NOT WALKING THE TALK:

IDENTITY INTERRUPTIONS, BEHAVIOR, AND STRESS

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

The topic of straight-identified men who engage in sexual behavior with other men (straight MSM) is becoming the subject of an increasing amount of literature within gender and sexuality studies. This study approaches this subject using social psychological theories of identity in order to test the idea that these men reframe and renegotiate these behaviors in order to make them compatible with their understanding of masculinity. Utilizing a survey involving 784 participants, this study diverges from the qualitative studies on the topic, by finding that straight MSM experience considerably more identity-related stress than both gay men and straight men without a history of same-sex behavior.

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NOMENCLATURE

MSM	Men Who Have Sex with Men
ICT	Identity Control Theory
ANOVA	Tennessee Valley Authority
OLS	Ordinary Least Squares
BSRI-12	Bem Sex Role Inventory Short Form
ISEL-12	Interpersonal Support Evaluative List Short Form
KLAMS	Kaplan Longitudinal and Multigenerational Survey

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1. INTRODUCTION

I explore the question: How does a man's perception of his own masculine identity influence the amount of stress that he experiences. More specifically, I ask whether white men who identify as *exclusively heterosexual* but engage in same-sex sexual behaviors experience stress as a result of identity non-verification? If so, how does masculinity moderate this relationship?

I posit that masculinity is an overarching identity because of the cultural assumptions embedded in its enactment, and that men use this identity to explain and justify a vast array of behaviors. There are many meanings attached to hegemonic masculinity. These include ideas about brotherhood and male bonding, toughness and physicality, and perhaps most importantly—heterosexuality (Kimmel 1994, 2006, 2008; Pascoe 2007). These multiple meanings help provide justification and framing for same-sex sexual behaviors, and allow straight men to maintain their heterosexual identity, indirectly, through maintaining their masculine identity, even in the face of obvious contradictions.

I hypothesize that, as long as one's masculinity is not questioned or violated, straight, white men who value and adhere to the features of hegemonic masculinity do not feel the identity-related stress that is typically the result of inconsistency between an individual's behavior and identity. This is because heterosexuality is so securely ingrained within traditional meanings of masculinity. If masculinity is not questioned, neither will their heterosexuality be scrutinized. Without the label of homosexual being applied to them, however, I hypothesize that the stress that occurs and the result of identity non-verification is not present.

This project explores the nuanced, and often contradictory, nature of white, American masculinity. Significantly, it calls into question the taken-for-granted assumption that one's sexual behavior determines or is indicative of sexual orientation. At first look, it may be tempting to say that men who have sex with other men are not straight. However, this negates, or at least minimizes, the role of identity. It draws attention to the role that masculinity, and masculine identity, plays in dictating behaviors for men. Moreover, I look at how men use the multiple dimensions of masculinity to navigate situations and justify behaviors that may, on the surface, be discrediting to their own masculinity. The discussions demonstrate that sex is not simply a personal act. It shows the cultural significance that shapes the way we socially categorize individuals, even independent of their self-identifications. Ultimately, this project demonstrates the need for a more nuanced understanding of sexual orientation and behavior as well as white masculinity.

This study focuses intentionally on only white men. Although research on men of color who engage in these same behaviors is severely needed and would prove valuable, white hegemonic masculinity yields a particular status in society that is correlated with power and privileges not shared by men of color. Therefore, it is important that this work begins with those at the highest realm of gender status and power to understand how this particular group deals with the contradictions. Examining exclusively straight white men, for whom hegemonic masculinity is valuable and attainable, who engage in homosexual acts without carrying the homosexual label, allows us to analyze how those in the highest position of privilege negotiate this contradictory behavior and the degree of success they have in doing so.

The decision to exclude women from the study and exclusively examine male sexuality and masculinity is also deliberate. It has been clearly demonstrated that female sexuality is

treated and conceptualized much differently than male sexuality. Thompson and Morgan (2008) showed that females are allowed a great deal more flexibility than men, both in terms of sexual behavior and identity. Many women are able to experiment with same sex behaviors without having a label applied to them or the assumption that it is indicative of a queer, static identity. Additionally, studies show that they more frequently identify as bisexual (Laumann et al. 1994; Poston and Chang 2015; Thompson and Morgan 2008). This is likely due not to an actual greater prevalence of bisexuality in women, but to the stigma attached to male bisexuality and its effects on perceptions of masculinity. Additionally, research has demonstrated that men uniquely experience a great deal of masculine-role stress (Eisler, Skidmore, and Ward 1988). It is due to these significant differences, that this study focuses exclusively on the sexuality of men and male masculinities.

Further, this project contributes to descriptive evidence about sexuality and identity. While there have been a number of previous studies on this topic (see Ward 2008, 2015; Carillo and Hoffman 2016, 2017; Silva 2017a, 2017b, 2018; Bridges 2014), there has been no comprehensive quantitative analysis. This large-scale survey enables us to assess the relationship between men's identities related to masculinity, sexuality, and the way that conflict between these may generate stress. As a quantitative survey study, this project adds significantly to the empirical literature on masculinity and sexuality—and particularly to the growing work on straight-identified men who have sex with men[1] (Straight MSM). Using social psychological theories of identity and established measures of stress, this study directly measures the

[1] In saying "straight MSM", I am referring to persons who self-identify as males who are exclusively heterosexual, but have engaged in same-sex sexual behaviors one or more times. This is not to his is not to say that these men exclusively have sex with other men.

relationship between masculine identity and sexual behavior and the effects of discrepancies between the two.

Until recently, relatively little attention has been paid to the queer practices of straight-identified individuals, and there have been calls for increased research (Bridges 2014; Ward 2008, 2015; Schippers 2000). The qualitative research that has been conducted (Ward 2008, 2015; Silva 2017, 2017; Carillo and Hoffman 2016, 2017; Bridges 2014) illustrates the myriad of ways in which white men create narratives in order to keep one's masculine identity intact, despite obvious behavioral contradictions.

I explore the idea of masculinity, not as a characteristic, but as an identity. This project makes it possible to test the extent to which heterosexuality is ingrained within traditional masculinity and an identification therein. This work adds to the ongoing conversation between masculinity and sexuality studies about the way in which homophobia, embedded within traditional masculinity, helps to uphold the traditional gender order by further subjugating alternative masculinities (Kimmel 1994; Bridges 2014; Connell 1995; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Pascoe and Bridges 2016). It is also distinct from other masculinities literature, as it brings queer and masculinity theories into conversation with social psychological theories of identity that focus on self-verification. This project offers an application of both of these theoretical frameworks.

I begin with a broad overview of the relevant literature on identity, stress, social support, gender, masculinities, and sexualities. Following this, I set up a theoretical argument applying the ideas of identity theory to the unique case of masculinity, and present several hypotheses. I test these using survey data, and then discuss the significant theoretical and empirical importance of my findings

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Identity

Very simply put, identities are the way that individuals think of themselves. In sociological social psychology, identity, refers to the self-meanings that an individual uses to define themselves as a member of a social group[2], occupant of a role[3], or as a biological entity[4] (Burke and Tully 1977; Burke 1991; Burke and Stets 2009; Stets and Burke 2000). Although there are a number of theories about identity, developed by both sociologists and psychologists, all of the research in identity theory works to explain the way in which an actor's self-concept is shaped through social interactions (Hogg, Terry, and White 1995; Taijfel, and Turner 1979; Burke and Stets 2009; Stets and Burke 2000; Burke 1991, 2004; Merolla, Serpe, Stryker, and Schultz 2012; Stryker and Burke 2000).

Sociological social psychological work on identity developed out of structural symbolic interactionism's focus on the related concept of the "self" (Stryker and Burke 2000; Stryker 2008). Each individual's self is comprised of "as many identities as distinct networks of relationships in which they occupy positions and play roles," and it is within their hierarchy of identities that the self is constructed (Stryker and Burke 2000:286; Mead 1932; James 1980). The culturally constructed and contextually bound self makes sense of identity meanings through social interactions (Stryker 1980, 2008; Merolla, Serpe, Stryker, and Schultz 2012). One's

[2] Group identities focus on one's identity as a member of a broader social category, such as one's nationality, race, gender, or sexual orientation (Burke and Stets 2000, 2009; Burke and Tully 1977).

[3] A role identity encompasses what it means to be in one role relative to another. For example, one would have the role of a student rather than a teacher or the role of mother rather than daughter (Burke and Stets 2009; Burke and Tully 1977).

[4] An actor's person-based might include characteristics like honest, introverted, or intelligent (Burke and Stets 2009).

identity meanings help to determine not only what it means to be who one is, but also how an individual should act in any given social situation (Burke and Stets 2009; Stets and Burke 2000; Burke 1991, 2004). Every social situation calls to the forefront certain identities that are relevant to each context, and individuals seek out situations in which they can enact their most salient identities. Identity salience is defined as the frequency with which, or the likelihood that, an identity will be activated in a given situation (Stryker and Burke 2000).

There are two primary foci of identity theories. The first of these emphasizes the way in which social structures influence identity and behavior and how these identities are organized into a hierarchy of salience. The second examines the internal, cognitive processes by which multiple identities are developed and maintained through comparison processes (Stryker and Burke 2000; Burke and Stets 2009). Burke and Stets (2009:4) explain that:

> As Cooley (1902) pointed out, the individual and society are two sides of the same coin. Like Coleman (1990), Stryker (1980), and others, it is our view that society (social structure) is created by the actions of individuals, though it is recognized that these actions are produced in the context of the social structure they create and are influenced by this context. For some, social structure is an idea about how the behavior of individuals ought to be patterned. For others, it is the actual patterns of behavior of those individuals.

Identity theory looks both at the way in which society influences the individual and the way in which an individual's behavior can influence social structures (Burke and Stets 2009; Burke 1991, 2007; Stryker and Burke 2000).

Although there is a great deal of consistency within identity theory, the way in which social scientists have theorized the role of motivation varies. These differences and can be

separated into two distinct schools of thought--self-enhancement and self-verification. Self-enhancement, developed by Stryker and colleagues, says that individuals seek positive appraisals from others. Within this theory, a lack of positive evaluation results in stress, regardless of whether these reviews match the content of their identity standard (Stryker and Burke 2000; Stryker 1980; Kaplan 1986; Swann, Pelham, and Krull 1989). In contrast to this self-verification theories, such as Identity Control Theory developed by Burke and colleagues, says that individuals feel stress whenever they are evaluated in any way that is inconsistent with their identity standard. This theory holds that even positive feedback, perceptions of being overevaluated, can result in stress if the feedback is inconsistent with the identity standard (Burke and Harrod 2005; Stryker and Burke 2000; Burke and Stets 2009; Burke 1991).

The theoretical framework that is central to this study, Identity Control Theory (ICT) focuses on the social interactions that help to shape identity (Burke 1991, 2004; Burke and Stets 2009). This framework explains that every identity held by an actor is part of a four-part control system which is established when any identity is activated. This system is depicted in a cybernetic feedback loop (Figure 1), a process in which actors construct and maintain their identity meanings through repeated social interactions (Burke 1991, 2007; Burke and Stets 2009). This system contains four key components. These are the: *identity standard, inputs, comparator, and outputs* (Burke 1991, 2004; Burke and Stets 2009).

An actor's *identity standard* is a reference point. It is the set of meanings for a given identity (Burke 1991, 2006; Burke and Stets 2009). The second component of the identity feedback loop are the perceptions of self-relevant meanings, or *inputs.* These are input from the environment or situation "including how one sees oneself and the meaningful feedback that the self obtains from others (reflected appraisals)" (Burke and Stets 2009:50; Burke 1991). The

element referred to as the "*comparator"* is used to describe the process in which an actor compares the input they have received from the environment or situation. People then consciously or unconsciously compare the input with the meanings dictated by the identity standard. It is in this phase where identities are either verified, when the input and identity standard are consistent with one another, or are not verified when the actor receives feedback that does not match the meanings dictated by the identity standard (Burke and Stets 2009; Burke 1991, 1997; 2007).

The goal of this process is identity verification. The result of an actor failing to achieve identity verification is stress. Emotions, or the myriad of feelings that one experiences, are of interest to identity theorists insofar as they are interested in exploring the conditions that produce negative or positive emotions (Burke and Stets 2009). The stress generated by identity interruptions manifest themselves as feelings of distress or anxiety. Rather than being the result of overload of demands, as is traditionally thought, identity theorists conceptualize stress as the result of interruption in one's identity process (Burke and Stets 2009; Thoits 1991). These two events are not mutually exclusive, however, as being overloaded with demands may result in identity interruptions (Burke and Stets 2009; Thoits 1991; Burke 1991). Burke and Stets (2009) explain that "[i]nterruption is the disconfirmation of an expectancy or the noncompletion of some initiated action... This is the *interruption theory of stress*. The basic premise of interruption theory is the well-documented finding that *autonomic activity (subjectively felt as distress or anxiety) results whenever some organized action or thought process is interrupted*" (Burke and Stets 2009:76). More salient an identity or the more frequent the interruptions in an actor's identity process the the greater the degree of stress the actor will feel. Following identity non-verification, individuals experience stress. Identity theorists explore the myriad ways that actors

may work to resolve these negative feelings (Burke and Stets 2009). Actors may seek to correct this disruption cognitively, behaviorally, or both (Burke and Stets 2009; Burke 1991).

