characterized by reciprocal closeness, trust, helping, and commitment. In a multidisciplinary literature review by Hruschka offered a description of common characteristics found within friendships along the dimensions of behavior, psychology, and physiology. The

author explains that although not much is known about friendship from a physiological perspective, brain activation, oxytocin, dopamine, and cortisol have been theorized to play a role in biological responses to friendship (Hruschka, 2010). From a behavioral perspective, the author explains, friends often engage in mutually beneficial behaviors such as helping, sharing, and gift giving. Friends also tend to spend a significant amount of time together, although the amount of time and frequency of contact may vary widely. Hruschka also explains that friends may engage in rituals that express their commitment to the friend relationship. These rituals, he explains, are observed across cultures and include everything from blood-brotherhood practices among farmers in Zambia to children in the United States exchanging friendship bracelets. Finally, Hruschka (2010) explains that friends are observed to give each other what are known as “Duchenne” smiles. In a study of the ability of people to make Duchenne smiles, Gunnery, Hall, and Ruben (2012) define these smiles as being smiles of enjoyment and a nonverbal communication of positive emotion. This, the researchers explained, is in contrast to “fake” smiles that are determined by the use of different muscles than “genuine” Duchenne smiles. For example, with Duchenne smiles, there tends to be more narrowing of the eyes and wrinkling of the skin around the eyes.

From a psychological standpoint, Hruschka (2010) explains that friends feel certain degrees of closeness, love, and commitment towards their friends. The concept of closeness is of particular importance for this study for two primary reasons. First, participants in this study will be recruited on the basis of “close” friendships, rather than just any type of friendship. Secondly, Hruschka explains that the concept of closeness is generally of particular importance to people living in the U.S., which is significant because participants from the U.S. will be primarily utilized. In an effort to quantify close friendship, Arunkumar and Dharmangadan (2001) created

the Friendship Intensity Measurement Scale (FIMS) which is a 40-item scale that utilizes Likert ratings on the dimensions of viability (i.e., respect, trust, and acceptance), support, intimacy, and harmony. In a social psychology study of levels of friendship, Rybak and McAndrew (2006) found that their U.S. participants rated best friends with higher levels of intimacy and intensity than general friendships, and rated general friendships as being more intense and intimate than relationships with acquaintances. This literature seems to suggest that people make clear distinctions between different categories of friends on the basis of closeness.

Hruschka (2010) asserts that reciprocity is another defining characteristic of friendships. The author explains that friendships can be very satisfying because of the trust, support, and feelings of closeness that this type of relationship fosters, and an important dynamic is that both members of the friendship dyad are contributing roughly an equal amount of the friendship behaviors described above. The author goes on to explain that the reciprocity may grant satisfaction and allow the friends to assume that the benefits generated in the friendship will be available unconditionally. Olk and Gibbons (2010) conducted a study of friendship reciprocity among adult professionals which confirms Hruschka's assertions. In their study, they found that their participants generally assumed that their friendships would be reciprocal.

Literature reviews on friendship grounded in social psychology, sociology, and other social sciences state that friendships tend to occur between people who are more alike than dissimilar (Blieszner & Adams, 1992; Fehr, 1996; O'Connor, 1992). A review by Manstead and Miles (1999) also concurred that friendships are generally created between people who are similar. They theorized that friendships, particularly among psychological and sociological models, tend to occur across individuals with compatible dispositions, goals, shared experiences, and social structures (Manstead & Miles, 1999). Therefore, friendships that occur across various

dimensions of diversity such as race, disability status, and sexual orientation appear to be significant phenomena due to the interpersonal challenges that arise from dissimilar identities (Galupo, 2009). Some scholars have been interested in examining how friendships across different dimensions of diversity contribute to social justice consciousness and causes (Jamieson et al., 2009; Odell, Korgen & Wang, 2005; Poteat, Espelage, & Koenig, 2009; Okech & Champe, 2008). In the next subsection, I will review literature that examines friendships that occur across dimensions of diversity.

Friendship across Dimensions of Diversity

Before reviewing friendships that form between heterosexual individuals and sexual minority individuals, I would like to first review literature that exists in general about friendships across different dimensions of diversity. As previously indicated, friendship more commonly occurs between people who share similar backgrounds, such as race, gender, socioeconomic status, disability status, and sexual orientation (Galupo, 2009; Manstead & Miles, 1999). A study by Galupo explored close friendships across race, gender, and sexual orientation. The researchers conducted a comparative analysis by utilizing 1009 (women, $n = 746$ and men, $n = 263$) self-identified heterosexual participants and compared the data with participant data from a previous study (Galupo, 2007) of sexual minorities (lesbian women, $n = 187$; gay men, $n = 53$; bisexual women, $n = 99$; bisexual men, $n = 66$). Their analysis revealed that friendships across gender are more common than cross-sexuality or cross-racial friendships. Sexual minority participants were more likely to engage in cross-sexuality friendships than heterosexual participants. Finally, white participants were more likely to have friendships with other white people, with sexual minority white participants having the most same-race friendships. However, among sexual minority participants that also held a racial minority identity, cross-racial friendships were about as

equally likely as same-race friendships. Overall, Galupo found that bisexual men and women were more likely to hold friendships across the dimensions of gender, race, and sexual orientation.

Reeder (2003) conducted a study to learn about how gender role orientation influences same and cross-gender friendship formation. They used a sample of 279 predominantly white university students and administered the Bem Sex Role Inventory as well as a questionnaire measuring cross-gender friendship formation. The researchers found that participants with a more feminine orientation tended to form more cross-gender friendships than masculine or androgynous participants. This result was found from more feminine-oriented female participants and more feminine-oriented male participants. These study findings reinforce the concept that friendships primarily form between those who belong to similar identities, such as race or sexual orientation (Blieszner & Adams, 1992; Fehr, 1996; O'Connor, 1992). There are very little data available on the friendships between able-bodied and disabled individuals, besides to suggest that these friendships are typically very rare (Absjornslett, 2011).

More research is available concerning cross-racial friendships. A study by Carmago, Stinebrickner, and Stinebrickner (2010) examined cross-racial friendships in college. They conducted a longitudinal study using two college cohorts who were surveyed 10 to 12 times yearly. This research revealed the relationship dynamics of students who had a roommate of a different race. These researchers found that having a roommate of a different race sometimes led to the formation of a cross-racial friendship. Their results revealed that as participants underestimated their friendship compatibility with people of other race, this belief decreased as cross-racial relationships formed. Additionally, the researchers found that having a cross-racial friendship increased the likelihood that an individual would be more likely to form more cross-

racial friendships in the future (Carmago, Stinebrickner, & Stinebrickner, 2010).

To better understand why friendships across various dimensions of diversity form in spite of the bias to form friends with people who are similar, it is helpful to understand the dynamics between diversity and variables impacting friendship formation. Several researchers have found that racially diverse environments do not necessarily foster the formation of cross-racial friendships. For example, Stein, Post, and Rinden (2000) examined racial attitudes towards the Hispanic population by whites. The researchers conducted a statewide telephone survey of 842 adults in Texas, which was a location selected because the research participants were more likely to have exposure to the Hispanic population. The researchers observed a complex set of interactions that occurred between contact with Hispanic people and racial hostility. The researchers concluded that positive or negative social effects resulting from contact with the Hispanic population largely had to do with the context of the social interactions. The context of the interpersonal exchanges between white individuals and Hispanic individuals could lead to either a reduction or an increase in racial hostility, depending on whether or not the white people reacted defensively (Stein, Post, & Rinden, 2000).

Gerbasí and Greene (2010) similarly found that exposure to racially diverse populations alone did not foster positive interpersonal relationships and friendships. These researchers conducted a study of racial diversity trust utilizing data from a randomized national telephone sample. They used 24,917 of the telephone survey responses from white participants and conducted a multivariate analysis for their sample. Their analysis revealed several significant points. First, they found among white individuals, as racial diversity of the social environment increases, the likelihood of expressing generalized trust decreases. Whites who lived in closer proximity with other racial groups tended to express higher levels of racial hostility and

prejudice and lower levels of trust. The researchers found that white individuals with a college education were significantly more likely to have racially diverse friend. Based on their data, the researchers hypothesized that friendships work to reduce affective racial prejudice and promote generalized trust through two primary mechanisms. First, cross-racial friendships facilitate the white person in thinking of their friend as an individual, rather than as a racial group. Secondly, these friendships facilitate the reduction of negative group stereotypes by exposure to their racial minority friend. The researchers postulated from their analysis that the increased trust by a white person towards their racial minority person that was facilitated by the cross-racial friendship generalized to the broad racial group (Gerbasi & Greene, 2010).

When friendships across dimensions of diversity do occur, they tend to foster positive interactions, particularly for the dominant group member. An international, interdisciplinary literature review by Okech and Champe (2008) examined cross-racial friendships and what effect they have on white therapists who work with racially diverse clients and peers. Their review found that white counselors who engaged in cross-racial friendships were less likely to face social adjustment issues, and more likely to function optimally in a racially diverse social setting. The authors posited from their review that the benefits generated from counselors holding cross-racial friendships generalized to future interpersonal interactions. Specifically, these counselors were more apt to perform competently with clients and peers of color (Okech & Champe, 2008). Clearly, there seem to be significant benefits resulting from cross-racial friendship based upon this review.

Along the lines of Carmago, Stinebrickner, and Stinebrickner's (2010) study on cross-racial friendships in college, Odell, Korgen, and Wang (2005) conducted a quantitative study of the factors that led to cross-racial friendship formation among university students. These

researchers surveyed students in general education courses. Their sample consisted of 505 participants, with 70.1% white participants, 14.1% black participants, and 15.8% Hispanic participants. Their analysis revealed that simply recruiting people of color into the student body or implementing diversity courses at a university or college were not sufficient to reduce prejudice among white students and foster healthy relationships between white students and students of color. These researchers argued that the implementation of extracurricular activity that promoted common goals between white students and students of color were found to be more effective to reduce prejudice and promote friendship (Odell, Korgen, & Wang, 2005).

In an apparent contradiction to Stein, Post, and Rinden's (2000) assertion that being in a diverse environment alone does not lead to cross-racial friendships, a qualitative study by Williams (2010) found that white students coming from more racially diverse high schools were more likely to form friendships with racial minority people later in their life. This researcher utilized 14 female participants with a variety of racial identities and conducted two sessions of semi-structured interviews on the topic of cross-racial friendships. Although these data do not corroborate Carmago, Stinebrickner, and Strinebrickner's (2010) findings that being in a diverse environment does not lead to cross-racial friendships, it does not explain why cross-racial friendships are formed in racially diverse high schools. Williams indicated that participants in this study participated in extracurricular activities together and experienced classroom organization that was racially integrated, rather than segregated. Therefore, the level of trust or hostility towards people of color that a white person may experience in a racially diverse environment may be strongly influenced by the social organization of that environment.

Conclusion

It is clear that the majority of friendships tend to form across lines of similarity (Blieszner

& Adams, 1992; Fehr, 1996; Manstead & Miles, 1999; O'Connor, 1992). Friendships occurring across different dimensions of diversity are much more uncommon. Reasons for this among people in dominant groups (i.e., heterosexuals, men, whites) may include the perception of incompatibility (Carmago, Stinebrickner; Stinebrickner, 2010), a perceived lack of similarity and common goals (Carmago, Stinebrickner; Odell, Korgen, & Wang 2005; Stinebrickner, 2010), lack of trust in a minority group (Gerbasi & Greene, 2010), and prejudice or hostility against a minority group (Gerbasi & Greene, 2010). People belonging to privileged groups seem to be afforded more latitude in the friendships that they choose and hold greater flexibility to choose friendship among similar identities. When friendships do form between majority and minority group members, the privileged person seems to be significantly impacted by the relationship. The friendships tend to reduce prejudice and bias while increasing empathy towards dissimilar groups (Galupo, 2009; Okech & Champe, 2008; Weinstock & Bond, 2008). In the next section, I will focus on the friendships between heterosexuals and sexual minority people, which is a major emphasis of this study. Areas of challenge and benefit, many of which are similar to the literature on cross-racial and cross-gender friendships, are explored.

Cross-Sexuality Friendships

Among heterosexuals who identify themselves as “allies” to the gender and sexual minority community, cross-sexuality friendship is often cited as a major contributor towards their development into allies (Asta & Vacha-Haase, 2012; Larson, 2012; DiStefano et al., 2000; Duhigg, Rostosky; Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995; Gray, 2010). In the following section, I will provide a review of the literature pertaining to cross-sexuality friendships. From this literature, I discovered four salient areas that I will also review: (a) unique characteristics and dynamics found within cross-sexuality friendships, (b) challenges found in cross-sexuality friendships, (c)

potential benefits that occur in cross-sexuality friendships, and (d) how cross-sexuality friendships relate to heterosexual anti-heterosexist identity development. The purpose of this review is to provide important background information and context for understanding cross-sexuality friendships as it relates to this study.

Cross-Sexuality Friendship Literature

In this subsection, I will review relevant literature pertaining to cross-sexuality friendships. I will review the following: (a) Ueno's (2010) longitudinal study of cross-sexuality friendships among high schoolers, (b) Rubin's (1985) qualitative study of heterosexual female and gay male friendships, (c) Tillmann-Healy's (2001) ethnographic narrative on heterosexual female and gay male friendships, (d) Grigoriou's (2004) interpretive phenomenology on heterosexual female and gay male friendships, (e) Shepperd, Coyle, and Hegarty's (2010) qualitative study on heterosexual female and gay male friendships, (f) Muraco's (2006) qualitative study on heterosexual female/gay male and heterosexual men/lesbian women friendships, (g) O'Boyle and Thomas's (1996) qualitative study of the friendship between heterosexual women and lesbians, (h) Weinstock and Bond's (2008) mixed-methods study of lesbian women and heterosexual female friendship, (i) and Galupo's (2007) mixed-methods study on friendships between lesbian women and heterosexual women and bisexual women and heterosexual women.

Ueno (2010) studied cross-sexuality friendships among adolescents to discover patterns of friendship. The researcher utilized survey-based and interview-based longitudinal data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health. From this study, the researcher utilized the data from 2552 students across two large high schools, one with predominantly white students and the other with a racially diverse student body. The researcher found a similar

number of sexual minority students in both schools, although reported sexual minority friendships were reported to be higher in the predominantly white school. Although cross-sexuality friendships were significantly more uncommon for heterosexual students to hold, among those that did have a sexual minority friend, the participant was more likely to be female. Ueno found that among their participants, heterosexuals were more likely to befriend sexual minority peers that had other similar backgrounds, such as socioeconomic status, religious identity, and academic aptitude. Among heterosexual participants who had a sexual minority friend, they were more likely to come from a white background with college-educated parents and a high academic aptitude (Ueno, 2010).

Among the literature on cross-sexuality friendships, perhaps the most frequently documented are the friendships between gay men and heterosexual women. An early work by Rubin (1985), a psychotherapist, examined the friendships between 300 men and women ages 25 to 55 through qualitative interviews. Her primary goal for this study was to examine the friendships between men and women in general, and how these friendships are devalued in favor of romantic relationships. Within her investigation, data about cross-sexuality friendships between gay men and heterosexual women emerged. These participants reported equal enjoyment of their friendships based upon shared activities together and shared intimacy. The participants in cross-sexuality friendships stated that they were able to find companionship in each other that they were not able to find with heterosexual men. The female participants in this study reported that they were able to be intimate with their gay male friends in ways that were similar to their female friends. The gay male participants reported that they felt respected in their friendships with heterosexual women, which was in contrast to feeling disrespected and marginalized by heterosexual men. Rubin (1985) concluded that heterosexual women and gay

men were “natural allies” because they are able to find companionship and avoid the marginalization that they would typically experience in a friendship with a heterosexual male.

Tillmann-Healy (2001) conducted a narrative ethnography from the perspective of the field of interpersonal communications. Her study was based upon her experiences with the friendships between herself and the members of a gay male softball team. She reported that she became a part of this community because her heterosexual male fiancé was able to join this team, despite his sexual orientation. She described her friendships with these gay men as being more similar to her friendships with heterosexual men than to her heterosexual female friends. Specifically, she stated that her friendships lacked warmth and intimacy and were typically more playful and active. She described her interactions with her gay male friends as sometimes being sexually charged, further stating that some of the exchanges she experienced went past a platonic friendship and into a sexual relationship. The researcher concluded by asserting that, based upon her friendships with the men on the gay male softball team and her experiences in the gay community over three years, that heterosexual women can act as a “bridge” between gay and heterosexual communities because heterosexual women lack apprehensions about masculinity (Tillmann-Healy, 2001).

To illustrate some common characteristics of cross-sexuality friendships, Grigoriou (2004) conducted an interpretive phenomenology of the friendships between gay men and heterosexual women. The participants in this study ranged in age from 21 to 42 with friendships that had durations from 14 months to 15 years. Participants were allowed to self-define what friendship “closeness” was, and the researcher found that heterosexual women and gay male participants defined closeness very similarly, explaining the importance of understanding, support, trust, self-disclosure, openness, reciprocity, and availability (Grigoriou, 2004). In

contrast to cross-gender friendships between heterosexual men and women where males tend to be more instrumental and females tend to be more intimate and expressive (Nardi & Sherrod, 1994), Grigoriou's study suggested that the friendships between gay men and heterosexual women do not have this difference and seem to have a balance of instrumentality, expressiveness, and intimacy.

Participants in Grigoriou's (2004) study portrayed their cross-sexuality friendship as somehow more meaningful or special than their same-sexuality friendships. Related to this point may be the finding that friendships between gay men and heterosexual women were generally labeled with kinship terminology (Grigoriou, 2004). For instance, some gay males characterized their female heterosexual friends as a surrogate or extended family member. Particularly for the gay men in this study, this finding highlights the importance of a "family of choice" that plays an important role in the lives of many sexual minority people (Grossman, D'Augelli, & Hershberger, 2000; Muraco, 2006; Stacey, 2005). Heterosexual women in this study utilized kinship terms for their gay male friends to explain the important roles that they played in their lives and to highlight the strong feelings they held for their friend (Grigoriou, 2004).

More recently, Shepperd, Coyle, and Hegarty (2010) conducted qualitative interviews of seven friendship dyads between heterosexual women and gay men, aged 21 to 64, in the United Kingdom. Based upon their findings, these authors overwhelmingly found support for the notion that the cross-sexuality friendships between gay men and heterosexual women typically lack sexual tension. The authors noted the significance of this trend, explaining that cross-gender relationships have the societal heterosexist assumption of romantic or sexual overtones. The authors explain that this was desirable for the heterosexual women in their study because they could have a friendship with a man that lacked sexual tension. Also of significance from their

analysis was the trend that the heterosexual female participants excluded their gay male friends from masculine social norms. On the other hand, the heterosexual female participants did not challenge their gay male friends' use of sexist language (Shepperd, Coyle, & Hegarty, 2010).

Expanding from just studying the cross-sexuality friendships between gay men and heterosexual women, Muraco (2006) explored the friendships between heterosexual women and gay men and the friendships between heterosexual men and lesbian women. This researcher conducted a qualitative, interview-based analysis on 23 friendship dyads. Ages of the participants ranged from 21 to 64 years, while the racial makeup included 59% white, 19% Asian, 17% Latino, and 4% African American participants. Muraco found that heterosexual women were more likely to view sexual minority people in a positive light, while heterosexual men were more likely to view sexual minority people more negatively. The researcher also found that participants experienced culturally-bound attitudes from others that assumed that friendships between men and women are fundamentally romantic or have the potential to develop into a romantic relationship. Among participants, the women in this study were expected to be nurturing and emotionally supportive while the men were expected to fill a provider role with material assistance (Muraco, 2006).

One key finding of Muraco's (2006) study was that participants mutually created intentional familial ties to each other. These family ties were mutual and were expected to be permanent between the friends. Notably, some of the gay male participants expressed worry that their friendships with their heterosexual female friend may not be as permanent as they would like, fearing that she would drift away from the friendship if she got married. The lesbian women in this study did not express the same concerns regarding their heterosexual male friends. The heterosexual female participants expressed a willingness to become an egg donor and pregnancy

surrogate so that their gay male friend could become a parent. This willingness also carried an assumption that the female heterosexual participants accepted that gay men make appropriate parents, which contradicts social heteronormativity. The same trend was not found between lesbian women and heterosexual male friends (Muraco, 2006).

To address the lack of research on the friendships between lesbian women and heterosexual women, O'Boyle and Thomas (1996) conducted a qualitative analysis of the experience of these types of friendships. These researchers ran two focus groups comprised of predominantly white women, one comprised of lesbian women and the other comprised of heterosexual women. Overall, they found that lesbian women and heterosexual women can form strong friendships together. However, the lesbian women participants indicated that they often feel as if their female heterosexual friend could not fully understand the struggles of being a sexual minority person. Lesbian participants also often felt uncomfortable discussing their romantic relationships to their heterosexual female friend. Their analysis suggested that heterosexual women and lesbian women must struggle with differing identities across the dimension of sexual orientation, which serves as a significant area of dissimilarity. The researchers concluded by asserting that heterosexual women and lesbian women must overcome their significant sense of difference. They state that heterosexual women must confront their personal heterosexism while lesbian women should focus on shared identities and interests (O'Boyle & Thomas, 1996).

Weinstock and Bond (2008) also studied the friendships between lesbian women and heterosexual women utilizing a mixed-methods study. The researchers utilized 47 predominantly white women to offer their perceptions of cross-sexuality friendships. Participants in this study filled out two surveys over the course of two years. The researchers then examined participant

responses for significant themes in the data. The researchers found several positive outcomes for this type of cross-sexuality friendship. First, participants experienced several socio-emotional benefits, including reciprocal appreciation, engaging interpersonal interactions, honest communication, and absence of sexual tension from the viewpoint of lesbian participants. Participants in this study also identified several learning opportunities resulting from their friendship, including general education about LGBT issues and learning about the LGBT subculture. Lesbian respondents in this study identified societal benefits resulting from their friendship, including breaking down personal and social barriers and building community and creating LGBT allies (Weinstock & Bond, 2008).

Weinstock and Bond (2008) also provided negative aspects that occur from this type of cross-sexuality friendship. To the lesbian participants in this study, they felt that their heterosexual female friends did not have an adequate understanding or have a deep enough appreciation for their sexual orientation, both from the standpoint of day-to-day interactions that are assumed to be heteronormative and also from the larger scope of systemic heterosexism. They further felt negatively about the heterosexism and heterosexual privilege they felt from within the context of their cross-sexuality friendship, stating that they often felt “othered” and felt responsible to educate their heterosexual friend about lesbian-centered issues. Moreover, sexual tension was another major area of contention. The lesbian women in this study reported being more “on guard” about their behavior, specifically being concerned that their behaviors would be misconstrued as romantic or sexual intentions towards their heterosexual female friend. The lesbian participants indicated that they experienced a significant level of anxiety about being ostracized or devalued by their heterosexual friend’s social network or community. Specifically, these women were concerned that they might be excluded from attending social events with their

heterosexual friend because of a lack of acceptance from that social environment (Weinstock & Bond, 2008).

Galupo (2007) conducted a mixed methods study on the close friendships between lesbian and heterosexual women and bisexual women and heterosexual women. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 52 years old, while friendship length ranged from 1 to 17 years. The researchers utilized 26 white participants, 6 African Americans, 2 Asian Americans, 2 Pacific Islanders, 2 Latinas, 1 Afghan, 1 Jamaican, and 1 Native American; 10 of the 20 cross-sexuality friendship dyads were also cross-racial. The researcher found that sexual minority participants were significantly more likely to have other cross-sexuality friendships than heterosexuals. Additionally, between bisexual and heterosexual female friends, the bisexual person's sexual identity was often ignored. This was in contrast to the friendships between heterosexual women and lesbian women, where the lesbian's sexual identity was explicitly acknowledged. However, when a bisexual female participant had a same-sex partner, their sexual identity was more visible to their heterosexual friend, and seemed to operate more like the friendships between lesbian women and heterosexual women (Galupo, 2007).

Now that I have reviewed the relevant research available on cross-sexuality friendships, I would like to review for salient areas of cross-sexuality friendships that I believe are important for the context of this study on cross-sexuality friendships influencing heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development: (a) characteristics and dynamics, (b) challenges, (c) benefits, and (d) cross-sexuality friendships and heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.

Cross-Sexuality Friendship Characteristics and Dynamics

As previously stated in the preceding section, friendships tend to form between people who are more similar than dissimilar (Blieszner & Adams, 1992; Fehr, 1996; O'Connor, 1992).

Therefore, it stands to reason that friendships that form along dimensions of difference have unique qualities. Cross-sexuality friendships generally seem to occur with lower frequency as do other friendships across dimensions of diversity (Galupo, 2009; Manstead & Miles, 1999). Ueno's (2010) study of high school adolescents corroborates this assertion. In this study, the researcher found a similar number of sexual minority students in both schools, although reported sexual minority friendships were reported to be higher in the predominantly white school. Although cross-sexuality friendships were significantly more uncommon for heterosexual students to hold, among those that did have a sexual minority friend, the participant was more likely to be female (Ueno, 2010).

This phenomenon may be at least partially explained by Muraco (2006), who observed a gender difference in the way heterosexual women and heterosexual men view sexual minority people. The heterosexual women in this study were more likely to evaluate sexual minority people more positively, while heterosexual men were more likely to evaluate sexual minority people more negatively (Muraco, 2006). Ueno's (2010) analysis of high school adolescents found that cross-sexuality friendships are more likely to occur among white individuals with a higher level of education and a higher socioeconomic status. Another important factor that influenced the formation of cross-sexuality friendships among adolescents was parental influence and socialization that was affirming of sexual minority people (Ueno, 2010).

To illustrate some common characteristics of cross-sexuality friendships, Grigoriou (2004) conducted an interpretive phenomenology of the friendships between gay men and heterosexual women. In contrast to cross-gender friendships between heterosexual men and women where males tend to be more instrumental and females tend to be more intimate and expressive (Nardi & Sherrod, 1994), Grigoriou's study suggested that the friendships between

gay men and heterosexual women do not have this difference and seem to have a balance of instrumentality, expressiveness, and intimacy.

Participants in Grigoriou's (2004) study defined their friendship with kinship terminology, placing their cross-sexuality friendships at a higher level of importance than their same-sexuality friendships. Also of significance from this study was the finding that the heterosexual female participants found themselves in a position of having to disclose that their cross-sexuality friendship was not romantic in nature, which often put the gay male friend in the position of revealing his sexual orientation to his heterosexual female friend's family. Cross-sexuality friendships also create unique dynamics concerning how others view the friendship. For both gay male and heterosexual female participants, the romantic partners typically viewed the cross-sexuality friendship positively. The heterosexual women in this study also stated that they were labeled as "fag hag"—typically by people who were not very interpersonally close to either member of the friendship dyad—although they did not usually understand this phenomenon as being a negative experience (Grigoriou, 2004).

Cross-Sexuality Friendship Challenges

In addition to the unique characteristics and dynamics of cross-sexuality friendships as described above, these types of friendships also tend to create specific types of challenges for both members of the friendship dyad. A significant struggle for the sexual minority friend tends to be issues with heterosexism, sexual tension, and a lack of understanding of sexual minority issues from the heterosexual friend. O'Boyle and Thomas's (1996) research indicated that lesbian women often feel as if their female heterosexual friend cannot comprehend the challenges of being a lesbian. These researchers emphasize that both heterosexual women and lesbian women must struggle with their differing identities across the dimension of sexual orientation, which

serves as a significant area of dissimilarity between them. The results from Grigoriou's (2004) qualitative analysis echo this particular area of challenge, with gay male participants complaining that their female heterosexual friends sometimes can't understand gay male culture.

Weinstock and Bond's (2008) mixed methods study outlined several conflicts that occurred within these cross-sexuality friendships. The lesbian participants in this study felt that their heterosexual female friends did not have an adequate understanding or have a deep enough appreciation for their lesbian identities. The participants affirmed that this was true from the level of daily interactions to the wider scope of heterosexism. The lesbian participants felt stressed and "othered" from their heterosexual female friend's heterosexual privilege, heterosexism, and ignorance about lesbian issues (Weinstock & Bond, 2008).

Another area of challenge is that of sexual tension within the cross-sexuality friendship. Referring again to Weinstock and Bond's (2008) study of the friendships between heterosexual and lesbian women, sexual tension was a major area of contention. The lesbian women in this study reported being more "on guard" about their behavior, specifically being concerned that their behaviors would be misconstrued as romantic or sexual intentions towards their heterosexual female friend. Finally, cross-sexuality friendships experience difficulties originating from social situations or specific people outside of the friendship dyad. Weinstock and Bond's lesbian participants indicated that they experienced a significant level of anxiety about being ostracized or devalued by their heterosexual friend's social network or community. Specifically, these women were concerned that they might be excluded from attending social events with their heterosexual friend because of a lack of acceptance from that social environment (Weinstock & Bond, 2008).

Another complication may arise from cross-sexuality friendships that are also cross-

gender friendships, as elucidated by Muraco's (2006) qualitative analysis of friendships across gender and sexual orientation. The results of this study found that participants experienced culturally-bound attitudes from others that assumed that friendships between men and women are fundamentally romantic or have the potential to develop into a romantic relationship.

Grigoriou's (2004) study of the friendships between heterosexual women and gay men seem to corroborate these findings. Specifically, the heterosexual participant's family would often assume she was in a romantic heterosexual relationship with her gay male friend. This phenomenon added an additional layer of social complexity to the friendship and put the gay male friend in the position of deciding whether to come out to his friend's family in order to clear up any incorrect assumptions about the nature of their relationship (Grigoriou, 2004).

Cross-Sexuality Friendship Benefits

Despite the challenges faced in cross-sexuality friendships, these types of friendships also afford many benefits. Gay male participants in Grigoriou's (2004) qualitative study of cross-sexuality friendships indicated that they enjoyed having heterosexual female friends because it made them feel more connected to the heterosexual world, which they portrayed as a positive experience. These same participants additionally indicated that they valued their friendships with heterosexual women because they found these relationships to be more trusting, honest, dependable, and "deeper" than their friendships with other gay men (Grigoriou, 2004). In contrast, the heterosexual female participants in the same study also valued their relationships with gay men, although for different reasons. They stated that they valued the male perspective and male companionship with their gay friends, because they tended to not experience it with heterosexual male friends. Additionally, they explained that their heterosexual female friends were perceived to "overanalyze" issues and overgeneralize to their own personal experiences,

which they felt that their gay male friends did not do. Rubin (1985), in a qualitative study of heterosexual female and gay male friendships, offered similar observations. This researcher explained that friendships with gay men can be appealing to heterosexual women because gay men typically offer a higher level of intimacy and expressiveness than is typically found with heterosexual men. Additionally, Rubin (1985) illustrated that for heterosexual women, having a gay male friend can give them a male perspective on life while concurrently providing them with an emotionally-connected friendship. This relationship is in contrast to heterosexual women's friendships with heterosexual males, which often do not provide emotional connectedness or friendships with heterosexual females that do not provide a male perspective (Rubin, 1985).

Some cross-sexuality friendships are viewed as being appealing because they lack sexual tension or an expectation of sexual tension. Grigoriou's (2004) heterosexual female participants in particular expressed an appreciation of the lack of sexual pressure with their gay male friends. These participants felt that they were able to attain male friendship without the expectation of a romantic or sexual relationship. Shepperd, Coyle, and Hegarty (2010) offered a review of the literature on the topic of a lack of sexual desire in the friendships between gay men and heterosexual women from a feminist and psychological framework. Their review, in affirmation of Grigoriou's (2004) findings, found that heterosexual women value their friendships with gay men, in part because of the lack of sexual tension that is assumed. The apparent asexuality of these cross-sexuality friendships is challenged by Tillman-Healy's (2001) narrative ethnography of the friendships she formed within a gay male softball team. In it, she indicated that her cross-sexuality friendships were sexually charged, which goes against the majority of existing literature on the topic (Shepperd, Coyle, & Hegarty, 2010). Despite this contradiction, a majority of the literature emphasizes the lack of sexual interaction between heterosexual female and gay

male friendships (Grigoriou, 2004; Shepperd, Coyle, & Hegarty, 2010).

Cross-Sexuality Friendships and Heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development

Another benefit for heterosexual people in cross-sexuality friendships is how these friendships contribute to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. Results from Weinstock and Bond's (2008) study indicated that the challenges faced by heterosexuals in cross-sexuality friendships fostered a deeper appreciation for sexual diversity in general. Galupo's (2009) comparative analysis of cross-sexuality friendships (reviewed in the "Friendship" section) also found that for heterosexuals, the close proximity to sexual minority subculture helped the heterosexual person more directly confront assumptions and stereotypes that they held about this population. Generally, cross-sexuality friendships seem to increase heterosexual people's flexibility in understanding their own personal sexual identity and promote greater sensitivity to sexual minority perspectives (Galupo, 2009). Cross-sexuality friendships may grant many positive learning opportunities for heterosexuals, including exposure to new people and environments. These new experiences often give the heterosexual friend the impetus to examine their own sexuality more closely, which can lead to personal growth around sexual orientation issues (Galupo, 2008 and Weinstock & Bond, 2008).

In order to more fully understand the more specific processes of how cross-sexuality friendship contributes to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development, more research must be conducted. The literature is relatively limited regarding cross-sexuality friendships, while other researchers and authors have mentioned the importance of cross-sexuality friendships for Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development without examining the in-depth, specific processes (Asta & Vacha-Haase, 2012; DiStefano et al., 2000; Duhigg, Rostosky, & Gray, 2010; Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995; Larson, 2012).

Conclusion

Heterosexism is a powerful, oppressive force (Moore, 2008; Peel, 2001; Smith, Oades, & McCarthy, 2012) that can negatively impact the way heterosexual counseling psychologists interact with their peers and clients (Smith, Shin, & Officer, 2012). The literature suggests that even if therapists assert that they are “affirming” towards sexual minority populations, they may still ignore their own individual heterosexism and heterosexual privilege while perpetuating heteronormativity (Asta & Vacha-Haase, 2012; Smith, Shin, & Officer, 2012). Some scholars have endeavored to study heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development in order to better understand how heterosexuals become aware of and process heterosexism, sexual orientation issues, and their own sexual identity as a heterosexual (Getz & Kirley, 2003; Mohr, 2002; Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995; Simoni & Walters, 2001; Washington & Evans, 1991; Worthington et al., 2002). However, many of these conceptual models have not been empirically tested.

