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Constraints to "Gay Lifestyle": Functioning within the Social Environment

Valerie A. Paget

Grand Valley State University

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Constraints to "Gay Lifestyle":
Functioning within the Social Environment

Submitted By: Valerie A. Paget
Date Submitted: April 25, 1997

Thesis Committee:
Jerry Johnson, ABD, Chairperson
Department of Social Work
Grand Valley State University

Dr. Terry Rosander, Committee Member
Department of Social Work
Grand Valley State University

Dr. Susan Lynch, Committee Member
Department of Social Work
University of Arkansas
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Valerie A. Paget
Constraints to "Gay Lifestyle": Functioning within the Social Environment

Abstract

"Gay lifestyle" is a phrase which carries with it many limitations and negative perceptions. In this paper, Adlerian psychology is used to facilitate a more broad understanding of lesbian, gay and bisexual lifestyles. To accomplish this, individual functioning is examined within the context of the social environment. Review of the literature examines the areas of cultural values; moral thought; theories on the etiology of homosexuality; attitudes as cognitive, affective, and behavioral reactions; development of gay and lesbian subcultures; and actual lifestyle functioning of gay, lesbian and bisexual persons. Sociological theories of feminism, constructionism, essentialism, and interactionism are all used to highlight different elements in these areas. Actual lifestyle functioning of lesbian, gay and bisexual persons is further examined using Adler's life tasks to narrow the focus of study. Of Adler's three life tasks of work, love, and society, the task of society is examined by measurement of leisure time pursuits. Three objectives were identified in this study: 1) to become familiar with the constraints to lifestyle functioning experienced by gay and lesbian persons, 2) to begin broadening current understanding of gay lifestyle, and 3) to provide a foundation for future research in this area. These were accomplished by surveying members of the lesbian and gay community regarding their leisure time. Collaboration with a Grand Rapids organization (The Network) serving lesbians and gays made this possible. A pilot study of 15 individuals was conducted prior to mailing to the 500 members of this organization. Confidentiality was maintained in that The Network distributed these surveys without the researcher's knowledge of participant information. Instrumentation was based on a tool measuring leisure time and developed by nationally recognized experts in the field. As no information was available on validity or reliability of this tool, limitations exist in interpreting data analysis. Additionally, convenience sampling prevents generalizing this study to the overall population of gay, lesbian and bisexual persons. Data analysis was conducted using techniques of analysis of variance, independent t-test, and chi-square. Additionally, basis content analysis was conducted in examined open-ended responses. The sample was composed of 50% lesbian women, 45% gay men, 4% bisexual women, and 1% bisexual men. Participant's perceptions of inhibition in their leisure time and levels of identity disclosure were measured and were found to be significantly related to variables of leisure satisfaction and companionship. Age, gender, relationship status, and length of time in current relationship were found to be significantly related to leisure pursuits and values stereotypically attributed to lesbian, gay and bisexual persons. Issues of isolation and empowerment are discussed, implications for social work practice are presented, and recommendations for future research are suggested.
"The honest psychologist cannot shut his eyes to social conditions which prevent the [individual] from becoming a part of the community and from feeling at home in the world, and which allow him to [survive] as though he lived in enemy country" (Adler, 1964 trans).

A basic tenet of Adler's Individual Psychology is that individuals cannot be understood in isolation from the social context in which they function. To understand the person, one must also understand their environment. This opens one to the complexities of human life and mandates respect of both philosophy and science. Adler refused to recognize and examine an isolated human being (Adler, 1964 trans).

The purpose of this thesis is to examine how the social environment of lesbian and gay persons affects their lifestyle functioning. Understanding lifestyle functioning of gay, lesbian and bisexual persons cannot be accomplished without first having knowledge of society as they experience it. Before one can truly comprehend lesbian and gay lifestyles, one must become aware of their environment and estimate the effects their surroundings have on either enhancing or constraining social functioning.

Because so little is known about the actual lifestyle functioning of gays and lesbians, studying their social environment becomes a critical prerequisite to this investigation. Without this preliminary work, understanding will become misunderstanding, and discriminatory practices may be continued by the perpetuation of the negative and limited perceptions that exist today. To overcome stereotypes, practitioners must be provided with accurate knowledge regarding both lifestyle functioning and constraints to that functioning.
"Gay Lifestyle"

Unfortunately, researchers and practitioners alike continue to be both recipients and bearers of negative, limited perceptions regarding "gay lifestyle." This can be seen in popular use of the phrase "gay lifestyle," which, when examined, can be seen to represent the social conditions to which gay, lesbian and bisexual persons are commonly exposed. This phrase demonstrates the underlying values, morals and attitudes commonly found within the social environment, and exemplifies the societal constraints often encountered by lesbian and gay persons. Use of the phrase, even by defenders of homosexuality, actually appears to be a term inhibiting lifestyle functioning, rather than a phrase describing lifestyle functioning.

Popular use has altered the basic meaning of this phrase for the worse making stereotypic reference to the central purpose of gay and lesbian lives as that of sexual desire. When using the phrase gay lifestyle to refer to same-gender sexual behavior, our perception of lifestyle is narrowed to sexual activities, thereby forcing lesbians and gays into a very narrow way of life. By stereotypically disregarding other dimensions in the concept of lifestyle, lifestyle functioning is negatively controlled by limiting the options of expected, perceived, and even researched behaviors in lifestyle dimensions outside of intimate relations.

Adler's Lifestyle

Life style was a concept developed by Alfred Adler and his colleagues of the Society for Free Psychoanalytic Research in the early 1900s (Lantz 1980), and was never meant to be used as a narrow description of functioning. On the contrary, Adler discouraged restricting the definition of lifestyle to a type (Powers, 1994). Since its origination, however, use of the phrase lifestyle in general has become very casual, and its comprehensive meaning seems lost from
the language of practitioners. Adler's theory of Individual Psychology, an extremely holistic approach to human functioning, utilizes style of life as a framework from which to understand and assess the complexities of human nature. As the knowledge disseminated by Adler is foundational to social work practice, rekindling of his concepts will be useful not only for this investigation of "gay lifestyle," but also for general education in human behavior.

As defined by Adler, life style is a set of cognitive assumptions that a person has learned and uses to help organize, understand, predict, and control experience. He believed that a person always strives for a better adaptation to his or her environment, and thought this striving to consist of three major life tasks: society, work, and intimate relations. To understand an individual's life style, Adlerians consider it of primary importance to assess 1) the individual's actual functioning in these three areas; 2) the individual's attitudes about his or her functioning in these areas, and 3) the individual's goals for functioning in these areas. (Lantz 1980). This current study will attempt to assess the first of these, actual functioning, with a focus on the task of society.

Although Adler did not clearly define the task of society, he referred to it frequently throughout his writings, describing it as communal life, association, friendship, and comradeship. One should not confuse the task of society with the overall social field. The overall social embeddedness of man is an assumption of Adler's Individual Psychology, and in this sense, society is the environment in which one moves, and which alone permits recognition of the significance of her behavior (Dreikurs, 1987). The task of society refers to a more specific dimension of functioning which occurs within the social environment along with the tasks of love and work. The concept of society, as a specific life task, consists of the distinct social life in which an individual partakes.

What more than our leisure time has its primary purpose as associating with others as companions and friends? A direct measure of one's social life is how they function within their leisure time. This preliminary study on the social functioning of lesbian and gay persons will,
therefore, explore Adler's task of society by gathering information on their leisure time. This is an attempt to measure one very specific dimension of "gay lifestyle": leisure time pursuits. For this investigation to be accurately reported, it will first be necessary to return to an understanding of the overall social environment in which gay, lesbian and bisexual persons interact.

Adler was the first of his time to acknowledge the role of values in human psychology and psychotherapy (Adler, 1964 trans). This makes sense when we recognize that values are essentially a social phenomenon. They are a social force, just as instincts are a biological force, and as such are the primary motivating force of cultural behavior (Shapiro, 1962; Adler, 1964 trans). Social conditions are the result of cultural values. As a social-psychologist, Adler forced us to bridge the gap between philosophy and science by addressing the influence of cultural values on lifestyle functioning. His assessment of the individual included an understanding of how the conditions of their society influenced their ability to function. Did conditions constrain or enhance functioning?

Lifestyle Constraints

"A constraint may be defined as any factor which intervenes between the preference for an activity and participation in it" (Henderson, et al., 1989). Sociologists' investigation of environmental constraints has been clearly useful when working with other oppressed populations. For example, considerable information has been acquired on barriers to functioning for individuals with physical impairments, and valuable insight into the social limitations experienced, due to these barriers, has been gained from this research. As a result, the individual lifestyles of those with disabilities have been greatly enhanced by the understanding and removal of such barriers.
Although the barriers that gay and lesbian persons most often confront when out in society are not usually physical barriers, the concept remains the same. Perceptual constraints are typically no less powerful in their ability to inhibit functioning than are concrete barriers. In order to explore and enhance actual lifestyle functioning, we must first know what constraints inhibit that functioning. Exploring these inhibitions will prove invaluable for research on actual lifestyle functioning of lesbian, gay and bisexual persons. The goal of this research is to facilitate empowerment of gay and lesbian persons by increasing awareness of interactional barriers they may encounter.

The theoretical model on the following page was developed for this thesis in an attempt to clearly portray the concepts to be discussed in this paper, and to illustrate the power of perceptual change. It is theorized that the areas depicted in this model all may serve to constrain or enhance lifestyle functioning of gay, lesbian and bisexual persons. When using the model to understand potential constraints, the reader is encouraged to conceptualize it as a funnel, with Cultural Values positioned on the top, inner edge. In this way, values, morals, and etiological theories are assumed to be the major source of constraint, serving to limit social functioning of gay populations. From these, attitudes are derived and, as will be established in the following chapter, exploring these attitudes will prove critical to comprehending the social environment of lesbians and gays. Attitudes reflect society’s values, and as such, are the impediments actually encountered by gays and lesbians in their daily lives.
Emergence and development of gay and lesbian subcultures has not occurred in a social vacuum, but has been greatly influenced by these constraints to functioning. Additionally, gay subcultures often provide an intermediate link between the societal mass and individual functioning of gay, lesbian and bisexual persons. It is an assumption of this thesis that all of the elements within the "funnel of constraints" influence social interaction, acting to either constrain or enhance lifestyle functioning.
Lifestyle Functioning

Nonsexual aspects of gay and lesbian lifestyles have received very little attention from traditional theorists. Therefore, very little is known or understood about how gay, lesbian and bisexual persons interact within society. This gap in the literature has resulted in an exaggerated focus and concern with sexual behaviors of gay, lesbian and bisexual persons which has served to further label them as deviant. Therefore, an exploration into the social functioning of gays and lesbians will be conducted in addition to research on constraints to functioning. This will be done as a means of broadening our understanding of expected behaviors, as well as instituting a framework for future research on lifestyle functioning.

"Gay lifestyle" is a unique notion in that it provides opportunity to explore the two main concepts chosen for this study, lifestyle constraints and lifestyle functioning. Shifting the focus, in this section, from lifestyle constraints to that of lifestyle functioning, reference is again made to the model on page six, although an important difference should be noted when reexamining this model. The reader is now encouraged to visualize it not as a funnel, but as a pyramid. This altered conception places individual lifestyle functioning on top of the pyramid. This change in interpretation illustrates the change that can occur when gay and lesbian persons become empowered and able to function effectively despite impediments encountered. A goal of this study is to facilitate this empowerment by broadening the expectations of social behaviors from which gay and lesbian persons might choose.

Statement of the Problem

Oppression, discrimination and constraints to functioning have all contributed to the secrecy and confusion around the actual day-to-day functioning of lesbians and gays within
society. Contributing to this discriminatory process are societal values and attitudes towards homosexuality, as well as the lack of available knowledge regarding nonsexual aspects of lesbian and gay functioning. These factors frequently serve to force gays and lesbians into limited, stereotypic social roles. As a result, the needs and abilities of gay and lesbian persons often become distorted and/or unnoticed.