In identity control theory, behavior is the primary method through which actors seek to correct interruptions caused by identity non-verification. Burke and Stets (2009:51) explain this, saying that "[b]ehavior is goal-directed in that there is an attempt to change the situation in order to bring perceived situational self-meanings in line with the meanings held in the identity standard… if the perceived self- in-situation meanings fail to match, distress is felt and behavior is altered to counteract the situational meanings in an attempt to accomplish identity-verification." Within this framework, behavior is a means to an end, and is used to define the situation. However, actors may also use a number of cognitive methods to make sense of their non-verification "such strategies as selective perception, rationalizing one's behavior, deprecating or rejecting others who are nonsupportive, or withdrawing from the interaction" (Burke and Stets 2009; McCall and Simmons 1978; Burke 1991). When these coping strategies are unsuccessful, an individual may instead change their identity standard (Burke and Stets 2009).

Although altering one's identity standard is much less common than changing behavior or using cognitive strategies to bring situational meanings into line with one's identity standard, ICT also addresses change. Under certain circumstances, in which a person has experienced repeated interruptions, it becomes necessary for the identity standard itself to change. Burke (2006:84) explains that "when our behavior, for some reason, does not reduce the discrepancy, or when we are prevented from countering the disturbance so as to change our perceptions, the standard will continue over time to change toward the perceptions until the error signal is reduced to zero — that is, until our perceptions match the changed standard." Thus,when the

stress of repeated inconsistency between the identity standard and reflected appraisals is high and consistent the identity standard changes. This standard may also change when more than one relevant identity is activated at a time, and when these identities have conflicting meanings.

2.2 Stress and Social Support

The measurement of stress, as it is used here, is tied very closely to theories of identity. Pearlin et al. (1981), however, speak to the "conceptual ambiguity" that surrounds definitions of stress. This ambiguity results in variation in the measurement of stress. Pearlin et al. (1981) identify three fundamental concepts that are related to stress. These are stressors, moderators/ mediators, and stress outcomes. *Stressors* are external circumstances that challenge an individual to change, or obstruct them from doing so (Pearlin et al. 1981; Aneshensel 1992; Pearlin and Schooler 1978). The moderators[5] of stress are certain resources that minimize the effects of stressors. Lastly, *Stress outcomes* refer to the manifestations (emotional, psychological, physiological) that are the result of stress (Pearlin et al. 1981; Aneshensel 1992).

Aneshensel (1992:16) explains that "stress is not an inherent attribute of external conditions, but emanates from discrepancies between those conditions and characteristics of the individual-- his or her needs, values, perceptions, resources, and skills." This echoes Burke's (1991) explanation of stress as a result of identity disruption. Burke and Stets (2009) discuss a number of the cognitive and behavioral ways in which individuals mediate the impact of stress that results of identity disruption. What (Burke 1991) makes clear is that social interactions are the link between stress and identity. Stress links these micro and macro processes, and examining these stress outcomes is a measurable way of analyzing the relationship between the two.

[5] The resources that work to moderate the effects of stress include factors such as social and emotional support or coping strategies (Pearlin et al. 1981; Aneshensel 1992; Pearlin and Schooler 1978).

The minority stress model provides a relevant illustration of the relationship between stress and social structures. It has been shown that low status or stigmatized groups are exposed to a greater number of stressors and may experience more negative outcomes, as the result of chronic strains and lack of resources (Thoits 1991, 1992; Pearlin 1989; Meyer 1995, 2003). Meyer (1995) explains that "minority stress can be described as being related to the juxtaposition of minority and dominant values and the resultant conflict with the social environment experienced by minority group members" (Meyer 1995; Pearlin 1989). Minority group members experience chronic strains as well as life event strains more frequently and to a greater degree.

Living as part of a stigmatized group results in individuals facing prejudice and discrimination and social isolation as well as living with the fear of these things (Meyer 2003). However, there are several methods through which minority groups attempt to modify stress factors to prevent stress outcomes. Research on stress and mental health among racial and ethnic minorities has shown these groups have lower incidences of negative mental health outcomes, as compared to whites, as a result of increased social support networks and superior coping skills (Twenge and Crocker 2002; Meyer 2003). These positive findings, however, do not extend to sexual minorities. Meyer (2003) shows that LGB populations are significantly more vulnerable to stress outcomes than heterosexuals.

One of the most powerful, and most frequently mentioned moderators of stress, is social support (Cohen, Underwood, and Gottlieb 2000; Cohen and Wills 1985; Cobb 1976). The term "social support" refers to the resources (whether they are perceived or actually provided) to which an individual has access (Cohen, Underwood, and Gottlieb 2000; Cobb 1976). Cohen, Underwood, and Gottlieb (2000:15) propose three reasons why social support is arguably the most important moderator of stress outcomes:

> "(1) socially integrated people have more diverse self-concepts... and this diversity makes stressful events in any one social domain (e.g., at work) less important; (2) socially integrated people have a more diverse resource pool to call on when under stress; and (3) socially integrated people have a better quality and greater quantity of social interactions, resulting in increased positive affect and decreased negative affect."

Although LGBTQ+ individuals do form communities of their own, these may not function to curtail stress outcomes (Meyer 2003; Bridges 2014). Lack of and limited access to social support is one of the greatest hurdles that non-heterosexual individuals must overcome (Meyer 2003).

2.3 Gender and Sexualities

Sociological social psychologists have further developed a perspective on status characteristics and power, and frequently use gender to illustrate these differences (Ridgeway 2011; Ridgeway and Smith-Lovin 1999; Burke and Harrod 2005; Burke and Stets 2007; Burke and Cast 1997; Mize 2015). In social psychological perspectives, power is determined by access to resources. Similar to its use in the stress literature, resources, within this context, "are the structurally provided tools that allow for the maintenance of a system of interaction" (Davis 2012:2; Freese and Burke 1994). It has been demonstrated that these resources allow individuals to achieve identity verification more easily. In terms of gender and sexuality, this means that individuals with greater power and higher social status are more easily able to enact their gender and sexuality in ways that are most valued and afford them the greatest amount of privilege (Childers 2000; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Ridgeway 2011; Burke and Cast 1997). This

power, perhaps more so than many other social factors, is used to organize nearly every social interaction (Ridgeway and Smith-Lovin 1999).

It is clear that identities play a crucial role in shaping people's lives and behaviors, with different identities becoming more or less salient within different situations (Hogg, Terry, and White 1995; Taijfel, and Turner 1979; Burke and Stets 2009; Burke 1991, 1997, 2004; Merolla, Serpe, Stryker, and Schultz 2012; Stryker 1980). Two identities that are almost inextricably intertwined on both personal and social levels are those of gender[6] and sexuality[7]. This close connection is undoubtedly due to each's association with assumptions about masculinity and femininity (Sandfort 2005; Halberstam 1998; Pascoe and Bridges 2016). The way that people experience both gender and sexuality is profoundly social in nature and, just as with other social identities, these two features work in a myriad of ways: by shaping interactions between individuals and between social structures, organizing communities, and helping to form and dictate cultural norms (Silva 2017; Simon and Gagnon 1986; Foucault 1978; Connell 1992). Ridgeway (2011) explains the way in which these pervade every level of social life, elaborating that the sex/ gender are a "primary frame" that is used to shape and influence the way we relate to one another, and that the enactment of gender is a cultural and social requirement for individuals (Ridgeway 2011).

In the social sciences gender and sexual orientation are frequently combined into a single subject of inquiry; however the way in which these concepts are studied continuously changes (Laumann et al. 1994; Ward 2015; Katz 1995; Poston and Chang 2015; West and Zimmerman

[6] Raewyn Connell defines gender as "a historical process involving the body, not a fixed set of biological determinants. Gender is social practice that constantly refers to bodies and what bodies do, it is not social practice reduced to the body" (Connell 1995).

[7] *"[S]exuality* refers to sex acts and sexual identities, but it also encompasses a range of meanings associated with these acts and identities" (Pascoe 2008)

1987). Similarly, the way in which these concepts are measured varies greatly between different disciplines. Bogaert (2012) gives an extensive list of dimensions of sexuality, making sure to delineate between romantic and sexual orientation-- concepts which are related but distinct from one another. He lists attraction and arousal, behaviors, cognition, and desire all as factors that should be taken into account in the study of sexuality (Bogaert 2012). By "attraction," the author is referring to the features or characteristics that draw one individual to another. The second listed dimension of sexuality, "arousal" refers to the physiological response to sexual stimuli, which is the factor frequently studied by biologists and sexologists alike. Behavior, of course, refers to the sexual behaviors that one engages in, and is used broadly across disciplines to study sexuality and sexual orientation. Cognition, or "cognitive scripts" are one of the elements of sexuality studied by cognitive psychologists and refer to one's thoughts and, in the context of sexuality, fantasies. Desire is the last element of sexuality, as listed by Bogaert, and is related all four of the earlier listed elements of sexuality. However, the author explains that it is frequently measured and used synonymously with "lust" (Bogaert 2012). This project, however, gives the major focus to sexuality to one's self-reported identity.

Earlier perspectives on gender and sexuality were largely biological in nature. The essentialist view, despite being common in popular thinking, is an antiquated view of biological determinism. This view posits that there is a fundamental and universal feature that distinguishes all men from all women and all straight individuals from gay and bisexual individuals (Laumann et al. 1994; Baumle, Compton, and Poston 2010; Poston and Chang 2015; Ward 2015). This belief in a feature that is common to all members of a group, in addition to leaving no room for human agency, offers no explanation for gender nonconformity, fluidity in identities, or cultural variation. Essentialism relied largely on traditional, western conceptions of masculinity and

femininity, citing these features as indications of fundamental differences. This perspective was met with sharp criticism from feminist scholars and social scientists alike, who condemned it for theorizing sexuality and gender outside of the context of the social world (Pascoe and Bridges 2016; West and Zimmerman 1987).

Many scholars have conducted studies that effectively discredit the essentialist perspective. In the 1930s, anthropologist Margaret Mead challenged ideas about the naturalness of gender in her studies of gender variation in different cultures. Her observations demonstrated that there are no universal differences between men and women, nor are there fundamental features of masculinity and femininity that apply to all members of a group cross-culturally (Mead 1935; Pascoe and Bridges 2016). Gender scholar and biologist, Anne Fausto-Sterling (2000), also calls for theories that can account for greater variation. In her discussion of intersexuality, Fausto-Sterling discusses the spectrum of biological sex categories, the way in which these bodies are regulated, and uses these as an example to show the way in which gender is culturally, not biologically, constructed and enforced (Fausto-Sterling 2000).

In the 1950s, Talcott Parsons' functionalist perspective, sex role theory, became one of the primary frameworks through which masculinity and femininity were examined (Parsons 1954; Carrigan, Connell, Lee 1985). This framework held that men and women are socialized into different roles, and then act consistently with their socialization. This framework has a number of significant shortcomings. First, and perhaps most importantly, it has no way to explain the way that beliefs about appropriate masculinity and femininity have changed throughout history (Risman 2004). Pascoe and Bridges also explain further insufficiencies saying that "[s]ex role theory was incapable of accounting for diversity; it presumed universal participation in the enactment of sex roles… [it] implicitly mistakes what is culturally normative

for what is normal… [it] has no way of making sense of anyone who might deviate from the expectations associated with the role that this framework situated them as socially obligated to play" (Pascoe and Bridges 2016:10; Parsons 1954). Perhaps most importantly, however, sex role theory has no explanation for inequality. Parsons treated masculinity and femininity with a "separate but equal" paradigm that didn't address the devaluation of femininity and the power imbalance between the two (Carrigan, Connell, Lee 1985; Pascoe and Bridges 2016; Parsons 1954).

It is from the shortcomings of sex role theory, that feminist scholars began to further develop the theoretical framework of social constructionism, one of the dominant perspectives used in the study of gender and sexual orientation today (Laumann et al. 1994; Poston and Chang 2015; West and Zimmerman 1987; Pascoe and Bridges 2016; Wade and Ferree 2015). Embedded within social constructionist thought is a challenge to and criticism of the essentialist view, questioning the assumptions that it takes for granted and "raising questions about how the (sex, gender and sexuality) categories emerge, are maintained, and change" (Laumann et al. 1994: 285). Its central claim is that all differences and variation within gender and sexuality "exist only within culture and show deep historical and cross-cultural variation" (Connell 1992).

One of the most striking and relevant illustrations in this variation is the relatively recent invention of the concept of heterosexuality itself. For much of history, well up until the nineteenth century, the presumed relationship between one's sexual behaviors and a sexual identity did not exist—nor did the idea that a sexual identity was an inherent part of an individual that dictated certain behaviors or was accompanied by certain personality traits (Blank 2012; Katz 1995; Halperin 1989; Ward 2015). The heterosexual and LGBTQ+ identities were further solidified and even embraced with the emergence of the LGBTQ+ rights movement (Ward 2015;

Mann 2012). The social constructionist perspective examined gender roles and their particular meanings in socio-cultural spaces. This increased the focus on the importance of an individual's gender and sexual identities, and the processes through which these are created and maintained (West and Zimmerman 1987; Poston and Chang 2015; Ward 2015).

