The Influence of Masculinity on Self-Authorship in College Men

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Abstract

The holistic development of college students encompasses their growth academically, socially, and personally and occurs as students master knowledge, develop connections with others, and increase their engagement in the college setting (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2013; Mauk, 2011; Shushok, 2008; Sungok, Shim, Ryan, & Cassady, 2012). Self-Authorship is a theory that describes holistic development in people as they transition from externalized to internalized ways of knowing (Baxter Magolda, 2009).

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore how constructs of masculinity influence Self-Authorship in college men. The conceptual framework for this study was Baxter Magolda's (2008) dimensions of Self-Authorship: Epistemological, Interpersonal, and Intrapersonal. Data were collected through interviews with men in their final year of study in college. The Masculine Behavior Scale (Snell, 1996) was utilized to organize participants into three groups: high scorers, medium scorers, and low scorers, which allowed me to further examine their experiences within the dimensions of Self-Authorship.

Analysis of the data revealed three key findings. First, participant scores on the Masculine Behavior Scale declined as their motivation to learn moved from external (status, power, etc.) to internal factors (learning for the sake of learning). Second, high scorers formed relationships that affirmed their abilities. Yet, medium/low scorers developed relationships for the sake of mutual benefit. Lastly, high scorers sought external validation, while medium/low scorers relied upon internal validation.

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General Audience Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore how constructs of masculinity influence Self-Authorship in college men. The conceptual framework for this study was Baxter Magolda's (2008) dimensions of Self-Authorship: Epistemological, Interpersonal, and Intrapersonal. Data were collected through interviews with men in their final year of study in college. The Masculine Behavior Scale (Snell, 1996) was utilized to organize participants into three groups: high scorers, medium scorers, and low scorers, which allowed me to further examine their experiences within the dimensions of Self-Authorship.

Analysis of the data revealed three key findings. First, participant scores on the Masculine Behavior Scale declined as their motivation to learn moved from external (status, power, etc.) to internal factors (learning for the sake of learning). Second, high scorers formed relationships that affirmed their abilities. Yet, medium/low scorers developed relationships for the sake of mutual benefit. Lastly, high scorers sought external validation, while medium/low scorers relied upon internal validation.

My study adds to the understanding that identifying external and internal motivators for learning and relationship-building for men in college is critical for their retention and persistence to graduation. With this knowledge, university administrators can structure campus environments that facilitate stronger academic and personal success for college men.

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When I started this journey I was unaware that it would be an experience that would go well beyond simply completing coursework. Many personal and professional milestones occurred for me along the way and I am grateful for each of them as they profoundly shaped my perspective and ability to persist. As I reflect back on this journey there are many people that should be acknowledged either for their academic wisdom, encouraging advice/support, or their gift of time.

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Chapter One

Introduction

The aim of a college education extends well beyond the acquisition of academic knowledge as students navigate the journey from adolescence to adulthood (Delbanco, 2012). During this journey students can examine the present within the context of the past, identify connections among phenomena that affect civilization, and develop a sense of ethical responsibility (Delbanco, 2012) to name just some of the outcomes academic leaders hope students achieve.

The goals of college education are discussed in the literature through three different, but connected, forms of development: academic (Epistemological), social (Interpersonal), and self (Intrapersonal). Academic goals are realized through students' mastery of knowledge and how they perform in the classroom (Shim, Ryan, & Cassady, 2012). The ways in which students acquire knowledge along with how they integrate cognitive and non-cognitive processes is integral to mastery of knowledge (Liu & Chang, 2014). Faculty members on college campuses have expectations that students will develop into innovative, analytical, and reasoned thinkers (Yenawine & Miller, 2014).

Academic achievement in college is often measured through grade point averages (GPAs) – a key indicator of students' ability to persist in college and their readiness for post-college employment (Hershbein, 2013). Capable students who earn high GPAs are better equipped to achieve academically (Wood & Palmer, 2013). The relationship between a high GPA and persistence in college is close as good grades are necessary to remain eligible for continued enrollment. Beyond college, employers and graduate schools correlate high GPA to ability and motivation in the workplace or graduate program (McKinney & Miles, 2009).

Social development also is a compelling part of the collegiate experience as students grapple with a major reorganization of their social network (Yang & Brown, 2012). Students entering college have an increased need for connections that they meet by creating new relationships and managing existing friendships (Ellison, Steinfeld, & Lampe, 2011; Yang & Brown, 2012). A variety of programs and services on campus foster connectivity. College administrators realize the benefit of peer-to-peer development and utilize programs like living-learning communities to maximize connectedness, couple connectedness to academic

achievement, and increase student engagement (Pike, Kuh, & McCormick, 2008; Plattner, 2012; Rocconi 2011).

Academic and social development are linked. Friendship among college students plays a critical role in their academic progress and achievement (Mauk, 2011). The quality and types of friendships students form influence what they learn from one another and how they learn together (Mauk, 2011; Shushok, 2008). Friendship provides social connections and engagement that lead to persistence in college as relationships increase students' belief that they are engaged in their community (Moore, 2013).

Engagement among students leads to positive outcomes in how they collaborate, actively learn, and respect the variety of talents within a group; skills needed to successfully contribute in a global society (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2011). Student engagement is a growing field of interest in higher education as scholars study how students relate to one another, discuss critical ideas with each other, collaborate on group assignments, and develop mentoring relationships with faculty (Quaye & Harper, 2014). These forms of social and emotional support are a consequence of social affiliations that, in turn, influence success in college (Tinto, 2012).

A final area of development for college students relates to their sense of self. Students demonstrate success in this area as their decision-making positively intersects with how they use knowledge to navigate the complexities of college and prepare for life after college (Jehangir, Williams, & Jeske, 2012). A strong understanding of self positively correlates with greater academic success though such outcomes differ depending on a student's background and identity (Cole, 2011).

The development of self in college also helps students balance the multiple psychological and cultural contexts in which they learn (Pizzolato, Nguyen, Johnston, & Wang, 2012). These multiple contexts are new for students who spent their pre-college years with a strong attachment to their parents. Parent-child emotional bonds affect the development of self in students as they create new identities, manage stress, and enter into new relationships (Mattanah, Lopez, & Govern, 2011). Two areas of importance are worthy of exploring in terms of self: self-confidence and self-efficacy.

Self-confidence is the belief one has in his/her untapped abilities (Filippin & Paccagnella 2012). As students struggle to understand their abilities and coping strategies they experience a decrease in self-confidence, which results in higher levels of stress and depression (Byrd &

McKinney, 2012). Opportunities for students to move beyond this struggle and experience positive achievement-related emotions are critical to creating their sense of confidence (Reeve, Bonaccio, & Winford, 2014). Positive achievement-related emotions are reflected in feelings of relief, joy, and pride (2014). As students grow from positive emotions associated with achievement they experience stronger well-being (Howell & Buron, 2011).

Self-efficacy is students' belief about their capacity to successfully deal with particular situations (Caprara, Allessandri, & Eisenberg, 2012). The focus is primarily on the specific actions that they might take when confronted with challenges, particularly if they are confident they will succeed (Woodrow, 2011). When students who exhibit high levels of self-efficacy fail to succeed it is often due to a faulty self-assessment of their skill level (Bandura, 2013). Thus, students could fail an exam if they have made inaccurate assumptions about their knowledge, skills, and talents in a particular area. Positive self-efficacy results in higher levels of learning, engagement, and motivation (Schunk & Mullen, 2012; Schunk & Pajares, 2009).

These three forms of development (academic, social, self), then, form the foundation of holistic development. If higher education leaders believe the aim of education is holistic development, then Self-Authorship emerges as a framework that can guide their efforts. Self-Authorship is a conceptual framework of holistic development in which students navigate Epistemological, Interpersonal, and Intrapersonal ways of knowing (Baxter Magolda, 2009; Kegan, 1982). These states of development are operationalized through three questions that student may pose to themselves: "How do I know?" "What relationships do I want to have?" "Who am I?" (Jehangir, Williams, & Jeske, 2012).

Epistemological development is the expansion of previously held thoughts gained through new learning (Engberg & Porter, 2013). Simple knowledge, which consists of accumulating significant amounts of factual knowledge, characterizes how mastery of information occurs (Schraw, Olafson, & VanderVeldt, 2012). In Epistemological development students move towards a constructivist approach to knowledge. Initially, they believe that information is certain and can be built upon without questioning the legitimacy of new information (Schraw, Olafson & VanderVelt, 2012). As Epistemological development occurs, students transition through stages that change how they engage in knowledge acquisition. For example, as they realize the benefit of moving beyond simple memorization in college coursework, students progress towards a "learn and apply" model that influences how they

experience knowledge (Mazzarone & Grove, 2013). The primary assumption about Epistemological development is that students progress within this dimension when they are able to weave together knowledge gained from others with their own personal understanding (Baxter Magolda, King, Taylor, & Wakefield, 2012).

Interpersonal development in Baxter Magolda's (2009) model refers to the relationships that students have with others and the influence those relationships play in their sense of self. For example, this form of development focuses on how students are able to critically examine the ways that the perspectives of others define how they experience growth (Renn & Reason, 2012). Through interactions with a diversity of people students acquire social responsibility (Merrill, Braskamp, & Braskamp, 2012) and a deeper understanding of truth and sense of self (Engberg, 2013).

Students develop a strong sense of self that balances what they need personally while maintaining relationships with others (Torres, 2011). Thus, the Interpersonal developmental challenge for students relates to how they craft their decisions; decisions that may be strongly influenced by what others may expect of them (Baxter Magolda, 2009). The answers that students seek within the Interpersonal dimension resolve questions for them about who they are and how they know (Pizzolato, 2010). Ultimately, students grow in the interpersonal stages of development as they identify the role of relationships in shaping their views (King, 2010).