Need for Present Study

Ninety-nine percent of the psychotherapy service providers in Garnets & Hancock’s (1991) national study reported having at least one lesbian or gay male client. Since helping professionals find themselves in such frequent contact with gays and lesbians, it is vital that our research accurately reflects the lifestyle functioning of this clientele. Otherwise, effective, useful services will continue to be unavailable to this population. Given the scarcity of research on the actual functioning of lesbians and gay males within society (Grossman, 1993), we really have very little knowledge on which to base our practice assumptions. What is needed is generation of fresh knowledge and insights from which we can form new understandings and theoretical models.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to examine how the social environment of lesbian and gay persons affects their lifestyle functioning, and to establish a framework for further investigation of this functioning. It is hoped that exploring this area will serve to challenge stereotypes regarding “gay lifestyle” and encourage a broader understanding of lifestyle
functioning. Ultimately, the goal is for this increased awareness to facilitate empowerment of gay, lesbian and bisexual persons.

Research Objectives and Questions

The first objective in conducting this research is to become familiar with the barriers to lifestyle functioning encountered by gays and lesbians. To accomplish this, a number of questions are posed:

1. What are potential constraints to functioning found in the literature?
2. Do lesbian, gay and bisexual persons experience inhibitions related to their sexual orientation?
3. If so, how is a perception of inhibition linked to actual leisure functioning within society?
4. Finally, what are actual constraints as reported by gay, lesbian, and bisexual persons?

The second objective of this study is two-fold: to begin broadening current understanding of lifestyle functioning and to provide a framework for future research. This will be done by exploring actual leisure time pursuits of study participants.

1. What are the actual leisure time pursuits of gay, lesbian and bisexual study participants?
2. What factors are associated with actual involvement in stereotypic pursuits?

Research Plan

This study will use a two step process in exploring lifestyle functioning. The first step will be a comprehensive review of constraints within the social environment of lesbian, gay and bisexual persons. These constraints are illustrated in the model on page six. The second step
will be an attempt to broaden perceptions of lifestyle and provide the framework for future studies through measurement of actual social functioning. This will be accomplished through distribution of 500 self-administered surveys to individuals within the lesbian and gay community. This second phase will also include further investigation of lifestyle constraints as encountered specifically by these participants.

As Adlerian concepts are reflected in numerous sociological theories, implementing this plan will be directed by these theories. Overall review and discussion of constraints will be guided by the feminist concept of social control, and, at various points, will be highlighted by use of three other sociological theories; constructionism, essentialism, and social-interactionism.

Assumptions

In utilizing Adler’s concepts of Individual Psychology as overall guidance in this presentation, the following theoretical assumptions are postulated. 1) Social embeddedness of humans. Adler believed individual’s were indivisible from their environment, that the two existed as one. This assumption is addressed throughout this presentation. 2) Self-determination and creativity. Adler also believed that circumstances are changed by individuals. 3) Subjectivity of perception. The world of experience is not simply given, but mediated by the human mind. These last two assumptions are not addressed until the final discussion in chapter five.

Limitations

Adler’s conceptualization of life style includes the tasks of society, work and intimate relations. For complete assessment of these tasks, functioning, attitudes about functioning, and goals for functioning should all be ascertained. This study will focus solely on assessing
functioning within the task of society. Assessment of attitudes and goals for functioning are beyond the scope of this study, as are assessing the tasks of work and intimate relations.

Another limitation is that this research does not provide contrast between the lifestyle functioning of gay, lesbian and bisexual persons and the functioning of heterosexual persons. To truly accept or reject the relative nature of a "gay lifestyle," this comparison is necessary. It is, however, beyond the scope of this study to provide such a contrast, although current research may be thought to form the basis for this comparison in future studies. Limits to methodology are outlined in chapter three.
In this chapter, the feminist concept of social control will be used as a guide to reviewing lifestyle constraints. "The basic concept in feminist ideology is one of equality" (Lachmann, 1991). Feminists believe that inequality between categories of individuals is maintained by a society's value system, a system which often stigmatizes gay, lesbian and bisexual persons. Within this approach, analysis of social conditions is critical to understanding how negative attitudes towards gays and lesbians are maintained, and subsequently the effects these attitudes have on restricting lifestyle choices (Borgatta, 1992; Browning, 1982).

Therefore, gay and lesbian lifestyles within any society must first be understood in light of how that society contends with homosexuality. Exploring how a society manages the categories of "homosexual" and "heterosexual" yields itself to three main questions. How are the categories of "homosexual" and "heterosexual" valued and perceived by society at large? As a result of these perceptions, how do members of society react to individuals in the "homosexual" role or category? Consequently, how do individuals organize around the category of "homosexual" in forming a group identity? To understand societal control of functioning, answers to these questions will be presented in the following review of the literature.

Modeling feminist theory, the literature will be divided into five areas corresponding to the tiers within the "funnel of constraints" on page six. Initial discussion will focus on elements within the funnel's two outermost tiers: values, moral thought, and etiological theories of homosexuality. Within this review, natural law theory will promote understanding of societal values. Constructionist and essentialist theories will aid in understanding both the nature of morality and etiological theory, and how they operate as social controls of functioning. The next area, corresponding to the funnel's third tier, presents a review of societal attitudes as derived
from moral thought and theories of etiology. Included will be topics of cognitive, affective, and behavioral reactions to lesbian, gay and bisexual persons. The fourth tier of the model, development of gay and lesbian subcultures, will be presented as an evolutionary process controlled by societal values, morals, etiological theories, and attitudes. Finally, research on lifestyle functioning will be presented, and will highlight the need for further exploration in this area.

Level One
Cultural Values

We use the term value to refer to the way we would prefer, desire or want something to be. Members of all societies exert pressures upon one another to conform to these values, or standards of behavior which are considered right and appropriate. Success or failure of an action depends upon the reaction of another person to it, and that reaction in turn is dependent on one's values. The value on procreation, reflected in adherence to the theory of natural law, has greatly influenced the lives of gay, lesbian and bisexual persons.

The concept of procreation and the value a society places on the category of "homosexual" have long existed in disparity. The Greek physician Soranus believed the sexual practices of lesbian, gay and bisexual persons to be "unnatural to human beings" (Bullough, 1979). This philosophy supports the theory of natural law, which has endured for generations.

Natural law theory states that man and woman were made for each other and no other form of sexual sharing is adequate to the institution of marriage and family (Brooke, 1993). Violation of this law occurs when a woman satisfies her desire on a woman, or a man on a man. According to natural law, this practice is thought to be contrary to the ends of humanity; for the ends of humanity in respect to sexuality is to preserve the species (O'Donohue & Caselles, 1993).
Given that procreation is a logical concept, the theory of natural law has inspired moral thinking in many societies (Boswell, 1980; Brooke, 1993; O'Donohue & Caselles, 1993). "Natural law theory regards homosexuality as immoral for the following reasons: 1) It is contrary to the procreative purpose of sexual intercourse; 2) It is an attack on the basic unit of society—the family; 3) It is deficient in the potential for complementary interaction between partners; and 4) It is a deliberate pursuit of sexual pleasure in the absence of a stable framework for mutual growth and understanding" (Brooke, 1993). As illustrated in the model on page six, procreative values have a powerful influence on social conditions, substantiating the deeply rooted nature of constraints faced by gays and lesbians (Browning, 1982). The aggregate influence of this value on the social environment will be demonstrated in following sections.

Familiarity with the origin of society's perceptions is critical to understanding the various attitudes and assumptions found within the environment. Without this information, there is a tendency to view environmental constraints as somewhat singular, when in reality, numerous types of perceptual constraints and attitudes exist (O'Donohue & Caselles, 1993). Although both the areas of morality and psychology have been influenced by society's values (Brooke, 1993; Browning, 1982), understanding the extreme difference in assumptions between these two philosophies is fundamental to understanding the diversity of attitudes and lifestyle constraints within the social environment.

Level Two, Section One
Moral Thought

The theory of constructionism renders useful insight into moral thought (Epstein, 1987). In this section, similarities between constructionism and moral thought will be hypothesized, and differences will be highlighted. Both point to belief in bisexual tendencies as nearly universal in
all humans across time and culture (Epstein, 1987). Beyond this assumption of origin, constructionists and moralists differ greatly in their values and assumptions. To the fundamental moralist, categories of “homosexual” and “heterosexual” delineate between right and wrong behavior. To the constructionist, creation of categories serves simply as a means of social control (McIntosh, 1968).

Universal Bisexual Potential

“Few arguments have caused as much controversy among gay audiences as the assertion of a universal bisexual potential. I was once interrupted during a taping of a gay radio program in Los Angeles by a producer very concerned by this position, which he said justified Anita Bryant’s claim that all homosexuals could be “cured.” He was only partially mollified by my pointing out that the reverse was equally true” (Epstein, 1987).

It is interesting to note that little professional research exists on the nature of moral thought regarding homosexuality. Yet, as will be illustrated in future sections, nearly half of all Americans adhere to the moralist’s assumption that “being homosexual is something people choose to be” (Mitchell, 1996). Lack of literary research or discussion in this area may reflect the discomfort of both gay and lesbian populations and majority populations in addressing the concept of a universal bisexual potential.

The concept of a universal bisexual potential is based in the theory of constructionism. A primary constructionist premise is that, within ancient societies, there may have been much homosexual behavior, but there were no homosexuals (McIntosh, 1968). In this perspective, the categories of homosexual and heterosexual are thought to be a construction of modern cultures (Davidson, 1990; McIntosh, 1968; Padgug, 1979; Epstein, 1987; Dynes, 1987; Hacking, 1986). The Kinsey reports (1948) are perhaps the strongest source of support for the constructionist ideology. “Kinsey challenged the model of human sexuality that conceived
sexuality as a polar construct with heterosexuality on one end and homosexuality on the other end and concluded that only a very small percentage of adults could be categorized as exclusively heterosexual or exclusively homosexual" (Browning, 1982). This then supports the moralist and constructionist philosophy of a universal bisexual potential.

Sin and Social Control

"Each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death” (James 1:14-15).

In ancient Judaism, all nonprocreative sex was undesirable and, therefore, sinful (Bullough, 1979). “Even nonprocreative sexual activity between husband and wife was sinful, since procreative purpose was the sole justification for any sexual act” (Boswell, 1980). Various religious texts and arguments support the philosophy of homosexual behavior as undesirable and morally impermissible (O’Donohue & Caselles, 1993). Scriptures commonly cited in these arguments include the following:

Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind; it is an abomination (Leviticus 18:22).

If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them (Leviticus 20:13).

That is why God has abandoned them to degrading passions: why their women have turned from natural intercourse to unnatural practices and why their menfolk have given up natural intercourse to be consumed with passion for each other, men doing shameless things with men and getting appropriate reward for their perversion (Romans 1:26-27).

To both constructionists and feminists, categorization of sexuality (homosexuality / heterosexuality) serves a negative function of social control. If homoerotic tendencies are
thought to be universal and also thought to lead to sin, then construction of sexual categories acts as a means of controlling behavior. Mary McIntosh (1968), a chief pioneer of social constructionism, believed the construction of categories to operate as a mechanism of social control in two ways. First it provides a clear, recognizable threshold between allowable and unallowable behavior. Secondly it serves to segregate those individuals involved in undesirable behavior. "The creation of a specialized, despised and punished role of homosexual keeps the bulk of society pure" (McIntosh, 1968).

Defenders of homosexuality agree with this concept of moral constraint by also noting that underlying procreative values were developed due to the survival needs of ancient populations. "It was imperative for the Jewish people to grow as a nation; therefore, emphasis was on procreation" (Brooke, 1993). Supporters of homosexuality believe that procreative values no longer apply to the needs of modern society in which individuals fight for needed resources, and therefore note that belief in homosexuality as sin is unnecessary (Brooke, 1993). The concept of sin, however, continues to be a powerful, influential force within the environment of gay, lesbian, and bisexual persons.