Queer theory is an interdisciplinary and multi-level perspective of gender and sexuality. In this perspective, identities are created as the result of practice, and these repeated performances create an illusion of a stable social category (Butler 1990, 1993; Pascoe and Bridges 2016). Although there is little overlap between the two, the queer theory perspective shares social psychology's critical view of perspectives that identities these as static and immutable categories (Mann 2012). Pascoe and Bridges (2016) concisely describe the queer theorist perspective on identities:

> *Beginning with Foucault (1978), most queer theorists see identity not as something that sets one free, but as a way in which power operates. Identities are templates for defining selves and behaviors. But, as templates, they are exclusionary, precluding the full range of possible ways to understand and experience selves, bodies, desires, actions, emotions, and more. Yet, we are all controlled by a discourse about identities that disciplines us to inhabit, craft, and embrace recognizable identities. We do so by constantly monitoring ourselves, our behaviors, and all manner of identity practices. The more closely we are able to approximate 'normal' identities, the more social rewards we receive (Pascoe and Bridges 2016).*

This explanation makes clear that queer theorists regard identity with great skepticism and criticism. Unlike frameworks in social psychology, which conceptualize identity formation as a

process with both macro and micro elements, both imposed and actively shaped by individuals, queer theorists view identities as something applied to an individual rather than chosen. In this framework, identities function more closely to labels (Pascoe and Bridges 2016; Mann 2012; Butler 1990). Similar to the approaches of postmodern theorists, queer theory deconstructs the basic constructions of gender, sex, and sexuality to demonstrate their consistencies and deficiencies. Queer theory is critical of the assumptions of gender and sexuality across various subsets of disciplines (Mann 2012).

Feminist scholar Adrienne Rich termed the pressure to embrace and conform to these 'normal' identities as "compulsory heterosexuality" (Rich 1980; Mann 2012). Using this term, she referred to the way in which sexual orientation is reinforced through gender norms. Pascoe (2007), illustrates the way in which homophobia is used during adolescence to reinforce norms related to masculinity. By referring to one another as "fags," the young men in her study suggest to one another that they are acting in a way that is feminine or at least insufficiently masculine. The use of this slur is employed to enforce norms related to both gender and sexual orientation. Pascoe refers to this process, an extension of compulsory heterosexuality, as the "fag discourse" (Pascoe 2007). It is through the devaluation of non hetero- and gender normative traits that hierarchies of gender and sexuality are constructed and from which inequalities result (Rich 1980; Pascoe 2007; Mann 2012).

2.4 Masculinities

While power imbalances within sex and gender seem relatively stable, the norms related to these categories change across time and culture. Just as sexual orientation and definitions of gender are both socially constructed and contextually bound, so is masculinity (Pascoe and Bridges 2016; Connell 1987, 1992, 1995; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Ward 2008, 2015;

Carrigan, Connell, Lee 1985). Pascoe and Bridges (2016) explain the necessity of understanding the importance of context and the variation in definitions saying that "[m]asculinity is anything but natural or stable. It is only through recognizing and understanding that masculinities can, do, and will change that we can better understand them" (Pascoe and Bridges 2016:27). When defined abstractly, masculinity refers to "[t]he practices, behaviors, attitudes, sexualities, emotions, positions, bodies, organizations, institutions, and all manner of expectations culturally associated with (though not limited to) people understood to be male" (Pascoe and Bridges 2016:4; Connell 1995; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005).

Masculinity, by its very nature, is relational in that it only exists with respect to femininity. It has been noted by a number of scholars that although the relationship between these is important, they are not on a spectrum with either at each end. Psychologist Sandra Bem provided a unique and important contribution to the literature on masculinity and femininity through the development of the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) (Bem 1974; Tate 2012; Pascoe and Bridges 2016; Sandfort 2005). This self-categorization measure, working under the assumption that both masculinity and femininity are socially constructed and should be measured independently from one another, was the first to allow individuals to rank high or low on both masculinity *and* femininity (Tate 2012; Bem 1974; Pascoe and Bridges 2016). Although her work has been criticized for its simplicity (Ballard-Reisch, Elton, and Elton 1992; Holt and Ellis 1998), its most important contribution to the field of masculinity studies is that its simplicity drew attention to the need for greater nuance and complexity in measuring gendered characteristics and beliefs (Pascoe and Bridges 2016).

Raewyn Connell has explored the ideas of masculinity within a broad social scientific frame. With her colleagues, she effectively set the theoretical foundation on which the current

discipline of masculinities studies is built (Connell 1987, 1995, 2005; Pascoe and Bridges 2016). Carrigan, Connell, and Lee (1985) noted the distinct lack of empirical literature as well as the "intellectually disorganized, even erratic" nature of the theoretical discussion on the topic of masculinity. In addition to pointing out the obvious flaws in role theory, they place some blame on the feminist movement for the oversimplification of masculinity. They argue that in the second wave feminist literature masculinity is unilaterally depicted as, "more or less unreviled villiany and all men as agents of the patriarchy in more or less the same degree" (Carrigan, Connell, Lee 1985:552). While acknowledging the importance of studying power relations and inequalities between the sex categories, Connell and colleagues also called for a closer examination of the hierarchies within a single sex category-- between men and masculinities.

The work of looking at multiple masculinities and at the inequalities between them involved examinations of relationships between heterosexual and homosexual men (Pleck 1980). Through this work, masculinity was pluralized and became 'masculinities.' It was recognized as an socially constructed set of practices with unstable norms that must be thought of as multiple ideas rather than a singular concept (Pascoe and Bridges 2016; Carrigan, Connell, Lee 1985). Connell and colleagues continue this work by outlining the several ways in which masculinities function, presenting several types of masculinity and explaining how these work both structurally and interactionally (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee 1985; Connell 1992, 1995, 2005; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005).

The first and most well- known of Connell's concepts is that of "hegemonic masculinity." This type of masculinity is the socially acknowledged dominant masculinity at any given time. It is the masculine ideal. Pascoe and Bridges (2016:18) explain that "hegemonic masculinity is often depicted as a specific "type" of man rather than a configuration of gendered practice within

a system of gender relations' that is internally contradictory and rife with conflict." Currently, this type of masculinity tightly encompasses heterosexuality as well as white, middle or working class ideals. It seems clear, that hegemonic masculinity, this ideal brand of manliness, is impractical and unattainable for most men. So, although it remains socially dominant and the most exalted brand of masculinity-- a standard to which many men aspire-- it is not the type of masculinity practiced by the majority. Hegemonic masculinity is the type of masculinity that is effective in keeping both women and other masculinities subordinated (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee 1985; Connell 1992, 1995, 2005; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Pascoe and Bridges 2016). In addition to heterosexuality itself, one of the primary features of traditional hegemonic masculinity is homophobia (Kimmel 1994; Bridges 2014; Connell 1995; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Pascoe and Bridges 2016). Homophobia, and the enforcement of heterosexual norms plays an integral role in upholding hegemonic masculinity, ensuring that the norms associated with it remain dominant and socially desirable.

Hegemonic masculinity cannot exist outside of relations to other types of masculinity. In her work, Connell identifies three subsets of masculinity that exist in the hierarchy of masculinities. The first of these is what she refers to as "complicit" masculinity. This type of masculinity is necessary to keep the dominant masculinity in power because those who engage in this type "aspire to attain or at least mimic it (hegemonic masculinity)" (Anderson 2016). Marginalized masculinities, in contrast are masculinities performed by men who are unable to participate in hegemonic masculinity by virtue of features like their race or class. Although these men may value tenants of hegemonic masculinity, marginalized masculinities frequently have standards and benchmarks that are different than those of the dominant group, which preclude them from being part of hegemonic masculinity (Pascoe 2007; Anderson 2016).

The third subset of masculinities that Connell identifies are "subordinated masculinities." She identifies gay masculinities as the most visible of these. These masculinities frequently display characteristics that are the opposite of those prescribed within hegemonic masculinity (Pascoe and Bridges 2016; Anderson 2008, 2009, 2016; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). Understanding the fundamental importance of heterosexuality as an element of hegemonic masculinity, it is clear why gay masculinities hold so little status in the hierarchy of masculinities. Connell (1992) elaborates the social nature of gay masculinities. She looks at how gay men construct their own masculinities, and how these are developed and formed both on an individual level and within a community. While Foucault argued that identities were constricting and regulatory, Connell argues that gay men's identification provides them with agency, community, and an outlet for self-exploration and an existing alternative to hegemonic masculinity (Foucault 1978; Connell 1992).

In addition to work on more traditional masculinities, there has been a relatively recent upsurge in the amount of literature on what have become called "hybrid" or "inclusive" masculinities (Bridges 2014; Anderson 2005, 2009, 2016). Those who embrace this type of masculinity use it to distance themselves from the homophobia and other harmful elements that are associated with hegemonic masculinity. Tristan Bridges describes hybrid masculinities as those that "incorporate 'bits and pieces' of marginalized and subordinated masculinities and, at times, femininities" while maintaining a "masculine distance" from homosexuality itself (Bridges 2014). Scholars give multiple, different, explanations of why this is becoming more and more common among men. Eric Anderson, who writes on what he calls "inclusive masculinities" sees the surge in these as the result of a shift towards greater gender and sexual equality (Anderson 2005, 2008, 2016). While it is clearly significant, other scholars propose that these

transformations in men's behaviors are indicative of the shift towards softer and more subtle, though no less harmful, versions of sexism and homophobia (Messner 1993, Bridges 2014). Although traditional and hegemonic masculinity remains dominant, these inclusive masculinities allow men who engage in them to maintain their male privilege, without being associated with the stigma of homophobia (Bridges 2014; Anderson 2016).

Tristan Bridges (2014) examines different ways in which straight-identified men coopt certain behaviors, tastes, and ideologies that are frequently seen as gay or effeminate and incorporate them into their own (hybrid) masculinity. His work provides further insight into which behaviors can be incorporated into a straight masculinity, and which cross the line and make something "authentically gay." Bridges' respondents discussed a variety of their own behaviors, tastes, and ideologies, (paying close attention to their appearance and hygiene, caring too deeply about their friends, enjoying art or jazz music, being a male feminist) that are "gay," while they work to distance themselves from "authentically gay" male same-sex sexual behaviors (Bridges 2014). This work, however, focuses exclusively on straight, white MSM, and the way in which they maintain heterosexual identities through drawing of various elements of masculinity to rationalize their same-sex behavior (Ward 2008, 2015).

2.5 Men Who Have Sex with Men

In the past several years there has been a considerable increase in academic literature on straight men who have sex with men (MSM) (Ward 2008, 2015; Silva 1017, 2017; Carillo and Hoffman 2016, 2017; Anderson 2008; Reynolds 2015). This category of interactions is known by many names 'bud-sex,' 'dude-sex,' 'bro-sex,' and the participants are categorized as 'not gay-identified MSM' or even 'behaviorally bisexual men' (Reback and Larkins 2010). The attention

to this has increased, however, as scholars realize how this seems a remarkable exception to beliefs about hegemonic masculinity and the strength of its commitment to heterosexuality.

In addition to his overarching contributions to sexualities research, Alfred Kinsey was one of the earliest social scientists to study male same-sex sexual behavior. Kinsey and colleagues (1948) revealed that more than one third of men had engaged in sex with other men (Kinsey et al. 1948; Gathorne-Hardy 2004). It has been made clear that Kinsey's studies were wrought with sampling errors which resulted in his results being severely inflated; however, the great numbers of MSM in his data showed the prevalence of these types of interactions, and that society is able to facilitate them. The Kinsey studies, however, measured sexuality only in terms of behavior, rather than identity, and in doing so cannot speak to the effects of these behaviors on identity (Gathorne-Hardy 2004; Ward 2015; Reback and Larkins 2007).

Following Kinsey, in the 1960s and 70s, sociologist Laud Humphreys studied straight MSM. Unlike Kinsey, Humphreys closely examined the intersection of sexual behavior and identity, as well as the context in which these interactions took place and how the subjects rationalized them. His ethnography, *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places* (1970) is the first work to explicitly study MSM in public places. "Tearoom," as used by Humphreys, is slang for a public restroom in which men would have homosexual encounters. Humphreys studied these interactions, estimating that nearly 5% of American adult men engaged in these types of activities. His observations and interviews demonstrated the frequency of straight men having homosexual sex (Humphreys 1970; Ward 2015).

Social theorist Michel Foucault discusses sexuality as a cultural production and a result of unequal power relations (Foucault 1978). Halperin (1989) extends Foucault's ideas and lends historical evidence for his idea of sexuality as power and a result of its' social context. He uses

the example of classical Athens, wherein sexual behaviors did not "express inward dispositions or inclinations so much as it served to position social actors in the places assigned to them, by virtue of their political standing, in the hierarchical structure of the Athenian polity" (Halperin 1989; Foucault 1978). In other words, male sexual actions were not primarily associated with a sexual identity, much less homosexuality as a social category. In terms of sex, *what an individual did wasn't who they were*. Halperin's example of MSM in ancient Greece shows the flawed nature in the common practice of placing an inherent meaning on sexual acts, as he and Foucault argue that these acts can have many meanings and motivations—most of which may be unrelated to one's sexual identity (Halperin 1989; Foucault 1978; Ward 2015; Katz 1995).

A great deal of the recent literature on straight MSM focuses on the way in which these men justify their heterosexual identities by incorporating features of hegemonic masculinity into their sexual practices and using qualifying language to explain their behavior (Ward 2015; Adam 2000; Reback and Larkins 2010; Silva 2017; Anderson 2008; Carillo and Hoffman 2017). While categories such as 'heteroflexible' exist, these are frequently not adopted as identities (Silva 2017; Reback and Larkins 2010). There are a myriad of ways in which straight men frame their homosexual interactions in order to make them not gay—or, at least, not "authentically" gay.