Additionally, there has been little attention directed towards the catalysts to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. Some researchers and authors have noted the importance of cross-sexuality friendships in Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development (Asta & Vacha-Haase, 2012; Larson, 2012; Duhigg, Rostosky, & Gray, 2010; DiStefano et al., 2000; Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995), but no study has attempted to examine this process more closely. From the literature on friendship and friendships across different dimensions of diversity, we know that friendship dyads can foster increased trust and lower hostility towards minority group members (Galupo, 2009; Gerbasi & Greene, 2010; Shepperd, Coyle, & Hegarty, 2010; Weinstock & Bond, 2008). Among the literature on cross-sexuality friendships, researchers have found that these types of friendships can encourage the heterosexual person to examine their own heterosexual identity and privilege while increasing sensitivity and awareness of sexual minority issues

(Grigoriou, 2004). This study is important because it generates a theory using a grounded theory methodology of how cross-sexuality friendships among heterosexual counseling psychology doctoral trainees have influenced their Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. By studying this phenomenon, I will fill an important gap in the literature that has ramifications for heterosexuals working with their sexual minority peers and clients.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

The purpose of this study was to examine the friendships between sexual minorities and heterosexuals in counseling psychology doctoral training programs in order to gain an understanding of what effect these close, interpersonal relationships have on the development of Anti-Heterosexist Identities in heterosexual trainees. I examined the experiences of heterosexuals who identify having been in a close friendship with a sexual minority individual during their counseling psychology doctoral program. I also interviewed sexual minority friends about the heterosexual friend in order to gain a different perspective on their friendship. This study is intended to help to answer questions about how close interpersonal cross-sexuality friendships increase awareness, knowledge, and empathy towards sexual minorities. Furthermore, this study is intended to explore the idea that cross-sexuality friendships play an important role in Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development among heterosexuals. The development of Anti-Heterosexist Identities is of direct importance to the field of counseling psychology because it holds significant implications for training, education, and the practice of LGBT-affirmative therapy. I employed a constructivist grounded theory methodological framework in order to answer the research questions and develop a theory about the data collected and analyzed. The methodology was also overlaid with core tenants of critical theory to better encompass the social justice orientation of this study.

This chapter will cover the following areas: (a) research questions, (b) use of qualitative methodology, (c) use of grounded theory, (d) application of critical theory, (e) procedures, (f) data analysis, and (g) rigor.

Research Questions

An important starting point to grounded theory methodology is the elucidation of the research questions (Hays & Woods, 2011). This study attempted to uncover the answers to two broad questions which focused on how the experience of a cross-sexuality friendship in a counseling psychology doctoral program has an affect on the heterosexual person's identity development. First, I asked, (1) by what process do cross-sexuality friendships among doctoral students in counseling psychology programs effect heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development? This process is important because some researchers have noted that cross-sexuality friendships play a significant role in the formation of heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development (Asta & Vacha-Haase, 2012; Duhigg, Rostosky, & Gray, 2010; DiStefano et al., 2000; Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995; Larson, 2012). Secondly, I also wanted to try to explain, (2) what is the general experience of heterosexuals about their cross-sexuality friendships during their counseling psychology doctoral programs? A basic understanding of the cross-sexuality friendship experience was necessary to form the context in which the grounded theory of this phenomenon was created.

Four more specific and focused research questions were also asked. These questions were asked due to their anticipated relevance to the study based upon the literature surrounding the topic. First, (3) how has the heterosexual friend's experience and understanding of heterosexism and heterosexual privilege been influenced as a result of their cross-sexuality friendship? Some studies have indicated that cross-sexuality friendships deepens the appreciation of sexual minority issues among heterosexuals (Weinstock & Bond, 2008), reduces heterosexist bias and prejudice (Galupo, 2009), and fosters personal growth about personal sexual identity (Galupo, 2009; Weinstock & Bond, 2008).

Next, I asked, (4) how (if at all) has the heterosexual friend's perception of their own sexual identity as a heterosexual person changed as a result of their cross-sexuality friendship? As indicated in the literature, heterosexuals who are early in Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development often do not think of themselves as having a sexual orientation (Eliason, 1995; Simoni & Walters, 2001; Sullivan, 1998; Worthington et al., 2002) or that heterosexuality is implied and compulsory (Mohr, 2002). This question was asked to better understand if the cross-sexuality friendship has generated or deepened the understanding of personal sexual identity for the heterosexual person.

Next, I asked, (5) how (if at all) has the heterosexual person's personal, social, and family life have been impacted as a result of their cross-sexuality friendship? If the cross-sexuality friendship has deepened the awareness of heterosexism and heterosexual privilege (Galupo, 2009; Weinstock & Bond, 2008), then the heterosexual person may potentially experience conflict or dissonance against heterosexist values held by family or social circles (Dillon et al., 2004; Mohr, 2002). The exploration of this question yielded important information about how heterosexual people process and integrate new knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors about sexual orientation issues and heterosexual identity into their personal life.

Finally, I asked, (6) how (if at all) has the heterosexual person's professional life and professional identity (i.e., in regards to therapy, supervision, interactions with peers, etc.) been shaped as a result of their cross-sexuality friendship? This question is similar to the preceding question, except with a focus on the heterosexual person's professional life rather than their personal life. Again, a cross-sexuality friendship may deepen the heterosexual person's awareness of their own identity as a heterosexual person, heterosexism, and heterosexual privilege (Galupo, 2009; Weinstock & Bond, 2008), which may influence the heterosexual

person's worldview about sexual orientation issues (Mohr, 2002), thus influencing the way they approach their professional work.

Use of Qualitative Methodology

The purpose of this section is to provide a broad understanding of qualitative research in order to clarify its suitability for answering this study's research questions. First, a brief overview of qualitative methods is provided in order to provide a context for the rationale of the methodology, before shifting the focus to the application of qualitative methods for this study.

While the characteristics of qualitative methods may vary widely and are constantly evolving, there are some characteristics that tend to be more common throughout many qualitative research studies. One prominent characteristic is that data collection for qualitative studies tends to be performed in naturalistic settings. Rather than collecting data in a contrived or laboratory setting, the researcher often interacts with the research participants in the same context or setting that the studied phenomenon is occurring (Creswell, 2007). Next is the concept that the researcher is the main instrument of data collection, rather than using developed questionnaires or other instruments (Hatch, 2002). In some qualitative methodologies, the researcher is believed to be an active participant within the data, rather than an entity completely removed from the data collection process (Oleson, 2005). Next, qualitative research tends to utilize multiple sources of data, such as interviews, focus groups, observations, written documents, or media (Creswell, 2007).

In contrast to the deductive process that quantitative research adheres to, qualitative research is typically inductive (Morrow, 2007). Specifically, qualitative analysis seeks to understand data from a bottom-up approach rather than a top-down approach (Creswell, 2007). The inductive approach leads the researcher through a process of observation and broad

meaning-making, which leads up to more specific and abstract meaning-making. Qualitative research does not seek to test hypotheses based on sets of presuppositions. Rather, it is a process of observing a specific phenomenon and allowing meaning to emerge. Related to the inductive approach, qualitative methods also tend to strongly emphasize the participants' subjective meanings (Boeije, 2010; Creswell, 2007). A balance must also often be struck between upholding participants' meanings and acknowledging the effect of the researcher's biases and values on the research process. More broadly, each qualitative study stems from a specific theoretical framework. These frameworks are diverse (Boeije, 2010) and span many different theoretical paradigms. These paradigms may include (but are not limited to) postpositivism, social constructivism, pragmatism, and advocacy or participatory research. Additionally, there are several interpretive lenses that a qualitative research may adopt, such as postmodernism, feminism, critical theory, queer theory, and disability theory. The different paradigms and analytic orientations may be applied across qualitative methodologies (Creswell, 2007). The specific philosophies and theoretical orientations adopted in this study will be delineated later in this chapter.

The qualitative research process is understood to be malleable or fluid, changing direction depending on how the data collection and analysis process progress (Creswell, 2007). Moreover, the overall qualitative research process tends to be cyclical, especially between data collection and data analysis (Boeije, 2010). In contrast to quantitative traditions, qualitative inquiry often tends to be expansive and holistic, rather than reductionistic (Creswell, 2007). Qualitative researchers often tend to seek out multiple viewpoints, identify the multiple factors involved with the phenomenon, and take into account contextual factors. Again, this is in contrast to quantitative design which is often ideally managed under controlled conditions. Although the

characteristics of qualitative research can vary, the previously outlined characteristics are fairly common. The methods of qualitative analysis may vary widely, but essentially, these lines of inquiry attempt to answer “how” and “what” questions whereas quantitative inquiries attempt to quantify and determine associations (Creswell, 1998).

Use of qualitative methodologies is common across the social sciences and they have become increasingly more common within the field of counseling psychology. Although counseling psychology research is predominantly quantitative, scholars have called for a greater use of qualitative methods in order to expand the diversity of inquiry within the realm of counseling psychology research (Morrow, 2007). Ponterotto (2002) argued that qualitative research methodologies were a “fifth force” in psychology, citing their usefulness in multicultural research. Unfortunately, the majority of psychological research has primarily relied on Eurocentric biased theories, constructs, measures, and other instruments that have characterized those in marginalized groups as being deficient, inferior, or pathological (Sue, 2010). By relying on a postpositivistic research paradigm which emphasizes “objectivism,” biased psychological research has largely ignored contextual factors such as social oppression. As a result of ignoring these critical contextual factors, a large body of psychological research has only served to deepen oppression towards marginalized populations. In contrast, qualitative research by its emphasis on subjectivity and contextualism has the power to address many of these biases directly.

As noted above, quantitative and qualitative research yield different kinds of information, so having a broad range of methodologies allows for greater discovery and dissemination of information. However, it is important for counseling psychologists to have a satisfactory understanding of the qualitative research process before beginning a qualitative study. Creswell

et al. (2007) suggest that counseling psychology researchers begin their research inquiry by outlining their ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology under the framework of a theoretical paradigm. Clearly establishing a philosophical grounding helps to guide the researcher's study design, analysis process, and data interpretation (Morrow, 2007). Each of these parameters for this study will be outlined later in this chapter.

Researchers must also be aware of the limitations of qualitative research in order to determine whether their line of inquiry is appropriate for qualitative methodologies. First, it is understood that qualitative data are grounded in subjectivity and values. The qualitative researcher is often oriented towards the worldview that meaning is derived from subjective experience. Therefore, a positivistic researcher seeking objective analysis of the studied phenomenon will find it difficult to find a suitable qualitative methodology. Qualitative research does not test hypotheses or propositions (Boeije, 2010). Due to the in-depth, descriptive data that are collected, the sample size of qualitative studies is often very small. In comparison, the large sample sizes of quantitative research allows for statements about generalizability. The controlled conditions and environments of quantitative studies more easily allows for conclusions to be derived from the results, whereas qualitative research is typically done naturalistically and the data may be very abstract or inconclusive (Boeije, 2010). It can also be very difficult for qualitative designs to be replicated for the very reason that they are typically not very controlled.

Next, I focus this discussion to the application of qualitative methodology to the current study. Despite the previously mentioned limitations, there are several strengths that qualitative research offers for this line of inquiry. First, qualitative methodologies are a powerful tool in the examination of social justice issues (Morrow, 2007). This study takes a social justice orientation because of the emphasis on heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. As noted in

the previous chapter, heterosexism and heterosexual privilege are harmful to sexual minority populations and heterosexuals alike (Smith, Shin, & Officer, 2012). Therefore, the exploration of how cross-sexuality friendships influence heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development may make a significant contribution to the understanding of how heterosexuals in counseling psychology process and resist issues relating to sexual orientation and heterosexism. Morrow elucidates the utility of qualitative research in the field of counseling psychology in general, stating that it can be used to explore concepts and variables that have not yet been identified or are not easily quantified. Qualitative research can also be used to study topics that have little to no existing research. This study fits well within this criterion—friendships between heterosexuals and sexual minorities and the impact that friendship has on the heterosexual have not been widely studied. The use of qualitative methodology for this study is reasonable because in order to study this phenomenon quantitatively, operationalized, measurable variables would need to be invented based upon the current literature, which is insufficient. A quantitative study in this case would not be helpful because the phenomenon is not yet well enough understood enough to accurately operationalize any variables. Morrow (2007) cautions against prematurely selecting a quantitative methodology when there are no theories available to offer an explanation of the studied phenomenon.

Qualitative research is helpful in the case of this study, because it allows for an in-depth, expansive, open-ended process of exploration (Morrow, 2007) into cross-sexuality friendships. Using qualitative methodology also allows for any new, unexpected information to emerge (Creswell, 1998; Marshall & Rossman, 1999). In contrast, a quantitative study would be unable to capture this type of information because the methodology is close-ended and controlled. Using a quantitative design for this study would be undesirable because it would require the creation of

objectifiable, measurable variables based on poorly understood assumptions. With such little data and theory on cross-sexuality friendships, doing a quantitative analysis on this study would be presumptuous. As noted previously, qualitative research allows the researcher to engage in a contextually-based analysis of complex processes (Morrow, 2007). Friendships may be both very complex and steeped in contextual factors. The use of a quantitative method in for this study would be unwise with such paucity of data and theory surrounding the area of inquiry. By operating from a qualitative standpoint, this study will help to pave the way for more focused and specific studies, which would naturally lead into quantitative research.

Grounded Theory

The application of grounded theory to this research study allows for the ability to answer the research questions. A grounded theory methodology allows for the creation of not just a description of what cross-sexuality friendships look like in counseling psychology programs, but also allows for the construction of an explanation of how these friendships affect heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity formation and development. In this section, general information on this type of methodology is provided in order to make clarify why this method is appropriate for this study.

The main purpose of utilizing the grounded theory methodology is to construct a theory of how cross-sexuality friendships in counseling psychology doctoral programs influence Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. Grounded theory is a qualitative methodology that generates theory from data. It is a way of thinking about data, a way of processing data, and a way of creating theory that emerges from data (Hays & Wood, 2011; Morse, 2009). Grounded theory in general is inductive and aims to develop abstract concepts and specify the relationships between these concepts. Therefore, this methodology assisted in explaining the relationship between how

cross-sexuality friendships may influence heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity development. Grounded theory is also intended to conceptualize the phenomenon in a way that can be understood with abstract terms while providing clearly articulated theory that relates to scope, depth, power, and relevance to the literature (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007).

The general process of grounded theory methodology includes the concurrent procedures of data collection, coding, conceptualization, and theorization (Fassinger, 2005). Data are often gathered through in-depth interviews (Creswell, 2007), which this study utilized. The participant data were then used to generate theory (Fassinger, 2005; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Throughout the data analysis process, there is intentional acknowledgement about the inherent subjectivity of theory generation, which is influenced by the researcher's own reflexivity (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). The process of grounded theory data collection and data analysis are cyclical, and both processes were conducted concurrently. As new data were collected, it was analyzed and the theoretical structure was regularly revised until theoretical saturation was achieved (Fassinger, 2005).

Grounded theory is a relatively new qualitative methodology, and it continues to evolve and branch off into different paradigms. Currently, this methodology includes a collection of different schools of thought. In order to better explain the adherence to constructivist grounded theory for this study, a brief background of the main branches of this methodology will be outlined. Although the purpose of all grounded theory is to generate theory from participant data (Fassinger, 2005), the philosophical grounding and structure vary widely. The first incarnation of grounded theory was first delineated by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Their methodology was developed at least in part to counter the contention that qualitative research was not useful in scientific inquiry (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). As result, Glaser and Strauss's grounded theory

method was more positivistic and assumed that theory can be objectively observed to emerge from data. This method strongly emphasized the concept of “pure” data emergence, to the point where it was only appropriate to do a literature review after the data had been collected, rather than before (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). This was done so that the researcher was less likely to conduct the study in a biased way. Glaser and Strauss eventually split philosophically, with Strauss and Corbin (1998) developing their own highly structured form of grounded theory, while Glaser remained with the initial positivistic version of this methodology. Since that time, other schools of grounded theory have developed, including Straussian grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), situational analysis grounded theory (Clarke, 2003), dimensional analysis grounded theory (Schatzman, 1991), and constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2000).

Next is an explanation of why constructivist grounded theory was selected out of the preceding schools of thought. Crucial to the selection of a specific type of grounded theory is an understanding of researcher’s theoretical underpinnings. Ponterotto (2005) states that counseling psychologist qualitative researchers should clearly outline their study’s epistemology, ontology, , and axiology in order to establish a philosophical grounding for their research design. From a philosophical standpoint, the epistemology of grounded theory in general is typically concerned with the connection between the researcher and his or her participants in order to mutually construct immersive meanings. Its axiology is concerned with communicating the interpretive lens and expectations of the researcher while relating the experiences of the participants (Fassinger, 2005). Ontologically, grounded theory can orient towards positivism (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), constructivism (Charmaz, 2006), or post-modernism (Clarke, 2003). My orientation as a researcher gravitates to the constructivist paradigm, which takes the stance that reality is socially constructed, contextual, and approximated (Hays & Woods, 2011; Fassinger,

2005). In other words, there are many different “truths” that exist and they may vary from person to person (Fassinger, 2005), thus the data collected from participants are inherently subjective. Unlike Glaser’s version of grounded theory, values are assumed to exist and are even welcomed into the research process (Morrow, 2007). Constructivist grounded theory not only acknowledges that subjectivity is a part of reality, but embraces it. Morrow posits that the constructivist-interpretive paradigm is particularly appropriate for counseling psychology because of the “constructivist nature of psychotherapy.”

Constructivist grounded theory assumes that reality is subjective, socially constructed, and contextual (Morrow, 2007), and is thus a good fit for answering this study’s research questions, topic of exploration, and research participants. Specifically, I am concerned with socially constructed concepts, and recognize them as such—friendships, heterosexism, and sexuality. The constructivist approach prioritizes the phenomenon that is being studied above everything else in the research design (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007), which often leads to changes in design as the research process unfolds. This approach postulates that the data collected and the analyses that follow are products of social constructions. Any theory that a researcher develops is rooted in the context of time, place, culture, and situation (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). The researcher is viewed as a crucial component of the research process and it is acknowledged that the theory that the researcher develops will depend on the researcher’s viewpoint. The researcher is also burdened with the task of not only acknowledging the role of values, context, and the overall socially constructed reality upon the research study, but to understand how it has influenced the data collection and analyses.

Although grounded theory is a powerful qualitative methodology and is helpful for theory generation, it is important to understand its limitations. The in-depth, unstructured framework of

constructivist grounded theory lends itself to a cumbersome research process. This methodology's very flexibility has drawn accusations of a lack of rigor within the methodology; however, this is a misunderstanding of the method. Rigor and trustworthiness are simply established in ways that are different from quantitative methods (Charmaz, 2000), which is further described in the Rigor section at the end of this chapter. With the exception of Straussian grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), grounded theory is also often unstructured, with the researcher shaping and changing the research design as data are collected and analyzed. There is a significant amount of labor that is necessary for grounded theory inquiry, which was true for this current study. For example, it required a high level of conceptual skills, the elucidation of researcher bias, and difficulty in streamlining in-depth, rich data for data analysis and presentation (Fassinger, 2005).

Despite the limitations of grounded theory, there are many advantages to this methodology. The appropriateness of this methodological approach for the research questions are outlined as follows. First, the use of grounded theory is appropriate when no theory on the phenomenon exists or any existing theories are inadequate (Creswell et al., 2007). There has been a paucity of research regarding cross-sexuality friendships, and certainly no formal theory has been generated on how these types of friendships influence heterosexual anti-heterosexist identity development. Secondly, grounded theory focuses on processes, such as experiences over time or phenomena that change over time and includes something like stages or phases (Morse & Field, 1995). This study's research questions pertain to the process of how cross-sexuality friendships change the identities of heterosexuals, so a process-centered methodology fits. Morrow (2007) also explains that constructivist-interpretivist methods, such as constructivist grounded theory, are particularly applicable to counseling psychology due to the "constructivist

nature” of the field. The use of constructivist grounded theory will also be helpful in accommodating the anti-heterosexist agenda this research inquiry hopes to accomplish.

The constructivist nature of this study focuses on how heterosexuals develop identities that counter the oppressive system of heterosexism through cross-sexuality friendships. As such, another paradigm was applied to the methodology: critical theory. By intentionally integrating the tenants of critical theory within the methodology, adherence to social justice values became more accessible.

Application of Critical Theory

In order to more strongly address social justice issues relating to the research questions and the research procedures, critical theory was applied to the methodological procedures. Critical theory focuses on the empowerment of disadvantaged groups, thus making it appropriate to consider with this study of cross-sexuality friendship contributing towards anti-heterosexist identity development. Critical theory can be thought of as a paradigm that concentrates on discovering and addressing societal problems. The criterion for this classification is broad, and may describe anyone who experiences oppression, suppression, or powerlessness (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Critical theory often seeks to give a voice to those who have been disempowered, to identify who gains power from an oppressive system, and how that power is expended (Morrow, 2005). Critical race theory, feminist theory, and queer theory could be thought to fall under the generalist umbrella of critical theory. As a paradigm, critical theory is highly compatible with constructivist approaches. The criteria of critical-ideological research studies are comparable to constructivist inquiries with the additional emphasis on social oppression dynamics and the study’s ability to further critical discourse pertaining to the phenomenon. Critical theory researchers openly take a stance towards something, and seek to expose, better

understand, and take action against oppression (Morrow, 2005).

The application of critical theory to this research design is important because it served to focus the study's underpinnings of heterosexual anti-heterosexism. This study is designed to explore how the identity of people in the dominant group changes towards people in the minority group through the context of cross-sexuality friendship. More specifically, this study explored what role friendships between heterosexuals (the dominant group members) and sexual minorities play in leading to a heterosexual's Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. This line of inquiry is different from that of much other existing critical theory-based research in that it is focused on the empowered group instead of the disempowered group. My intent in carrying out this study was to better understand the role that cross-sexuality friendships play in creating, fostering, and developing Anti-Heterosexist Identity among heterosexuals. This phenomenon is important to examine because it may have a significant impact on the way heterosexual counseling psychologists interact with peers and clients, particularly those belonging to the sexual minority population.

In addition to applying critical theory in order to better accommodate this study's emphasis on Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development via cross-sexuality friendship, it is also important to use this paradigm to avoid unintentionally applying methods and procedures that are biased towards white participants. As an illustration of the need to avoid white racial bias in counseling psychology research, Singh and Shelton (2011) conducted a quantitative analysis of sexual minority qualitative research over a 10-year period in the field of counseling psychology and generated a list of suggestions for future studies. Among these suggestions include increased attention to people of color. Not only do people of color who are sexual minorities face multiple layers of discrimination and oppression, but they are underrepresented in the sexual minority

counseling psychology research literature. In general, psychological research is biased towards white participants (Sue & Sue, 2003). In order to avoid the problem of underrepresentation of people of color in this study, the sampling method purposefully attempted to sample in a way that did not result in a sample comprised of all or mostly white participants (see Participant Recruitment and Selection section). Singh and Shelton (2011) also highlighted the importance of discussing researcher reflexivity in order to acknowledge researcher subjectivity and bias. The researcher's orientation towards racial issues will also be delineated in the Researcher Positionality section below. Finally, questions that aim to include racial dynamics will be included in the Interview Protocol section.

Singh and Shelton (2011) found that most research participants in the qualitative sexual minority research studies that they examined were focused on gay and lesbian populations. Just as people of color are underrepresented in counseling psychology research, so are sexual minorities that do not identify as gay or lesbian. Although these authors specifically suggested the investigation of bisexual individuals, I widened the presentation of sexual identities to include the full spectrum of diversity within the aspect of sexual orientation. The purpose of this was to be inclusive of sexual minority participants and include identifications that go beyond gay, lesbian, and bisexual, while also acknowledging those who might identify as queer, pansexual, and asexual, as examples. This strategy fits in well with the constructivist-interpretive and critical-ideological paradigms (Morrow, 2005), because it acknowledges the diverse ways that people may define their sexual orientation while concurrently giving voice to those that may otherwise be ignored.

In order to better address the issues outlined above, I integrated critical theory philosophy into this study. The paradigmatic stance of this study can be effectively described as

constructivist-critical. It is not sufficient to adhere to only a constructivist philosophy in the instance of this study for multiple reasons. First, my positionality as a researcher is rooted in values that promote social justice. Secondly, the addition of critical theory is important because of the nature of the studied phenomenon, which is focused on anti-oppressive identity development. Finally, the design of this study addresses the problem of peripheral oppressive forces by drawing attention to people of color and including the full spectrum of sexual orientation identities through purposeful sampling protocols (see Participant Recruitment and Selection for more information).

Procedures

In this section I will outline procedures and rationale for the data collection process. I cover the following topics: (a) participant recruitment and selection, (b) demographics questionnaire, (c) interview protocol, (d) theoretical sampling and follow-up interview protocol, (e) focus group protocol, and (f) data confidentiality. Data analysis, although co-occurring with data collection, will be explained in the subsequent section.

Participant Recruitment and Selection

My initial sampling procedures utilized a general purposive sampling approach. Purposive sampling is used for a broad variety of reasons. First, it can be used to address the focus of the research inquiry or to directly address the research questions (Creswell, 2007). Purposive sampling is the intentional selection of participants in an attempt to generate specific data determined by the researcher. The aim of sampling in qualitative research is not to produce results that reflect a general population, but to characterize a wide range of perspectives and experiences (Boeje, 2010).

In order to be considered eligible for the study, potential participant needed to be current

or former counseling psychology doctoral students who held a close, cross-sexuality friendship that lasted at least 1 year in duration. The rationale for using this specific set of selection criteria was so that counseling psychology training directors could consider this study's implications when considering how to make their training programs promote Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. Potential participants were identified by faculty members in counseling psychology doctoral programs. The initial faculty informants were comprised of my doctoral committee; they made suggestions of other faculty members to contact for recruitment purposes, thus taking advantage of a snowballing method. If the faculty member informants did not have the contact information of potential participants, then I utilized an internet search to seek out any available email addresses. After an email address was obtained, the potential participant were sent an email invitation to participate in the study (see Appendix B: Potential Participant Recruitment Letter). The recruitment email included a brief description of the study, a description of the inclusion criteria, and an outline of the participant process (i.e., interviews and focus group). Attached to this email was the implied consent document (see Appendix F: Implied Consent Document). Participants were not required to sign the document, rather, their consent was assumed based upon the continued participation in the study.

A second recruiting method was to send a recruitment email and recruitment poster to program directors of accredited counseling psychology doctoral programs around the United States to be distributed to their program's students (see Appendix C: Counseling Psychology Program Recruitment Email and Appendix E: Recruitment Poster). The last recruitment method used was to post a recruiting message to social media (see Appendix D: Social Media Recruitment Message) along with the Recruitment Poster. If a student was interested in participating, they were sent the Implied Consent document.

After the participants acknowledged their consent to participate, I then sent them an email with the demographics questionnaire and directions for filling this form out digitally and returning it via email (see Appendix G: Email Explaining the Demographics Questionnaire and Appendix H: Demographics Questionnaire). Participants were considered for inclusion for this study if they considered themselves to be in a close, cross-sexuality friendship that was at least 1 year in duration. Although some participants may have subjectively defined close friendship in slightly different ways, the demographic questionnaire (explained further in the Demographic Questionnaire subsection) contained a description of close friendships. The parameters for defining close friendships is based upon the definitions provided by Hruschka (2010) and Hays (1998), which state that close friendships contain most or all of the following characteristics: a significant degree of trust and helping, a high level of closeness, a sense of commitment towards the friendship, and a significant amount of time spent together.

There are several reasons that a participant may have been excluded from further participation in the study. First, the participant was excluded if they were not describing a friendship between a heterosexual person and a sexual minority person. Another reason for exclusion was if the heterosexual person in the friendship dyad did not identify as an “ally” or someone who works against heterosexism or oppression against sexual minority people. Next, a white participant may have been excluded from further participation if the sample is already overly saturated with white participants. Finally, a participant may have been excluded from further participation if data collection had ceased after data saturation had been achieved (see Data Saturation subsection for further information). If a participant was excluded from further participation in the study, they were sent an email thanking them for their time (see Appendix I: Email Declining Use of Participant).

Demographics Questionnaire

After I received confirmation of consent to participate, I sent another email asking the participant to fill out a demographics questionnaire (see Appendix G: Email Explaining the Demographics Questionnaire), which was attached to the email. I utilized the demographic questionnaire (see Appendix H: Demographics Questionnaire) for multiple purposes. First, I used it to confirm that the participant was eligible for the study (please see prior subsection for an explanation of inclusion and exclusion criteria). Secondly, I used the demographic questionnaire to gain important contextual background information for each participant, such as gender identity, sexual orientation, and racial identity of the participant. Although participants were assigned a numbered code to help protect their confidentiality to be used with digital files attached to the participant, the demographic information was digitally marked on the transcript data in order to provide important contextual information on the basis of diverse identities.

After I received the completed demographics questionnaire from the participant and determined that the participant should be included in the study based upon the selection procedures, I sent a correspondence to schedule the initial individual interview. The type of correspondence, whether it is through email or via phone, was determined based upon what the participant indicated preference for on the demographics questionnaire. In this correspondence, I asked for the participant's availability for a 1 to 1.5 hour individual interview and determined whether the participant would like an in-person interview or an interview conducted via online video conferencing (see Appendix J: Scheduling for the Initial Interview [Email Script] and Appendix K: Scheduling for the Initial Interview [Phone Script]). For the participants that elected to use online video conferencing utilizing a free web browser attachment that required no account registration, I provided instructions for the online video conferencing (see Appendix L:

Directions for Online Conferencing) and a message confirming the interview time (see Appendix M: Confirmation of Initial Interview [Email]). Two days prior to a scheduled interview, a note was sent to participants to remind them of their interview time and place or method (see Appendix N: Reminder of Initial Interview Time [Email Script] and Appendix O: Reminder of Initial Interview Time [Phone Script]).

Participant Demographics

A total of 24 participants were recruited for this study. Due to a recording error for the individual interview, one participant's data was unable to be used and so their demographic information is not included in this section. Please see Table 1 below for detailed demographical information.

I did not formally collect nationality information on the demographics form. On the form, a few participants noted an Asian national identity. During interviews of some of these individuals, nationalities including Chinese and Vietnamese identities were disclosed.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Total # of Programs	8
Midwest	5
East Coast	1
South	2
Status	
Students	18
Psychologists	5
Age Range	
20-24	1
25-29	10
30-34	6
35-39	3
40-44	2
50-54	1
Gender Identity	
Cisgender	23
Transgender	0
Woman/Femme	17
Man/Masculine	6
Sexual Orientation	
Heterosexual	19
Gay	1
Lesbian	2
Queer	1
Racial Identity	
White	13
African American/Black	4
Asian National	4
Asian American	1
Biracial	1
Friendship Length	
Minimum	1 year
Maximum	30 years, 2 months
Average	6 years
Median	3 years, 2 months
Mode	3 years

Individual Interview Protocol

According to Rubin and Rubin (2005), qualitative interviews allow the researcher to understand experiences that the researcher did not participate in, to describe social processes, and answer why and how things change. Therefore, qualitative interviewing is a suitable method of gathering data to address my research questions that ask how cross-sexuality friendships in counseling psychology doctoral programs contribute to an Anti-Heterosexist Identity among heterosexuals. The initial individual interviews were conducted via online video conferencing. Online conferencing interviews using the video feature are the most desirable due to the ability of the researcher to notice nonverbal behaviors and because of the increased ability to facilitate rapport (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). If the participant elected to conduct the individual interview via online conferencing, the participant was instructed to situate themselves in a quiet, private space for the duration of the interview. The initial individual interviews were in-depth and semi-structured that will ranged from 1 hour to 1.5 hours in duration. All interviews were recorded and transcribed.

I utilized two individual interview protocols, one for heterosexual participants and one for sexual minority participants (see Appendix P: Initial Interview Protocol for Heterosexual Participants and Appendix Q: Initial Interview Protocol for Sexual Minority Participants). The interview questions focused on how the cross-sexuality friendship contributed towards the heterosexual person's anti-heterosexist identity development. The two interview protocols were very similar and were tailored to help answer the study's research questions. These questions were based upon the literature review in the previous chapter, which were further modeled after this study's research questions (see Research Questions section in this chapter). The questions were semi-structured yet still open-ended enough to allow participants to provide a description of

their experiences. The questions were narrow enough to address the research focus but broad enough to give participants the freedom to elaborate and construct their own meanings. I used follow-up questions and probes to elicit further articulation and clarification from participant responses. Interview recordings were transcribed and analyzed during data collection (see Data Analysis section for further details).

Data Confidentiality

I took precautions to facilitate confidential data collection from participants as much as possible. I encrypted all files, digital documents, and audio or visual recordings and stored them on a password-protected hard drive, as well as a password-protected USB drive for back up. Each participant was assigned a numbered code attached to any transcriptions, rather than the participant's name. Demographics information were included on these transcripts to provide contextual information. The names of people were changed to a random letter, and I removed the names of specific places or other identifying information in order to increase de-identification. Upon transcription, I deleted the audio or visual recordings of the interviews.

I recruited transcribers to assist with the transcription of audio recordings. The transcribers were thoroughly briefed about the procedures of the study, how to ethically and securely handle research data, and how to take steps to ensure participant confidentiality. The transcribers did not have access to the demographic questionnaires, only to their assigned recordings and the transcripts that they created. Upon completion of their assigned transcripts, I had the transcribers destroy the recordings. I checked each transcript individually for errors before beginning the analysis. The transcribers did not take part in any other part of the data collection or data analysis process.