Level Two, Section Two
Etiological Theories of Homosexuality

"At its base the psychosexual developmental conception has the a priori assumption that 'good,' 'normal,' or 'healthy' development is heterosexual in nature" (Cornett, 1986).

Societal values and moral thought are very powerful in their influence on theoretical thought. Silverstein (1984) suggests that when reviewing the relationship between psychiatric diagnosis & morality, moral reasoning has been the primary determinant in the diagnosis of sexual disorders. Although etiological theories of homosexuality may extend from moral thought and a shared value base (O'Donohue & Caselles, 1993), these two domains, theory and
morality, approach this value base from two very different perspectives. Understanding this
difference is necessary to understanding the social environment of gays and lesbians.

The Dichotomy of Sexuality

The fields of medicine and psychiatry are based on an essentialist assumption of
homosexuality. Whereas moralists and constructionists may discuss homosexuality in terms of
sexual preference, theorists and essentialists will discuss it in terms of sexual orientation.
Essentialists believe that homosexuality stems from fundamental human differences. “Humans
are differentiated at an individual level in terms of erotic attraction, so that some are more
attracted sexually to their own gender, some to the opposite gender, and some to both, in all
cultures... The supposition is that there have been in all Western societies ‘gay people’ and
‘non-gay people’” (Boswell, 1980). Essentialists consider categories to be the footprints of
reality: they exist because humans perceive a real order in the universe and name it (Dynes,
1987).

The inclination towards studying the etiology of homosexuality is in itself an essentialistic
practice. Beyond this basic tendency, preference for etiological theories is even more strikingly
essentialistic. In Vreeland’s (1995) study of psychiatrists’ beliefs regarding the “etiology” of male
homosexuality, each psychiatrist rank ordered their theoretical preference of twelve theories.
The results follow and clearly demonstrate essentialist preferences.

1. Genetic inheritance               7. Seduction by same-sex adult
2. Prenatal hormonal development    8. Cross dressing of child
5. Dominant mother                  11. Only child
Disease and Social Control

McIntosh (1968) believed that the way in which people become labeled as homosexual is an important social process connected with mechanisms of social control, so that diagnosing gays and lesbians as diseased was a means of controlling their behavior. Before the elimination of "Homosexuality" as a diagnostic category in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM), the process of labeling gay, lesbian and bisexual persons as diseased was quite common.

"In the first edition of the DSM (1952) homosexuality was included as one of the sexual disorders which were classified among the Sociopathic Personality Disorders. Sociopathic disorders were characterized by a lack of distress or anxiety despite the presence of severe pathology. This allowed homosexuality to be classified as a mental disorder despite the homosexual's possible satisfaction with his or her sexual orientation. In the second edition of the DSM (1968) homosexuality was reclassified as a Sexual Deviation, among the Nonpsychotic Disorders. The category, Sexual Deviation, included individuals whose sexual interests are directed toward objects other than persons of the opposite sex, or toward acts not usually associated with coitus, or toward acts involving coitus under bizarre circumstances. It was noted that, although these individuals may be disturbed by their sexual behavior, they are unable to substitute 'normal sexual behavior.' In 1973, when Homosexuality was eliminated from the DSM, the third edition of the manual contained the diagnosis Ego-Dystonic Homosexuality, which described individuals with a sustained pattern of overt homosexual arousal that is unwanted or distressing, accompanied by a desire to acquire heterosexual arousal" (O'Donohue & Caselles, 1993).

It is interesting to note that when the diagnostic category of "homosexuality" was eliminated from the DSM, it was eliminated by a vote of 5854 to 3810 (O'Donohue & Caselles, 1993). This implies that at least 40% of the American Psychiatric Association's voting members continued to consider "homosexuality" a disease. In addition, Garnets and Hancock (1991) reported that "fifty-eight percent of the psychologists surveyed knew of negative incidents, including cases in which practitioners defined lesbians or gay men as 'sick' and in need of
change." The philosophy of gays and lesbians as diseased continues as a powerful constraint to lifestyle functioning.

Level Three
Attitudes: Cognitive, Affective, & Behavioral Reactions

Attitudes function as an expression of basic values (Borgatta, 1992). They both reflect the society and social institutions of which an individual is a member, and they link society and social institutions to individuals and groups (Borgatta, 1992). In this sense, attitudes may be thought of as the arena where morality and psychology are played out against gays, lesbians and bisexuals. Attitudes are also studied as indicators of social change at the societal level. "A major source of such data is the General Social Survey" (Borgatta, 1992) which will be utilized in the following discussion.

Measurement of attitudes towards gays and lesbians has been found to be somewhat problematic in the literature. "Homophobia is the term used to describe the irrational fear of anyone gay or lesbian, or of anyone perceived to be gay or lesbian" (Gelso et al, 1995). Some believe that the emphasis on fear alone (homophobia) does not adequately impart the severity (i.e. violence) or variety of responses toward gays in this society (Gelso et al, 1995). Current measurements of 'homophobia' may include anywhere from a very narrow definition of affective response (i.e. fear) to an undefined mixture of behaviors, beliefs and feelings towards gay, lesbian and bisexual persons (O'Donohue & Caselles, 1993). Defining all reactions to gay, lesbian and bisexual persons as irrational fear, as currently practiced, does not reflect the myriad of responses found within our society, and limits our understanding of the social environment in which gays and lesbians interact.

Attitude can be defined as "a mental state of readiness to act toward an object or set of objects in a consistently positive or negative way, thus as a precursor of intention and of
behavior in various realms" (Agnew et al, 1993). Most comprehensive definitions of attitude include three basic components—a cognitive component, an affective component, and a behavioral component (Agnew, 1993; Borgatta, 1992; Gelso et al, 1995; O'Donohue & Caselles, 1993). The following review of attitudes will divide the literature into these three types: cognitive, affective, and behavioral reactions.

Cognitive Reactions

Cognitive reactions are the element of the social environment that perhaps best represent the diverse nature of constraints faced by gay, lesbian, and bisexual persons. The actual perceptions of members of society are demonstrated through these reactions, and the diversity of these perceptions are encapsulated within this discussion. These reactions strongly reflect the underlying forces of both moral thought and psychological thought, and demonstrate both the negativity and limitations of these views.

In the 1994 General Social Survey taken by the National Opinion Research Center (Mitchell, 1996), 41% of the people surveyed believed that "being homosexual is something people choose to be," which reflects the concept of a universal bisexual potential. 44% believed that "being homosexual" is something people cannot change, reflecting an essentialist notion. 14% were unsure. It, therefore, appears that the nation is split between constructionist thought and essentialist thought.

Newman (1989) noted that "there is no indication in the data that a majority of American adults are likely to consider homosexual relations to be morally acceptable in the near future." This prediction is confirmed by response to the following question. "What about sexual relations between two adults of the same sex—do you think it is always wrong, almost always wrong, wrong only sometimes, or not wrong at all?" (Mitchell, 1996). Results for three years were presented:
A majority of Americans say that sex between two adults of the same-gender is always wrong. But a growing minority say it is not wrong at all. Other results of interest are that blacks are slightly more likely than whites to say homosexual sex is always wrong. Additionally, the proportion who believe it is always wrong rises sharply with age and declines sharply with education (Mitchell, 1996).

### Stereotypes as Limited Cognitive Reactions

"A lesbian couple, seeking relationship therapy, was advised that such therapy was not applicable to their ‘type’ of relationship, that it should not be considered a permanent relationship, and that they might consider going to ‘gay bars’ to meet other people like themselves" (Garnets & Hancock, 1991).

Stereotypes are one type of attitude (Borgatta, 1992). They are limited expectations about the members of a specified group, and as such fall into the cognitive domain of reactions. In modern societies where a stereotyped “homosexual role” is recognized, expectations are created regarding those who play the role. These expectations often assume totalizing dimensions in which all behavior of the categorized person becomes interpreted by society through a perception of difference (Epstein, 1987; McIntosh, 1968). This narrow perception returns us to the popularly viewed concept of a “gay lifestyle.”

The following abridgments were drawn from research found in the literature reviewed for the writing of this thesis. These clips demonstrate the stereotypic reference of the phrase gay lifestyle to sexual behavior as the central focus and purpose of gay and lesbian lifestyles.
In an article focusing solely on lesbian and heterosexual clients’ discussion of sexual problems, the following is noted: Without addressing “the therapist’s own personal conflicts and problems about sexuality and about gay and lesbian lifestyles, the therapist’s effectiveness with the client is likely to be impaired” (Gelso, Fassinger, Gomez, & Latts, 1995).

“If offspring who develop homosexual lifestyles are less likely to reproduce, then parental fitness would be reduced accordingly” (Gallup, 1995).

“To the extent that seduction may be involved in the development of a homosexual lifestyle, seduction by peers as opposed to pedophiles is probably at least, if not more important than enticement by adults” in those surveyed (Gallup, 1995).

O’Donohue & Caselles (1993) “. . . characterized the homophobic as an individual who does not value a homosexual lifestyle equally with a heterosexual lifestyle.”

“These activists call for acceptance & normalization of homosexuality as a legitimate alternative lifestyle” (Hurwitz, 1993).

Thumma (1991) examined “the process by which gay men reconcile their gay lifestyle with their Evangelical religious identity. . . to resolve the dissonance between their religious beliefs and their homosexual desires.”

“Many lesbians in such fields as teaching, child care, and child psychology remain ‘closeted’ because of the myth that they recruit children to the gay lifestyle” (Browning, Reynolds & Dworkin, 1991).

“Female homosexuality can no longer be equated only with sickness or inadequacy, but may properly be considered as a preference, orientation, or propensity for certain kinds of lifestyles” (Rudolph, 1988).

An article titled Psychoanalytic Theory and Affirmation of the Gay Lifestyle explored ways to ameliorate conflict between “psychoanalytic thought and affirmation of homosexuality as an alternative healthy lifestyle” (Cornett & Hudson, 1985).

When using the phrase gay lifestyle or homosexual lifestyle to refer to same-gender sexual behavior, our perception of lifestyle becomes limited to sexual intimacies. Rothblum
(1994) claims that gays and lesbians are objectified and sexualized by portrayals of society. "so that they live in a culture of sex." When sexuality is isolated from the context of the whole person, there is a tendency to view that person as morally dangerous" (Browning, 1982). This then provides the moral "justification" for discrimination against gay, lesbian and bisexual persons.

When it is expected that sexuality will play a part of some kind in all relations with others, this may lead to other sexually based stereotypes (McIntosh, 1968). These stereotypes, particularly those of promiscuity and pedophilia, appear to be intricately connected to mandates against nonprocreative behaviors. The apparent assumption is that if an individual violates this procreative mandate in one form, it is assumed they will violate this mandate in a general way.

St. Albertus Magnus (1206-80) "believed that homosexuality was contagious and could spread rapidly from one person to another. By implication one had to be watchful, particularly over the young" (Bullough, 1979). Even though research on pedophilia documents no association between child molestation and homosexuality (Newman, 1989), many people indicate that they believe lesbian, gay and bisexual persons will attempt to seduce young children (Gallup, 1995; Weinrich, 1987). Consistent with this analysis, gay and lesbian teachers are more likely to be discriminated against than gay and lesbian persons in many other professions (Gallup, 1995).

Affective Reactions

"In a clinical case presentation by a psychology intern who was providing appropriate treatment to a gay client, a senior psychology faculty member stated 'this guy is a faggot—don't you have any reaction to that'" (Garnets & Hancock, 1991).

"A colleague told me she 'couldn't help' expressing astonishment and disgust to a male client who 'confessed homosexuality'." (Garnets & Hancock, 1991).
It is proposed that "homophobia is currently a construct that includes primarily the personal affective responses including disgust, anxiety, aversion, discomfort, fear, and anger related to any contact or involvement with homosexuals." In reality, emotional reactions to gays and lesbians "may be negative (e.g. anxiety, disgust, anger), positive (e.g. love, happiness), or more neutral (e.g. curiosity)" (O'Donohue & Caselles, 1993). Much of the current literature, however, reflects mostly discomfort and uneasiness or disgust as affective reaction to gay and lesbian persons.