One of the most fundamental elements of hegemonic masculine identity is homophobia (Kimmel 1994, 2006, 2008; Anderson 2005; Connell 1987, 1995; Bridges 2014; Pascoe 2007). Illustrated through what CJ Pascoe terms a "fag discourse," straight MSM frequently employ homophobia to distinguish themselves from "real" gay men, and distance themselves from a homosexual identity (Reback and Larkins 2010; Ward 2015). Although the presence of overt homophobia has lessened in recent years (Silva 2017), there are a number of homophobic strategies still employed by straight MSM who seek to maintain their heterosexual identity.

These include distancing oneself from LGBTQ+ populations, experiencing shame or displaying appropriate disgust with these interactions, or even employing homophobic language when describing "real" gay men (Ward 2015; Reback and Larkin 2010).

The most commonly used way of maintaining a heterosexual identity, despite engaging in contradictory behavior, is the use of a variety of distancing strategies. One of the ways in which straight MSM do this is by depersonalizing their male sexual partners (Reback and Larkin 2010; Silva 2017). For straight, white MSM, an important benchmark of what makes an encounter "count" as authentically gay is the investment (or lack thereof) in the relationship to one's sexual partner. This emotional detachment goes so far that many of these interactions are regarded or justified as illegitimate. Participants may justify and reframe this behavior within the boundaries of appropriate masculinity. They may say that "shit happens" (Ward 2015) or that they were "helpin' a buddy out" (Silva 2017) or use a variety of other phrases and tactics to explain, desexualize, and minimize homosexual interactions. Scholars explain that straight MSM use the context of the interaction to distance themselves from "real" gay identities, spaces, and communities. In this way straight MSM have again disconnected homosexual behavior from a gay identity (Ward 2015; Reisen et al. 2010; Bridges 2014).

Another, closely related feature of many straight MSM's same sex sexual interactions is anonymity. Anonymity[8] is embedded in the very structure of these interactions (Reback and Larkins 2010; Carillo and Hoffman 2016, 2017; Reisen et al. 2010; Gonzales 2007; Ward 2015). In the 1990s, scholars and individuals of color developed the discourse of the "down low" (DL). Several scholars have argued that the "down low" is not unique to men of color (Ford et. al 2007;

[8] Anonymity defined as whether those not directly involved in an interaction (such as one's family or friend group) know about these encounters.

Ward 2008, 2015). While the behaviors described in the DL discourse, those of anonymity, compartmentalization, and secrecy are not unique to men of color, the socio-cultural pressures felt by these men and varying definitions of masculinity and expectations of heterosexuality make a separate discourse necessary (Carillo and Hoffman 2016; Reisen et al. 2010; Gonzales 2007).

Gender and sexuality are both categories of social power, and taking on a non-heterosexual identity brings with it an extraordinary amount of cultural baggage as well as a distinct loss of privilege or one's "patriarchal dividends" (Foucault, 1978; Halperin 1989; Ward 2015; Bird 1996). Echoing Rich (1980), Ward (2015) writes that "the fact that straight people (or gay people) have uncomfortable feelings about, or disassociation from, their participation in homosexual sex probably tells us less about their core sexual orientations or embodied desires than it does about the effects of heteronormativity on people's sexual experiences." According to this literature, on how men work to distinguish what is gay and what is not, it seemingly does not matter *who* one has sex with as much as *how, when and where* they the act takes place. Just as definitions of homosexuality are bound by time and place, this literature adds an additional dimension showing that even within cultures and times definitions of homosexuality are further stratified.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Theory

It is very tempting, and would be simple, to categorize straight MSM as "not straight," or at least not "authentically straight." This work, however, illustrates the mistake that it would be to disregard one's identity in favor of a hasty social categorization. It does this by showing the magnitude of the relationship between masculinity and how this is thought to function as a buffer for straight men who are vulnerable to identity-related stress, while simultaneously showing how damaging extremes in masculinity can be overall. I use "masculine" rather than simply "gender" identity, as straight MSM's gender itself is not what is called into question, but rather their adherence to gender norms. Burke and Tully (1977) explain this distinction as it related to identities. They explain that one's gender identity encompasses masculinity and femininity, and an individual's' gender identities are set at varying degrees of masculinity or femininity[9] (Burke and Cast 1997; Burke and Tully 1977). It is the hierarchy within masculinity itself that lead to the pluralization of masculinity to focus on "masculinities," and to the variation within this identity. While gay men's maleness is not called into question, their masculinity is subjugated and devalued only on the basis of their sexual orientation (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee 1985). It is one's status within this hierarchy of masculinities, and the benefits that accompany this status, that is in jeopardy for straight, white MSM.

[9] Burke and Cast (1997) discusses the identity verification process using an example of a thermostat that is set to a certain temperature (standard). When the thermostat perceives (input) that the temperature is higher than its setting, inconsistency occurs and the thermostat works to right this inconsistency by turning on their air conditioning (output).

However, because of the complex and multiple meanings of masculinity, the literature demonstrates that there are a number of ways in which these men draw on other facets of masculinity to rationalize their same-sex behavior and work to prevent stress. This study is able to effectively measure the degree of success that these men have in navigating the discrepancy between their masculine identity and homosexual behavior, as well as the way in which masculinity affects men whose identities are varied along different axes of masculinity, but verified.

To investigate how identities and behaviors affect stress and the subjective experience resulting from stress, I will examine three different groups of men:[10] Those who identify as heterosexual and report only having opposite sex sexual interactions; those who identify as exclusively homosexual and report as having engaged in same-sex sexual interactions, and; those who identify as exclusively heterosexual but report having engaged in same-sex sexual interactions. These three groups of individuals will enable me to test propositions related to identity, minority status, social support, stress and the behaviors that work to prevent this stress.

3.2 Propositions

Proposition 1: Social support decreases the amount of stress that men experience.

The preceding proposition is based on the idea that social support is perhaps the most influential moderator of stress outcomes (Cohen, Underwood, and Gottlieb 2000; Cohen and Wills 1985; Cobb 1976). Those men who perceive themselves as having more social support also report experiencing less stress than those with weaker social ties.

Proposition 2: Individuals of all sexual orientations experience less stress if their sexual behavior aligns with their sexual identity.

[10] That is, those individuals who self-identify as being male.

The second proposition is a direct application of ICT. This study includes groups of straight MSM, straight-identified men with no history of same-sex sexual interactions, and gay-identified men who only indicated engaging in homosexual interactions. In the latter two groups there is no discrepancy between identity and behavior, therefore there are no disruptions in the identity process. Examining the differences between straight MSM and both non-discrepant groups will clearly show whether the stress that is reported by straight MSM is related to identity non-verification.

Proposition 3: Gay-identified men experience more stress than straight-identified men.

This proposition is a straightforward application of the theoretical framework set forth in the minority stress model as it relates to sexual minorities. Although there is no lack of identity verification, gay men, overall experience higher levels of stress than straight men who also have no inconsistency within their identity (Meyer 1995, 2003). This stress, then, is not the result of identity non-verification, but rather a result of living as part of a subjugated group where one faces increased exposure to stressors.

Proposition 4: There is variability in the degree to which men identify themselves as traditionally masculine.

For many men, one's masculine identity is a high-level identity that is activated in most social situations. It is used to influence many behaviors ranging from their appearance, hobbies and interests, to those they choose to be a part of their social circle (Bridges 2014). There is, however, a great deal of variation in how different men think of masculinity and how masculine they consider themselves to be. Bridges (2014) and Anderson (2005), both talk about the changing nature of masculinity and its shift towards a less hegemonic, more inclusive (or more stereotypically feminine) form that is becoming less stigmatized for both straight and gay men.

In order to curtail stress that is related to incongruence between sexual behavior and identity, straight MSM frequently draw on features of hegemonic masculinity to explain away their same-sex sexual behaviors. Because of this, they may rank themselves as more consistently masculine when compared to other groups.

Proposition 5: The extent to which men identify themselves as traditionally masculine or feminine affects the amount of stress they experience.

Both hegemonic and hybrid masculinities generate stress in their own way. Hybrid, non-traditional, masculinity or a weak masculine identity is likely to generate stress, as those men have to resist the norms of hegemonic masculinity and take on a set of traits and behaviors that have less social value. Conversely, those who identify very strongly with the tenets of hegemonic masculinity often feel a great deal of pressure to attain these (frequently unattainable) markers of masculinity. In contrast, straight MSM use hegemonic masculinity as a buffer to the stress, and a very strong, masculine identity may help this group to curtail the stress that they experience as a result of the inconsistencies between their behaviors and identity.

Proposition 6: Anonymity in same-sex sexual interactions helps to curtail identity stress for straight MSM, but has the opposite effect for straight-identified men with no history of same-sex interactions and gay-identified men having sex with men.

The literature on straight MSM speaks to the importance of anonymity within their same-sex sexual interactions. The preceding proposition echoes this by proposing that anonymity and a shallow relationship with one's sexual partner can help to prevent stress, as the individual has fewer opportunities for contradictory feedback, in terms of masculinity. However, and especially in the case of gay-identified men, anonymity in their sexual interactions could be an indication

that they have not yet disclosed their sexual orientation publicly, which may lead to increased stress due to fear of disclosure or exposure.

In sum, these propositions reflect the importance of one's identity standard, and the many factors that both exacerbate and decrease the stress that can be generated when this goes unverified. Although this study examines the masculine identity of all participants, its importance and the meanings attached to it may vary considerably. When these meanings include a strong emphasis on heterosexuality, and men behave inconsistently, stress will be generated if they cannot compensate for the inconsistency by drawing on other features of hegemonic masculinity. The low status that is associated with a gay identity and gay masculinities make rationalizations of their behavior all the more important to straight MSM when attempting to avoid stress. The significance of this study lies in its ability to measure the strength of one's masculine identity and the magnitude of the impact that lack of inconsistencies within this identity has on these different identity and behavior groups.

4. METHODS

4.1 Procedures and Measurements

Anonymity is deeply embedded in the sexual interactions of straight MSM. Therefore it is appropriate that anonymity is also embedded in the method of inquiry used to examine these interactions. This study is conducted as an anonymous survey, with no identifying personal information collected about the respondents. Participants who respond to surveys anonymously are considerably less likely to over report desirable behaviors or under-report socially undesirable behaviors (Bradburn, Sudman, and Wansink 2004). One of the strengths of this design is that through allowing participants to remain completely anonymous, I avoid a social desirability bias.

As mentioned in the theoretical discussion, I choose to only investigate white, American men. For this first investigation, this allows me to control on culture and also ethnicity. I further control on the age of participants by only asking for responses from men between the ages of 18 and 65. According to the Pew Research Center, 17 is the median age at which LGBTQ+ individuals recognize and disclose their sexual orientation (Pew Research Center 2013). In 2011, The United States Department of Health and Human services also reported that the average age at which men lose their virginity is at 17.1 years (Anjani et al. 2011). In light of these findings, it is likely that the sample of men who have participated in this study are readily able to self-identify their sexual orientation, and also have some behavioral sexual experience.

At the time of design, there existed no estimation of the population of straight MSM.[11] It is not clear how we could develop a sampling frame. To solve this issue and to ensure that we have an approximately equal number of men in the three groups of theoretical interest, I contacted the Qualtrics Research Pool[12]. Qualtrics has an extremely large groups of respondents and can segment the respondents through filtering questionnaires. Filtering questions and participant quotas were added to the survey in order to create the three different groups, based on respondents' self-reported identity and behavior.[13] Based on resources available, and crude power analysis of likely responses on the dependent variables related to stress responses, I estimated that we would need around 250 men in each category or group. Each individual was paid for their participation, and the responses were collected over a period of 18 days. After data collection, the final number of participants is 784.

The mean age of participants is 39.3. They have, on average of 15 years of education, and an annual household income of $58,860 (Table 1). The 784 study participants are divided into three groups. The first group, and one that is of primary interest, is of 251 straight MSM, that is those who identify as *exclusively heterosexual* but have engaged in sexual activity with another man (or men) one or more times. These men are demographically similar to other groups, the only difference being a significantly ($p<.001$) higher annual household income of $67,630 (Table

[11] During the time when the survey was active, Tony Silva published "Bud-sex, Dude-sex, and Heteroflexible Men: The Relationship between Straight Identification and Social Attitudes in a Nationally Representative Sample of Men with Same-sex Attractions or Sexual Practices" in *Sociological Perspectives.* In this article, using the 2011-2013 National Survey of Family Growth, the author uses the data to estimate that 2.8% of straight-identified men, aged 15-44 have engaged in same-sex sex (Silva 2018).

[12] According to Qualtrics, their "[participants] are recruited from various sources, including website intercept recruitment, member referrals, targeted email lists, gaming sites, customer loyalty portals, permission-based networks, and social media, etc." (Qualtrics 2017).

[13] The three groups of interest being: those men who identify as heterosexual and report only having opposite sex sexual interactions; those who identify as exclusively homosexual and report as having engaged in same-sex sexual interactions, and; those who identify as exclusively heterosexual but report having engaged in same-sex sexual interactions.