Data Analysis

As noted in the Procedures section, I analyzed the data while I continued to collect data. Qualitative data analysis in grounded theory methodology is comprised of multiple steps. These steps include immersion in the data (typically interview transcripts), identifying a broad framework of the studied phenomenon, using constant comparison to refine that framework, identifying causal connections, using more refined coding to develop the theoretical themes further, identifying the core concept, and constructing a verbal and visual portrayal of the theory (Hays & Wood, 2011). I approached the data analysis using a multi-layered process, which I explain in the following sections: (a) positionality of the researcher, (b) memo writing, (c) initial coding, (d) focused coding, (e) theoretical coding, (f) data saturation, and (g) theoretical sorting, diagramming, and memo integration. Throughout the data analysis process, Glaser and Struass's (1967) constant comparative method between the data was used in order to establish analytic distinctions and comparisons. The constant comparative method describes the process by which codes are compared with each other so that the researcher can identify the properties of the conceptual themes and their relationships to one another.

Positionality of the Researcher

As part of designing a rigorous qualitative study, positionality must be delineated (Boeije, 2010; Morrow, 2005). Creswell (2007) explains that positionality, including the researcher's gender, culture, and history of experiences, shape all aspects of the qualitative inquiry, including the research focus, research questions, data collection, data analysis, and presentation of the data. Therefore, being clear about a researcher's positionality gives insight about how and why a qualitative study is conducted and helps to acknowledge researcher values and biases.

As far as my own positionality, I identify as a white, heterosexual, cisgender woman. I

have been keenly interested in sexual minority issues over the past 5 years, and my interest in cross-sexuality friendships, at least in part, stems out of my own personal relationships that I have held over the years. Most salient have been my cross-sexuality friendships during my counseling psychology doctoral program, which have helped guide the current line of inquiry. Academically, I have been introduced to the scholarly study of systems of oppression and specifically heterosexism. My knowledge of this topic area has been furthered by university-based trainings and self-directed study and research. My interest in cross-sexuality friendships stems from a desire to better understand how heterosexuals move from the status quo of heterosexism to an Anti-Heterosexist Identity. It is my hope that by better understanding these processes, heterosexuals within the counseling psychology profession can take a more intentional and active role in adopting anti-heterosexist identities in order to better serve their sexual minority clients, to further the study of this vulnerable population, and to advance an anti-oppressive agenda.

I also hold some explicit assumptions which have guided the construction of this study. First, I assume that there is an unequal power distribution between heterosexuals (the majority population) and sexual minority people, who are unfairly oppressed in this society based upon their sexual orientation. I further assume that this inequality is unjust and is harmful to not only the sexual minority population, but also to heterosexuals. I assert that friendships are an important piece of Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development—therefore, this study is concerned with how these friendships contribute to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development, not whether friendships actually promote Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development or not. I also assume that through constructing further understanding of Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development, counseling psychologists wishing to advance sexual minority issues in this field will be assisted

somehow through research, practice, supervision, and/or training.

Finally, I am aware of my racial identity as a white person living in the United States of America. It is my intention to take extra care to attempt to avoid recruiting a disproportionate number of white individuals for my study. In order to address the lack of attention paid to racial minority people in the sexual minority literature, I intentionally applied critical theory to my study. Additionally, I integrated exclusionary selection procedures into my sampling procedures in order to help develop a racially diverse sample.

Memo Writing

In a grounded theory study, memoing occurs throughout the data analysis process. Formal memoing is important to keep a level of organization within the analysis, so the data produced by the researcher are not lost. Memoing includes the researcher's exploratory thoughts about the data, hypotheses about the properties and dimensions of themes, elaboration of the theoretical framework, and the development of a coherent storyline. Memoing is a fluid process that the researcher engages in, and the content, degree of conceptualization, and length of memos can vary widely. The purpose of memoing is to help the researcher conceptualize, so stylistically, memos can vary across researchers. However, an important function of memos is to summarize the researcher's thoughts about the analysis as they occur. Thus, frequent memoing is critical (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

In the current study, I used memoing concurrently during the data analysis process, which I wrote in a word processor and saved digitally. I wrote the memos as commentary on the data during the overall data analysis process and the memos included ideas, conceptualizations, and premises about the data. The also included notes about the data, including when I thought that a category was saturated. I kept these notes digitally in the same encrypted, password protected

place as the rest of the data on my personal computer. At the end of the analysis, I integrated the memos into the overall theoretical structure that I created.

Initial Coding

I began the data analysis stage with initial coding of the transcripts while adhering to the constant comparative method to establish analytic distinctions and comparisons (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Once the interview transcripts were created (please see the Procedures section for a detailed explanation), I read each transcript multiple times to ensure that I was immersed in the data. Next, I conducted open coding. Qualitative coding should be thought of as a cyclical process rather than a linear one (Saldaña, 2009). In constructivist grounded theory methodology, the first phase of initial coding includes open coding. Open coding occurs at the beginning of data analysis and its purpose is to fragment and organize the data (Boeije, 2010). The initial open coding phase is intended to answer basic questions about the research focus, addresses what the data suggests, and what point of view it is coming from (Glaser, 1978). During my open coding, I tried not to interpret anything and prematurely constrict the data to any theoretical framework. I also tried to keep this level of coding as precise and as simple as possible. As a result, this level of coding occurred relatively quickly, as is typical with grounded theory analysis (Charmaz, 2006). After initial coding, I proceeded with focused coding.

Focused Coding

In the next cycle of data analysis, I shifted to focused coding using the initial codes that were already gathered, and by examining the transcripts again. Charmaz (2006) explains that focused coding is “more directed, selective, and conceptual” than the initial coding phase. After the establishment of some analytic conceptualization was provided by the initial coding process, I then focused on what seemed to be the most significant pieces of data. I created codes based

upon categories of thematic or categorical similarity, called themes and subthemes. I also used focused coding to explore how themes related and differed from each other, while refining the overall themes that were emerging (Saldaña, 2009). This phase of data analysis can be thought of as the researcher shifting from a more passive role to an active role due to their emphasis on conceptualization (Charmaz, 2006). Because this study used a grounded theory methodology, the focused coding stage led naturally into the next phase of coding, which is theoretical coding.

Theoretical Coding

After completing focused coding, I began theoretical coding. The purpose of theoretical coding is to develop a theory about the studied phenomenon (Boeije, 2010). The theoretical codes were based upon the focused codes from the previous step. I used theoretical coding to elaborate upon potential relationships between themes and attempt to bring together a coherent theory or story from the data (Saldaña, 2009). Overall, I used the theoretical coding phase to clarify and refine the data into a comprehensible theoretical framework. I continued to recruit participants for individual interviews until data saturation was achieved.

Data Saturation

I continued to collect data and analyze that data until I determined that the data was saturated. I utilized memoing in order to help determine when data saturation occurred (see Memo Writing subsection). Data saturation occurs when information that contributes to the understanding of any of the theoretical categories is no longer found (Creswell, 2007). Saturation is achieved when the same patterns within the data continue repeating with no new information, insights, or properties about the core theoretical categories (Charmaz, 2006). Due to the amount of rich data required for theory generation, the typical sample size for grounded theory studies can range from 20 to 60 individuals (Creswell, 2007). Data saturation may be achieved with a

small sample if the researcher makes modest claims, but if the data is suggesting larger, more sweeping claims about the studied phenomenon that is contradicted in previous research, then a more rigorous data collection and data analysis process must occur in order to ensure the overall trustworthiness of the study (Charmaz, 2006).

This study fell within Creswell's (2007) suggested range number of 20-60 participants for a grounded theory. It was important to meet this range due to the inherent complexity of creating a theory of how cross-sexuality friendships might influence heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. To summarize the process, I conducted an initial sampling and transcribed interviews. As I created transcripts, I achieved immersion by reading over the transcripts several times. Next, I engaged in initial coding, and then focused coding. As I received more transcripts, I began the process of theoretical coding, which I revisited throughout the duration of the data analysis process. When I was no longer gaining any new information from the data, I ceased collecting data and I moved onto the next stages of the analysis: theoretical sorting, diagramming, and memo integration.

Theoretical Sorting, Diagramming, and Memo Integration

After data saturation was achieved, I moved the analysis into its final steps. I used theoretical sorting to establish theoretical links between the themes and subthemes. Charmaz (2006) outlines the general process involved with theoretical sorting, which was employed for use in this study. First, I organized the memos by the title of each category. Next, I compared the themes and subthemes and carefully gave them an order. I then compared the order of the themes with the logic of those themes. As a result, I created a balance between the studied phenomenon, the themes, and the theoretical statements made about them.

Next, I diagrammed the data. The purpose of diagramming is to give a visual image of the

theoretical framework and may include maps, charts, or figures in order to clarify the theory's categorical relationships or positionality. Charmaz (2006) states that diagramming can enable the researcher to see the "relative power, scope, and direction of the categories in [the] analysis as well as the connections among them." Finally, I integrated memos written during the data analysis up to this point logically into the existing theoretical framework (Charmaz, 2006).

Auditing

After data collection was completed, a theoretical scheme and flowchart of the theoretical structure was developed. The auditing team consisted of a faculty member of my doctoral committee with background and experience in qualitative research and experience auditing other qualitative projects. This faculty member supervised a doctoral student with a basic background in qualitative research and familiarity with basic LGBT terminology. I sent the doctoral student auditor my theoretical themes, the flowchart diagram I created of my theory, and a sample of a few un-coded transcripts for review and feedback. Based upon the feedback received from the auditing team, I revised my theoretical categorical scheme and flowchart diagram.

Focus Groups

After the auditing process was completed, I invited participants back to participate in focus groups. The purpose of these focus groups was to present the data back to the participants in order to elicit further information or clarification on the categorical scheme. The inclusion of focus groups helps to ensure that the data are triangulated (Creswell, 2007; Creswell et al., 2007; Morrow, 2005), which helps improve rigor. Focus groups also served as a form of member checking that allowed the participants to bring up any concerns or contradictions to the presented data (Boeije, 2010; Morrow, 2005). Additionally, the focus groups served explore follow-up questions that were generated from the data analysis and audit.

All participants who completed the initial individual interviews were invited to participate in a focus groups approximately one year after the individual interviews had concluded. I sent out invitations to participants (see Appendix R: Invitation to the Focus Group [Email Script] and Appendix S: Invitation to the Focus Group [Phone Script]) to obtain availability for participation. I then selected times to conduct the focus groups to accommodate as many participants willing to participate as is possible. While 13 people were scheduled to participate in a focus group, only 10 attended. One participant was unable to attend due to technical difficulties, another was unable to attend due to uncontrollable life circumstances, and the third was unable to participate for unknown reasons. The demographic make-up can be found below in Table 2.

Table 2

Focus Group Demographics

Focus Group #1	
Participant #1	African-American, woman, heterosexual, doctoral student
Participant #2	African-American, woman, heterosexual, doctoral student
Participant #3	African-American, man, heterosexual, doctoral student
Focus Group #2	
Participant #1	Asian national, man, heterosexual, doctoral student
Participant #2	White, woman, heterosexual, doctoral student
Focus Group #3	
Participant #1	White, woman, heterosexual, doctoral student
Participant #2	White, woman, heterosexual, doctoral student
Participant #3	White, woman, heterosexual, doctoral student
Participant #4	Asian national, woman, heterosexual, doctoral student
Participant #5	Biracial, woman, heterosexual, doctoral student

I notified the participants of the focus group time that matched their submitted availability (see Appendix T: Focus Group Confirmation [Email Script] and Appendix U: Focus Group Confirmation [Phone Script]) and were provided a reminder email before the focus group

time and date (see Appendix V: Focus Group Reminder [Email Script] and Appendix W: Focus Group Reminder [Phone Script]).

The focus groups were conducted via audio-only Skype conferencing. At the beginning of the focus group, I provided a PowerPoint presentation to participants about the initial findings and theoretical framework. Participants were given the opportunity to ask any questions about the findings to ensure that the information presented was clear to them. Questions for the focus group were geared towards member checking and validity. Specifically, I asked about the participants' general reactions to the analysis, what seemed accurate about the analysis, and anything that did not seem accurate about the analysis. Additionally, I asked additional questions about subthemes that raised additional questions about participant experience (see Appendix X: Focus Group Protocol). These additional follow-up questions included a few different topics. First, I asked about any negative reactions that heterosexual participants recalled experiencing in terms of their friendship. Second, I asked about the relationship dynamics for participants who were in an opposite-gender, cross-sexuality friendship. Third, I asked heterosexual participants if they had thought about how they might support a sexual minority child in their family. I integrated feedback from the focus groups into the theoretical framework as appropriate.

Feedback was integrated into the theoretical framework as appropriate. Specifically, I did not make any alterations to the theoretical structure based upon the focus groups, because the data gathered from these groups were purely confirmatory. Rather, I was able to add in more data to existing subthemes. These subthemes included Unique Relationship with an LG Friend of the Opposite Sex and Supporting Sexual Minority Children.

Rigor

In this section, I will address general matters of rigor within the context of this study.

Rigor is defined broadly as the quality and trustworthiness of a study (Creswell, 2007).

Establishing rigor in a qualitative research inquiry is crucial because it helps to ensure that the presented results are valid and meaningful. Clearly outlining measures taken for rigor are particularly important for a qualitative study in the field of counseling psychology because qualitative research may be viewed with skepticism and may be assumed to not be rigorous. The inherently subjective nature of qualitative research may also seem incompatible with rigor; however, this is a misconception (Creswell, 2007)

Several basic principles for establishing a rigorous qualitative study do exist. Creswell (2007) suggests that qualitative researchers begin their inquiry with a single focus, core concept, or idea. Creswell goes on to explain that as the study progresses, the researcher can begin incorporating other related factors and make comparisons in order to allow the data to emerge naturally and to help avoid unnecessary researcher bias. Along this line, the researcher's positionality, otherwise known as researcher reflexivity, was outlined as suggested by Creswell and Morrow (2005) (see Researcher Positionality subsection). This section described the cultural background and personal biases of the researcher. Researcher positionality shapes all aspects of the study including research questions, data collection, data analysis and interpretation, and how the data are presented or written up in a report (Creswell, 2007).

Next, I utilized several strategies to establish rigor regarding the data collection process, including prolonged engagement with the participants, triangulation, framing the study within a philosophical approach, using a recognized qualitative approach, and adhering to ethical standards. First, I engaged in prolonged contact with my participants through individual interviews and focus groups. Hays and Wood (2011) and Creswell (2007) state the importance of spending adequate time in the field or to having prolonged engagement with the data.

Next, I strengthened this study's rigor by collecting multiple types of data, mainly from interview and focus group data (see Individual Interview Protocol and Focus Groups subsections). Numerous researchers highlight the importance of collecting multiple types of data from interviews, focus groups, observations, text, or media (Creswell, 2007; Creswell et al., 2007; Morrow, 2005; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This strategy is also known as "triangulation." However, data triangulation goes beyond just using multiple forms of data. It may also entail the use of multiple methods or the application of multiple theories to interpret the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The purpose of triangulation is to increase the ability of the researcher to collect rich data. By utilizing multiple sources of data or employing different methods to analyze and interpret the data, the researcher is better enabled to present a fuller explanation of the studied phenomenon (Hays & Wood, 2011). For my study, I analyzed the data using multiple levels of abstraction (see Initial Coding, Focused Coding, Theoretical Coding, and Theoretical Sorting, Diagramming, and Memo Integration subsections). Looking at the data from multiple and even unusual angles provides a fuller understanding of the data (Creswell, 2007). Valid interpretations are those that are grounded empirically and conceptually and contain theoretical consistency and accurate interpretation (Dey, 2007 and Morrow, 2005).

Another way I enhanced the rigor of this study was to frame it within a philosophical approach. This guideline was demonstrated for this study by outlining the paradigms, epistemology, ontology, and axiology that the researcher is working under (see Grounded Theory section). Creswell (2007) goes on to state that the use of a recognized qualitative approach is important because it enhances the rigor and sophistication of the inquiry. A qualitative researcher should identify and define their approach, cite studies that use it, and follow any outlined procedures in the approach. The author notes that mixing approaches is fine. The reason for this

principle is not to suppress new methods of discovering data, but to allow inexperienced researchers to follow tried-and-true approaches. Again, I adhered to these guidelines by stating the qualitative methodology and describing the specific approaches that were employed. I provided a detailed account of the methodology and I also utilized a rigorous approach to data collection, data analysis, and report writing (see Procedures section). I moved my data analysis from narrow codes to a broadening, interrelated net of abstract meanings as is suggested by Creswell. Furthermore, the accuracy of the data analysis was validated through data triangulation and an external auditor, as suggested by Boeije (2010) and Morrow (2005). Please see the Data Analysis section for a more detailed account of these procedures.

Finally, I conducted this study in a way that adhered to ethical standards. Creswell (2007) provides several guidelines for research ethicality, which was adhered to during this study. I submitted my study and had it approved by the HSIRB before engaging in data collection or analysis. During the recruitment process, I provided the implied consent procedures to all potential participants. This measure was intended to fully inform participants of the purpose of the research, risks or benefits involved, and any other pertinent factors. The way in which the informed consent is delivered is also important in order to ensure that research participants are participating from their free-will and are not being coerced. In order to achieve this, I provided the full implied consent document to all potential participants and I was available to answer any questions about the document or the study (see Appendix F: Implied Consent Document).

Creswell (2007) also emphasizes the importance of preserving participant confidentiality. At times, this can be difficult in qualitative research because it often involves rich description that may be traced back to specific participants. I took steps to ensure that participants' data was kept confidential by encrypting all participant data files and documents and keeping these files

on a password protected hard drive and backup USB drive. I also provided participants with a cost/benefit analysis of the study, which was included in the implied consent document (see Appendix B: Implied Consent Document). The implied consent document was reviewed and approved by the HSIRB before distribution to potential participants. Finally, Creswell (2007) states that any covert or deceptive procedures must be fully explained and justified. I did not use deception in this study, so this guideline was irrelevant for this study.

Guidelines exist not only for rigor in qualitative research and grounded theory methodologies in general, but specific measures for rigor can also be taken for the usage of specific paradigms (Morrow, 2005). I employed two philosophical paradigms in this study: constructivism-interpretivism and critical-ideological. The constructivism-interpretivism paradigm is concerned with three dimensions of rigor: fairness, authenticities, and meaning. The researcher adhered to the standard of fairness by eliciting and honoring different interpretations and constructions during the interviewing process and the data analysis process. Authenticities may relate to four categories, including ontological, educative, catalytic, and tactical (Morrow, 2005). I adhered to the ontological aspect by eliciting and honoring the individual participant's understanding of the phenomena of friendships contributing to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. I adhered to the educative aspect of authenticity by appreciating the participants' understandings. I adhered to the catalytic dimension primarily during the discussion of the research findings by suggesting further lines of future research and making suggestions to foster Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.

Finally, I adhered to the last parameter, meaning, by becoming concerned with enhanced and deep understanding—also called *verstehen*—and the co-construction of meaning, which is dependent on context, culture, and the rapport between researcher and participant. This final

authenticity was primarily in the forefront during focus groups, when the participants were able to give feedback on the theoretical structure (see Focus Groups subsection). As Morrow (2005) cautions against, I avoided blurring research with therapy. This author states that counseling psychologist researchers may have an easier time establishing rapport, but warns not to mix research with therapy.

The criteria for trustworthiness in research using the critical-ideological paradigm are the same as the guidelines for a constructivist-interpretive paradigm with two extra additions—consequentiality and transgressive validity (Morrow, 2005). First, I evaluated the degree to which the research has been consequential during the discussion of the data analysis results. Specifically, I assessed the success in which this research has achieved its goals as it relates to social change. To address transgressive validity, I promoted the philosophical values and social justice objectives of the researcher throughout the study, primarily through the literature review, statement of positionality in the Data Analysis section, and the discussion of the results.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter describes the theoretical structure and the constellation of themes that encompass this theory, as derived from the saturated data. A grounded theory methodology was employed to guide the methods and resulting data analysis. Specifically, I examined the data utilizing a constructivist grounded framework and adhered to the broad tenets of critical theory. Constructivist grounded theory assumes that reality is subjective, socially constructed, and contextual (Morrow, 2007), which is compatible this study's focus on friendships, heterosexism, and sexual identity. Critical theory was highly compatible with this study due to its focus on the empowerment of disadvantaged groups. Furthermore, to help counteract the overrepresentation of white individuals in the literature, I recruited and selected participants purposefully in order to give a larger voice to a greater number of people from different racial identities.

I derived specific themes from the open coding process, which were then organized, under categories during the focused coding phase, and then finally grouped into broad categories during the theoretical coding phase. A more detailed explanation of the process and development of the three phases of coding are delineated in more detail in this chapter. From these emergent themes, a model was constructed that described how cross-sexuality friendships affected Heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development within the context of counseling psychology doctoral programs.

In this chapter, I review the multi-phased coding and memoing process that was employed for this study, how the theory was diagrammed from the defined themes, and include a detailed description for each of the themes. I also explore the application of a constructivist and critical theory lens over the data. Finally, I provide a description of the relationships between the

themes as it relates to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. Please note that I have altered any names disclosed in the participant quotes to a randomly selected letter to increase confidentiality.

Coding and Memoing

After I became immersed in the data by reading over the individual interview transcripts multiple times, I began the coding process. I utilized three levels of coding during the data analysis process: open coding, focused coding, and theoretical coding. The initial stage of coding was open coding. During this phase, I looked for chunks of distinct meaning within the interview transcripts. The codes were as brief as a word or short phrase, or they could be a lengthy narrative that described a discrete experience or concept. I completed this portion of coding relatively quickly. During the next phase of coding, focused coding, I re-considered the open codes from a more detailed and purposeful analysis. The open codes were organized into groups of shared meaning, called themes. I did not utilize all of the open codes. I split some codes into distinct codes when they seemed to be expressing separate ideas, and discarded some codes all together. Finally, I employed theoretical coding in order to tie together all of the themes and sub-themes into a coherent theoretical structure. I established relationships between the focused codes, and then categorized into even more broad themes.

Throughout the data analysis process, I wrote research notes or “memos” in order to help me conceptualize the data. My memos included exploratory thoughts about the data, hypotheses about the properties and dimensions of the themes, elaboration of the theoretical framework, and the development of a coherent storyline. The memoing process occurred organically, as thoughts came to me about the research, and I recorded them in a separate document with a tag to the original document and place that the memo referred to. For brief notes or clarifications, such as

on a specific code, I added the memos directly onto that document and not put in my memo journal.

Theoretical Sorting, Diagramming, and Audit

After data saturation was achieved, I employed theoretical sorting in order to establish theoretical links between the categories of data. I compared the themes and carefully gave them an order, and then compared the order of the themes with the logic of those themes. Once I established the theoretical relationships between the themes, I began diagramming the themes. I developed a visual flowchart in order to illustrate the relationships between the themes and sub-themes.

Next, the theoretical framework was sent to a member of the researcher's committee and a doctoral graduate student to complete an audit of the data analysis. Included in this audit were the open, focused, and theoretical codes, 3 un-coded transcripts, and the visual flowchart of the theoretical framework. Alterations were made to the theoretical framework and visual flowchart based upon the feedback from the auditors. Overall, I clarified in my description of the theoretical structure that my data were based upon the perceptions of my participants, and thus may be a reflection of their biases or blind spots. I split my initial Context and History major theme into two major themes: 1) Context and History and 2) Description and Progression of the Friendship. I clarified that the Historical thoughts/attitudes/behaviors subtheme could be fluid or contradictory among participants. Furthermore, I eliminated the "Initiation of current sexual minority friendship" subtheme due to its irrelevance to the theoretical model. I combined Seeking Support and Validation from the Heterosexual Friend into the Reciprocal Caring subtheme due to redundancy.

I also made alterations under the Learning and Perception major theme. First, I moved the

Exploring and Questioning One's Own Sexual Orientation and/or Sexual Fluidity from the Expanded Awareness and Learning of Sexual Orientation and Sexual Identity subtheme to the Internal Processes Resulting From Expanded Awareness Caused by the Friendship subtheme due to being a better fit with that subtheme. Second, I consolidated the Tension Between Consolidating Racial Identity With Anti-Heterosexist Thinking and Recognizing Personal Heterosexism and Heterosexual Privilege subthemes with the Difficulty or Distress in Confronting One's Own Heterosexism and Heterosexual Privilege subtheme due to redundancy. Third, I merged the Violence Against the LGB Community and Intersectional Identities subthemes with the Systemic Oppression and Discrimination subtheme due to redundancy. Lastly, I altered subthemes in the Change and Action major theme. I combined the Clinical Work with Sexual Minority Clients, Classroom Situations, and Research Situations subthemes with the Learning About Working with Sexual Minorities in a Professional Capacity subtheme.

Application of Constructivism and Critical Theory

Constructivism was a crucial framework through which the data were viewed. To briefly review, constructivist grounded theory is an interpretive approach that tries to make sense of not only what participants experience, but how and why they experience it (Charmaz, 2006). The main ideas that were being explored and presented by participants were social constructions: the experience of friendships, the meaning and resulting impact of sexual orientation, and the concept of heterosexism and the consequences that occurred because of it. Furthermore, the resulting theory is based upon my interpretation as a researcher, another important aspect of constructivist grounded theory.

In order to emphasize the voices that are often underrepresented and overlooked in psychological research, I incorporated tenets of critical theory into the methodology and analysis

of this study. Critical theory focuses on oppressive systems (Gibson, 2007), which is not only compatible for sexual minority populations, but also for racial minority populations. The perceptions and experiences of cross-sexuality friendships among participants were affected by the interactions of racial contexts and nuances. I interpreted the narratives presented by participants under the context of oppressive systems, such as structural racism. During the focus group phase of the research, which had the purpose of member checking for accurate meaning, I took special consideration to address potential biases in my analysis. Specifically, I announced my identity as a white, cisgender, heterosexual woman, and explained that because of that, I may have some unintended biases in my presentation and interpretation of the data concerning identities that I did not belong to, such as sexual minority and racial minority identities. I invited sexual minority participants to give feedback on any points that they found biased or heterosexist. I also asked participants of color to give feedback on any points that they found to perpetuate racism. My hope in addressing this explicitly during my focus groups were to encourage focus group members to address any inaccuracies or biases that were caused by my own blind spots. However, group members did not offer suggestions on these points.

Overview of Themes

In this section, I describe the themes that emerged from the data. In my organization of my analysis, I produced three levels of abstraction, going from describing very broad categories of ideas, to more specific categories that were comprised of more subthemes. The third level of themes were very discrete and contain the specific thoughts and experiences of the participants. First, I will start by describing the four broad themes that make up my theory (see *Figure 1*). Context and History is the foundation upon which the cross-sexuality friendship occurred, providing context for the heterosexual participant's resulting experiences and reactions.

Description and Progression of the Friendship describes the start of the friendship and the resulting interpersonal dynamics found within the friendship. Learning and Perception was influenced by the nuances of the friendship dynamics, and describes the resulting information learned about sexual minority issues and the internal processes relating to this learning. Finally, Change and Action was prompted or furthered by the learning experienced by the heterosexual friend. Although these major themes are illustrated in a linear format, I was to note that the movement through these themes are not necessarily strictly linear and a heterosexual person may cycle back through these themes depending on the context. The culmination of these major themes describes Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development as experienced through cross-sexuality friendships in the context of counseling psychology doctoral programs.

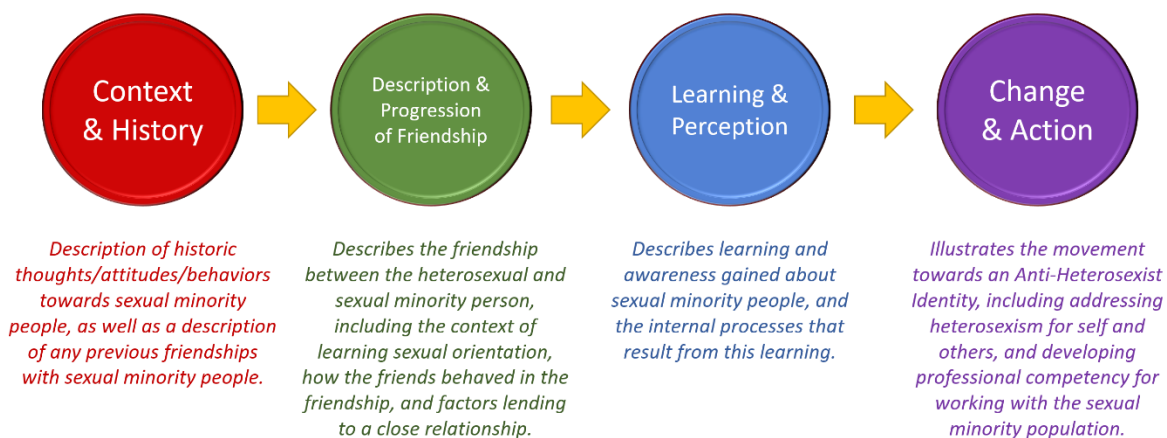


Figure 1. How Friendships Between Heterosexual and Sexual Minority Counseling Psychology Doctoral Students Affect Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development

Next, I will review each of these broad themes in detail, including the second and third levels of abstraction.

Context and History

This major theme is comprised of two subthemes: Perception of Thoughts/Attitudes/Behaviors towards Sexual Minority People and Context of Previous Relationships with Sexual Minority People. The first subtheme describes the history of attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors about and towards sexual minority people and the second subtheme describes the history of sexual minority friendships as experienced by the heterosexual person. Both of these subthemes describe aspects that provide important context and nuance to interpreting the heterosexual person's resulting responses to the cross-sexuality friendships described in this study. The subthemes described in this major theme is illustrated in *Figure 2*.

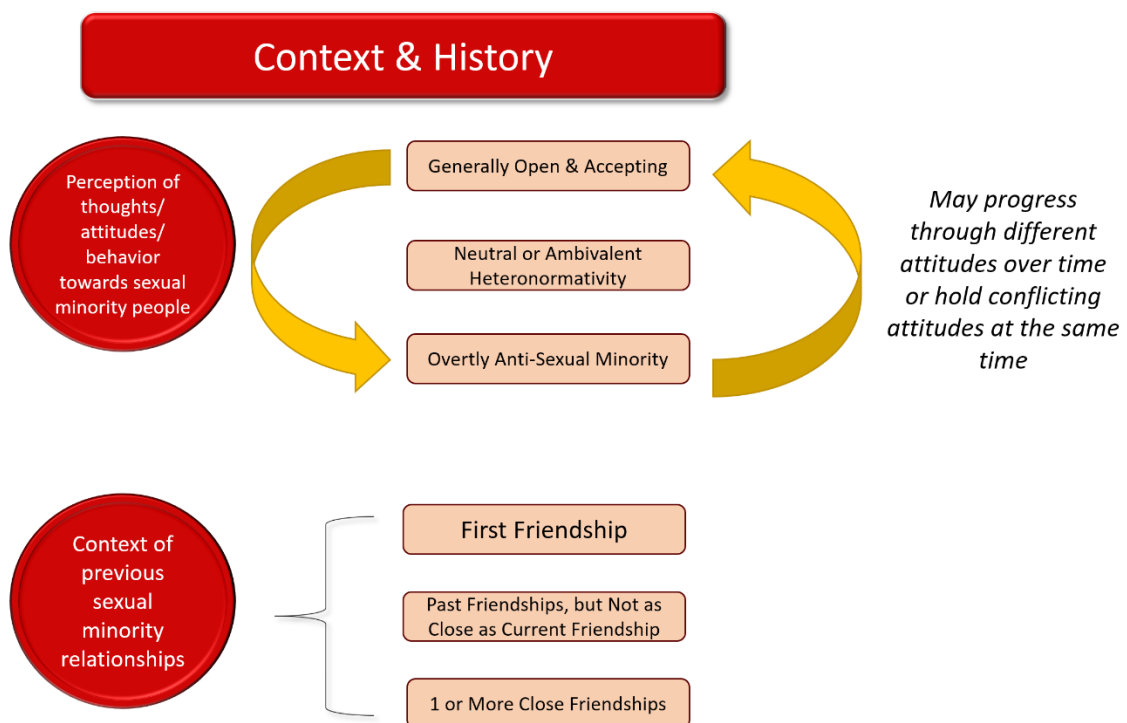


Figure 2. Context and History

Perception of Attitudes/Thoughts/Behaviors towards Sexual Minority People

The first subtheme is comprised of three descriptions of general attitudes: Generally Open and Accepting, Neutral or Ambivalent Heteronormativity, and Overtly Anti-Sexual Minority. This subtheme describes the various attitudes held about sexual minority issues and people, personal thoughts about sexual minority people and issues, and specific behaviors towards sexual minority people prior to the friendship that were described for this study. It is important to note that the participants described their attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors from their personal perspectives. Thus, I reported the participant's perceptions as they were presented to me in the interviews, rather than trying to objectively determine the accuracy of those perceptions. For example, some participants described their overall attitudes as being affirming, but it is possible that they may have been naively unaware of the heterosexist aspects of their attitudes and beliefs, or may have been unwittingly engaging in heterosexist microaggressions.

Also important to note is that the attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors were not necessarily static among participants, nor did they necessarily fit into only one category. Some participants described change or progress in their beliefs over time. For example, someone might initially hold anti-sexual minority beliefs, but then shift to more affirming and open beliefs about sexual minority people. As one participant illustrated: "Over time, I've looked back and seen the progression of the change of my beliefs. And what happened was, at first I was gay-rejecting—of the lifestyle. I was nice to people. And then when I got to know people who were gay, LGB ... then I started seeing them as people and with valid desires. And started realizing that they loved who they loved and realizing that in fact most were indeed born that way." Additionally, some participants also held different or even conflicting attitudes at the same time. For example, for some participants, I may have coded a response and classified it in the Generally Open and

Accepting subtheme, and then coded yet another response under the Neutral or Ambivalent Heteronormativity subtheme. Participants did not necessarily comment on these seemingly contradictory beliefs within the interview, but it was something that I noticed during my analysis of the data.

Generally open and accepting. This subtheme describes the perception of broad openness and acceptance towards sexual minority people. These attitudes may stem from a sexual minority-affirming family, social environment, or personal attributes (e.g., a self-described compassionate personality). Participants included general attitudes that they labeled as “liberal” or “progressive.” Some participants described being open and accepting despite the influences of disaffirming family environment, social environment, or other community environments. For example, one participant stated, “I’ve always tried really hard to be a really open-minded and accepting person in general, even coming from a really conservative Christian background.” Additionally, affirming attitudes may have developed as a result of life experiences, such as personal relationships with sexual minority people.