Intrapersonal development refers to how students make meaning of external influences with an internal voice (Jones & Abes, 2013). Social development in the Intrapersonal dimension is characterized mostly by the interplay between the self and outside world (Kroger, 2004). Self is central to constructing knowledge (Baxter Magolda, 2001) and the self is comprised of multiple identities and contexts (Pizzolato, Nguyen, Johnston, & Wang, 2012). The environments that students move between, particularly physical environments, influence how they develop an internal foundation (2012). Achieving collegiate goals requires an internal orientation where the identification of beliefs, identities, and relationships is guided by an internal voice (King, Baxter Magolda, Barber, Brown, & Lindsay, 2009).

Self-Authorship, then, is a model of holistic development that can positively benefit college students. It is important to consider, however, whether those benefits are equally distributed across all college students. This study is particularly interested in Self-Authorship

among college men so it is essential to note the disproportionate ratio of men to women in postsecondary education (Lopez & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2014).

In 1990, 12,000,000 students in the United States were enrolled in colleges and universities (Stetser & Stillwell, 2014). Of those, 55% were women and 45% were men. In 2013 college enrollment grew to over 19,000,000 students (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2013). More relevant to my study is the widening gap in enrollment by gender; in 2013 women represented 57% of all students while men comprised only 43% of that population. Enrollment projections for 2023 reveal a potential increase of 18% for women but only an 8% increase for men (Stester & Stillwell, 2014), a trend that would further exacerbate the gender gap in the academy.

Several trends help to explain this gap. To start, in 2000, the high school completion rates for women and men were nearly equal (Suchan, Perry, Fitzsimmons, Juhn, Tait, & Brewer, 2007) with women leading the way at 81% versus men at 80%. Those numbers have shifted and in 2012, women had graduated at a higher rate of 84% versus men at 77% (Stetser & Stillwell, 2014). Additionally, men are delaying enrollment in college upon completing high school and their attrition rates once in college are higher than women (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2013; Severeins & ten Dam, 2012).

To compound problems, women in higher education are completing college at a faster rate than men (Buchmann & DiPrete, 2006; Severeins & ten Dam, 2012). The six-year degree completion rate of women in 2012 was 61% as compared to 56% for men (Stetser & Stillwell, 2014). Higher rates of high school completion, college enrollment, and college completion for women all contribute to the gap in educational achievement between women and men (DiPrete & Buchmann, 2013). If more women are enrolling and succeeding in college than men, then there is a disparity amongst college students in terms of who gains some of the benefits of higher education; particularly holistic development.

It is important to note, however, that while enrollment statistics may disproportionately favor women, men continue to benefit overall from a social system designed to protect patriarchal dominance (Case, Hensley, & Anderson, 2014). For example, in 2010 47% of the United States workforce was comprised of women, yet they accounted for only 14% of executive positions (Schuh, et. al, 2014), rendering them with less power and lower salaries. Although

enrollment statistics reveal that men in college may not be accruing the same developmental benefits as women, they are not marginalized in terms of pay or leadership roles.

Nonetheless, there is a missed opportunity for developmental growth as men matriculate to college with gendered attitudes and behaviors that can affect interpersonal competence and self-efficacy (Harper & Harris, 2010). The degree to which they shape their own experiences is affected by how they view their roles in life and the acquisition of knowledge. For example, college men value the presence of faculty members that are men over those that are women. This can impact the connection they make to learning if they view some material as "feminine" (Basow, 1992). If college men do not establish a connection to the learning experience this may become a barrier for them in persistence towards graduation.

Another barrier to persistence in college is separation from the institution, often as the result of conduct issues. College men are responsible for a significant portion of the misconduct as university administrators fail to realize the interplay between male socialization and violent acts (Ludeman, 2011). The prevalence of men as offenders in behavioral incidents significantly and negatively influences their success in college (Lopez & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2014).

Theories of masculinity are useful in characterizing the development of men throughout college. Kimmel's (2004) framework of masculinity suggests four attributes of college men: (1) no hint of femininity; (2) manhood measured by the amount of possessions, status, and power; (3) no display of emotion; and (4) daringly and aggressively moving forward. Men on the path from adolescence to adulthood often navigate their lives with anxiety and uncertainty about their place (Kimmel, 2004; Kimmel 2012). In Kimmel's framework men can be in the space between adolescence and adulthood for a decade or longer (2004), a time period that coincides with the college years for traditional aged (18-24 year old) students that are men.

The fear of femininity, or gender-role conflict, is a psychological state in which men's potential is restricted as they struggle with competing ideals of the role of men and women (O'Neil, Helms, Gable, David, & Wrightsman, 1986). This fear results in negative consequences for men if they fail to live up these gender roles (1986). Thus, the anxiety of being called "feminine" produces significant angst in the lives of men (Kimmel, 2004).

While manhood is measured by power and possessions, the conflict for men in resolving their gender role status relates to feelings of powerlessness or a sense that they may actually have no power (Kaufman, 1993). The gendered belief about manhood is that they should have power

over everyone – all genders – and every environment (Kimmel, 2010). Thus, the angst of men is reaffirmed each time they fail to succeed in the college setting, workplace, or at home (Kimmel, 2004).

Total control of emotions and inexpression traps men in an emotionally isolated state (Shamir & Travis, 2002). Their escape from this isolated state can result in incidents of abuse towards themselves or others (Kimmel, 2004). The gendering of boys has resulted in their externalization of pain, more intense feelings of victimization by others, and unhealthy methods for discharging stress (Real, 1998).

The persistent push among men to aggressively move forward is based in the need to negotiate their social status (Bowleg, 2004). Men often deny any perceived risk to themselves and others as they seek to affirm societal norms of masculinity (2004). Hegemonic masculinity refers to how men are socialized to assert domineering roles in society (Ludeman, 2004 & 2011). The correlation between hegemonic masculinity and violent experiences is high (Ludeman, 2011). More often than not, men are perpetrators of acts related to: homicides, physical assaults, sexual assaults, domestic abuse, and are more likely to possess weapons (Ludeman, 2004). As men consider limited ways to construct their masculinity, risk taking and physical dominance are typical methods they use to embrace masculinity (Courtenay, 2006).

The framework described by Kimmel (2004) has implications for the experiences of college men. Men are struggling to enroll and achieve while in college. Issues of masculinity may be playing a role in their development of Self-Authorship, yet the research regarding the intersection of gender and Self-Authorship is limited.

Statement of the Problem

In summary, holistic development is a primary goal of higher education and holistic development focuses on growth in the academic, social, and self arenas (Delbanco, 2012). The emphasis on academic development is realized through mastery of knowledge (Shim, Ryan, & Cassady, 2012) and high GPA (Wood & Palmer, 2013). Social development is a key aspect of holistic learning as students develop connections with others (Ellison, Steinfeld, & Lampe, 2011; Yang & Brown, 2012), create friendships (Mauk, 2011; Shushok, 2008), and increase engagement on campus (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2013). The focus on self occurs as students navigate multiple contexts (Pizzolato, Nguyen, Johnston, & Wang, 2012). In general, success in college helps students cultivate self-confidence (Filippin & Paccagnella 2012; Reeve,

Bonaccio, & Winford, 2014) and self-efficacy (Caprara, Allessandri, & Eisenberg, 2012; Schunk & Pajares, 2009; Schunk & Mullen, 2012; Woodrow, 2011).

Self-Authorship (Baxter Magolda, 2008) is a framework for gauging holistic development as students incorporate epistemological (Baxter Magolda, King, Taylor, & Wakefield, 2012; Engberg & Porter, 2013; Mazzarone & Grove, 2013; Schraw, Olafson, & VanderVeldt, 2012), interpersonal (Baxter Magolda, 2009; Merrill, Braskamp, & Braskamp, 2012; Pizzolato, 2010; Renn & Reason, 2012), and intrapersonal (Baxter Magolda, 2001; Jones & Abes, 2013; Kroger, 2004; Pizzolato, Nguyen, Johnston, & Wang, 2012) ways of becoming. Ultimately, Self-Authorship is the process by which students transition from externalized ways of knowing to internalized ways of knowing (King, Baxter Magolda, Barber, Brown, & Lindsay, 2009; Pizzolato, Nguyen, Johnston, & Wang, 2012). The benefits of Self-Authorship are unequally distributed by gender however, when considering rates of enrollment and attrition in college.

The enrollment rates of women and men in college are disproportionate, as the enrollment of men has decreased (Stetser & Stillwell, 2014; National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2013). A declining rate of men enrolling in college is strongly correlated with men completing college at a lower rate than women (Suchan, Perry, Fitzsimmons, Juhn, Tait, & Brewer, 2007). The gender gap continues to widen as men experience higher rates of attrition, which impacts how they accrue the benefits of higher education (Buchmann & DiPrete, 2006; Severeins & ten Dam, 2012).

Masculinity can impact ways of knowing in college students (Basow, 2013; Harper & Harris, 2010). There are multiple factors that influence the development of men throughout their life: their understanding of gender (Kimmel, 2004; O'Neil, Helms, Gable, David, & Wrightsman, 2010), power and privilege (Kaufman, 1993; Kimmel 2004; Kimmel, 2010), reconciliation of emotions (Real, 1998; Shamir & Travis, 2002), and the aggressive push forward in spite of risks (Bowleg, 2004; Courtenay, 2006). The Kimmel framework for masculinity offers context for viewing how men develop in college and under the influence of external forces (Kimmel, 2004).