In Herek's (1995) national research on attitudes toward lesbians and gay men, he found that 57% of Black Americans think gays and lesbians are disgusting, and 58% of White Americans think they are disgusting. In his national study on adolescent's affective responses, Marsiglio (1993) found that 89% of heterosexual adolescent males find sexual behavior between men 'disgusting,' in addition to the finding that about 59% of adolescent males reported that they could not even be friends with a gay person.

In a more isolated study of psychiatric nurses, Smith (1993) suggested that nurses may have cognitive acceptance of gays and lesbians and homosexuality yet continue to have negative feelings towards this population. "Concern for the welfare" of gays and lesbians was felt by 53% of participants, and subjects also reported uneasiness, curiosity, awkwardness, and discomfort as emotions frequently experienced when interacting with gays and lesbians.

One function of attitudes is to protect an individual from recognizing certain thoughts or feelings that threaten his or her self-image (Borgatta, 1992). Comett & Hudson (1986) hypothesize that gay, lesbian and bisexual persons force heterosexual persons to contact the homosexual part of their personality. "The anxiety which is mobilized as a result of this contact is considerable, for such contact conflicts with ... cultural taboos ... . To deal with such primitive anxiety, a therapist mobilizes a primitive defense—namely destruction of the object's (i.e. client's) capacity to arouse anxiety. As a result, the therapist's efforts become concentrated on changing the client's sexual orientation" (Comett & Hudson, 1986).
Behavioral Reactions

"A (gay) clinical psychology student was required to get aversion therapy from a professor as a condition of his remaining in the program once he was discovered" (Gamets & Hancock, 1991).

People will aggress towards or avoid gay, lesbian and bisexual persons for any of the wide variety of reasons discussed as part of the social environment. Negative behavioral reactions, known as anti-gay hate crimes, can be defined as any action that is intended to harm or intimidate individuals who are gay or lesbian (Herek, 1989). These behaviors can include anything from slurs yelled by a passing motorist to torture and murder (Agnew, 1993; Newman, 1989; Shannon, 1991). These are perhaps the most concrete barriers to functioning encountered by gay and lesbian populations, although they can be every bit as subtle and unnoticeable as the cognitive and affective dimensions of attitude.

In the past, social sanctions faced by gays and lesbians have often taken the form of physical violence. "For example, both women and men have suffered extreme retribution such as burning, hanging, drowning, and beheading for expressing homosexual preferences. Large numbers of homosexuals during the Nazi regime were placed in concentration camps and identified by pink triangles; an estimated two hundred twenty-five thousand homosexuals died in the concentration camps because of their sexual orientation" (Browning, 1982).

Behaviors more commonly known today involve legal or social type discriminations. These sanctions may include employment discrimination, police harassment, court cases involving child custody suits, housing discrimination, rejection by family members and friends upon disclosing one's sexual orientation, violation of due process, limitations regarding freedom of association and speech and equal protection under the law, and antigay rhetoric (Browning, 1982).

Terms such as 'dyke' 'fag,' 'fairy,' and 'pervert' have been applied at various times to lesbians and gays as individuals (Bullough, 1979). It is interesting to note the reflection of moral
control in these language categories. "Gay was a term originally applied to the prostitute and intended to suggest the 'immoral' life they led" (Bullough, 1979). "Pervert was as an antonym to convert—a pervert being one that is turned from good to evil, and convert being the contrary" (Davidson, 1990).

Attitudes both reflect societal thought and link that society to its individual members. They are perhaps the most obvious impediments to functioning faced by lesbian, gay and bisexual persons. They are often difficult and complicated to measure, but can be understood to embody three dimensions, the cognitive, the affective and the behavioral. Cognitive reactions often directly reflect society's underlying moral and psychological thought, and are thought to include limited stereotypic perceptions of gays and lesbians. Affective reactions, including disgust and fear, are the reactions most commonly considered when measuring homophobia. These, as well as behavioral reactions, are the ones often directly felt by gay and lesbian populations creating powerful obstacles to interacting socially.

O'Donohue & Caselles (1993) suggest that certain combinations of reactions from each of the three domains, cognitive, affective and behavioral, can be isolated and combined to form what might be useful constructs in the future. For example, they propose that "the emotional reaction of fear, plus the behavioral reaction of avoidance, in the absence of the intellectual reaction of negative moral arguments" might be defined as homophobia, or an irrational fear. It is only then that we may begin to understand the myriad of attitudes towards lesbians and gays. As will be demonstrated in the following sections, it is a diversity of attitudes that has influenced development of lesbian, gay and bisexual populations.
Life in the Closet

"In the years before Stonewall gay liberation, before lesbian and gay sports clubs, gay churches, gay bookstores, and gay professional organizations—encounters in bars, stores, YMCAs, military bases, public parks, and bathrooms provided some of the only ways men could meet other men for sex and a moment of shared identity" (Nardi, 1995).

Actual studies of the primarily covert group activities involving lesbians and gays before the gay rights movement are very scarce. Studies that do exist have most often focused on the gay population, as a subject of deviance, while the lesbian population has been ignored (Bullough, 1979). "Probably the least explored area of sociology of deviant behavior is exactly that of deviance that is organized, important to the individuals who engage in it, and strongly structured socially, but is not subcultural" (Humphreys, 1970). Additionally, the previously described labeling process of American society did not occur in a social vacuum. There was a complex social life that is only now revealing itself, and it is quite clear that the internal life of innumerable clubs and associations interacted with this labeling process (Hacking, 1986).

Adelman (1990) provided research on the influence of stigma on adjustment and interaction patterns of lesbians and gays 60 years of age and older, therefore, persons living most of their lives before the gay rights movement. In this study she researched older adult's disclosure patterns and level of involvement with other gays. The results demonstrate the powerful influence of the social environment on the covert gay culture. "In considering adjustment and involvement with other gay people, high life satisfaction is related to low involvement with other gays, and low satisfaction to high involvement. This trend [the opposite of what is commonly found today] is not surprising if we consider socio-historical factors." Other studies support this notion.
Humphreys (1970) tearoom studies demonstrated a need for low disclosure/low involvement within this hidden culture. His analysis highlights "one aspect of all [tearoom] interaction: the protection of the identities of the participants in the gathering... We discover that the highly constrained interaction within the tearoom is a function not only of the desires of the participants to limit their involvement but also of stigmatization of their activity." Therefore, the closeted gay subculture appeared to initially constrain, not enhance, functioning of gay men.

In discussing the influence of an overt subculture in helping closeted gay men mediate their relationship with the larger society, Humphreys (1970) writes "To some extent the ultimate social and psychological adjustment of the homosexual will be conditioned by the structure of role opportunities provided by the homosexual community. Those who are forced into covert adaptation by the derogation of society are denied this help from the subculture. My own recommendations for social policy may be simply summarized: In order to alleviate the damaging side effects of covert homosexual activity in tearooms, ease up on it." In this way, gay and lesbian subcultures, if accepted by society, are a potential source of support as opposed to an additional source of constraint.

Gay subcultures, however, as we know them today, were unavailable to the generation of later-life gay people and they therefore had few opportunities to resocialize to a more positive identification with other gay people. In Adelman's (1990) study one respondent, a 68-year-old woman, reported, "I never wanted to identify with a lesbian group. I just like being with women." Adelman suggests that "avoidance of identification and minimum involvement with other gays in the pre-Stonewall era operated as a successful adaptation to the negative status assigned to gay people." In other words, the closets of the pre-Stonewall generation provided comfort in a hostile environment by allowing one to have a positive self-image.
The Emerging Subculture and Sociological Theory

An important factor in the emergence and development of gay and lesbian subcultures was the urbanization that occurred during the industrial revolution which created the social space for a gay subculture. It was namely urban areas that facilitated this group cohesion, and by mid-century, gay subcultures were firmly established in most major cities (Epstein, 1987).

In the 1950s and early 1960s, a constructionist ideology dominated activist groups such as the Gay Liberation Front. These groups "portrayed homosexuals as revolutionary subjects who were uniquely situated to advance the cause of sexual liberation for society as a whole" (Epstein, 1987) Activists desired the disappearance of both "the homosexual" and "the heterosexual" through the abolition of constraining categories.

"The reason so few of us are bisexual is because society made such a big stink about homosexuality that we got forced into seeing ourselves as either straight or nonstraight. . . We'll be gay until everyone has forgotten that it's an issue. Then we'll begin to be complete people" (Epstein, 1987).

"I will tell you what we want, we radical homosexuals: not for you to tolerate us, to accept us, but to understand us. And this you can do only by becoming one of us. We want to reach the homosexuals entombed in you, to liberate our brothers and sisters, locked in the prisons of your skulls. . . We will never go straight until you go gay. As long as you divide yourselves, we will be divided from you" (Epstein, 1987).

It was not until 1969, with the Stonewall riot in Greenwich Village, that the gay movement truly burst out of its silence. Interestingly, it was not the constructionist approach that brought about growth in the subculture, but it was the essentialist labeling practices of physicians and psychiatrists that allowed stigmatized lesbians and gays to gradually begin organizing around and asserting the legitimacy of their identity (Foucault, 1978). "This is a familiar dilemma, and one that is by no means peculiar to the gay movement: How do you protest a socially imposed categorization, except by organizing around the category" (Epstein, 1987)? Just as blacks
could not fight the arbitrariness of racial classification without organizing as blacks, so gays could not advocate the overthrow of the sexual order without making their gayness the very basis of their claims (Epstein, 1987).

With this essentialist approach and the increase in tolerance by the American Psychiatric Association, there was a phenomenal growth in the institutionalization of the gay movement in the 1970s. "Deviant subcultures" gave way to "gay communities" and eventually to the concepts of an "ethnic" and "invisible" minority. Epstein (1987) defines ethnic self-understanding as a much looser form of essentialism than a strict genetic or hormonal theory of homosexuality. He believes that this ethnicity is based on an analogy that is not necessarily intended literally, and finds that it is peculiarly vague about where the essential "core" of gayness resides.

An ethnic ideology is reflected in Card's (1995) conceptualization of a "family resemblance," a concept based on finding unity in diversity to develop an "ethnicity" that gays and lesbians share cross-culturally. Through use of ancient tales, she offers "three branches of a genealogy of 'the lesbian' as many of us know her today" (Card, 1995). These branches are those of Sappho, the Amazons, and such passionate, biblical friends as Ruth and Naomi who might all be seen as ancestors to twentieth century lesbians, and who also serve to offer salient "ethnic" patterns. Similarly, Epstein (1987) notes gay men may look to regaining their ancient historical role as medicine people, healers, prophets and shamans.

Although not all gay, lesbian and bisexual persons choose involvement in the gay community, to those that do, their entrance may constitute a 'secondary socialization,' (as opposed to a 'primary socialization' which occurs in traditional racial and ethnic groups) (Epstein, 1987). Epstein further defines this "new ethnicity" as a secondary socialization, by noting that it differs from traditional ethnicity in a variety of respects. It combines an affective tie with the pursuit of explicitly sociopolitical goals in 'interest group' form. It is 'forward-looking' seeking to expand the group's social position, while the old ethnicity was 'backward-looking.'
aimed at preserving the past against the encroachments of modernization. Additionally, he notes that new ethnic groups are increasingly inclined to press their demands by appealing to ideologies such as 'equal rights'.

Lesbian and Gay Communities

Gay and lesbian bars may be thought to form an institutional foundation for the gay community. Warren (1974) noted gay bars have historically been one of the few places that gay identities could be safely created and sustained for the self and others. She noted two socio-historic functions: 1) They are sexually defining spaces and anyone inside them is presumed to be gay. There have been few other places in our society where this is true for gays and lesbians. 2) Bars have also been places to greet members of the network within which lesbians and gays belong and continue sociable relations.

