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Selfobject Needs, Homophobia, Heterosexism, Among Gay Men During Emerging Adulthood

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Abstract

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M.S., Walden University, 2009

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Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

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Abstract

This study was conducted to determine the associations between homophobia and heterosexism, psychodynamics of the subconscious mind, and life satisfaction among gay men during emerging adulthood. Although researchers have reported on the psychological distress associated with antigay oppression, limited research is available on the psychodynamics of young gay men in the United States, a place known for prevalent homophobia and heterosexism. Kohut's theory of self psychology and self object needs served as the theoretical foundation for the study. Selfobject needs, perceived homophobic and heterosexist discrimination, and life satisfaction were explored in a national sample of 118 gay men aged 18-25 years. Data were collected using the Selfobject Needs Inventory, Gay and Lesbian Oppressive Situation Inventory, and Satisfaction with Life Scale in a secure internet-based survey. Analysis of the data revealed significant and positive bivariate correlations between antigay oppression and elevated selfobject needs. Elevated selfobject needs were also related to psychodynamic protective reactions and maladjustment. The study results also revealed a significant negative correlation between antigay oppression and life satisfaction. The social change implications of this study relate to treatment planning and developing social programs that aim to decrease antigay oppression by informing mental health clinicians and the wider public about the inter-relationships between homophobia, heterosexism, selfobject needs of young gay men, and their life satisfaction.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the 118 young gay men who volunteered to provide detailed information about their life experiences. The study would not have been possible without their contributions. This dissertation is also dedicated to all young gay men and other sexual minorities who continue to face antigay oppression and the social and mental health consequences. By learning more about the unique psychological needs of gay men during emerging adulthood, psychologists and other social change advocates will have a greater chance of improving the life satisfaction, hope, and optimism among these individuals. I will continue to dedicate my professional efforts to improving society for young gay men and all sexual minorities.

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge everyone who made this dissertation possible through his or her encouragement, social support, mentoring, and friendship. This includes the many friends who patiently listened as I processed what I was learning and discovering.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to my dissertation committee. Dr. Ragsdale, my dissertation chair, provided incredible leadership, patience, mentoring, and insight. He not only educated and inspired me on psychology and research, but also on how best to address social change. He talked me through challenging times when the subject of this dissertation became very personal. I will always be in debt to Dr. Ragsdale for his contributions to this dissertation and my life. I also wish to acknowledge Dr. Mitchell Hicks, my second committee member. Dr. Hicks opened my eyes to the world of psychoanalysis in my first year of doctoral studies and provided invaluable mentoring as I traveled the journey into the work of Heinz Kohut and other psychoanalytic scholars. My professional path and personal life will continue to benefit from his mentoring. It was a true honor and privilege to have had the opportunity to work with Dr. Ragsdale and Dr. Hicks, two distinguished scholar practitioners.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the profound contributions my life partner, Scott Rimmer, provided to this dissertation. Scott was always there to provide unconditional support and encouragement throughout the dissertation process and my doctoral studies. He also provided his superior editing skills and spent many hours reviewing my manuscript. He also patiently listened as I tried to explain something new I had learned. I will never be able to thank him enough for his contributions.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Background of the Study

The psychodynamic factors associated with gay men are poorly understood. There are many reasons for this knowledge deficit, including the historical labeling of same-sex orientation as pathological and illegal, the subordinate status of gay men and other sexual minorities, and a lack of research focused on this topic (Murphy, 2008; Pryce, 2006). However, there is comparatively more research literature available that documents the homophobic and heterosexist environment in which gay boys and gay men live and the psychological distress associated with growing up in a stigmatizing and oppressive social environment (Almeida, Johnson, Corliss, Molnar, & Azrael, 2009; Lewis, Derlega, Griffin, & Krowinski, 2003).

Pryce (2006) argued that the limitation of research and a strong social bias against accurately reporting sexual orientation research has contributed to a decreased understanding of human sexuality and sexual minorities. Using a scale of zero to six, with zero indicating a strictly heterosexual orientation and six representing an exclusively gay orientation, Kinsey argued that human sexuality is not dichotomous but is represented by a range of sexual orientations. Kinsey concluded that 10% of males are exclusively gay (Pryce, 2006). McWhirter, Sanders, and Reinisch (1990), using Kinsey's data sample, concluded that 14% of males had exclusive, or at least more than incidental, same-sex experiences. Gonsiorek and Weinrich (1995) argued that due to the perceived social risk of disclosure for study participants, same-sex behavioral studies have historically

underestimated an accurate accounting of same-sex orientation and they suggested the current prevalence of exclusive same-sex orientation is in the range of 4-17%.

Using an average estimate of 10% for the prevalence of exclusive same-sex orientation among men and a current population estimate of 18 million men aged 18-25 in the United States (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2008), there are approximately 1.8 million gay men in this age group. This appears to indicate there is a large number of individuals for which there is limited psychological research available and this lack of information represents an important gap in the psychological literature. Research on this age group could improve the psychological knowledge base for the larger group of approximately 11 million adult gay men in the United States.

By considering the psychosocial symptoms reported by gay male adolescents, including depression, hopelessness, social isolation, and suicidality (Almeida et al., 2009), important questions can be raised about gay men during emerging adulthood. For example, how does the experience of being a sexual minority in an oppressive and discriminating environment impact an individual's psychological development during adolescence into early adulthood? How does this unique social status influence a young gay man's mental health and life satisfaction? These and other questions should be studied in order to improve the psychological knowledge base about young gay men and increase the capacity for psychologists and other mental health professionals to provide effective psychological services to this vulnerable population. This area of research could lead to significant social change by promoting the mental health of young gay men and

towards a greater understanding of the negative outcomes of homophobia and heterosexism.

There are risks associated with exploring sensitive psychological and social issues including the research question proposed for this dissertation. O'Neil (2004) argued that social change often leads to a focus on individuals rather than social systems. Previous psychological studies about gay men have focused on internalized homophobia and psychological distress associated with homophobia (Aquinaldo, 2008; Lewis, Derlega Griffin; & Syzmanski, 2009). However, these studies have not explored the psychodynamics associated with anti-gay oppression and how this information might be used to promote mental health and decrease oppression.

The aim of this dissertation was to promote the mental health of young gay men by directly addressing the psychodynamic impact of homophobic and heterosexist oppression. Furthermore, I aimed to reveal information about possible long-term psychological impacts of discrimination and oppression on young gay men, and to report those findings within the social context of homophobia and heterosexism.

Problem Statement

Understanding that young gay men experience social and psychological distress caused by homophobia and heterosexism is not the same as understanding the impact of antigay oppression on the subconscious mind or psychodynamics of young gay men. The research for this study focused on the potential association of the psychodynamics of gay men during emerging adulthood and the social constructs of homophobia and heterosexism. Specifically, in this study, I explored the associations between age,

ethnicity, and perceived discrimination and the self psychology construct of selfobject needs of young gay men. As defined by Kohut (1991), selfobject needs are subconscious developmental requirements that exist throughout our lives and include the needs to idealize other people, to be recognized for our accomplishments, and to be included in interpersonal relationships. In addition, I explored the association between life satisfaction and selfobject needs. Perceived discrimination was measured with the Gay and Lesbian Oppressive Situations Inventory-Frequency (GALSOI-F) (Highlen, Bean, & Sampson, 2000), self psychological needs with the Selfobject Needs Inventory (SONI) (Banai, Mikulincer, & Shaver, 2005), and life satisfaction was assessed with the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) (Corigan, 2000).

The Nature of the Study

The problem statement was addressed through a quantitative nonexperimental design utilizing a survey instrument. The survey was fielded through a private website on the internet in order to secure a study sample of young gay men who live throughout the U.S. The study participants were recruited through informational notices placed on gay and gay-friendly websites including www.gay.com, www.craigslist.org, and www.yahoo.com.

The following research question was explored: What are the associations between perceived homophobic and heterosexist discrimination, selfobject needs, and life satisfaction among gay men during emerging adulthood? The following null hypotheses were tested:

Hypothesis #1. There is no significant difference among gay men aged 18-25 who report higher levels of perceived discrimination, as measured by the GALOSI-F, and hunger for or denial of selfobject needs, as measured by the SONI.

Hypothesis #2. There is no significant difference among gay men aged 18-25 from different ethnic groups who report a similar frequency of perceived discrimination, as measured by the GALOSI-F, and hunger for or denial of selfobject needs, as measured by the SONI.

Hypothesis #3: There is no significant difference among gay men aged 18-25 who report lower satisfaction with life scores, as measured by the SWLS, and hunger for or denial of selfobject needs, as measured by the SONI.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore the selfobject needs among gay men in the emerging adulthood phase of life who have experienced homophobia and heterosexism. Study participants were assessed on seven subscale scores of the SONI that included the following measures: overall hunger for selfobject needs, overall denial for selfobject needs, need for idealization, need for mirroring, need for twinship, avoidance of idealization and twinship needs, and avoidance of mirroring needs. It should be noted that these seven selfobject needs align with Kohut's three developmental axes of idealization, grandiosity, and ego-connectedness (Kohut, 1971, 1977, 1984). Kohut's psychodynamic constructs were researched in association with the variables of perceived discrimination, age, ethnicity, and life satisfaction.

This study was one of the first examinations of the psychodynamics among young gay men who are exposed to oppression and discrimination. As such, this study partially fills an important gap in the psychological research on gay men during emerging adulthood.

Theoretical Definitions

The study was based on Kohut's theory of self psychology. As described by Kohut (1984), people will experience themselves as a cohesive unit with connections to their past and an optimistic view of the future, but only if their environment is experienced as positively responsive to their selfobject needs. The selfobject, a central component of Kohut's theory, represents an object that is located external to an individual but is experienced as part of the self (Kohut, 1991). In other words, the self needs individuals and other objects that can accurately reflect and accept one's inner self. Traditional Western concepts define the self as the center of one's universe and the core of the personality (Kohut, 1991). Internalized selfobjects develop when a person interacts with people, pets, art, and other objects of interest, idealization, and passion (Kohut, 1987a). When selfobject needs are not met, psychological maladjustment or protective reactions can occur, including the lowering of one's self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and/or hostility (Kohut, 1977, 1984).

Kohut posited that the self develops along three dimensions: the idealization, grandiosity, and ego connectedness axes. He identified specific selfobject needs for each axes, including idealization, mirroring, and twinship (Kohut, 1991). These are the selfobject needs that were measured in this study.

The study also used the frameworks of social dominance and system justification theories to explore the prevalence of homophobia and heterosexism in the U.S. These theories provide a social construct for explaining anti-gay oppression and social inequality. Social dominance is maintained when individuals adhere to discriminatory ideologies and social myths about sexual and other minorities (Poteat, Espelage, & Green, 2007). By exploring oppression in depth using the seven subscales and the total score of the GALOSI-F, I elucidated information about potential social change strategies to reduce homophobia and heterosexism.

Technical Terminology and Jargon

The following terminology and jargon were used throughout this dissertation:

Emerging adulthood was used to refer to young gay men aged 18-25. It refers to a developmental period that combines late adolescence and early adulthood.

Gay refers to men with exclusive same-sex orientation. Although this terminology is frequently used in a broader context to define gay men, lesbian, bisexual, queer, and questioning individuals (LGBTQQ), for the purposes of this dissertation, the term gay was limited to men with same-sex orientation.

Gay friendly refers to organizations and other resources that specifically serve the social and other cultural needs of sexual minorities. For the purposes of this study, gay friendly refered to resources dedicated to gay men.

Heterosexism is defined as the societal-level ideologies and institutionalized oppression of nonheterosexual people (Herek, 2000).

Homosexuality refers to same-sex orientation but will only be used in a historical context considering the negative pathological connotation of this term.

Homophobia is defined as individual-level antigay attitudes and behaviors (Herek, 2000).

Object is a term used in self psychology and object relations to refer to a person or element that is external to the self (Kohut, 1971).

Self is defined as a component of the mind that exists throughout one's lifetime, and is the center of ambitions, goals, skills, and talents (Kohut, 1971).

Selfobject refers to an external object that is internalized and experienced as part of the self (Kohut, 1971).

Sexual minority refers to gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning individuals and was used to represent all these groups in this dissertation. This term was used in place of the acronym LGBTQQ to improve readability and was not intended to represent a dismissal or subordination of any sexual minority group(s).

Assumptions and Limitations

The most important assumption of this study was that participants answered the survey instrument questions honestly and to the best of their ability and that the anonymous nature of the internet-based survey improved response accuracy. In addition, I assumed that the willingness of participants to complete the survey did not bias the study results. I also reasoned that participants accurately reflected their sexual orientation when deciding to complete the survey instrument and self identify as a gay man. Finally, I assumed that the GALOSI-F, SONI, and SWLS psychometric instruments accurately

measured the variables identified for this study. Specifically, the SONI and SWLS have not been previously tested on gay men aged 18-25.

The results of this study are limited to gay men aged 18-25 living in the U.S. and should not be generalized to other sexual minorities or gay men from different age groups or from other countries.

Significance of the Study

This study contributed to the understanding of the subconscious dynamics of young gay men and potential associations with homophobia and heterosexism. This study addressed a significant gap in the psychological literature. Utilizing the theoretical framework of Kohut's self psychology and selfobject needs, a developmental and metapsychological theory, the study results could improve how psychologists and other mental health professionals assess and treat the psychological impact of homophobia and heterosexism. Additionally, the study results will likely enhance their overall understanding of the psychodynamics of young gay men.

A majority of research conducted on gay men has focused on psychopathology, internalized homophobia and heterosexism, and individual and community-level responses to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. By identifying the selfobject needs of young gay men, this study contributes to the gay community's understanding of the psychological needs of young gay men and how service organizations can address these needs. Specifically, information about the selfobject needs of gay men should be used in psychological and community initiatives aimed at promoting mental health, improving social support, and descreasing high risk behaviors that can lead to HIV infection. In

addition, the study may expand the broader society's understanding of the psychological impact of homophobia and heterosexism. All of these outcomes from the study should contribute to positive social change for gay men and other sexual minorities.

Summary

In this study, I explored the associations between selfobject needs, as defined in Kohut's theory of self psychology, and homophobia and heterosexism experienced by gay men during emerging adulthood. In addition, I studied the associations between selfobject needs and age, ethnicity, and satisfaction with life and contributed to the scarcity of psychological research on young gay men. I contributed to social change by improving the psychological knowledge about young gay men during emerging adulthood and by adding to the understanding of the impact of homophobia and heterosexism.

In chapter 2, I summarize the literature that was reviewed for the study and include information on the available research on object relations, Kohut's self psychology, selfobject needs, and the prevalence and impact of homophobia and heterosexism on sexual minority youth. In chapter 3, I describe the research methods used for this study, and in chapter 4, I explore the results of the study. Finally, in chapter 5, I provide an overview of the study, interpretation of the study findings, and implications for social change.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Background

Although the theory of self psychology dates back over 40 years, there is limited research available on how this psychological theory relates to the mental health and well-being of gay men. In this literature review, I establish the existing gap in research on the unique psychosocial factors for gay men during late adolescence and early adulthood, and associations with homophobia and heterosexism. Additionally, I explore how the theory of self psychology can provide an important foundation for studying the impact of homophobic discrimination and oppression on the development of the self for gay men during emerging adulthood. Information is included in this chapter on the evolution of the theories of object relations and self psychology, the contemporary views of these theories, and how they relate to psychological development in adolescence and young adulthood. The work of Heinz Kohut provided the central theoretical framework for this review.

In this chapter, I will review available research on homophobia and heterosexism in the United States and the social stigmatization of young gay men aged 18-25. I will demonstrate that homophobia and heterosexism continue to be prevalent and socially acceptable. Research on social domination theory and the maintenance of the status quo will be reviewed to determine why homophobia continues to be prevalent in the U.S. Research on the psychological outcomes associated with homophobia will also be explored.

The search for literature was conducted primarily through Walden University's electronic research databases, specifically Academic Search Premier, PsycINFO, PsycBOOKS, PsycARTICLES, and GLBT Life in Full Text. In addition, electronic and book resources were reviewed and obtained through the Portland State University library in Portland, Oregon. Keywords used for the search included *Heinz Kohut*, *self psychology*, *object relations*, *gay youth*, *adolescents*, *gay men*, *homosexual, homophobia*, *heterosexism*, *resilience*, and *social dominance*. Of note, a search with the keyword *adolescents* retrieved over 14,600 peer-reviewed journal articles but a search using both keywords *gay* and *adolescents* retrieved only 71 journal articles. A search using the keywords *self psychology* secured over 20,000 peer-reviewed journal articles but a search using both the keywords *self psychology* and *gay men* retrieved just 22 journal articles, a majority of which were not applicable to this dissertation. For example, six articles focused on psychotherapeutic strategies, three focused on issues associated with HIV, two reported on studies related to gay men and body image, and one article reported about being gay and having a Christian identity. A search using both the keywords *adolescents* and *homophobia* retrieved only 10 articles related to gay males. A search using the keyword *object relations* secured over 1,600 entries but adding the keyword *gay* reduced the entries to 12. A majority of these articles were also not applicable to this dissertation. For example, two articles focused on the case study of a boy with two mothers, two studied Fairbairnian object relations and a community's response to HIV, one studied object relations between gay clients and a gay therapist, and one article discussed lesbian relationships.

Object Relations and Self Psychology

A History of Object Relations

In psychoanalysis, object relations refer to relationships between a *self* and another person, or the *object*. The experience of the self includes an external component, or what the self experiences as real about the other, and an internal component described as what the self perceives and fantasizes internally (Bacal & Newman, 1990). It has been argued that the development of object relations theory dates back to the work of Freud and that most schools of psychoanalysis accepted the importance of object relations (Rogers, 1991, pp. 2 – 5). There has been no consensus as to the contributions of individual object relations theorists, but the theories may be grouped into two major categories: drive oriented and person oriented. The following summary, based on the work of Bacal and Newman, will provide information on object relations theorists and their major contributions to object relations theory.

Joseph Breuer and Sigmund Freud founded the school of psychoanalysis in the late 19th century based on instinctual drive theory. Freud is reported to have recognized the importance of object relations but remained committed to his theoretical foundation that psychopathology developed out of a child's instinctual *phantasy* life.

Melanie Klein was considered to be a transitional theorist whose object relations theory retained and extended Freud's focus on instinctual drives and fantasies about objects. In comparison, Ian Suttie was considered the most influential British object

relations theorist and he focused on the innate human need for companionship and relatedness.

Harry Stack Sullivan was an American psychoanalyst who had a primary focus on interpersonal relationships and emphasized human development as a two-person system and deemphasized the impact of drives and instincts. Otto Kernberg and Heinrich Racker were American clinicians who emphasized the pathology of internal object relations and the distorting impact on the superego and ego that ultimately created disturbed external object relations.

Margaret Mahler was a British theorist who formulated her object relations views based on psychoanalytic drive and ego development and retained Freud's concept of primary narcissism. Alice and Michael Balint were Hungarian psychoanalysts who developed the concept of the *basic fault,* the results of a deficiency in a two-person relationship in which there is a discrepancy between an infant's needs and the capacity of the people in the child's environment to meet these needs.

Ronald Fairbairn was a British psychoanalyst who came closer than all British object relations theorists to developing an object relations theory marking a major departure from the Freudian instinctual drive framework and redefined libido as object seeking rather than pleasure-seeking, relational rather than self indulgent (Stolorow, Orange, & Atwood, 2001);

D.W. Winnicott focused on the environmental or external factors that contributed to an infant's development, differentiated his theory from Freudian psychoanalysis, and provided evidence that he had an early understanding of the functions of self object

relations similar to Heinz Kohut. John Bowlby, a British psychoanalyst, developed attachment theory as the essential nature of the infant and mother relationship, emphasized the child's relationship with the object, and considered attachment theory to be a variant of object relations theory.