If college administrators hope to address the gap in academic success between men and women, they need more information about how masculinity influences Self-Authorship. My study aimed to provide preliminary data about the nexus between masculinity and Self-Authorship.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore how constructs of masculinity influence Self-Authorship in college men. Masculinity was defined as (1) no hint of femininity; (2) manhood is measured by the size of possessions, status, and power; (3) no display of emotion; and (4) daringly and aggressively always go forward (Kimmel, 2004). The conceptual framework for this study was Baxter Magolda's (2008) dimensions of Self-Authorship: Epistemological, Intrapersonal, and Interpersonal.

The sample consisted of college men in their final year of study at three postsecondary institutions. Data were collected through interviews with participants.

Research Questions

The study was designed to address the following research questions:

1. How does masculinity influence the epistemological experiences of college men?
2. How does masculinity influence the interpersonal experiences of college men?
3. How does masculinity influence the intrapersonal experiences of college men?

Significance of the Study

This present study was significant for several constituencies on college campuses that may benefit from its findings, including college men, student affairs administrators, and counseling center practitioners. Men in college, as reflected in this study, struggle with conflicting ideals of what their experience should be in college and the findings may reveal what promotes and/or prohibits their identity development. The results of this study may be useful to men in college as they navigate the influence of masculinity on how they come to know themselves, and the role others can have in their development.

Student affairs administrators on college campuses may find relevance in this study as they implement programming, structure learning outcomes, and provide advising to men in college. Administrators might utilize the findings to develop initiatives that would specifically meet the challenges that men in college confront. Learning outcomes may be better structured by administrators to help college men traverse the path from external ways of knowing to internal ways of knowing. Additionally, initiatives that promote healthy masculinity development might be useful (refer to the 2014 White House initiative *My Brother's Keeper* as an example).

Specifically, practitioners in counseling centers on college campuses may find this study useful as they work with clients that are men. The findings revealed the experiences of college men as they balance how others view them against the identity they build for themselves. Counseling practitioners may benefit from that information as they help college men balance masculinity with college success.

This study also had significance for future research. I elicited data only about masculinity and Self-Authorship. Future studies may expand beyond the Self-Authorship framework to consider other psychosocial theories of development that interface with masculinity and influence how men in college come to know themselves. Such studies could explore the nexus of masculinity and moral reasoning or racial identity development, for example.

This study explored how constructs of masculinity influence Self-Authorship in college men. Future studies might examine how constructs of feminism influence Self-Authorship in college women. Modifying the sample to focus on other genders would provide relevant information about gender-related influences on Self-Authorship, as women constitute the majority of students on college campuses.

An additional study that would expand on this research may be longitudinal in nature and reveal changes in masculinity and Self-Authorship between the freshman year and senior year. While Self-Authorship is understood to be a process that fully actualizes in mid-life, a study that examines foundational experiences throughout the formative years of 18-22 would be helpful to researchers. Studying these experiences may yield valuable information about what factors influence the early development of college men as they become adults.

Policy is a third area of significance for this study. This study revealed how men in college make sense of their experiences and make connections to others. A key challenge for men relates to seeking assistance to navigate their struggles in college. Student affairs administrators may consider the findings of my study in determining what types of personnel and resources are needed to best serve college men.

Additionally, the results of this study provided information about the challenges that exist for men in college. Administrators in Student Affairs may find these findings useful when structuring disciplinary and remediation policies for men that align with holistic development while adhering to community expectations for safety and security.

Finally, student affairs administrators may identify useful information from this study that informs how they develop curricular experiences for men in their senior year. This study focused exclusively on college seniors and the findings reflect the lived experiences of this group of students. Policymakers may consider how masculinity influences Self-Authorship when considering policies related to college success and workforce preparedness.

Delimitations

As with all research, this study had some initial delimitations. One was related to the method. This was a qualitative study that explored the experiences of select college men. The experiences described in this study belong solely to the participants at three universities. Consequently, transferability should be done with caution, as the findings established through this study may not reflect what takes place among men on all university campuses.

A second delimitation for this study was the sample. The sample included only traditional aged college men. Self-Authorship occurs later in life and the participants may not have developmentally arrived at a point that Self-Authorship was evident. If this study had been longitudinal in nature and explored growth beyond college, the influence of masculinity may have emerged differently than it did in this study.

Another delimitation for this study was the issue of candor by participants. This study relied on respondents sharing personal information about their experiences in college. It is possible that participants were uncomfortable in offering information that would provide insight into their development as men. Thus, the results of this study could have been influenced by an unwillingness of participants to be candid in their responses.

These delimitations do present challenges to the study, but the information gained was helpful in understanding of how men develop in college. The lack of information about how masculinity influences Self-Authorship in college men rendered this study relevant.

Organization of the Study

I organized the study around seven chapters. Chapter One provided an introduction to the topic, the purpose statement, and the significance of this study. Chapter Two offers a review of relevant literature that is useful for the study. Chapter Three describes the methodology, including sampling, data collection, and data analysis procedures. Chapters Four, Five, and Six offer findings of the study based on the reported experiences of each group of participants.

Chapter Seven offers discussion of the findings and their implications for practice, research, and policy.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

There were two bodies of literature that were significant to my study. The first included studies on Self-Authorship. Two subsets of studies were examined in the category: those about intellectual/consciousness development and those on Self-Authorship in college. The second body of literature explored studies of masculinity. This included studies on masculinity in general and those on masculinity among college men.

Self-Authorship

There are three assumptions about learning in the Self-Authorship model: the complex and socially constructed nature of knowledge; the role of identity in building knowledge; and the interplay of shared expertise of authority (Baxter Magolda & King, 2004). These three assumptions serve as the foundation for researchers who have studied ways of knowing among college students. The roots of Self-Authorship can be found in both intellectual development (Perry, 1970) and the evolution of consciousness through the organizing of experiences (Kegan, 1994).

Intellectual/Consciousness Development

Perry's model of intellectual development laid the groundwork for the notion of Self-Authorship in students. He examined students' experiences in an authority-driven, experiential learning-based environment that was grounded in respect and collaboration (Perry, 1970). In this experiential environment, students move through linear phases of development: Dualism, Multiplicity, Relativism, and Commitment (Perry, 1970). A core element of students' development in college is the intersection between their intellect and identity – these stages of development shape how students form their identity (King, 1978).

The underpinnings of Self-Authorship are best reflected in clear transitions between the phases of learning in Perry's model. Transitions of intellectual development refer to three changes in how students acquire knowledge: knowledge is based in what the instructor wants; knowledge is formed by new insights of what it means to know and learn; and knowledge is an integration of what is taught and a personal world view (Kloss, 1994).

Kegan's (1982) evolution of consciousness extended Perry's model of intellectual development and assumed that meaning-making is a physical activity, a social activity, and a survival activity. He identified five orders (or dimensions) of consciousness that follow a

person's journey from age 5 to age 40, as their stages of development build on each other (Kegan, 1994).

In the first order, children view others through the ways in which they view themselves. Decisions are made impulsively and focused primarily on self. Others are not viewed as having separate feelings or needs, but rather are an extension of the child. In this stage, other people do not exist and decisions only reflect what satisfies an immediate need by the child (Kegan, 1994; Love & Guthrie, 1999).

This is followed by a transition to recognizing other objects and people through their own individual categories (Komives & Woodard, 2003). For example, Charles views Mary as being dissimilar with her own descriptors and feelings. As a person begins to construct classifications that describe those things that exist separately from them, they see others as being distinct from themselves (Kegan, 1995). Viewing others as an independent object allows the person to realize what best characterizes their own identity (Love & Guthrie, 1999).

Abstract thinking and self-reflection in which the needs of others are considered characterize the third order. As people consider the needs of others they begin to reflect on how they exist in relation to others (Kegan, 1994). Exploring how their own identity influences others around them allows them to understand that other people have points of view that shape their perspective of the world as well. Within this stage a person also starts to realize the difference between "I am" and "I am experiencing." The latter marks the movement from a concrete way of knowing to a dynamic process of knowing (Love & Guthrie, 1999).

In the fourth order, Self-Authorship takes form as people realize their own inner beliefs and how those beliefs can guide decisions when a values conflict occurs (Komives & Woodard, 2003). People in this stage incorporate a stronger sense of self in the decisions that they make – even the more difficult decisions (Kegan, 1994). Relationships with others are constructed in a manner that is beneficial to both as individuals balance their own value-set with that of others (Komives & Woodard, 2003).

The fifth order of consciousness is achieved beyond the age of 40 and is marked by a rare way of thinking about the world (Kegan, 1994). This higher level of thinking goes beyond both self and others to a level where the overall system of interdependence is considered (Komives & Woodard, 2003). Ultimately, in the final dimension, the wholeness of a person is derived from relationships with others (Kegan, 1994; Komives & Woodard, 2003; Love & Guthrie, 1999).

The development of consciousness reflects elements of Self-Authorship as each dimension is viewed through interpersonal and intrapersonal experiences, and the dimensions are not fully realized until much later in a person's life (Love & Guthrie, 1999). Kegan's theory examined development over the lifetime, not just the college years. Yet, the second through fourth dimensions align with traditional collegiate years as individuals experience more complex cognitive development (Decker, 2013).

In the second dimension a student may experience challenges as they encounter expectations for conduct on a college campus that are meant to safeguard the needs of everyone (Love & Guthrie, 1999). Within this dimension what may be interpreted as a disregard for campus policy by students may simply be the difficulty they have recognizing that others have needs that must be respected.