Neutral or ambivalent heteronormativity. This subtheme describes an insulation from awareness of sexual orientations besides heterosexuality. There seemed to be an assumption that everyone is heterosexual, often including a general lack of awareness or acknowledgement of other sexual orientations. This subtheme also describes adherence to heteronormativity. For some participants, this also describes a general neutrality or ambivalence about sexual minority people and their struggles, sometimes as a result of ignorance of the issues or an absence of relationships with sexual minority people. As one participant summed it up, “I just didn’t think about it much.”

Overtly anti-sexual minority. This subtheme describes blatantly anti-sexual minority attitudes and behaviors, including feeling disgusted, fearful, and/or uncomfortable with sexual minority people. Descriptive terms used by participants included, “conservative” and “homophobic.” Some participants noted that anti-sexual minority sentiment was woven into the general attitudes that their cultural or racial group held. For example, one African-American participant stated, “In my preteens, I remember basically learning that was a taboo,” alluding to the anti-sexual minority sentiments they experienced in their family and their community in general. A significant portion of this subtheme also describes anti-sexual minority sentiment as connected towards Christian belief that same-sex relationships are “sinful.” One participant described their experience with Church teachings as they were growing up: “Definitely in like, Catholic grade school and high school, we were taught like, it’s fine to be gay. We love gay people. The church loves gay people. But they’re not allowed to act on being gay. Which basically, I was like, okay. Because I’m not gay and didn’t really have any experience of tons of empathy of what it must feel like to be attracted to someone and not be able to act on that attraction. I was just like, oh, maybe that’s a burden that they have to have. And I would rationalize that with my religion.”

Context of Previous Sexual Minority Relationships

This subtheme includes descriptions of relationships held by participants with sexual minority people other than the friendship they described for this study. Most participants had experienced at least one relationship with a sexual minority person, although not as close as the friendship being described for the study. Many of these relationships were described as being a positive influence in their life, while other friendships brought to light negative perceptions about sexual minority people within the heterosexual participant.

One or more close relationships with a sexual minority person. A couple of participants described other close relationships with a sexual minority person, occurring during college or high school. The relationships were portrayed as helping the participant to learn more and become more comfortable towards sexual minority people and issues. One participant reflected on the impact of their previous friendships as it related to their learning in graduate school, stating: “Grad school helped me learn, helped me to have those conversations and learn to be comfortable. I kept having conversations about what it was like to identify as lesbian or identify as gay or even trans.”

Past relationships with sexual minority people, but not as close as current friendship. Most heterosexual participants described at least one previous relationship with a sexual minority person prior to the close friendship being described for this study. Some participants described these relationships as being impactful in some way towards Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development, including becoming aware of sexual minority issues and increased comfort around sexual minority people. One participant described a relationship that had led to further questioning about their religiously-based beliefs about sexual minority people, stating, “But going into college, also, undergrad, I went to Catholic college where I think I knew one person who was out, and that was about it. So I started thinking about things more. But I think I was kind of in an undecided state about, oh is the acting on [a same-sex relationship] as I was taught part wrong or not?”

First friendship with a sexual minority person. Several participants acknowledged that the friendship that they were describing in the study was their first friendship with a sexual minority person who was out to them. One heterosexual participant explained, “Coming from, you know, a really small town, I hadn’t had much exposure. I grew up in a really small town in

[the Midwest]. I think he might have been the first sexual minority that I was, that I'd ever had more than like, you know, a very very brief interaction with." A sexual minority participant described their impression of their heterosexual friend, stating, "I don't think he really thought about it very much before. I don't think, in his mind...he ever thought of himself as a person who was anti-LGBT or anything like that. But I also don't think he really had any close gay friends until me. He seems to be a little bit wary about talking about gay things."

Description and Progression of Friendship

This major theme describes the friendship between the heterosexual and sexual minority person (see *Figure 3*). Included in this theme is a description of how the heterosexual learned about the sexual minority person's sexual orientation and their reactions to learning their new friend's sexual identity. Also described in this theme are the specific friendship dynamics perceived by the heterosexual friend and the sexual minority friend.

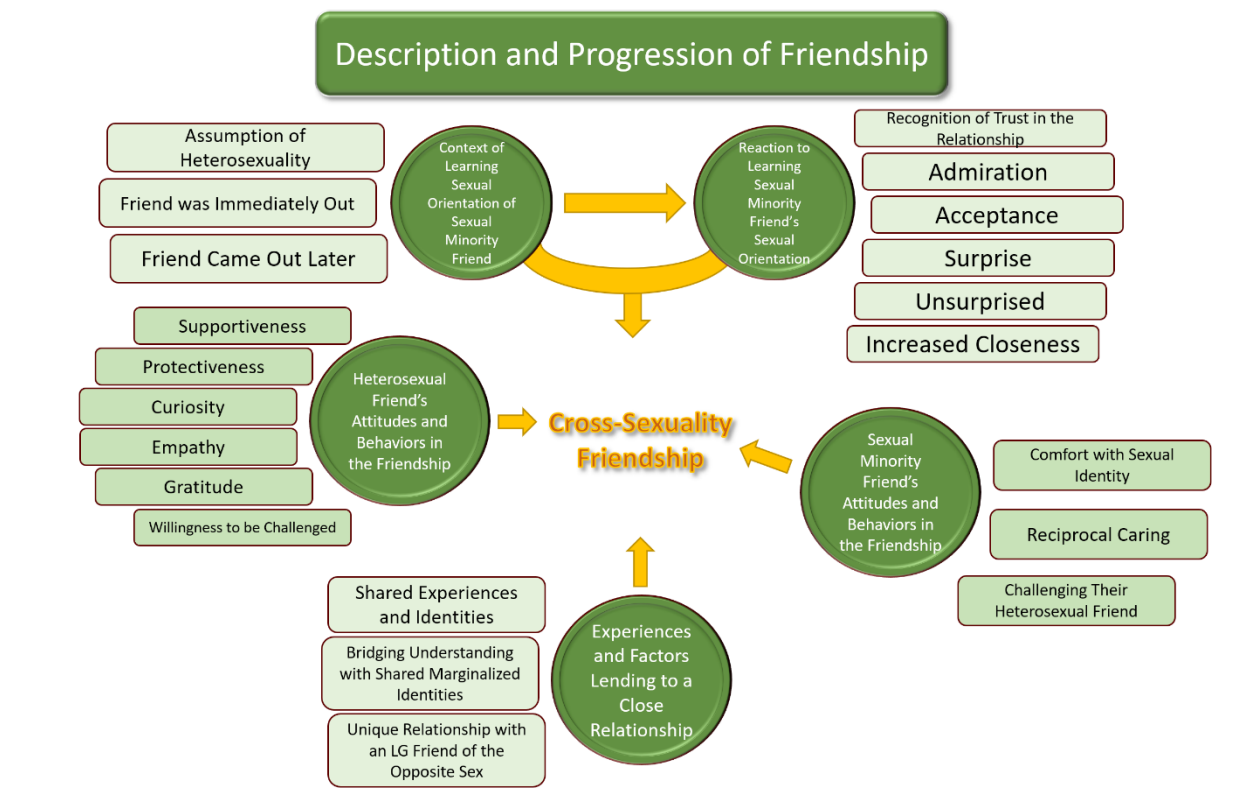


Figure 3. Description and Progression of the Friendship

Context of Learning Sexual Orientation of Sexual Minority Friend

This subtheme describes the context of how the heterosexual person learned about the sexual minority person's sexual orientation, including whether or not they were immediately out, whether they came out to their heterosexual friend later, and if the friend initially assumed that the sexual minority person was heterosexual.

Assumption of heterosexuality. Some participants initially assumed that the sexual minority person was heterosexual, demonstrating a general attitude of heteronormativity, particularly if that person is not displaying stereotypical characteristics that are perceived as belonging to the sexual minority person. For example, one participant stated, "There's definitely aspects that I see in myself of you know, heteronormativity. I probably assumed that she was in a heterosexual relationship before she disclosed that." Another participant described an assumption

that their sexual minority friend was heterosexual because they had not disclosed their sexual identity sooner, stating, “So that kind of took me aback because her only significant relationship then—it was kind of like, ‘Oh, okay, I get that, I see that,’ um, and that it was just a part of who she was. It didn’t really give me any more thought than like, oh, you’ve never talked about women before, but okay.”

Friend was immediately out (implicitly or explicitly). Most participants described situations in which it was immediately known that the sexual minority person was not heterosexual—either upon the first meeting or shortly thereafter. The sexual minority person was described as being forthcoming about their sexual identity, either by explicitly coming out or identifying as sexual minority or by implicitly signaling their sexual orientation by alluding to same-sex romantic or sexual behaviors (e.g., discussing a same-sex romantic partner). For example, one participant discussed their new friend openly discussing same-sex romantic endeavors, although they did not declare their sexual minority identity by stating explicitly that they were gay: “So when we first met, I had that hypothesis, and then, kind of colloquially, he just... I think it was within our first meeting ... he wasn’t in a relationship at the time, but he had referenced something about dating men or seeing other men or something like an online dating profile for men. ... He never fully came out to the group, it was just kind of known off the bat. The way that he spoke, and yeah, I guess ever since then, there’s just been reference to, and kind of talked about it in a just a very normative way.”

Some heterosexual participants also picked up on cues that were perceived to signal a sexual minority identity. Many of these cues were based upon perceived stereotypes of sexual minority people, such as a non-gender conforming appearance or specific vernacular that was

used. The heterosexual person may have also assumed a sexual minority sexual orientation based upon academic, research, and work interests that were sexual minority-related.

Friend came out later. This subtheme describes the scenarios in which the sexual orientation of the sexual minority person revealed their identity later, after the initial getting-to-know-you phase of the relationship. This scenario occurred when the sexual minority friend was closeted to some people and then determined that the heterosexual person was safe enough to come out to. One participant explained, “It was disclosed to me by this person directly, um, in somewhat confidence. ... She warmed up and trusted me enough to share that.” All participants acknowledged that their sexual minority friend came out to them within the first year of their friendship, from 2 months to 8 months after the beginning of the friendship.

Reactions to Learning the Sexual Minority Friend’s Sexual Orientation

This subtheme describes the heterosexual person’s immediate reactions to learning their friend’s sexual orientation. Most of the reactions disclosed appeared to be positive and affirming, with few difficulties to learning the sexual minority friend’s sexual orientation.

Recognizing trust in the relationship. Heterosexual friends recognized and respected the trust needed for the sexual minority friend to disclose their sexual orientation to them. This trust potentially stemmed from non-assumptive or affirming language (e.g., using gender-neutral terms such as “partner” to not assume heterosexuality) and generally feeling connected enough to feel safe with more risky disclosures. Participants discussed recognizing and respecting the vulnerability that it took to be open about one’s sexual orientation. Some heterosexual participants stated that because their sexual minority friend shared a vulnerable part of themselves, they also felt safe enough in the relationship to reciprocate that level of vulnerability. One participant explained this phenomenon for themselves, stating, “[Coming out] was a sign of

trust and the fact that she was willing to disclose it was a huge step forward. I think, in our friendship and since then, we've had much more open conversations, not just about the differences in sexual identity or sexual orientation, but just about other things. ... I think that was really sort of a pivotal moment in our friendship where she trusted me enough to share that information with me. In return, I trusted her enough, having sort of witnessed this disclosure, that she was willing to do that. To be honest, that made me feel like I could trust her more."

Admiration. Heterosexual participants expressed appreciation of the potential difficulty of disclosing one's sexual minority identity and of generally being out of the closet in society. Some participants acknowledged that it felt refreshing to know someone who was "unapologetic" about their sexual minority orientation. As one participant stated, "I think what impacted me the most was that this person was just open about [their sexual orientation] and proud of her identity and was unapologetic and didn't worry much about what others thought. I think I strongly connected with that piece of it." From a cultural and racial identity standpoint, some heterosexual friends expressed admiration for a person being out and open about their sexual orientation when that positive openness may not have been common within that cultural or racial group.

Acceptance. This subtheme describes the heterosexual friend's perception that they felt and/or reacted in a way that was accepting of the sexual minority friend's disclosure of sexual orientation. A sexual minority participant described their perception of their heterosexual friend's attitude: "She gives you that kind of personal aura, you know, that you can be safe with her. So there's never been a problem." This reaction was generally portrayed as not feeling or behaving in a way that was openly negative towards sexual minority people, or by not having difficulties accepting their friend's sexual orientation.

Surprise. This subtheme describes the general reaction of surprise that some heterosexual friends felt upon learning their sexual minority friend's sexual orientation. A reaction of surprise may have stemmed from assuming that the sexual minority friend was heterosexual and general heteronormative attitudes overall. Furthermore, some heterosexual friends admitted being surprised at their friend's sexual orientation because they did not conform to stereotypes held about sexual minority people. Additionally, some heterosexual people saw a sort of incompatibility between their religious or socio-cultural background and a concurrent sexual minority identity. One heterosexual participant expressed many of these aspects, stating, "I remember being surprised because we had some similarities in our background. Like we both came from pretty conservative Christian backgrounds and you know, just kind of the stereotypes in that culture is that being a sexual minority is not really super accepted. ... I guess she didn't fit what I considered... you know, I hadn't actually had tons of sexual minority friends up until that point. So she didn't fit whatever stereotype I had in my head, of what a sexual minority person is like."

Unsurprised. On the other hand, some participants experienced the opposite reaction. This subtheme describes a lack of surprise upon learning their sexual minority friend's sexual orientation. The lack of surprise may have stemmed from contextual clues picked up during conversations or traits that conformed to the heterosexual person's stereotypes about sexual minority people. As one participant stated, "I think I was not surprised in the least. She definitely gender bends. And so I think that she sometimes fills some of the stereotypes that I think lesbian women are known for." Some heterosexual participants also described holding a general attitude of not assuming a person's sexual orientation.

Increased closeness. Heterosexual participants described feeling closer to their sexual minority friend as a result of the more vulnerable disclosure of sexual orientation, particularly if the friend was not explicitly out to everyone. This subtheme appears to also interact with some of the aspects of the “recognizing trust in the relationship” subtheme. Both of these subthemes deepen the friendship by the process of reciprocal personal sharing. As one participant described, “After she had disclosed that information about her identity to me, that made the friendship really take off. ... Closed any artificial gap between us, so to speak.”

Sexual Minority Friend’s Attitudes and Behaviors in the Friendship

This subtheme describes significant aspects of the sexual minority friend’s attitudes and behavior towards their heterosexual friend within their relationship. The dynamics noted here seemed to be significant in affecting the heterosexual person’s Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.

Openness and comfort with sexual identity within the friendship. The sexual minority friend expressed, implicitly and explicitly, comfort with their sexual identity to their heterosexual friend. A heterosexual person described their reactions to their sexual minority’s openness and confidence about their sexual identity: “When [S] and I first met, I would say that she was—she intimidated me. ... She has this very strong personality and she is very adamant about her position on things and she’s very—she’s like, super intelligent. Um, knows so much. So, when I first met her, I was definitely intimidated by just her perception of the world and her critical consciousness.”

Reciprocal caring, validation, and support. The sexual minority friend described reciprocal caring that helped them feel more trusting of their heterosexual friend. A sexual minority participant clarified, “She is a person who I would say has been the strongest support to

me in the program. ... When I'm not doing well, or I feel like I just need some extra help and support, and just someone to really go to, um...not necessarily a crying shoulder, but also a crying shoulder. Like, she's been the person for me." A heterosexual participant shared their thoughts about the supportiveness in their friendship, stating, "I think this person being receptive and open to helping me change and develop but also doing that in a way that valued me and valued our friendship, so I think that's kind of what helped us maintain a relationship.

Challenging their heterosexual friend. The sexual minority friend felt comfortable enough in the friendship to issue challenges to their heterosexual friend against the heterosexism or heterosexual privilege that they experienced with them. A sexual minority participant worried that their frankness about pointing out oppression may have been off-putting: "I worry sometimes that that makes it seem like folks need to walk on eggshells around me because they're worried that they might do or say something. ... I'm really critical of institutions and critical of systems that marginalize and perpetuate systems of oppression. As individuals, I'm a little bit more empathetic, because I recognize that each and every one of us, regardless of who we are, can accidentally, and will accidentally perpetuate systems of oppression. ... I feel like sometimes that makes it difficult for folks to have frank conversations with me, because they're worried that I might become offended or not understand where a person is coming from or be unwilling to really listen to a person's viewpoint, and then be able to have a discussion with them about why I agree or disagree."

However, some participants recognized the rewards as related to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development when their sexual minority friend challenged their heterosexism. As one participant explained, "If I ever said something ... that she interpreted as offensive or felt offensive to her, she would let me know right away." Another participant stated, "She pushed

me... like, I think I felt I was very aware of a lot of LGBT stuff before coming to my doctoral program and appreciating how we just have so far to go.”

Heterosexual Friend's Attitudes and Behaviors in the Friendship

This subtheme describes significant aspects of the heterosexual friend's attitudes and behavior towards their heterosexual friend within their relationship. The dynamics noted here seemed to be significant in affecting Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.

Supportiveness. This subtheme describes desire of the heterosexual friend to support their sexual minority friend, including supportive attitudes and behaviors. Examples illustrated by participants included a willingness to listen to their sexual minority friend, especially about any issues related to sexual orientation, and a willingness to openly communicate in these conversations. One participant described how supportiveness displayed itself in their friendship, stating, “I try to be open and frank about conversations ... I know I love her and that I'm always here if she needs to talk. When she experiences an oppressive encounter she will call me, and I think that's kind of telling.”

Protectiveness. This subtheme demonstrates a protective attitude that heterosexual participants felt towards their sexual minority friend. This attitude was often explained as stemming from being aware of the negative impacts of heterosexism, either from learning about heterosexism in general or by becoming aware of negative past experiences that their sexual minority friend suffered. One participant shared, “So for me the circumstances made me feel more protective of my friend, because I felt like no one else was doing it and I wanted to take them, and I think I still do that, take them under my wing and make them recognize that they do have an ally and just be that safe space where they don't have to judge themselves or worry about how they might be perceived.”

Curiosity. This subtheme describes the tendency for some heterosexual participants to feel curious about their sexual minority friend's identity and issues about sexual minority people in general. Some participants explained that they asked their friend many questions which stemmed from their ignorance about sexual orientation and sexual minority issues. Some of these participants later recognized that these questions may have been microaggressive, and regretted the way in which they expressed their curiosity towards their friend. A heterosexual participant described this phenomenon after their sexual minority friend had come out to them, stating, "Looking back on that now, I'm not exactly proud of how I handled that because I think it's ... this person just disclosed something to me and I'm playing 20 questions because *I'm* curious." Others explained that they felt curious, but refrained from asking questions, recognizing that they might be potentially inappropriate or invasive to ask.

Empathy. One of the more widely experienced reactions among heterosexual friends within their cross-sexuality friendship was empathy. This subtheme describes the empathetic connection heterosexual people experienced with their sexual minority friend as they became aware of general and daily hardships that impacted their friend due to their sexual minority identity. Participants described trying to adopt the worldview of that friend. Through this perspective-taking, participants attempted to feel what it must be like to navigate life as a sexual minority person and to face the realities of experiencing sexual identity-based oppression. Some participants noted that the empathy generalized to all sexual minority people, not just their friend: "I'm able to kind of understand more about other sexual minorities on campus. Not just like, this friend. I'm able to empathize [with] some of the experiences that they may have across the board. ... Having a close relationship with him as opposed to like a casual friendship, or like

even a friendship in which it's like, you know—I see them but I'm not like emotionally close with them, I think that makes a difference.”

This empathy was observed among sexual minority participants as well. One participant described what they observed in their friend: “Being able to understand and recognize the struggles that I have had over time has made her just a lot more compassionate. And like I said, not that she wasn't before, but it's a different type of knowing... that she has now, that she didn't have before. ... I think that [in our friendship], that we can talk about some tough shit. (laughs) ... So I think that being friends with me, and knowing what a sensitive person I am, her antennas would go off. So, she would be aware of somebody kind of maybe saying something out of turn, and then she would come back and check with me. And I think through that conversation, there was a deepening of her understanding.”

Gratitude for the friendship. Many heterosexual participants expressed gratitude for their friendship because of how positively it had impacted them and helped them to grow. This gratitude was often expressed after reflecting on how helpful and meaningful their friendship had been to them. One participant explained, “I cannot imagine her not being in my life. And I cannot imagine you know... like when I think about all the other people that I have the privilege to work with, and just the true joy...and I think, when you have someone who can be honest with you and push yourself and talk about sex and sexuality in ways that, I guess, I don't normally do.” Another participant noted succinctly the powerful meaningfulness that the friendship has played in their life, stating, “I feel really fortunate to have had this person for what I imagine will be a lifelong friendship.”

Willingness to be challenged. Some heterosexual participants reported a willingness to be challenged by their sexual minority friend, particularly in terms of their heterosexism and

ignorance about sexual minority issues. This subtheme describes the heterosexual person's openness to receive personal feedback and critique about potentially harmful thoughts or actions towards sexual minority people, as well as a willingness to be pushed towards Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development even if it might be uncomfortable or difficult. As one heterosexual participant reflected, "She really helped me to challenge some of my beliefs or helped me to more clearly understand some things that I thought I understood previously. Because I think, you know, unless you live the embodiment of an identity, you can never really fully understand somebody—something, no matter how much you attempt to. And so I think there [were] things that I thought that I knew, or things that I thought I was solid on in terms of my understanding about sexual minority issues ... but until I really sort of was able to sit down and have conversations about whether the clients that we were seeing or issues that we were talking about in class or things that [were] happening on the media, you know, have really helped to advance my understanding, and the way I articulated that understanding as well."

Experiences and Factors Contributing to a Close Relationship

This subtheme describes the unique aspects of the friendship that contributed to a close relationship between the heterosexual and sexual minority person. This subtheme includes three interconnected subthemes, including shared or similar experiences and identities, connecting over shared marginalized identities, and the distinctive situation of dynamics between a heterosexual friend and LG friend of the opposite sex.

Shared experiences or identities. Participants bonded over shared experiences and identities, such as being doctoral students. Cross-sexuality friends also connected over shared interests and hobbies and experiencing similar romantic relationship dynamics. For example, one participant shared how their friendship deepened, stating, "And you know, then we found out

we had things in common. We joined some similar activities. And so we started to hang out a little bit. And um... and then just the conversations developed from there. And then we would have long conversations at work about these issues, and the many issues that were coming up.” Another participant explained, “We also share something in that we both are in a long-distance relationship. ... There are a lot of differences in our relationships and some of these differences are related to them in a same-sex relationship and me in a heterosexual relationship, and recognizing these differences while also being able to connect to similar feelings about being in a long-distance relationship. That was another point of connection.”

The features of this subtheme are not unique to cross-sexuality friendships, but rather, are typical of any close friendship. The fact that participants were friends during their doctoral program, and thus connected as a support system for each other, is meaningful for understanding how the friendship was able to strengthen and lead to other aspects of the friendship that led to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.

Bridging understanding with shared marginalized identities. Many participants were able to connect and bond in their friendship over experiences relating to shared marginalized identities, such as racial identity or nationality. These shared identities helped the heterosexual friend to better understand the oppression faced by the sexual minority friend. One heterosexual participant spoke about bonding over shared racial identities and experiences that stemmed from that, stating, “We also have a lot of similarities in terms of the undergraduate experiences that we had. We went to historically Black colleges so that was another bonding point for us as well. And being a racial minority, I felt more connected to that. And also, the beginning transformation was kind of...[sexual minority people] are individuals. They’re people. You know, they have hearts. They have minds. You know, they go through everything like anyone else. I mean, there’s really

no difference with them. They have preferences, just like I have preferences. I had to really check my own biases and assumptions about how I may have treated someone or being presumptuous about something regarding a sexual minority status and kind of paralleling that to being a racial minority. There are some overlaps and definitely some differences. I think that connection and making that more plain for me was, like, the tipping point.”

Another participant bonded over being international Chinese students and also began to become aware of their identity as heterosexual, explaining, “Actually getting to know him and starting talking to him about cultural adjustments and identities as international students and as Asian, as Chinese and stuff like that, that’s what made me realize how being heterosexual shapes my experience a lot.” Additionally, some heterosexual friends belonged to a different marginalized community than the sexual minority friend, which also helped the heterosexual friend understand the systemic issues faced by the sexual minority friend.

Unique relationship with an LG friend of the opposite sex that deepened the friendship. Uniquely, some participants experienced a special dynamic that contributed to a deeper friendship with their LG friend. Specifically, this dynamic was reported among friends who held an opposite-sex friendship between a heterosexual person and a lesbian or gay person. For example, the friendship between a heterosexual man and a lesbian woman. This friendship dynamic allowed the heterosexual person to be released from any fears or hesitations about a romantic or sexual relationship with their LG friend, which contributed to a closer friendship. As one participant explained, “As I became closer and closer with [G], my barrier never went up with her because, you know, she identifies as gay and so there was never any sexual tension. She was the first person in my life that I had like this incredibly close, authentic, genuine connection of all of who I am and I didn’t need to protect myself with another woman. She just really

opened the door for me and wow, I've been limiting myself with other relationships with women."

Learning and Perception

This major theme describes learning and awareness gained about sexual minority people, and the internal processes that resulted from this learning (see *Figure 4*). The subthemes included are general learning and expanded awareness about sexual minority people, identities, and issues, and the internal processes stemming from that learning.

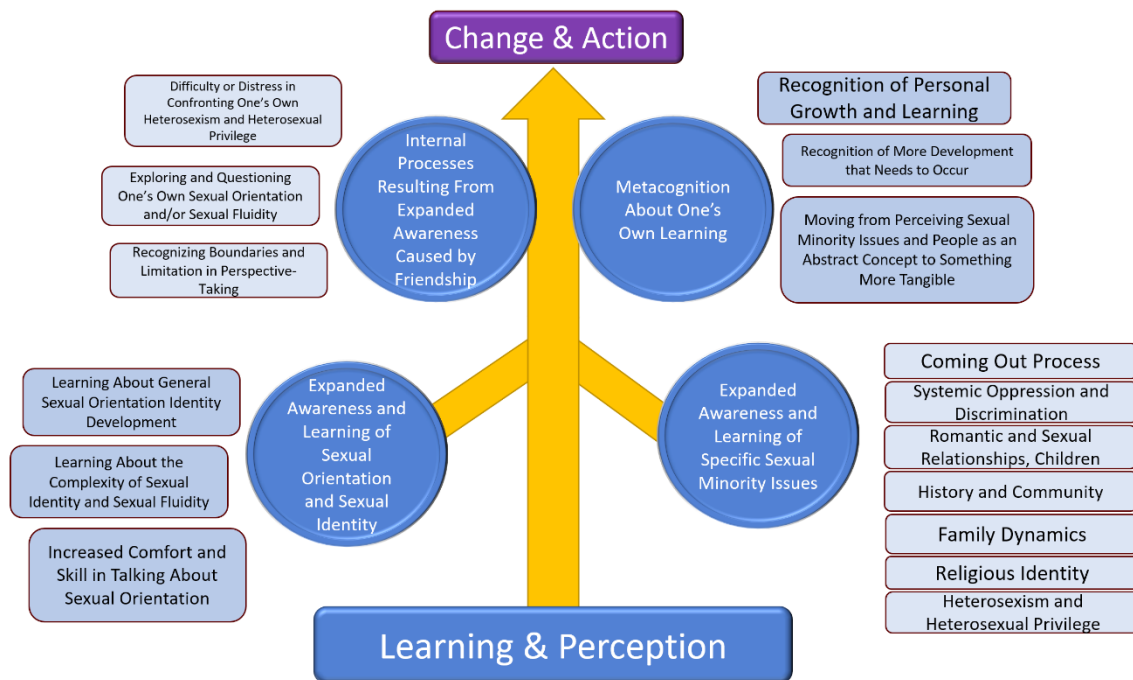


Figure 4. Learning and Perception

Expanded Awareness and Learning of Sexual Orientation and Sexual Identity

This theme illustrates the learning achieved by heterosexual participants about the general concept of sexual orientation and sexual identity development, gaining a more complex understanding of sexual identity and sexual fluidity, and the resulting increased comfort that occurred because of the expanded awareness and understanding about these topics.

Learning about general sexual orientation identity development. This subtheme describes the broad learning heterosexual participants acquired about what sexual orientation is and how sexual minority people develop their sexual identities. A heterosexual participant elaborated on the knowledge and awareness gained, as well as how that helped to deepen his friendship as well: “As our friendship began to develop, and I started to care about him more as a person and became more invested in the friendship, it kind of led me to naturally becoming more invested in learning more about these issues, and just being more aware, I guess, of all the nuances and subtleties that I wasn’t necessarily aware of in the past. ...As well as issues that he’s faced, you know, throughout his life, due to his sexual orientation, and know that, at times in his life, it’s been hard...you know, to identify as gay. So I think hearing him talk about his sexual orientation and how he has experienced these struggles, and hearing his story, has made me feel...more connected to him, but just to the community as a whole.”

Learning about the complexity of sexual identities and sexual fluidity. Beyond general awareness of sexual orientation concepts and topics, many heterosexual participants learned about the depth and complexity of sexual identity and sexual fluidity. For example, some participants spoke about learning that sexual orientation was not binary, and sexual identities may span across a continuum or be more ambiguously defined. Additionally, there may have been learning about sexual fluidity, where a person’s sexual identity may flux over time.

One participant described their learning about sexual orientation as “transformative.” Having a friendship that has lasted over a few decades, they explained that they first became aware of bisexuality as a new concept, and then over the years, have become aware of many other expressions of sexual identity. Another participant noted a perspective shift from a binary way of thinking about sexual orientation, to a continuum, stating, “I believe now that it’s a

continuum and it's not like...I guess it's more of a fluidity, where I never really thought of that before, I just that though oh, you're either gay or you're straight or...there's like boxes. That was kind of a cool, interesting awareness." Another participant reflected on how they view sexuality as being more complex, explaining, "So I guess in a sense it helped me to think just about how attraction works and like, 'could that be an attractive face?' I don't know, it just gave me a different way of thinking about how people love and develop love and attraction and sex and just all of the above."

Increased comfort and skill in talking about sexual orientation. Heterosexual friends described the experience of becoming more comfortable and confident when talking about sexual orientation. Some participants described the experience of no longer needing to be cautious when choosing words any more, or being overly preoccupied with doing or saying something heterosexist. As one heterosexual participant described, "If you have those conversations and they keep happening, I think that your confidence grows in being able to have them with [anybody]. ... I could be more empathetic and understanding of her situation but then also be able to speak freely about whatever thoughts came to mind without having to filter them through like, is this the right thing to say? Is this the right language? Like the filter just works automatically, you don't say dumb stuff anymore." A sexual minority participant reflected on the increased confidence that they observed in their heterosexual friend, explaining, "Both professionally and personally. So I think she got both aspects of that, yes. ... Definitely more confident and definitely more, kind of, professional advocacy."

Expanded Awareness and Learning of Specific Issues Pertaining to Sexual Minority People

Participants spoke about the multitude of specific issues pertaining to sexual minority people that they learned about, from more broad awareness of systemic oppression to coming

out, to various socially-driven issues. The subthemes described here are an illustration of the particular pieces of knowledge gained about the sexual minority population, and not the general knowledge or awareness of what sexual orientation, as I described previously.

Coming out process. This subtheme describes an increasing awareness among heterosexual participants of what coming out is, the process of coming out, and the potential risks and difficulties involved with coming out. One participant explained their learning about coming out, stating, “I think it’s made me more aware of other identities that people might be holding that they haven’t shared yet. [I try to be] more thoughtful in the things that I say—there might very well be a lot of things that they haven’t disclosed yet. It really made me sit back and think about what does it mean to use the phrase ‘come out’ to someone, what does it mean.” Another heterosexual person explained that they learned how difficult the coming out process can be, explaining that they had come from a community that was more accepting of sexual minority people: “I got to hear more about how hard that coming out process can be ... Because I feel like sometimes I don’t understand how hard it is... I think talking to [E] has helped me realize [that] even if it’s an accepting community, they can still—it’s really hard to—it can be really hard to say that, so. As he struggles saying this with his family. I think I have a deeper understanding of them in terms of like, how hard the coming out process can be.”

Systemic oppression and discrimination. This subtheme describes the learning that heterosexual participants gained about systems of oppression against sexual minority people, such as legal barriers, issues with healthcare, marriage, adoption, issues within the military, and racism and bi- and asexual-erasure within sexual minority communities. One participant summarized their learning about systemic discrimination, stating, “Simply recognizing the barriers are there. Again, I have friends who have expressed interest in having children or getting

married and talk about barriers. Some of them were married in one state and moved across states and their marriage wasn't recognized. That's horrible. They talked about healthcare issues, that's horrible." Another participant reflected on the complexities of having a partner seriously ill in a hospital: "And potentially if one of them had been in the ICU, the other one couldn't have gotten in because they weren't technically family members. And the...I found that appalling. ... Here is the face of real people who love someone else, why not allow that to be?" Although some of the issues that participants spoke about have since been changed in U.S. law, such as the national legalization of same-sex marriage, the revelations about systemic structures in place to discriminate against sexual minority people was palpable.

Romantic and sexual relationships, having children. Some heterosexual participants described learning about the difficulties experienced by sexual minority people in finding romantic relationships, what it looks like to get married, the dynamics involved in bisexual people having relationships with either men or women, and the complexities of starting a family and adoption among same-sex couples. As one participant explained, "As a heterosexual male, I think as I think about family and what that looks like. And then, like at the age I am and the age that my friend is, that's something that comes up and that's come up in conversation. Like, what does it look like, having a family? Who's going to carry the baby...things like that. And those aren't, you know, things I necessarily have to think about."

Many participants were also able to recognize that despite some major differences in the specific properties of relationships, there were many similarities between opposite-sex and same-sex romantic and sexual relationships. One participant explained, "It has also helped me think about relationships not just from like a hetero perspective, but there are things that kind of transcend relationships and dynamics regardless of sexuality. So even though it seems different,

and there are different gender roles and all of that, there are some core elements of relationships, like commitment, and just [in] general, couple's fights that are similar regardless of sexual orientation."