This summary is not meant to diminish the importance of over 40 years of psychoanalytic theoretical evolution but is intended to highlight the various theorists and theoretical orientations that contributed to the development of object relations theory.

Self Psychology

In the 1970s, Heinz Kohut, an Austrian born American psychoanalyst, integrated earlier work in object relations theory and psychoanalysis into the theory of *self psychology* and positioned his theory as an alternative to traditional Freudian psychoanalysis. He constructed self psychology as a distinct metapsychology theory of development and psychological treatment (Bacal & Newman, 1990, p.225). Kohut moved away from the Freudian focus on unconscious drives and the psychic structures of the id, ego, and superego, and redefined the self as part of the mental apparatus, the center of a person's psychological universe (Kohut, 1971). In self psychology, the self is further defined as a component of the mind that is cohesive, exists throughout an individual's lifetime, and is the center of ambitions, goals, skills, and talents and the tensions that develop between these various elements (Kohut, 1991, p.452). It is important to reinforce the critical functions the self plays in Kohut's theory as it is described in such profound terms as the center of one's psychological universe and center of experiential processes.

The selfobject is perhaps the most important concept in self psychology and represents an object that is located external to an individual but is experienced as part of the self (Kohut, 1991). The selfobject is the necessary precondition for the development of the self (Wolf, 1989). Selfobjects describe the interactions of daily living that were previously defined in psychoanalysis by libidinal energy and interagency conflict (Villela-Minnerly, 1991). Internalized and experienced selfobjects become a part of the self and an individual perceives them with the same level of control he or she has over his or her body and mind. Selfobjects are not experienced as controlling the other in the self-selfobject dyad but are interrelated experiences necessary for healthy development (Kohut, 1991, p. 457). Kohut posited that the progression to mature self-selfobject relatedness resulted from both positive experiences and nontraumatic selfobject failures called transmuting internalizations (Kohut, 1991). Few other psychologists gave similar weight to the importance of immediately perceived experiences (Wolfe, 1989). Kohut considered that healthy psychological development lead to mature adults who placed less importance on selfobjects and gained the capacity to be the object for other individuals (Kohut, 1977). However, significant deficits in selfobject needs during important developmental stages were considered harmful and could contribute to psychopathology and a noncohesive or fractured self (Kohut, 1977).

Bacal and Newman (1990, pp. 228-229) differentiated Kohut's self psychology from classical Freudian psychoanalysis based on five specific characteristics. These include the elimination of instinctual drives as motivation, a paradigm shift from one body to multiple body psychology, the significance of selfobject relationships throughout

one's life, and the recognition of the selfobject relationships as a foundation for psychological development and psychoanalytic therapy. Kohut's theory of self psychology is aligned with these characteristics.

Masek (1986) argued that Kohut's self psychology resulted in a profound paradigm shift in psychoanalysis and had, perhaps, the most significant impact on classical psychoanalysis since the period following the founding of psychoanalysis by Breuer and Freud. Kohut's seminal work continues to impact modern psychoanalysis and psychotherapy and is considered an important psychotherapeutic approach. However, Bacal and Newman (1990, p. 227) reflected that Kohut did not consider his work to have benefited from the contributions of other object relations theorists. They posited that Kohut was concerned earlier theorists placed too much emphasis on interpersonal relationships rather than on intrapsychic factors. This bias could have been the result of Kohut's earlier connections to the traditional Cartesian one mind tradition of Freudian psychoanalysis compared to more contemporary views that emphasize postCartesian two mind interrelatedness (Stolorow, Atwood, & Orange, 1999). Additionally, some early object relations theorists did not completely separate their theories from the instinctual drive focus used by Freud (Bacal & Newman, 1991, p.137).

More recently, the relational or interpersonal foundation of Kohut's self psychology has been argued by Son (2006), who proposed that the duality of the self-selfobject relationship, the lifelong mutual dependency on selfobjects, and the requirement of empathy for the development and maintenance of a healthy self all demonstrate the interpersonal nature of self psychology and object relations.

Contemporary self psychologists recognize the relational and contextual nature of selfobjects as vital to the understanding of object relations. Self experience is, by its nature, a function of feeling the responsiveness of other people within one's social network (Stolorow et al., 1999). From these postulations, self psychology is strengthened by its relational focus. However, Kohut's self psychology falls short of a more modern description of an interpersonal psychology that goes beyond a two-person or selfobject orientation to a contextual psychology in which experiential Worlds mutually interact with intersubjective fields (Stolorow et al., 2001).

According to Kohut (1984, p. 52), the self views the internal and external environment as a combination of "I", "You", and "I-You" experiences. The "I-You" experiences are defined as the selfobjects in self psychology. *Objects* are the focus of external interest and can be other people, pursuits of interest, pets, art, or other things in an individual's environment (Kohut, 1987b, p. 5). Kohut clarified that traditional psychoanalysis explores the self as it desires the object, but self psychology focuses on the self, as it needs a selfobject. Kohut (1984) provided an eloquent definition of self-selfobject relationships in *How Does Analysis Cure?*

> Throughout his life a person will experience himself as a cohesive harmonious firm unit in time and space, connected with his past and pointing meaningfully into a creative-productive future, [but] only as long as, at each stage in his life, he experiences certain representations of his human surroundings as joyfully responding to him, as available to him as sources of idealized strength and calmness, as being silently present but in essence like him, and, at any rate, able

> to grasp his inner life more or less accurately so that their responses are attuned to his needs and allow him to grasp their inner life when his is in need of sustenance. (p. 52)

Important points reinforced in Kohut's definition of selfobject relationships are that they are primary components of psychological experience throughout one's life and are central to both psychological health and psychopathology. Kohut's definition is focused solely on individual internal psychological processes.

Empathy, a central element of Kohut's clinical work, is described as a developmental path that leads from the archaic to mature selfobjects and from understanding to explaining (Klugman, 2001; Kohut, 1984). The result of the maturing of self-selfobjects is that one person can experience the inner life of another person and Kohut argued that this action is central to both mental health and the healing process in psychoanalytic therapy (Kohut, 1984).

Kohut (1987a) also redefined narcissism as a normal developmental experience rather than a defensive or pathological condition as typically represented in Freudian concepts of ego development. He argued that healthy narcissism supports the consolidation of a cohesive self, provides a sense of identity and permanence, and promotes the actualization of an individual's talents and skills (Kohut, 1987a). However, when object relations transitions from a narcissistic self orientation to an *other* orientation, the selfobject is redefined as object love (Kohut, 1991, p. 454). Kohut (1984, p. 53) also suggested that all forms of psychopathology result from defects in the structure of the self or distortions and weaknesses of the self. This is also referred to as

fragmentation of the self that results from disturbances in self-selfobject relationships during childhood and adolescence.

Kohut described how the cohesive self develops along three axes: the grandiosity axis, the idealization axis, and the alter ego-connectedness axis. The grandiosity axis is where a person's capacity to maintain a healthy and stable self-esteem, ambitions, and dedication to productive tasks develop while the idealization axis is where an individual develops goal-setting values. The alter ego-consciousness axis is where an individual develops the capacity to establish intimate relationships, communicate feelings, and join larger groups (Kohut, 1971, 1977, 1984).

Kohut proposed that three critical selfobject needs relate directly to the three axis of the development of the self (see Figure 1). The selfobject need to be admired is supported by mirroring, the need to be established and merged with an ideal image of significant others is supported by the idealization need, and the need to feel similar and be included by others is supported by the twinship selfobject need (Kohut, 1971, 1977, 1984).

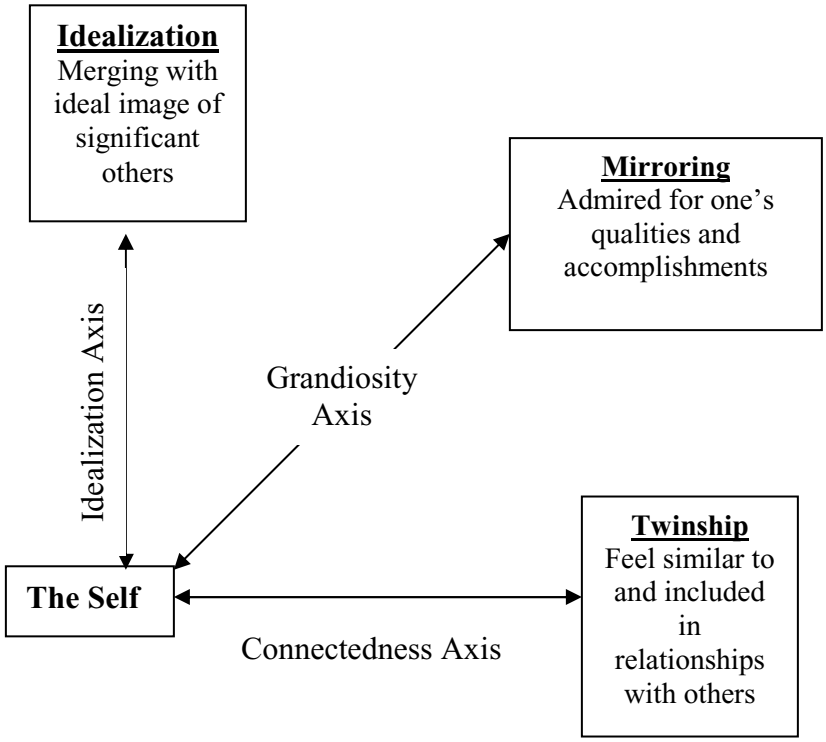

Figure 1. Model of Kohut's three developmental axes of the self and the associated selfobject needs. Created by author based on information in "Selfobject Needs in Kohut's Self Psychology," by E. Banai, M. Mikulincer, and P. Shaver, 2005, *Psychoanalytic Psychology, 22*, pp. 225-226.

The Self During Adolescence and Young Adulthood

Selfobject needs develop sequentially from infancy to early adulthood, with the alter ego/connectedness needs being the primary focus of the self during adolescence through early adulthood (Shreve & Kunkel, 1991). As a result of maturing physiological drives and changing sociocultural expectations, the assertive and ideal components of the self are placed at risk during adolescence (Kohut, 1978). In addition, the stress placed on the self during adolescence may reactivate childhood fears of disintegration and leads to the need and search for support systems (Kohut).

Peers play a critical support role for each other during adolescence by supporting the important selfobject need of the alter ego by reflecting the endangered self or providing a sense of increased security through the mutual contact with a similar other. Additionally, adolescent peers can help increase feelings of cohesion of the self through empathy and sharing the same ideals (Marcia, 1994, pp. 76-77). In many western, industrialized societies a major task of adolescence is differentiation, and to a degree separation, from parents/guardians. By experimenting with different roles and changing parental selfobject experiences, adolescents and young adults redefine parental selfobject relationships (Marcia).

Adolescence is also generally a time during which individuals explore peer love relationships. Kohut (1987b, pp. 20-21) wrote extensively on object love and adolescent love relationships. He reported that these relationships are typically aligned with narcissistic elements more than mature love relationships. Kohut argued that being in love involves an overestimation of the love object that is caused by a self imagery that is placed on the loved individual. When love relationships end, the self does not perceive a loss of the object but experiences a loss of part of the psychological self. Kohut described two lines of development associated with love objects: a subject-bound narcissism in which the self needs other people to maintain itself or idealize; and an object-bound narcissism in which the self needs the overestimated object to attach oneself to through mirroring. Considering Kohut's construct of love relationships, it is not surprising that adolescence and young adulthood is frequently filled with emotionally charged romantic explorations. For gay males and other sexual minorities this period of life may be further

complicated by the additional complexities of secret attractions, unfamiliar sexual orientation of love objects that conflict with the societal emphasis on heterosexual relationships, and experiencing relationships in isolation from families and peers.

If selfobject transitions to the different developmental phases of the self are hindered and unsuccessfully achieved, the self becomes fixated on earlier phases resulting in an inability to meet one's psychological needs and can lead to dissatisfaction and low self-esteem (Shreve & Kunkel, 1991). This dynamic can lead an individual to experience shame that includes a painful awareness of oneself as an object of observation, associating this awareness with self-perceived self deficits, anticipating a negative reaction from others, and wishing to withdraw from the situation (Shreve & Kunkel). These authors also described secondary shame that occurs when individuals have a painful awareness of their tendency to experience shame. This can result in shyness, grandiosity, and/or social withdrawal. Shame focuses on the self, results in a conflict with internalized parental ideals, and a fear of abandonment. In contrast, guilt develops from a concept of wrongdoing and focuses on the transgression rather than the self (Shreve & Kunkel).

Taking into consideration the potential for decreased peer support and homophobic discrimination experienced by gay male adolescents and gay young men, it would not be surprising to find shame as a common affect among this vulnerable population. An individual experiencing shame would likely have challenges sufficiently meeting selfobject needs along the idealization, grandiosity, and/or alter-ego/connectedness developmental axes.

Making changes in the parent/child relationship is a complicated task considering adolescents need to maintain an intimate relationship with families for emotional support and a source for self-esteem (Marcia, 1994, p. 77). Considering many young adults continue to rely on parental support for college, housing, and other needs, it is reasonable to conclude that an adolescent or young adult without a supportive family faces a daunting task of meeting selfobject needs during adolescence and early adulthood. In adolescence and young adulthood, peers provide critical selfobject functions, including the maintenance of self-esteem, strengthening of the self, and establishing ideals for future life choices, including education, careers, and intimate relationships (Kohut, 1987c, pp. 36-37). Again, gay males during emerging adulthood might frequently face a major challenge in establishing and maintaining healthy selfobject connections if they do not have or create an empathetic and supportive network of peers.

Homophobia and Heterosexism

History of Homophobia and Heterosexism.

Historically, actions within the psychological community have lead to stigmatizing homosexuality and labeling individuals with same-sex orientations as pathological. In the first edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), published in 1952, homosexuality was categorized as a sociopathic personality disorder. In 1968 it was reclassified as a sexual deviation and in 1980 was labeled as ego-dystonic homosexuality (Goldfried, 2001). It has only been 22 years since all references to homosexuality were removed as a diagnostic category in the DSM (Murphy, 2008). It is important to note that Freud has been misconstrued as an advocate

of homophobia when in fact he unambiguously concluded that homosexuality was not a pathological condition (Robinson, 2000). In fact, Robinson argued that Freud concluded pathology could occur if natural homosexual drives were repressed but not all psychoanalysts shared Freud's views and many used his name to justify their efforts to pathologize homosexuality.

In a proactive move, the American Psychological Association (APA) established a position against homosexual bias in 1975 and established the Committee on Lesbian and Gay Concerns in 1980 (Goldfried). That committee reported in 1991 that 84% of psychologists responding to a survey indicated they knew of gay and lesbian individuals who had been harmed by psychotherapy (Goldfried).

The term *homophobia* was coined by psychologist George Weinberg in the late 1960s and first appeared in print in 1969 (Herek, 2000). During this same time period, the term *heterosexism* began to be used to define a social system that placed homosexuality as inferior to heterosexuality (Swim, Johnston, & Pearson, 2009). Herek argued that the term *sexual prejudice* should replace homophobia considering it aligns with the study of other forms of prejudice and he suggested that homophobia is a value-laden word and, perhaps, limits a full exploration of antigay bias. However, this review of the literature revealed that nearly all psychology researchers continue to use the term homophobia to describe antigay prejudice and heterosexism to describe the subordination of psychological, legal, moral, and social and civil liberties for sexual minorities by the social heterosexual majority.

Homophobia, both explicit and implicit, has been present throughout recent social, medical, and psychology history in the U.S. As early as 1882, an American neurologist recommended extensive bicycle riding as a treatment for homosexuality. In 1929 physician John Meagher differentiated between congenital and acquired homosexuality and labeled homosexuals as "indulgent male inverts" aligning with Freud's concept of inversion; and during the following years, numerous medical professionals searched for and experimented with cures for homosexuality, many of which were extremely harmful (Murphy, 2008). Homosexuality was illegal in many states up until the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003) and abolished all anti-sodomy laws (Human Rights Campaign, 2008 [HRC]).

In recent years, there has been improvement in the attitudes of psychologists about sexual minorities. However, in a recent survey, 58% of psychologists reported using a gay affirmative therapeutic approach and 20% still considered homosexuality to be a mental health disorder (Kilgore, Sideman, Kiran, Baca, & Bohanske, 2005). There is a small group of psychologists who continue to promote conversion or reparative therapy even against the admonitions of the APA (Kilgore et al.). Unfortunately, in 2004 and 2006, two past presidents of the APA defended the right of psychologists to offer sexual orientation conversion therapy even though there is no empirical evidence supporting this therapeutic approach (Murphy, 2008). The current recommendation by the APA for the psychological treatment of sexual minorities is a gay affirmative approach (APA, 2000). This approach validates that a sexual minority identity is equally positive as a heterosexual identity and that the unique sociocultural and strength factors of a sexual

minority client should be considered (Crisp & McCave, 2007). Although this approach is an improvement to past harmful approaches used by the psychological community, in many ways affirmative therapy merely represents the baseline cultural awareness that is provided to heterosexual patients from varying cultures. In other words, providing an accepting, nonjudgmental, and positive attitude toward an individual should be the starting point of building rapport with all patients. Affirmative therapy does not appear to address the inner psychological dynamics and uniqueness of being a gay man or other sexual minority.

Homophobia and Public Attitudes

The Gallup Poll has tracked public attitudes that can be used as a measure of homophobia and heterosexism in the U.S. As recently as 2003, 50% of survey respondents indicated that same-sex relations should be legal, but this percentage increased to 59% in 2007 (Hicks & Lee, 2006; Savin-Williams, 2008). Savin-Williams argued that these poll results demonstrate a significant increase in positive public opinion, but a closer look at the survey data might indicate otherwise. According to Saad (2007), 57% of respondents answered yes to the question, “Do you feel that homosexuality should be considered an acceptable alternative lifestyle or not?” In the same Gallup Poll conducted in May of 2007, 47% of respondents indicated that same-sex relations are morally acceptable and 49% responded that same-sex relations are immoral. Approximately 46% of respondents supported same-sex marriage and 53% did not (Saad). Finally, Saad described that the 2007 poll results document that 42% of

Americans believe that individuals are born with same-sex orientation and 56% believe homosexuality cannot be changed (Saad).

Utilizing a random dialing response public opinion survey method, Herek (2002) explored the differences in attitudes about gay men and lesbians among 1,335 heterosexual men and women. Herek reported that heterosexual women had more favorable attitudes toward sexual minorities and were more likely to support employment and adoption rights. In contrast, heterosexual men reacted more negatively to gay men than lesbians in questions about same-sex relationships and adoption rights and were more likely to consider gay men mentally ill or perceive them as child molesters. One possible explanation for this result is that heterosexual men develop and typically define themselves within the socially accepted standards of masculinity or the masculine-feminine polarized attributes assigned to men and women. In other words, heterosexual men may perceive gay men as a threat to their self-identity and socially defined role (Theodore & Basow, 2000). Overall, Herek reported that both heterosexual men and women had more negative attitudes about gay men than lesbians.

These survey results indicated a polarized social construct in which similar percentages of Americans either recognize or do not recognize the morality of same-sex orientation and do or do not support full equal rights for sexual minority populations. These attitudes are likely to be translated into implicit and explicit, or at the least an acceptance of, homophobic messages by a large percentage of Americans. Furthermore, the survey results appear to indicate that while a majority of Americans are accepting of

the concept of a same-sex orientation, a majority of Americans consider same-sex relations immoral.