1). The other groups, in which there is no inconsistency between identity and behavior are samples of men who identify themselves as *exclusively heterosexual* and have engaged in only heterosexual behavior (n=266) and men who identify as *exclusively homosexual* and only engage in only homosexual sex (n=267).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Characteristics

	Overall	Gay Men	Straight Men (No Same-Sex Behavior)	Straight MSM
Years of Age (21- 60)	39.35 (12.25)	40.5 (13.07)	38.95 (12.28)	38.56 (11.23)
Annual Household Income (in Thousands) (15- 105)	58.86***[a] (30.59)	55.90 (30.7)	54.30 (31.03)	67.63***[b] (28.18)
Years of Education (0- 22)	15.09***[a] (3.06)	15.40 (2.87)	14.10***[b] (2.82)	15.82 (3.23)
Married (0- 1)	.44***[a] (.50)	.25***[b] (.44)	.48***[b] (.50)	.60***[b] (.49)
Valid N	784	267	266	251

N=784 (*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05, + p<.10)
Data Source: 2018 Sexual Orientation, Behavior, and Stress Survey (SOBSS)

[a]=significant difference between groups (ANOVA)
[b]= significantly different from both comparison groups (Bonferroni Multiple Comparison Post-Test)

Once participants responded affirmatively to an information sheet (Appendix Item 1), subjects in this study first were asked a range of demographic questions about gender, age, race, marital status, income, educational attainment, and sexual orientation (Appendix Item 2). The measurement of sexuality used is the Kinsey scale (Kinsey et al. 1948). This scale is a seven-point scale ranging from exclusively heterosexual to exclusively homosexual, with additional categories for asexuality and other orientations included. Those who meet the gender, age, sexual orientation, and race criteria set forth were then asked whether or not they have engaged in sexual behavior of any kind.[14] Once a participant answered affirmatively to this question, he is

[14] Participants who do not meet the age, race, or gender criteria or who indicate that they have never engaged in any sexual behavior have their survey session terminated, and are told by Qualtrics that they are ineligible for participation.

then directed to multiple questions about his past partners and the consensual sexual behavior that he has engaged in since age 18. Men (both gay-identified and straight MSM) who indicate having engaged in same-sex sexual behaviors are sorted to a series of questions inquiring about the nature of their same-sex experiences. Straight-identified men with no history of same-sex sexual interactions are sorted to an identical series of questions inquiring about their opposite-sex sexual experiences (Appendix Item 3).

The measure used to assess the variable of *social support* is derived from a shortened version of the Interpersonal Support Evaluation List (ISEL-12)[15] (Appendix Item 4) (Cohen et al. 1985). This 12-item set of statements is a multidimensional measure of perceived social support. The three dimensions, each captured by four statements, are: appraisal support, belonging support, and tangible support. Participants are asked to select whether a statement is true or false,[16] and these responses are taken together to measure a participant's perceived level of social support.

The dependent variable that is of greatest theoretical importance is *stress.* Identity stress is measured on three scales that capture anxiety, depression, and self-derogation. All of these are important and telling indicators. The evaluative terms measuring anxiety, depression, and self-derogation are taken from the Kaplan Longitudinal and Multigenerational Survey (KLAMS) questionnaire (Appendix Items 5, 6, and 7). This multifaceted measure, designed to capture the negative emotions elicited by interruption in the identity process is referred to as a measure of

[15] The original Interpersonal Support Evaluation List is a 40-item scale, where participants rate the accuracy of a list of statements utilizing a 4-point scale ranging from "Definitely True" to "Definitely False" (Cohen and Hoberman 1983).

[16] If participants find that the statement is neither true nor false, they are asked to select the option that is most closely descriptive of themself.

"negative self-feelings." Participants respond to this list of 23 evaluative statements and rank the frequency with which they experience these on a Likert scale of 1 (never) to 7 (always).

To measure the variables of *masculinity and femininity,* respondents rank themselves on a list of evaluative terms (on a scale of 1 [never or almost never true] to 7 [almost always true]) of 12 masculine, feminine, and gender neutral traits taken from a commonly used short form version of the Bem Sex Role Inventory [17](BSRI-12) (Appendix Item 8). These measures of variations in masculinity, and how they relate to sexuality tell us a great deal about the way in which men think of themselves and their own masculinity. Moreover, it tells us how susceptible different groups of men are to the stress that is the result of identity disruption and how masculinity and femininity can moderate this relationship. The following hypotheses, directly related to the theoretical propositions presented earlier, reflect the nuanced nature of masculine identities and their complex relationship to stress.

Several of my hypotheses refer to specific groups, individually. When this is the case I will use the label of straight MSM, gay men, and straight men with no same-sex behavior. Additionally, I use "Straight Men" to describe all men with a straight-identity-- this group encompasses both straight men with no history of same-sex behavior and straight MSM. Other hypotheses, however, refer to members of the "non-discrepant" groups, which is a group that combines the groups of gay men and straight men with no same-sex behavior. This is in contrast to the straight MSM, as they are the only group with a discrepancy between their behavior and identity.

[17] The original Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) is a 60-item list of traits. These traits are evenly dispersed between ones that are thought to be traditionally masculine, feminine, and gender neutral (Bem 1794).

4.2 Hypotheses

Given the measurements discussed above, I can now translate my propositions into specific hypotheses (Summary Table Appendix Item 9):

Hypothesis 1: Social support is negatively related to measures of negative self-feelings.

Hypothesis 1.1: Gay-identified men perceive having less social support than straight-identified men.

Hypothesis 1.2: Straight MSM perceive having less social support than straight-identified men who have only had heterosexual interactions.

Hypothesis 2: The groups without any inconsistency between their identity and behavior report significantly less negative self-feelings, overall, than the group of straight MSM.

Hypothesis 3: Gay-identified men report higher levels of negative self-feelings than straight-identified men.

Hypothesis 3.1: Straight MSM report higher levels of negative self-feelings than straight-identified men who have only engaged in heterosexual interactions.

Hypothesis 4: There are significant differences in levels of masculinity and femininity between groups.

Hypothesis 4.1: Straight MSM have significantly less variation within masculinity than both of the non-discrepant groups.

Hypothesis 4.1a: Straight MSM rate themselves as more masculine than men in the non-discrepant groups.

Hypothesis 4.1b: Straight MSM rate themselves as more masculine than gay-identified men.

Hypothesis 4.1c: Straight MSM rate themselves as more masculine than straight-identified men who have only engaged in heterosexual interactions.

Hypothesis 4.1d: Gay-identified men rank themselves as less masculine than straight-identified men.

Hypothesis 4.2: Straight MSM have significantly less variation within femininity than both of the non-discrepant groups.

Hypothesis 4.2a: Straight MSM rate themselves as less feminine than men in the non-discrepant groups.

Hypothesis 4.2b: Straight MSM rate themselves as less feminine than gay-identified men.

Hypothesis 4.2c: Straight MSM rate themselves as less feminine than straight-identified men who have only engaged in heterosexual interactions.

Hypothesis 4.2d: Gay-identified men rate themselves as more feminine than straight-identified men.

Hypothesis 5: Strength of masculine and feminine identity is significantly related to levels of negative self-feelings for all groups.

Hypothesis 5.1: Masculinity is positively related to negative self-feelings for men in both non-discrepant groups.

Hypothesis 5.1a: Masculinity is negatively related to negative self-feelings for straight MSM.

Hypothesis 5.2: Femininity is negatively related to negative self-feelings for men in both non-discrepant groups.

Hypothesis 5.2a: Femininity is positively related to negative self-feelings for straight MSM.

Hypothesis 6: Straight MSM are more likely to keep their reported sexual interactions anonymous than members of the non-discrepant group.

Hypothesis 6.1: Anonymity is positively related to negative self-feelings for members of the non-discrepant groups.

Hypothesis 6.2: Anonymity is negatively related to negative self-feelings for straight MSM.

5. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

In the preliminary analysis of this data, I first assessed the reliability of the measures used in the survey. I conducted factor analyses and used Cronbach's Alpha as well as the Kuder-Richardson coefficient of reliability[18] to assess the construct validity, or how well the different indicators in each scale measure the same underlying concept, of the BSRI-12, adapted ISEL-12 and KLAMS measure of negative self-feelings. The BSRI-12's measure of masculinity has an alpha value of .85, and the measure of femininity yielded an alpha value of .87. The Kuder-Richardson coefficient of reliability for the adapted version of the ISEL-12 is .82. The KLAMS measures of anxiety, depression, and self-derogation were combined into an index of negative self-feelings, which yielded an alpha value of .94.[19] All of these scores strongly indicate that these individual measures each capture a single, underlying concept.

5.1 Social Support

H1: Social support is negatively related to measures of negative self-feelings

H1.1: Gay-identified men perceive having less social support than straight-identified men.

H1.2: Straight MSM perceive having less social support than straight-identified men who have only had heterosexual interactions.

According to previous literature on the topic, social support is perhaps the most important moderator of negative self-feelings. Using a Linear Regression with Ordinary Least Squares

[18]Kuder-Richardson coefficient of reliability was used to evaluate the ISEL-12, which has dichotomous indicators.
[19]Three items were removed from the KLAMS measure of negative self-feelings in order to improve internal validity. These indicators are marked with an asterisk* in the appendix.

(OLS) estimates, I found significant (p<.001) support for the negative correlation between social support and negative self-feelings. Table 3 shows that for every 1 unit increase in perceived social support, negative self-feelings decreased by .14, even when controlling for extraneous variables.

Table 2: Bivariate Analysis of Negative Self-Feelings, Masculinity, Femininity, Anonymity, and Social Support by Sexual Identity and Behavior Groups

	Overall	Gay Men	Straight Men (No Same-Sex Behavior)	Straight MSM
Social Support (0-11)	7.74***[a] (2.96)	8.20 (2.92)	8.36 (2.73)	6.60***[e] (2.92)
Negative Self-Feelings (1-5)	2.86***[a] (1.01)	2.73 (.99)	2.58 (.84)	3.29***[e] (1.05)
Masculinity (1-7)	5.42*[a] (1.08)	5.27 (1.06)	5.47+[c] (1.06)	5.51*[c] (1.07)
Femininity (1-7)	5.52***[a] (1.02)	5.72***[b] (.95)	5.29 (1.00)	5.54*[b] (1.07)*[c]
Anonymity (1-5)	3.26***[a] (1.50)	3.13 (1.39)	2.91 (1.49)	3.77***[e] (1.50)
Valid N	784	267	266	251

N=784 (*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05, + p<.10)
Data Source: 2018 Sexual Orientation, Behavior, and Stress Survey (SOBSS)

[a] significant difference between groups (ANOVA)
[b] significantly different from Straight Men (no same-sex) (Bonferroni Multiple Comparison Post-Test)
[c] significantly different from Gay Men
[d] significantly different from Straight MSM
[e] significantly different than both other groups

Table 3: Linear Regression with OLS Estimates Predicting the Effect of Social Support of Negative Self-Feelings

	Negative Self-Feelings
	H1
Social Support	-.14***
Control Variables	
Annual Household Income (in 10s of Thousands) (1.5-10.5)	-.01
Married (0-1)	.26***
Years of Education (0-22)	.01
Years of Age (21- 60)	-.03***
Constant	4.77***
R-squared	.32
Degrees of Freedom	5

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05, + p<.10

Table 4: Linear Regression with OLS Estimates Predicting Social Support by Sexual Identity

	Social Support	
	H1.1	**H1.2**
Straight-Identification	-.86***	
Gay Men		1.75***
Straight Men (No Same-Sex Behavior)		1.70***
Control Variables		
Annual Household Income (in 10s of Thousands) (1.5- 10.5)	.05	.07+
Married (0-1)	.41+	.45*
Years of Education (0-22)	-.15***	-.11**
Years of Age (21- 60)	.03**	.02**
Constant	9.11***	6.66***
R-squared	.05	.10
Degrees of Freedom	5	6

N=784 (*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05, + p<.10)
Data Source: 2018 Sexual Orientation, Behavior, and Stress Survey (SOBSS)

The first column of table 4 addresses hypotheses 1.1, which is not supported by the data. As shown, there is a significant (p<.001) negative correlation between straight identification and negative self-feelings. Controlling for other variables, there is a .86 unit decrease in perceived

social support for men who identify as straight, as compared to gay-identified men. This demonstrates that a straight identity alone is not a predictor of social support row 1 of table 2 shows the bivariate analysis for hypothesis 1.2, and reveals support this hypothesis. On a scale of 0-11, with a mean of 8.36, straight men with no history of same-sex behavior reported the highest perceived level of social support that is not significantly different from gay men with a mean of 8.20. However, straight MSM reported a mean of 6.60, which is significantly ($p<.001$) lower levels of perceived social support. As shown in column 2 of table 4 this hypothesis is also confirmed on a multivariate level. When controlling for other variables, gay men report a 1.75 unit increase in social support compared to straight MSM. Similarly, straight men with no history of same-sex behavior report a 1.70 unit increase over straight MSM, who report having much less perceived social support than both non-discrepant groups.

5.2 Negative Self-Feelings Between Groups

H2: The groups without any inconsistency between their identity and behavior report significantly less negative self-feelings, overall, than the group of straight MSM.

H3: Gay-identified men report higher levels of negative self-feelings than straight-identified men.

H3.1: Straight MSM report higher levels of negative self-feelings than straight-identified men who have only engaged in heterosexual interactions.

Interruption in one's identity process, or the incongruence between identity meanings and behavior results in stress (Burke 1991; Burke and Stets 2009). However, I hypothesized that, based on the multiple meanings attached to masculinity, straight MSM would not experience the negative self-feelings as a result of this incongruence, but rather that they would successfully be

able to use other elements of masculinity in order to rectify the interruption in their identity process and avoid negative self-feelings. When applied to sexual minorities, the minority stress model says that sexual minorities experience increased amounts of negative self-feelings as opposed to majority group members (Meyer 1995, 2003). Based on this theoretical framework, I hypothesized (H3) that gay men would report a higher levels of negative self-feelings than straight identified men.