Roommate relationships in the residence hall setting may demonstrate the third dimension, as students must learn how to value the needs of a roommate (Love & Guthrie, 1999). Being asked to turn down music is an act of recognizing the impact of one's decisions, and the self-reflection that occurs can aid students in understanding their own personal values-set.

As students engage the fourth dimension of consciousness in the collegiate environment they may elect to join organizations or choose majors that offer them the opportunity to make a positive impact on others (Love & Guthrie, 1999). These choices stem from their own convictions about what is right and what is wrong. In this realm, students can start to exercise the earliest practices of Self-Authorship as they make decisions that are internally driven.

These dimensions are characterized by an understanding of how rules structure their lives, how the opinions of others weigh against their own individual perspectives, and the degree to which students take ownership of internal authority (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2009). The successful progression through Kegan's orders of consciousness results in students being able to internally ground their knowledge within the context of someone else's opinion (Decker, 2013).

As these theories of intellectual and consciousness development evolved they aligned with Baxter Magolda's holistic framework of Self-Authorship, which integrated the epistemological, intrapersonal, and interpersonal domains (Boes, Baxter Magolda, & Buckley, 2010). The way in which individuals use the certainty of knowledge to critically construct their

views demonstrates their Epistemological development (Baxter Magolda, 2004). In the Epistemological area, knowledge is grounded in multiple perspectives depending on context and the person interprets knowledge as such.

Intrapersonal development impacts people as they attempt to develop an internal identity without relying on the views of others (Baxter Magolda, 2004). Within this stage of development students wrestle with how they view themselves while constructing an identity.

Through Interpersonal development students value the need for interdependent relationships as they shape their views of the world. This area is characterized by how people construct relationships that will influence how they see themselves (Baxter Magolda, 2004).

Ultimately, as these three dimensions of Self-Authorship fully develop, a person reaches cognitive maturity. The integration of these dimensions is necessary for a person to develop an internal foundation (Baxter Magolda, 2010).

These conceptual frameworks for intellectual development, consciousness development, and Self-Authorship describe the foundational theories of how meaning making occurs. However, my study explored Baxter Magolda's framework for Self-Authorship among students in college. It was important to examine studies that related to Self-Authorship among college students in general, and within specific segments of students.

Self-Authorship in College

Baxter Magolda (1992) extended both Perry and Kegan's frameworks. She started with a five-year longitudinal study that, ultimately, expanded to a 16-year study of the same participants. Her five-year study examined how college students made meaning of their lives. At a large university in the Midwest that was rich in tradition and involvement, she worked with 101 participants (51 women and 50 men) who entered college in 1986. Seventy (70) of those were retained throughout the study.

Peer-to-peer relationships, campus engagement, and diverse contexts created a complex learning environment in which students navigated a path of uncertainty towards authoring their experiences. At the end of their college career students had only moved into Baxter Magolda's second stage of knowing in which they were willing to accept that knowledge is uncertain. Thus, Self-Authorship is not fully realized until much later in life.

It is important to note one particular gender-related pattern of knowing that emerged in Baxter-Magolda's (1992) original study. Female participants were more likely to incorporate a

variety of viewpoints, while male participants were more interested in working alone and relying on their own pursuit of knowledge (Baxter Magolda, 1992). The patterns most typically used by men align with traditionally masculine behaviors.

The ways in which students constructed their knowledge through Epistemological reflection was a key factor in assessing ways of knowing and prompted Baxter Magolda's next study (2004). In the long run, students made meaning on the basis of balancing both congruent and conflicting assumptions about themselves and the world around them (Baxter Magolda, 2004, 2010). That is, students developed intellectually by finding equilibrium between uncertainty and complexity.

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Students frame their experiences of building a self-authored system through an emerging process of: trusting the internal voice; building an internal foundation; and securing internal commitments (Baxter Magolda, 2008; 2010). Baxter Magolda observed this process throughout her longitudinal study as participants identified ways to listen to their internal voice, developed confidence in expressing it, and bracketed the external voices in their lives (2008).

Trusting the internal voice allowed students to know when to make things happen in their lives versus when to let them happen (Baxter Magolda, 2008). In trusting the internal voice, students question what they know, how they know it, and refine their own understanding. Ultimately, individuals arrive at a place in their lives where they feel clarity in their beliefs and purpose.

The internal voice gives way to building the internal foundation as people actively consider their talents and other elements of how they are put together (Baxter Magolda, 2008). Students may discover in this process that they have capacity to do well in a specific major, or later in life that they have talents aligned with a particular vocation. This developing understanding of themselves provides for stability in purpose and allows them to accept an internally created vision of life.

Fortifying an internal foundation is essential for the next phase of a self-authored system: securing internal commitments. As people's internal foundation is strengthened they are able to solidify commitments to how they view themselves, the world, and their relationships with others (Baxter Magolda, 2008). Balancing the blurred lines of Epistemological, Intrapersonal, and Interpersonal becomes second nature to a person (Baxter Magolda, 2008; 2010). A marked transformation occurs as individuals move between an understanding of how knowledge and wisdom impact their lives in different ways.

For example, Dawn, a participant in Baxter Magolda's longitudinal study determined that knowledge was an awareness of things in her life and the world. Eventually, Dawn came to realize that wisdom was a lived experience of that knowledge developed over time (Baxter Magolda, 2008). The experience of wisdom allows individuals to fully commit to their views in a manner that frees them to listen openly to others with an internal certainty (Baxter Magolda, 2010).

Through the process of intercultural knowing people develop the ability to accept and not be threatened by others while understanding how to exist interdependently of them (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). As students experience meaning making with others, their intercultural knowing expands and intersects with Self-Authorship. Cognitive development in relating to others is complex and demonstrates that Self-Authorship involves the ability of a student to entertain multiple perspectives through multiple contexts (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005).

Research regarding the experience of Latino students provides relevant information about the influence of cultural identity on a person's journey through Self-Authorship. One prominent issue emerged within this area: a student's experience is not linear and can often progress, regress, or become stagnant (Torres, 2011). In this study, Latina/o students were impacted significantly by how they made meaning of social contexts like racism and discrimination.

If students had not yet resolved a negative situation that occurred as a result of their ethnicity, it was likely that they would experience regression or stagnation in their development of meaning making (Torres, 2011). If messages from their families did not affirm their ability to rise above these situations then their movement towards a self-authored life was impacted. Moreover, as in the case of one student in this study, financial support for college was dependent on students' willingness to accept the views of their parents (Torres, 2011).

Changes within environment, if navigated successfully, allow for students of color to experience dissonance in a manner that solidifies their capacity for meaning making. Their developmental process is impacted more significantly as they attempt to manage interpersonal disruptions to their ways of knowing. Students' desire and capacity to manage these external influences impact how they arrive at a place of understanding themselves in relation to the world (Torres, 2011).

Conversely, it is also possible that limitations experienced by high-risk students could create more successful opportunities for the development of Self-Authorship, as students hold close internal commitments when creating their own paths for success (Pizzolato, 2003). High-risk students include students that may have challenges accessing college and staying enrolled, which could negatively contribute to their persistence through college (Choy, 2002).

Pizzolato examined these negative experiences noting that they could be provocative for students as they make meaning, and could also cause disequilibrium as they struggle with the presence, or lack thereof, of privilege (2003). Higher privilege (e.g., full scholarships, supportive staff like academic tutors and athletic coaches) for students would mean fewer opportunities for disequilibrium, as resources are made readily available for them.

Mezaros and Lane (2010) found that students experiencing the most risk progressed towards Self-Authorship when learning partnerships were created between them and a supportive other that would validate their knowing and expertise. They realized through their study of high-risk adolescents enrolled in a pre-college program that students' belief in their own potential for resilience could lead to more self-authored ways of knowing.

Finally, a limited number of studies have examined Self-Authorship among certain groups of college students. Latino/a students develop similarly to the majority students in Baxter Magolda's study, yet additional factors of growth, regression, and stagnation based on the circumstances of their ethnic identity must be accounted for (Torres & Hernandez, 2007).

Abes and Kasch's (2007) study provides understanding for how queer theory can inform an understanding of Self-Authorship. Their research expands on Kegan and Baxter Magolda's research by offering Queer-Authorship for students that identify as LGBTQ. Like Latino/a students, LGBTQ students can simultaneously possess qualities of multiple dimensions and not progress along a linear path (Abes & Kasch, 2007). These additional studies are helpful and illustrate the wide array of experiences that influence the dimensions of Self-Authorship.

Studies of Masculinity

The studies of Self-Authorship examined here describe the factors that contribute to the successful emergence of meaning making for college students in general, and the challenges to meaning making that occur for those most at-risk for not performing well in college. It is important to examine studies regarding men in college. Moving forward, my review of related literature includes how men develop in general and throughout their collegiate experience.

Masculinity in General

The development of masculinity in men can be traced to how they are socialized in their early childhood years. At the age of five, boys find themselves pushed away from the family relationships and expected to handle many activities and situations on their own (Chu, 2014; Pollack, 1999). In the earliest years of their lives when nurturing and comfort from familial connections is most needed boys are often shamed if they express any sense of vulnerability (Pollack, 2006). Emotional expression that reveals internal thoughts and feelings is often met by statements like: "Don't be a mamma's boy", or "Stand on your own two feet" (Pollack, 1999; 2006).