Aguinaldo (2008) argued that the term homophobia is individualistic and locates gay oppression in the psychologies of individuals rather than direct the focus on the broader social problem. This author concluded that the concept of internalized homophobia has been used as a way of shifting the focus of gay oppression onto the oppressed rather than the oppressors and directs the solution to the oppression on the individual rather than on to society.

Researchers have reported that higher levels of homophobia exist among individuals who are older, achieved lower levels of education, and who live in the South or Midwest regions of the United States. (Herek, 2000). Living in rural areas, being a member of a fundamentalist religious organization, and frequently attending religious services have all been associated with higher rates of homophobia (Herek). Based on a study with 85 undergraduate male college students, Theodore and Basow (2000) noted that a male's belief in the importance of demonstrating traditional masculine attributes was a predictor of homophobia. These researchers also found that males with a negative self-perception of their own masculine attributes, or an internal conflict between socially accepted gender roles and the self-perception of their masculinity, were most likely to have homophobic attitudes. Once again, this is not a surprising finding considering that all boys grow up in a heterosexist social environment with strict standards related to acceptable masculine attributes.

Homophobia and Gay Youth

Today's sexual minority youth are exposed to a high level of homophobia at school, in their communities, religious institutions, and at home. Russell (2002) argued that prior to the mid-1990s, issues related to sexual minorities were relatively hidden and not discussed in public forums, including the media. However, Russell posited that recent generations of sexual minority youth experience an unusual level of homophobia as the debates regarding same-sex marriage, employment and housing nondiscrimination, the Mathew Sheppard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, and the Don't Ask Don't Tell (DADT) policy are broadcast through numerous media outlets. These debates appear more polarized and inclusive of hate speech against sexual minorities than in the years before the 24-hour news cycle and Internet-based blogs. Although major advances have been made in making racial, ethnic, and gender discrimination socially unacceptable in the media, the gay population is perhaps one of the last groups that is still vulnerable to widespread socially sanctioned stigmatization (Clark, 2006). For example, On September 22, 2009, Oklahoma Senator Tom Coburn's chief of staff was videotaped at a conference making an inflammatory presentation about how homosexuality is inflicted on people, that homosexuality is caused by pornography, and that 10-12 year old boys have less tolerance for homosexuals than any other group because they don't want to be that way (Washington Monthly, 2009). These homophobic statements moved well beyond the initial audience as the national media covered the story.

On October 7, 2009, U.S. Representative Louie Gomert of Texas delivered a homophobic diatribe on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives defending DADT,

and arguing against the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act using biased and discrminatory lanaguage. The Representative claimed that passage of the Act would lead to legalization of necrophilia, pedophilia, and bestiality. In other words, he equated same-sex orientation with pathological and illegal behaviors (Think Progress, 2009). Once again, the media amplified the impact of these stigmatizing messages by airing the extreme ideological and false information without providing balanced and evidence-based information.

In addition to facing homophobic messages in the broader social context of their lives, sexual minority youth frequently experience verbal and physical homophobia at school. According to the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network's (2008 [GLSEN]) 2007 National School Climate Survey of 6,200 middle and high school students nearly 90% of sexual minority youth reported they had been verbally harassed and 44% reported being physically harassed. In addition, and over 20% of the sexual minority youth reported they had been physically assaulted at school during the past year because of their sexual orientation (GLSEN, 2008). An important note for this dissertation is that gay male youth are at the highest risk of verbal and physical homophobic discrimination (Wilkinson & Roy, 2005).

Homophobic discrimination starts at a young age. In a study of 133 seventh graders ages 12-13, Athanasas and Comar (2005) found that the antigay slurs, "that's so gay" and "fag", were used frequently at school. A majority of students reported hearing these terms on a daily basis and one-third of the study participants reported using one or more of the terms weekly (Athanasas & Comar). Although these antigay slurs may be

perceived as innocuous to many heterosexual students, such terms can add to the homophobic climate that appears to be the social norm in most American middle schools and high schools.

Sexual minority youth are not all the same and come from various socioeconomic and ethnic groups. However, there is scant research available on the experiences of sexual minority youth who are also ethnic minorities. Parks (2001) argued that *same-gender-loving youth* who are African American experience multiple victimization experiences including homophobia, racism, and institutionalized racism. The life experiences of this population make their school and home experiences uniquely challenging but poorly understood. Park also posited that ethnic minority youth may not self-identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual and the coming out process for these youth may vary significantly from that of European American youth.

Making the school issue more complex is the conservative environment in most U.S. school systems and the fact that school counselors and other school employees are typically unwilling to ask a student about their sexual orientation. On the other hand, students are usually reluctant to come out to teachers and school counselors (Espelage, Aragon, Birkett, & Koenig, 2008). Unfortunately, this leaves many sexual minority youth without support and protection from homophobia at school.

Although there is limited research available on the impact of homophobia during emerging adulthood, in 29 states it is legal to discriminate in employment on the basis of sexual orientation, in 36 states it is legal to discriminate in housing issues based on sexual orientation, and a majority of states do not provide legal protection for same-sex couples

(HRC, 2008). Therefore, as youth leave home and begin to establish their work and home lives, in addition to other homophobic discrimination, in a majority of states they face the possibility of being discriminated against based on their sexual orientation when applying for a job or securing a home.

Homophobia, whether originating from antigay media messages, silence in the face of discriminatory acts, isolation and marginalization, or even public victimization, is present in many institutions and social environments that make up the sociocultural context of a gay youth's life today (Almeida et al., 2009). This unique context in which gay youth live makes their developmental path fundamentally different from their heterosexual peers. The impact of a heterosexist and homophobic social environment could make gay youth vulnerable as they become aware of their sexual orientation (Almeida et al.).

The research discussed above indicates the discriminatory environment begins before middle school, continues through high school and college, and remains prevalent well into emerging adulthood when individuals attempt to gain employment, secure housing, and establish an adult social network and romantic relationships.

Psychosocial Impact of Homophobia on Gay Youth

Several researchers have documented the psychosocial consequences for individuals who are exposed to homophobia and social stigmatization as a gay youth. Sullivan and Wodarski (2002) raised a critical point that gay youth are a unique minority group, which after facing hatred and discrimination, typically do not have a gay role model at home who has gone through similar experiences and can offer effective support.

The experiences of gay youth, therefore, are different from other minority groups who have family members and friends who typically reinforce their social identities and foster positive self-esteem. The impact of lacking adequate social supports can lead to social withdrawal, isolation, and negative self-esteem (Sullivan & Wodarski). Homophobic victimization has also been associated with increased depressive and externalizing symptoms among gay youth (Williams, Connolly, Pepler, & Craig, 2005). In addition to victimization, these authors argued the depressive and externalizing symptoms resulted from a lack of social support. It is important to note that the psychosocial stress experienced by sexual minority youth is caused by the social environment and not sexual orientation in and of itself (Williams et al.). Older youth have indicated higher levels of sexual identity distress but the more open a youth is about their sexual orientation within their support network, the less sexual identity distress they experience (Wright & Perry, 2006).

Homophobic teasing has been associated with depression, suicidal gestures and completion, and alcohol and marijuana use among sexual minority youth (Espelage et al., 2008; Savin-Williams & Ream, 2003). These authors argued that youth who are still questioning their orientation are at higher risk for these psychosocial outcomes than youth who self-identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual. The questioning youth also indicated the lowest level of parental support. Safren and Heimberg (1999) found that sexual minority youth reported higher rates of past suicidality and increased present suicidality, depression, and hopelessness. Russell (2002) argued that gay youth are marginalized from the full range of developmental experiences. A critical component of development

for youth is having healthy relationships with their peers; however, gay male youth have been shown to have smaller social networks, a high level of fear about losing friends, and more insecurity in romantic relationships (Diamond & Lucas, 2004).

Perceived discrimination is a likely outcome of growing up as a sexual minority in a heterosexist society. Based on a study of 1,032 high school students ages 13-19 years old, Almeida, Johnson, Corliss, Molnar and Azrael (2009) reported that perceived discrimination based on a student's self-reported sexual orientation was correlated with increased symptoms of depression and suicidal ideation among gay males. In a study using 64 sexual minority individuals who were mostly college students, participants maintained daily diaries of heterosexist hassles, Swim, Johnston, and Pearson (2009) reported that experiencing heterosexist *hassles* was associated with anger, being in an anxious mood, and a decreased perception of public perceptions of sexual minorities.

The Positive Nature of Being Gay

Clearly, a majority of gay male youth develop into productive, healthy, and successful adults (Riggle, Whitman, Olson, Rostosky, & Strong, 2008). The increasing visibility of sexual minorities has lead to an understanding that sexual minorities are present in all sectors of society and hold positions as varied as heterosexuals. There are gay men who are teachers, physicians, janitors, military officers, psychologists, stock brokers, and professional athletes, just to name a few professions. In addition, there are gay men who are single, married, divorced, and parenting children alone or with a partner. Unfortunately, the psychological research available about healthy sexual minorities and their resilience to homophobia is scarce. In fact, the only research

available on resilience and gay youth was located in two doctoral dissertations. Cagle (2007) reported that a self perception of strength and resilience in gay men transitioning to adulthood was associated with having a mentor and the use of gay social support services. Adams (2006) noted that resilience in sexual minority youth was associated with having a positive self identity as a sexual minority, having family support, and self-identifying as a sexual minority at a younger age.

Looking at the broader construct of psychological well-being, Detrie and Lease (2007) reported that well-being was associated with collective self-esteem, perceived social support from one's social network, and social connectedness. However, the results of this study are limited by the relatively wide age range of participants that included individuals aged 14 to 23 (i.e. early adolescents to early adulthood). There are new and an increasing number of structured resources available to gay youth to meet with other gay youth or gay-friendly heterosexual peers. These resources include gay-straight alliances at middle schools and high schools, internet social networks, and community social support organizations serving sexual minority youth (Russell, 2002). Unfortunately, these resources are not available in all communities and some communities have agressively protested against the establishments of gay-straight alliances. Less than 10% of middle and high schools have a gay-straight alliance on the school campus (GLSEN, 2008).

Exploring a study with older participants could reveal positive atrributes experienced by gay men during emerging adulthood and the importance of connecting gay youth to their local gay communities. Riggle, Olsen, Whitman, Rostosky, & Strong (2008), conducted an online survey with 550 gay and lesbian adults and asked them to

identify the positive aspects of being a gay man or a lesbian. Study participants indicated the following positive factors were a result of their sexual orientation: belonging to a unique and supportive community; creating families of choice as an alternative to their families of origin; serving as a positive role model; having a strong sense of self and personal insight; and having increased empathy for other oppressed peoples (Riggle et al., 2008).

Heterosexism, Social Dominance Theory, and The Status quo

Social dominance theory provides a conceptual framework for explaining the root causes of prejudice and social inequality. According to this theory, group-based hierarchies in society assign dominant positions of power and privilege to certain groups while subordinating other groups (Poteat, Espelage, & Green, 2007). These authors argued that social dominance is maintained through the use of legitimizing myths or ideologies that normalize and justify social inequalities. In order to reduce social inequality, the myths must be rejected. However, changing attitudes and beliefs on an individual level is a significant challenge considering how they are formed. According to Hicks and Lee (2006), individuals form attitudes by receiving positive feedback for mimicking the attitudes of parents and/or peers and by modeling the social behavior of parents and other role models. Considering the widespread heterosexism in religious, political, and social organizations and their itinerant homophobia, it is not surprising that members of the sexual majority are prone to developing, beginning at a young age, discriminatory attitudes towards sexual minorities.

Within the social framework of social dominance, hierarchy-enhancing and hierarchy-attenuating environments have been proposed (Poteat et al., 2007). For example, these researchers have identified differences in social dominance behavior in various universities and professions. In addition, social dominance behavior in adolescents is associated with homophobic attitudes and behaviors (Poteat et al.). In opposition to social dominance theory, Goodman and Moradi (2008) studied 255 undergraduate student participants and found using structural equation modeling that *right-wing authoritarianism,* a high degree of submission to religious, government, and social authorities, and a belief in traditional gender roles (i.e. men are masculine and women are feminine) were predictors of anti-gay and anti-lesbian attitudes and rejecting behavior. Social dominance was not found to be a predictor of these attitudes and behaviors. Herek (2000) also found that homophobia was correlated with authoritarianism.

As described by Jost, Banaji, and Nosek (2004) in their study of the system justification theory, there is a general ideological motivation to justify and maintain the status quo. These researchers also argued that some marginalized individuals, including those in the gay population, who are most negatively impacted by the status quo actually implicitly favor being part of an *out group* as a way of maintaining a positive identity and protecting themselves against discrimination and social marginalization by the social majority.

The predominance of social dominance and system justification attitudes in U.S. society indicate that reducing homophobia and heterosexism will continue to be a

significant social problem in need of resolution. Sexual minorities, by definition, will never be in a majority status. Issues associated with being a sexual minority in a heterosexist society will continue to impact sexual minorities, specifically gay males during adolescence and emerging adulthood, for years to come.

Summary

In this literature review, I have documented that Kohut's theory of self psychology provides a dynamic foundation on which to explore the important psychological and social questions about young gay men during emerging adulthood. In particular, Kohut's constructs of developmental axes and selfobject needs will serve as a central framework for this dissertation. Self psychology is an important construct for expanding the psychological research on gay male youth and moves beyond the historical emphasis on psychopathology and the more recent introduction of gay affirmative therapy.

In this literature review, I also revealed that homophobia and heterosexism continue to be dominant social constructs in the United States leading to social stigmatization, marginalization, and oppression of sexual minority peoples, specifically gay male youth. Although some progress has been made in improving social attitudes and legal protections for sexual minorities during the last few decades, gay male youth are frequently reminded of their subordinate social status. Many face frequent verbal and physical abuse at school and decreased social support from family and peers. Additional prevalent issues among young gay men include depression, hopelessness, loneliness, and suicidality.

I have raised important questions about young gay men and self psychology considering the potential impact of homophobia and heterosexism on the developing self and selfobject relationships during a critical period of psychological development. These questions relate to the mental health, personal relationships, and life satisfaction for the individuals in this vulnerable population. Finally, with this review, I revealed the overall paucity of psychological research on issues related to the psychological well being of gay male youth and other sexual minorities.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Using a nationally targeted internet-based survey to sample the study population, I measured the degree of relationship between selfobject needs and perceived anti-gay oppression among a sample of gay men aged 18-25. I also examined potential differences in selfobject needs between various ethnic groups within the participant sample, and measured the degree of relationship between life satisfaction and selfobject needs. What follows is detailed information on the research design, the sample of study participants, the survey instrument components, plans for data collection and analysis, and the mechanisms for protecting study participants.

Research Design

For the study, I used a nonexperimental quantitative design and collected anonymous data from a national convenience sample of gay men aged 18-25. In order to secure this data, a survey instrument was designed and posted on a tamper proof website. The internet-based survey method was selected to achieve a national sample in an efficient and cost-effective approach. In addition, because some gay men might be hesitant to disclose their sexual orientation and discuss personal information in face-to-face interviews, an internet-based survey method provided a forum for study participants to complete the survey questions anonymously and privately. Numerous researchers have documented the validity and reliability of internet-based survey studies compared to traditional survey instruments (Braunsberger, Wybenga, & Gates, 2007; Fortson, Scotti, Del Ben & Chen, 2006; Miller et al., 2002).

The research method presented a significant advantage in that it yielded data from throughout the U.S. By promoting the study on gay and gay-friendly websites that had local interfaces throughout the country, the study collected random data from a geographically diverse population. Other researchers have successfully secured gay male study participants through the use of gay and gay-friendly websites. Ross, Rosser, Stanton, and Konstan (2004) recruited over 1,500 Latino men who have sex with men for a study on sexual behavior through the chat rooms and personal listings on a gay-focused website. Szymanski (2009) recruited 210 gay and bisexual men for a study on heterosexism and psychological distress partly through the use of the gay chat rooms on a popular search engine. The recruitment strategy for this study enhances the generalizability of its results for gay men aged 18-25 throughout the United States.

This age group was selected for the study considering individuals in this developmental stage are continuing to develop their sexual identity. They have currently or recently been in close peer environments, including high school, college, the military, trade school, or in neighborhood settings. In addition, individuals in this age group are frequently dependent on family financial support as they emerge into full adulthood. Consequently, young men aged 18-25 are at a vulnerable life stage during which anti-gay discrimination by peers and family members could be particularly harmful.

Setting and Sample

The setting for the study was an internet-based survey distributed on Survey Monkey, a service that allows researchers to design and post customized survey instruments in a secure electronic environment. Information about research surveys

posted on Survey Monkey is frequently seen on the American Psychological Association's e-mail discussion lists. Suarez-Balcazar, Balcazar, and Taylor Ritzler (2009) argued that internet-based surveys can be an effective way to reach culturally diverse populations for psychological research and that Survey Monkey is easy for participants to use. Forshee (2008) used Survey Monkey to collect data from 321 self-identified transgender men, a culturally distinct and hidden population, for a demographic study.

The study was promoted by posting notices on the local access interfaces of the following gay and gay-friendly websites: www.gay.com (state and city specific gay men's chat rooms), www.craiglist.com (men seeking men and casual encounter personal advertisement websites in available cities), and www.yahoo.com (gay men's lounge chat rooms) (See Appendix A). These websites were selected because of their popularity with gay men (Ross et al., 2004) and the free public access to the sites. The study notice, which included the website address of the survey instrument, was posted on state and city access sites throughout the United States on numerous occasions over a 5-week period of time to an estimated viewing audience of over 10,000 gay men.

In order to achieve a medium level effect size for the bivariate correlation and multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) statistical tests, using an alpha level of .05 and a statistical power level of .80, a minimum of 64 study participants had to be recruited. The primary rationale for this sample size was the need to secure 16 participants for each of the four ethnic categories. While the statistical analysis only required a total of 64 participants, recruiting a minimum of 100 or more participants provided a safety margin

for incomplete or invalid surveys and the ability to reach the minimum number of participants for each ethnic group. The study sample included individuals from the following four ethnic groups: African American/nonHispanic, Asian or Pacific Islander, Hispanic, or White/nonHispanic.

The final sample secured through the data collection process was 118 young gay male participants. The age range of participants was 18 to 25 years of age (M = 21.71, SD = 2.34). Figure 2 shows the age distribution for participants and it appears that a similar number of participants are represented in each age within the age range of 18-25.

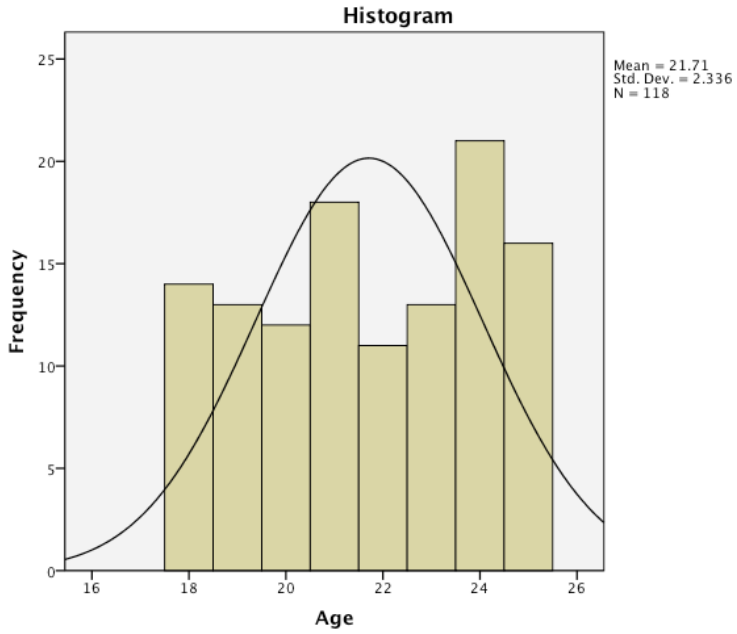

Figure 2. Participant age distribution

Table 1 shows the frequencies and percentages of the participants' ethnicity. Of the 118 participants, 57% were White/nonHispanic, 14% were Hispanic, 14% were African American/nonHispanic, and 14% were Asian or Pacific Islander. These percentages are comparable to the ethnic distribution within the United States as reported

by the U.S. Census Bureau (2009) in which 57% of respondents were White/nonHispanic, 15% were Hispanic, 14% were African American/nonHispanic, and 14% were Asian or Pacific Islander. The ethnic distribution of the study sample confirms that young gay men come from all ethnic categories.