History and community. This subtheme describes the learning gained about specific nuances important within sexual minority communities, subcultures within sexual minority communities, and historical details that have influenced sexual minority communities. A heterosexual participant reflected on their overall thoughts about learning about the existence of sexual minority people in history: "One thing that I had never thought about before would be like, getting the history. Like, there's a whole history there. I was never taught it. I still don't know much of anything about it." Another participant commented, "I feel like I've learned more about sort of the nuances of being a part of [the sexual minority] community. Um, just sort of the subcultures that are in that community and the really particular issues that people in that community face."

Family dynamics. Heterosexual participants described learning about family dynamics that may be important to sexual minority, especially difficult dynamics due to the family rejecting or being critical of the sexual minority person. Only a couple of participants disclosed that the sexual minority friend had struggled significantly with their family on the basis of their sexual orientation. One participant explained, "When I hear [my friend's] stories, you know, most of it had been centered on family dynamics and [their] issues with it."

Religious identity. This subtheme describes the learning that the heterosexual participants gained about the many struggles involving the often-hostile stance of Christianity toward same-sex relationships. This subtheme was more elaborated upon by several participants, and it ended up containing a great deal of rich data in comparison to some of the other subthemes

in this category. Heterosexual participants described learning of the sexual minority friend's difficulties revolving around their relationship to their religious identity or background. For instance, some participants described situations in which there was conflict between their family and/or their religious community due to their sexual orientation. Some heterosexual participants noted that their friend may have ultimately rejected their religion due to the high degree of tension.

One participant noted that for themselves, "I did not grow up in a religious family and my friend did. And so I did not have anywhere near the awareness of what it meant to kind of come from a religious background like she did. Because I had no idea. There's like, kind of this construct that I was like... I still get amazed by kind of the craziness of religion and what it means for people who are struggling to figure out like, where do they fit on their sexual spectrum? What does that mean for them? And that, to me, was also eye opening. I also didn't have as much awareness about the culture."

While some participants were initially ignorant to the struggles with religious issues with sexual minority people until their cross-sexuality friendship, other heterosexual participants stated that they had come into the friendship with some history of anti-sexual minority attitudes grounded in Christian-based values. So, this subtheme describes both an emergent awareness about religious issues among sexual minority people and also brought to the fore the personal struggles many sexual minority people face due to anti-sexual minority Christian values.

Heterosexism and heterosexual privilege. Heterosexual participants universally identified significant learning about heterosexism and heterosexual privilege. They described becoming aware of oppression they were previously ignorant about, becoming aware of their own heterosexual privilege, and thinking about the general struggles of existing as a sexual

minority person in a heterosexist society. Many participants noted that facing their heterosexual privilege, they realized they don't have to think about sexual orientation regularly, and have the option to never have to think about it. As one participant noted, "It wasn't on my radar, which is part of the privilege ... I never really had to think about it." Another participant reflected, "We could certainly go through life without giving it a second thought. You know, if you don't want to." Still other participants realized that they were blind to their own sexual orientation, because they never had to consider that there was something other than heterosexuality.

Many participants had learned about the daily struggles of sexual minority people by understanding certain experiences or situations. One participant stated, "I've never been called derogatory names just for holding my partner's hand. I've never been called an abomination. I've never had to be at arms with my religion or feel like I'm not welcome in certain communities. Those are all things that I had never even thought about prior to grad school, really. So yeah, my privilege is really quite incredible. And it's—it's pretty much on every level except for [not] being a man." Another participant found an emotional connection to hearing and witnessing their friend's struggles with heterosexism and the impact it made on realizing their own privilege, "So she, again through these conversations, as she talks about her experiences of being oppressed because she identifies as gay or because she doesn't look as stereotypically feminine or even because the oppression she experiences because she's Black. And every time we're talking about that, we're always like, it's always a huge confrontation of my own privilege. I just don't have the experience of... I just don't have to think about it. It sort of forces you to think about it and then you become aware of just how much easier life can be." This participant went on to state, "Everyday [G] gets angry. Every day she gets angry because of these kinds of issues. And I never do. I mean, I get angry for her, I get angry with her. But I don't have my own experience to get

angry about. When you really sit and you really think about that...the impact on somebody's life is just tremendous. And how that's just a completely different life course."

One other aspect of this subtheme includes participants understanding of their identity as someone in the sexual orientation majority group. As one participant explained, "I think I became very aware of--what am I trying to say—of the power behind my own identity. Of what it means to be a part of the majority group, and the benefits that are afforded me [because] of that. It's made this friendship and this disclosure that this person trusts me enough with, has made me aware of all the privilege I have because of my sexual orientation. ... I don't have to like, maybe put myself into a box. Like I wouldn't want to try to put other people in a box."

Violence against the sexual minority community. Some heterosexual participants spoke about learning of the realities with violence against the sexual minority communities. Some participants mentioned the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando, FL, which occurred during the interviewing period of this study. The participants speaking about this topic mentioned being able to see how the shooting had impacted the sexual minority community, and feeling shock and sorrow over the violence. One participant noted, "Being in this friendship and sort of witnessing my friend sort of deal with these things that are going on, um, both on campus, and just nationwide, you know...the whole Pulse shootings and everything. Um, [that] has kind of made me feel more connected to those issues."

Interaction of multiple identities. Heterosexual participants identified learning about the complexities of how other identities (e.g., racial, cultural, religious, etc.) interacted with each other. One heterosexual participant noted, "But then over time, as [my friend] felt comfortable with me, then we were able to talk about their sexual identity, the intersectionality between being Black in the LGBT community." Another participant contrasted their identities with their sexual

minority friend's different identities and experiences, stating, "Having his sexual minority status as well as his ethnic status, coming from a very homogenous group in [Midwest state], of straight white individuals, those two different layers of complexity, I think, really helped expand my perspective and how I see the world in making things apparent to me that hadn't been apparent before. Really being able to be close to someone who really holds those identities and really see firsthand the impact on the sexual minority community and the ethnic community... really helped foster, I think myself as a person, but also as a clinician, and definitely interpersonally as well." Concerning the interaction of sexual identity and racial identity, a sexual minority participant reflected on the learning that their heterosexual friend had seemed to gain, stating, "Her depth of knowledge has absolutely grown in leaps and bounds. I think that, for me, the most...important piece of that is the personal development. You know, in her...not that we were comparing oppression, so not exactly like that, but she is biracial, and so I think that we had a lot of discussion about the intricacies of sexual identity and racial identity. I mean, obviously I am white, she is not. She is heterosexual, I am not. And so, we can really kind of talk about how oppression affected us on a personal level, while still recognizing that the oppression is different, if that makes sense."

Internal Processes Resulting from the Expanded Awareness as Caused by the Friendship

This subtheme demonstrates the cognition and emotional reactions stemming from the general learning about sexual minority topics as influenced by the cross-sexuality friendship, including distress caused in being faced with personal heterosexism, examining and questioning one's own sexual orientation and sexual fluidity, and gaining awareness of navigating interpersonal boundaries as it relates to sexual minority issues.

Difficulty or distress in confronting one's own heterosexism and heterosexual privilege. This subtheme describes the inner conflict resulting from acknowledging and confronting personal heterosexism and heterosexual privilege. Heterosexual participants described feeling ashamed when faced with their own ignorance about sexual minority issues, acknowledging heterosexist biases, experiencing cognitive dissonance when faced with trying to be affirming to sexual minority people versus previously held conflicting values and beliefs, and generally acknowledging shortcomings about being affirming to sexual minority people. Some participants also described difficulties navigating conflicts with being affirming to sexual minority people and religiously-based anti-sexual minority beliefs.

One heterosexual participant spoke generally about the discomfort caused by their own personal heterosexism that they had become aware of, stating, "A lot of my own ignorance came to the surface. And that made me uncomfortable. This person would point out, you know, my blind spots and my biases. And that was uncomfortable. That was difficult because I had to own it. And I didn't want to at the time, because I was in this program that, you know, required... and I was going through this transition, where it required you to be more progressive. And I didn't want to own that I had these blind spots in these areas in my life that I needed to work on. And acknowledge these biases I had about sexual minorities. So this person highlighted a lot of that for me during our friendship, like [in] the early stages. And it was done...it was done gently but you know, I got corrected a lot. I think initially it was a lot of denial on my part. It was a lot of not wanting to acknowledge my shortcomings. As the relationship strengthened, I felt more comfortable in doing that."

A common difficulty that many heterosexual participants faced was reconciling religious beliefs with being affirming to sexual minority people. One participant described the discomfort

and internal upheaval that came from questioning their own heterosexism: “Particularly I’m thinking about something that occurred within my church, when someone came out. And this person was someone that was like, you know, very involved in the church and maintained certain positions and activities in the church. And when this person came out, they were basically asked to like, not participate in these things anymore. So I’ve just been really impacted and moved by the... or connected with people through their pain and the damage that it’s caused, even in a place that I hold great value in, such as my own church. It’s like, man, you guys have caused some major damage for people. And where do they seek comfort and healing? Because that’s where I do it, I do it through the church. And the very place that helps me restore and grow and find peace is—is, you know, wreaking havoc in other people’s lives. So that’s been a challenge. And I got to be honest, that’s still hard for me. Because that—that’s actually pretty fresh. It’s causing a lot of...confusion and dissonance for me, honestly.” Although the incident this participant described did not happen with their sexual minority friend, the friendship had led the heterosexual participant to think more critically about heterosexism that they witness and how they might be participating in systems that oppress sexual minority people.

Exploring and questioning one’s own sexual orientation and/or sexual fluidity. One consequence of being in a cross-sexuality relationship is that some heterosexual friends found themselves questioning their heterosexuality and/or sexual fluidity more purposefully and critically. As one participant reflected, “It really showed me to more fully question my identity. You know, because I was able to do it outside of the space of like, well what does it mean if I’m attracted to men? What does it mean if I, you know, had a same-sex fantasy? I was able to really just be okay in the ambiguity of it in ways that were a little bit different. You know, rather than saying I’m heterosexual and that’s it, and I’m never going to consider any other possible fact.”

Other participants wrestled with the concept of sexual fluidity, asking questions such as whether they had some sexual fluidity, and what did that mean in terms of their sexual identity. A heterosexual participant described their current thinking about fluidity and their personal identity, explaining, “I think I realize that even though I think my sexuality feels pretty fluid... Like, I feel like you can be attracted to members of the opposite sex and still hold a core identity. Like, I feel like that’s pretty fluid. I’ve been attracted to women before. I think my friendship with her and also my friendships with others, and working at [undergraduate school], I realize that even though I may have some fluidity and I may be attracted to women at times, my primary orientation is heterosexual.”

Recognizing boundaries and limitations in perspective-taking. Some heterosexual participants came to understand that there were limitations to their full understanding of sexual minority issues because it would never be their lived experience. Other participants discussed learning what was appropriate to have conversations about with their sexual minority friend, realizing that some questions may be microaggressive. One heterosexual participant summarized, “I think that with her friendship, there’s a few things that I’ve learned as far as boundaries. So I’m not part of the [sexual minority] community. And so the way that I might respond in a situation is going to be different than how I might respond if I was part of the community. So I’m very conscious of, you know...for lack of a better term, kind of staying in my lane... Speaking out but not speaking out as if I’m part of the community, as if I know everything about what it’s like to be a sexual minority, if that makes sense.”

Metacognition of One’s Own Learning

This subtheme describes the thinking and reflecting that heterosexual friends had about the learning and changes in perception gained as a result of their cross-sexuality friendship,

including reflections on personal growth, recognition of needed to grow more, and being able to understand sexual orientation issues in a way that is less abstract and more tangible.

Recognition of personal growth and learning. This subtheme includes the realization or acknowledgement of the personal impact that the friendship had upon the heterosexual person, including learning, changes in attitudes or behavior, and personal growth. For example, one participant noted, “I learned a lot from her. ... I’m constantly learning but I would never be so open if not for those friendships in my Ph.D program.” Another participant reflected, “The friendship has definitely been fundamental to my experience in graduate school, and I think shaping me into a different type of person than I came into this program being, for sure.” Another participant expressed gratitude, stating, “And really like, it’s a perspective that just has been so valuable to me, these friendships that have been so valuable to me because you know, I can talk about relationships and sex and sexuality, without having to worry about sex or sexuality.”

Recognition of more development that needs to occur. This subtheme describes acknowledgment from the heterosexual person that more learning and development about needed to occur. Specifically, heterosexual participants identified that they needed more education about the sexual minority community and issues, needed more growth in terms of working with their own personal heterosexism, and identifying a need to be more actively affirming. One participant reflected, “To be completely transparent, there’s a lot I don’t know about the LGBT community. I’m very aware of that gap in my knowledge base. Having these prior disclosures and then this one that occurred in the context of a psychology program, it made me really stand up and say, ‘I need to be more proactive in my learning.’ I need to be more proactive in my community engagement and seek out opportunities to act as an ally for this group, not just to sort of say it, but [to] act it.”

Moving from perceiving sexual minority issues and people as an abstract concept to making the issues and people more tangible and personal. Some heterosexual participants described the phenomenon of sexual minority issues becoming more personal and more “real” as a result of their friendship. They explained that the issues and knowledge felt more abstract or theoretical to begin with, but their friendship allowed them to have a more direct, personal connection which helped them to more fully understand the issues in a much more pronounced way. Several participants commented on this phenomenon. One participant stated, “As a result of this friendship, I feel more invested in [sexual minority] issues. I’ve seen how they’ve directly impacted my friends. And so, I feel more committed to issues that are present in that community. ... If I develop a deep connection with someone, I’m gonna care about what they care about...” Another participant related similar thoughts, stating, “I think it’s kind of parallel, like being in school and learning, you know, about multicultural issues, especially as it relates to specifically sexual minorities. ... Then I hear the different stories, especially from my friend and because we’re close and we’ve grown up so much in the past year, that it makes me want to step my game up more than that. It made me feel more that I had a responsibility.” Another participant commented on how connected they felt to the sexual minority community and the issues impacting them due to the closeness of their friendship: “It allowed me to approach it from a personal space. You know, because it wasn’t a theoretical other that I was advocating for. You know, it was my sister. You know, it was somebody that I loved. You know, somebody who I didn’t want to hurt.”

Change and Action

This major theme illustrates the movement towards an Anti-Heterosexist Identity, including addressing heterosexism for self and others, and developing professional competency for working with the sexual minority population (see *Figure 5*).

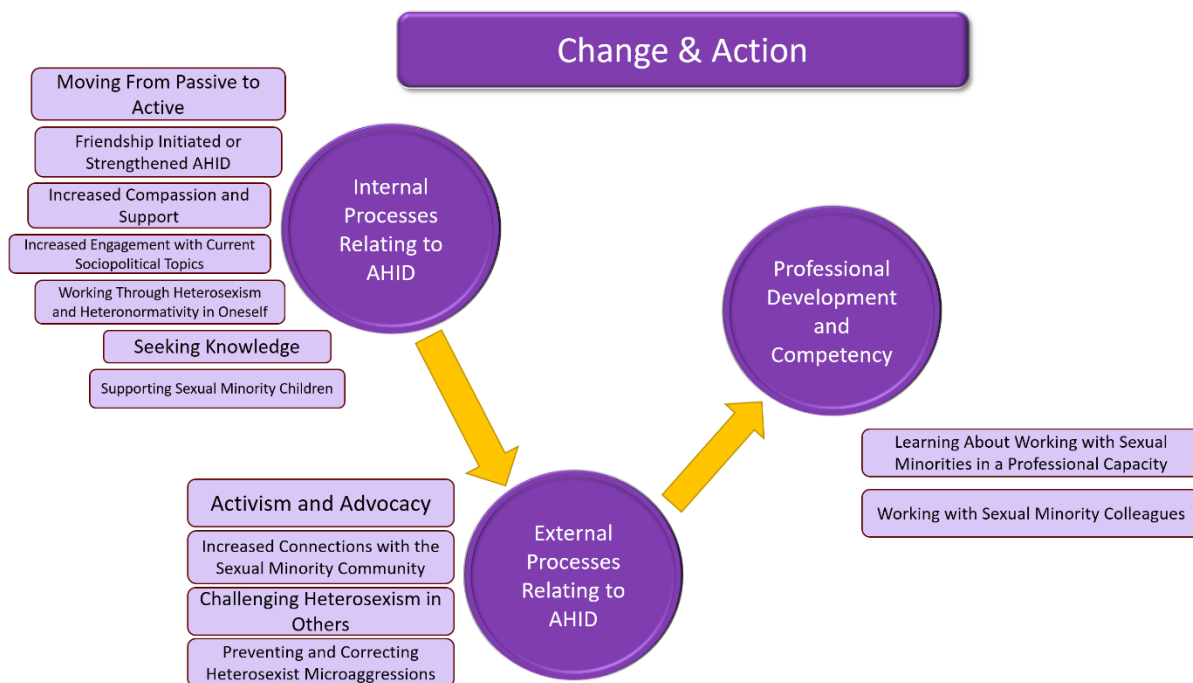


Figure 5. Change and Action

Internal Processes relating to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development

This subtheme describes the internal processes of changes in thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors culminating in the development of Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. Due to its usage in popular vernacular, most participants described themselves in terms of developing as an “ally” or a “heterosexual ally.” Although the concept of allyship is slightly different from the way Anti-Heterosexist Identity is being framed, it is very similar (please see Chapter 1 for rationale concerning usage of this terminology).

Friendship began the process of or strengthened Anti-Heterosexist Identity

Development. Heterosexual participants described their Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development as being inspired by their cross-sexuality friendship, or, if they had already begun development in this area, the friendship deepened their Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. One heterosexual participant described the way that their identity deepened because of their cross-sexuality friendship, “Things that go on [in] the community mean so much more to me because of my friendship with [S]. Like, they’ve...it’s always been, ‘oh yes, I’m in—I would consider myself an ally, oh yes, I would consider myself to be an advocate for gay rights.’ But now when I say those words, those words have so much more meaning behind it, because I’m actually doing something, if that makes sense. I’m not just saying that I’m an ally, I know what it actually means to be an ally, and how hard it is to be any ally, and what it’s like to stand up for someone.”

A sexual minority participant offered their thoughts about what they observed in their friend in terms of Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development: “She would absolutely identify as an ally. I think that she would’ve before, but now I think that she’s got, kind of, the knowledge and personal experience to back up what she would say. You know what I mean? If she was politically active, she’s definitely vocal about sexual identity issues, but I’m not sure how vocal she would have been in the past. Not, you know, not for any reason, other than she just might not know. And now I feel like she knows. And she could be an advocate, but also, stay in her lane. Like, no...like ‘yeah, I can speak about this to a certain degree but I’m not part of the community.’”

Increased compassion and support. Heterosexual participants identified increased compassionate attitudes towards their sexual minority friend and increased efforts to support their friend, including more listening and an outwardly accepting attitude. One participant

shared, “I think the biggest thing that comes to mind first is compassion. ... I’m really concerned about, ‘do you have the support that you need? How can I support you?’” Another participant simply noted, “I’m more inclined to listen” to their sexual minority friend.

Seeking knowledge. Heterosexual participants described increased behaviors of seeking out more knowledge about sexual minority issues, including reading books and articles on the topic, asking faculty, supervisors, and other mentors about resources, and attending trainings. One heterosexual participant noted some specific ways that they sought out more knowledge, stating, “Like I said, the trainings, the didactic trainings or the Safe Zone trainings, or there’s lectures on campus about LGBTQ issues. Usually I’ll make an effort to attend them.” Another participant reflected, “I know that I’ve taken steps to find out things and read more about sexual minority issues, talk more with my faculty members about resources that they might have that they use to teach and engage students with these topics.”

Increased engagement with current sociopolitical topics. This subtheme describes the increased awareness and engagement with societal and political issues impacting the sexual minority population, including broad issues and current events. One participant reflected on keeping up with sociopolitical issues, noting, “Certainly with what’s happening with...in the country right now. Particularly around trans issues and the recent federal law passing making [same-sex] marriage legal. If you weren’t proactive, I think it’d be very easy to fall behind. It’s important to be thinking about.” Another participant described their increased awareness of regional issues, “[In my state], when the federal government determined that gay marriage was, you know, permitted, [my state] really fought against that.”

Some participants described not just becoming more personally aware of these sociopolitical issues, but becoming more open about discussing these issues, in person and on

social media. “I have become a lot more active in posting articles and stuff on my social media about sexual minority issues and specifically on [Asian country’s] social media. I am recognizing that doing that in and of itself is not enough. A lot of people, some people, are doing that, but it’s easy to just do that and think, ‘I support gay rights.’”

Working through heterosexism and heteronormativity in oneself. This subtheme describes the increased awareness of heteronormativity while also the tendency to normalize sexual minority relationships and existence in society. The cross-sexuality friendships also led to questioning and processing personal heterosexism, often in multiple areas of life, including family, religion, school, etc. One heterosexual participant explained how they had begun moving away from heteronormativity, “So, having her in my life normalized that sexual minorities were there, that this was a part of who some people were, and here’s someone who I loved and respected. And so that piece was absolutely crucial in my movement... Because then here’s someone that I actually care about and yet I have these beliefs about them that are in conflict. And are they going to coexist or is there going to be some softening or some movement and we both, [A] and I both gave each other the time and space to make that movement. Her more so than me because she was more where she wanted to be.”

Another heterosexual participant discussed how they had been working with their personal heterosexism, stating, “...Having a safe space to explore some of my own issues was really helpful. Because it like...I wasn’t as fearful, trying to step into some spaces or because you know, I didn’t want to be wrong. Or I didn’t want to be seen as heterosexist or, you know... But because I had these friends and because I had their support, and because they were such close friends, I could go into situations that I might not have otherwise previously been in because of my own worries about how I would have been perceived.” In this case, the cross-

sexuality friendship was instrumental for the heterosexual friend to have the agency to confront their own heterosexism.

Moving from passive to active. Heterosexual participants recognized that they had moved from being more passive, to more outwardly active in trying to be affirming to sexual minority people, challenging heterosexism, and becoming more active in outreach or advocacy work. A heterosexual participant described their experience, additionally noting the consequences that has made in their other relationships, “I think where I’ve seen the biggest shift in my life is not being afraid to stand up, to say hey, don’t use those slurs in my presence or you shouldn’t use that at all. Like, just being able to stand up to people and calling, you know, that type of behavior out. I think that’s where I’ve seen the biggest shift in my life. That causes some friction. It’s caused friction in my own family and other friendships. But I’m okay with that.”

Supporting sexual minority children or thinking about how to support future children. This subtheme described how heterosexual participants supported, or anticipated supporting their current or potential future children if they were sexual minority. This topic was explored more widely during the focus groups. Some participants reflected on how they anticipated supporting a sexual minority child in their family in general. Other participants worried that their future spouse or partner may not be affirming to sexual minority people, and they wondered how they would manage that potential situation.

A participant with an adult son reflected on their experience of their son coming out to them, stating, “Okay so here...my son about two weeks ago let me know that he’s bisexual. ... In fact, I had told [my son] that one of the things I had wanted, as a mom, the one thing I had worried about was, the world’s still harsh with LGBTQ...and I don’t want him hurt. You know?” The participant went on to state that they were unsure that had they not experienced a close

cross-sexuality friendship in their doctoral program, they may never have developed their Anti-Heterosexist Identity: “I could’ve never known that important part of my son or I could’ve lost him. ... So yes, [the friendship] impacted me and I’m glad for it. And even though there were growth pains, it was, maybe it was not only to make me safe as a therapist and a friend, but also as a mother. So it affected every area of my life.”

External Processes Relating to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development

This subtheme describes the observable behaviors or actions that are affirming or supportive of the sexual minority population, including increased activity with activism, the sexual minority community, working with heterosexism in others, and working with sexual minority people in a professional environment.

Participation in activism and advocacy. This subtheme describes the activity heterosexual participants took towards supporting sexual minority communities, educating others about sexual minority issues, providing resources to people within sexual minority communities, and engaging with sexual minority groups and trainings. One heterosexual participant noted their increased activity in this area, stating, “I think that the compassion and even the advocacy part has grown. It’s evolved for me at a deeper level because of my friend. ... Again, in my role, doing outreach work across the campus at the university. Educating people more, making it clear that I am an ally. Simple things like having stickers on my wall or in my office that show that I am an ally. Having books so people can see that I am trying to educate myself to be a stronger advocate.”

Increased connections with the sexual minority community. Heterosexual participants described developing more friendships with sexual minority people, developing more professional relationships among the sexual minority people, and developing more connections

with the general sexual minority community. As one participant noted, “I definitely developed more friendships with those of a sexual minority status, both in school and in the community area. I have also been involved in projects, working closely with those who are a sexual minority.” Some participants also described their increased connections with sexual minority communities by going to local Pride events, for example, “She invited me to go to Pride in [large city] and I never would have even considered going before, it would have never even been a thought.”

Challenging heterosexism in others. Many heterosexual participants described situations in which they spoke out against heterosexism more, including with family, friends, community members, and others. Some people found that they needed to compartmentalize this behavior. For example, they may have found it too risky or futile to challenge heterosexism in some social circles. One participant explained in general terms the ways they have been challenging heterosexism more, “When I hear things, like stereotypes and derogatory statements, I’m much more likely to speak up and say, you know, I don’t appreciate when you talk like that and I tell people that, ‘I don’t agree with you.’ I correct people in my family and some of my friendships. [I] educate more than I did before.” Another participant described what it was like to challenge their family member’s heterosexism, saying, “My dad, for example, is kind of still really conservative Christian. And you know, I’m willing to engage with him in conversations about political issues that involve sexual minorities. I may not have been willing to do that earlier on in my life. You know, I just kind of accepted his views for his views and my views for my views. ... It can be kind of valuable for me to challenge him on some of that stuff. Because I wouldn’t want my dad running around, you know, voicing offensive views that could possibly

get him in trouble or affect some of his relationships. Because I know he has a good heart and he wouldn't mean to do that."

Other participants spoke about the difficulties they experienced in challenging loved ones: "Depending on who it is sometimes it can be scary. I have issues with my family, like the older ones. I don't want to hurt them, I love them, and they need to have a better understanding rather than be ignorant and make judgments about people. Now I think the biggest thing is moving down South, and it is very conservative. And I get the side-eye, what-is-wrong-with-you look as a person of color who identifies as a Christian and how they are very much against same-sex marriage and relationships down here...so I feel a little nervous when I speak up about it. But I try not to back down just because of emotion, I try not to. I can't say I'm successful all the time, it's a little like, okay let me put on my big girl pants if I'm going to have this conversation because I might be met with a lot of resistance from the people I'm talking with."

Preventing and correcting heterosexist microaggressions. This subtheme includes the efforts some heterosexual participants took to try and prevent committing microaggressions and taking ownership and correcting microaggressions that they became aware of committing. For example, a heterosexual participant explained the specific ways that they try to avoid causing microaggressions, stating, "...trying to be very careful about what words I use in conversation with people where I know that there might be things I don't know about them. Being very aware of not using binary language. Refraining from using any sort of stereotypes that might be embedded in cultural idioms. When I was around [my sexual minority friend], but it sort of prompted me to do that around anybody in the program or with clients."

Professional Development and Competency

This subtheme describes the professional development and competency relating to the sexual minority population that heterosexual participants gained as a result of their cross-sexuality friendship. Subthemes included in this category include working with sexual minority people professionally and working with sexual minority colleagues.

Learning about working with sexual minorities professionally. Some heterosexual participants described gaining education and competency for working with the sexual minority population in clinical, teaching, and research settings. A heterosexual participant described their work with sexual minority clients, “I think professionally [my friend] helped me be a much better clinician. I do a lot of...I’m one of the few people on our staff that does a lot of work with counseling sexual minority couples. And so really appreciating like, having that perspective with her allows me to connect with, I think, my clients in a different way—to really appreciate like, maybe what that really means.” Another participant spoke about gaining greater awareness in general about themselves and their relation to sexual minority issues, which they felt helped them be a more effective clinician to sexual minority people: “So I think that’s been the biggest impact professionally, is just changing my posture and acknowledging that I don’t know everything, acknowledging that I do harbor some...you know, I’m bringing my biases into the room. Knowing the impact that I could...the potential impact that I could have on someone. ... I want to be mindful of the impact that I can have, the impact that the therapeutic relationship can have on that person.”

Working with sexual minority colleagues. Heterosexual participants also described increased ability to work in an affirming way with sexual minority colleagues, including peers, supervisors, and professors. Participants noted that they felt more open and warm when

discussing sexual minority topics, which helped facilitate positive professional relationships. One participant reflected, “I think that’s the biggest thing that I’ve taken away is just having the level of comfort to be able to talk and discuss with [my colleagues and peers] about [sexual minority issues].” Another heterosexual participant gave an example specific to their role as a supervisor, stating, “I’ve supervised sexual minorities as well. And again, that like...because when you’re in supervision, sometimes you really have to challenge people’s assumption, how they view clients, right? And so because of my familiarity with the [sexual minority] community, and my familiarity with [sexual minority] people, you know, very deeply with some people in the community, I was able to ask questions and ask students to challenge some of their assumptions about the clients they were seeing both while working with sexual minority supervised youth, but also working with heterosexual supervised youth.”

Summary of the Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development as Influenced by Cross-Sexuality Friendships Model

The model I have proposed here describes how heterosexual people in counseling psychology doctoral programs develop Anti-Heterosexist Identities as influenced by their close, cross-sexuality friendships. To summarize, each heterosexual friend in the cross-sexuality friendship begins their relationship with a history. That history includes overall thoughts, attitudes, values, and behaviors towards sexual minority people, which can range from affirming of sexual minority people to rejecting of sexual minority people. This context and history also includes previous relationships with sexual minority people, whether this is their first cross-sexuality friendship or whether they have had multiple close cross-sexuality friendships.

The description of cross-sexuality friendships that occur during counseling psychology doctoral programs included the context of how the heterosexual person learned about the sexual

minority person's sexual orientation and how they reacted to learning about their sexual orientation. The description of the cross-sexuality friendship also included attitudes and behaviors of both friends in the friendship, and other factors that contributed to a close relationship. The dynamics within the friendship, including specific experiences with the sexual minority friend, led the heterosexual person to engage with greater learning and awareness of sexual orientation and sexual minority issues. Major topics of learning included gaining knowledge about the concept of sexual orientation and learning about the complex nuances of sexual identity. Heterosexual people also gained significant knowledge about specific sexual minority issues, spanning from heterosexism and heterosexual privilege to the coming out process, among many others. Internal processes that stemmed from this new learning included distress from confronting personal heterosexism, exploring and questioning one's own heterosexuality, and recognizing limitations in perspective-taking. Heterosexual people also reflected on their own learning, recognizing the personal growth that had been produced, recognizing more growth that needed to occur, and recognizing that sexual minority issues had become more personal and tangible because of their cross-sexuality friendship.

The increased learning and awareness led to change and action within the heterosexual friend. Changes to the heterosexual person included internal changes, such as increased engagement, activity, and working directly with personal heterosexism. External changes included increased connections to sexual minority communities, increased activism and advocacy, and challenging heterosexism in others. Finally, professional competency with working with sexual minority clients and colleagues was improved. The culmination of the four major themes—Context and History, Description and Progression of the Friendship, Learning and Perception, and Change and Action—describe how cross-sexuality friendships impact Anti-

Heterosexist Identity Development.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this investigation was to form a theory of how the friendships between heterosexual and sexual minority people affect the heterosexual person's Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. In this chapter, I will expand upon the results that were outlined in the previous chapter and address this study's original research questions. In this chapter, I will also include the strengths and limitations of this study, implications for understanding Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development and training of counseling psychology trainees, and finally, suggestions for future research.

Summary of Findings

The results of this study revealed some of the powerful ways that cross-sexuality friendships can impact heterosexual people in counseling psychology doctoral programs. As the theoretical model illustrates, each heterosexual person enters the cross-sexuality friendship with a background and a history of attitudes and values. These attitudes and values can span from overtly anti-LGBQ to affirming. Additionally, heterosexual people in counseling psychology doctoral programs came in with different histories of past cross-sexuality friendships. Some people had held past close, cross-sexuality friendships previously, or may have had cross-sexuality friendships that were not as close. Some heterosexual people indicated that they had not had any friendships with sexual minority people out about their sexual orientation prior to the one they described for this study.

The background factors were influential when considering the context in which heterosexual people first learned about their friend's sexual orientation, and the reactions that occurred due to this new knowledge. Some participants, steeped in heteronormativity, assumed

that their friend had been heterosexual, and were often surprised. For others, learning about their friend's sexual orientation was unsurprising, often due to the sexual minority person's comfort with their sexual identity and cues about their sexual orientation. The reactions that heterosexual participants experienced were overall positive, with an emphasis on admiration and acceptance. This is somewhat surprising, given that coming out can often be a risky action. It is possible that some heterosexual participants may have not been forthcoming about any negative or heterosexist reactions that they experienced. It is also worth considering that all the friendships described in this study were close friendships, so it is likely that there were no overly negative scenarios that would have driven a wedge between the heterosexual person and the sexual minority person.

Both friends contributed different behaviors and attitudes within the friendship that led to a close relationship. Specifically, the sexual minority friend was comfortable with their sexual identity and enjoyed reciprocal caring and support within the friendship. The heterosexual friends experienced empathy and supportiveness towards their friend. Most importantly, the friendship dynamic often included a willingness to challenge and be challenged. The sexual minority friend, for example, may have pointed out instances when the heterosexual person was making a heterosexist microaggression, or was blind to their own heterosexual privilege. The heterosexual friends were willing to receive these challenges, even if it meant some discomfort or distress, which led to personal growth. All of these factors provided an opportunity for the heterosexual friend to gain learning and awareness about sexual minority people and issues.

The increased learning and perception gained by heterosexual people in cross-sexuality friendships occurred in a few different aspects. First, heterosexual people gained general awareness about sexual orientation and its nuances, and gained increased comfort in regard to

talking about these topics and concepts. Similarly, heterosexual people also gained knowledge about specific sexual minority issues, spanning several social and political topics, including understanding heterosexism and heterosexual privilege. Participants in this study described some internal processes that resulted from the expanded awareness of sexual minority issues. First, participants spoke about the difficulties that they experienced from confronting personal heterosexism and heterosexual privilege. Some heterosexual participants experienced significant distress when they realized that their values—often culturally or religiously-based—conflicted with anti-heterosexist values. Other heterosexual people, as they learned about sexual identity, began to examine their own sexual orientation and sexual fluidity more closely. Finally, heterosexual people reflected on the learning that they had gained due to their cross-sexuality friendship, recognizing that sexual minority issues had become much more tangible and important to them personally. They also recognized that while they had achieved some personal growth, that there was still more learning and growth that needed to occur.