By the late 1970s, bars were only one of many institutions serving the gay community. Major American cities contained cities-within-cities (or gay ghettos) in which gay male inhabitants "need never leave to satisfy their desires, whether those desires be sexual, recreational, cultural, or commercial. There were gay churches, gay banks, gay theaters, gay hiking clubs, gay bookstores, and gay yellow pages listing hundreds of gay-owned businesses. While lesbian communities were neither as visible nor as territorially based, they too provided a variety of cultural supports and institutions, fostering a sense of minority-group identity that was furthered by separatist tendencies" (Epstein, 1987). Little wonder, then, that lesbian and gay persons began to be seen as, and to think of themselves as, almost a distinct type of being. Gone were the dreams of freeing society by releasing 'the homosexual in everyone.' Instead,
lesbians and gays concentrated their social energies on advancement as a separate population (Epstein, 1987).

The emergence of a gay community and its resultant effects on gay and lesbian lifestyles has impacted the adjustment and interaction patterns of many gays and lesbians. In contrast to older gay and lesbian adults in Adelman's (1990) study, "adjustment in adult and middle-aged gays is related to high disclosure styles and high involvement. These generational differences can be attributed to socio-historical factors. Today, homophobic cultural values are offset by visible and viable gay subcultures. Previously, gay people had few alternatives but to attribute a low status value to either themselves or each other. Today, however, gay people no longer have to view themselves as defiant or deficient, but can consider themselves members of an oppressed minority group. This new status brings gay people together and promotes self-esteem through self-affirmation (self-disclosure and identification with other gay people)" (Adelman, 1991). Today, these subcultures are found more and more to enhance rather than constrain lifestyle functioning of lesbian, gay and bisexual persons.

Level Five
Lifestyle Functioning

"I have had clients describe... therapists' outright denial that a client has experienced societal homophobia or therapists' failure to recognize internalized homophobia as a source of depression and low self-esteem" (Garnets & Hancock, 1991).

Understanding the activities of gay and lesbian persons cannot be done in isolation from the reactions of society. Support for this assumption is found in the theory of social interactionism which emphasizes the role of society in shaping the individual's personality and sense of self. Charles Horton Cooley formulated the interactionist concept of the looking-glass
self to describe this process. Each individual, he argued, imagines herself as she appears in
the minds of others, and her evaluation of this image leads to continued modification of her own
behavior (Lachmann, 1991).

Therefore, in understanding actual societal functioning, one must first be aware of how
lesbian, gay and bisexual persons might imagine themselves in the minds of others. Does this
image constrain or enhance their social functioning? Given society’s limited, negative image of
“gay lifestyle,” the self-image of many lesbian and gay persons may be both limited and
negative, and may serve to constrain, not enhance, lifestyle behaviors.

In light of this, how might gay and lesbian persons develop the social abilities to function
effectively? In returning to the model on page six, how might gay, lesbian and bisexual persons
visualize being on top of a pyramid as opposed to being on the bottom of a funnel? Adelman
(1990) noted that gays and lesbians who rejected society’s negative connotations of
homosexuality developed a well-adjusted self-image as opposed to gay and lesbian persons
who internalized those perceptions. She also noted that, in today’s society, lesbian and gay
persons who are involved in the gay community tend to develop a more positive self-image.

Exploring nonsexual aspects of “gay lifestyle” may facilitate empowerment of lesbian and
gay persons in two ways. First, it presents a more positive depiction of gay lifestyle than that
received by the majority population. Secondly, it broadens the options of expected and
perceived lifestyle behaviors.

Research on Lifestyle functioning

Research focusing specifically on societal aspects of gay and lesbian lifestyles was
found to be very scarce. Devall (1979) provided a descriptive review of the development of
several institutions catering to the recreation of gay men and discussed the development of "gay culture." He argued that "gay culture and gays lifestyles are leisure lifestyles and that these leisure lifestyles of gay men are examples of emergent lifestyles of many people in advanced industrial societies" (Devall, 1979). This study provides a useful conceptual summation of perceived gay lifestyles, but does not provide actual measurement of lifestyle functioning.

Albro's (1979) study on the leisure time pursuits of lesbian women is perhaps most closely related to current research on lifestyle functioning. This study utilized a sample of 91 lesbian women from east coast cities. Results demonstrated ways in which participants met other lesbians and social activities in which lesbians most frequently engaged. These were dining with friends, entertaining at home, participating in lesbian organizations, and going to gay bars. Additionally, Albro found that respondents felt isolated from society as a result of their sexual orientation, and considered society's acceptance of them as lesbians to be very important. She concluded that the gay subculture was important for this sample in areas of friendship, emotional support, and social interactions.

Perhaps the underlying similarity found in most research on gay and lesbian persons is the search to understand this often "hidden" population. Beyond this similarity, very little research has been done to quantitatively measure social behaviors of this population. This preliminary investigation will provide a framework for studying leisure time pursuits of gays and lesbians, and begin to promote understanding of their actual function within society.

Measuring actual functioning, yields itself to three questions, as yet unanswered. Do lesbian, gay and bisexual persons experience limitations in social functioning with regard to their sexual orientation? How do gay, lesbian and bisexual persons actually function within society? Finally, does social functioning of gay, lesbian and bisexual persons indeed correspond with societal expectations for these individuals? The following preliminary investigation is designed
to explore these questions in an attempt to broaden our perception of “gay lifestyle” from the narrow concept of sexual behavior to one involving nonsexual functioning.

Broadening our perception of lifestyle needs and abilities will force us to reexamine currently held stereotypes regarding “gay lifestyle”. It is in this way that “gay lifestyle” will be understood less as a sexual behavior and more as a diverse human identity. It is hoped that this altered conception will enhance our ability in working with gay and lesbian clients by increasing awareness of their social needs and empowering them with positive, varied lifestyle options.
CHAPTER THREE  
METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research is to examine how the social environment of lesbian, gay and bisexual persons affects their lifestyle functioning, and to establish a framework for further investigation of actual lifestyle functioning. This investigation entails a two step process in assessing lifestyle functioning. The first step is review and measurement of environmental constraints. The second step is a preliminary investigation and measurement of actual social functioning. This chapter presents an elaboration on research design, the sample population, procedures, definition of variables, instrumentation, and limitations to methodology in conducting this research.

Research Objectives and Questions

The first objective in conducting this research is to become familiar with the constraints to lifestyle functioning experienced by gays and lesbians. To accomplish this, a number of questions were posed:

1. What are potential constraints to functioning found in the literature?
2. Do lesbian, gay and bisexual persons report experiencing inhibitions with regard to their sexual orientation?
3. If so, how is a perception of inhibition linked to actual leisure functioning within society?
4. Finally, what are actual constraints as reported by gay, lesbian, and bisexual persons?
The second objective of this study is two-fold: to begin broadening current understanding of lifestyle functioning and to provide a foundation for future research. This was done by exploring actual leisure time pursuits versus stereotypic pursuits of study participants.

1. What are the actual leisure time pursuits of gay, lesbian and bisexual respondents?
2. What factors are associated with respondents actual involvement in stereotypic pursuits?

Research Design and Sampling Frame

Respondents were identified using non-probability, convenience sampling methods. This was done in collaboration with a Grand Rapids' organization which serves gay, lesbian and bisexual persons. The Lesbian/Gay Community Network of Western Michigan (The Network) participated in this study by distributing surveys to the members of their organization. The survey was sent to 500 members and returned by 171 (34%), a good response rate given two understandings: 1) the chosen time of mailing was one week prior to the major holiday season occurring in November and December; and 2) only one mailing was done with no follow-up request sent to participants.

Prior to distribution, the survey was piloted to the 15 board members of The Network. Nine surveys were completed from this pilot and, as noted in the section on instrumentation, necessary modifications in the measurement tool were completed as a result of this preliminary study.
Procedures

Data collection procedures included use of a self-administered mail survey. Two cross-sectional survey instruments, the first on leisure time pursuits (Appendix A) and the second on social support, were mailed simultaneously in a collaborative research effort. Since this study utilized only the first of these two tools, the instruments were separated upon receipt of completed surveys.

Also included in this mailing were a cover letter and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The letter contained an introduction and instructions to the survey, assurance of confidentiality, and description of assumed consent through participation. Confidentiality was made possible through anonymous distribution and return of the surveys. This issue is a strong ethical concern in surveying this population, and participants were assured that every effort would be made to maintain ethical adherence.

Definition of Variables

Constraints Defined

"A constraint may be defined as any factor which intervenes between the preference for an activity and participation in it" (Henderson, et al., 1989). Henderson discussed numerous constraints to leisure including lack of time, lack of skills, lack of money, lack of opportunities and facilities, lack of partners, family commitments, lack of information, and health and safety concerns. Although each of these dimensions were addressed in this survey instrument, actual data analysis is more specifically focused on discrimination as a constraint, for which there is little attention in the literature.
A strong focus of current leisure research is on environmental barriers to leisure. Most of this literature is devoted to the elderly, people with disabilities, and individual's who are chemically dependent (Crawford 1991, Witt 1989). Although this was found to be useful in understanding how environmental barriers correlate with one's ability to function in the leisure world, little attention was given to the dimension of discrimination as a barrier.

As fully reviewed in chapter two, discrimination is a significant barrier faced by lesbian, gay and bisexual persons, as a group, in their leisure time pursuits. Attempts to operationalize this concept were accomplished by posing numerous questions located in Table 2. Although homophobia is a problematic term, the decision was made to use this term due to lack of alternative language currently available to conceptualize this concept.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Constraints to functioning operationalized</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Can you think of any things, related to your sexual orientation, that interfere with your leisure?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. If yes, what things do you find interfere with your activities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How often does fear of crime keep you from doing leisure activities you would really like to do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How often does homophobia keep you from doing leisure activities you would really like to do? (questions three and four used a scale of frequently, sometimes, rarely, never)</td>
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Leisure Defined

Godbey (1990) defines leisure as "living in relative freedom from the external compulsive forces of one's culture and physical environment so as to be able to act from internally compelling love in ways which are personally pleasing, intuitively worthwhile, and provide a basis for faith". Engaging in leisure implies performing an activity for its own sake because of its intrinsic value.

Kelly & Godbey (1992) categorized leisure into three main dimensions: leisure as time, leisure as experience, and leisure as action. Leisure as time involves the setting of priorities and "gives shape to all actions and interactions" (Kelly & Godbey, 1992). Secondly, leisure as
experience involves the underlying meaning, or the subjective attitudes of an individual. Perceptions of freedom and intrinsic motivation are cognitive characteristics that make experience leisure. Finally, leisure as action involves both meaning and the creation of meaning through activity. "Whether the focus is on engagement in an activity, making a choice, allocating a resource, or experiencing a kind of consciousness, the individual engages in some sort of action" (Kelly & Godbey, 1992).

A fourth dimension of leisure may be thought of as companionship. "In many leisure settings, the central action is actually interaction. Frequently, the most significant factor in the ordinary round of leisure is who else is there" (Kelly & Godbey, 1992). The times, places, and activities remain important, but very often it is the people that make an experience one of leisure. Each of these four dimensions of leisure were measured in this survey and examples of questions are demonstrated in Table 3.

Table 3. Leisure operationalized

Leisure as time
On a typical day, how many hours of free time do you have available when you are not working, sleeping, or attending to household, family, or other duties?

Leisure as experience
Please indicate how important each of the following are to you at this point in your life:
   a. Meeting someone for a romantic relationship
   b. Having a rewarding sexual relationship
   c. Making new friends
   d. Involvement in a long-term relational commitment
   (very important, important, somewhat important, not important)

Leisure as action
During the past year, how often did you engage in the following activities [i.e. go to bars, attend a religious service]? (every day/almost every day, about once/twice a week, about once/twice a month, less than once a month, never)

Leisure as companionship
How important is it to you that you find [i.e. companionship] in your leisure activities (very important, important, somewhat important, not important)?
How often does [i.e. lack of companionship] keep you from doing leisure activities you would really like to do (frequently, sometimes, rarely, never)?
Sexual Orientation Defined

Sexual orientation can be defined in numerous fashions. Rothblum (1994) cites three classifications for researchers in defining sexual orientation: self-identity (i.e. I am a lesbian), sexual behavior (i.e. I have sex with woman), and community participation (i.e. I am a member of the lesbian community). It is important to note the overlap in these areas, and that placing oneself in one definition does not mean an individual includes themselves in all three definitions. This study utilized self-identity to define sexual orientation. Respondents were asked to choose from the following six categories: heterosexual, bisexual woman, bisexual man, gay man, lesbian woman, or not sure of orientation. Four surveys were returned by heterosexual participants and removed from the sample prior to data analysis.