Overall, H2 was strongly supported by the data, while H3 was not. The data convincingly supported the framework of identity control theory, showing that it is the discrepancy between behavior and identity that results in increased negative self-feelings, rather than sexual orientation or minority status. Based on an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Bonferroni multiple comparison post-test, the data show that straight MSM experience significantly ($p<.001$) greater amounts of negative self-feelings than did either of the non-discrepant groups (Row 2 in Table 2). The mean level of negative self-feelings for straight MSM is 3.3, compared to 2.7 for gay men and 2.6 for straight men with no same-sex behavior, on a scale of 1 to 5.

Table 5: Linear Regression with OLS Estimates of Sexuality and Identity Discrepancy on Negative Self-Feelings

	Negative Self-Feelings	
	H2	**H3**
Identity Discrepancy	.35***	
Straight Identity		-.01
Control Variables		
Social Support (0-11)	-.13***	-.14***
Annual Household Income (in 10s of Thousands) (1.5- 10.5)	-.02	-.01
Married (0-1)	.20**	.26***
Years of Education (0-22)	.01	.01
Years of Age (21- 60)	-.03***	-.03***
Constant	4.63***	4.78***
R-squared	.34	.32
Degrees of Freedom	6	6

N=784 (*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05, + p< .10)
Data Source: 2018 Sexual Orientation, Behavior, and Stress Survey (SOBSS)

Table 5 shows the results of a linear regression with ordinary least squares (OLS) estimates. The control variables included are factors that may influence negative self-feelings, based on the previous literature. They are: social support, whether the individual is married or single, annual household income (in thousands), years of education, and age. The regression results for H2 and H3 show that, even when controlling for the variables of social support, marital status, annual household income, educational attainment, and age, the significant ($p<.001$) relationship between identity discrepancy and negative self-feelings remains. This is to say that, controlling for other variables, those men who do have a discrepancy between their identity and behavior experience a .35 unit increase in negative self-feelings as compared to those whose behaviors align with their identity standard. We see that H3 is not supported, as there is no significant relationship between sexual orientation and negative self-feelings.

Table 6: Linear Regression with OLS Estimates of Negative Self-Feelings by Sexuality and Behavior Groups

	Negative Self-Feelings H3.1
Gay Men [a]	.22**
Straight MSM [a]	.46***
Control Variables	
Social Support (0-11)	-.13***
Annual Household Income (in 10s of Thousands) (1.5- 10.5)	-.02
Married (0-1)	.25***
Years of Education (0-22)	.00
Years of Age (21- 60)	-.03***
Constant	4.62***
R-squared	.35
Degrees of Freedom	7

N=784 (*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05, + p<.10)
Data Source: 2018 Sexual Orientation, Behavior, and Stress Survey (SOBSS)

[a] compared to Straight MSM

The analysis presented in Row 2 of Table 2 shows the bivariate results for hypothesis 3.1, which examines the negative self-feelings of straight-identified men-- both those who have and have not engaged in same-sex behavior. The data show that straight MSM experience significantly (p<.001) more negative self-feelings than do straight men with no history of same-sex interactions and gay-identified men. More specifically, and as shown in the linear regression with OLS estimates results in Table 6 this analysis reveals that, even when controlling for other variables, gay men experienced a .22 unit increase in negative self-feelings compared to straight men with no history of same-sex behavior. Similarly, straight MSM reported a .46 unit increase in negative self-feelings compared to the straight men with no same-sex sexual experiences. Both of these results are significant.

While the minority stress model is confirmed, these results do convincingly demonstrate that *identity interruption is the primary contributor to negative self-feelings.*

5.3 Masculinity and Femininity

H4: There are significant differences in levels of masculinity and femininity between groups.

Hypothesis 4 focuses on the different levels of masculine and feminine traits that men in different groups report for themselves. Hypothesis 4 was confirmed, finding that there were indeed significant differences between groups on both the measures of masculinity and femininity. Bivariate analyses (Rows 3 and 4 in Table 2) shows significant ($p<.05$) differences in masculinity between groups, and even more highly significant ($p<.001$) differences in femininity between groups. The mean level of masculinity for straight MSM is 5.51, compared to 5.27 for gay men and 5.47 for straight men with no same-sex behavior, on a scale of 1 to 7. Whereas, the mean level of femininity for straight MSM is 5.54, compared to 5.72 for gay men and 5.29 for straight men with no same-sex behavior.

H4.1: Straight MSM have significantly less variation within masculinity than both of the non-discrepant groups.

H4.2: Straight MSM have significantly less variation within femininity than both of the non-discrepant groups.

Hypotheses 4.1 and 4.2 focus on the variation within groups of how masculine and feminine men rated themselves as being. I hypothesized that Straight MSM, or those with a discrepancy between their identity and behavior, would consistently rate themselves as more masculine and as altogether less feminine, rather than there being a wider dispersion of answers. Overall, I did not find support for these hypotheses.

While an f test showed that there were no significant differences in the standard deviations of masculinity between groups, the data did show a significant difference in variance of femininity between Straight MSM and the non-discrepant group and straight MSM and gay men ($p<.05$). The standard deviation of femininity for straight MSM is 1.1, compared to .95 for gay men and 1 for straight men with no same-sex behavior. However, there was no significant difference in the standard deviations of straight MSM and straight men with no history of same-sex behavior (Rows 3 and 4 of Table 2).

H4.1a: Straight MSM rate themselves as more masculine than men in the non-discrepant groups.

H4.2a: Straight MSM rate themselves as less feminine than men in the non-discrepant groups.

Table 7 shows the results for Hypotheses 4.1a and 4.2a, which deal with the differences in masculinity and femininity between those with and without discrepancies between their identity and behavior. The linear regression with OLS estimates revealed no significant differences between these groups in either masculinity or femininity, demonstrating that having a discrepancy in one's identity does not influence how masculine or feminine a man perceives himself to be.

Table 7: Linear Regression with OLS Estimates of Masculinity and Femininity of Straight MSM Compared to Non-Discrepant Groups

	Masculinity H4.1a	Femininity H4.2a
Discrepancy	.10	.07
Control Variables		
Social Support (0-11)	.06***	.04**
Annual Household Income (in 10s of Thousands) (1.5- 10.5)	.04**	-.02
Married (0-1)	.32***	.22**
Years of Education (0-22)	.02	.00
Years of Age (21- 60)	.00	.00
Constant	4.43***	5.07***
R-squared	.09	.03
Degrees of Freedom	6	6

N=784 (*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05, + p<.10)
Data Source: 2018 Sexual Orientation, Behavior, and Stress Survey (SOBSS)

H4.1b: Straight MSM rate themselves as more masculine than gay-identified men.

H4.1c: Straight MSM rate themselves as more masculine than straight-identified men who have only engaged in heterosexual interactions.

H4.2b: Straight MSM rate themselves as less feminine than gay-identified men.

H4.2c: Straight MSM rate themselves as less feminine than straight-identified men who have only engaged in heterosexual interactions.

The results presented in Table 8, however, demonstrate that, controlling for other variables, sexual orientation is a significant determinant of how masculine or feminine men perceive themselves as being. Hypotheses 4.1b, 4.1c, 4.2b, and 4.2c predict that straight MSM would rate themselves as more masculine and less feminine than both the straight-identified men

with no history of same-sex behavior and the gay-identified men, due to their need to distance themselves from femininity and perform a more exaggerated version of hegemonic masculinity.

Additionally, in Table 8 we see that both H4.1b and H4.2b are supported by the data, as straight MSM rank themselves higher in masculinity and lower in femininity than gay-identified men do. Gay men report a marginally significant ($p<.10$) .18 unit decrease in masculinity and a significant ($p<.05$) .20 unit increase in femininity compared to straight MSM.

Overall, the results of the Linear Regression with OLS estimates in Table 8 show mixed support for these hypotheses. The data show that H4.1c is not supported, as there are no significant differences in reported masculinity between the two groups of straight-identified men. H4.2c was also unsupported by the data, as I actually found its inverse to be statistically significant ($p<.001$). This is to say that straight men with no history of same-sex behavior rated themselves as significantly less feminine than straight MSM. For straight men with no history of same-sex behavior, there was a .32 unit decrease in femininity compared to straight MSM, controlling for other variables.

H4.1d: Gay-identified men rank themselves as less masculine than straight-identified men.

H4.2d: Gay-identified men rate themselves as more feminine than straight-identified men.

Table 8: Linear Regression with OLS Estimates Predicting Masculinity and Femininity by Sexual Identity and Behavior Groups

	Masculinity H4.1b & H4.1c	Femininity H4.2b & H4.2c
Gay Men [a]	-.18+	.20*
Straight Men (No Same-Sex Behavior) [a]	-.02	-.32***
Control Variables		
Social Support (0-11)	.06***	.04**
Annual Household Income (in 10s of Thousands) (1.5- 10.5)	.04*	-.01
Married (0-1)	.28***	.33***
Years of Education (0-22)	.03+	-.02
Years of Age (21- 60)	.00	.00
Constant	4.45***	5.38***
R-squared	.09	.07
Degrees of Freedom	7	7

N=784 (*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05, + p.10)
Data Source: 2018 Sexual Orientation, Behavior, and Stress Survey (SOBSS)
[a] compared to Straight MSM

Table 9: Linear Regression with OLS Estimates Predicting Masculinity and Femininity by Sexual Identity

	Masculinity H4.1d	Femininity H4.2d
Gay Men [a]	-.17*	.38***
Control Variables		
Social Support (0-11)	.06***	.03*
Annual Household Income (in 10s of Thousands) (1.5- 10.5)	.04**	-.01
Married (0-1)	.28***	.34***
Years of Education (0-22)	.03+	-.01
Years of Age (21- 60)	.00	.00
Constant	4.44***	5.16***
R-squared	.09	.05
Degrees of Freedom	6	6

N=784 (*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05, + p<.10)
Data Source: 2018 Sexual Orientation, Behavior, and Stress Survey (SOBSS)
[a] compared to Straight Men

Rows 3 and 4 of Table 2 show the results of the bivariate analysis for hypotheses 4.1d and 4.2d, for which the ANOVA and Bonferroni post-test yielded mixed support. When examining the differences between groups, based on sexual orientation alone, it becomes even more evident that sexual orientation is not necessarily a reliable predictor of how masculine a man thinks of himself as being. Table 9 shows the multivariate results for hypotheses 4.1d and 4.2d, both of which are confirmed. Column 1 of Table 9 shows the results for hypothesis 4.1d; there are significant differences between straight and gay men in terms of masculinity-- with gay men ranking themselves as significantly ($p<.05$) less masculine than straight men. Gay men reported a .17 unit decrease in masculinity, when compared to straight-identified men. As shown in Column 2 of Table 9 the data reveals strong support for hypothesis 4.2d, as gay men rank themselves as significantly ($p<.001$) more feminine than men in the straight-identified group. Gay men reported a .38 unit increase in femininity, when compared to straight men.

5.4 Masculinity and Negative Self-Feelings

H5: Strength of masculine and feminine identity is significantly related to levels of negative self-feelings for all groups.

Hypothesis 5 deals with the relationships between masculinity, femininity, and stress. Overall, I found mixed support for this hypothesis. Examining the relationship between masculinity and negative self-feelings, the linear regression with OLS estimates yields no significant relationship between negative self-feelings and masculinity (Table 10). However, this analysis did reveal an only marginally significant ($p<.10$) positive relationship between femininity and negative self-feelings. As shown in Column 2 of Table 10 the data reveals that for every 1 unit increase in the mean of femininity, there is a .06 unit increase in negative self-feelings, controlling for other variables.

Table 10: Linear Regression with OLS Estimates for Effects of Masculinity and Femininity on Negative Self-Feelings

	Negative Self-Feelings	
	H5	**H5**
Masculinity	-.02	
Femininity		.06+
Control Variables		
Social Support (0-11)	-.14***	-.15***
Annual Household Income (in 10s of Thousands) (1.5- 10.5)	-.01	-.01
Married (0-1)	.27***	.25***
Years of Education (0-22)	.01	.01
Years of Age (21- 60)	-.03***	-.03***
Constant	4.88***	4.49***
R-squared	.32	.32
Degrees of Freedom	6	6

N=784 (*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05, + p<.10)
Data Source: 2018 Sexual Orientation, Behavior, and Stress Survey (SOBSS)

Table 11: Linear Regression with OLS Estimates and Interaction Effects of Negative Self-Feelings by Masculinity and Femininity in Sexual Identity and Behavior Groups

	Negative Self-Feelings	
	5.1 & 5.1a	**5.2 & 5.2a**
Masculinity	.15**	
Gay Men	1.03**	1.12**
Straight Men (No Same-Sex Behavior)	1.01**	.52
Gay Men x Masculinity	-.24***	
Straight Men (No Same-Sex Behavior) x Masculinity	-.27***	
Femininity		.17***
Gay Men x Femininity		-.25***
Straight Men (No Same-Sex Behavior) x Femininity		-.18*
Control Variables		
Social Support (0-11)	-.12***	-.13***
Annual Household Income (in 10s of Thousands) (1.5- 10.5)	-.02	-.02+
Married (0-1)	.24***	.23***
Years of Education (0-22)	.00	.00
Years of Age (21- 60)	-.03***	-.03***
Constant	4.25***	4.14***
Observations	784	784
R-squared	.37	.36
Degrees of Freedom	10.00	10.00

N=784 (*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05, + p<.10)
Data Source: 2018 Sexual Orientation, Behavior, and Stress Survey (SOBSS)

Table 12: Main Effects of Masculinity and Femininity on Negative Self-Feelings by Sexual Identity and Behavior Groups

	Negative Self-Feelings	
	H5.1	**H5.2**
Gay Men	-.09+	-.08
Straight Men (No Same-Sex Behavior)	-.12*	-.01
Straight MSM	.15**	.17***

N=784 (*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05, + p<.10)
Data Source: 2018 Sexual Orientation, Behavior, and Stress Survey (SOBSS)
Control Variables are used in the analysis (Linear Regression with OLS estimates with interaction effects), but not included in this table.