This increased learning resulted in internal and external changes as well as tangible actions that were anti-heterosexist. Heterosexual participants discussed becoming more active in their endeavor to become anti-heterosexist, seeking out more knowledge and information about current events relating to sexual minority issues, and working through personal heterosexism. External changes also manifested among heterosexual people due to their friendships, and participants described increased engagement with activism and advocacy, connecting more with sexual minority communities, and challenging heterosexism in others. Finally, as a culmination of all of the gained knowledge and changes occurring, heterosexual participants discussed increased professional development and competency. Overall, the changes that heterosexual people experience in cross-sexuality friendships during counseling psychology doctoral

programs resulted in impactful changes leading to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.

Next, I would like to address the research questions that were posed at the beginning of this study, and how the results of this investigation answered those questions.

Research Question #1: By what process does cross-sexuality friendships among doctoral students in counseling psychology programs affect heterosexual understanding of sexual orientation?

In heterosexual identity development models, gaining an understanding of what sexual orientation is and one's own heterosexuality typically occurs early on during heterosexual identity development (Eliaison, 1995; Mohr, 2002; Sullivan, 1998; Simoni & Walters, 2001; Worthington et al., 2002). The answer to this research question is addressed the most directly in the Learning and Perception theme, particularly in regard to the Expanded Awareness and Learning of Sexual Orientation and Sexual Identity subthemes. That is, participants reported that the friendship promoted an environment in which the heterosexual person felt comfortable and motivated enough to recognize the importance of sexual orientation issues and start to understand how heteronormativity works. Participants learned information about different sexual orientations, with greater learning about other orientations beyond just gay and lesbian identities. Heterosexual friends may have also learned about sexual minority identity development, in addition to their own greater understanding of heterosexual identity development. Finally, heterosexual friends learned about the complexities of sexual orientation, such as learning that sexual orientation was not binary, and that sexual identities may span across a continuum or may be more ambiguously defined. Many participants in this study gained knowledge about sexual fluidity, understanding that sexual identity may change over time. The knowledge gained about sexual orientation seemed to be initiated or furthered through the influence of the cross-sexuality friendship.

Research Question #2: What is the general experience of heterosexuals in their cross-sexuality friendships?

This research question is primarily addressed in the Description and Progression of the Friendship theme, which describes how the friendship began, the attitudes and behaviors of both friends in the relationship, and factors within the relationship that contributed to a close relationship. Participants generally described their friendships as being meaningful and positive, although there may have been some discomfort that stemmed from working through personal heterosexism or heterosexual privilege. A relationship characterized by negative interactions and experiences is unlikely to result in a close friendship, which may help to explain why the participants in this study had a noticeable lack of negative experiences.

Within the friendship, heterosexual friends tended to exhibit empathy, supportiveness, and protectiveness within their friendship. This may have been in part due to the experience of the friendship that allowed them to feel more directly and personally connected to sexual minority issues. Participants described the friendship as having made sexual minority issues more “real” and less abstract, compared to knowledge gained simply from learning about the issues in a textbook. This more personal stake in sexual minority issues was portrayed as helping heterosexual people understand sexual minority issues in a deeper and more pronounced way. Galupo’s (2009) study similarly found that cross-sexuality friendships seem to increase sensitivity to sexual minority perspectives among heterosexual people.

Heterosexual friends also tended to describe having curiosity about sexual minority concepts and issues within their friendship. The curiosity described by participants often fell under two general topics, including curiosity about sexual minority issues in general and curiosity about experiences specific to their sexual minority friend. This finding connects to

Weinstock and Bond's (2008) discovery that cross-sexuality friendships foster a deeper appreciation for sexual diversity among heterosexual people. For heterosexuals that didn't know much about sexual minority issues generally, there was often curiosity about what sexual orientation was and trying to understand their friend outside of a heteronormative viewpoint. Many heterosexuals also expressed curiosity directly to their friends about what their sexual identity meant to them and what it was like for them to initially come out. This curiosity may have led to increased motivation to learn more outside of the friendship, which is expressed in the Learning and Awareness theme.

One salient dynamic within these cross-sexuality friendships was the willingness for the sexual minority friend to challenge their heterosexual friend, and the heterosexual friend's willingness to be challenged. Sexual minority friends that were described in this study, perhaps influenced by their comfort with their sexual identity and trust in the friendship, seemed to be generally unwilling to let heterosexism and heterosexist microaggressions be ignored within the cross-sexuality friendship. Likewise, heterosexual participants expressed a willingness to engage with their ignorance about sexual minority issues and personal heterosexism within their friendship. The sexual minority friends risked backlash by presenting the challenge, because heterosexual people might become defensive when confronted with their personal heterosexism. The openness and willingness to self-critique and work through difficult thoughts and emotions led to meaningful personal growth for the heterosexual person.

This aspect is particularly interesting because it underscores the role that cross-sexuality friendships can play in the conflict-oriented stages of heterosexual identity models. For example, Worthington et al.'s (2002) model includes the diffusion status, which is characterized by a confused identity, and can only be resolved through active exploration. Simoni and Walters

(2001) describe the Diffusion stage in their model, which relates to the confusion and turmoil that arises when heterosexual people first began to see heterosexual privilege. If a heterosexual person experiences positive growth out of this stage, they enter a stage called Pseudo-Independence, in which they acknowledge their sexual orientation and recognize the oppression of sexual minority people. This stage is followed by Autonomy, in which heterosexual people fully acknowledge their heterosexual privilege and develop an integrated Anti-Heterosexist Identity. The friendships as described in this study seemed to create a safe and supportive place that heterosexual people could be challenged on their heterosexism and heterosexual privilege, which seemed to ease the movement through the developmental stages that tend to cause a great deal of upheaval.

Finally, heterosexual friends tended to experience a sense of gratitude for their friendships. Despite any discomfort due to facing personal heterosexual privilege and heterosexism, the heterosexual friends seemed to feel grateful for their friendship not only because of the benefits endowed through friendship, but also because of the personal growth that they experienced because of their cross-sexuality friendship.

The results from this study expand upon other findings about cross-sexuality friendships in the literature. For example, Grigoriou's (2004) study on the friendships between gay men and heterosexual women focused the closeness of these relationship. The current study goes beyond just listing the positive and negative outcomes that occur as a result of the cross-sexuality friendship, and elucidates some of the processes that heterosexual people experience within these friendships.

Research Question #3: How is the heterosexual friend's experience and understanding of heterosexism and heterosexual privilege influenced as a result of their cross-sexuality friendship?

All participants identified significant learning about heterosexism and heterosexual privilege. For instance, participants described becoming aware of oppression based upon sexual identity that they were previously ignorant about. They also described significantly increased knowledge about heterosexism. Most participants also described becoming more aware of their own heterosexual privilege in many aspects of their lives. Increased awareness about heterosexism led heterosexual people in this study to think more about the general struggles of how sexual minority people exist in a heterosexist society.

Heterosexuals described a better understanding of the ways in which institutions oppress sexual minority people, including legal barriers, issues with healthcare, marriage, adoptions, and issues within the military. Participants also described learning about racism within sexual minority communities, and the tendency for sexual identities other than gay and lesbian to go largely unacknowledged by sexual minority communities (e.g., bi-erasure and asexual-erasure). They also described increased understanding of the coming out process, including what coming out means, what the process might look like, and the potential risks involved with coming out. Heterosexual participants described learning about the history of sexual minority issues, violence against sexual minority communities, and issues with anti-sexual minority sentiment within religious institutions. Additionally, heterosexual participants expressed learning about difficult family dynamics, what romantic and sexual relationships can look like, and how same-sex couple have children. Furthermore, knowledge was gained about the complex ways that multiple identities can interact, such as with racial, cultural, and religious identities. All of these specific issues are tied into the multiple, systemic ways that heterosexism permeates the different

structures that exist within society.

The Internal Processes Resulting from Expanded Awareness Caused by Friendship subtheme describes the reactions that heterosexual participants experienced upon learning about these issues. Participants thought not just about heterosexual privilege and heterosexism in general, but thought about their personal privileges and biases that they may not have been aware of previously. Many participants acknowledged that they did not have to think about their privilege or heterosexism, which was a privilege in of itself. Some participants experienced distress or discomfort when they were confronted with their personal heterosexism and heterosexual privilege. The discomfort seemed to come from feeling guilty when realizing that past attitudes and behaviors have been harmful towards sexual minorities. Participants described feeling ashamed about their ignorance about sexual minority issues and facing personal heterosexist biases. This finding is in line with Duhigg, Rostosky, and Gray's (2010) and Simoni and Walters' (2001) finding that heterosexual people can experience significant guilt when learning about heterosexual privilege.

Additionally, some participants described cognitive dissonance when their values and multiple identities came into conflict. For example, a participant may have held the values of being open and empathetic to sexual minority people while also holding internalized anti-sexual minority messages stemming from their religious beliefs. Other participants described internal conflict with, for example, cultural values of heteronormativity clashing with their desire to be supportive in their cross-sexuality friendship. Mohr (2002) discusses this phenomenon as well, describing the cognitive dissonance, confusion, and lack of identity cohesion that occurs among heterosexual people who adopt contradictory identities in different social spheres.

Overall, gained knowledge and awareness about heterosexism and heterosexual privilege

tended to have a profound impact on the heterosexual person. Learning about systems of oppression based upon sexual issues and how it related to personal biases and privilege was often difficult and uncomfortable for many heterosexual participants. Heterosexual participants were able to challenge and continue to mentally process their own internal heterosexism. This was likely made possible because of the empathy, desire to support their sexual minority friend, and general value system of the heterosexual person. These findings are supported in the literature, which states that friendships between dissimilar groups—such as cross-sexuality friendships—tend to reduce bias and prejudice while increasing empathy (Galupo, 2009; Okech & Champe, 2008; Weinstock & Bond, 2008).

Research Question #4: How (if at all) has the heterosexual friend's perception of their own sexual identity as a heterosexual person changed?

Some heterosexual participants reported that they had found themselves examining and questioning their own sexual identity as a result of their cross-sexuality friendship. For some, the gained knowledge about the complexities of sexual orientation identities and sexual fluidity led to examining more closely how that fits into their sexual orientation. Some other participants more openly had begun to question their sexual identity and sexual fluidity. Many participants indicated that they held some sexual fluidity even though they still considered themselves to be heterosexual. One participant even formally identified as questioning their sexual orientation as heterosexual as a result of their friendship. On the other hand, some participants were beginning to understand what sexually fluidity was as a concept, but did not think it necessarily applied to themselves. For example, one participant stated that they had been struggling with applying the concept of sexual fluidity to themselves, stating that they were unsure if they were sexually fluid or not. Awareness of one's own heterosexual orientation fits into existing models of heterosexual

identity development (Mohr, 2002; Simoni & Walters, 2001; Sullivan, 1998; Worthington et al., 2002), and the cross-sexuality friendships in this study seemed to have a significant impact on this exploration and understanding.

Galupo (2008) and Weinstock and Bond (2008), in their studies of cross-sexuality friendships, also found that these friendships tend to make the heterosexual friend reflect upon their own sexual identity. The experiences as related by participants in this study can also be tied to existing models of heterosexual identity development. For example, according to Simoni and Walters' (2001) model, a heterosexual person is in the Pseudo-Independence stage when they acknowledge their own sexual orientation and acknowledge, at least partially, the sociopolitical status of sexual minority people. Similarly, Worthington et al.'s (2002) model characterizes the exploration of sexual identity among heterosexual people as the Active Exploration stage.

These findings also relate to heterosexual ally development studies. For example, in Dillon et al.'s (2004) study of processes involving how counselors-in-training challenged heterosexual attitudes, many participants reported that they had begun to become aware of their sexual identity as a heterosexual person. Duhigg, Rostosky, and Gray's (2010) study on factors that contribute to heterosexual ally development also noted that comfort in one's own sexual identity was important. Formal models of heterosexual ally identity development (Getz & Kirkley, 2003; Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995; Washington & Evans, 1991) unfortunately do not specifically address how heterosexual people become aware of their own sexual orientation. The current study helped to reveal more information about this topic. For instance, participants spoke about how their cross-sexuality friendships helped to break them away from heteronormative thinking about the world and also helped them to realize more specifically how their sexual orientation developed and what meaning that their heterosexual identity has for them in their

lives.

Research Question #5: How (if at all) has the heterosexual person's personal social and family life been impacted as a result of their cross-sexuality friendship?

The cross-sexuality friendships described in this study seemed to have an effect on how heterosexual participants engaged with their family and other people in their social circles about heterosexism and sexual minority issues. Although some participants stated that their families were affirming of sexual minority people, others came from family backgrounds who may have been heteronormative or overtly heterosexist. Heterosexual friends became more aware of heterosexism and heterosexual privilege and the harm that it can produce. Perhaps holding personal values against bigotry and feeling a close, empathetic connection to their sexual minority friend, led to less tolerance of heterosexism from other people in their lives. Many heterosexual participants spoke about the ways that they spoke out against heterosexism to their family, friends, and community members.

For many, challenging the people in their social circles came with many difficulties. Some found that they were able to work effectively in trying to change the mindsets and correct behaviors of loved ones, while others encountered a great deal of struggle and opposition. One participant described a situation where they challenged a family member about their deep-seated heterosexist beliefs, causing a considerable amount of strain on their relationship. In this instance, the participant felt that they would not be able to change their loved one's mind, and so avoided the topic with that person, although they challenged heterosexism in other areas of their life. Some others expressed difficulties in challenging heterosexism within their religious community that professed heterosexist beliefs. For some participants, this struggle was something that they were still working with in their lives, trying to navigate how to align with

their anti-heterosexist beliefs within a community that taught heterosexist beliefs. One participant, who had held their cross-sexuality friendship over the span of decades, stated that they had eventually resolved this personal conflict by leaving their church.

Although some ally identity development models mention engaging in activism or advocacy (Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995; Simoni & Walters, 2001), there is very little in the literature concerning the specific ways in which heterosexual people with Anti-Heterosexist Identities confront outside heterosexism from other heterosexual people. The current study was helpful for describing some of the specific ways that heterosexual people in cross-sexuality friendships have confronted heterosexism among their social circles.

Research Question #6: How (if at all) has the heterosexual person's professional life and professional identity (i.e., in regards to therapy, supervision, interactions with peers, etc.) been shaped?

Participants described numerous ways in which their professional life has been impacted by their cross-sexuality friendship. Many participants spoke about the ways in which they approached clinical settings, stating that, for example, they worked to provide affirming therapy for their sexual minority clients. While most participants described professional change in clinical settings, others were involved with teaching and research. In these instances, participants spoke about making sure that sexual minority issues were being addressed when appropriate, and that sexual minority people were being referred to or accommodated in an anti-heterosexist way. For example, one participant spoke about making sure that the voices of sexual minority research participants were included in their research study, whereas previously, they may not have placed any importance on specifically recruiting sexual minority participants into their research studies.

Another way that heterosexual participants were impacted by their cross-sexuality friendship was their relationships and professional interactions with sexual minority colleagues.

The types of relationships that participants held included fellow students, faculty, mentors, peers, colleagues, supervisors, and supervisees who identified as a sexual minority person. One participant said that because of the development they had experienced as a result of their cross-sexuality friendship, they perceived that they were more approachable to their sexual minority colleagues. Others discussed a sense of being open to talk about about sexual minority issues in their relationships with their colleagues, describing increased comfort and confidence about engaging with these topics.

Similarly to the previous research question, some ally development models talk about stages of development that include engaging in activism and advocacy (Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995; Simoni & Walters, 2001), but do not discuss specifics. There is little that the literature says about the specific ways that heterosexual people with Anti-Heterosexist Identities try to navigate their professional spheres in a way that is affirming to sexual minority people. This study again has been helpful in outlining some of the ways that cross-sexuality friendships can influence heterosexual people to take explicit actions that are anti-heterosexist and affirming to sexual minority people.

Beyond the Research Questions

Additional information emerged from the data that were not accounted for by the original research questions. These topics include issues and dynamics specific to racial and cultural identities, religious identity and beliefs, and concerns about supporting children who may hold a sexual minority identity. In this section, I will address each of these topics directly, focusing on the how they connect to cross-sexuality friendships and Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.

Racial and Cultural Identity

Although there were no specific questions in the individual interviews pertaining

specifically to racial, cultural, or national identity, extra sensitivity was paid towards these issues. Specifically, when a participant mentioned anything relating to cultural or racial identity, follow-up questions were asked as appropriate. Some heterosexual participants noted learning about the complex ways that multiple identities interacted with each other. For example, some participants learned that a person can hold multiple oppressed identities, such as being Black and lesbian. Furthermore, some heterosexual participants began to understand how the sexual minority friends were impacted by their multiple marginalized identities. Additionally, some heterosexual participants learned about the complicated ways that some identities may seem to conflict with each other—for example, as with a cultural identity that professes overall heterosexist sentiment. In these instances, the sexual minority person may have struggled in reconciling multiple, apparently conflicting identities. If their sexual minority friend held multiple oppressed identities, that seemed to help the heterosexual person's understanding and appreciation of the way systems of oppression interact with each other.

Next, some heterosexual participants indicated that they were able to deepen their cross-sexuality friendship by bonding over shared racial and/or cultural identities. Although there were no questions related to nationality on the demographics form, some participants disclosed their nationality during the interview. For example, some of the participants disclosed that they were in a friendship with shared nationalities or cultural heritage, which facilitated bonding within the friendship. Related to this, some participants discussed that holding similar marginalized identities with their friends helped them to bridge their own personal understanding of heterosexism. Participants explained that they achieved this understanding by reflecting from a personal standpoint of how oppressive systems can affect a person. It should be noted that this understanding only opened a window for the heterosexual person to try and understand

heterosexism based upon their own personal experience as someone with a different marginalized identity. That is not to say that all oppressive systems and marginalized identities are the same—each has their own history and context in society, and the ways in which these structures impact marginalized communities are different. For example, it would be inappropriate to conflate heterosexist systems to racist systems, even if there may be some similar dynamics coming from oppressive systems in general.

Finally, some heterosexual participants described discomfort when faced with confronting personal heterosexism stemming from values and beliefs held by their racial and cultural communities. As illustrated in the data, one heterosexual participant described a scenario in which they felt pulled in different directions by members of their racial group, their sexual minority friend, and the sexual minority community within that context that they were trying to be affirming towards. They expressed their frustration with the situation, stating, “And there was a ribbon that I think said ally, or it was a color that represented being an ally that you could put on your name badge. I think I had done that. And it caused a real big issue, almost like you couldn’t be African American and be an ally. You had to choose. So that was a real time of cognitive dissonance for me and [my friend]. I mean, there are people of color who are also gay. And I think that just didn’t seem to come across anybody’s mind at the time.”

Due to my status as a white researcher, there are limitations to the conclusions I can draw about racial dynamics as they relate to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development within cross-sexuality friendships. My intention here is to present the data and experiences here as they were related to me by my participants without drawing inappropriate conclusions that may be grounded in my own inherent, unconscious racist bias as a white person.

The findings of this study help to illuminate some of the experiences of people of color in

cross-sexuality friendships, which is scarce among the literature. It is clear from the data that the culturally and racially-bound experiences that heterosexual people have in cross-sexuality are unique to their white counterparts, making this topic a worthy discussion point.

Religious Beliefs

Heterosexual friends learned about the struggles that face sexual minority people in heterosexist religious systems. Although heterosexist beliefs may stem from many religious backgrounds, the faith discussed by participants in this study was Christianity. Heterosexual participants may have learned about beliefs that were hostile to sexual minority communities and the ways that certain religiously-based beliefs rejected sexual minority people. Some participants learned that sexual minority people can become alienated from their religious community due to the tension, and may seek out churches that are affirming or reject Christianity all together.

Similarly to the racial dynamic described above, some participants noted difficulty in confronting personal heterosexism as it relates to their religious identity. Some participants, for instance, described holding a history of heterosexist beliefs as it related to their background in their religious community coming into conflict with their developing anti-heterosexist values and beliefs. For some participants, this was an area in which they still felt “stuck” while they tried to decide what action to take or not take regarding their religious identity. Some participants suggested that they were attempting to reconcile the conflicting beliefs either personally within themselves, or more directly by trying to change the minds of people within their congregation. Duhigg, Rostosky, and Gray (2010) described a few participants in their study of ally identity as having a strong Christian identity. In this study, these participants explained that they rejected any anti-sexual minority messages as it related to their religion, although this finding was not expounded upon. Data from the current study relates how difficult and complicated it can be to

try to manage an Anti-Heterosexist Identity with a conflicting religious identity.

Supporting Sexual Minority Children

Another topic to emerge from the data was the consideration of current or potential future children who may hold a sexual minority identity. Only a small percentage of participants had children. Notably, one participant spoke about their adult child who had recently come out to them. They reflected on how much they had changed as a result of their cross-sexuality friendship, and worried about how poorly their child's coming out may have gone had they not learned how to be affirming to sexual minority people. In this instance, they expressed gratitude for their Anti-Heterosexist Identity development that had helped them welcome their child's sexual identity into both of their lives together. Other participants were planning on have children in the future and wondered about how they might try to be supportive to a child who held a sexual minority identity.

This topic was explored further during the focus groups. Participants shared that they had concerns that their future partner or spouse may not be supportive or affirming of sexual minority people, and worried about how they would navigate a situation in which their child came out as a sexual minority person. Additionally, some participants reflected on how they might be affirming to sexual minority children in general, and some participants shared the ways that they were currently trying to support others in their family that held a sexual minority identity, particularly if their family was not being affirming. The issue of supporting potential sexual minority children is not specifically covered within the psychological literature, making the data that emerged from this study particularly interesting.

Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development Among Participants

While Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development was not formally evaluated among

participants, ideas expressed by heterosexual participants that seemed to correspond with various stages of development as described in models of heterosexual identity development and ally identity development models. For example, a student who has held their friendship for a few years discussed exploring their sexual orientation and recognizing heterosexual privilege. Therefore, it seems to suggest that they were in the active exploration phase of Worthington et al.'s (2002) heterosexual identity development model, which is, in part, characterized by purposeful exploration of sexual orientation. It was clear that participants were expressing attitudes and behaviors that were indicative of them being in various stages of development. For example, from initial awareness of different sexual identities other than heterosexuality, to a deeper understanding of sexual orientation, and integration of a person who actively works against heterosexism.

Context of Cross-Sexuality Friendships in Counseling Psychology Doctoral Programs

One unique thing about the experience of cross-sexuality friendships among the participants in this study was that the friendship occurred during the course of their counseling psychology doctoral program. Although emphasis on diversity issues may vary from program to program, counseling psychology programs as a whole typically place importance on multicultural issues. The emphasis on learning about sexual minority issues may also vary by program, although several participants spoke about what they had learned about these issues in their classes, campus trainings and workshops, and research labs. As participants discussed the increased learning and awareness that occurred as a result of their cross-sexuality friendship, they often did so in connection with how it was interacting with their academic environment. It may be that holding a cross-sexuality friendship during one's training program helps to enhance the understanding of sexual minority issues and may help some students bridge learning about

diversity issues and systems of oppression and connect it to their friendship. As previously discussed, many participants stated that their cross-sexuality friendship helped sexual minority issues become less abstract and more tangible and understandable.

This finding is corroborated by some recent literature on LGBT allyship and ally development. LaMantia, Wagner, and Bohecker (2015) emphasized the importance of experiential learning for helping LGBT ally development. Although specific experiential experiences were not listed by these authors, cross-sexuality friendships could be thought of as an informal experiential learning experience. In the current study, participants had to navigate the learning within their programs with the dynamics within their cross-sexuality friendship. This particular experience appeared to lead to a great deal of increased knowledge about sexual minority issues and seemed to promote Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. Russell and Bohan (2016) warned of the limitations of allyship based only upon relationships with sexual minority people, rather than allyship rooted in values and understanding of oppressive systems. They argued that having underlying social justice-based values that recognize the importance of working against institutional oppression leads to more effective allyship. Although the topic of this study was on a specific type of relationship, cross-sexuality friendships, it could be argued that the friendship helped to transform existing heterosexist attitudes and beliefs to anti-heterosexist attitudes and beliefs. For other participants that professed accepting attitudes towards sexual minorities, the cross-sexuality friendship seemed to further their Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development in general. It is also possible that the concurrent education and training as a counseling psychologist helped to connect empathy produced by the cross-sexuality friendship, furthering the overall Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development for the heterosexual person.

Key Themes

Although this model presents a complex and comprehensive description of how cross-sexuality friendships promote Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development, several themes appeared to be more significant than others. In the friendship dynamics described by participants, the heterosexual friend often felt that they could more easily empathize with not only their sexual minority friend's struggles with heterosexism, but with sexual minority people in general. As many participants described, the cross-sexuality friendship made sexual minority issues become more tangible and more personal. The increased empathy as experienced by heterosexual friends led to a number of outcomes that contributed to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development, such as seeking out additional information about sexual minority people, confronting personal heterosexism, confronting heterosexism in others, and overall integrating an Anti-Heterosexist Identity into personal and professional areas of their lives.

The sexual minority friend's readiness to challenge their heterosexual friend and the heterosexual friend's willingness to be challenged was also key. The sexual minority friend felt comfortable enough to point out instances of heterosexism to their heterosexual friend and encourage personal growth towards heterosexism. This was likely because there was enough trust and openness within the relationship. Likewise, the heterosexual friend's willingness to be challenged on their heterosexism and heterosexual privilege, despite personal discomfort, was crucial. The openness to be challenged was perhaps a function of not just the closeness of the friendship, but also the increased empathy towards sexual minority people. The willingness to be challenged led to a number of helpful outcomes, including self-exploration of sexual identity, increased comfort with talking about sexual orientation issues, and confronting personal heterosexism.

Finally, the movement from passive to active was an essential factor for the heterosexual person's Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. This internal process helped heterosexual people move from passive support, and generally accepting that sexual minority issues were valid, to actively applying affirming sexual minority values throughout their life. For example, heterosexual participants sought out knowledge and confronted personal heterosexism. Participants also gave many specific examples of how they confronted people in their personal and professional circles to combat heterosexism. For some participants who were still experiencing difficulties in some areas of their lives, they experienced cognitive dissonance. Matching up values with behaviors led to a more coherent identity. The experiences of dissonance and identity integration match up with the stages described in Mohr (2002) and Worthington et al.'s (2002) heterosexual identity models.

Limitations of the Study

There are several important limitations to this study to consider when interpreting its results. First, I would like to acknowledge the role of researcher positionality in this study. Positionality, grounded in my own personal values and biases, influenced the way that the study was formed, how the study was carried out, and how the data were ultimately analyzed and interpreted. Specifically, I acknowledge that institutional oppression exists, and that it is something that we must work to dismantle. This study was created in an attempt to explore ways in which counseling psychology doctoral students might counteract heterosexism. The influences of race and culture were also considered as important factors that influenced participants experience. On the other hand, I want to acknowledge the limitations of my viewpoint as a member of multiple privileged groups—specifically my status as a white, heterosexual, cisgender woman. Because of this, I may have unintentional biases in the way that I conducted,

analyzed, and interpreted this study.

This study is also limited in its scope to sexual identities. This is an important consideration to note because transgender and gender non-conforming identities are often closely tied to sexual identities, and are often grouped together socio-politically. To consider gender identity alone would have required an additional study. However, despite the focus on only sexual identity, many participants blurred together sexual orientation and gender identity in their discussion. I did not include experiences related exclusively to gender identity in this study—for example, if a participant mentioned being engaged with the issue of transgender and gender non-conforming people and bathrooms. However, at times, it was difficult to parse out the construct of gender identity in participant statements. For example, I conducted the individual interviews for this study around the time that the Pulse nightclub shootings happened in Orlando, Florida. As a result, some participants spoke about this event under the context of increased knowledge about violence against the LGBTQ community. However, this specific violent incident disproportionately affected trans women of color, rather than the general sexual minority population. It is possible that participants who spoke about this event were unaware of those specific nuances, and were instead conceptualizing this knowledge more generally as it applied to the sexual and gender minority population.

Concerning the types of sexual orientations represented in the friendships, most sexual minority friends identified as gay or lesbian. There was no representation of some sexual orientations, such as asexual. Participants from any age range and status as a student or a psychologist were considered for inclusion of this study. As a result, some participants had much longer—some over the span of decades—to reflect upon the impact on their cross-sexuality friendship. Most participants, however, were still currently in their doctoral programs, and some

had known their friends for a relatively short span of time. Because of the great range of friendship lengths, some of the participants with shorter friendships had less to say, less to reflect upon, and might not have been as far along in their own Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.

I did not ask participants about their experience with sexual orientation issues as taught within classes or during clinical experiences, because that was not the focus of the current study. Therefore, it is difficult to talk about the values and attitudes surrounding sexual orientation within the training program and how it may have affected participants and their understanding of sexual minority issues. It would have been interesting to consider this dimension as it relates to the experiential learning that occurred within the cross-sexuality friendship.

Although the very nature of this study is subjective interpretation on the part of the participants and the researcher, there are some nuances that should be considered. Although guidelines for what a close friendship entails were provided to potential participants during the recruitment process, there was still subjectivity on the part of the participant on how they were defining a close friendship. Additionally, specific to participants who held multiple impactful cross-sexuality friendships, sometimes it was difficult to tease apart how individual friendships impacted them, if that was possible at all. Finally, some participants discussed thoughts and attitudes that were based in their own perceptions but may have been grounded in naïve heterosexism. For example, many participants spoke about being accepting, but it is possible that they still may have held many unacknowledged heterosexist thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors.

Another limitation of this study is that participants were predominantly white, meaning that the data was biased towards white perspectives. Although the number of people of color in this study was higher than the typical demographical make-up of most counseling psychology doctoral programs in the U.S., most participants in this study were white. As noted previously,

the literature on this topic comes from studies with predominantly white participants, meaning that the literature is based upon the experiences of white people. To be truly representative, the experiences of people of color need to be included in the literature at a much higher degree.

Implications for Training

This study is the first attempt to closely examine the role of cross-sexuality friendships and how that experience influences Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development among counseling psychologists and counseling psychology trainees. To uphold the values of social justice and emphasis on the importance of diversity issues within the field of counseling psychology, heterosexism is a type of oppressive system that must be addressed. This study was important because its findings hold several implications for the Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development of counseling psychology trainees. Although friendships will occur organically within training programs, recruitment committees of counseling psychology can take steps to recruit students with diverse sexual orientations so that it is at least possible for these friendships to occur at all. Diversity of sexual orientation is important not only among the student body, but also among faculty and staff. Relationships, professional and informal, will naturally form within the program, and having sexual diversity at multiple levels will provide opportunities for cross-sexuality social interactions to occur, all which may influence Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.

Next, because being in a cross-sexuality friendship while concurrently learning about sexual orientation issues and oppressive systems in general enhances Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development, it is important for counseling psychology to provide and encourage learning about these topics. Addressing heterosexism can of course be addressed during multicultural counseling courses, but sexual orientation issues in general should be addressed in other courses

as it is relevant. Furthermore, as suggested by LaMantia, Wagner, and Bohecker (2015), experiential learning may influence Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. Therefore, it may be helpful for instructors to incorporate experiential learning activities relating to sexual orientation and heterosexism within their courses. Because LGBT ally or safe zone trainings and workshops also incorporate experiential learning activities, faculty and advisors should encourage students to attend these trainings for their professional development.

Training programs can provide an important foundation for their students to develop Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. Beyond representation of different sexual orientations across faculty, staff, and students, the program as a whole should uphold the values of anti-heterosexism and social justice in general. For instance, heterosexual faculty should be committed to their own personal and professional Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. Sexual orientation issues should not be relegated to a tokenized sexual minority person within the department, only to be addressed within their classes or research labs.

As illustrated in the theoretical model, willingness to be challenged is an important component for heterosexuals to develop Anti-Heterosexist Identities. Programs could directly address this aspect in the curriculum by teaching it as a skill or a set of skills. The process of confronting one's own oppressive attitudes, values, and behaviors can be laid out clearly, including normalizing the discomfort that occurs. Emphasizing awareness and methods for coping with and working through this discomfort can help students who are in the dominant group to work their own oppressive thoughts and behaviors. These skills would then hopefully encourage students to challenge oppressive behaviors within themselves and promote Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.

Lastly, Russell and Bohan (2016) raised several important points as it relates to structural

anti-heterosexism. These authors pointed out several important cautions when considering Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. First, they state that it is a mistake for self-proclaimed sexual minority allies to view their role as “parents,” which silences the voices of sexual minority people, blinds the heterosexual person to their own privilege, and ignores the importance of changing oppressive systems. While heterosexual people with this type of stance may seem to take some pro-sexual minority stances, the approach is ultimately superficial because it focuses on social connection with sexual minority people rather than structural change. The authors warn that so-called “allies” that take this approach focus on making sexual minority friends but do not seek out input from sexual minority people, do not ask about their needs, and makes the assumption that the privileged group knows what is best for the oppressed group. These points are important to consider because the model developed in this study was based upon a description of processes experienced by participants as it relates to an Anti-Heterosexist Identity, but it does not evaluate to what degree participants were actually anti-heterosexist.

Russell and Bohan (2016) advocate for anti-heterosexism foundationally based upon valuing the structural dismantling of oppressive power structures. These authors encourage activism that fosters heterosexual self-analysis of privilege, listening carefully to what sexual minority people are saying about heterosexism and their own experience with it, and not making assumptions about how best to approach heterosexism. They state that superficial anti-heterosexism based upon making individual sexual minority people feel good runs the risk of the heterosexual person “focus[ing] relatively little on supporting a broad social justice agenda and relatively more on providing nurturing, protective, perhaps heroic support in the face of violations to individual people or groups.” This caution deserves careful consideration by counseling psychology programs looking to nurture anti-heterosexist development among their

students. Not only should education about oppressive systems in general be integrated into the curriculum, but students should also be taught how to critically examine their own personal role in heterosexism and what actions to take to become more anti-heterosexist, including intentionally listening to the voices and guidance of sexual minority people for how to dismantle heterosexism. Likewise, people in cross-sexuality friendships who consider themselves to have an Anti-Heterosexist Identity should be cautious and consider these points as well.