Consequently, in the earliest years of their lives when they are learning the skills necessary to socialize with others, pertinent lessons revealed through a "boy code" are being taught. The boy code establishes rules that punish behaviors considered weak, feminine, or gay (Steinfeldt, Vaughan, LaFollette, & Steinfeldt, 2012). Within this code, boys are constrained within a metaphorical straightjacket as they adhere to rules that govern: stoic and stable ways of being; high-energy, daring actions; a mask of coolness; and withholding stereotypically feminine expressions (Pollack, 1999). These themes will be explored later in this literature review as they remerge throughout a boy's journey to becoming a man.

As boys traverse their adolescent years they are often presented with different opportunities at which point they may resist the code by: having relationships with other boys that are emotionally intimate; expressing their vulnerabilities with others regardless of gender; disliking aggression; and challenging societal norms of masculinity (Way, Cressen, Bodian, Preston, Nelson, & Hughes, 2014). While in the minority, some boys are able to successfully view their friendships with other boys as contributing to their emotional well being, as they divulge their deepest secrets to each other (Way, 2011). Even though these boys may find themselves able to be their truest self around their male peers, typical relationships among boys

lack depth as they are framed in the simplest of ways with loose connections (Biddulph, 2008; Way, 2011).

As boys enter elementary school the constraints of masculinity that are often enacted through expectations from their parents are strengthened through the gendering process from peers. The gendering process is ongoing, and is revealed through how boys and girls naturally create same-gender groups while at play with each other (Thorne, 2004). Gendering during adolescence is reinforced through the use of language in school as teachers will often dichotomize each group by singling them out and associating specific roles and learning styles with each gender (Driessen, & van Langen, 2013; Thorne, 2004).

The restrictive nature of socially constructed rules governing boys has been empirically observed. The performance of boys in the Gender Role Conflict Scale for Adolescents reveals a high correlation between male gender and stress, misconduct and negative emotions (O'Neil, Challenger, Renzulli, Crapser, & Webster, 2013). Consequently, there is a high need for intervention programs that will help post-pubescent boys engage in healthy pathways of development, particularly programs that help them understand masculinity, positive psychology, and gender roles (Kiselica, & Englar-Carlson, 2010; O'Neil, Challenger, Renzulli, Crapser, & Webster, 2013).

The gendering process for men is solidified significantly during the high school years as they mature into young adults. Nowhere is the socialization of men more apparent than in issues of sexuality. Sexuality is the manner through which social life is organized for young men and women (Pascoe, 2007). Pascoe found that sexuality aligns significantly with acts and identities that play out as a result of a person's sexuality (2007).

Sexual identity for young men is strengthened as they are taught to feel a sexual attraction to women – reinforced through talk of sexual appeal or pornography (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009). Women are typically used as props for young men staking a claim to their heterosexuality. Moreover, the degree to which young men taunt other men for expressing themselves as gay is a means of signifying their own masculinity (Pascoe, 2007).

As sexuality for men in high school is primarily viewed through their actions involving women, it is during this period of role transition that young men come to associate being called "gay" with acting in a non-masculine manner. Being bullied and called a fag for acting feminine may have little to do with sexual preference, but more to do with not fulfilling the standards of

the boy code (Pascoe, 2007; Ringrose & Renold, 2010). Bullying plays a significant role in aggression within the boy code; young men learn that it is undesirable to act in a manner that is inconsistent with traditional masculinity.

Policing of masculinity (POM) has emerged as a concept that describes how young men counteract through action and discourse behaviors that do not conform to traditional notions of hegemonic masculinity (Adams, Anderson, & McCormack, 2010; Chu, 2014; Reigeluth & Addis, 2015). Policing behaviors either affirm masculine traits or condemn resistance to traditional masculinity. Fear of punishment from others for not adopting behavioral norms is self-corrective for high school boys (Reigeluth & Addis, 2015).

High school boys identify three functions that form the basis for engaging in policing behaviors, even at the expense of reinforcing norms that stifle their vulnerability: masculine norm enforcement, status elevation and preservation, and friendship perseveration (Reigeluth & Addis, 2015). Consequently, the high school experience is highly characterized as a time for preventing behaviors inconsistent with orthodox masculinity and punishing behaviors that would challenge gender norms.

Hyper masculinity increases throughout high school; particularly through participation in traditionally masculine team sports (football, basketball, baseball, wrestling, and soccer) that create an environment for young men to increase their social capital and dominance (Anderson, 2005; Michael, 2013). Sports allow high school boys to demonstrate their ability to be competitive and exert their influence over others.

In a 2003 study, the nature of interactions between high schools boys and dominant groups was explored. High school athletes claimed a top-tier position within the social environment. Characteristics of dominance over others and use of women as objects reinforced the social standing of these young men (Pascoe, 2003). Even as high school boys find themselves balancing both positive and negative aspects of their gendered identity, it is apparent that being seen by others as masculine is key to their lifestyle.

A prominent theme when high school boys transition to their lives as men is learning how to perform masculinity (Edwards & Jones, 2009). Often, this takes place as they mask their internal selves and conform to societal expectations. Putting on the mask allows men to cover aspects of their true self that do not fit with expectations. This can be a barrier for meaningful relationships with other men and father figures. Acting tough and being less emotional are fronts

that create tremendous pressure for young men as they reconcile what they do with who they are (Edwards & Jones, 2009).

Masculinity of College Men

Several studies of college men examine the role of masculinity in the areas of binge drinking, hazing, and sexual assault. Binge drinking is strongly associated with participation in team sports (Green, Nelson, & Hartmann, 2014). Just as athletics creates an opportunity for the display of hyper masculine tendencies, the competitive consumption of alcohol is strongly correlated with expressions of masculinity by men. Binge drinking presents an opportunity to exert dominance and affirm masculine tendencies.

The ability to consume significant amounts of alcohol without vomiting or having debilitating reactions is seen as desirable by men and affirms their alcohol expectancies (Zamboanga, Iwamoto, Pesigan, & Tomaso, 2015). Gendered social learning is prevalent in the patterns of alcohol use by college men, and impacts the decisions they make related to dating, friendships, and campus involvement. As a result of this gendered social learning men are likely to form expectations about their behavior, such as being more casual in sexual relationships while over intoxicated (Zamboanga, Iwamoto, Pesigan, & Tomaso, 2015).

Men have a greater tendency to use binge drinking as a means to adhere to scripts about masculinity, which promotes risk taking, dominance over women, and emotional restraint, particularly within peer groups like fraternities (Iwamoto, Cheng, Takamatsu, & Gordon, 2011). Achieving status within a fraternity is strongly associated with masculine norms, and drinking to overconsumption provides this peer group opportunities to engage in the reckless nature of risk taking and casual relationships. Moreover, as men in fraternities engage in greater consumption of alcohol, the masculine norm of self-reliance increases and they are less likely to seek assistance for their binge drinking (Iwamoto, Cheng, Takamatsu, & Gordon, 2011).

The drinking patterns of first-year college men have significant implications for predicting the misuse of alcohol throughout college. During their first year of college men are likely to consume greater quantities of alcohol; in most cases this occurs in spite of their initial intentions about drinking (Borsari, Murphy, & Barnett, 2007).

First-year students, regardless of gender, report higher stances of engaging in high risk drinking games, which heightens binge drinking and results in alcohol-associated problems. Coping with stress is strongly correlated with alcohol use in men throughout their collegiate

experience (Borsari, Murphy, & Barnett, 2007). While the use of alcohol to cope decreases in college women over time, it remains consistent for college men.

The influence of masculinity is especially prevalent in how college men learn from each other about alcohol consumption. Manliness is associated with high levels of consumption, and that behavior is viewed as acceptable, regardless of the associated risk. The recurring theme is acceptance and risky alcohol consumption is rarely questioned by men. In their case study, Foste, Edwards, and Davis (2012) follow a college male examining his experiences through the prominent constructs of masculinity. Ultimately, the student was able to realize that he would need to fit into externalized ideals of manhood while also living an authentic lifestyle.

Hazing is a second area that is prevalent in most places in which college men associate on campus – athletic teams, fraternities, performing arts organizations, academic clubs, and honor societies (Kimmel, 2008). Hazing is not simply an opportunity for rookies in an organization to prove their manhood, but for members to affirm the legitimacy of their own manhood (Kimmel, 2008). Thus, the hazing rituals endured by men, particularly in all-men organizations, serve as a rite of passage and integral part of their development.

The process of "man-making" within a group contributes to the use of hazing as a means for identifying the ideal man. Man-making is most extreme in all-male collegiate settings, like Morehouse College. Aggressive acts, which include intimidation and humiliation, are used to test a man's ability to subscribe to constructs of manhood established within a group (Grundy, 2012). At Morehouse, incoming freshmen are challenged by upperclassmen to ensure that they adhere to gender and class codes of the college.

An ethnographic study at the all-male college examined the extent to which hazing creates the "Morehouse man." In the hopes of creating black men that lead courageously at the national level and in predominantly white professions, students often endorse "man-making" activities like shaving the head of freshmen to fit the brand of Morehouse men (Grundy, 2012). Creating a brand of manhood is essential within all-male cultures and hazing establishes socially accepted norms of gendered behavior.

The man-making experiences prevalent within hazing reflect the emphasis placed on rites of passage as a method for establishing a person's place within an organization. The rite of passage process consists of separation, marginalization, and aggregation; each process used as a means of determining fit and imposing a socially constructed identity (Parks, Jones, Ray, &

Hughey, 2015). In-group behavior towards younger male members in an organization is meant to emasculate them to the point of creating a hardship that causes them to appreciate moving towards a newly constructed identity. Consequently, older members of groups like fraternities and athletic teams view hazing as a means of guiding younger members into manhood (Parks, Jones, Ray, & Hughey, 2015).