H5.1: Masculinity is positively related to negative self-feelings for men in both non-discrepant groups.

H5.1a: Masculinity is negatively related to negative self-feelings for straight MSM.

H5.2: Femininity is negatively related to negative self-feelings for men in both non-discrepant groups.

H5.2a: Femininity is positively related to negative self-feelings for straight MSM.

Hypotheses 5.1, 5.1a, 5.2, and 5.2a all deal with the relationships between masculinity, femininity, and negative self-feelings while looking at how these relationships vary between groups. Table 11 shows the results of a linear regression with OLS estimates as well as the interaction effects between femininity and negative self-feelings and masculinity and negative self-feelings for both non-discrepant groups compared to straight MSM.

As shown in Tables 11 and 12, hypotheses 5.1 and 5.1a were not only unsupported by the data, but rather I found the inverse of these hypotheses to be the case. I found that masculinity is negatively correlated to negative self-feelings for men in both non-discrepant groups, and is positively correlated to negative self-feelings for straight MSM. Masculinity decreases negative

self-feelings by .11 ($p<.001$) for those in non-discrepant groups. As shown in Table 12, the effect of masculinity for gay men is -.09 ($p<.10$), and the effect of masculinity for straight men with no history of same sex behavior is -.12 ($p<.05$). However, for straight MSM, the effect of masculinity is .15. This is to say that for every one unit increase in masculinity, negative self-feelings increase by .15 for straight MSM ($p<.05$). The masculinity interaction effect for gay men and straight men with no history of same-sex interactions is inconclusive (marginally significant negative effect). What is clear, however, is that masculinity effects the negative self-feelings of straight MSM in a significantly different way than either of the non-discrepant groups, and it is a stronger positive effect on negative self-feelings ($p<.01$).

Hypotheses 5.2 (Tables 11 and 12) was unsupported by the data, as there is no significant relationship between femininity and negative self-feelings for both gay men and straight men with no history of same-sex interactions. The effect of femininity for gay men is -.08, and the effect of femininity for straight men with no history of same-sex behavior is -.01. However, neither of these coefficients are significant. In contrast to this, hypothesis 5.2a was confirmed by the data, as there is a strong positive effect between femininity and negative self-feelings for straight MSM. The effect of femininity on negative self-feelings for straight MSM is .17 ($P<.001$). This is to say that for every one unit increase in femininity, straight MSM experience a .17 unit increase in negative self-feelings. The femininity interaction effect on gay men and straight men with no history of same-sex interaction is not significant, showing that femininity has a similar effect on negative self-feelings for both of these groups (which is that it has no effect). However, femininity does affect negative self-feelings in a significantly different way for straight MSM than it does for than either of the non-discrepant groups, as femininity has a stronger positive effect on negative self-feelings for straight MSM (Table 11).

5.5 Anonymity

H6: Straight MSM are more likely to keep their reported sexual interactions anonymous than members of the non-discrepant group.

H6.1: Anonymity is positively related to negative self-feelings for members of the non-discrepant groups.

H6.2: Anonymity is negatively related to negative self-feelings for straight MSM.

Following the qualitative literature on straight MSM, which discusses the number of strategies that straight MSM use to distance themselves from the LGBTQ+ community and the perception of non-heterosexuality, I hypothesized that not only would straight MSM keep their same-sex interactions anonymous more frequently, but also that this anonymity would lead to decreased negative self-feelings for this group. Unsurprisingly, the data confirmed hypothesis 6, as the analysis of variance and Bonferroni multiple-comparison post-test showed that straight MSM are significantly ($p<.001$) more likely than either of the non-discrepant groups to keep their same-sex sexual interactions anonymous[20] (Row 5 of Table 2). On a scale of 1-5, the mean of anonymity for straight MSM is 3.77, whereas the mean for gay men is 3.13, and even lower at 2.91 for straight men with no history of same-sex interactions. This hypothesis was also confirmed in a multivariate analysis (Table 13), as the data revealed that there is a .53 ($p<.001$) increase in anonymity for straight MSM compared to both non-discrepant groups.

However (as shown in Tables 14 and 15), I find mixed support for hypotheses 6.1 and 6.2. Rather, I found that anonymity increases negative self-feelings for both straight MSM and gay men. I found a significantly ($p<.01$) positive correlation between negative self-feelings and

[20] This data, however, cannot speak to the frequency of anonymity in straight MSM's heterosexual interactions.

anonymity for straight MSM. That is, for every 1 unit increase in anonymity, straight MSM experience a .11 increase in negative self-feelings. The interaction effect for gay men is not statistically significant, showing that anonymity affects their negative self-feelings in a similar way to straight MSM. In contrast, the interaction term for straight men with no history of same sex behavior is significantly negative ($p<.05$), indicating that anonymity affects this group's negative self-feelings in a significantly different way than it does for straight MSM. This shows that engaging in anonymous sex with only opposite-sex partners results in a decrease in negative self-feelings that is not shared by either of the other groups.

Table 13: Linear Regression with OLS Estimates Predicting Anonymity by Sexual Identity and Behavior Groups

	Anonymity	
	H6	**H6**
Gay Men[a]	-.39**	
Straight Men (No Same-Sex Behavior)[a]	-.65***	
Straight MSM[b]		.53***
Control Variables		
Social Support (0-11)	-.10***	-.10***
Annual Household Income (in 10s of Thousands) (1.5- 10.5)	.00	.00
Married (0-1)	.25*	.20+
Years of Education (0-22)	.00	.01
Years of Age (21- 60)	.00	.00
Constant	4.27***	3.63***
R-squared	.10	.09
Degrees of Freedom	8.00	7.00

N=781 (*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05, + p<.10)
Data Source: 2018 Sexual Orientation, Behavior, and Stress Survey (SOBSS)

[a] compared to straight MSM
[b] compared to both non-discrepant groups

Table 14: Linear Regression with OLS Estimates and Interaction Effects of Negative Self-Feelings by Anonymity in Sexual Identity and Behavior Groups

	Negative Self-Feelings	
	6.1	**6.2**
Anonymity	.06**	.11**
Gay Men	-.21**	-.08
Straight Men (No Same-Sex Behavior)	-.41***	-.03
Gay Men x Anonymity		-.03
Straight Men (No Same-Sex Behavior) x Anonymity		-.12*
Control Variables		
Social Support (0-11)	-.12***	-.12***
Annual Household Income (in 10s of Thousands) (1.5- 10.5)	-.02	-.02
Married (0-1)	.23***	.23***
Years of Education (0-22)	.00	.00
Years of Age (21- 60)	-.03***	-.03***
Constant	4.80***	4.62***
Observations	781	781
R-squared	.35	.36
Degrees of Freedom	8.00	10.00

N= 781 (*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05, + p<.10)

Table 15: Main Effects of Anonymity on Negative Self-Feelings by Identity and Behavior Groups

	Negative Self-Feelings H6.1 & 6.2
Gay Men	.08*
Straight Men (No Same-Sex Behavior)	.01
Straight MSM	.11**

N=784 (*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05, + p<.10)
Data Source: 2018 Sexual Orientation, Behavior, and Stress Survey (SOBSS)
Control Variables are used in the analysis (Linear Regression with OLS estimates with interaction effects), but not included in this table

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As the literature demonstrates, sexuality is a complex issue, with many different aspects. One important aspect of sexuality is identity. Exactly how does one's "sexual identity" relate to behavior? This study addresses this question by combining literature from gender studies and social psychology.

To specifically investigate these issues of sexuality, I constructed an anonymous survey that compares responses from three groups of white men who identified in different ways: straight identified men who have sex with men; straight identified men who only have sex with women, and; gay identified men who have sex with men. These surveys were administered through a Qualtrics sample in the United States.

The data collected for this study has a number of unique strengths. The first is that it has a relatively large sample size. Additionally, it was able to be administered as an anonymous survey, eliminating selection factors and a social desirability bias that are likely present in qualitative data that was collected face-to-face. There are a number of limitations of this study, however. The first being that the Qualtrics' subject pool sample is non-representative and not random. Due to the relatively sensitive nature of this research, a truly representative sample would be extremely difficult to obtain. However, this limitation in sampling does not necessarily affect the theoretical relevance or importance of this study, as I am generalizing to a theoretical population,[21] testing the theoretical principles of what discrepancy or non-discrepancy might reveal. Another limitation is that, although all participants are American, I do not have any

[21] A theoretical population is defined as the set of all outcomes associated with a certain principle, or a group that has an exact class definition.. This is opposed to an empirical population which are groups that have specified parameters or characteristics.

information about their location or geographic region. Additionally, I did not collect information about participants' socio-political beliefs, a factor which has been shown (Silva 2018) to impact the way men conceptualize their own sexual behavior. While this study uses a relatively nuanced measure of sexual identity categories, future research could draw on other disciplines' measures of sexuality when designing our own. In order to fully capture the complex nature of sexuality future measures should include: sexual identity, romantic identity, sexual behavior, sexual attractions, romantic attractions, desires, and fantasies. Nonetheless, this data helps us understand the effect of discrepancies between sexual identity and behavior.

Gender scholars have attempted to make sense of straight MSM's discrepancies between identity and behavior. Through interviews they have found that straight MSM may frame their interactions as "bud-sex" (Silva 2017, 2018) or "dude-sex" (Ward 2008), and that they frequently justify their same-sex behaviors by explaining that they were simply "helpin' a buddy out," that these behaviors were part of a male bonding or initiation rite, or that they were engaging in these behaviors only as only a way to fulfill their sexual urges and would not have done so if there had been an opposite-sex partner available (Silva 2017a, 2017b, 2018). Work on the topic has shown that straight MSM even further attempt to distance themselves from "real" or "authentic" gays through engaging in homophobic behavior or distancing themselves by depersonalizing their sexual partner in order to more easily frame their interactions as "illegitimate" or unsexual (Pascoe 2008; Ward 2008, 2015). These important studies show that there are a myriad of ways that straight MSM claim to frame or reinterpret their identity that is reconcilable with a socially acceptable and dominant form of masculinity (Pascoe 2008; Ward 2015; Silva 2017a, 2017b, 2018). Despite straight MSM's insistence that these behaviors are

compatible with their conceptualizations of appropriate masculinity, the data collected in this study tells a very different story.

This study shows that, although straight MSM may enact these behaviors in order to protect their identities from being questioned, they are largely unsuccessful. Although the straight MSM in this study reported that others did not know of their sexual behavior and partners more frequently than the other groups, both they and the gay-identified men are negatively affected by this increased anonymity in sexual interactions. That is, that those who are not directly involved in the interactions (such as an individual's family or friend group) are not aware of these encounters. This most likely relates to violations of what is expected by family and friends; such violations lead to greater negative self-feelings.

My findings add to previous scholarship on straight MSM by incorporating social psychological frameworks within this analysis of masculinity. The findings of this study speak to the overwhelming importance of not just one's identity, but the importance and centrality of identity verification, and the powerful negative effect that non-verification has on straight MSM. The data revealed that having a straight identity alone is not enough to curtail identity related stress, but rather that one's identity process must also be uninterrupted in order for an individual to gain the benefits of their majority status. Neither drawing on masculinity as a dominant identity nor one's majority status are not enough to reduce negative self-feelings.

In this sample despite having much higher household incomes and being the most likely to be married, straight MSM reported having the weakest social support networks of all groups. Although the literature related to social support suggests that this relationship is typically causal (as negative self-feelings result from a lack of social support), I posit that this finding in this particular study are the result of the same underlying mechanism and are better explained

together. The low levels of social support that were reported by straight MSM are an extension of negative self-feelings. In this case, straight MSM's lack of perceived social support is an effect rather than a cause of their negative self-feelings.

While understanding masculinity within the framework of the gender paradigm is essential to this study, it does not fully explain how negative self-feelings are affected. I had suggested that high levels of masculinity would be problematic for both those who identified as gay and those who identify as straight but have no history of same sex relations, as gay men experience being part of a subjugated masculinity and straight men with no history of same-sex interactions are subject to the pressures to attain the ideals of hegemonic masculinity. I proposed that having a strong masculine identity would exacerbate these factors, making both of these groups more vulnerable to negative self-feelings. However, this was not the case. This suggests that, at least in the American context, masculinity serves to "buffer" negative self-feelings for these two groups. On the other hand, masculinity did not provide a buffer for straight MSM. In fact, it had the opposite effect. But, so too did higher levels of femininity. So, while the qualitative studies of straight MSM suggested that one way to resolve the seeming inconsistency between identity and behavior was through high levels of masculinity, this was not the case with my sample. The opposite was true. Masculinity was expected to function in a way that shields straight MSM from identity-related stress, by allowing straight MSM to draw on other aspects of masculinity in order to bring their identity into congruence. This relationship is likely so significant, as the stronger or more salient an identity is, the more frequently it is activated in social situations. Therefore there are a greater number of opportunities for one to receive reflected appraisals that do not match their identity standard, thus resulting in interruption of their identity process. When men who consider themselves to be very masculine continuously act

in ways that violate the tenets of acceptable masculinity, especially the expectation of heterosexuality that is entrenched therein, the increased negative self-feelings they experience are the result of the interruption of closely held identities.