Suggestions for Future Research

Findings from this study provide many ripe areas for future research inquiries. For instance, this study focused on cross-sexuality friendships within counseling psychology programs, but it would be helpful to study cross-sexuality friendships in general and how it affects Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. It is possible that there may be differences in how cross-sexuality friendships affect Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development outside of the context of a counseling psychology program. Additionally, it may be helpful to study cross-sexuality in other fields, particularly those that often work closely with the sexual minority population, such as clinical psychology, social work, medical professions, and many others. Increased research among these helping professions would help increase the representation of voices from other models of training.

Next, it may be helpful to study counseling psychologists who have held longer cross-sexuality friendships. The purpose of this line of inquiry would be to see how they have reflected upon their friendship over a long period of time, how they have integrated learning gained from these friendships, and how that learning has manifested in their professional life. In addition to how cross-sexuality friendship impacts Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development in therapeutic settings, it would also be interesting to see how counseling psychologists have changed in other

professional roles, such as assessment, research, and teaching.

This study brought to light many important dynamics relating to cultural, racial, and religious identities that affect cross-sexuality friendship as it relates to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. For example, there is merit in exploring the role of racial identity as it interacts with sexual orientation within cross-sexuality friendships. For instance, it might be interesting to examine what white heterosexual people learn about when their sexual minority friend is a person of color. Does the learning change when the heterosexual person is a person of color and the sexual minority person is white? When two people of color are in a cross-sexuality friendship, how does that impact Anti-Heterosexual Identity Development?

Furthermore, it may be helpful to explore religious concerns as it relates to cross-sexuality friendships and Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. Many heterosexual participants in this study discussed struggling with religiously-based heterosexist beliefs learned from their church, so it would be interesting to study how those views impact Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. It would also be helpful to consider how heterosexuals from other faiths relate to sexual minority issues and heterosexism as it relates to religious belief.

Another interesting avenue of research is the experience of cross-sexuality friendships among international students and how cultural factors play a role in Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development in the context of counseling psychology programs. Participants in this study who identified as international students spoke about heterosexist beliefs grounded in the cultural norms in their countries and how their attitudes shifted because of their cross-sexuality friendship in their U.S.-based counseling psychology doctoral program. Future research could examine other dynamics relating to international student identities as it relates to cross-sexuality friendships and Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.

Next, this study was focused on sexual orientation rather than gender identity. It would be helpful to conduct a similar study on how friendships between a cisgender person and a trans or gender non-conforming person impacts anti-cissexist identity development. Because most of the literature to date on LGBTQ topics have focused primarily on sexual orientation issues, there is a significant need for research to focus on issues impacting trans and gender non-conforming people.

Finally, future research could explore other factors beyond friendships that relate to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development in-depth by utilizing qualitative methodology. For example, increased study of how heterosexual people begin to understand sexual identities outside of heterosexuality, how they process their sexual identity, and how they manage reactions to learning about personal heterosexism and heterosexist privilege. The culmination of these research inquiries should hopefully help scholars in this field to construct an accurate understanding of Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development as a whole.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to form a theory of what role cross-sexuality friendships in the context of counseling psychology doctoral programs play in heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. Some researchers have noted the importance of cross-sexuality friendships in Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development (Asta & Vacha-Haase, 2012; DiStefano et al., 2000; Duhigg, Rostosky, & Gray, 2010; Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995; Larson, 2012). However, no studies have closely examined the process involved with how cross-sexuality friendships impact Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development. Therefore, this study has helped to fill a gap in the research by describing the general process by which heterosexual counseling psychology trainees' Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development is influenced by their cross-

sexuality friendships.

My theoretical model includes a description of the relevant details about historic attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors towards sexual minority people and a description of previous friendships with sexual minority people. It also includes a description of the friendship and what led to a close relationship, the learning and perception that occurred as a result of the friendship, and the action and change that occurred from that learning. Participants expressed a great deal of new knowledge about sexual minority issues, heterosexism, and heterosexual privilege, and demonstrated increased empathy towards sexual minority people. Through internal changes also came external actions taken to challenge heterosexism, and participants further described how they challenged heterosexism in their personal and professional life.

The cross-sexuality friendships described by participants in this study were highly impactful and meaningful for heterosexual participants. The experience of a personal and close relationship with a sexual minority person seemed to help the heterosexual person understand and engage with learning about diversity issues and oppressive systems within their counseling psychology doctoral program, overall contributing to Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development.

REFERENCES

- Absjornslett, M., Engelsrud, G., and Helseth, S. (2011). 'Friendships in all directions': Norwegian children with physical disabilities experiencing friendship. *Childhood, 0*, 1-14. doi: 10.1177/0907568211428093.
- Anton, B. S. (2010). Proceedings of the American Psychological Association for the legislative year 2009: Minutes of the annual meeting of the Council of Representatives and minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors. *American Psychologist, 65*, 385-475. doi: 10.1037/a0019553.
- Arunumar, T. and Dharmangadan, B. (2001). The friendship intensity measurement scale (FIMS). *Psychological Studies, 46*, 59-62.
- Asta, E. and Vacha-Haase, T. (2012). Heterosexual ally development in counseling psychologists: Experiences, training, and advocacy. *The Counseling Psychologist, 41*, 493-529. doi: 10.1177/0011000012453174.
- Barber, M. (2013). Gender's alphabet soup. *USA Today, 51*.
- Barndt, J. (2007). *Understanding and dismantling racism: The twenty-first century challenge to white America*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.
- Bernstein, M., Kostelac, C., and Gaarder, E. (2003). Understanding "heterosexism:" Applying theories of racial prejudice to homophobia using data from a southwestern police department. *Race, Gender, and Class, 10*, 54-74.
- Bieschke, K. and Matthews, M. (1996). Career counselor attitudes and behaviors toward gay, lesbian, and bisexual clients. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 48*, 243-255. doi: 10.1006/jvbe.1996.0021.
- Black, L. and Stone, D. (2005). Expanding the definition of privilege: The concept of social

- privilege. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 33, 243-255.
- Blieszner, R. and Adams, R. (1992). *Adult Friendship*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Boeje, H. (2010). *Analysis in qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Bright, C. (2004). Deconstructing reparative therapy: An examination of the processes involved when attempting to change sexual orientation. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 32, 471-481. doi: 10.1007/s10615-012-0418-x.
- Broido, E. (2000). The development of social justice allies during college: A phenomenological investigation. *Journal of College Student Development*, 41, 3-18.
- Bryant, A. and Charmaz, K. (2007). *The SAGE handbook of grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Carmago, B., Stinebrickner, R., and Stinebrickner, T. (2010). Interracial friendships in college. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 28, 861-892.
- Cass, V. (1979). Homosexual identity formation: A theoretical model. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 4, 219-235. doi: 10.1080/00224498409551214.
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Charmaz, K. (2000). Grounded theory: objectivist and constructivist methods. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Chase, B and Ressler, P. (2009). An LGBT/Queer glossary. *English Journal*, 98, 23-24.
- Clarke, A. E. (2003). Situational analyses: Grounded theory mapping after the postmodern turn. *Symbolic Interaction*, 26, 553-576.
- Corbin, J. and Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for*

- developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five Approaches*, (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., Hanson, W. E., Clark Plano, V. L., and Morales, A. (2007). Qualitative research designs: Selection and implementation. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 35, 236-264. doi: 10.1177/0011000006287390.
- Croteau, M. (2008). Reflections on understanding and ameliorating internalized heterosexism. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 36, 645-653. doi: 10.1177/0011000008319285.
- Croteau, M., Bieschke, K., Fassinger, R., and Manning, J. (2008). Counseling psychology and sexual orientation: History, selective trends, and future directions. In S. D. Brown and R. W. Lent (Eds.), *Handbook of Counseling Psychology*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- Daily effects of straight privilege. (2002, February). Retrieved from http://www.cs.earlham.edu/~hyrax/personal/files/student_res/straightprivilege.htm
- Dey,(2007). Grounding categories. In Bryant, A. and Charmaz, K. (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Dillon, F., Worthington, R., Savoy, H., Rooney, C. Becker-Schutte, A., and Guerra, R. (2004). On becoming allies: A qualitative study of lesbian-, gay-, and bisexual-affirmative counselor training. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 43, 162-178.
- DiStefano T., Croteau, J., Anderson, M., Kama-Kokesch, S., and Bullard, M. (2000). Experiences of being heterosexual allies to lesbian, gay, and bisexual people: A qualitative exploration. *Journal of College Counseling*, 3, 131-141.
- Duhigg, J., Rostosky, S., and Gray, B. (2010). Development of heterosexuals into sexual-

- minority allies: A qualitative exploration. *Sex Research and Social Policy*, 7, 2-14. doi: 10.1007/s13178-010-0005-2.
- Eliason, M. (1995). Accounts of sexual identity formation in heterosexual students. *Sex Roles*, 32, 821-834. doi: 10.1007/BF01560191.
- Espelage, D. and Swearer, S. (2008). Addressing research gaps in the intersection between homophobia and bullying. *School Psychology Review*, 37, 155-159.
- Fassinger, R. E. (2005). Paradigms, praxis, problems, and promise: Grounded theory in counseling psychology research. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52, 156-166. doi: 10.1037/0022-0167.52.2.156.
- Fassinger, R. E. and Arseneau, J. (2007). "I'd rather get wet than be under that umbrella:" Differentiating among lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. In K. Bieschke, R. Perez, & K. DeBord (Eds.), *Handbook of counseling and psychotherapy with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender clients* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: APA Books.
- Fehr, B. (1996). *Friendship Processes*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Feigenbaum, E. (2007) Heterosexual privilege: The political and the personal. *Hypatia*, 22, 1-9. doi: 10.1111/j.1527-2001.2007.tb01145.x.
- Galupo, P. (2009). Cross-category friendship patterns: Comparison of heterosexual and sexual minority adults. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 26, 811-831.
- Galupo, P. (2007). Women's close friendships across sexual orientation: A comparative analysis of lesbian-heterosexual and bisexual-heterosexual women's friendships. *Sex Roles*, 56, 473-482. doi: 10.1177/0265407509345651
- Garnets, L. D. and Kimmel, D. C. (2003). *Psychological perspective on lesbian, gay, and bisexual experiences*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

- Gelberg, S. and Chojnacki, J. (1995). Developmental transitions of gay/lesbian/bisexual-affirmative, heterosexual career counselors. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 43, 267-276.
- Gerbasi, A. and Greene, K. (2010). Ethnic diversity, friendship and generalized trust. Roundtable presented at the 105th Annual Meeting Toward a Sociology of Citizenship. Atlanta, GA. August 2010.
- Getz, C. and Kirkley, E. (2003). Identity development models: One size fits all? Heterosexual identity development and the search for “allies” in higher education. Paper presented at the 84th annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Chicago, IL, April 2003.
- Glaser, B. G. (1978). *Theoretical sensitivity*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B. G. and Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago, IL: Aldine.
- Grigoriou, T. (2004). Friendship between gay men and heterosexual women: An interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Families and Social Capital ESRC Research Group*.
- Grossman, A., D’Augelli, A., and Hershberger, S. (2000). Social support networks of lesbian, gay, and bisexual adults 60 years of age or older. *Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Services*, 55, 171-179.
- Gunnery, S., Hall, J., and Ruben, M. (2012). The deliberate Duchenne smile: Individual differences in expressive control. *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior*, 37, 29-41.
- Hardiman, R. and Jackson, B. (1992). Racial identity development: Understanding racial dynamics in college classrooms and on campus. *Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 52, 21-37. doi: 10.1002/tl.37219925204.

- Hatch, J. A. (2002). *Doing qualitative research in education settings*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- Hays, R. (1998). Friendship. In S. Duck (Ed.), *Handbook of Personal Relationships*. London: John Wiley & Sons.
- Hays, D. G. and Woods, C. (2011). Infusing qualitative traditions in counseling research designs. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 89, 288-295. doi: 10.1002/j.1556-6678.2011.tb00091.x.
- Helms, J. (1995). An update of Helms's white and people of color racial identity models. In J. Ponterotto, J. Casas, L. Suzuki, and C. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counseling*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Helms, H. & Carter, R. (1990). Development of the white racial identity inventory. In J. E. Helms, (Ed.), *Black and white racial identity: Theory, research, and practice*. New York: Greenwood Press.
- Herek, G. (1988). Heterosexuals' attitudes toward lesbians and gay men: Correlates and gender differences. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 25, 451-477. doi: 10.1080/00224498809551476.
- Hruschka, D. J. (2010). *Friendship: Development, ecology, and evolution of a relationship*. Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.
- Israel, T. (2012). 2011 society of counseling psychology presidential address: Exploring privilege in counseling psychology: Shifting the lens. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 40, 158-180. doi: 10.1177/0011000011426297.
- Jamieson, M., Hutchinson, N., Taylor, J., Westlake, K., Berg, D., and Boyce, E. (2009). Friendships of adolescents with physical disabilities attending inclusive high schools. *Revue Canadienne D'Ergotherapie*, 76, 368-376.

- Kashubeck-West, S., Syzmanski, D., and Meyer, J. (2008). Internalized heterosexism: Clinical implications and training considerations. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 36, 615-630. doi: 10.1177/0011000007309634.
- Larson, A. L. (2012, August). Grounded theory of the development of heterosexual allies to the LGBT population: A pilot study. Poster presented at the American Psychological Conference in Orlando, FL.
- Lyons, H., Brenner, B., and Fassinger, R. (2005). Multicultural test of the theory of work adjustment: Investigating the role of heterosexism and person-environment fit in the job satisfaction of lesbian, gay, and bisexual employees. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52, 537-548.
- Manstead, A. and Hewstone, M. (1999). Friendship. In Manstead, A. and Hewstone, M. (Eds.). *The Blackwell encyclopedia of social psychology*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
- Marcia, J. (1987). Identity in adolescence. In J. Adelson (Ed.), *Handbook of adolescent psychology*. New York: Wiley.
- Marshall, C. and Rossman, G. B. (1999). *Designing qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Matthews, C. (2007). Affirmative lesbian, gay, and bisexual counseling with all clients. In K. Bieschke, R. Perez, and K. DeBord, *Handbook of counseling and psychotherapy with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender clients* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- McIntosh, P. (1989). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. *Peace and Freedom*, 49, 10-12. doi: 10.1080/23311886.2015.1053183.
- Mohr, J. (2002). Heterosexual identity and the heterosexual therapist: An identity perspective on

- sexual dynamics in psychotherapy. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 30, 532-566. doi: 10.1177/00100002030004003.
- Moore, M. (2008). Gendered power relations among women: A study of household decision-making in lesbian stepfamilies. *American Sociological Review*, 73, 335-356. doi: 10.1177/000312240807300208.
- Morrow, S. L. (2007). Qualitative research in counseling psychology: Conceptual foundations. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 35, 209-235. doi: 10.1177/0011000006286990.
- Morrow, S. L. (2005). Quality and trustworthiness in qualitative research in counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52, 250-260. doi: 10.1037/0022-0167.52.2.250.
- Morrow, S. L. (1997). Career development of lesbian and gay youth: Effects of sexual orientation, coming out, and homophobia. *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services*, 7, 1-15.
- Morse, J. M., Stern, P. N., Corbin, J., Bowers, B., Charmaz, K., Clarke, A. E. (2009). *Developing grounded theory: The second generation*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, Inc.
- Morse, J. M. and Field, P.A. (1995). *Qualitative research methods for health professionals*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Mueller, J. and Cole, J. (2009). A qualitative examination of heterosexual consciousness among college students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 50, 320-336.
- Muraco, A. (2006). Intentional families: Fictive kin ties between cross-gender, different sexual orientation friends. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 68, 1313-1325. doi: 10.1111/j.1741-3737.2006.00330.x.
- Nardi, P. and Sherrod, D. (1994). Friendship in the lives of gay men and lesbians. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 11, 185-199.

- O'Boyle, C. and Thomas, M. (1996). Friendships between lesbian and heterosexual women. In J. Weinstock (Ed.), *Lesbian friendships: For ourselves and for each other. The cutting edge: Lesbian life and literature*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- O'Connor, P. (1992). *Friendships between women: A critical review*. New York, NY: Guilford.
- Odell, P., Korgen, K., and Wang, G. (2005). Cross-racial friendships and social distance between racial groups on a college campus. *Innovative Higher Education*, 29, 291-305. doi: 10.1007/s10755-005-2863-8.
- Okech, J. and Champe, J. (2008). Informing culturally competent practice through cross-racial friendships. *International Journal of Advanced Counselling*, 30, 104-115. doi: 10.1007/s10447-008-9049-x.
- Oleson, V. (2005). Early millennial feminist qualitative research: Challenges and contours. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Olk, P. and Gibbons, D. (2010). Dynamics of friendship reciprocity among professional adults. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 40, 1146-1171. doi: 10.1111/j.1559-1816.2010.00614.x.
- Peel, A. (2001). Mundane heterosexism: Understanding incidents of the everyday. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 24, 541-554. doi: 10.1016/S0277-5395(01)00194-7.
- Ponterotto, J. G. (2002). Qualitative research methods: The fifth force in psychology. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 30, 394-406.
- Poteat, P., Espelage, D., and Koenig, B. (2009). Willingness to remain friends and attend school with lesbian and gay peers: Relational experiences of prejudice among heterosexual youth. *Journal of Youth Adolescence*, 38, 952-962. doi: 10.1007/s10964-009-9416-x

- Reeder, H. (2003). The effect of gender role orientation on same- and cross-sex friendship formation. *Sex Roles*, 49, 143-152. doi: 10.1023/A:1024408913880.
- Rostosky, S. S., Black, W. W., Riggle, E. D. B., and Rosenkrantz, D. (2015). Positive aspects of being a heterosexual ally to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 85, 331-338. doi: 10.1037/ort0000056.
- Rubin, L. (1985). *Just friends*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Rubin, H. J. and Rubin, I. S. (2005). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Rybak, A. and McAndrew, F. (2006). How do we decide whom our friends are? Defining levels of friendship in Poland and the United States. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 146, 147-163. doi: 10.3200/SOCP.146.2.147-163.
- Saldaña, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Schatzman, L. (1991). Dimensional analysis: Notes on an alternative approach to the grounding of theory in qualitative research. In D. R. Maines (Ed.), *Social organization and social process*. New York, NY: Aldine De Gruyter.
- Sears, J. T. and Williams, W. L. (1997). *Overcoming heterosexism and homophobia: Strategies that work*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Sexual Policy Watch. (2008). Position paper on the language of “sexual minorities” and the politics of identity. doi: 10.1016/S0968-8080(09)33431-X.
- Shepperd, D., Coyle, A. and Hegarty, P. (2010). Discourses of friendship between heterosexual women and gay men: Mythical norms and an absence of desire. *Feminism and Psychology*, 20, 205-224. doi: 10.1177/0959353509349604.

- Silverstein, C. (2008). Are you saying homosexuality is normal? *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Mental Health*, 12, 277-287. doi: 10.1080/19359700802111635
- Simoni, J. and Walters, K. (2001). Heterosexual identity and heterosexism: Recognizing privilege to reduce prejudice. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 41, 157-172.
- Singh, A. A. and Shelton, K. (2011). A content analysis of LGBTQ qualitative research in counseling: A ten-year review. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 89, 217-226. doi: 10.1002/j.1556-6678.2011.tb00080.x.
- Smith, N. (2009). Productivity in lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender scholarship in counseling psychology: Institutional and individual ratings for 1990 through 2009. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 38, 50-68. doi: 10.1177/0011000009345533.
- Smith, S. D., Reynolds, C. A., and Rovnak, A. (2009). A critical analysis of the social advocacy movement in counseling. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 87, 483-491. doi: 10.1002/j.1556-6678.2009.tb00133.x.
- Smith, I., Oades, L., and McCarthy, G. (2012). Homophobia to heterosexism: Constructs in need of re-visitation. *Gay and Lesbian Issues and Psychology Review*, 8, 35-44.
- Smith, L., Shin, R. and Officer, L. (2011). Moving counseling forward on LGB and transgender issues: Speaking queerly on discourses and microaggressions. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 40, 385-408. doi: 10.1177/0011000011403165.
- Smith, N. & Ingram, K. (2004). Workplace heterosexism and adjustment among lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals: The role of unsupportive social interactions. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 51, 57-67. doi: 10.1037/0022-0167.51.1.57.
- Stacey, J. (2005). The families of man: Gay male intimacy and kinship in a global metropolis. *Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 30, 1911-1935. doi: 10.1086/426797.

- Stein, R., Post, S., and Rinden, A. (2000). Reconciling context and contact effects on racial attitudes. *Political Research Quarterly*, 53, 285-303.
- Strauss and Corbin, (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Swim, J., Pearson, N., and Johnston, K. (2007). Daily encounters with heterosexism. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 53, 31-48. doi: 10.1080/00918360802101179.
- Sue, D. (2010). *Microaggressions in everyday life: race, gender, an sexual orientation*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Sue, D. and Capodilupo, C. (2008). Racial, gender, and sexual orientation microaggressions: Implications for counseling and psychotherapy. In. D. Sue & D. Sue (Eds.). *Counseling the culturally diverse, 5th Edition*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Sue, D. W. and Sue, D. (2003). *Counseling the culturally diverse: Theory and practice*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- Sullivan, P. (1998). Sexual identity development: The importance of target or dominant group membership. In Sullivan, P and Sanlo, R. (Eds.). *Working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender college students: A handbook for faculty and administrators*.
- Szymanski, D. & Chung, Y. (2003). Internalized homophobia in lesbians. *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, 7, 115-125. doi: 10.1300/J155v07n01_08.
- Tillmann-Healy, L. (2001). *Between gay and straight: Understanding friendship across sexual orientation*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.
- Ueno, K. (2010). Patterns of cross-orientation friendships in high schools. *Social Science Research*, 39, 444-458. doi: 10.1016/j.ssresearch.2009.10.001.
- Waldo, C. (1999). Working in majority context: A structural model of heterosexism as minority

- stress in the workplace. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 46, 218-232. doi: 10.1037/0022-0167.46.2.218.
- Washington, J. and Evans, N. (1991). Becoming an ally. In N. Evans and V. Wall (Eds.). *Beyond tolerance: Gays, lesbians, and bisexuals on campus*. Alexandria, VA: American Association for Counseling and Development.
- Weinstock, J. and Bond, L. (2008). Building bridges: Examining lesbians' and heterosexual women's close friendships with each other. *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, 6, 149-161.
- Williams, S. (2010). Through the eyes of friends: An investigation of school context and cross-racial friendships in racially mixed schools. *Urban Education*, 45, 480-505. doi: 10.1177/0042085910372350.
- Worthington, R. and Mohr, J. (2002). Theorizing heterosexual identity development. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 30, 491-195.
- Worthington, R., Savoy, H., Dillon, F., and Vernaglia, E. (2002). Heterosexual identity development: A multidimensional model of individual and social identity. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 30, 496-531. doi: 10.1177/00100002030004002.

Appendix A: Faculty Informant Recruitment Email

Subject Line: “Dissertation research on the impact of cross-sexuality friendships among doctoral students” or “[name] suggested that you may be able to assist me with my dissertation research on the impact of cross-sexuality friendships among doctoral students”

Hello,

My name is Amber Sylvan and I am a doctoral student in Western Michigan University’s Counseling Psychology Ph.D. program. [You are receiving this letter because (name) suggested that you may be of assistance in helping to identify individuals who are eligible for participation in my dissertation research.]

Specifically, I am seeking current students of counseling psychology doctoral programs or counseling psychologists who are or have been in a close, “cross-sexuality” (i.e., between a heterosexual and an openly LGB person) friendship during their training program. The individuals may include current students or graduated psychologists. Having both individuals in the friendship pair participate is not necessary for the purposes of this study. Through this research, I hope to learn about how these friendships might influence heterosexual counseling psychology trainees’ understanding of sexual orientation.

If you believe you know potential participants that may be interested in learning more about this study, I would request that you either a) inform me via email (amber.l.larson@wmich.edu) or phone (269-365-3405) of these individuals with any of their contact information that you may be able to provide me or b) pass along the recruitment poster that I have attached to this email to these individuals yourself. In the case that you give me the names for potential participants, I would use your name as reference when contacting these individuals (i.e., “[name] suggested that you...”).

Additionally, please feel free to recommend other faculty members that may be of assistance in identifying potential participants for this study.

Thank you for your consideration.

Amber Sylvan, M. S.
Doctoral Student Investigator
Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University

Appendix B: Potential Participant Recruitment Letter

Subject Line: “Dissertation research on the impact of cross-sexuality friendships among doctoral students” or “[name] suggested that you may be able to assist me with my dissertation research on the impact of cross-sexuality friendships among doctoral students”

Hello,

My name is Amber Sylvan and I am contacting you because [(name) suggested that] you may be able to assist me with my dissertation research. I am conducting dissertation research on the friendships that occur between heterosexual and sexual minority students that are open about their sexual identity within counseling psychology doctoral programs. Specifically, I am interested in learning how these friendships might influence heterosexual counseling psychology trainees towards their understanding of sexual orientation. [I want to emphasize that (name) will not be notified regarding your involvement or lack of involvement with this study.]

You are eligible for participation in this study if you are currently, or have been, in a close, “cross-sexuality” (i.e., a friendship between a heterosexual and a sexual minority person open about their sexual identity) friendship in your doctoral counseling psychology training program. The friendship should be a minimum of one year in duration.

Participants of this study would engage in a 1-hour interview, a possible follow-up interview as needed, and participation in a 1-hour focus group with other participants. You will be offered a \$20 Amazon gift card for the completion of the initial interview and a \$10 gift card for the completion of the focus group. Participants are free to withdraw from the study at any point without penalty. Interviews will be conducted via Go2Meeting, a free online application for conferencing, or via phone call.

If you are interested in learning more about participating, please review the document that I have attached to this email. If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of the study, please email me at amber.l.larson@wmich.edu or call me at (269) 365-3405 to set up a brief meeting so that I can address any questions that you may have about the study. After you have reviewed the document describing the study and would like to participate, please contact me at amber.l.larson@wmich.edu with a statement of your interest.

Additionally, please feel free to recommend other counseling psychology students or counseling psychologists that may be interested in participating in this study. You may either share the recruitment poster that I have attached to this email or share their names and contact information with me at your discretion.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Amber Sylvan, M. S.
Doctoral Student Investigator
Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University

Appendix C: Counseling Psychology Program Recruitment Email

Subject Line: “Please share this information about my dissertation study with your Counseling Psychology doctoral students”

Hello,

My name is Amber Sylvan and I am a doctoral candidate in Western Michigan University’s Counseling Psychology Ph.D program. I am contacting you because I would like to share information about my dissertation study on cross-sexuality friendships in Counseling Psychology doctoral programs with your program’s doctoral students. Participants are given a \$20 Amazon gift card for completing an initial interview and \$10 for completing a focus group. I have attached my recruitment poster with more information to this email.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Amber Sylvan, M. S.
Doctoral Student Investigator
Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University

Appendix D: Social Media Recruitment Message

Attention Counseling Psychology doctoral students, faculty, and practitioners! Are you, or were you, in a close friendship between a heterosexual and LGB/sexual minority person in your Counseling Psychology doctoral program? I am offering \$20 for completion of the initial interview and \$10 for completion of a focus group to participants. Please see my recruitment flyer for more information.

Please share this flyer with anyone whom you believe might be interested.

Feel free to message me or email me at amber.l.larson@wmich.edu for more information about my study.

Appendix E: Recruitment Poster

How Cross-Sexuality Friendships Contribute to Heterosexual Understanding of Sexual Orientation

Are you or were you in a close friendship between a heterosexual and LGB/sexual minority person during your Counseling Psychology doctoral program?

My name is Amber Sylvan and I am a doctoral candidate in Western Michigan University's Counseling Psychology Ph.D program. I am conducting qualitative dissertation research on the friendships that occur between heterosexual and sexual minority students within counseling psychology doctoral programs in order to learn how these friendships might influence heterosexual counseling psychology trainees towards their understanding of sexual orientation. **I am offering a \$20 Amazon gift card to participants who complete the initial interview and a \$10 gift card for completion of the focus group.**

You are eligible for participation if:

- The friendship was between a heterosexual and an LGB/sexual minority person. Both heterosexual and LGB/sexual minority individuals may participate.
- You are currently attending a counseling psychology doctoral program or have graduated from a counseling psychology doctoral program. If you are graduated, the length of time from graduation does not matter.
- You consider the friendship to be, or to have been, a “close” friendship lasting no less than 1 year in duration.
- The LGB/sexual minority person must have been “out” to their heterosexual friend.
- The friendship occurred within the context of your counseling psychology doctoral program.

If you are interested in learning more about my study or participating in my study, please either send me an email at amber.l.larson@wmich.edu or call me at (269) 365-3406.



Appendix F: Implied Consent Document

Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology

Principal Investigator: Eric Sauer, Ph.D.

Doctoral Student Investigator: Amber Sylvan, M.S.

Title of Study: “A Grounded Theory of How Cross-Sexuality Friendships in Counseling Psychology Doctoral Programs Alter Heterosexual Perceptions of Sexual Orientation and Promote Heterosexual Anti-Heterosexist Identity Development”

You have been invited to participate in a research study titled “A Grounded Theory of How Cross-Sexuality Friendships in Counseling Psychology Doctoral Programs Alter Understanding of Sexual Orientation among Heterosexuals.” In this consent document, you will be offered an explanation surrounding the purpose of this research study, the time commitments required, the procedures that will be used to complete the study, and the risks and benefits of participating in this research project.

What are we trying to find out in this study?

The overall purpose of this study will be to explore how the friendships between heterosexual students and sexual minority students open about their sexual identity in counseling psychology doctoral programs influence heterosexual understanding of sexual orientation.

Who can participate in this study?

Individuals who have or have had a cross-sexuality friendship between a heterosexual individual and a sexual minority individual open about their sexual identity in their counseling psychology Ph.D program are eligible for inclusion in this study. Friendships should have lasted at least one year in duration and should be defined as a “close” friendship, as indicated by a significant level of reciprocal closeness, trust, and time spent together. Participants may be selected for inclusion for this study based upon demographic factors in order to form a diverse participant pool.

Where will this study take place?

The data collection for this research study will take place using Go2Meeting (an internet-based video conferencing application) or in-person.

What is the time commitment for participating in this study?

Participants will be asked to participate in an initial 1.5-hour interview. During the data analysis process, some participants may be asked to come back for a 30-minute to 1-hour follow-up interview to gather additional information as it is relevant. At the conclusion of initial data analysis, participants will be asked to return for a 1-hour focus group via Go2Meeting using

audio-only conferencing to review the study's findings, to comment on the validity of the researcher's conclusions, and to offer any additional information. A participant should expect to spend 2 to 3.5 hours participating in this study over the course of several months while the doctoral student researcher collects and analyzes the data.

What will you be asked to do if you choose to participate in this study?

Participants may email or call the doctoral student researcher with any questions or concern prior to concerning the informed consent. Participants are also requested to fill out and email a demographic questionnaire to the doctoral student researcher after signing the informed consent. If the doctoral student researcher determines that you are eligible for participation in this study based upon inclusionary criteria from the demographic questionnaire, you will be contacted to set up the first interview time. Participants may choose to be interviewed via Go2Meeting or phone depending on their preference, and interviews will be scheduled at the participant's convenience. If you are excluded from further participation in the study, you will be sent an email thanking you for their time and no further action will be required on your part.

The doctoral student researcher will then conduct an in-depth, semi-structured interview lasting 1.5 hours in duration. The informed consent will be re-reviewed and you will be given the chance to ask questions or withdraw from the study. You will be asked to respond to open questions about a cross-sexuality friendship that you have experienced during their counseling psychology doctoral program. The interviews will be recorded and then individually transcribed. As the doctoral student researcher begins analyzing the interview data, you may be contacted for a second follow-up interview to answer further questions about the study's topic. Any follow-up interviews conducted will be in-depth, semi-structured, and last approximately 30 to 60 minutes.

Following the initial data analysis and preliminary theory construction, you will be invited to participate in a focus group to review my findings and interpretations of the data. During the focus group, you will have the opportunity to comment on the accuracy of my conclusions, have the chance to add any additional relevant information, and provide clarifications on my interpretations.

What information is being measured during the study?

Participant data from individual interview, follow-up interviews, and focus groups will include descriptions of the participant's experience with their close friendship. Heterosexual participants will be asked to describe how their cross-sexuality friendship has impacted their understanding of sexual orientation. Sexual minority participants will be asked to describe how their cross-sexuality friendship has impacted the understanding of sexual orientation for their heterosexual friend.

What are the risks of participating in this study and how will these risks be minimized?

Minimal risks are associated with participation in this study. There is the possibility that you may experience some discomfort when reflecting upon your experiences, as you may have felt

challenged by any personal growth experiences. Participation in this study will involve a loss of time, which may be an inconvenience. Finally, this research is intended to contribute to the sexual orientation and counseling psychology literature, and as such, data from this study will be used at conferences and publications. Although every step will be taken to preserve your confidentiality through changing names and places and removing key identifying information, there is a remote chance that a colleague may recognize a particular response, which may in turn associate it with you.

In order to maximize your confidentiality, certain steps will be taken to de-identify your information. First, you will have a numbered code attached to any transcriptions, rather than your name. Demographic information will be included on these transcripts to provide contextual information. Any names of people or specific places will be altered. Upon transcription, audio or visual recordings of interviews or focus groups will be destroyed. Upon completion of the study, the list pairing numbers will be destroyed. All transcriptions, recordings, and documents relating to the study will be encrypted and stored on a password-protected hard drive and backup USB drive kept by the doctoral student researcher.

During participation in the focus groups, you may be recognized by other participants in the focus group. This risk is increased during participation within in-person focus groups versus groups that take place with a voice-only Go2Meeting conference call. The voice-only conference call will be used to increase anonymity among participants.

If at any time during your participation of this study you become uncomfortable with any questions, you may choose to withhold your response at your own discretion. In addition, you may discontinue your participation in this study at any time without penalty.