Level of identity disclosure was also measured. Participants ranked their level of disclosure in eight different situations (i.e. with siblings, with heterosexual friends, with gay friends) on a scale of "my identity is known, some know my identity, and do not know my identity."

Instrumentation

In 1982, United Media Enterprises conducted multi-stage research to study American attitudes toward leisure. Their research process involved extensive qualitative and background research on the methodology of exploring leisure decisions. This review was conducted by a panel of nationally known experts on leisure studies (United Media Enterprises, 1982). The resultant tool, devised to measure leisure time decisions, was used in a national phone survey of over 3000 participants. This survey format, utilizing predominantly ordinal/interval level
scaling, was used as the primary instrument of this research (please see Appendix A for copy of the survey).

Modification of this tool was necessary for four reasons. First, the tool was created for research done in 1982. Therefore, some updating was required. Next, the tool was initially used in a phone survey as opposed to a mail survey. Minimal adjustments in question format were necessary to accommodate this difference. Third, many of the questions focusing on media-use were eliminated due to difference in research focus. Finally, the focus of the United Media Researchers did not include groupings for gay, lesbian or bisexual persons. Based on the purpose of this current study, additional questions and modifications to the tool were necessary to include a focus on this group.

Limitations

There are three main limitations found in this methodology. The first is the hidden nature of the gay and lesbian population, which limits the possibilities for sampling methods, and results in a convenient, biased sample. Participants responding in this study were found to be almost exclusively European-American (96%), and maintain a high socio-economic status (42% earned more than $50,000 annually, and 44% had received post graduate education). Given the bias of this sample, generalizability to the overall population of lesbians and gays is not possible.

A second limitation of this study is the lack of a standardized instrument for use in the survey. Construct validity exists in that the instrument was developed by national experts in the field of leisure, and face validity was established by review of the tool by both thesis committee members and pilot study participants. Although face and construct validity were established, the model instrument, from which my tool is derived, lacks studies on reliability and validity.
Also, it was necessary to modify the model instrument to meet the needs of this study (see section on instrumentation). Given the limitations of this data collection instrument, the validity of study results will be negatively affected.

Finally, limitations in content analysis of open-ended responses also exists. Although stability and face validity were established, these are the weakest forms of reliability and validity when performing content analysis. Interpretation of results should be understood in light of this limitation.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted by use of numerous techniques. As different levels of data (nominal, ordinal/interval) were used in measurement, analysis was conducted using one of three tests (analysis of variance, independent t-test, and chi-square) depending on the type of data involved in the specific analysis. Two variables, age and relationship status, were collapsed to facilitate analysis. Variables measuring constraints and levels of identity disclosure were used as predictors when exploring issues of companionship and satisfaction with leisure; and demographic variables were used as predictors when exploring stereotypic activities and values.

In addition, open-ended responses to a question of constraint were examined by basic content analysis. Data was categorized using multiple classification of whole-text units. Stability reliability was ascertained through repeated coding of responses by this researcher, and face validity was established through review of categories by thesis committee members.
CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In this chapter, results of survey findings will be presented. The chapter will report data analysis results in three main areas: demographics, constraints to functioning, and leisure time pursuits. In each area, results of data analysis will be presented in both table and narrative format.

Demographic data are presented in Table 4. In addition to results in this table, the respondents in this study are found to be strongly democratic (73%), with a greater portion preferring a very liberal political ideology (45%). None of the respondents considered themselves as "very conservative". Forty percent of participants are Protestant, while 31% had no religious affiliation, and only 3% are affiliated with Wicca or religions of witchcraft.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4. Demographic characteristics of participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sexual Orientation</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship Status</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Length of Relationship</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Constraints to Leisure

Do lesbian, gay and bisexual persons experience inhibitions to functioning with regard to their sexual orientation? In answer to this question, 35% of the participants responded in the affirmative, indicating there are things related to being gay, lesbian or bisexual which interfered with their leisure functioning. In addition, being constrained specifically by homophobia is fairly common (47% never, 27% rarely, 26% sometimes or frequently), and appears to create more of a barrier than does being constrained by fear of crime (47% never, 39% rarely, 14% sometimes or frequently).

How is this perception of inhibition linked to actual leisure functioning? In Table 5, constraint variables and levels of identity disclosure are used to predict participant's satisfaction with leisure and issues of companionship. Numerous findings are of interest for this research. Subjects who have general feelings of being constrained due to sexual orientation appear to derive less satisfaction from their leisure time ($t=-3.78, p<.001$), as do those feeling homophobia limits their leisure ($F=3.33, p<.05$). Participants constrained by homophobia are more likely to feel limited in available places to participate socially ($x^2=14.95; p<.01$), and they are generally more concerned by issues of companionship than respondents who do not feel their sexual orientation interferes with their leisure time (find companionship: $F=8.31, p<.0001$; $t=3.26, p<.001$; lack companionship: $F=2.79, p<.05$; available places: $x^2=18.22, p<.0001$; $x^2=14.95, p<.01$).

How is level of identity disclosure linked to actual leisure functioning? Also illustrated in Table 5, participants who are more disclosing to other gays and lesbians are less inclined to general feelings of constraint ($x^2=5.52; p<.05$). The results of this chi-square analysis are weak in that greater than 50% of the cells have an expected frequency of less than five units. However, if a relationship should exist between these variables, it is one worthy of exploration and will therefore be discussed in this paper. In contrast to those more disclosing to gay
Table 5. Constraints to functioning and levels of identity disclosure (predictor variables)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor variable</th>
<th>Satisfaction with leisure</th>
<th>Importance of finding companionship in leisure</th>
<th>Frequency that lack of companionship interferes with leisure</th>
<th>Feel there are enough places to participate in leisure</th>
<th>Things related to sexual orientation interfering with leisure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things related to sexual orientation that interfere with leisure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>3.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>b***</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical technique</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homophobia interferes with leisure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>2.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>b***</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>3.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>b***</td>
<td>3.60</td>
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<td>Statistical technique</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fear of crime interferes with leisure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Never</td>
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<td>NS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
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<td>NS</td>
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<td>Sometimes</td>
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<td>NS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statistical technique</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identity disclosure to straight friends</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity is known</td>
<td>--</td>
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<td>NS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some know identity</td>
<td>--</td>
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<td>NS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identity is not known</td>
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<td>Statistical technique</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identity disclosure to siblings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identity is known</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some know identity</td>
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<td>Identity is not known</td>
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<td>Statistical technique</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identity disclosure to gay friends</td>
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<td>Identity is known</td>
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<td>NS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some know identity</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Statistical technique</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Statistical technique: a=analysis of variance, b=t-test, c=chi-square.
Significance: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001, ****p<.0001
Table 6. Actual Constraints to Functioning Reported by Participants

**Threshold of Behavior**

**Public Affection**
- Public reaction to being affectionate with my partner. i.e. can’t hold hands, have arms around each other in movie comfortably
- Walking together anywhere - in a mall, neighborhood, beach, etc. - not socially acceptable to hold hands, show affection verbally or physically
- Not practical to walk hand-in-hand
- Not being able to walk hand & hand and be able to sit next to my partner in restaurants etc.
- Just not being able to always be closet show affection openly in public
- Inability to be publicly affectionate to my life partner and of dancing with same sex partner
- Walking on the beach, I can’t hold my dates hand, I can’t put my are around him at the movies
gay men - generally - must contain public emotion thus we tend to seek out “gay” places so we feel free to be ourselves.
Be OUT in public

**Traditionally Heterosexual or Couples Activities**
- Church organized dances and family nights
- Ballroom dancing lessons
- Most social activities are for heterosexual couples
- Moonlight bowling, dancing - things that require male-female partners
- Participation w/charities - organizations (straight)
- I would enjoy ballroom/ partner dancing but am not comfortable doing this outside gay bar
- Dancing
- Outdoor activities - i.e. skiing, boating w/partner
- Out to dinner with non-gay friends

**Primary Enforcement of Behavioral Threshold**

**General Attitudes and Reactions**
- Attitudes of “moral majority” toward seeing a lesbian couple showing moderate affection in publ
  holding hands, etc.
- People’s repressed sexual outlook
- Society views and stigma of lesbians
- People attitudes
- Societal reaction
- People stare or react to us when we are together
- People’s discomfort upon hearing about my partner (as opposed to talking about a spouse, for instance)

**Rejection and Intolerance**
- Lack of acceptance of straight people the activity may bring me into contact with
- My perception of others not being open to being my friend because of my orientation
- Out to eat some prejudice
- The kids friends and parents are prejudice and stop interactions with our child
- Family, church, people who are not tolerant of others differences
- Not accepted
- Intolerance
Table 6, cont. Actual Contraints to Functioning Reported by Participants

Secondary Enforcement of Behavioral Threshold

**Fear of Exposure or Harassment**
- Risk of exposure in Grand Rapids
- Being seen together in straight establishments - we have visible jobs in the community
- Being identified
- I do not feel safe or free to be myself at most “normal” places
- Unable to hold hands in public and feel comfortable (fear of verbal harassment)
- I would like to be able to walk in the park holding the hand of my significant other without social repercussions or police interference

**Discomfort or Uneasiness**
- Comfortably hang out socially within my profession both alone and with my life partner
- I feel somewhat out of place with straight friends or straight parties (lack of gay population)
- Unable to take past partner to class reunion and feel comfortable
- Unability to relax and be myself; homophobia
- Not always comfortable in public with my boyfriend
- Feel out of place at many church related functions
- Being comfortable with gay friends at a lot of places, dancing, etc.

**Segregation**

**Lack of Social Opportunities**
- Need more places for gays to openly socialize
- Not enough places that are open to gays
- Still today a lot of people don’t accept gay so in my area there’s no support group
- I think I would participate in more social events if straight people weren’t somehow threatened by my sexual orientation. I find I get left out quite a bit when it comes to socializing

**Being single**
- I would like to participate more, but live so far from Grand Rapids
- Lack of lesbian community in area
- Lack of community activities other than bars
- Lack of organized gatherings for lesbians to meet each other
- No gay softball league for men (gay) where I can be myself

**Self-restriction on Social Participation**
- I limit my volunteer to adults
- I no longer attend the church of my youth
- Cannot socialize with hets
- Being gay and live in a very conservative retirement small town community. I prefer just being left alone with total privacy reading gay erotica within my four walls while still in the closet
friends, respondents who are more disclosing to heterosexuals ($F=5.25; p<.01$) and siblings ($F=4.4; p<.05$) may be less constrained by lack of companionship.

Open-ended Clarification of Constraints

What are actual constraints to lifestyle functioning as reported by gay, lesbian, and bisexual persons? Table 6 illustrates the responses given in answer to the survey question: “What things do you find [related to your sexual orientation] interfere with your leisure activities?” Basic content analysis was performed, and the 58 responses were divided into the four primary categories of 1) threshold of behavior, 2) primary enforcement of behavioral threshold, 3) secondary enforcement of behavioral threshold, and 4) segregation. Each of these contains two secondary categorizations of response. One miscellaneous response of “I like nurturing children, but I don’t have my own children” was eliminated from this analysis.

Leisure Time Pursuits

Answer to the question, what are the leisure time pursuits of gays and lesbians, forms the basis for the second area of study. Participants were asked to indicate frequency of involvement in 26 different activities by responding to the question: “During the past year, how often did you engage in the following activities?” These results will be useful in comparative studies between gay, lesbian and bisexual populations and heterosexual populations. However, as this contrast is beyond the scope of this study, these results are not presented here.