Table 1

Frequencies and Percentages of Ethnicity Category

Ethnicity Category	Frequency	Percentage
African American/NonHispanic	17	14
Asian or Pacific Islander	17	14
Hispanic	17	14
White/NonHispanic	65	57

The Survey Instrument

The survey instrument was designed to measure the study participants' self-perceived homophobic and heterosexist oppression, selfobject needs, and satisfaction with life. The survey instrument began with informed consent information that provided basic information about the survey and any potential risks or benefits associated with participation (see Appendix B). The first questions on the survey requested a participant's age and ethnicity. Sexual orientation was confirmed in the informed consent and study notice. After the initial demographic questions, the survey included questions from the GALOSI-F (oppression), questions from the SONI, (selfobject needs) and questions from the SWLS (life satisfaction). The subscales of the SONI were used because overall scores

for this psychometric instrument have not been previously evaluated. Of note, permission to use the SONI and GALOSI instruments were obtained form the instrument authors and there were no copyright issues identified (see Appendix G). The SWLS is in the public domain (Pavot & Deaner, 1993).

The Gay and Lesbian Oppressive Situation Inventory-Frequency (GALOSI-F)

The GALOSI-F was originally developed by Highlen et al. (2000) and included seven scales that were tested; Couples Issues (CI), Dangers to Safety (DS); Exclusion, Rejection, & Separation (ERS); Internalized Homonegativity (IH), Restricted Opportunities & Rights (ROR), Stigmatizing & Stereotyping (SS), and Verbal Harassment & Intimidation (VHI). Highlen et al. reported coefficient alphas of .63 for CI, .77 for DS, .87 for ERS, .88 for IH, .69 for ROR, .85 for SS, and .77 for VHI with a sample size of 165 gay men and 112 lesbians. These researchers also reported the following mean and standard deviations for the seven scales: CI *(M* = 16.76, *SD*=3.29); DS (*M* = 19.05, *SD* = 3.96), ERS (*M* = 31.28, *SD* = 7.11); IH (*M* = 35.14, *SD* = 7.71); ROR (*M* = 9.99, *SD* = 1.85), SS (*M* = 50.14, *SD* = 5.59); VHI (*M* = 28.27, *SD* = 4.14); and total GALOSI-F score (*M* = 189.48, *SD* = 27.13)

Highlen et al. (2000) confirmed discriminant validity of the GALOSI-F by finding no association between socially desirable responding and the GALOSI-F scales. In a subsequent study, Zalik and Wei (2006) used the ROR and VHI scales and reported positive and significant correlations between these scales and the Perceived Prejudiced the Perceived Discrimination subscales from the Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students among a sample of 234 gay males.

In this study, the seven scales of the GALOSI-F included a total of 49 questions. Each question will be answered on a five point Likert scale with 0 correlating to *never* and 4 to *almost always.* The total score for the GALOSI-F range from 0 to 196 with higher scores indicating a greater degree of perceived discrimination (see Appendix C).

The Selfobject Needs Inventory (SONI)

Banai et al. (2005) developed the SONI, as a way to align a self-report measurement instrument with Kohut's self psychology theoretical constructs. These researchers conducted seven studies in order to develop the SONI and confirm its validity and reliability. The initial study conducted by Banai et al. reduced a pool of 118 questions down to 38 using a team of expert self psychologists and a pilot study with a sample group of 295 undergraduate students. Utilizing factor analyses, the researchers identified the following five scales: Need for twinship (NT), need for idealization (NI), need for mirroring (NM), avoidance of idealization and twinship (AIT), and avoidance of mirroring (AM). All five scales had acceptable coefficient alphas ranging from .79 to .91. Test-retest reliability was confirmed with high reliability coefficients between test 1 and 2, and concurrent validity was established comparing the SONI with scales of superiority, goal instability, and lack of connectedness (correlations ranged from .74 to .78) (Banai et al.).

As described by Banai et al. (2005), the NM, NI, and NT were all significantly correlated with attachment anxiety and rejection sensitivity but only the NM and NT were significantly associated with depression and anxiety. Both the AIT and AM were significantly correlated with attachment avoidance and fear of intimacy. Additionally, the

NM and the AIT were both significantly associated with self-admiration, superiority, and exploitiveness as measured by the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (Banai et al.). The authors did not provide mean scores or standard deviations for the five subscales in any of the seven studies conducted.

The SONI included 38 questions that were answered on a 7-point Likert scale with 1 representing *not at all* and 7 indicating *very much*. For the purposes of this study and based on a recommendation by one of the authors of the SONI, a hunger for selfobject needs score, combining the subscales of NM, NI, and NT, and a denial of selfobject needs score, combining AIT and AM, were also used (See Appendix D). The scores for the hunger for selfobject needs range from 21 to 147 and the scores for the denial of selfobject needs range from 17-119 with higher scores on both measures representing greater selfobject needs.

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)

The SWLS was developed as an alternative to instruments that measure negative assessments of life and instead provides an individual the opportunity to focus on the positive aspects of life (Pavot & Diener, 1993). The SWLS is composed of five questions that are answered using a 7-point Likert scale with 1 representing *strongly disagree* and 7 indicating *strongly agree*. The scores for the SWLS range from 5 to 35 and the total score aligns with seven rating categories. Higher scores indicate a stronger level of satisfaction with life (See Appendix E).

Pavot and Diener (1993), who developed the SWLS in 1993, reported that the SWLS had an alpha coefficient of .87 and a 2-month test-retest stability coefficient of .82

using a sample of 176 undergraduate students. They also concluded that the SWLS demonstrated convergent validity with several measures of life satisfaction, including face-to-face interviews and informant ratings. The SWLS demonstrated strong discriminant validity with the Beck Depression Inventory ($r = -.72$, $p = .001$). Utilizing a sample of 114 African American college students in the U.S, Pavot and Deiner reported a mean SWLS score of 22.4 with a standard deviation of 6.4.

Study Variables

The independent variables for the study included age, ethnicity (African-American/nonHispanic, Asian or Pacific Islander, Hispanic, or White/nonHispanic), the seven subscale scores of the GALOSI-F (CI, DS, ERS, IH, SS, ROR, and VHI) , and the rating category of the SWLS. The dependent variables included the seven subscales of the SONI.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data was downloaded from the Survey Monkey website and manually inputted into a customized database created in the Predictive Analytic Software (PASW) Statistics GradPack 18 program. After any required data cleaning and/or transformations, the data analysis included a frequency distribution to determine the mean age of the study participants and the number and percentages of study participants in each ethnic category. The following three null hypotheses were analyzed.

Hypothesis #1. There is no significant difference among gay men aged 18-25 who report higher levels of perceived discrimination, as measured by the GALOSI-F, and hunger for or denial of selfobject needs, as measured by the SONI.

Hypothesis #2. There is no significant difference among gay men aged 18-25 from different ethnic groups who report a similar frequency of perceived discrimination, as measured by the GALOSI-F, and hunger for or denial of selfobject needs, as measured by the SONI.

Hypothesis #3: There is no significant difference among gay men aged 18-25 who report lower satisfaction with life scores, as measured by the SWLS, and hunger for or denial of selfobject needs, as measured by the SONI.

For Hypothesis #1, a bivariate correlation test was conducted using the seven scales the GALOSI and the seven subscales of SONI. Correlations were examined for strength and direction of relationships across all variables. For Hypothesis #2, a one-way MANOVA test was conducted with the independent variable ethnicity, the seven SONI subscales as dependent variables, and seven subscales GALOSI-F as covariates (in order to control for perceived discrimination). Follow-up ANOVAs were planned to determine any statistically significant mean differences between ethnic groups and the dependent variables. For Hypothesis #3, a one-way MANOVA test was conducted with the independent variable SWLS category and the dependent variables from the subscales of the SONI.

Protection of Participants' Rights

Protecting the rights of the study participants was a high priority for this study. The privacy of the participants was guaranteed by the anonymous nature of the research design. In addition, all raw data were secured in a password protected computer file and were only used for this study. All study participants agreed to and electronically signed an informed consent prior to participating in the survey. Information in the informed consent included the purpose of the study, a description of how the survey was being conducted, any risk and benefits associated with participating in the study, inducements, and the voluntary and anonymous nature of the study. Contact information was provided in the event an individual wanted to learn more about the study and its results or report an untoward event (See Appendix B).

Chapter 4: Results

The results described in this chapter are directly related to the overall research question for this study: What are the associations between perceived homophobic and heterosexist discrimination, selfobject needs, and life satisfaction among gay men during emerging adulthood?

As described in chapter 3, in order to secure a national participant sample, a convenience or purposive method was used with an online survey instrument composed of three previously validated psychometric instruments. For protection of the study participants' privacy and to encourage participation by individuals who might not be open about their sexual orientation, only age and ethnicity information was collected. However, based on the participant recruitment strategy, it is reasonable to assume the study sample included individuals from a wide range of geographic locations and socioeconomic groups.

Data Management

The results that were collected through the 94 question survey located at www.surveymonkey.com (see Appendix E) were first exported from the Survey Monkey website to Microsoft Excel where narrative answers were changed to the appropriate Likert scale score. Each of the three psychometric instruments used in the study had a different Likert rating scale. For example, in the survey instrument the 49 questions for the GALOSI-F included the following answer options: *never, rarely, sometimes, often,* and *almost always.* In the Excel database, by utilizing the find and replace function, all the *never* responses were replaced with the number 0, *rarely* was replaced with a 1,

sometimes with a 2, *often* with a 3, and *almost always* was replaced with the number 4. In other words, the text answers were re-coded to the 5-point Likert scale as defined by the GALOSI-F (Highlen et al., 2000).

The 15 study variable scores were produced by combining the individual scores as required by the Gay and Lesbian Oppressive Situation Inventory- Frequency (GALOSI-F), the Selfobject Needs Inventory (SONI), and Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) psychometric instruments (see Appendices C, D, and E). For example, in the GALOSI-F, as defined by Highlen et al. (2000), scores on questions 19 through 28 were combined to formulate the internalized homonegativity (IH) subscale. For the SONI, scores on questions 1, 7, 11, 29, 33, and 35 were combined to formulate the need for mirroring (NM) subscale as defined by Banai et al. (2005).

The data were then transferred from the Excel database to a customized database in the Predictive Analytic Software (PASW) Statistics GradPack 18 Program. The data were screened for missing values and outliers. No missing values were identified but four cases were determined to be extreme outliers based on Mahalanobis distances and were removed from the database and only 114 participants were included in the following statistical analyses.

Descriptive Statistics

Study Variables

The 15 quantitative variables listed in Table 2 were calculated for all study participants. There were no missing values for any of the 114 participants. The GALOSI-F subscale scores, representing perceived homophobic and heterosexist discrimination,

included couple issues (*M* = 13.77, *SD* = 4.12), dangers to safety (*M* = 11.17, *SD* = 4.47), exclusion, rejection, and separation (*M* = 23.36, *SD* = 8.60), internalized homonegativity (*M* = 25.49, *SD* = 9.78), restricted rights and opportunities (*M* = 4.47, *SD* = 2.49), stigmatizing and stereotyping (*M* = 36.70, *SD* = 9.19), and verbal harassment and intimidation (*M* = 20.74, *SD* = 5.82). Higher scores on the GALOSI-F subscales indicated a higher level of perceived discrimination in the specific area of homophobic and/or heterosexism being examined within each subscale. Although this is the first time all subscales of the GALOSI-F have been used since the original construction of the instrument, in chapter 5 two subscales from this study will be compared to results reported by Zalalik and Wie (2006).

The SONI subscales included a hunger for selfobject needs (*M* = 92.65, *SD* = 16.74) and a denial of selfobject needs (*M* = 59.85, *SD* = 11.78). Additional SONI subscales included a need for twinship (*M* = 37.89, *SD* = 7.60), a need for idealization (*M* = 29.47, *SD* = 6.8), a need for mirroring (*M* = 25.28, *SD* = 6.87), avoidance of idealization and twinship (*M* = 35.66, *SD* = 9.77), and avoidance of mirroring (*M* = 24.19, *SD* = 6.01). Higher scores for all the SONI subscales are considered to represent elevated selfobject needs that are potentially associated with psychodynamic maladjustment and psychological distress as described in chapters 2 and 3. For example, the scores for the SONI-Hunger variable ranged from a low 47 to high of 126. The mean of 92.65 is on the higher end of this range. The scores for the SONI-Denial variable ranged from a low of 34 to a high of 93. The mean of 59.85 falls in the middle of the

range. Of note, this is the first time the SONI has been fielded in an empirical study since the instrument was constructed. This issue will be discussed in detail in chapter 5.

Finally, the SWLS variable, an indicator of satisfaction with life, was measured for each participant (M = 20.18, SD = 7.22). The SWLS scores from this study will be compared with the SWLS scores from previous studies in chapter 5.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for Study Variables

Variable	*M*	*SD*	*Min to Max*	N
Couples Issues	13.77	4.12	4-20	114
Dangers to Safety	11.17	4.47	6-24	114
Exclusion, Rejection, & Separation	23.36	8.59	9-44	114
Internalized Homonegativity	25.49	9.78	10-40	114
Restricted Rights and Opportunities	4.74	2.49	3-14	114
Stereotyping & Stigmatization	36.70	29.19	11-53	114
Verbal Harassment & Intimidation	20.74	5.82	8-35	114
SONI-Hunger	92.65	16.74	47-126	114
SONI-Denial	59.85	11.78	34-93	114
Need for Twinship	37.89	7.60	17-53	114
Need for Idealization	39.47	6.87	8-44	114
Need for Mirroring	25.28	5.89	10-40	114
Avoidance of Idealization and Twinship	35.66	9.77	16-69	114
Avoidance of Mirroring	24.19	6.01	12-41	114
Satisfaction with Life Scale	20.18	7.22	5-35	114

Hypothesis 1: Homophobic and Heterosexist Discrimination and Selfobject Needs

Hypothesis 1 was framed to determine if there is a relationship between an individual's experiences with homophobic and heterosexist discrimination and selfobject needs. The null hypothesis states there is no significant difference among gay men aged 18-25 who report higher levels of discrimination, as measured by the seven subscales of the GALOSI-F, and hunger for or denial of selfobject needs, as measured by the seven subscales of the SONI. This hypothesis was evaluated using a bivariate correlation test. Table 3 includes a correlation matrix of these variables. A p value of .05 or less was required for significance.

Bivariate Correlation Test Results

The following significant correlations were identified by the bivariate correlation test. Hunger for selfobject needs was significantly and positively associated with internalized homonegativity ($r = .25$, $p < .01$). A need for twinship was also significantly and positively related to internalized homonegativity ($r = .20$, $p < .05$) while the need for mirroring was significantly and positively correlated with couples issues ($r = .20$, $p < .05$), internalized homonegativity ($r = .27$, $p < .01$), and stigmatizing and stereotyping ($r = .18$, $p < .05$). Avoidance of idealization and twinship was significantly and positively correlated with restricted rights and opportunities ($r = .23$, $p < .05$) and avoidance of mirroring was significantly but negatively associated with internalized homonegativity ($r = .22$, $p < .05$)

These results will be interpreted in detail in chapter 5, however, based on information provided in chapter 1 and 2, it is important to note that this is the first time

that antigay oppression has been empirically associated with an individual's psychodynamics within a population of sexual minorities.

Strength and Direction of Significant Correlations

The Pearson correlation coefficients for the significant associations between variables ranged from .18 to .27 indicating a moderate effect size or strength of the correlations. All correlations were positive in direction except for avoidance of mirroring that had a negative correlation with internalized homonegativity.

Conclusion for Hypothesis 1

In general terms, among gay men aged 18-25, selfobject needs increased as homophobic and heterosexist discrimination increased. Based on the results of the bivariate correlation tests, increased homophobic and heterosexist discrimination is significantly associated with increased selfobject needs. Therefore, the null hypothesis must be rejected.

Hypothesis 2: Ethnicity and Selfobject Needs

Hypothesis 2 was included in the study to determine if different young gay men from different ethnic groups had different selfobject needs, regardless of their experiences with homophobic and heterosexist discrimination. In other words, would other life experiences, including racism, also impact selfobject needs of young gay men. The null hypothesis is stated as follows, there is no significant difference among gay men aged 18-25 from different ethnic groups and hunger for or denial of selfobject needs, as measured by the SONI.

In order to test hypothesis 2, a one-way MANCOVA test was conducted with ethnicity as the independent variable, the seven subscales of the SONI as the dependent variables, and the seven GALOSI subscales as covariates. The covariates were included in order to control for homophobic and heterosexist oppression.

Table 3

Correlations Among Seven GALOSI Subscales and Seven SONI Subscales

	CI	DS	ERS	IH	ROR	SS	VHI
H	.11	-.10	.07	.25**	.02	.12	.04
D	.02	.11	.07	-.02	.18	.00	.00
NT	.05	-.16	.04	.20*	-.01	.09	.07
NI	.05	-.09	-.00	.16	-.07	.03	-.01
NM	.20*	.04	.16	.27**	.15	.18*	.13
AIT	.13	.14	.13	.12	.23*	.09	.06
AM	-.17	.00	-.08	-.22	-.02	-.14	-.08

Note. CI=couples issues, DS=dangers to safety, ERS=exclusion, rejection, separation, IH=internalized homonegativity, ROR=restricted opportunities and rights, SS=stigmatization and stereotyping, VHI=verbal harassment and intimidation, NT=need for twinship, NI=need for idealization, NM=need for mirroring, AIT=avoidance of idealization and twinship, and AM=avoidance of mirroring.
*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

MANCOVA Results

The MANCOVA for hypothesis 2 revealed there were no significant differences among the four ethnic categories on any of the seven SONI subscales (Wilks' $\wedge$=.856, F(15, 290)=1.126, p=..339, $\eta^2 = .050$). A Scheffe post hoc test confirmed the

nonsignificant results by revealing no significant differences between the four ethnic categories on any of the seven SONI subscales. Therefore, the null hypothesis must be retained.

In general terms, gay men aged 18-25 from different ethnic groups did not have significantly different selfobject needs among the study sample when controlling for homophobic and heterosexist discrimination. Table 4 presents the means and standard deviations for the SONI subscale scores by ethnicity. A follow-up ANOVA was conducted to determine if there were significant differences in ethnicity based on age. The results revealed there was no significant difference in ethnicity within the age range of 18-25, $F(3,110) = .681$, $p = .566$, $\eta^2 = .018$. In other words, all ages within the four ethnic categories were appropriately represented in the study sample.