While there are significant differences between historically Black fraternities and predominantly White fraternities regarding how hazing occurs, there is also a significant difference between fraternities and sororities regarding the physical nature of hazing (Parks, Jones, Ray, & Hughey, 2015). Manhood can be measured in terms of physical strength and dominance – characteristics not attributed to women or gay men. As such, demeaning acts of hazing are often used to denounce not only feminine attributes, but affirm a heterosexual lifestyle. Overcoming these obstacles is strongly associated with prescribing to a hegemonic patriarchy, in which men rest atop the system.

Sexual assault is the final area of consideration for studying masculinity in college men. Sexual aggression is strongly associated with hyper-masculinity, particularly incidents of hostile masculinity (Malmuth, Sockloskie, Koss, & Tanaka, 1991). From their study of sexual aggression, Malmuth et. al (1991) examined high levels of promiscuity and masculinity in male participants. Sexism, coercion, and gender-based violence are heightened as men promote aggression against weaker individuals through incidents of sexual assault.

A 2013 study expands on this research by examining the personality traits of men that commit sexual assault. Impersonal sex, characterized by detachment and promiscuity, along with hostile and insecure attitudes towards women are based in psychopathic tendencies (LeBreton, Baysinger, Abbey, & Jacques-Tira, 2013). The authors studied aspects of anger, narcissism, and erratic lifestyle in over 400 men. An expectation of entitlement to sexual favors was displayed in a significant number of participants. Hostility towards women, fueled by impulsive, narcissistic traits, align strongly with dominant frameworks for masculinity.

Male peer support (Schwartz & DeKeseredy, 1997) emerges from two influencers in the lives of men: social learning and social support (Franklin, Bouffard, & Pratt, 2013). Social learning is the reinforcement of attitudes by group members through punishment or reward. Individual members learn about desirable, and undesirable behavior through the actions displayed towards them by other group members. Social support within a group of men

produces confidence for individual members as they manage the anxiety that is often associated with situations like the treatment of women.

Researchers have examined the gap that exists in studies of male peer support with respect to the intersection of low self-control and abuse-facilitating attitudes in sexual violence against women (Franklin, Bouffard, & Pratt, 2013). While a small percentage of the participants that responded to their survey were fraternity members, the researchers further examined their responses as students belonging to a group characterized by strong male peer support. Within this sub-group, researchers determined that factors such as group secrecy, peer pressure, gender role ideology, and informational support were strong predictors of sexual assault.

The lack of self-control within college men is evident in pornography use, misuse of alcohol, and gender role ideology. The increased use of alcohol and gender role ideology is highest within social settings for men and low self-control has an indirect effect on risky behaviors and attitudes that facilitate abuse towards women (Franklin, Bouffard, & Pratt, 2013). This underscores the need to consider how men learn and the influence of hegemonic masculinity in these experiences. The proclivity of men to perpetrate sexual assault is impacted by lessons learned in both informal and formal spaces where men gather throughout college.

The ways college men describe sexual encounters with women is a clear indicator of how sexual assault allows them to affirm gender roles. A longitudinal study of 197 men in 2004 featured the following responses from participants about their experiences: "[she] was just playing hard to get"; "a man has to persist"; "just another night'; "I felt that I had gotten something I was entitled to" (Abbey & McAuslan, 2004). These statements by college men are examples of the in-group lessons men are taught about going after what they believe is theirs, and doing so without regard for others. Often, the media portrays that a traditional, heteronormative college experience is the availability of women and the expectation of a sexual relationship (Foste, Edwards, & Davis, 2012; Kimmel, 2008). Sexual assault is another means by which men are able to exert unhealthy levels of masculinity on others.

Issues of masculinity and problematic behaviors are not new. Indeed, the constructs of masculinity have been present within the collegiate environment since the 19th century; to be manly was synonymous with being "forthright, confident, loyal, eloquent, healthy, robust, and intelligent" (Syrett, 2009). While the aggressive behaviors of college men that became common in the 21st century collegiate environment were not present in the 19th century, opportunities to

moderately indulge in alcohol use or exert athletic prowess were common. The 19th century college man viewed his manhood through his ability to rebel against rules implemented by faculty and administrators that sought to reign in his independence (Syrett, 2009).

As Kimmel (2013) explored masculinity on the present day college campus, the constructs from the 19th century had not changed significantly. A common framework of what characterizes the experiences of men currently in college has emerged. Masculinity means: (1) displaying no hint of feminity; (2) measuring manhood by the extent of possessions, status, and power; (3) showing very little emotion; and (4) pushing forward without regard for risk (Kimmel, 2004; 2008; Kimmel & Davis, 2011; Kimmel, 2013).

These societally informed regulations for men are bound together by a unifying theme that in life men should always restrict emotions, never admit weakness, and put on a face that expresses that everything is fine (Kimmel & Davis, 2011). Consequently, men in college are placed in a precarious position in which their development into fully actualized human beings is being impeded by restrictive norms of hegemony and masculinity.

In summary, there is extensive research about how college students experience ways of knowing through their intellectual and cognitive development (Decker, 2013; Evans et al., 2009; Kegan, 1982 & 1994; Kloss, 1994; Komives & Woodard, 2003; Love & Guthrie, 1999; Perry, 1970) and the foundations of Self-Authorship while in college (Baxter Magolda, 1992; 2004; 2008; Boes, Baxter Magolda, & Buckley, 2010; King & Baxter Magolda, 2005; Mezaros & Lane, 2010; Pizzolato, 2003; Torres, 2011).

There is also significant literature that describes the development of masculinity within men (Biddulph, 2008; Chu, 2014; Driessen & van Langren, 2013; Pascoe 2007; Pollack, 1999; 2006; Reigeluth & Addis, 2015; Steinfeldt, et al., 2012; Thorne 2004; Way, 2011; Way et al., 2014). More specifically within the literature of masculinity, is a relevant body of literature that describes the experiences of men in college (Abbey & McAuslan, 2004; Borsari et al., 2007; Franklin et al., 2013; Green et al., 2014; Grundy, 2012; Iwamoto et al., 2011; Kimmel, 2004; 2008; Kimmel & Davis, 2011; LeBreton et al., 2013; Malmuth et al., 1991; Parks, et al., 2015; Syrett, 2009; Zamboanga et al., 2015).

However, the research examining the influence of masculinity development on Self-Authorship in college men is limited. There are studies that describe Self-Authorship in college-aged men (Baxter Magolda, 1992; 2004), along with research on masculinity among college men

(Kimmel & Davis, 2011). The current literature does not capture intersections of Self-Authorship and masculinity. This study sought to fill that gap by examining how constructs of masculinity influence Self-Authorship in college men.

Chapter Three

Methodology

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore how constructs of masculinity influence Self-Authorship in college men. Masculinity was defined as (1) no hint of feminity; (2) manhood is measured by the size of possessions, status, and power; (3) no display of emotion; and (4) daringly and aggressively always go forward (Kimmel, 2004). The conceptual framework for this study was Baxter Magolda's (2008) dimensions of Self-Authorship: Epistemological, Interpersonal, and Intrapersonal.

The central research questions guiding this study were:

1. How does masculinity influence the epistemological experiences of college men?
2. How does masculinity influence the interpersonal experiences of college men?
3. How does masculinity influence the intrapersonal experiences of college men?

In this chapter I describe the design of the study including my positionality, sample selection, instrumentation, data collection, data analysis, and the steps I took to enhance the accuracy of the data.

Positionality

Before describing the method for the study it is important to note my background and experiences. When designing the study, I was very aware of my position as a researcher and the experiences that shape my own process of Self-Authorship and masculinity. I selected the topic in part because I have more than 15 years of professional experience working with college men in the areas of residence life, student conduct, and Greek life.

In residence life I oversaw all-male communities. As a student conduct administrator a disproportionate number of offenders whose cases I adjudicated were men. Through my work with fraternities and sororities I serve as advisor to 29 traditional fraternities.

In each of these positions I was responsible for managing and coordinating educational efforts to impact the holistic development of men. As a Black man, I am keenly aware of my own meaning-making experiences that were shaped primarily by male peers. Consequently, I entered this research project and the interpretation of its results with assumptions about masculinity, Self-Authorship, and college men.

I took a number of steps to keep my potential biases in check, including journaling and taking extensive field notes. It is important to note, however, that those biases could have influenced either the design of the study or my interpretation of the findings.

Sample Selection

Intentional and purposeful sampling, where participants are chosen through predefined traits and experiences, are essential components to qualitative research design (Creswell, 2012; Luborsky & Rubenstein, 1995). The extent to which the sample is chosen so that it may provide rich, think descriptive data relevant to the research questions is integral to establishing rigor (Creswell, 2012). This study required two samples: an institutional sample and a sample of participants from each institution.

There were four criteria that institutions had to meet in order to be included in this study. The first criterion was that the senior student affairs officer (SSAO) had to be willing to serve as a gatekeeper for me. This was important, as the SSAO would be someone I would utilize to access campus facilities and to help me identify others who could assist me in soliciting individual participants for the study.

In order to identify potential institutions with significant engagement of college men, my second criterion was that the institution needed to have established offices for Housing and Residence Life, Fraternity and Sorority Life, and Recreational Sports. Additionally, these areas needed to report through the Student Affairs division at each campus. This was important because they are services that are target-rich with men, hence potential respondents.

The third criterion was that each institution had to represent a different Carnegie Classification type. I sought to collect data at a small, four-year institution; a medium-sized four-year, comprehensive institution; and a large four-year, research institution. I chose to collect data at three different types of settings to account for any influence that campus context may have had on masculinity and/or Self-Authorship.