What are the benefits of participating in this study?

For heterosexual participants, participation in this study may be beneficial because it may help to increase understanding about your cross-sexuality friendships and reaffirm and appreciate your self-growth surrounding sexual orientation. For sexual minority participants, the interviews may increase your understanding of your cross-sexuality friendship. Due to the high level of reflection required by this study, you may come to a deeper understanding about your own development regarding sexual orientation issues and how it has affected you personally and professionally. For sexual minority participants, reflection upon their cross-sexuality friendship may lead to a greater understanding of your cross-sexuality friendship and its effects on the heterosexual friend. However, there is no guarantee that you will experience these benefits.

By participating in this study, you will also assist me in better understanding the phenomenon of cross-sexuality friendships in counseling psychology training programs. It is my hope that the results from this study will lead to a deeper understanding of what leads heterosexuals to an anti-heterosexist identity, which should further lead to important implications for professionals and trainees.

Are there any costs associated with participating in this study?

There are no foreseen financial costs to you incurred as a result of participation in this study. The doctoral student investigator will initiate any calls related to the study, including individual interviews. It is assumed that you will have access to an internet connection for correspondences or Go2Meeting interviews—if this is not the case, these correspondences may be held via telephone.

Is there any compensation for participating in this study?

Participants completing the initial interview will be offered a \$20 digital gift card to Amazon.com. Participants completing the focus group will be offered a \$10 digital gift card to Amazon.com.

Who will have access to the information collected during this study?

All collected data will be kept confidential to the best of my ability. Informed consent documents and demographic questionnaires will be stored separately from the rest of the collected data. Recordings will be destroyed after transcripts are created. These transcripts, as well as all other materials related to data analysis, will be encrypted and kept on a password-protected hard drive and backup USB drive. At the conclusion of this study, the informed consents, background questionnaires, and all materials related to the data analysis will be stored in the office of my doctoral advisor, Dr. Eric Sauer.

Access to any research-related materials will be limited to the principal investigator, co-investigator, and volunteer research assistants in this study. In accordance with federal laws, the Code of Ethics for counselors (American Counseling Association, 2005), and the Code of Ethics for Psychologists (American Psychological Association, 2002) data will be retained for at least 3 years after the study has been completed. However, after transcription has occurred, the interview recordings themselves will be erased. The privacy of all participants will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. As with many research protocols, one significant limit to confidentiality is if any of the participants report being a danger to him/herself or others. If this information is disclosed, the proper individuals will be notified as specified by ethical and legal codes.

What if you want to stop participating in this study?

Participation in this research is strictly voluntary and you are under no obligation to participate. No penalty is incurred for refusing participation. If you decide to participate, you will always have the right to drop out of this study at any point in time without prejudice or penalty.

Should you have any questions prior to or during the study, you can contact me at any time at the following email address: amber.l.larson@wmich.edu or via telephone at (269) 365-3405. You may also contact the principal faculty investigator, who is my doctoral advisor (Dr. Eric Sauer) at the following email address: eric.sauer@wmich.edu or via telephone at (269) 387-5111. Finally, you may also contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board at (269) 387-

8293 or the Vice President for Research at (269) 387-8298 if questions arise during the course of the study.

This consent has been approved by the Western Michigan University Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) on 3/17/2015. Do not participate after 3/17/2017.

Participating in this research project indicates your consent.

Appendix G: Email Explaining the Demographics Questionnaire

Subject Line: Cross-Sexuality Friendship Study Participation

Hello [participant name],

[This email is being sent as a reminder because I have not received a response from you concerning your demographics questionnaire. If you are no longer interested in participating, please let me know and you will receive no further emails from me.][This email is being sent as a final reminder because I have not received a response from you concerning your demographics questionnaire. If you are no longer interested in participating, please let me know and you will receive no further emails from me.]

Thank you for your interest in my study! The first step for participation in this study includes filling out a brief demographics questionnaire. You should be able to edit the document to type in your responses to the questions and mark in the checkboxes provided. I recommend using Adobe Acrobat Reader, a free PDF reader, to accomplish this. If you do not have this program installed on your computer, you can download it at <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>

If you are having any difficulties filling out the form, please email me so that I can assist you. When you have completed the questionnaire, please save the document, and send me an email with the completed questionnaire as an attachment.

Thank you! I appreciate your time and help in completing my dissertation research.

Amber Sylvan, M. S.
Doctoral Student Investigator
Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University

Appendix H: Demographics Questionnaire

Directions: *Please answer the following questions about yourself. The contact information will be used by the researcher to correspond with you in the future and the demographic information will be used to provide context about each participant as well as determining eligibility for participation in this study.*

Name:

Do you prefer to be contacted via email or phone in future correspondences? I will contact you to schedule interviews, focus groups, and give reminders of what I have scheduled with you.

☐ Email

☐ Phone

Phone Number (please only provide if you selected the phone option):

Doctoral counseling psychology program you are currently in or graduated from:

Your Age Range:

☐ 20-24 ☐ 25-29 ☐ 30-34 ☐ 35-39

☐ 40-44 ☐ 45-49 ☐ 50-54 ☐ 55-59

☐ 60-64 ☐ 65 or older

Your Sexual Orientation:

☐ Heterosexual

☐ Gay

☐ Lesbian

☐ Bisexual

☐ Pansexual

☐ Queer

☐ Asexual

☐ I prefer a different designation (please specify):

Your Gender Identity:

☐ Male

☐ Female

☐ Non-Binary

☐ Genderqueer

☐ Agender

☐ I prefer a different designation (please specify):

Do you identify as Transgender?

☐ No ☐ Yes

Your Racial Identity (*check all relevant racial identities*):

☐ African American/Black ☐ Asian American

☐ Latino/a or Hispanic ☐ Pacific Islander

☐ White/Caucasian/European American

☐ Native American/American Indian (please specify tribe):

☐ I prefer a different designation (please specify):

☐ Biracial or Multiracial (if desired, check relevant racial identities above)

Directions:

In the following section, please answer the following questions to briefly describe the context of this friendship.

1.) Do you consider this friend to be or to have been a close friend?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2.) Approximately how long have you been friends with this individual?

 years and months.

3.) Are you still in contact with each other?

☐ Yes ☐ No

4.) If you identify as heterosexual, does your friend openly hold a sexual minority identity? If you identify with a sexual minority identity, does your friend identify as heterosexual?

☐ Yes ☐ No

5.) Did or does this friend attend the same Counseling Psychology Ph.D program that you attend or attended?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Appendix I: Email Declining Use of Participant

Subject Line: Dissertation Research: Thank you for your participation

Hello [participant name)],

I have taken the time to review your completed demographic questionnaire. I have determined that at this time, I am unable to use your participation in this study because you do not meet my inclusionary criteria or my demographic requirements. If this changes at any point before the conclusion of my study, I may contact you again to see if you are still interested in participating. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you again for your time and interest in assisting me with me dissertation research.

Sincerely,

Amber Sylvan, M. S.
Doctoral Student Investigator
Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University

Appendix J: Scheduling for the Initial Interview (Email Script)

Subject Line: Dissertation Research: First Interview Scheduling

Hello (participant's name),

Thank you for your interest in participating in my dissertation research study titled “A Grounded Theory of How Cross-Sexuality Friendships in Counseling Psychology Doctoral Programs Alter Understanding of Sexual Orientation among Heterosexuals.” After reviewing the information from your submitted demographic questionnaire, I have determined that you would be a good candidate for further participation in this study.

I would like to schedule a 1.5-hour interview with you at your convenience. The interview will be conducted via Go2Meeting, a free online conferencing application that requires no user registration. If for any reason you are unable to use Go2Meeting, please contact me so that I can arrange an interview over the phone. I have the following days available for interviews:

[The doctoral student researcher will provide a few different suggested days for the interview.]

Please select one of the days above for your individual interview and specify what time you would be able to complete a 1-hour interview. If none of these days work for your schedule, please let me know so we can select a different date that will accommodate your schedule.

The informed consent document will be reviewed prior to the interview. All interviews will utilize audio/visual equipment or software for the purposes of recording. The transcripts created from these recordings will be used to analyze data.

Thank you again for your expressed interest in participating. If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact me via email at amber.l.larson@wmich.edu or call me at (269) 365-3405.

Sincerely,

Amber Sylvan, M. S.
Doctoral Student Investigator
Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University

[If no response is received, this email will be sent once more as a reminder with an addendum at the beginning of the email stating that this email is being sent for a second time.]

Appendix K: Scheduling for the Initial Interview (Phone Script)

Hello (participant's name), thank you for your interest in participating in my dissertation research study titled "A Grounded Theory of How Cross-Sexuality Friendships in Counseling Psychology Doctoral Programs Alter Understanding of Sexual Orientation among Heterosexuals." After reviewing the information from your submitted demographic questionnaire, I have determined that you would be a good candidate for further participation in this study. I would like to schedule a 1.5-hour interview with you at your convenience. The interview will be conducted via Go2Meeting, a free audio and visual conferencing program.

[If there is no response and a voicemail is received, I will leave my email and phone for contact. If not, I will respond with the following.]

Would you like to pick an interview method and schedule a time right now?

[The doctoral student researcher will wait for the participant's response and schedule or call back at a more convenient time.]

The interview will take place at (specified time). You will be emailed directions for the use of Go2Meeting in a later meeting. If you are unable to use Go2Meeting, I will arrange for the interview to be conducted over the phone. Please make sure you have a quiet, private space for the duration of the interview.

[I will end the phone conversation with the following statement.]

I will contact you two days prior to your scheduled interview via email to confirm our interview day and time. If you have any further questions or need to contact me in order to reschedule your interview, please contact me at amber.l.larson@wmich.edu or (269) 365-3405. Thank you again for your expressed interest in participating.

Appendix L: Directions for Online Conferencing

Go2Meeting is a free online conferencing application that requires no user account registration. First, you will be sent an email titled “WebEx meeting invitation” 2 days prior to our scheduled interview. Within this email will be a reminder of when the interview is scheduled to take place as well as a browser attachment that will need to be installed to your browser. It is strongly recommend that you download this attachment well ahead of your scheduled interview to avoid interfering with your interview time.

On the day of the interview, you will be sent an additional email titled “Join WebEx meeting in progress.” While the meeting will NOT take place until the scheduled time, this email will contain a toll-free phone number for you to call in to the interview should any technical difficulties arise.

When entering the online WebEx conference room, you will need to press the button to “Connect to Audio” and enable your video feed as well (unless you prefer an audio-only feed).

For your interview or focus group, please ensure that you are in a quiet and private location.

Appendix M: Confirmation of Initial Interview (Email)

Subject Line: Dissertation Research: Interview time confirmation

Hi (participant name),

I am confirming your interview at (date/time). I will be calling you via Go2Meeting.

Go2Meeting is a free online conferencing application that requires no user account registration. First, you will be sent an email 1 day prior to our scheduled interview as a reminder. One hour before the interview, you will be sent an email titled “Join WebEx meeting in progress.” This email will contain a link to install a browser attachment needed for the online conference call. Also included will be a toll-free phone number that you may call instead in order to join the interview if you are experiencing difficulties with your computer or internet connection. The interview will not begin before the scheduled time.

When entering the online WebEx conference room, you will need to press the button to “Connect to Audio” and enable your video feed as well (unless you prefer an audio-only feed).

For your interview, please ensure that you are in a quiet and private location.

If you are unable to make the scheduled time, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can reschedule.

Thank you.

Amber Sylvan, M. S.
Doctoral Student Investigator
Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University

Appendix N: Reminder of Initial Interview Time (Email Script)

Subject Line: Dissertation Research: Interview Reminder

Hello (participant's name),

I just wanted to confirm your interview on (date) from (time) to (time).

We will be using Go2Meeting for the interview, which is a free online conferencing application that requires no user account registration. One hour before the interview, you will be sent an email titled "Join WebEx meeting in progress." This email will contain a link to install a browser attachment needed for the online conference call. Also included will be a toll-free phone number that you may call instead in order to join the interview if you are experiencing difficulties with your computer or internet connection. The interview will not begin before the scheduled time.

When entering the online WebEx conference room, you will need to press the button to "Connect to Audio" and enable your video feed as well (unless you prefer an audio-only feed).

For your interview, please ensure that you are in a quiet and private location.

In the meantime, please feel free to contact me at amber.l.larson@wmich.edu or (269) 365-3405 with any questions.

Thank you,

Amber Sylvan, M. S.
Doctoral Student Investigator
Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University

Appendix O: Reminder of Initial Interview Time (Phone Script)

Hello (participant's name), I just wanted to confirm your interview on (date) from (time) to (time).

We will be using Go2Meeting for our interview, which is a free online conferencing application that requires no user account registration. On the day of the interview, 1 hour before the interview, you will be sent an email titled "Join WebEx meeting in progress." This email will contain a link to install a browser attachment needed for the online conference call. Also included will be a toll-free phone number that you may call instead in order to join the interview if you are experiencing difficulties with your computer or internet connection. The interview will not begin before the scheduled time.

When entering the online WebEx conference room, you will need to press the button to "Connect to Audio" and enable your video feed as well (unless you prefer an audio-only feed).

For your interview, please ensure that you are in a quiet and private location.

In the meantime, please feel free to contact me at amber.l.larson@wmich.edu or (269) 365-3405 with any questions. Thank you.

Appendix P: Initial Interview Protocol for Heterosexual Participants

Hello (participant name), thank you for agreeing to consider participating in my dissertation research titled “A Grounded Theory of How Cross-Sexuality Friendships in Counseling Psychology Doctoral Programs Alter Understanding of Sexual Orientation among Heterosexuals.”

Before we begin, I would like to take the time to review the risks to participating in the study and answer any questions or concerns you may have about the study.

[The researcher will verbally review risks of participation on the implied consent document and ask if the participant has any more questions. The researcher will formally ask if the participant still agrees to participate before proceeding.]

I am going to take a moment to turn on my recording equipment. If at any time you wish to withdraw from the study or otherwise wish me to stop recording, please let me know and I will turn off my recording equipment immediately. Do you have any questions before we begin?

[The researcher will answer any questions the participant may have before turning on the audio and/or visual recording equipment or software.]

Okay, I would like to briefly review how this interview will be structured. I am going to ask you several questions related to your experience of being in a friendship with a sexual minority individual that was open about their sexual identity during your counseling psychology doctoral training program and how this friendship has changed you. This interview will focus on the friend you identified on the demographics form. Please try to answer the questions as comprehensively as you are comfortable doing. Feel free to pause and take time to consider your responses. I would also be happy to repeat questions for you as many times as you need.

During the interview, I may ask you follow-up questions or clarification questions about something that you have stated. Again, please answer questions as comprehensively as you are comfortable doing. You are free to not answer any questions you are not comfortable with and you are free to discontinue participating at any point of this process.

Is there anything unclear about this that you would like me to explain before I proceed?

[Wait for participant to respond and address any questions that they may ask.]

First, I would like to ask you to describe the friendship you have selected for the purposes of this study. You may answer in whatever way is most meaningful for you, but you may wish to consider several points such as the context of when you first met, how long ago this friendship occurred and whether or not you still hold this friendship.

[The researcher will pause to allow the participant to respond. The researcher may ask questions to clarify responses, such as “Can you explain what you meant by...” The

researcher may also ask follow-up questions such as “Can you describe further about...” or “Please tell me more about...” to elicit further description.]

When and how did you discover that your friend belonged to a different sexual orientation than your own?

[The researcher will pause to allow the participant to respond. The researcher may ask questions to clarify responses, such as “Can you explain what you meant by...” The researcher may also ask follow-up questions such as “Can you describe further about...” or “Please tell me more about...” to elicit further description.]

Please describe the development of the friendship over time and how you believe this friendship influenced you.

[The researcher will pause to allow the participant to respond. The researcher may ask questions to clarify responses, such as “Can you explain what you meant by...” The researcher may also ask follow-up questions such as “Can you describe further about...” or “Please tell me more about...” to elicit further description.]

How would you describe your attitudes, values, behaviors, and thoughts towards sexual minority individuals prior to becoming friends with [participant’s friend’s name]?

[The researcher will pause to allow the participant to respond. The researcher may ask questions to clarify responses, such as “Can you explain what you meant by...” The researcher may also ask follow-up questions such as “Can you describe further about...” or “Please tell me more about...” to elicit further description.]

Please take a moment to reflect upon how you may have changed as a result of being friends with [participant’s friend’s name]. Can you please comment on any changes you noticed within yourself in regards to thoughts, values, attitudes, behaviors, or any other significant factors about sexual orientation or sexual minorities? You may consider both short-term and long-term changes.

[The researcher will pause to allow the participant to respond. The researcher may ask questions to clarify responses, such as “Can you explain what you meant by...” The researcher may also ask follow-up questions such as “Can you describe further about...” or “Please tell me more about...” to elicit further description.]

Prior to the friendship you have been describing to me, have you held any other cross-sexuality friendships? [If participant responds affirmatively, ask:] Can you briefly tell me about those friendships and how they influenced you?

[The researcher will pause to allow the participant to respond. The researcher may ask questions to clarify responses, such as “Can you explain what you meant by...” The

researcher may also ask follow-up questions such as “Can you describe further about...” or “Please tell me more about...” to elicit further description.]

Next I would like to ask how you believe that your friendship with [participant’s friend’s name] sparked or otherwise deepened your identity as an ally or someone who works in support of sexual minority issues.

[The researcher will pause to allow the participant to respond. The researcher may ask questions to clarify responses, such as “Can you explain what you meant by...” The researcher may also ask follow-up questions such as “Can you describe further about...” or “Please tell me more about...” to elicit further description.]

Next, could you please comment on how your understanding of sexual minority issues has changed as a result of this friendship?

[The researcher will pause to allow the participant to respond. The researcher may ask questions to clarify responses, such as “Can you explain what you meant by...” The researcher may also ask follow-up questions such as “Can you describe further about...” or “Please tell me more about...” to elicit further description.]

Could you please comment on how your understanding of your own sexual orientation and sexual identity has been influenced by your friendship?

[The researcher will pause to allow the participant to respond. The researcher may ask questions to clarify responses, such as “Can you explain what you meant by...” The researcher may also ask follow-up questions such as “Can you describe further about...” or “Please tell me more about...” to elicit further description.]

Next, can you comment on how your understanding of privilege based upon your sexual orientation has been influenced by your friendship?

[The researcher will pause to allow the participant to respond. The researcher may ask questions to clarify responses, such as “Can you explain what you meant by...” The researcher may also ask follow-up questions such as “Can you describe further about...” or “Please tell me more about...” to elicit further description.]

Have you noticed any changes in the way you approach sexual orientation issues in your personal life?

[The researcher will pause to allow the participant to respond. The researcher may ask questions to clarify responses, such as “Can you explain what you meant by...” The researcher may also ask follow-up questions such as “Can you describe further about...” or “Please tell me more about...” to elicit further description.]

Have you noticed any changes in the way you approach sexual orientation issues in your professional life? You may wish to discuss your therapeutic approach, supervision, and interactions with peers.

[The researcher will pause to allow the participant to respond. The researcher may ask questions to clarify responses, such as “Can you explain what you meant by...” The researcher may also ask follow-up questions such as “Can you describe further about...” or “Please tell me more about...” to elicit further description.]

That concludes my main line of questions. I would like to give you the opportunity to state anything else you may wish to comment on about this topic that you may not have gotten to in your previous responses.

[The researcher will wait for the participant’s response and ask probes as necessary.]

Thank you for your participation.

[The researcher will turn off the recording equipment or software and review the next steps of the research process, including a potential follow-up interview and the focus group meeting.]

Over the following months, I will be analyzing my collected data. During this process, I may find it necessary to contact participants to come back for a follow-up interview. This follow-up interview would be used to expand upon information I found to be significant from the first wave of data analysis. So, there is a possibility that I may contact you again to see if you would like to participate in a follow-up interview.

After I have finished analyzing my data and have created a preliminary theoretical structure, I will be contacting you again for participation in a focus group. The focus group will be used to present the interpretation of my data to participants in order to help ensure that I am not misrepresenting the collected data.

If you know of anyone else who may be interested in participating in this study, please let me know their email address so I may invite them to participate. I will also give you my email address and phone number if you would like to contact me about potential participants.

Do you have any questions before we end today?

[Wait for the participant to respond and address any questions that they may ask.]

Alright, thank you again for taking the time to assist me in my research. You can expect a correspondence from me within the next few months.

Appendix Q: Initial Interview Protocol for Sexual Minority Participants

Hello (participant name), thank you for agreeing to consider participating in my dissertation research titled “A Grounded Theory of How Cross-Sexuality Friendships in Counseling Psychology Doctoral Programs Alter Understanding of Sexual Orientation among Heterosexuals.”

Before we begin, I would like to take the time to review the informed consent document and answer any questions or concerns you may have about the study.

[The researcher will review the informed consent document and ask if the participant has any more questions.]

I am going to take a moment to turn on my recording equipment. If at any time you wish to withdraw from the study or otherwise wish me to stop recording, please let me know and I will turn off my recording equipment immediately. Do you have any questions before we begin?

[The researcher will answer any questions the participant may have before turning on the audio and/or visual recording equipment or software.]

Okay, I would like to briefly review how this interview will be structured. I am going to ask you several questions related to your experience of being in a friendship with a heterosexual colleague during your counseling psychology doctoral training program and how you believe that friendship may have changed your friend. This interview will focus on the friend you identified on the demographics form. Please try to answer the questions as comprehensively as you are comfortable doing. Feel free to pause and take time to consider your responses. I would also be happy to repeat questions for you as many times as you need.

During the interview, I may ask you follow-up questions or clarification questions about something that you have stated. Again, please answer questions as comprehensively as you are comfortable doing. You are free to not answer any questions you are not comfortable with and you are free to discontinue participating at any point of this process.

Is there anything unclear about this that you would like me to explain before I proceed?

[Wait for participant to respond and address any questions that they may ask.]

First, I would like to ask you to describe the friendship you have selected for the purposes of this interview. You may answer in whatever way is most meaningful for you, but you may wish to consider several points such as the context of when you first met, how long ago this friendship occurred and whether or not you still hold this friendship.

[The researcher will pause to allow the participant to respond. The researcher may ask questions to clarify responses, such as “Can you explain what you meant by...” The

researcher may also ask follow-up questions such as “Can you describe further about...” or “Please tell me more about...” to elicit further description.]

When and how did your friend discover your sexual orientation, and how did the development of the friendship change over time?

[The researcher will pause to allow the participant to respond. The researcher may ask questions to clarify responses, such as “Can you explain what you meant by...” The researcher may also ask follow-up questions such as “Can you describe further about...” or “Please tell me more about...” to elicit further description.]

To the best of your knowledge, how would you describe your friend’s attitudes, values, behaviors, and thoughts towards sexual minority individuals prior to becoming friends with them?

[The researcher will pause to allow the participant to respond. The researcher may ask questions to clarify responses, such as “Can you explain what you meant by...” The researcher may also ask follow-up questions such as “Can you describe further about...” or “Please tell me more about...” to elicit further description.]

Please take a moment to reflect upon how your friend may have changed as a result of being friends with you. Can you please comment on any changes you noticed in regards to thoughts, values, attitudes, behaviors, or any other significant factors grounded in their personal or professional life about sexual minorities or sexual orientation? You may consider both short-term and long-term changes.

[The researcher will pause to allow the participant to respond. The researcher may ask questions to clarify responses, such as “Can you explain what you meant by...” The researcher may also ask follow-up questions such as “Can you describe further about...” or “Please tell me more about...” to elicit further description.]

To the best of your knowledge, please describe your friend’s current stance towards the sexual minority population. You may wish to comment on what you know of their therapeutic style with sexual minority clients, their relationship with sexual minority colleagues, and any participation in pro-sexual minority advocacy or political action.

[The researcher will pause to allow the participant to respond. The researcher may ask questions to clarify responses, such as “Can you explain what you meant by...” The researcher may also ask follow-up questions such as “Can you describe further about...” or “Please tell me more about...” to elicit further description.]

That concludes my main line of questions. I would like to give you the opportunity to state anything else you may wish to comment on about this topic that you may not have gotten to in your previous responses.

[The researcher will wait for the participant's response and ask probes as necessary.]

Thank you for your participation.

[The researcher will turn off the recording equipment or software and review the next steps of the research process, including a potential follow-up interview and the focus group meeting.]

Over the following months, I will be analyzing my collected data. During this process, I may find it necessary to contact participants to come back for a follow-up interview. This follow-up interview would be used to expand upon information I found to be significant from the first wave of data analysis. So, there is a possibility that I may contact you again to see if you would like to participate in a follow-up interview.

After I have finished analyzing my data and have created a preliminary theoretical structure, I will be contacting you again for participation in a focus group. The focus group will be used to present the interpretation of my data to participants in order to help ensure that I am not misrepresenting the collected data.

If you know of anyone else who may be interested in participating in this study, please let me know their email address so I may invite them to participate. I will give you my email address and phone number for future contact. Do you have any questions before we end today?

[Wait for the participant to respond and address any questions that they may ask.]

Alright, thank you again for taking the time to assist me in my research. You can expect a

Appendix R: Invitation to the Focus Group (Email Script)

Subject Line: Dissertation Research: Invitation to participate in a focus group

Hello (participant name),

I have completed my initial data analysis and am ready to begin scheduling my 1-hour focus groups. The focus groups will give participants a chance to review my initial theoretical framework and provide feedback, clarifications, and additional information. I am suggesting the following days and times for possible focus groups:

[The researcher will provide a list of days and times that potential 1-hour focus groups will occur.]

If you are willing to participate, please indicate which of the times would work for your schedule and email me at amber.l.larson@wmich.edu or call me at (269) 365-3405. If none of the suggested days and times works for you, you are welcome to indicate alternate times in which you would be available to participate. Thank you.

Amber Sylvan, M. S.
Doctoral Student Investigator
Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University

Appendix S: Invitation to the Focus Group (Phone Script)

Hello (participant name), I have completed my initial data analysis and am ready to begin scheduling my 1-hour focus groups. The focus groups will give participants a chance to review my initial theoretical framework and provide feedback, clarifications, and additional information.

[If the participant is unavailable, the following statement will be made to the participant's voicemail:]

If you are able and willing to participate, please contact me at amber.l.larson@wmich.edu or 269-365-3405 so that we can discuss potential days and times to attend a focus group. Thank you

[If the doctoral student researcher is able to speak directly with the participant, the following statement will be made:]

Would you like to hear the suggested days and times I have selected for potential focus group times, or would you prefer to contact me at a later time?

[If the participant assents, the doctoral student researcher will list the potential days and times and ask the following:]

Out of those that I just listed, what days and times might work for you? Please include all possibilities, as it will help me to form the groups. If none of those times work for your schedule, you can also provide me with some alternative times that may better work for you.

[The doctoral student researcher will record down the participant's available times and ask the following:]

Thank you. As soon as I form the focus groups, I will contact you with a confirmation of the day and time of the focus group. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any concerns in the meantime. Do you have any questions?

[The doctoral student researcher will answer any of the participant's questions or concerns and then conclude the phone call.]

[The doctoral student researcher will record down the participant's available times, or contact the participant later as they prefer. If the voicemail of the participant is received, the doctoral student researcher will make the following statement.]

Appendix T: Focus Group Confirmation (Email Script)

Subject Line: Dissertation Research: Focus group scheduling confirmation

Hi (participant name),

I have been able to schedule you for the focus group at (date/time). We will be using Go2Meeting again for an audio-only conference call. If you are unable to make the scheduled time, please let me know as soon as possible so that I can communicate the other scheduled focus group times that are available.

Thank you.

Amber Sylvan, M. S.
Doctoral Student Investigator
Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University

Appendix U: Focus Group Confirmation (Phone Script)

Hi (participant name), I have been able to schedule you for the focus group at (date/time). We will be using Go2Meeting again for an audio-only conference call. If you are unable to make this time, please let me know as soon as possible so that I can communicate the other scheduled focus group times that are available. Thank you.

Appendix V: Focus Group Reminder (Email Script)

Subject Line: Dissertation Research: Focus group reminder

Hello (participant's name),

I just wanted to remind you of the focus group on (date) from (time) to (time). I will be contacting you via Go2Meeting for an audio-only conference call. The procedures will be the same as you followed for your interview. As a review:

On the day of the interview, 1 hour before the interview, you will be sent an email titled "Join WebEx meeting in progress." This email will contain a link to install a browser attachment needed for the online conference call. Also included will be a toll-free phone number that you may call instead in order to join the interview if you are experiencing difficulties with your computer or internet connection. The interview will not begin before the scheduled time. When entering the online WebEx conference room, you will need to press the button to "Connect to Audio." You will not need to enable video feed for this audio-only call.

For the focus group, please ensure that you are in a quiet and private location.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at amber.l.larson@wmich.edu or (269) 365-3405.

Thank you,

Amber Sylvan, M. S.
Doctoral Student Investigator
Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University

Appendix W: Focus Group Reminder (Phone Script)

Hello (participant's name), I just wanted to remind you of the focus group on (date) from (time) to (time). I will be contacting you via Go2Meeting for an audio-only conference call. The procedures will be the same as you followed for your interview. As a review:

On the day of the interview, 1 hour before the interview, you will be sent an email titled "Join WebEx meeting in progress." This email will contain a link to install a browser attachment needed for the online conference call. Also included will be a toll-free phone number that you may call instead in order to join the interview if you are experiencing difficulties with your computer or internet connection. The interview will not begin before the scheduled time. When entering the online WebEx conference room, you will need to press the button to "Connect to Audio." You will not need to enable video feed for this audio-only call.

For your interview or focus group, please ensure that you are in a quiet and private location.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at amber.l.larson@wmich.edu or (269) 365-3405. Thank you.

Appendix X: Focus Group Protocol

Hello everyone, thank you for your continued participation. Before we begin, I would like to revisit the informed consent document and review the risks of participating in the focus group.

[I will review the risks and benefits of participation in the focus group from the informed consent document. Any questions that the participants may have about this will be answered.]

Next, I would like to cover some ground rules for this group. I also want to ask everyone to keep the information discussed today in the focus group private. While I can guarantee that I will maintain confidentiality of the information that you share, I cannot guarantee that other participants here today will keep what is discussed private. Because this is a risk of participating in the focus group, please be mindful about the level of disclosure that you are comfortable sharing. Does anyone have any questions?

[I will wait for anyone to ask questions or withdraw from the study before continuing.]

Today I would like to present to you the preliminary findings of the data analysis and allow everyone to give their feedback. Please keep in mind that this information describes the experiences of the collective participants, so your individual experiences may vary. You may wish to ask yourself while I review my findings, “Does this capture my own experience? Is there anything significant missing from this description?” Please also keep in mind that this data is describing the experiences of the heterosexual friend. So even if you are an LGBTQ participant, you were describing your heterosexual friend.

I also want to make a special note about any experiences related to racial identity. I want to acknowledge that I am a white, cisgender woman and while I did my best to minimize my own biases and present the data in as accurate as a way as possible, I am aware that I may have blind spots. I would like to invite any people of color in this group to please feel free to correct anything they see as an inaccuracy or misrepresentation of anything to do with racial identity in particular.

If there are no other questions, I will now turn on my recording equipment and present my findings.

[At this point I will present a powerpoint presentation of my data analysis findings. I will answer any clarification questions as they are asked by participants.]

Regarding the dynamics in a friendship between a heterosexual person and an LG person of the opposite sex: 1.) If you were in a friendship like this, did you feel like because there was not a possibility of sexual romantic attraction, you were able to become closer with your LG friend? 2.) Were there any other dynamics you noticed as a result of being in an opposite-sex, cross-sexuality friendship?

Does the description of the context and history of your cross-sexuality friendship fit your own experiences? Is there anything that conflicts or is a misrepresentation of your experience? Is there anything significant missing from this description?

In regards to the heterosexual friend's reactions to their LGBTQ friend coming out to them, or learning about their sexual orientation in another way, a considerable majority of the reactions described were positive. Do you recall any uncomfortable, distressing, or negative thoughts or reactions?

Does the narrative of the description and progression of your cross-sexuality friendship fit your own experiences? Is there anything that conflicts or is a misrepresentation of your experience? Is there anything significant missing from this description?

In regards to the description of the learning and perception gained from the cross-sexuality friendship, is there anything that conflicts or is a misrepresentation of your experience? Is there anything significant missing from this description?

For heterosexual participants thinking about potentially having children in the future, has your friendship led to thoughts about how you might support an LGBTQ child? Does the description of the change and action resulting from the cross-sexuality friendship as experienced by the heterosexual friend fit your own experiences?

Now that you have seen the initial data analysis, what are your reactions to this information? Is there anything that conflicts or is a misrepresentation of your experience? Is there anything significant missing from this description?

Now that I have reviewed all of my findings, I would like to ask some general follow-up questions. Is there anything that surprised you about the findings? In general, do you feel that the data is portrayed in an accurate way? Do you feel that the my findings are portrayed in a way that is accurate to your understanding of your own experience?

Finally, do you have any clarifications about the data that you would like to offer, or do you have any additional information to add?

[The researcher will pause after each question and allow the participants to discuss the question. Probing questions will be applied to elicit further information or discussion, or to clarify responses.]

That concludes the focus group and thus ends your participation in the study. Thank you everyone for your participation.

Appendix Y: HSIRB Research Project Approval Letter

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY



Human Subjects Institutional Review Board

Date: March 18, 2015

To: James Croteau, Principal Investigator
Amber Sylvan, Student Investigator for dissertation

From: Amy Naugle, Ph.D., Chair

Re: HSIRB Project Number 14-12-21

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project titled "A Grounded Theory of How Cross-Sexually Friendships in Counseling Psychology Doctoral Programs Alter Understanding of Sexual Orientation among Heterosexuals" has been **approved** under the **expedited** category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note: This research may **only** be conducted exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project (e.g., ***you must request a post approval change to enroll subjects beyond the number stated in your application under "Number of subjects you want to complete the study."*** Failure to obtain approval for changes will result in a protocol deviation. In addition, if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

Reapproval of the project is required if it extends beyond the termination date stated below.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: March 17, 2016

Walwood Hall, Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5456
PHONE: (269) 387-8293 FAX: (269) 387-8276