Table 4

Means and standard deviations for Selfobject Needs by Ethnicity Category

	H		D		NT		NI		NM		AIT		AM	
Ethnicity	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
African American/NonHispanic	92.0	20.0	57.5	9.5	37.8	8.5	30.5	7.6	23.8	7.0	32.8	7.9	24.8	9.8
Asian or Pacific Islander	99.1	15.0	63.9	14.3	39.8	14.3	32.7	6.9	26.7	5.1	39.6	8.1	24.3	7.6
Hispanic	86.2	17.5	62.5	10.4	35.1	8.4	26.7	7.9	24.4	7.1	37.4	10.3	25.2	5.5
White/ NonHispanic	92.9	15.8	58.7	11.6	38.2	7.4	29.2	6.2	25.5	5.5	35.0	10.2	23.8	5.8

Note. H=Hunger for selfobject needs, D=denial of selfobject needs, CI=couples issues, DS=dangers to safety, ERS=exclusion, rejection, separation, IH=internalized homonegativity, ROR=restricted opportunities and rights, SS=stigmatization and stereotyping, VHI=verbal harassment and intimidation, NT=need for twinship, NI=need for idealization, NM=need for mirroring, AIT=avoidance of idealization and twinship, AM=avoidance of mirroring.

Hypothesis 3: Satisfaction with Life and Selfobject Needs

The third and final study hypothesis was analyzed to determine if study participants with different life satisfaction scores would have significantly different selfobject needs. The null hypothesis is as follows, there is no significant difference among gay men aged 18-25 who report lower satisfaction with life, as measured by the SWLS, and their selfobject needs, as measured by the SONI. This hypothesis was assessed with a one-way MANOVA test with SWLS categories as the independent variables and the SONI subscales as the dependent variables. The SWLS categories were generated by taking the raw SWLS score for each participant and assigning it to one of the seven SWLS categories as defined by Pavot and Deiner (1993).

The MANOVA results revealed no significant differences among the SWLS categories on any of the seven SONI subscales (Wilks' $\wedge = .760$, $F(15, 414) = .977$, $p = .504$, $\eta^2 = .055$). Scheffe post hoc tests confirmed the results by revealing no significant differences between any of the seven SWLS categories on any of the seven SONI subscales. In general terms, for the participants in the study sample, selfobject needs did not change when compared with various levels of satisfaction with life. Table 5 presents means and standard deviations for the seven SONI subscales by SWLS category.

The results of the MANOVA are surprising and appear random considering the positive association between selfobject needs and antigay oppression as described under hypothesis 1, and the negative association between antigay oppression and life satisfaction that will be described below under additional analyses. Therefore, an

additional statistical test, a standard multiple regression, was conducted using the overall raw score of the SWLS, to determine the accuracy of the MANOVA results.

Standard multiple regression was conducted to determine the accuracy of the SONI subscales (SONI-H, SONI-D, NM, NT, NI, AIT, and AM) predicting satisfaction with life. Regression results indicated that the overall model, that only included five of the seven SONI subscales (NT, NI, NM, AIT, AM) did not significantly predict satisfaction with life, $R^2 = .039$, $R^2_{adj}=-.006$, $F(5, 108)=.873$, $p=.502$. The results of the multiple regression test support the results reported for the MANOVA test. Therefore, the null hypothesis is retained.

In general terms, for the participants in the study sample, selfobject needs did not predict satisfaction with life as defined by the overall score on the SWLS. A summary of regression coefficients is presented in Table 5 and indicates that none of the seven predictor variables contributed significantly to the model.

Table 5

Means and standard deviations for Selfobject Needs by SWLS Category

	H		D		NT		NI		NM		AIT		AM	
Satisfaction with Life Scale	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Extremely Dissatisfied	93.1	18.9	64.2	14.6	37.3	9.4	27.7	6.4	28.1	6.1	40.8	11.9	23.4	6.2
Dissatisfied	98.8	16.3	60.8	12.3	40.6	6.7	31.8	8.3	26.4	4.2	36.5	8.4	24.2	6.2
Slightly Dissatisfied	92.8	14.3	55.6	11.1	38.7	7.4	29.8	6.4	24.4	4.5	31.9	8.5	23.7	5.8
Neutral	95.8	10.5	58.3	7.8	37.0	5.6	28.0	4.2	30.8	4.6	36.8	8.7	21.5	2.1
Slightly Satisfied	91.2	18.4	60.0	8.9	37.1	7.9	28.9	7.7	25.1	6.6	36.1	7.6	23.9	5.8
Satisfied	89.0	18.6	62.6	14.5	36.3	8.0	29.1	6.4	23.6	7.3	37.5	13.1	25.1	7.3
Extremely Satisfied	91.7	14.6	59.9	14.9	38.0	7.5	29.6	4.0	24.1	5.5	32.4	12.1	27.4	5.6

Note. H=Hunger for selfobject needs, D=denial of selfobject needs, CI=couples issues, DS=dangers to safety, ERS=exclusion, rejection, separation, IH=internalized homonegativity, ROR=restricted opportunities and rights, SS=stigmatization and stereotyping, VHI=verbal harassment and intimidation, NT=need for twinship, NI=need for idealization, NM=need for mirroring, AIT=avoidance of idealization and twinship, and AM=avoidance of mirroring.

Table 6

Coefficients for Model Variables

	B	ß	t	*p*	Bivariate r	Partial r
NM	-.112	-.118	-.924	.358	-.141	-.089
NI	.084	.080	.673	.502	-.058	.065
NT	-.152	-.124	-.817	.416	-.174	-.078
AIT	-.032	-.044	-.388	.698	-.062	-.037
AM	.034	.028	.236	.814	.093	.023

Note. NT=need for twinship, NI=need for idealization, NM=need for mirroring, AIT=avoidance of idealization and twinship, and AM=avoidance of mirroring.

Additional Analyses

Satisfaction with Life and Homophobic and Heterosexist Oppression

Although the SWLS was not included as a variable in the first hypothesis, it is important to note that a bivariate correlation test revealed a significant but negative correlation between satisfaction with life and the SONI subscales of exclusion, rejection, and separation (r=-.24, $p<.05$); and internalized homonegativity (r=-.35, $p<.01$). In other words, as homophobic and heterosexist discrimination increased, satisfaction with life decreased.

Age, Selfobject Needs, Antigay Oppression, and Satisfaction with Life

Additional analysis of variance tests were conducted in order to determine if study participants from different ages would have different selfobject needs, satisfaction with life, and/or perceived homophobic and heterosexist oppression.

The first additional MANOVA explored age and selfobject needs. The results of the MANOVA revealed no significant differences between different ages and any of the SONI subscales (Wilks' $\wedge$ = .741, $F(35, 431) = .909$, $p = .621$, $\eta^2 = .058$). A second additional MANOVA examined if there were any differences in perceived homophobic and heterosexist oppression by age. The MANOVA revealed no significant differences in any of the seven GALOSI subscales by age (Wilks' $\wedge$ = .568, $F(49,688)=1.232$, $p = .142$, $\eta^2 = .078$). Finally, age and satisfaction with life were examined with an ANOVA test. The ANOVA revealed there were no significant differences in the level of satisfaction with life based on age, $F(7,106) = .458$, $p = .863$, $\eta^2 = .029$.

Ethnicity, Antigay Oppression, and Satisfaction with Life

Hypothesis 2 explored group differences between individuals from the ethnicity categories and selfobject needs. As previously stated the results were not significant. An additional MANOVA test was conducted to explore ethnic group differences and perceived homophobic and heterosexist oppression. The MANOVA revealed no significant differences in the GALOSI subscale scores between study participants in the four ethnic categories (Wilks' $\wedge$ = .778, $F(21,299) = 1.304$, $p = .170$, $\eta^2 = .080$). Finally, an ANOVA was conducted to determine if there were any group difference between

individuals in the four ethnic categories and satisfaction with life. The ANOVA results indicated there were no significant differences in SWLS scores between study participants in the four ethnic categories, $F(3, 110) = .967$, $p = .411$, $\eta^2 = .026$.

Content Validity for the GALOSI and SONI Instruments

Considering both the GALOSI and SONI psychometric instruments have had either limited or no use since their initial construction, it is important to note additional information revealed in the bivariate correlation test conducted for hypothesis 1. As seen in Table 6, nearly all the subscales are significantly correlated with other subscales in the GALOSI. These results would appear to indicate content validity between the different submeasures in this instrument.

Table 7

Correlations Between GALOSI Subscales

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. CI	1						
2. DS	.14	1					
3. ERS	.48**	.52**	1				
4. IH	.60**	.31**	.31**	1			
5. ROR	.26**	.45**	.45**	.29**	1		
6. SS	.32**	.44**	.44**	.51**	.47**	1	
7.VHI	.36**	.53**	.53**	.54**	.52**	.78**	1

Note. CI=couples issues, DS=dangers to safety, ERS=exclusion, rejection, separation, IH=internalized homonegativity, ROR=restricted opportunities and rights, SS=stigmatization and stereotyping, and VHI=verbal harassment and intimidation. *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$.

Reviewing the data in Table 7, it is clear there are many significant correlations, both positive and negative between the hunger for selfobject needs and the denial for

selfobject needs subscales. These results also appear to indicate content validity between the subscales for the SONI instrument.

Table 8

Correlations Between SONI Subscales

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. H	1						
2. D	.00	1					
3. NT	.85**	-.17	1				
4. NI	.82**	-.03	.53	1			
5. NM	.78**	.00	.51**	.49**	1		
6. AIT	.14	.86**	-.08	.15	.33**	1	
7. AM	.40**	.56**	-.20*	-.30	-.53**	.06	1

Note: H=Hunger for selfobject needs, D=Denial of Selfobject needs, NT=need for twinship, NI=need for idealization, NM=need for mirroring, AIT=avoidance of idealization and twinship, AM=avoidance of mirroring. *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$.

Conclusion

The results described in this chapter were produced using standard statistical analysis techniques as described by Mertler and Vannatter (2005). In addition to the hypotheses that were developed to test the overall research question, additional analyses were conducted to thoroughly explore the unique data set of the hidden and vulnerable population of young gay men secured through this study.

The primary finding from the study was that selfobject needs increased as a young gay man's exposure to homophobic and heterosexist discrimination increased. Additionally, a key finding described in this chapter was that satisfaction with life decreased as a young gay man's antigay experiences with exclusion, rejection, and separation increased and when internalized homonegativity increased, two specific

domains of antigay oppression. Interpretation of the results described in this chapter, including implications for social change, will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Study Summary

This study was conducted to address the impact of homophobia and heterosexism on the subconscious minds of young gay men. There has been limited research on this unique population. Consequently, there is a critical gap in understanding the psychological needs of this group of young men. Among the limited research available on this population, researchers have documented that sexual minorities and young adults experience higher levels of psychological distress, including depression (Almeida et al., 2009), anxiety (Almeida et al.), suicide (Savin-Williams & Ream, 2003), hopelessness (Safren & Heimberg, 1999), social isolation (Sullivan & Wodarski, 2002), and substance abuse than among their heterosexual peers (Espelage et al., 2008). However, knowing that young gay men and other sexual minority youth experience psychological distress is not the same as understanding the underlying psychodynamics associated with their distress. In other words, knowing that an individual is experiencing anxiety or depression is not equivalent to an understanding of that individual's associated subconscious factors.

Because of the limited or nonexistent quantitative psychoanalytic studies on gay men and other sexual minorities, there is a gap hindering the capacity of the psychological profession to understand the short and long-term psychological harm of antigay oppression, and thus to treat or even mitigate the psychological impact of antigay oppression.

This study was also conducted due to the continuing, if not expanding, homophobic and heterosexist oppression in the United States (Clark, 2006; Herek, 2009;

Murphy, 2008; Saad, 2007). As explained in chapter 2, due to the 24-hour news cycle, polarized politics, religious ideology, and unedited Internet blogs, homophobia and heterosexism are more prevalent, pervasive and vitriolic in 2010 than they were 30 years ago (Murphy, Saad). Despite the continued existence of antigay oppression, a few well-known psychologists have widely promoted their opinion that sexual minority youth have similar developmental paths as their heterosexual peers and that traditional sexual orientation labels are no longer relevant (Savin-Williams, 2008, 2010).

Savin-Williams, an esteemed psychology researcher from Cornell University in New York, appears to base his position on conversations with an undefined sample of sexual minority youth and a developmental theoretical argument that, above all else, adolescents are teenagers first regardless of their sexual orientation. Of note, I contacted Dr. Savin-Williams directly about his position but was unable to secure information on the research method or population sample he used to reach his conclusions. Savin-Williams' positions are not supported by any peer-reviewed psychological literature. Specifically, Savin-William's position that sexual minority youth are *postgay* and that traditional labels are no longer relevant is contradicted by a study of over 2,500 adolescents that revealed 84% of the nonheterosexual youth self-identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or questioning (Russell, Clarke, & Clary, 2009). In addition, the many studies cited throughout this dissertation that report the oppression sexual minority youth encounter and the higher psychological distress they experience compared to their heterosexual peers, infers that sexual minority youth experience a different developmental path than their heterosexual peers (Detrie & Lease, 2007; Moradi et al.,

2009). Furthermore, these unsubstantiated arguments have the potential for negatively impacting the social concern, research, and interventions for young gay men and other sexual minority youth. Therefore, the continuing psychological distress experienced by gay youth throughout the U.S., combined with the lack of psychological research on young gay men and other sexual minority youth should be a major concern, not only for psychoanalytic oriented psychologists, but also for the entire field of psychology.

Self Psychology and the Psychodynamic Impact of Antigay Oppression

In order to explore the psychodynamic impact of homophobic and heterosexist oppression on young gay men, I used Kohut's (1991) theory of self psychology. As discussed in chapter 2, this psychoanalytic theory provided a unique and dynamic platform upon which to explore the potential impact of homophobic and heterosexist discrimination on the subconscious minds of young gay men. To date, there have been no quantitative psychoanalytic studies on gay men that I could identify. As such, this study could be considered ground breaking or at least opens a door to exploring how psychoanalytic theory can inform the psychology community about the impact of oppression. Disseminating the study results could also lead to improving psychological interventions for young gay men by integrating psychodynamic approaches into treatment plans.

Kohut (1987c) described adolescence and early adulthood as a critical period of psychological development during which a cohesive self can be placed at risk. As an adolescent or young adult physically matures and begins to establish independence, psychological development along the grandiosity and ego-connectedness axes become

critically important. Twinship, or establishing relationships with individuals who clearly see them, understand them, and provide emotional support, becomes a primary task of psychological development (Kohut). Establishing a supportive and empathic group of peers appears to be an important step in the healthy development of a cohesive self during adolescence and young adulthood. Mirroring or being recognized for one's self value and accomplishments is another important selfobject need during adolescents and young adulthood. However, if selfobject needs, including twinship and mirroring, are not adequately met, an individual can become stuck in the maturation of a selfobject need or regress to an earlier stage of self development, such as the grandiosity axis (see Figure 1). Individuals can even experience shame if they perceive themselves as being observed as deficient or inadequate by their peers and other selfobjects such as family members (Shreve & Kunkel, 1991).

The results of this study, as described below in the *Interpretation* section, revealed that homophobia and heterosexism appear to create barriers to the developmental needs of young gay men, specifically, in the selfobject needs of twinship and mirroring. The self is defined as a component of the mind that is cohesive, exists throughout an individual's lifetime, and is the center of ambitions, goals, skills, and talents and the tensions that develop between these various elements and relationships with people and other objects (Kohut, 1991). As a young gay man distances himself, either voluntarily or involuntarily, from peers and family members because of his sexual orientation and internalizes negative homophobic societal messages, his selfobject needs might not be met.

Kohut (1977, 1978) described the maturing of the self as a complex process in which unmet selfobject needs of idealization, twinship, and mirroring can lead to subconscious protective reactions or even severe psychopathology, as in the individual with a fragmented self. The development of the self is typically not threatened by temporary disappointments with unmet needs that recover through transmuting internalizations but more resistant unmet needs can inhibit the development of a mature and cohesive self (Wolff, 1989). All individuals, throughout life, have selfobject needs but a mature and cohesive self does not have a hunger for or denial of these needs (Kohut, 1991). Kohut posited that healthy psychological development leads to mature adults who place less importance on selfobject needs and gain the capacity to be the object for other individuals (Bacal & Newman, 1990). The consequences of selfobject needs being unmet will be described below but indicate that Kohut's theory of self psychology needs to be expanded to include the unique psychological and social development of gay boys and men.

Young gay men appear to be at high risk for the developmental issues described above. As reported by Herek (2009), 40% of gay men will experience antigay victimization compared to approximately 13% of lesbians and bisexual individuals. As the literature has revealed, gay males during adolescence and young adulthood are more likely then their heterosexual peers to separate from, have more insecurity about, or perceive barriers between friends and other important selfobjects (Diamond & Lucas, 2004). Once again, this risk appears to be directly related to societal oppression that consistently reinforces the inferior status and even the *immorality* of same sex

orientation. Unfortunately, this oppression appears to place the selfobject needs of mirroring and twinship, as described in the results of this study, at risk for many young gay men.

Homophobia and Heterosexism as Cultural Pathology

Social discrimination against minority groups, in particular against young gay men, could be defined as a cultural pathological condition. As described by Murphy (2008), social problems are all too often directed toward individuals instead of communities and the larger collective society. The psychological distress experienced by young gay men and other sexual minorities has been directly related to antigay discrimination and the shame associated with being viewed as inferior by the sexual majority. When a society willfully allows a minority group to suffer and even die unnecessarily because of their prejudices and biased beliefs, the society should be viewed as culturally pathological. As argued by Moradi et al. (2009), the negative social stigma against sexual minorities is so pervasive it would be nearly impossible for a sexual minority to avoid exposure to damaging antigay messages. As a doctoral student of psychology and as a gay man, I argue that the social problems of homophobia and heterosexism must decrease and ultimately end in order to prevent the continuing and future suffering of millions of young gay men and other sexual minorities. The social problem if antigay oppression should be a priority for individuals dedicated to promoting mental health and social justice for all people.

In the following section, *Interpretation of Findings*, I encourage the reader to place the responsibility for the psychological harm caused by homophobic and

heterosexist oppression on the discriminatory actions that are widespread throughout society and perpetuated by individuals, groups, and organizations as described above. With this study, I revealed that antigay oppression is significantly related to elevated self object needs, as defined by Kohut's theory of self psychology, associated psychodynamic reactions, and decreased satisfaction with life. These results indicate a social and mental health problem for the approximately 1.8 million gay men aged 18-25 in the U.S. and their network of friends and family members (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2008).

Interpretation of Findings

Selfobject Needs and Antigay Oppression

The results presented in chapter 4 relate to the research question, *what are there associations between perceived homophobic and heterosexist discrimination, self psychology needs, and life satisfaction among gay men during emerging adulthood?* The results for hypothesis 1 revealed homophobic and heterosexist discrimination is significantly associated with elevated selfobject needs. More specifically, an overall hunger for selfobject needs, a need for twinship, and a need for mirroring were significantly and positively correlated with internalized homonegativity, couples issues, and stigmatization and stereotyping. In addition, avoidance of mirroring significantly decreased as internalized homonegativity increased. In other words, as a need for mirroring increased, avoidance of mirroring decreased. Finally, the GALOSI subscale of restricted opportunities and rights was significantly correlated with an avoidance of idealization and twinship. This result indicates that individuals who experience high

levels of perceived restrictions in their lives, most likely related to their sexual orientation, might avoid being attracted to an idealized image of a role model or experiencing feelings of similarity and inclusion in their relationships with other people.

Of note, a need for idealization was not significantly associated with any of the GALOSI subscales. A possible explanation of this result is that maturation along the idealization axis is the first stage of psychological development and might not be as relevant in adolescence and young adulthood as the development along the grandiosity or ego-connectedness axes (Kohut, 1987b, 1987c).