The final criterion was proximity. Groups of institutions had to be located in the same region of the United States, within 200-miles of each other. Selecting institutions based upon their proximity allowed for face-to-face interviews to be conducted. Face-to-face interviews were ideal so informal communication could be observed and rapport could be established in an environment with which the participant was familiar (Creswell, 2012).

To select the institutional sample, I started by reviewing the Carnegie Classifications of Institutions of Higher Education (Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research, 2016) and sorting for institutions across the country by size and setting classification. There are six classifications maintained by the Carnegie system, and I selected "Basic Classification" and "Size & Setting Classification". Basic Classification (Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research, 2016) would allow me to identify institutions that varied according to the highest degree offered to students (doctorate, master's, bachelor's, associate, etc.).

Size & Setting Classification sorted institutions by differences in campus environments, the student population, and types of programs and services available to students (Indiana University Center for Postsecondary, Research, 2016). By cross-referencing the institutions that were selected though both sorts, I could identify campuses that met the criteria. Choosing participants from institutions of these different classifications increased the breadth and potential transferability of this study.

First, I compiled a list of institutions that fell within the classifications of: Doctoral Universities (n=335); Master's Colleges and Universities (n=742); and Baccalaureate Colleges (n=583). Next, I created a list of institutions within these three Carnegie Classification types by Size & Setting. This yielded three lists of institutions for this study: small four-year (n=334); medium four-year, primarily non-residential (n=201); and large four-year, primarily residential (n=141).

After comparing the list of institutions organized by Basic Classification and Size & Settings Classification, I combined the two lists and refined by types to: small, four-year highly residential that are baccalaureate colleges; medium, four-year, primarily non-residential that are master's colleges and universities; and large, four-year, primarily non-residential that are doctorate-granting universities. Next, I sorted this list according to the state in which each institution was located. This step yielded a list, by state, of all potential institutional participants.

Next, I cross-referenced schools in each state based on their geographic proximity to one another. I generated a list for each state that identified clusters of three institutions (one of each type) within a 200-mile radius of each other. I identified the states with the highest number of three-school targets in close proximity to each other.

I then selected a trio of institutions in one state. I identified through an institution's website the Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAO) for each institution, and confirmed through

website review that the areas of Housing and Residence Life; Fraternity and Sorority Life; and Recreational Sports reported through its Student Affairs division. I contacted the SSAO via email (Appendix A) to describe the study. In this email I requested to speak with the SSAO by phone to further discuss the study and the role the SSAO and the institution might play in it.

If the SSAO confirmed an interest in discussing the study I scheduled a phone call. I used a pre-screening protocol (see Appendix B) when speaking with the SSAO. During the conversation I confirmed that there would be a private meeting space on their campus, and that I could utilize the SSAO's assistance in securing this space. I asked for the contact information of a staff member within his/her office that I could as my onsite contact that I could work with to arrange logistics for the study. Additionally, I requested the names and contact information of the directors for Housing and Residence Life; Fraternity and Sorority Life; and Recreational Sports.

I completed this step for each SSAO in my initial institutional trio. If any of the SSAOs in that trio decline to participate, I selected another trio and repeated this process until such time as all three SSAOs in a trio agreed to participate.

The second sample for this study included the participants from each selected institution. One component of purposeful sampling is the use of criteria that will help identify participants with similar contexts and shared experiences (Creswell, 2012). There were five main criteria that participants needed to meet to be included in the study.

First, all respondents needed to be men as my interest was in the experiences of college men. The second criterion was that participants needed to be in their final year of study and between the ages of 21-24 years old. Self-Authorship occurs later in life, so it was necessary to interact with students at the institution that would closer to this point in life. Interviewing seniors between the ages of 21-24 and in their final year of study would allow for participants who had more experiences to reflect upon.

The third criterion was that participants had to be members of an organized peer group at their institution, such as a club, sports team, or a fraternity. One component of Self-Authorship is Interpersonal, which focuses on how relationships with others influence self-concept. Involvement in an organized peer group would ensure that respondents could provide data that would allow me to analyze their Interpersonal experiences.

The fourth criterion was that respondents needed to be willing to participate in one 60-90 minute face-to-face interview on their campus since that was one of my means of collecting data. The final criterion was that participants had to agree to complete the 20-item Masculine Behavior Scale (MBS) that would be administered prior to their face-to-face interview. The MBS was used to assess masculinity among respondents and is discussed in more detail below. I sought permission from the author of the MBS, which was granted. The MBS (discussed in more detail in the Instrumentation section of this chapter) and scoring instructions appear in Appendix C. The correspondence with the author appears in Appendix D.

To identify participants for my study I utilized the following steps with each institution in my sample. I emailed (see Appendix E) the directors of Residence Life, Fraternity and Sorority Life, and Recreational Sports and copied the SSAO. In this communication I included a description of the study and verification that it had been endorsed by the SSAO. I requested that the Directors electronically send a flyer (see Appendix F) to students that might be eligible to participate in the study. The flyer briefly described the study, listed my contact information, and offered an incentive.

I also asked the directors for recommendations of students that I could directly contact if that would be more convenient for them. I noted that I would be happy to speak with them by phone if they wanted further clarification about the study and its purpose.

Next, I called the staff member identified by the SSAO as my onsite logistics contact to arrange for meeting space. I identified three days that I would be on campus for interviews and requested a meeting space for the entirety of my visit.

As I received emails of interest from potential participants, I emailed (see Appendix G) these students with a description of the study and a request for a 10-minute phone call. I asked for their phone number and then confirmed a time and date for this conversation.

During the call with a potential participant I utilized a participant pre-screening protocol (see Appendix H). I explained the study and confirmed that potential participants were 21-24 years of age, were in their final year of college, and were involved in at least one peer group. I reviewed with them the criteria for participation and determined whether they were willing to participate. If potential participants did not meet all of the criteria for sample selection or did not agree to participate, I thanked them for their interest and indicated that I would not be able to include them in my study.

If potential participants met all of the criteria and expressed interest in participating in the study I scheduled the date and time of the interview and told them where on campus we would meet. I also verified the participant's choice of a pseudonym that would be used during the face-to-face interview for the purposes of ensuring his confidentiality. Additionally, I confirmed his willingness to complete, prior to our interview, the Masculine Behavior Scale (MBS) that would be sent to him following our phone call. Finally, I explained that I would send him an electronic copy of the informed consent form (see Appendix I) for his review. I explained that I would ask him to sign the consent form at the interview and that I would give him $15 at the conclusion of our interview to thank him for his time.

At the conclusion of my pre-screening call with participants, I emailed them the informed consent form and a link to the MBS. I reminded them of the need to complete the masculinity inventory at least 48 hours prior to our interview and offered my phone number to them in the event that they needed to reschedule their interview.

The size of the sample in qualitative studies can vary depending on when the researcher reaches data saturation (Charmaz, 2006), the point at which no new information is emerging. For this study, I sought to include at least 8 men from each of the three campuses but collected data until saturation was achieved.

Instrumentation

For purposes of this study I utilized two protocols. The first was a masculinity inventory that measured how men express characteristics of masculinity. I examined a variety of inventories that measure development of masculinity and identified the Masculine Behavior Scale (MBS) (Snell, 1996) for use in this study. The MBS was designed to assess the degree to which participants engage in behaviors associated with masculinity in four subscales: Success Dedication; Restrictive Emotionality; Inhibited Affection; and Exaggerated Self-Reliance (Snell, 1996; 2001). Success Dedication refers to behavior that reflects excessive concern with the attainment of success. Restrictive Emotionality is withholding public displays of emotion. Inhibited Affection describes behavior that demonstrates inhibited feelings of affection for others. Exaggerated Self-Reliance is characterized by an excessive need for self-reliance and control (see Appendix C for a copy of the MBS and scoring instructions).

I created a secure online site to upload the inventory through Google Forms and used this site to administer the MBS. Once the inventory was completed by a participant, and prior to his

in-person interview, I checked to make certain the MBS was fully completed and would yield useable data for the study.

A second protocol was designed for interviews (see Appendix J). Gender studies have demonstrated that men are not socialized to speak openly and freely about their experiences (Schwalbe & Wolkomir, 2003). Therefore, to collect descriptive detail that would enhance data collection and the interview experience, I needed to utilize questions that were open-ended and the interview needed to occur in a setting that was natural for them. The protocol consisted of five sections and included 17 questions, along with prompt questions that would be used if needed. The first two questions (Opening Questions) allowed to me to establish rapport with the participant. The remaining questions in the protocol were designed to gain information that would address the research questions posed in the study.

Questions 3, 4, and 5 focused on the Epistemological experiences of participants. These questions were designed to elicit responses about their academic experiences, including interactions with faculty members. For example, I asked participants to describe a difficult problem they faced in class.

Questions 6, 7, and 8 were developed to glean information about the relationships of participants. The Interpersonal dimension of Self-Authorship focuses on how relationships influence sense of self. This series of questions provided information about how participants developed friendships and the influence of family members on the decisions they made in college.

Questions 9, 10, 11, and 12 focused on the Intrapersonal experiences of participants. The Intrapersonal dimension is characterized by how students make meaning of their world. Responses to these questions offered insight into how the values of participants have been challenged/supported and what they learned about themselves while in college. For example, participants were asked how their values had changed since their first year in college.

Questions 13, 14, and 15 focused on the influence of the participant's manhood in three distinct areas: inside the classroom, in relationships with other people, and what the participant believed about himself. This series of questions aligned with the research questions for this study and directly elicited responses that would reflect their experiences of manhood.