Of more particular interest for current study is investigating what factors are associated with respondents involvement in stereotypic pursuits. Leisure time activities and values
stereotypically related to "gay lifestyle" were isolated and analyzed to determine what variables were related to their existence. The three activities chosen for study include 1) going to bars, 2) attending a religious service, and 3) engaging in sexual activities. The three values chosen for study include 1) importance of meeting someone for a romantic relationship, 2) importance of involvement in a long-term relational commitment, and 3) importance of having a rewarding sexual relationship.

As illustrated in Table 7, older subjects (F=3.65; p<.05), female subjects (t=5.54; p<.0001), those who are living with a partner (t=−4.65; p<.0001), and those maintaining a longer relationship (F=9.01; p<.0001) are less likely to go to bars or engage in sexual activities (age: F=3.76; p<.05, gender: t=3.69; p<.001, relation status: t=2.11; p<.05, length of relation: F=4.16; p<.01) than their counterparts. Participants concerned with spending time making new friends (F=5.74; p<.001) and engaging in activities to meet new people (t=6.84; p<.0001) tend to spend more time going to bars. Additionally, male subjects were more likely than female subjects to attend a religious service (t=2.82; p<.01).

As illustrated in Table 7, these variables also predict adherence to stereotypic values. The value of meeting someone for a romantic relationship is strongly predicted by gender (t=3.2; p<.01), relationship status (t=−8.27; p<.0001), length of relationship (F=7.03; p<.001), and satisfaction from relationship with partner (F=3.2; p<.05). The value of involvement in a long-term relationship is very strongly predicted by relationship status (t=5.34; p<.0001), and satisfaction from relationship with partner (F=10.72; p<.0001). Younger participants (F=3.05; p<.05) and those in relationships of shorter duration (F=2.63; p<.05) tend to be more concerned with having a rewarding sexual relationship.
Table 7. Stereotypic Pursuits and Values (Criterion variables)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor variable</th>
<th>Frequency go to bars or nightclubs</th>
<th>Frequency engage in sexual activity</th>
<th>Frequency attend religious service</th>
<th>Importance of meeting someone for romantic relation</th>
<th>Importance of involvement in a long-term relation</th>
<th>Importance of having a rewarding sexual relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
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<td>Age</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 to 30</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>3.75</td>
<td>0.62</td>
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<td>31 to 40</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>0.90</td>
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<td>41 to 50</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>69</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>1.02</td>
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<td>51 to 78</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>1.16</td>
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<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>0.97</td>
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<td>3.43</td>
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<td>Female</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>0.99</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b***</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Status</td>
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<tr>
<td>Living with partner</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>86</td>
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<td>3.31</td>
<td>0.93</td>
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<tr>
<td>Single, etc.</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>81</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>1.10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statistical technique</td>
<td>b****</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt;1 year</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>0.77</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-5 years</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>0.71</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.38</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20 years</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>0.59</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;20 years</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>2.57</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statistical technique</td>
<td>a***</td>
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<td></td>
<td>a**</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Activities to meet new people</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>1.02</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1.73</td>
<td>0.69</td>
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<td>Statistical technique</td>
<td>b****</td>
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<tr>
<td>Making new friends</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not important</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>0.70</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
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<td>0.99</td>
<td>76</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Statistical technique</td>
<td>a***</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship with partner</td>
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<tr>
<td>No satisfaction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Little satisfaction</td>
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<td>Some satisfaction</td>
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<td>Much satisfaction</td>
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<td>Statistical technique</td>
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CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter will present summation of the literature review and data analysis by discussion in two general areas: segregation and empowerment. To facilitate this argument, I return to the theory of Individual Psychology. Adler upheld numerous assumptions in his theory of Individual Psychology, one being the social embeddedness of humans. He believed that the individual and her social environment were indivisible, and that it was simply not possible to understand one without the other. Without knowledge of the structure of an person's life problems and the task they impose upon her, it is impossible to form a right estimate of that individual (Adler, 1964 trans).

A second Adlerian assumption, as yet unmentioned, is that of self-determination and creativity. Adler (1964 trans) believed that individuals are "the authors and actors of their history." He adhered to the Marxist philosophy that circumstances are changed by men and women. A third and final assumption to be discussed in this chapter is the subjectivity of perception, and the mediation of experience by the human mind. Each of these assumptions will facilitate discussion of the segregation and empowerment of gay, lesbian, and bisexual persons.
Segregation

"When the individual decides that the social problems which he has to face are too difficult... he withdraws from some life task, either from work or from social relations with friends or relatives, or from love and marriage" (Terner & Pew, 1978).

In studying the nature of gay's and lesbian's experiences within their environment, it is evident that societal isolation and segregation has occurred in the past and continues to exist today. To better understand this experience, I have delineated this isolation into a process encompassing four distinct elements. These include 1) a recognizable threshold of "acceptable" behavior, 2) primary enforcement of this threshold, 3) secondary enforcement of the behavioral threshold, and 4) social segregation. Effective intervention with gay and lesbian populations necessitates awareness of the specific social impediments detected in this process.

The first mechanism in societal segregation is identification of a clear, recognizable threshold between allowable and unallowable behavior (McIntosh, 1968). As revealed in the survey responses, this threshold lies in the display of affectional behaviors and involvement in couples activities. It is not socially acceptable for individuals of the same-gender to hold hands, to show affection verbally or physically, or to sit with their arms around each other while in public. Neither this public affection nor participation in couples activities is reputed as appropriate behavior. Dancing, moonlight bowling, family nights, and most social activities created for heterosexual couples all demonstrate the very clear, tangible threshold of "inappropriate" functioning. This threshold is concrete and easily recognized within our society, and it can have devastating effects on the well-being of gays and lesbians as individuals and as a population.

The affective, emotional and cognitive reactions that members of society display regarding this behavior serve to enforce this threshold. This primary enforcement is rooted in
cultural values set in place thousands of years ago. As illustrated in chapter two, much of society holds a narrow perception of lifestyle functioning as encompassing only that of sexual behavior. Additionally, overall societal perceptions of homosexuality are negative, and perhaps best summarized by the fact that 63% of Americans believe that homosexual activity is always wrong (Mitchell, 1996), and that 58% of Americans feel that gays and lesbians are disgusting (Herek, 1995). These limited, negative attitudes serves to constrain and control social behaviors of gay, lesbian and bisexual persons.

Two large areas of constraint noted by survey participants were general societal attitudes and intolerance, with social rejection as perhaps the most apparent force limiting their behaviors. Participants provided specific reports of being "stared at" when in public, being left out of social activities, and having interactions discontinued by heterosexual friends. One respondent stated "I would like to be able walk in the park holding the hand of my significant other without social repercussions." These are but a few examples of the rejections enforcing society's threshold of "unacceptable" behavior.

Third, additional enforcement of this threshold is illustrated in the resulting fear and discomfort gays and lesbians experience in crossing over the designated behavioral line. Substantial declines in leisure satisfaction occur when individuals perceive that their sexual orientation somehow interferes with their social activities. Participants reported feeling unsafe in public, being unable to relax and be themselves in public, feeling out of place with straight friends, and fears of being seen with their partner in straight establishments. This uneasiness has, in the past, paved the way to the isolation of whole communities, as was clearly demonstrated in earlier gay subcultures. As respondents feel increasingly inhibited by homophobia, their concern with companionship and available places to participate in leisure rises sharply. Fear and discomfort regarding affectional expressions are the building blocks of seclusion.
Finally, when societal attitudes have enforced boundaries of affectional expression, and fear and discomfort have enforced withdrawal from social functioning, then segregation often occurs. Gay and lesbian participants report this experience as a perceived lack of social opportunities or withdrawal from available opportunities, both typically resulting in isolation. "At the root of all deficiencies lies discouragement. As long as somebody has confidence in himself he will function. Only when he has become demoralized, discouraged, doubtful of himself, doubting his chances, doubting his place in the group, only then does he switch, as we call it, to the "useless side," becoming deficient and maladjusted" (Terner & Pew, 1978). Practitioners must assess gays and lesbians in light of their social conditions. They must understand the environment to understand the individual, and be aware of the devastating impact a hostile environment can have on each individual.

Empowerment

"Anyone capable through his creative power of constructing with artistic perfection a useless, mistaken life style, previously hardly understood, is also capable of changing himself and of producing a generally useful form of life. Being one with the world and man, understanding the relationship to human society, to occupation, and to love, then shows him the way which leads him higher" (Adler, 1964 trans).

In light of this, how might gay and lesbian persons develop the social abilities to function effectively? In returning to the model on page six, how might gay, lesbian and bisexual persons visualize being on top of a pyramid as opposed to being on the bottom of a funnel? Following awareness of potential impediments to functioning, gay and lesbian persons must choose their battles and decide which obstacles will be accepted and which will be confronted. Options for
challenging environmental barriers may occur at many different levels and may take on various forms.

Challenging Segregation

“Confidence is only where there is courage” (Adler, 1964 trans).

The lifestyle, according to Adler, is ultimately the individual’s own creation, the product of his creative power. Adler attributed this creative power to every individual, not only a chosen few. Perhaps the tool of courage most available to gay and lesbian persons is that of appropriate disclosure of sexual identity.

Isolation of gay and lesbian participants appears to result from a perceived lack of social opportunities or withdrawal from available opportunities. The threshold of unacceptable behavior often mandates where, and with whom, one participates in leisure activities. Disclosure of one’s identity may prove to be an effective means of challenging this isolation, and study results indicate that disclosure in different settings may serve different purposes.

Normal public affections between persons of the same-gender are basically prohibited by our society which appears to greatly interfere with social life of gays and lesbians. Since a strong theme of inhibited participants was discomfort and uneasiness in “being themselves” when among heterosexuals, one would naturally expect the subculture to provide the space in which to express affections publicly. It is very interesting, therefore, that participants who were less disclosing to gay friends also felt more inhibited by “things related to their sexual orientation.” A general theme of these “things related to sexual orientation” was discomfort with public affection and couples activities. Therefore, it is very possible that disclosure to gay
friends facilitates a certain forum for displaying public affection and involvement in couples activities, and thus may decrease the intensity of feeling socially constrained.

While higher levels of identity disclosure to gay and lesbian friends is related to participants feeling uninhibited by their sexual orientation, it does not appear related to constraints of companionship. It is interesting that higher levels of identity disclosure to heterosexual friends is linked to being less constrained by companionship issues. Therefore, being constrained by lack of companionship may be most effectively offset with involvement in the majority population.

In facilitating confidence and courage within gay and lesbian clients, it appears necessary to understand the social context in which striving and mastery may occur. It appears that disclosure within different social systems may enhance specific areas of social functioning. Understanding these differences is an area very worthy of attention, as awareness of specific functional purposes in these endeavors would prove very useful in the empowerment of gay, lesbian and bisexual persons. Self-determination and courage in appropriate disclosure of identity may bring about the existence of self-confidence and facilitate healthy societal interactions.

Challenging Perceptions

“Sometimes the change of one basic misconception was sufficient to help a client function more effectively and cooperatively in the human community” (Terner & Pew, 1978).

According to Adler, the lifestyle, or cognitive organization, comprises an individual’s basic convictions by which the person moves through life toward selected goals (Jones, 1995). Basic convictions are the conclusions a person comes to based on interpretations of their
subjective experience. Adler thought that lifestyle change occurs only when changes in basic convictions occur. Dealing with slight modifications in behavior may help individuals maintain an easier course in their lifestyle, while overhauling convictions may revolutionize one’s lifestyle (Jones, 1995).

Lifestyle, as cognitive organization, is nonconscious, although a distinction between this and the Freudian unconscious must be understood. For Adlerians, nonconscious means that which is not completely understood. Adlerian therapy involves helping clients gain understanding or awareness of their lifestyle (Jones, 1995).