Dangers to safety and verbal harassment and intimidation, as operationalized in two GALOSI subscales, were not significantly associated with increased selfobject needs. Perhaps this reflects a change in antigay oppression in which direct physical and verbal assaults, commonly referred to as *gay bashing*, are less likely than a broader social level of discrimination. Specifically, a more visible and acrimonious homophobia and heterosexism could lead to the results revealed in this study including an increased perception of being stereotyped and stigmatized by social messages promoting gay men as child molesters or religions which preach that being gay is immoral. Other examples of specific types of discrimination reported by the study participants include issues specific to same-sex couples, such as, a fear of demonstrating public affection or feeling the need to exclude a same-sex partner from work and family events. The following questions from the stigmatizing and stereotyping submeasure illustrate the broader social constructs associated with this type of oppression; *I have seen people assume that gay men exhibit indecent and flamboyant behavior*; *I have seen the media negatively portray gays and*

lesbians; and, *I have seen parents teach their children that gayness is disgusting* (see Appendix C).

Although cause and effect cannot be concluded with the results of the bivariate correlation test, it is assumed that the increase in selfobject needs is the result of increased homophobic and heterosexist oppression and not vice versa. In other words, it seems unlikely that an individual's selfobject needs increased perceived discrimination among a wide range of factors including internalized homonegativity, stereotyping and stigmatization, and couples issues.

The Psychodynamics of Selfobject Needs

As discussed in chapter 2, an overall hunger for selfobject needs is associated with the potential development of psychological maladjustment. This is also true for a denial of selfobject needs. In this study, as operationalized by the SONI, elevated scores on the denial of a need for idealization and twinship was positively associated with a GALOSI subscale that measured restricted opportunities and rights. It is important to note that avoidance of idealization and avoidance of mirroring are two different selfobject concepts but were combined into one subscale in the SONI instrument. However, I find it problematic that Banai, et al. (2005) combined the two factors considering the avoidance of idealization is more problematic than an avoidance of twinship (Kohut, 1977, 1978).

A hunger or denial of selfobject needs can indicate the potential for the development of narcissistic personality disorder or narcissistic tendencies in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood (Kohut, 1971). More specifically, an increased need for mirroring has been positively associated with several scales of the Narcissistic

Personality Inventory, including self-absorption, superiority, and entitlement (Banai et al., 2005).

Looking through the theoretical lens of self psychology, it is understandable that increased narcissism could develop as a protective factor for a fractured or even fragile inner self. As the minds of young gay men are assaulted by subtle and aggressive antigay oppression, combined with unmet selfobject needs, it appears that some type of subconscious psychological protective reactions would develop. It is important to note that Kohut (1987a) did not consider narcissism to be necessarily pathological but at times was an appropriate defense mechanism or reaction to unmet selfobject needs.

A hunger for mirroring and a hunger for twinship have also been associated with difficulties in maintaining self-esteem, negative emotions, and interfering thoughts or *negative self talk* (Banai et al., 2005). Multiple studies have reported that sexual minority youth, including young gay men, experience an increased prevalence of depression, anxiety, anger, and hopelessness (Almeida et al., 2009; Wright & Perry, 2006;).

The findings reported in this study reveal a potential link between antigay oppression and the unconscious factors of unmet selfobject needs and the resultant development of low self- esteem and poor affect regulation. Low self-esteem and decreased affect regulation contribute to depression and anxiety. In addition, Banai et al., (2005) reported the avoidance of idealization and twinship was also related to high levels of depression, anxiety, and hostility, but not problems regulating self-esteem. These authors argued that the defensive posture of avoidance leads to the attempted exclusion of

negative information about the self but did not protect an individual from psychological distress.

As seen in Table 3, internalized homonegativity is the subscale that had the strongest effect size across three SONI subscales: overall hunger for selfobject needs; a need for mirroring; and a need for twinship. Several authors have discussed the concept of internalized homophobia. It has been defined as applying antigay prejudice on one's self (Moradi et al., 2009). The concept of internalized homophobia could be construed as a result of negative selfobject relationships between a young gay man, his family, friends, idealized figures, dominant social values, and/or numerous other social and cultural elements. Internalized homophobia is related to difficulty regulating self-esteem, psychosocial and psychological distress, quality of relationships, and career development (Szymansi, Kashubeck-West, and Meyer, 2008). In this study, the GALOSI subscale of internalized homophobia included statements such as, *I have hidden my gayness so that people would like me*; *I have worried that people would be upset if I were out being gay*; and *I have worried I will go to hell because of my gayness* (See Appendix C).

The association between internalized homonegativity and elevated selfobject needs could be interpreted as the way antigay elements of a heterosexist society can be internalized and impact the unconscious self. This is a profound concept considering that toxic messages are widespread and can start to lead to the development of negative selfobjects at a young age. For example, as discussed in chapter 2 and reported by Athanasas and Comar (2005), a majority of students aged 12-13 reported hearing antigay slurs on a daily basis at school. It is likely that many children of this age and younger also

hear antigay messages within their families, religious institutions, and other community settings. Psychologists should consider the impact of this rhetoric on important selfobject relationships considering these toxic messages typically continue through the critical development stages of adolescence and young adulthood. As a preadolescent or adolescent boy becomes aware of his same-sex orientation and redefines selfobject relationships with important others, what happens to the cohesion of the self? The young boy might start distancing himself from the safety net of parents, other family members, and friends, resulting in unmet selfobject needs. Another consideration might include that as a gay boy begins to feel different from others, does he interpret his experiences differently and becomes more perceptive or even sensitive to breaks in self-selfobject relationships? He might even become more resistant to the healing impact of transmuting internalizations.

In two of the studies conducted during the development of the SONI, Banai et al., (2005) reported an association between the increased need for mirroring and twinship and discrepancies between various components of the self (i.e. actual self, ideal self, or ought self) and cognitive differentiation of the self (i.e. number of self-aspects, self-distinctiveness, and negative affect labels). These authors argued the results indicated a lack of cohesion as defined by Kohut. Again, considering the subconscious threats to the self, including a lack of cohesion, it is not surprising that elevated selfobject needs are associated with a range of protective defensives and affects including narcissistic factors of an inflated self worth, grandiosity, hostility, shyness, and social withdrawal. Again, it is important to note that the expression of these defenses fall on a spectrum and a

majority of gay men lead productive and healthy lives. However, an increased awareness of the psychodynamics of selfobject needs of young gay men could help mental health professionals and social support programs address not only mood disorders but issues in personal relationships, employment, and other components of a gay man's life.

Shame and Selfobject Needs

Shame is an important concept in self psychology and is viewed as a result of the self dealing with unmet selfobject needs. Kohut (1978) posited that shame-proneness is a consequence of maladjustments in the self that lead to a lack of self-cohesion and associated low self-esteem. Adolescents and young adults are at a unique risk of developing shame as they shift from the idealizations of childhood and become increasingly dependent on peers for support of the self (Shreve & Kunkel, 1991).

I suggest the results of this study appear to support the unique risk that young gay men have for developing shame, and the associated expressions of shyness, grandiosity, or social withdrawal, as indicated by the increased needs for mirroring and twinship that were associated with antigay oppression. Other studies support this result and have reported that young gay men are at the highest risk of homophobic and heterosexist discrimination among sexual minorities and are also more likely to distance themselves from friends or have an increased fear of losing friends (Diamond & Lukas, 2004; Russell, 2009).

It is important to note that shame, like any affect, is experienced on a spectrum and is not always physically or socially debilitating as an individual utilizes self defenses to avoid or decrease the experiences of degradation association with shame (Shreve &

Kunkel, 1991). However, a tragic example of extreme shame occurs when an individual attempts to escape the associated severe psychological pain by committing suicide. As discussed in chapter 2, young gay men are at an increased risk of suicide attempts and completions (Savin-Williams & Ream, 2003). I posit that this study established a psychodynamic link to the increased suicidality among young gay men as explained by the increased selfobject needs and associated psychological maladjustments.

When Do Selfobject Needs Mature?

I have discussed that the study participants had a range of selfobject needs (see Table 2). For example, the overall hunger for selfobject needs submeasure included scores ranging from 47 to 126 with a mean of 92.65, a value above the midpoint of the range. Considering the analysis described in chapter 4 revealed that there were no significant differences in selfobject needs within the age range of 18-25, participants as young as 18 and as old as 25 had elevated selfobject needs. Therefore, a puzzling question remains about the time when selfobject needs actually mature. Although this question was not addressed by this study, a reasonable assumption is that selfobject needs are less mature during preadolescents and adolescents. Additionally, maturation of the self could be stalled as a same-sex oriented boy becomes aware of his sexual orientation and begins to experience unmet selfobject needs as previously discussed. Earlier life events, including a death in the family, divorce, insufficient emotional connections with parents, etc., could also lead to elevated selfobject needs but it is unlikely that all the participants in this study would have experienced these types of challenges during early and mid-childhood. However, considering some boys become aware of their sexual

orientation or perceiving themselves as different in preadolescents, it is possible that many study participants had similar unmet selfobject needs during childhood. Therefore, elevated selfobject needs in emerging adulthood could indicate a delayed maturing of the self for individuals who experience significant unmet selfobject needs during childhood and adolescence.

Satisfaction with Life and Antigay Oppression

Perhaps one of the most important findings from this study is that life satisfaction was negatively and significantly correlated with homophobia and heterosexism. This result is relevant considering that many gay social advocates and a large percentage of funding for social justice is being directed to political and legal battles for equal rights, while limited funding is being directed to psychological research focused on sexual minorities and social support programs.

The SWLS has been used in previous studies. As reported in chapter 3, using a study sample of 114 African American college students, Pavot and Deiner (1993) reported a mean of 22.4 with standard deviation of 6.4 for the SWLS. The results of this study revealed a mean of 20.18 with a standard deviation of 7.22 for the SWLS. It is interesting to note that the findings from this study are comparable to the results reported by Pavot and Deiner considering the level of racism that was directed towards African American students in the early 1990s. In other words, two separate groups of minority youth had similar scores on the SWLS. In addition, the mean SWLS score in this study also compares to the mean SWLS score reported by individuals one year after suffering a traumatic brain injury (Corrigan, 2000). For the young gay men in this study, the mean

rating for satisfaction with life was neutral to slightly dissatisfied. Since the SWLS is also significantly and positively related to hope and optimism, decreased SWLS scores associated with antigay oppression also reflect decreased hope and optimism (Bailey, Eng, Frisch, & Snyder, 2007).

A Closer Look at the SONI and GALOSI Instruments

It is important to reiterate that this study was the first time the SONI has been fielded since being constructed through a series of seven studies conducted by Banai, et al. (2005). Therefore, the mean scores of the SONI subscales in this study cannot be compared with previous studies. However, the lack of comparison data should not be considered a limitation because comparing the SONI scores from this study with a different population might not have any significant utility. Of note, and as can be seen in Table 2, the mean scores for the subscales of the need for twinship, need for idealization, and need for mirroring were all above the midpoint of the range of scores indicating elevated selfobject needs in these three domains.

This study was also the first time all seven subscales of the GALOSI have been fielded since its development by Highlen et al., (2000). However, in a study conducted with a sample of 234 gay men aged 18-80, the verbal harassment and intimidation (VHI) and the restricted opportunities and rights (ROR) subscales were used along with other measures (Zakalik & Wie, 2006). In that study, the researchers reported a mean of 21.22 with a standard deviation of 5.27 for the VHI and a mean of 4.70 with a standard deviation of 2.31 for the ROR. These values are comparable to the results revealed in this study that revealed a mean of 20.74 with a standard deviation of 5.82 for the VHI and a

mean of 4.74 with a standard deviation of 2.49 for the ROR. I suggest these results support the validity of the GALOSI. In addition, as can be seen in Table 2, the mean value for all the GALOSI subscales were close to or above the midpoint of the range indicating a high level of perceived oppression by the study participants.

Age, Ethnicity, Selfobject Needs, and Satisfaction with Life

The results of hypothesis 2 revealed no significant difference in selfobject needs between the four ethnic groups. In the additional analyses reported in Chapter 4, there were no statistically significant differences in selfobject needs by age within the study age range of 18-25. In exploring potential differences in the GALOSI and SWLS scores by age and ethnicity, no significant differences were identified. I argue these results should be construed as supporting the stability of the SONI, GALOSI, and SWLS results across the age range and four ethnic groups included in this study and reinforce the finding that homophobia and heterosexism were related to increased selfobject needs for gay men of all ethnicities throughout emerging adulthood. However, reflecting on the work of Park (2001) in which he described that same gender loving youth who are African American experience the burdens of racism in addition to homophobia, this study raises an important question. Does a young gay man who is also an ethnic minority experience antigay oppression and racism differently as defined by the construct of selfobject needs? One possible explanation for the results found in this study is the participants self identified as gay. Perhaps the results would be different if the study had included young men of color who have sex with other men but who do not self identify as a sexual minority.

As noted in the results for hypothesis 3, there were no significant associations between elevated selfobject needs and satisfaction with life. This result appears somewhat confusing considering satisfaction with life decreased and selfobject needs increased as perceptions of antigay oppression increased. A possible explanation of this result is that the SWLS is a global score with just five questions that secures consciously accessible perceptions about one's life. In addition, the GALOSI, although more extensive with 49 questions, also secures consciously accessible perceptions of past and current experiences. In contrast, the SONI was designed to reveal subconscious factors. Perhaps different results would have been achieved about the relationship between selfobject needs and satisfaction with life if a more extensive measure of satisfaction with life had been used. I propose another explanation is that narcissistic reactions associated with elevated selfobject needs could have skewed the results. In other words, individuals displaying grandiosity or an inflated sense of self worth might not accurately rate their satisfaction with life.

Implications for Social Change

Decreasing Antigay Oppression

With this study, I revealed an important psychodynamic explanation of the psychological impact of homophobia and heterosexism on gay men during emerging adulthood. I also provided a description of the subconscious factors associated with psychological distress reported in other studies. As such, this information can enhance the argument for increasing the social change priority of reducing, and ultimately eliminating, antigay oppression in the U.S.

For several years, information has been available about the travesty of increased depression, anxiety, hopelessness, suicide ideation, and suicidality among sexual minority youth. However, adding information about the destructive impact of antigay oppression on the subconscious mind, and even potential long-term changes in an individual's personality, will, perhaps, strengthen the social change argument. Adding information about selfobject needs, a psychoanalytic construct, to the relationship between antigay oppression and psychological distress and maladjustment should provide a deeper understanding of the impact of homophobia and heterosexism on the mental health of young gay men. Although I did not confirm causation with this study, it raised questions that should be explored in additional research studies in order to further explore the complexity of Kohut's theory of selfobject needs and the life path of young gay men.

Expanding Social Support Programs

In addition to supporting efforts to decrease antigay oppression, I revealed a need to expand effective social support for gay men during adolescents and young adulthood. The individuals in this population have a unique need for recognition of their self worth, praise for accomplishments, and an expanded network of friends who appreciate them for who they are. Social advocates could use this information to reinforce the need to expand the availability of social support networks, such as establishing gay-straight alliances on school campuses and community-based school social support programs. These resources provide young gay men with access to supportive peers and mentors. I have demonstrated this social need with the study results that indicated young gay men have an elevated need for mirroring and twinship.

Improving Psychological Care

I will distribute the results of this study to help inform psychologists and other mental health professionals about the unique risks young gay men face from exposure to antigay oppression and how it can be psychologically expressed as described above. By understanding the psychodynamics associated with shame and unmet selfobject needs, psychologists, if appropriately trained, could utilize psychoanalytic psychology to treat psychological distress among young gay men. As previously stated, it is likely the unmet selfobject needs for the study population developed during preadolescence and adolescence. This assumption is made based on the psychological distress that has been reported for gay boys during early adolescence. Therefore, psychologists should consider using the construct of selfobect needs when working with younger gay boys presenting with psychological distress. Perhaps with this study, I have revealed a new approach to the psychological treatment of young gay men and other sexual minorities who live in an oppressive society (See Figure 3). A specific recommendation is to increase the use of the SONI and GALOSI for assessing the object needs and perceived discrimination among young gay men.

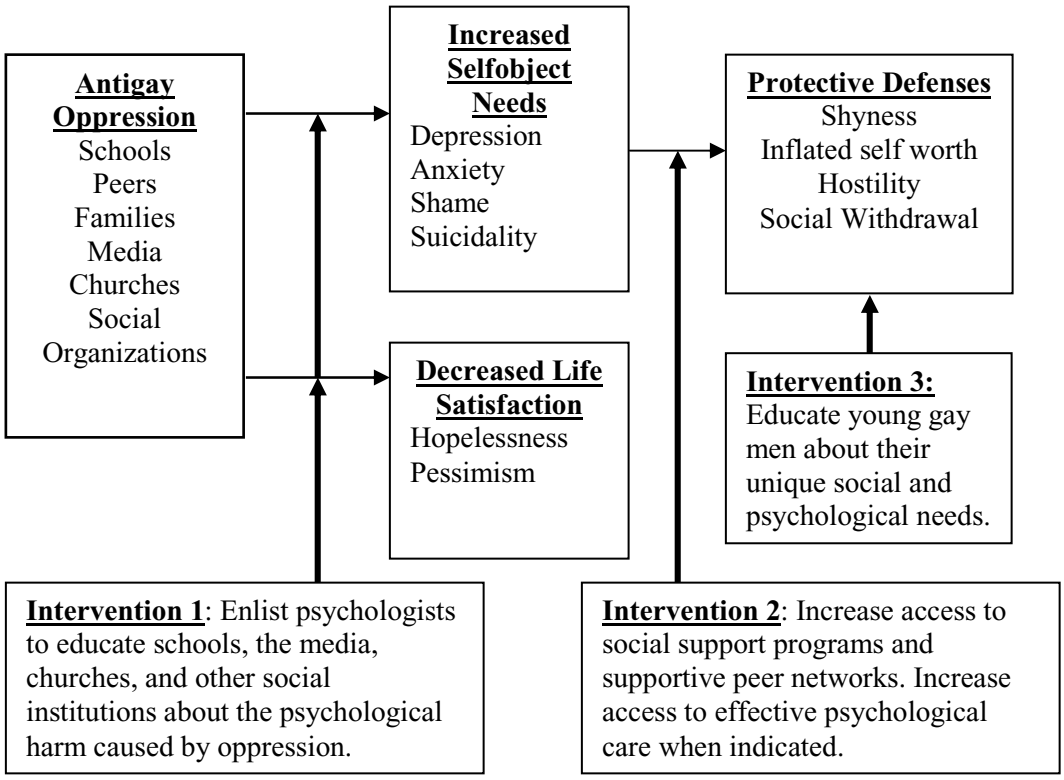

Figure 3 Social change model for young gay men

Recommendations for Action

I will distribute the results of this study to the psychology field through the dissemination plan described below. An important audience will be the psychoanalytic community that has not previously quantitatively explored the psychodynamics associated with homophobic and heterosexist discrimination. However, the study results should also be distributed to all psychologists and other mental health professionals working with young gay men.

I will also frame the study results in language appropriate for general audiences so the information can be used to inform social advocates, social support organizations, school professionals, and gay men themselves about the unique psychological and social

needs of young gay men. I also provided information on how to promote mental health and mitigate psychological distress through improved social support interventions, including programs within schools.

As described in Figure 3, three social change interventions are recommended. First, I recommend using the study results to decrease antigay oppression by expanding the awareness of how it negatively impacts the subconscious minds of young gay men Psychologists should be leaders in this social change effort. Additionally, schools leaders and social advocates should work to increase social support programs on school campuses and in other community settings in order to expand access to supportive peers and mentors for young gay men. Psychologists and other mental health professionals might improve care for young gay men by addressing selfobject needs in treatment plan. Finally, schools and social support programs should educate young gay men about their unique social and psychological needs and how these needs might impact their relationships, careers, and life stress.