Gay-identified men did rate themselves more highly on feminine traits than did straight men, further reaffirming the idea of multiple masculinities, the distinctions between these categories, and the subjugated nature of gay masculinity. Self-ascribed gay male identity already indicates nonconforming behavior therefore it follows that gay men would rank themselves as more feminine than their straight identified counterparts.

Sexuality and masculinity are multidimensional. One's sexual identity is one of the most important identities for many Americans (Dean 2014), and the results of this study speak to its importance. Although it is growing increasingly more popular, there is still relatively little research that looks at straight MSM. More research is needed that examines sexual identity and sexual behavior among men of color and women. This study illustrates well the complexity of the relationship between masculinity and sexuality. Perhaps its most significant contributions are that it highlights the need to incorporate social psychological frameworks into conversations about gender and sexuality, and the necessity of hypothesis testing when developing theories. Identity is not a single element of sexuality, as it is frequently treated by gender scholars. Rather it is an ongoing process of meaning-making, patterned behavior, and social forces that simultaneously influence and are influenced by the individual.

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APPENDIX

Item 1: Survey Information Sheet

Introduction:
You are invited to take part in a research study being conducted by Dr. Jane Sell, a researcher from Texas A&M University. The purpose of this form is to provide you information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research study.

What will I be asked to do?
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in a survey, answering a number of demographic questions, as well as questions about your *sexual orientation and behaviors*, social support networks, mental health outcomes, and masculinity. The survey will take no more than 15 minutes.
What are the risks involved in this study?
The risks associated with this study are minimal and are not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to.
Do I have to participate?
No. Your participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate or exit the survey session at any time.
Will I be compensated?
You will be compensated the amount you agreed upon when you entered into the survey.
Are there any costs to me?
Aside from your time, there are no costs to you.
Who will know about my participation in this research study?
This study is anonymous. You will not be asked for your name or any other personnel identifiers. No one will know which responses are yours. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any sort of report that might be published.
Whom do I contact with questions about the research?
If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Dr. Jane Sell, (979) 845-6120, j-sell@tamu.edu.
Whom do I contact about my rights as a research participant?
For questions about your rights as a research participant, or if you have questions, complaints, or concerns about the research, you may call the Texas A&M University Human Subjects Protection Program office at (979) 458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu.
STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDINGI agree to be in this study and know that I am not giving up any legal rights by signing this form. The procedures, risks, and benefits have been explained to me, and my questions have been answered. I know that new information about this research study will be provided to me as it becomes available. I can ask more questions if I want. A copy of this information sheet will be available to me. I have read and understood the information.

- ○ Yes, I would like to proceed to the survey. (1)
- ○ No, I do not wish to proceed. (2)

Item 2: Descriptive Survey Questions: Demographic Characteristics & Sorting Criteria

Do you consider yourself to be:

- ○ Male (1)
- ○ Female (2)
- ○ Transgender Male/Transgender Man (3)
- ○ Transgender Female/Transgender Woman (4)
- ○ Genderqueer/Gender Non-conforming (5)
- ○ Different Identity (6) _____
- ○ Prefer not to state (7)

What is your racial or ethnic category?

- ○ Black or African American (1)
- ○ White or European American or Anglo (2)
- ○ Hispanic or Latino/a (3)
- ○ Asian or Pacific Islander (4)
- ○ American Indian or Native American (5)
- ○ Other (6) _____

What is your age?

- ○ Under 18 years (1)
- ○ 18 to 24 years (2)
- ○ 25 to 34 years (3)
- ○ 35 to 44 years (4)
- ○ 45 to 54 years (5)
- ○ 55 to 65 years (6)
- ○ Over 65 years (7)

What is your marital status? Are you:

- Now married (1)
- Widowed (2)
- Divorced (3)
- Separated (4)
- Never Married (5)

What is your highest level of education?

- None (1)
- Elementary School (2)
- High School or GED (3)
- Associate's Degree (4)
- Bachelor's Degree (5)
- Master's Degree (6)
- Doctoral or Professional Degree (Ph.D, Ed.D., MD, JD, etc.) (7)

What was the approximate annual income from employment and from all other sources for all members of your household before taxes in 2016?

- Less than $20,000 (1)
- $20,000 to $29,999 (2)
- $30,000 to $39,999 (3)
- $40,000 to $49,999 (4)
- $50,000 to $59,999 (5)
- $60,000 to $69,999 (6)
- $70,000 to $79,999 (7)
- $80,000 to $89,999 (8)
- $90,000 to $99,999 (9)
- More than $100,000 (10)

Do you consider yourself to be:

- ○ Heterosexual or straight (1)
- ○ Homosexual or gay (2)
- ○ Bisexual (3)
- ○ Other (4) _____

Do you consider yourself to be:

- ○ Exclusively heterosexual (1)
- ○ Predominantly heterosexual, only incidentally homosexual (2)
- ○ Predominantly heterosexual, but more than incidentally homosexual (3)
- ○ Equally heterosexual and homosexual (4)
- ○ Predominantly homosexual, but more than incidentally heterosexual (5)
- ○ Predominantly homosexual, only incidentally heterosexual (6)
- ○ Exclusively homosexual (7)
- ○ Asexual- No sexual contacts or relations (8)
- ○ Other (9) _____

Item 3: Descriptive Survey Questions: Sexual History and Behavior
Have you ever engaged in consensual sexual behavior of any nature?

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

Since you were 18, have you ever consensually engaged in any of these behaviors (an opportunity to explain the context of these interactions will be provided):

- Watched another male undress/ strip
- Held or touched a male's sexual organ
- Male performed oral sex on you
- Performed oral sex on a male
- Masturbated with another male
- Had anal intercourse with a male partner

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

How frequently were these interactions kept anonymous (that is to say, how often do those not directly involved in these interactions [such as your family or friend group] know about them)?

- ○ Always (1)
- ○ Most of the time (2)
- ○ About half the time (3)
- ○ Sometimes (4)
- ○ Never (5)

Since you were 18, have you ever consensually engaged in any of these behaviors (an opportunity to explain the context of these interactions will be provided):

- Watched a female undress/ strip
- Touched a female's genital area
- Masturbated with a female partner
- Performed oral sex on a female

- Female performed oral sex on you
- Had vaginal intercourse

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

How frequently were these interactions kept anonymous (that is to say, how often do those not directly involved in these interactions [such as your family or friend group] know about them)?

- Always (1)
- Most of the time (2)
- About half the time (3)
- Sometimes (4)
- Never (5)

Item 4: Adapted Interpersonal Support Evaluation List Short Form (ISEL-12)

This scale is made up of a list of statements each of which may or may not be true about you. For each statement we would like you to select "True" if the statement is true about you or "False" if the statement is not true about you. You may find that many of the statements are neither clearly true nor clearly false. In these cases, try to decide quickly whether true or false is most closely descriptive of you.

	True (1)	False (2)
If I wanted to go on a trip for a day (for example to the beach, the country, or mountains), I would have a hard time finding someone to go with me. (1)	○	○
I feel that there is no one I can share my most private worries and fears with. (2)	○	○
If I were sick, I could easily find someone to help me with my daily chores. (3)	○	○
There is someone I can turn to for advice about handling problems with my family. (4)	○	○
If I decide one afternoon that I would like to go to a movie that evening, I know someone I can turn to. (5)	○	○
I don't often get invited to do things with others. (6)	○	○
If I had to go out of town for a few weeks, it would be difficult to find someone who would look after my house or apartment (the plants, pets, garden, etc.). (7)	○	○
If I wanted to have lunch with someone, I could easily find someone to join me. (8)	○	○
If I was stranded 10 miles from home, there is someone I could call who could come and get me. (9)	○	○
If I family crisis arose, it would be difficult to find someone who could give me good advice on how to handle it. (10)	○	○
If I needed some help in moving to a new house or apartment, I would have a hard time finding someone to help me. (11)	○	○

Item 5: Kaplan Longitudinal and Multigenerational Generational Survey (KLAMS) Measure of Negative Self-Feelings: Anxiety

Below is a list of questions dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Do you often get angry, annoyed, or upset? (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Are you often bothered by nervousness? (9)	○	○	○	○	○
Do you often bite your fingernails? (10)	○	○	○	○	○
Are you often bothered by bad dreams? (11)	○	○	○	○	○
Are you often bothered by pressures or pains in the head? (12)	○	○	○	○	○
Are you often troubled by your hands sweating so that they feel damp & clammy? (13)	○	○	○	○	○

Item 6: Kaplan Longitudinal and Multigenerational Generational Survey (KLAMS) Measure of Negative Self-Feelings: Depression

Below is a list of questions dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Do you wish you could be as happy as others seem to be? (1)	○	○	○	○	○
*Would you say that most of the time you feel in good spirits? (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Do you often lose track of what you were thinking? (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Do you often have difficulty keeping your mind on things? (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Do you often have trouble sitting still for a long time? (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Do you often have trouble getting to sleep or staying asleep? (6)	○	○	○	○	○
*Do you get a lot of fun out of life? (7)	○	○	○	○	○

Item 7: Kaplan Longitudinal and Multigenerational Generational Survey (KLAMS) Measure of Negative Self-Feelings: Self-Derogation

Below is a list of questions dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly disagree (9)	Somewhat disagree (10)	Neither agree nor disagree (11)	Somewhat agree (12)	Strongly agree (13)
All in all I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I certainly feel useless at times. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
At times I think I am no good at all. (5)	○	○	○	○	○
*I take a positive attitude toward myself. (6)	○	○	○	○	○
Do you often feel downcast and dejected? (7)	○	○	○	○	○
*On the whole, I am satisfied with myself. (8)	○	○	○	○	○
I wish I could have more respect for myself. (9)	○	○	○	○	○
I feel disgusted with myself. (10)	○	○	○	○	○
*I felt proud or good about some things I did during the past month. (11)	○	○	○	○	○
I feel that I do not have much to be proud of (12)	○	○	○	○	○

Item 8: Bem Sex Role Inventory Short Form (BSRI-12)
Rate yourself on each item, on a scale from 1 (never or almost never true) to 7 (almost always true), then press the button.

Item 9: Hypotheses and Results Summary Table

Hyp.	Table	Hypothesis	Fully Supported	Partially Supported	Not Supported
H1	2, 3	Social support is negatively correlated to measures of negative self-feelings.	**X**		
H1.1	4	Gay-identified men perceive having less social support than straight-identified men.			**X**
H1.2	4	Straight MSM perceive having less social support than straight-identified men who have only had heterosexual interactions.	**X**		
H2	5	The groups without any inconsistency between their identity and behavior report significantly less negative self-feelings, overall, than the group of straight MSM.	**X**		
H3	5	Gay-identified men report higher levels of negative self-feelings than straight-identified men.			**X**
H3.1	6	Straight MSM report higher levels of negative self-feelings than straight-identified men who have only engaged in heterosexual interactions.	**X**		
H4	2	There are significant differences in levels of masculinity and femininity between groups.	**X**		
H4.1	2	Straight MSM have significantly less variation within masculinity than both of the non-discrepant groups.			**X**
H4.1a	7	Straight MSM rate themselves as more masculine than men in the non-discrepant groups.			**X**
H4.1b	8	Straight MSM rate themselves as more masculine than gay-identified men.		**X+**	
H4.1c	8	Straight MSM rate themselves as more masculine than straight-identified men who have only engaged in heterosexual interactions.			**X**
H4.1d	9	Gay-identified men rank themselves as less masculine than straight-identified men.	**X**		
H4.2	2	Straight MSM have significantly less variation within femininity than both of the non-discrepant groups.		**X**	
H4.2a	7	Straight MSM rate themselves as less feminine than men in the non-discrepant groups.			**X**
H4.2b	8	Straight MSM rate themselves as less feminine than gay-identified men.	**X**		
H4.2c	8	Straight MSM rate themselves as less feminine than straight-identified men who have only engaged in heterosexual interactions.			**X***

Item 9 Continued: Hypotheses and Results Summary Table

Hyp.	Table	Hypothesis	Fully Supported	Partially Supported	Not Supported
H4.2d	9	Gay-identified men rate themselves as more feminine than straight-identified men.	**X**		
H5	2, 10	Strength of masculine and feminine identity is significantly related to levels of negative self-feelings for all groups.		**X+**	
H5.1	11, 12	Masculinity is positively related to negative self-feelings for men in both non-discrepant groups.			**X***
H5.1a	11	Masculinity is negatively related to negative self-feelings for straight MSM.			**X***
H5.2	11, 12	Femininity is negatively related to negative self-feelings for men in both non-discrepant groups.			**X**
H5.2a	11	Femininity is positively related to negative self-feelings for straight MSM.	**X**		
H6	2, 13	Straight MSM are more likely to keep their reported sexual interactions anonymous than members of the non-discrepant group.	**X**		
H6.1	14, 15	Anonymity is positively related to negative self-feelings for members of the non-discrepant groups.		**X**	
H6.2	14, 15	Anonymity is negatively related to negative self-feelings for straight MSM.			**X**

+ result is inconclusive as the finding is only marginally significant ($p<.10$)
*result is opposite of hypothesis