Challenging Limited Perceptions

In adhering to Adler’s holistic conception of lifestyle, exploring nonsexual aspects of “gay lifestyle” may facilitate empowerment of lesbians and gays in two ways. First, it presents a more positive depiction of gay lifestyle than that received by the majority population. Secondly, it broadens the options of expected and perceived lifestyle behaviors. Therefore, increasing “visibility” of the lifestyle needs and abilities of gay, lesbian and bisexual persons is an attempt to facilitate empowerment and enhance lifestyle functioning. Preliminary to this investigation has been an exploration of actual involvement of lesbians and gays in “stereotypic” activities.

In light of all the variables related to stereotypic pursuits, the validity of these stereotypes is placed in question. Age, gender, length of current relationship, and participant’s relationship status are all strongly related to many of the popular stereotypes. It may be hypothesized, then, that involvement in these stereotypic pursuits may be negligible when accounting for factors that might typically influence any population’s adherence to these pursuits, be they heterosexual, gay, lesbian or bisexual persons.
Going to bars, a commonly perceived activity of gays and lesbians, does appear to be a networking activity for this population. As supported by the data, bars are a place to spend time with close friends and to make new friends. Without comparison, it is difficult to determine how much different this purpose is for gay, lesbian and bisexual persons than it is for heterosexual persons. It is hypothesized that this stereotype may also prove negligible in contrast to heterosexual populations.

Although no comparison data is available, preliminary hypotheses can be made regarding the data on actual lifestyle functioning of gay, lesbian and bisexual participants. To establish the validity of preliminary hypotheses, this contrast is necessary. A solid foundation for future research is, however, made possible by the existing data.

**Challenging Negative Perceptions**

Why has the attitude that homosexual behavior is always wrong remained such a powerful force in our society even since the gay rights movement? The reason may be largely due to our misunderstanding of the constraints within the social environment, which in turn points to the driving force behind societal attitudes. If we believe that, by categorizing homosexuality as a disease, we have succeeded in removing it from the realm of moral judgment, we are in error (Szasz, 1965). We have simply evaded the issue for a time.

The philosophy of a universal bisexual potential is much more complicated than that of dichotomous sexuality. It has, therefore, proven itself as a greater force in the social environment of gay, lesbian and bisexual persons. In the age of social constructionism, we may be forced to seriously grapple with this philosophy. Accepting the dichotomy of sexuality, whether as a member of a minority or majority, is simpler and safer than accepting a universal bisexual potential. There are unknown fears attached to the notion that we all may have the
potential for homosexual relations, but in grappling with the concept of sin, this is the underlying philosophy. Even though 41% of the nation adheres to this notion of sexual "preference," helping professionals have chosen to evade the concept of a universal bisexuality. If the message sent to helping professionals, that "homosexuality is okay," is truly believed, then this philosophy poses no problem. If homosexuality is okay as long as it resides in only 10% of the population, then the message is not the same, and the moral concept of a universal potential remains problematic.

Individual gay, lesbian and bisexual persons come from various systems of belief. It would be interesting to determine, of the 35% feeling inhibited within the environment, what portion adhere to the concept of sexual preference. Those who come from a moral understanding of preference may face significantly different impediments to functioning than those from a dichotomous philosophy of orientation. In order to work effectively with this population, helping professionals must be acquainted with the underlying nature of these constraints and their influence on individual functioning. Until our culture can truly claim that homosexuality is okay for anyone, the constraint found in the concept of sin, and ultimately in the concept of disease, will continue as a significant impediment to social functioning. The attitude that "homosexual behavior is always wrong" will continue to act as a means of controlling behavior as long as the concept of a universal bisexual potential is misrepresented and evaded.

Conclusions

In this paper, Adlerian psychology was used to facilitate understanding of "gay lifestyle." Adler's concepts of social embeddedness, self-perceptions, and creative construction of self
were all found useful in understanding the nature of the social environment and the ways in which gays and lesbians might function within that environment. It is important that social workers be aware of the myriad of factors encountered by gay and lesbian clients in their everyday lives so that they might understand its influence on their behavior and perceptions. As social workers, we are obligated to facilitate empowerment of the individuals we serve. In providing services to gay, lesbian and bisexual persons, knowledge of issues in segregation, the value of identity disclosure, nonsexual lifestyle behaviors, and the client’s own beliefs regarding their sexual orientation are all necessary to facilitate this process. It is with these understandings that we may assist lesbian, gay and bisexual persons to develop a lifestyle in which they can function effectively at work, at home, and at play.

Recommendations for Future Research

One purpose of this study was to provide a framework for future research regarding lesbian and gay lifestyles. To achieve this, preliminary investigations were made into actual lifestyle functioning of lesbians and gays, although this study is incomplete without contrasting this functioning to that of heterosexual populations. This comparison is the primary recommendation for future research. Three other areas of interest might also be addressed in future studies. First, more specific measurement and attention to public affection and couples activities as an actual constraint to functioning is necessary in studying lifestyle. Second, identity disclosure in different settings may serve different purposes in lifestyle functioning and deserves further exploration. Finally, more specific attention to the underlying beliefs of gay and lesbian persons regarding sexual orientation versus sexual preference would prove invaluable in understanding lifestyle behaviors.
References:


APPENDIX A

INSTRUMENTATION
**TIME AVAILABLE FOR LEISURE**

1) On a typical day, how many hours of free time do you have available when you are not working, sleeping, or attending to household, family, or other duties? (Write number of hours)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Hours Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES**

2) During the past year, how often did you engage in the following activities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Every day or almost every day</th>
<th>About once or twice a week</th>
<th>About once or twice a month</th>
<th>Less than once a month</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Watch television</td>
<td>( )</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Read a newspaper or book for pleasure</td>
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<td>c. Use computer for fun</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. Painting, sculpting, writing, or other creative activities</td>
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<td>e. Go to the movies</td>
<td>( )</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. Play cards or games</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. Listen to music at home</td>
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<td>( )</td>
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<tr>
<td>h. Attend parties</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
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<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Go out to eat</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Go to bars/nightclubs</td>
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<tr>
<td>k. Attend a theater, music, or dance performance</td>
<td>( )</td>
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<tr>
<td>l. Travel for pleasure</td>
<td>( )</td>
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<tr>
<td>m. Participate in a club or community activity</td>
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<td>n. Attend a religious service</td>
<td>( )</td>
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<tr>
<td>o. Engage in a hobby</td>
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<tr>
<td>p. Go shopping</td>
<td>( )</td>
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<tr>
<td>q. Exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>r. Participate in political activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>s. Engage in sexual activities</td>
<td>( )</td>
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<tr>
<td>t. Attend sports events as a spectator</td>
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<tr>
<td>u. Participate in team sports</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
7) Of all your leisure activities, which do you enjoy the most? (Pick only one)

4) Do you subscribe to any magazines?
   a. Yes
   b. No

If yes, which ones?

POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

5) On political issues, which of the following best describes your usual position?
   a. Very liberal
   b. Slightly liberal
   c. Moderate
   d. Slightly conservative
   e. Very conservative

6) In general, what would you consider your political affiliation?
   a. Democrat
   b. Republican
   c. Independent
   d. None
   e. Other

7) Which of the following best describes your religious affiliation?
   a. Protestant
   b. Catholic
   c. Jewish
   d. None
   e. Other

8) How frequently are you involved in the following religious activities and experiences?

   a. Attend a religious service
   b. Engage in prayer or meditation
   c. Encourage others to turn to religion
   d. Participate in religious social activity
   e. Listen to religious radio broadcasting
   f. Watch religious broadcasts on TV
   g. Read the Bible or other spiritual texts
   h. Other

OBSTACLES TO THE USE OF LEISURE TIME

9) Are there enough places nearby where you can go to participate in leisure activities?
   a. yes
   b. no
   c. don't know
10) Can you think of any things related to your sexual orientation which interfere with your leisure? These could be things which prevent you from doing some activities as often as you would like or which keep you from doing other activities at all.
   a. yes
   b. no

If yes, what things do you find interfere with your leisure activities?

11) How often do the following things keep you from doing leisure-time activities you would really like to do?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Health concerns</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Lack of time</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Family commitments</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. Work commitments</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. Fear of crime</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. Lack of companionship</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. Price of admissions, equipment, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>h. Lack of skill</td>
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<tr>
<td>i. Homophobia</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

12) How important is it to you that you find the following in your leisure activities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Challenge</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Creativity</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Relaxation</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. The chance to learn new things</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Competition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Companionship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Excitement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Exercise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Cultural Enrichment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13) How important is it that you do the following in your leisure time?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Help other people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Forget about work or chores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Spend time with family and friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Think and reflect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Keep informed about current events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14) In general, how much satisfaction do you get from the following areas of your life?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Much Satisfaction</th>
<th>Some Satisfaction</th>
<th>Little Satisfaction</th>
<th>No Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Your relationship with your spouse or romantic partner (if applicable)</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Your relationship with parents or relatives</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Your friendships</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Your work</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Your children (if applicable)</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Your leisure time activities</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
15) Please indicate how important each of the following are to you at this point in your life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Meeting someone for a romantic relationship</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Spending time with close friends</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Having a rewarding sexual relationship</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Making new friends</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Doing things with your parents, children, or relatives.</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Spending time with your spouse or romantic partner (if applicable)</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Involvement in a long-term relational commitment</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16) (If gay, lesbian, or bisexual) In which of the following situations is your sexual identity known?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>My identity is known</th>
<th>Some know my identity</th>
<th>Do not know my identity</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Work or school</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Parents</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Siblings</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Children</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. People with whom you live</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Heterosexual friendships</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Gay, lesbian, or bisexual friendships</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Counselor or advisor</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17) Please choose one of the following. Are you currently:

|                                                                 |     |     |     |     |
| a. Married                                                     |     |     |     |     |
| b. Living with a different-sex partner                        |     |     |     |     |
| c. Living with a same-sex partner                             |     |     |     |     |
| d. Dating or 'involved'                                       |     |     |     |     |
| e. Widowed                                                     |     |     |     |     |
| f. Divorced                                                    |     |     |     |     |
| g. Separated                                                   |     |     |     |     |
| h. Single                                                      |     |     |     |     |

18) If married or in a relationship, how long have you been in that relationship? (Skip to #20 if not a

|                                                                 |     |     |     |     |
| a. Less than one year                                         |     |     |     |     |
| b. 1 to 5 years                                               |     |     |     |     |
| c. 6 to 10 years                                              |     |     |     |     |
| d. 11 to 20 years                                             |     |     |     |     |
| e. More than 20 years                                         |     |     |     |     |
| f. Not applicable                                             |     |     |     |     |

19) If married or in a relationship, how often do you and your spouse or romantic partner do the fol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Talk about work</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Discuss personal feelings</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Watch TV together</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Visit relatives together</td>
<td>( )</td>
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<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Shop or run errands together</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Work on the house or garden</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Prepare meals together</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Exercise or engage in sports</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Discuss films, art, or books</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Discuss politics or news</td>
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<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Other</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
20) Are there any activities you do, or places you go, mainly for the purpose of meeting new people?
a. Yes
b. No

If yes, what are they?

21) Do you have children?
a. Yes
b. No (if no, skip to question # 24)

22) If yes, what are the ages of your children?

23) For each minor child (under age 18), choose one of the following:
I have:

- Full custody
- Joint custody
- Visitation rights
- No contact
- Other

DEMOGRAPHICS

24) What is the last grade of school you completed? (Please circle one)
a. 8th grade or less
b. Some High School
c. High school graduate
d. Some college
e. College graduate
f. Post graduate

25) How old are you?

26) Circle one: Male  Female

27) What is your racial or ethnic background?
a. European-American (White)
b. African-American (Black)
c. Latin-American (Hispanic)
d. Asian-American (Chinese, Japanese, etc.)
e. Native-American (Indian)
f. Other: ____________________

28) What is your sexual orientation?
a. Heterosexual
b. Bisexual woman
c. Bisexual man
d. Gay man
e. Lesbian woman
f. Not sure of orientation

29) What was your total household income category for the past year?
a. Less than 10,000
b. 11,000 - 20,000
c. 21,000 - 30,000
d. 31,000 - 40,000
e. 41,000 - 50,000
f. More than 50,000

30) What is your occupation? ____________________