Dissemination Plan

I will disseminate the results of this study in several ways. First, a journal article will be developed and submitted to the *Psychoanalytic Psychology* or the *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, both are journals of the American Psychological Association. In addition, applications will be submitted to present the study through a poster or platform session at the annual meetings of the American Psychological Association, the Western Psychological Association, and the Oregon Psychological

Association. A poster about the study has been approved for Walden University's 2011 Winter Research Symposium in January.

In order to reach the study population, an article will be submitted to the Advocate, a popular publication for sexual minorities. An article will also be submitted for inclusion in the editorial page of gay.com.

Conclusion

I conducted this study to learn about the psychological needs of young gay men. I implemented the study with rigorous attention to appropriate scientific design and statistical analysis in order to produce valid results. Although I had to expend extensive effort to secure a national study sample, the study was strengthened by this approach and the results can, therefore, be generalized to young gay men throughout the country.

I propose this study was novel in that it was the first quantitative study that explored the psychodynamics of antigay oppression on a sample of sexual minority youth. As such, the results should be used to inform psychologists and other mental health professionals who either work with young gay men or who are interested in promoting their mental health. The results should also be used to enhance initiatives to reduce antigay oppression and increase social support networks for young gay men throughout the U.S.

The most meaningful way to close this dissertation and to reinforce the social and psychological needs of young gay men, is to paraphrase the words of Heinz Kohut that are quoted in chapter 2. A young gay man will only experience life as a cohesive, optimistic, and productive self, if he experiences his environment and people in his life as

responding to him in a joyful way and providing strength and calmness as idealized figures, being present for him, and able to perceive and value his inner life, being aware of his needs, and allowing him into their inner life when his is in need of nourishment (Kohut, 1984, p.52).

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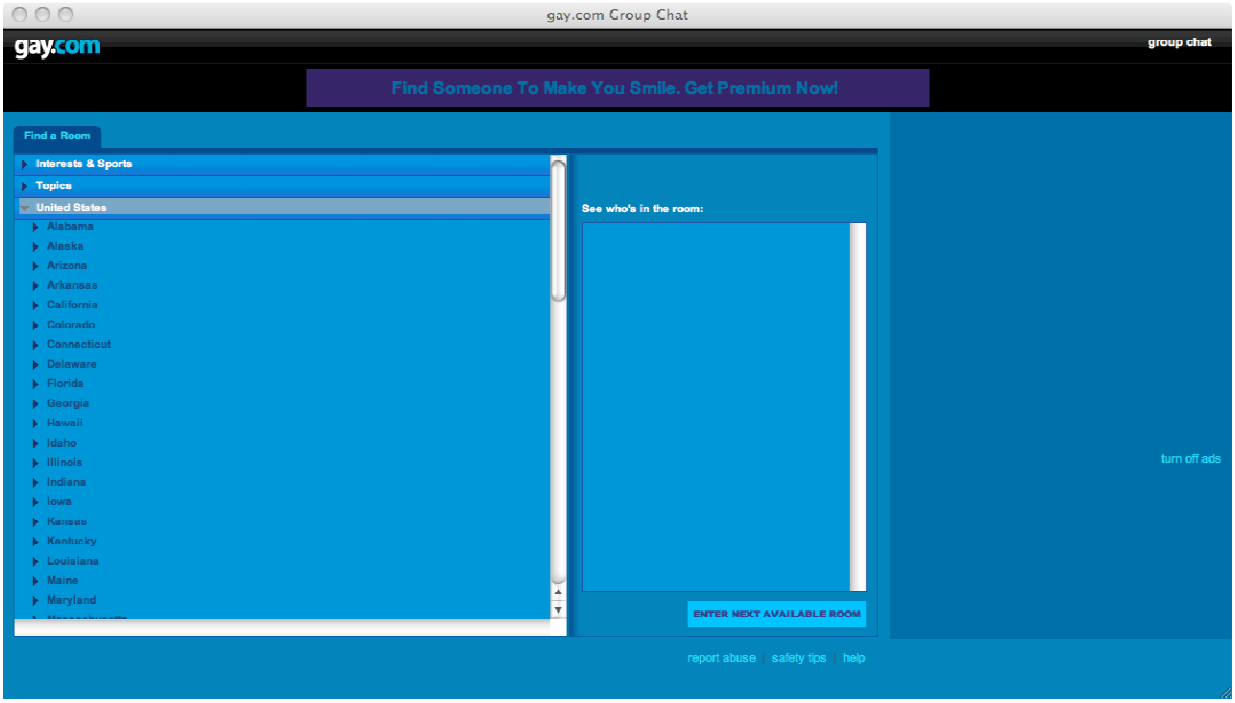
Appendix A

Notice for Gay-Friendly Websites and Website Screens

My name is Ken Allen and I am a PhD student in Psychology at Walden University. You are invited to participate in an anonymous online study about the psychology of young gay men. The purpose of my study is to explore the psychological needs of gay men who have been experienced homophobia. This dissertation will help us understand the strengths and challenges of gay men. If you are between 18 to 25 years of age and are gay, queer, or questioning your sexual orientation, you are eligible to participate in the study. Participation is voluntary, no identifying information will be collected, and all information will remain anonymous.

The study will include a survey with approximately 90 questions and should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. If you are interested in participating in the study, please go to http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/younggaymen to complete the anonymous online survey.

Thank you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Find Someone To Make You Smile. Get Premium Now!
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Topics
United States
Alabama
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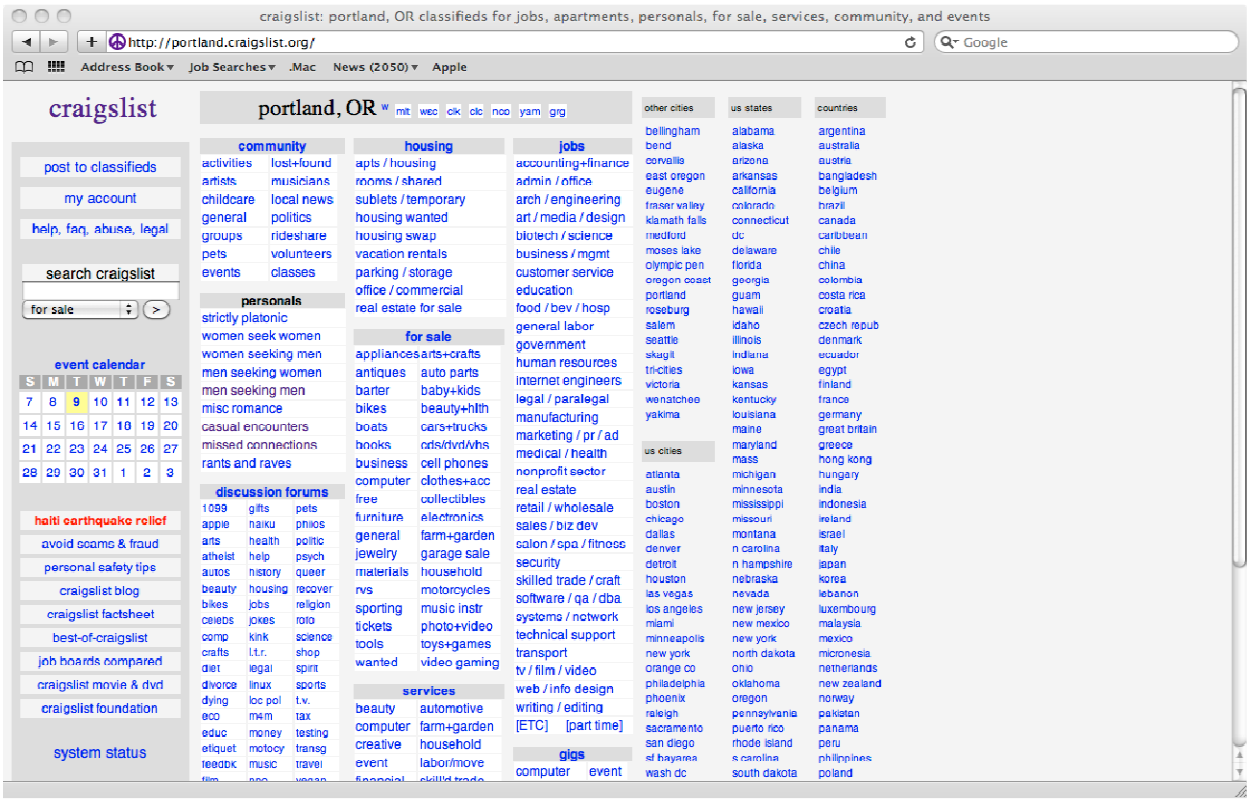
Arizona
Arkansas
California
Colorado
Connecticut
Delaware
Florida
Georgia
Hawaii
Idaho
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maine
Maryland
See who's in the room:
ENTER NEXT AVAILABLE ROOM
turn off ads
report abuse
safety tips
help


craigslist: portland, OR classifieds for jobs, apartments, personals, for sale, services, community, and events
http://portland.craigslist.org/
Google
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Job Searches
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News (2050)
Apple
craigslist
portland, OR
post to classifieds
my account
help, faq, abuse, legal
search craigslist
for sale
event calendar
haiti earthquake relief
avoid scams & fraud
personal safety tips
craigslist blog
craigslist factsheet
best-of-craigslist
job boards compared
craigslist movie & dvd
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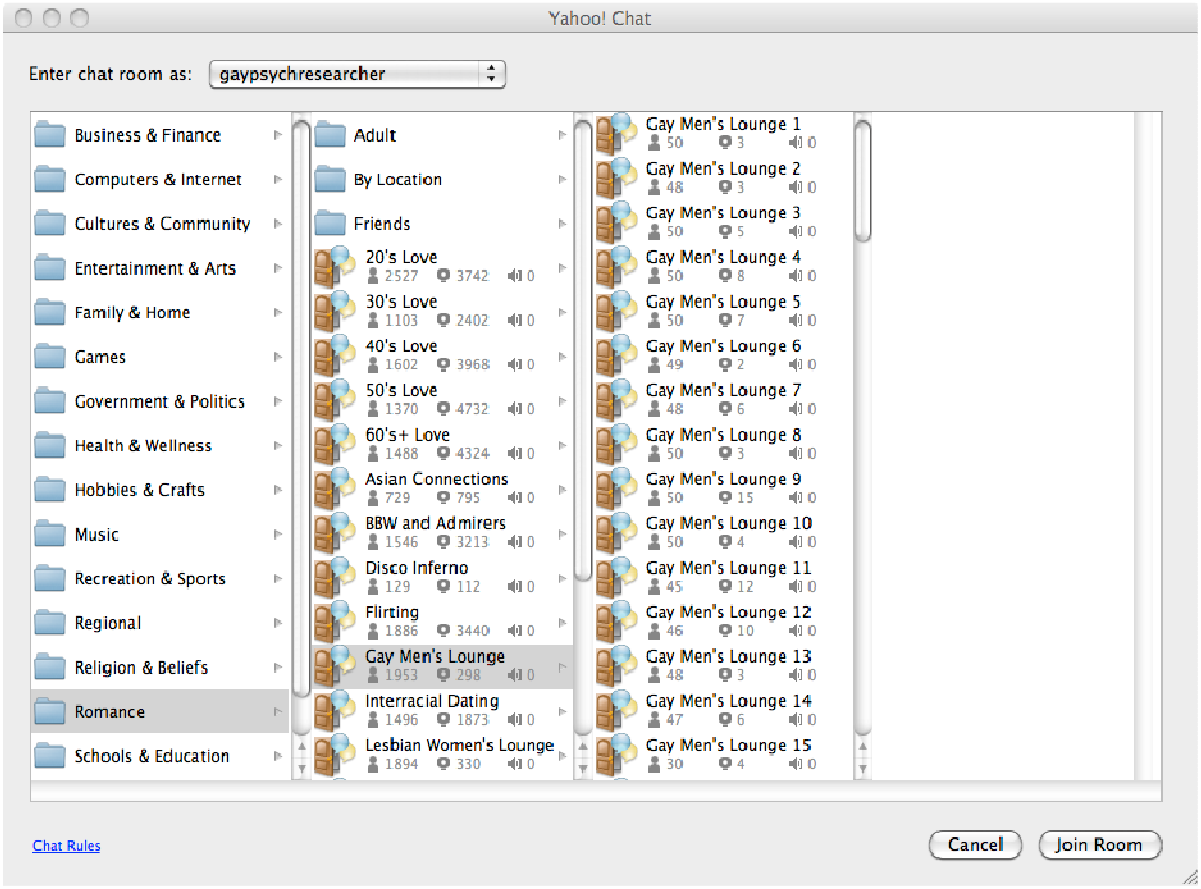
Yahoo! Chat
Enter chat room as:
gaypsychresearcher
Business & Finance
Computers & Internet
Cultures & Community
Entertainment & Arts
Family & Home
Games
Government & Politics
Health & Wellness
Hobbies & Crafts
Music
Recreation & Sports
Regional
Religion & Beliefs
Romance
Schools & Education
Adult
By Location
Friends
20's Love 2527 3742 0
30's Love 1103 2402 0
40's Love 1602 3968 0
50's Love 1370 4732 0
60's+ Love 1488 4324 0
Asian Connections 729 795 0
BBW and Admirers 1546 3213 0
Disco Inferno 129 112 0
Flirting 1886 3440 0
Gay Men's Lounge 1953 298 0
Interracial Dating 1496 1873 0
Lesbian Women's Lounge 1894 330 0
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Chat Rules
Cancel
Join Room

Appendix B

Informed Consent Form

Consent to Participate in a Dissertation Research Study on the Psychology of Young Gay Men

Study conducted by Ken Allen, M.S.
PhD in Psychology Doctoral Student
Walden University

You are invited to take part in a research study that I am conducting for my PhD in Psychology dissertation. The study will collect information about young gay men's experiences with personal relationships and any experiences with discrimination. You are being asked to participate in this anonymous study because you have identified yourself to be between the ages of 18 and 25 years old and confirmed that you are gay, queer, or questioning your sexual orientation.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to read approximately 90 short questions and mark the answer that matches what you believe is your personal experience. It should take no more than 30 minutes to complete the survey. Your participation is completely voluntary and anonymous. No information will be collected during the survey that could identify you by name or any other information that could identify you personally.

There are minimal risks associated with this study. You may find some of the questions uncomfortable if you or someone you know has experienced negative events associated with being gay. If you experience any emotional discomfort or distress, you should contact your local gay community center, a mental health provider, or call The Trevor Helpline at 866-4-U-TREVOR.

There may be no personal benefit to you from your participation but the information received through this study may help researchers develop a better understanding about the psychology of young gay men and their personal experiences. You will not be compensated for participating in the study.

Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and will be anonymous. This means that you can stop taking the test at any time, and that I will not know who you are. You may refuse to participate or withdraw your consent or discontinue your participation in the study at any time without penalty. I will not use the information for any purposes outside of this research project.

If at any time you have questions about the survey or the study, please contact Ken Allen at 503-803-5533 or by email at ken.allen@waldenu.edu, or my dissertation Chair, Dr.

Brian Ragsdale at brian.ragsdale@waldenu.edu. If you want to talk about any of your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott, our Institutional Review Board (IRB) representative. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 1-800-925-3368, extension 1210. Walden University's approval number for this study is 07-02-10-0390380 and it expires on July 1, 2011. Statement of Consent: I have read the above information and feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my participation. By clicking here, I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Appendix C

Gay and Lesbian Oppressive Situations Inventory – Frequency (GALOSI-F)

And Demographic Questions

Your Age: _____
Please check the ethnic group you belong to: _____African American/nonHispanic
_____Asian or Pacific Islander _____Hispanic _____White/nonHispanic

Instructions. Gay men and lesbians often encounter discrimination, prejudice, and negative stereotypes based on their sexual orientation. Below are situations that you may have encountered. Please think about each situation and how often you have experienced it. Please answer all questions.

Frequency

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
0	1	2	3	4

Couples Issues (CI)

1. I have been uncomfortable about introducing my partner/boyfriend to biological family members.
2. I have seen that it is harder for gay to have children than heterosexuals.
3. I have been uncomfortable bringing my partner/boyfriend to work-related social events.
4. I have been afraid to publicly display affection for my partner/boyfriend.

Dangers to Safety (DS)

5. I have been physically threatened because of my gayness.
6. I have known gay people who committed suicide.
7. I have been afraid of being physically injured because of my gayness.
8. I have known gay people who have attempted suicide.
9. I have known people who have been physically injured because of their gayness.

Exclusion, Rejection, and Separation (ERS)

10. I have felt isolated by members of my biological family because of my gayness.
11. People have told me to keep my gayness a secret.
12. I have been afraid that my family would reject me because of my gayness.
13. My biological family has denied the existence of gay family members.
14. Biological family members have rejected me because of my gayness.
15. I have had biological family members ask me to pretend that I am not gay.

16. I have had to think about how much of my gayness to share with new people.
17. Members of my biological family have acted like gayness is wrong.
18. Friends have rejected me because of my gayness.

Internalized Homonegativity (IH)

19. I have hidden my gayness so that people would like me.
20. My gayness has been in conflict with my religious beliefs.
21. I have had to hide my gayness to be accepted by members of my biological family.
22. It has been hard for me to feel good about myself because of people's negative views about my gayness.
23. It has been hard for me to accept my gayness.
24. I have worried that people would be upset if I were out about being gay.
25. I have denied my gayness.
26. I have felt depressed about my gayness.
27. I have worried I will go to hell because of my gayness.
28. I have worried about disapproval when I have shared my gayness with heterosexuals.

Stigmatizing and Stereotyping (SS)

29. I have seen the media negatively portray gays and lesbians.
30. I have seen people assume gay men are HIV+
31. I have seen people assume that gay men exhibit indecent and flamboyant behavior.
32. When I was growing up, my religion preached that gayness is wrong.
33. I have seen people assume that lesbians are overly masculine women.
34. I have known heterosexuals who think that gays are child molesters.
35. I have been stereotyped based on my gayness.
36. I have gotten the message that gayness is undesirable.
37. I have seen people assume that gay men have AIDS.
38. I have seen people assume that lesbians hate men.
39. I have seen parents teach their children that gayness is disgusting.

Restricted Opportunities and Rights

40. Advancement opportunities at work have been limited because of my gayness.
41. I have been denied employment because of my gayness.
42. I have been denied housing because of my gayness.

Verbal Harassment and Intimidation (VHI)

43. I have had anti-gay remarks directed at me.

44. I have heard people telling gay-bashing jokes.
45. Members of my biological family have made anti-gay remarks.
46. People have treated me differently if they think I am gay.
47. I have seen anti-gay graffiti in public places.
48. I have heard people make making negative remarks about gays.
49. I have seen people tell lesbians that all they need is a good man.

Appendix D

Selfobject Needs Inventory (SONI)

Below are statements that you may agree or disagree with. Using the 1 - 7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

- 7 – much
- 6 - Agree
- 5 - Slightly agree
- 4 - Neither agree nor disagree
- 3 - Slightly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 1 – Not at all

1. I feel hurt when my achievements are not sufficiently admired.
2. It's important for me to be around other people who are in the same situation as me.
3. When I have a problem, it's difficult to accept advice even from experienced people.
4. Associating with successful people allows me to feel successful as well.
5. I don't need other people's praise.
6. I would just not be involved with people who suffer from problems similar to mine.
7. I'm disappointed when my work is not appreciated.
8. I seek out people who share my values, opinions, and activities.
9. I find it difficult to accept guidance even from people I respect.
10. I identify with famous people.
11. I don't function well in situations where I receive too little attention.
12. I feel good knowing that I'm part of a group of people who share a particular lifestyle.
13. I feel bad about myself after having to be helped by others with more experience.
14. It's important for me to feel that a close friend and I are "in the same boat".
15. When I'm doing something, I don't need acknowledgement from others.
16. It bothers me to be in close relationships with people who are similar to me.
17. I am attracted to successful people.
18. I have no need to boast about my achievements.
19. I feel better about myself when I am in the company of experts.
20. I would rather not be friends with people who are too similar to me.
21. I feel better when I and someone close to me share similar feelings to other people.
22. It's important for me to be part of a group who share similar opinions.
23. I don't really care what others thing about me.
24. I know that I'm successful, so I have no need for others' feedback.

25. I'm bored by people who think and feel too much like me.
26. It's important for me to be around people who can serve as my role models.
27. I feel stronger when I have people around who are dealing with similar problems.
28. It's difficult for me to belong to a group of people who are too much like me.
29. In order to feel successful, I need reassurance and approval from others.
30. When I'm worried or distressed, getting advice from experts doesn't help much.
31. I try to be around people I admire.
32. I gain self-confidence from having friends whose beliefs are similar to mine.
33. I need a lot of support from others.
34. I find it difficult to be proud of the groups I belong to.
35. Most of the time I feel like I'm not getting enough recognition from my superiors.
36. It's important for me to belong to high-status, "glamorous" social groups.
37. I don't need support and encouragement from others.
38. I would rather not belong to a group of people whose lifestyle is similar to mine.

The individual SONI scales include the following questions:

1. Hunger for Selfobject Needs Scores: 21–147.
    Need for Twinship (NT): 2, 8, 12, 14, 21, 22, 27, 32.
    Need for Idealization (NI): 4, 10, 17, 19, 26, 31, 36.
    Need for Mirroring (NM): 1, 7, 11, 29, 33, 35.
2. Denial of Selfobject Needs Scores: 17-119
    Avoidance of Idealization and Twinship (AIT): 3, 6, 9, 13, 16, 20, 25, 28, 30, 34, 38.
    Avoidance of Mirroring (AM): 5, 15, 18, 23, 24, 37.

Appendix E

Satisfaction with Life Scale

Below are five statements that you may agree or disagree with. Using the 1 - 7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

- 7 - Strongly agree
- 6 - Agree
- 5 - Slightly agree
- 4 - Neither agree nor disagree
- 3 - Slightly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 1 - Strongly disagree

____ In most ways my life is close to my ideal.
____ The conditions of my life are excellent.
____ I am satisfied with my life.
____ So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.
____ If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

Scores and Rating Categories

- 31 - 35 Extremely satisfied
- 26 - 30 Satisfied
- 21 - 25 Slightly satisfied
- 20 Neutral
- 15 - 19 Slightly dissatisfied
- 10 - 14 Dissatisfied
- 5 - 9 Extremely dissatisfied

Appendix F

Survey Instrument Fielded on Survey Monkey

Psychology Survey, Gay Men 18-25

Informed Consent

1. Informed Consent Form

Consent to Participate in a Dissertation Research Study on the Psychology of Young Gay Men

Study conducted by Ken Allen, M.S.
PhD in Psychology Doctoral Student
Walden University

You are invited to take part in a research study that I am conducting for my PhD in Psychology dissertation. The study will collect information about young gay men's experiences with personal relationships and any experiences with discrimination. You are being asked to participate in this anonymous study because you have identified yourself to be between the ages of 18 and 25 years old and confirmed that you are gay, queer, or questioning your sexual orientation.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to read approximately 90 short questions and mark the answer that matches what you believe is your personal experience. It should take no more than 30 minutes to complete the survey. Your participation is completely voluntary and anonymous. No information will be collected during the survey that could identify you by name or any other information that could identify you personally.

There are minimal risks associated with this study. You may find some of the questions uncomfortable if you or someone you know has experienced negative events associated with being gay. If you experience any emotional discomfort or distress, you shouldcontact your local gay community center, a mental health provider, or call The TrevorHelpline at 866-4-U-TREVOR.

There may be no personal benefit to you from your participation but the information received through this study may help researchers develop a better understanding about the psychology of young gay men and their personal experiences. You will not be compensated for participating in the study.

Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and will be anonymous. This means that you can stop taking the test at any time, and that I will not know who you are. You may refuse to participate or withdraw your consent or discontinue your participation in the study at any time without penalty. I will not use the information for any purposes outside of this research project.

If at any time you have questions about the survey or the study, please contact Ken Allen at 503-803-5533 or by email at ken.allen@waldenu.edu, or my dissertation Chair, Dr. Brian Ragsdale at brian.ragsdale@waldenu.edu. If you want to talk about any of your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott, our Institutional Review Board (IRB) representative. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 1-800-925-3368, extension 1210. Walden University's approval number for this study is 07-02-10-0390380 and it expires on July 1, 2011.

Statement of Consent: I have read the above information and feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my participation. By clicking here, I am agreeing to terms described above.

◯ I have read and agree with the informed consent form.

Psychology Survey, Gay Men 18-25

Survey Part I

1. What is your age?

◯ 18 ◯ 19 ◯ 20 ◯ 21 ◯ 22 ◯ 23 ◯ 24 ◯ 25

2. What ethnic group do you belong to?

◯ African-American/non-Hispanic

◯ Asian or Pacific Islander

◯ Hispanic

◯ White/non-Hispanic

Psychology Survey, Gay Men 18-25

Survey Part II

Instructions. Gay men and lesbians often encounter discrimination, prejudice, and negative stereotypes based on their sexual orientation. Below are situations that you may have encountered. Please think about each situation and how often you have experienced it. Please answer all questions.

1. I have been uncomfortable about introducing my partner/boyfriend to biological family members.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

2. I have seen that it is harder for gays to have children than heterosexuals.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

3. I have been uncomfortable bringing my partner/boyfriend to work-related social events.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

4. I have been afraid to publicly display affection for my partner/boyfriend.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

5. I have been physically threatened because of my gayness.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

6. I have known gay people who committed suicide.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

7. I have been afraid of being physically injured because of my gayness.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

8. I have known gay people who have attempted suicide.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

9. I have been physically injured because of my gayness.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

10. I have felt isolated by members of my biological family because of my gayness.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

11. People have told me to keep my gayness a secret.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

12. I have been afraid that my family would reject me because of my gayness.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

Psychology Survey, Gay Men 18-25

13. My biological family has denied the existence of gay family members.

○ Never ○ Rarely ○ Sometimes ○ Often ○ Almost Always

14. Biological family members have rejected me because of my gayness.

○ Never ○ Rarely ○ Sometimes ○ Often ○ Almost Always

15. I have had biological family members ask me to pretend that I am not gay.

○ Never ○ Rarely ○ Sometimes ○ Often ○ Almost Always

16. I have had to think about how much of my gayness to share with new people.

○ Never ○ Rarely ○ Sometimes ○ Often ○ Almost Always

17. Members of my biological family have acted like gayness is wrong.

○ Never ○ Rarely ○ Sometimes ○ Often ○ Almost Always

18. Friends have rejected me because of my gayness.

○ Never ○ Rarely ○ Sometimes ○ Often ○ Almost Always

19. I have hidden my gayness so that people would like me.

○ Never ○ Rarely ○ Sometimes ○ Often ○ Almost Always

20. My gayness has been in conflict with my religious beliefs.

○ Never ○ Rarely ○ Sometimes ○ Often ○ Almost Always

21. I have had to hide my gayness to be accepted by members of my biological family.

○ Never ○ Rarely ○ Sometimes ○ Often ○ Almost Always

22. It has been hard for me to feel good about myself because of people's negative views about my gayness.

○ Never ○ Rarely ○ Sometimes ○ Often ○ Almost Always

23. It has been hard for me to accept my gayness.

○ Never ○ Rarely ○ Sometimes ○ Often ○ Almost Always

24. I have worried that people would be upset if I were out about being gay.

○ Never ○ Rarely ○ Sometimes ○ Often ○ Almost Always

25. I have denied my gayness.

○ Never ○ Rarely ○ Sometimes ○ Often ○ Almost Always

26. I have felt depressed about my gayness.

○ Never ○ Rarely ○ Sometimes ○ Often ○ Almost Always

Psychology Survey, Gay Men 18-25

27. I have worried I will go to hell because of my gayness.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

28. I have worried about disapproval when I have shared my gayness with heterosexuals.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

29. I have seen the media negatively portray gays and lesbians.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

30. I have seen people assume gay men are HIV+.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

31. I have seen people assume that gay men exhibit indecent and flamboyant behavior.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

32. When I was growing up, my religion preached that gayness is wrong.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

33. I have seen people assume that lesbians are overly masculine women.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

34. I have known heterosexuals who think that gays are child molesters.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

35. I have been stereotyped based on my gayness.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

36. I have gotten the message that gayness is undesirable.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

37. I have seen people assume that gay men have AIDS.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

38. I have seen people assume that lesbians hate men.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

39. I have seen parents teach their children that gayness is disgusting.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

40. Advancement opportunities at work have been limited because of my gayness.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

Psychology Survey, Gay Men 18-25

41. I have been denied employment because of my gayness.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

42. I have been denied housing because of my gayness.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

43. I have had anti-gay remarks directed at me.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

44. I have heard people telling gay-bashing jokes.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

45. Members of my biological family have made anti-gay remarks.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

46. People have treated me differently if they think I am gay.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

47. I have seen anti-gay graffiti in public places.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

48. I have heard people make making negative remarks about gays.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

49. I have seen people tell lesbians that all they need is a good man.

◯ Never ◯ Rarely ◯ Sometimes ◯ Often ◯ Almost Always

Psychology Survey, Gay Men 18-25

Survey Part III: You are More than Half Way Done!

Instructions: Below are statements that you may agree or disagree with. Using the options listed below each statement, indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

1. I feel hurt when my achievements are not sufficiently admired.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

2. It's important for me to be around other people who are in the same situation as me.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

3. When I have a problem, it's difficult to accept advice even from experienced people.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

4. Associating with successful people allows me to feel successful as well.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Not at all

5. I don't need other people's praise.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

6. I would just not be involved with people who suffer from problems similar to mine.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

7. I'm disappointed when my work is not appreciated.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

Psychology Survey, Gay Men 18-25

8. I seek out people who share my values, opinions, and activities.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

9. I find it difficult to accept guidance even from people I respect.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

10. I identify with famous people.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

11. I don't function well in situations where I receive too little attention.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

12. I feel good knowing that I'm part of a group of people who share a particular lifestyle.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

13. I feel bad about myself after having to be helped by others with more experience.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

14. It's important for me to feel that a close friend and I are "in the same boat".

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

15. When I'm doing something, I don't need acknowledgement from others.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

Psychology Survey, Gay Men 18-25

16. It bothers me to be in close relationships with people who are similar to me.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

17. I am attracted to successful people.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

18. I have no need to boast about my achievements.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

19. I feel better about myself when I am in the company of experts.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

20. I would rather not be friends with people who are too similar to me.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

21. I feel better when I and someone close to me share similar feelings to other people.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

22. It's important for me to be part of a group who share similar opinions.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

23. I don't really care what others think about me.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

Psychology Survey, Gay Men 18-25

24. I know that I'm successful, so I have no need for others' feedback.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree nor disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

25. I'm bored by people who think and feel too much like me.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

26. t's important for me to be around people who can serve as my role models.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

27. I feel stronger when I have people around who are dealing with similar problems.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

28. It's difficult for me to belong to a group of people who are too much like me.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

29. In order to feel successful, I need reassurance and approval from others.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

30. When I'm worried or distressed, getting advice from experts doesn't help much.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

31. I try to be around people I admire.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

Psychology Survey, Gay Men 18-25

32. I gain self-confidence from having friends whose beliefs are similar to mine.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

33. I need a lot of support from others.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

34. I find it difficult to be proud of the groups I belong to.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

35. Most of the time I feel like I'm not getting enough recognition from my superiors.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

36. It's important for me to belong to high-status, "glamorous" social groups.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

37. I don't need support and encouragement from others.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

38. I would rather not belong to a group of people whose lifestyle is similar to mine.

◯ Very Much ◯ Agree ◯ Slightly Agree ◯ Neither Agree or Disagree ◯ Slightly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Not at all

Psychology Survey, Gay Men 18-25

Survey Part IV - Just 5 Short Questions and You Are Done!

Below are five statements that you may agree or disagree with. Using the scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by selecting the appropriate reponse. Please be open and honest in your responding.

1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.

◯ Strongly disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Slightly disagree ◯ Neither agree or disagree ◯ Slightly agree ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly agree

2. The conditions of my life are excellent.

◯ Strongly disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Slightly disagree ◯ Neither agree or disagree ◯ Slightly agree ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly agree

3. I am satisfied with my life.

◯ Strongly disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Slightly disagree ◯ Neither agree or disagree ◯ Slightly agree ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly agree

4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.

◯ Strongly disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Slightly disagree ◯ Neither agree or disagree ◯ Slightly agree ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly agree

5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

◯ Strongly disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Slightly disagree ◯ Neither agree or disagree ◯ Slightly agree ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly agree

Appendix G

Permissions

Permission to Use the Selfobject Needs Inventory:

Phil is 100% accurate. All the information is in the article. In any case, I would be glad to assist you in the research you will conduct. Good luck -- Mario

Professor Mario Mikulincer, Dean
The New School of Psychology
Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) Herzliya
-----Original Message-----□From: Phil Shaver [mailto:prshaver@ucdavis.edu] □Sent: Thursday, December 17, 2009 12:30 AM□To: 'Ken Allen'□Cc: Mikulincer Mario□Subject: RE: Request for Information on the Selfobject Needs Inventory(SONI)

I'll check this with Mario Mikulincer. The original work was part of Erez Banai's dissertation research. I don't have any information that is not in the article. The items are provided in an appendix at the end. Our findings are all in the article. I think the next step is likely to be yours. ;-)

Phil
Phillip R. Shaver, PhD
Distinguished Professor of Psychology
Past President, Int. Assoc. for Relationship Research
Department of Psychology
University of California, Davis

From: Ken Allen [mailto:kendallen@comcast.net
Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2009 11:43 AM
To: prshaver@ucdavis.edu
Subject: Request for Information on the Selfobject Needs Inventory (SONI)
Dear Dr. Shaver:
I enjoyed reading the journal article "Selfobject Needs in Kohut's Self Psychology" that you coauthored. I am interested in learning more about the SONI instrument. I am working on my doctoral dissertation in psychology and will be focusing on object relations during emerging adulthood. I would appreciate any information you can provide about accessing additional information about the SONI, ability to use the inventory, and any copyright issues.

Best Regards,
Ken
Ken Allen, M.S.
Doctoral Student

School of Psychology
Walden University
ken.allen@waldenu.edu

Permission to Use the Gay and Lesbian Oppressive Situation Inventory (GALOSI)

Ken,

Here is all that I have left. I am assuming that you checked with Robyn and Meifen. I have sent what I have had on my computer hard drive to whoever inquires. When I change computers, more seems to be lost.

Best wishes to you in your research. You may use whatever we created for your research. If you would share your finding with me if you choose to do research with parts of the GALOSI, I would be appreciative.

Pam

Pamela Highlen, PhD
-----Original Message-----
From: Ken Allen [mailto:kendallen@comcast.net]
Sent: Monday, December 28, 2009 1:50 PM
To: highlen.1@osu.edu
Subject: Question about the Gay and Lesbian Oppressive Situation Inventory

Dear Dr. Highlen:

I read about the Gay and Lesbian Oppressive Situation Inventory (GALOSI) in an article authored by Robyn Zakalik and Meifen Wei from Iowa State University. I am working on my dissertation for my PhD in Psychology and this inventory looks very promising for my research. I have not been able locate any additional information on the inventory. If possible, can you please direct me to where I can locate the GALOSI and if there are any proprietary issues associated with using this inventory? Thank you for any information you can provide.

Best Regards,
Ken
Ken Allen, M.S.
Doctoral Student
School of Psychology
Walden University

Curriculum Vitae

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1224 SW Westwood Court
Portland, Oregon 97239
503-803-5533
kendallen@comcast.net

Relevant Professional Experience

11/07 – Present Senior Consultant, Nonprofit Results Consulting, Portland, OR. Provide nonprofit organizations with expert consulting services in the areas of strategic planning, program research, development and evaluation, establishing performance measures, and change management.

12/00-09/07 Director of Program Planning and Training**,** National Resource Center for Health Programs and Strategies, Children's National Medical Center, Washington, D.C. Managed program planning and training initiatives for Federally funded grant programs. Assisted grantees with achieving required performance measures through effective project management and leadership development. Provided consultation to Federal project officers on strategic and tactical issues for state and national healthcare initiatives. Developed and conducted professional educational conferences and web-based training sessions.

5/96-12/00 Senior Program Planning Associate, Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) National Resource Center, Children's National Medical Center, Washington, DC. Planned initiatives aimed at improving access to emergency medical care for children and adolescents. Provided technical assistance in the areas of project management, partnership building, grant writing, and disaster preparedness for grantees receiving more than $20 million in Federal grant funding.

10/90-3/96 Manager, Community Education. Center for Healthier Communities, Children's Hospital and Health Center, San Diego, California Developed, implemented, and evaluated community health programs for this regional pediatric trauma center. Responsibilities included the coordination of the San Diego Safe Kids Coalition, recruitment of sponsors for community education projects, development of injury prevention programs, and creation of a health-information telephone line. Developed a weekly television news segment and annual exposition on child health issues, produced public service announcements, and functioned as the hospital's spokesperson for prevention issues.

9/88-10/90 Health Education Specialist II**,** Kaiser Permanente, Los Angeles, California Developed health education programs for this HMO Medical Center that

provided services to a culturally diverse patient population of over 250,000. Created, implemented and evaluated behavior modification programs for patients with HIV/AIDS, hyperlipidemia, diabetes and obesity. Developed clinic/provider interventions, instructed classes, and trained clinical staff.

7/85-2/88 Health Educator**.** Park Center for Health, San Diego, California. Developed and evaluated health promotion programs for this internal medicine practice specializing in the treatment and prevention of HIV/AIDS. Provided group and individual behavior modification counseling.

Academic Experience

2/09 - 1/11 PhD in Psychology, Research and Evaluation
Walden University, Minneapolis, Minnesota

12/07 – 2/09 Master of Science, Psychology
Walden University, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

10/81-12/86 Bachelor of Science - Neurophysiology, University of California, San Diego.

Other Training

Harvard Management Mentoring Program, Children's National Medical Center, 2006

Project Management Certificate Program, University of California, Berkeley, 2003

Management Training Program, Children's National Medical Center, 2002

Honors

Psi Chi National Honor Society in Psychology

Community Service

12/09 – Present
Founder and President, The National GLBTQ Youth Foundation

11/08 – Present
Volunteer, New Avenues for Youth. Provide assistance to staff at this nonprofit organization dedicated to homeless and at-risk adolescents.

9/10 – Present
Diversity Committee, Oregon Psychological Association

Publications

Allen, K., & et al. (2006*). EMSC performance measures implementation Guide.* Washington, D.C.: Health Resources and Services Administration.

Allen, K., & Ball, J. (2000). Consensus recommendations for responding to children's emergencies in disasters. *National Academies of Practice Forum, Issues in Interdisciplinary Care*, 2(4), 253-257.

Allen, K., Ball, J., & Helfer, B. (1998). Preventing and managing childhood emergencies in schools. *The Journal of the National Association of School Nurses*, 14(1), 20-24.

Allen, K. (1996) *Preventing childhood emergencies: A guide to developing effective injury prevention initiatives.* Washington, D.C.: Health Resources and Services Administration.