The last two questions of the protocol allowed me to capture any additional information participants wanted to offer, and determine whether the participants would be willing to answer additional questions as a follow-up to their interview.

A panel of experts who had experience in qualitative methods, protocol design, and college student development reviewed the draft protocol. After I received the feedback from these experts, I made the appropriate modifications to the interview questions. Next, I piloted the interview protocol on three students that met the selection criteria for the study but were not part of the study. Based on feedback from pilot participants, I made additional modifications to the protocol to enhance clarity and ensure that the interview questions aligned with the research questions.

Data Collection

Prior to selecting the participants or collecting data for this study, I received approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at my home institution in addition to IRB approval at any of the three participating institutions that required such approval. Appendix K contains the IRB approval letter(s). The letter from my home institution was sent to the SSAO at the participating institutions to verify approval to conduct the study.

After determining that participants were eligible to be included in this study at the conclusion of the pre-screening conversation, I sent them a link to complete the Masculine Behavior Scale (MBS) via a secure online Google Form. Each participant completed the scale, prior to his interview and I entered his results into a spreadsheet labeled with his pseudonym. I briefly reviewed the data to make sure it was complete and that the participant did not need to redo the Scale.

I collected additional data through individual interviews conducted in-person at the participants' home institution. With the assistance of a staff member from the SSAO's office for each institution in my sample I reserved a private conference room in the student life center on campus that would provide both comfort and easy access for participants. The interviews lasted 60-90 minutes.

On the day of the interview, I arrived at the site early to set up and test the recording equipment. When participants arrived, I greeted them and chatted with them in order to put them at ease. At the start of each interview I reminded participants that I would be recording our discussion. I asked them to sign the informed consent form. Then I turned on the recording

equipment and requested that they verbally acknowledge their consent to participate in the study and be digitally recorded. I explained the flow of the interview and noted that we could take a break at any point.

Throughout the interview I made field notes to indicate the participant's tone, general disposition, non-verbal reactions to various questions, and any relevant behavior. Field notes detail observations made about the participant's experience and other descriptive factors that might be beneficial to data analysis and interpretation (Creswell, 2012). Scholars who conduct research involving men also advise that descriptions of how they answer questions and how they behave in the interview provide important insights (Schwalbe & Wolkomir, 2003).

At the conclusion of the interview, I asked if there were any additional thoughts respondents wanted to share regarding their experiences in college that I could include in the study. I explained to them that the audio file would be saved in a secure location under their pseudonym and be sent to a service for transcription. Participants were asked if they would be willing to review the transcript for accuracy and validity once completed. Finally, I thanked them for their participation and paid them $15 for their participation in the study.

Each audio recording was transferred from the digital recorder to my personal laptop and saved using the participant's pseudonym and date of the interview. The audio recording was deleted from the recorder to ensure security of data. Each recording was uploaded to my personal Google Drive.

The audio recording was transcribed and a copy of the transcript was sent to each participant via email (see Appendix L) for his review. The participant was asked to make any corrections he felt were needed and to return the revised document to me within seven days. I explained that if I did not receive a response by the deadline I would assume it was accurate. An audit trail detailing each step of sample selection and data collection was kept to allow me to adequately reflect on the process utilized to conduct this study and verify that methods were consistent with intent and purpose

Data Analysis

Qualitative research design challenges the researcher to analyze data through a spiral approach as opposed to a linear approach (Creswell, 2012). Data are analyzed throughout the data collection process, and each step taken to collect, organize, and arrange data is reviewed and considered for purposes of analyzing the experiences of both the participants and the researcher.

First, I scored the participant's MBS inventory to identify their level masculinity, which would be helpful later in my analysis. The MBS is scored along a 5-point continuum: "Agree" (+2); "Slightly Agree" (+1); "Neither Agree or Disagree" (0); "Slightly Disagree" (-1); and "Disagree" (-2). A total score was determined by summing the scores for each of the four subscales. Total scores for the MBS could range from -40 to +40.

I received permission from the author of the MBS to translate the meaning of these scores as necessary for interpreting the data. I determined that a total score between +40 and +20 indicated that the participant engaged in highly masculine behaviors and this was classified as high masculine behavior (MBS-H). A total score between +19 and -19 reflected that the participant was moderate on the continuum and was classified as moderate masculine behavior (MBS-M). A total score between -20 and -40 suggested that the participant was low in masculine behavior (MBS-L).

Next, I reviewed the transcripts several times to make certain I was familiar with the overall content prior to the start of coding. The comment was the unit of analysis for this study. A comment consisted of a phrase or sentence (or series of phrases/sentences) on the same topic. When the respondent started talking about a new topic that was deemed the start of a new comment. Both open coding and axial coding were used for the purpose of qualitative analysis (Boejie, 2009).

To initiate the data analysis process, I created three spreadsheets with titles that aligned with the research questions: Epistemological, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal. A fourth spreadsheet was titled Miscellaneous and used for comments that did not appear to fit within the three constructs of Self-Authorship. I examined each comment and then copied and pasted each into one of the four spreadsheets.

For example, I asked respondents who had the greatest impact on their success in college, and why. Possible responses to this question might have included:

My team captain had the most impact because he taught me how to remain calm and keep a balanced head throughout tough situations so I could be more successful.

One time I overreacted and lost my temper during a class discussion. The professor, who was also my advisor, chatted with me after class and we talked about how others might not want to depend on me if I had those types of outbursts.

> I learned a lot from my chapter president – just by simply watching how he interacted with others in the fraternity. He would keep his opinions to himself so he wouldn't be the bad guy, and that's helped me understand the importance of just keeping it in.

All of these comments would seem to reflect Interpersonal relationships so I would have pasted them into that particular spreadsheet.

As I copied a comment to one of the documents, I inserted the pseudonym of the respondent responsible for the comment, the MBS classification for the respondent (MBS-H, MBS-M, or MBS-L), and the page number of the transcript on which the comment appeared. At the completion of this process, all comments from all transcripts were included in one of the four spreadsheets (the three constructs or miscellaneous).

Next (see Figure 1), I grouped the comments in each spreadsheet by level of masculine behaviors: MBS-H, MBS-M, and MBS-L. At the end of that process, I had a spreadsheet that contained all comments related to Epistemology grouped by level of masculine behaviors. I had similar spreadsheets for Interpersonal and Intrapersonal comments. I then looked for themes within those groupings of comments. For example, I looked at all the Interpersonal comments from MBS-H participants. If I found language about the same issue in three or more comments, I considered that a theme.

	MBS-H	MBS-M	MBS-L
Epistemological:	*comments*	*comments*	*comments*
Interpersonal:	*comments*	*comments*	*comments*
Intrapersonal:	*comments*	*comments*	*comments*

Figure 1

Data Presentation Plan

Shortly after initiating the coding process, I sought the assistance of a peer with expertise in qualitative research. The expert reviewed my coding and the themes that I had identified. We discussed any areas of disagreement so that I could analyze the balance of the data consistently.

Accuracy of the Data

In the qualitative tradition of research, it is important to take steps to ensure trustworthiness and demonstrate the rigor of the methodology (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Throughout this study, I took six steps to ensure accuracy of the data. To start, I had a panel of experts review the draft interview protocol and revised it based on their suggestions. This is a form of expert review. Expert review is one way to enhance the accuracy of the data (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Next, the study was piloted on three students at an institution that was not part of my sample. Their feedback allowed me to determine whether the questions were clear and appropriate for the potential participants. Piloting the study is another step that enhances accuracy of the data and identifies potential roadblocks for research (van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2002).

Additional steps to boost accuracy of the data include: triangulation, transferability, peer review of coding, and member checking. Triangulation is a method for identifying the convergence of information from different data points to form themes and categories (Creswell & Miller, 2000). This can include utilizing multiple methods of data collection to identify different types of evidence for both major and minor themes. I identified themes only after hearing similar responses from three different participants, which suggested convergence.

Transferability is an additional factor that enhances accuracy of data and dictates how well it applies and can be replicated across different contexts (Burchett, Umoquit, & Dobrow, 2011). To augment transferability, I chose to conduct research utilizing a sample of respondents at three different types of institutions. Replicating data collection from participants across three different contexts (a small, liberal arts college, a medium-sized, comprehensive institution, and a large, public research university) allowed me to enrich transferability of the findings.

In this study, a fellow researcher reviewed my coding scheme and the themes I identified. This peer provided feedback to me about code selection and theme organization that was helpful in shaping analysis. Peer review is the use of someone familiar with the topic and who is able to offer an external opinion that, among other things, can challenge assumptions made by the

researcher (Creswell & Miller, 2000). The use of peer review of coding procedures is another opportunity for enhancing accuracy of the study.

Finally, I allowed participants to check the transcript of their interview. This process of member checking let the participants verify the credibility of the information they provided and to offer additional feedback that could be helpful in analysis. Member checking is way to boost accuracy in research and to insure there was no misunderstanding in data collection (Cho & Trent, 2006; Creswell & Miller, 2000). Participant review of the data in this study enhanced the credibility of the information provided by them.

In summary, this study was designed to gain an understanding of how masculinity influences the Epistemological, Interpersonal, and Intrapersonal experiences of college students. The methodology described in this chapter was developed to provide accurate and valid data that would be relevant to the research questions.

Chapter Four

Introduction to Findings

The original research questions posed for this study each examined one of the domains of Self-Authorship (Epistemological, Interpersonal, and Intrapersonal). Baxter Magolda's model of Self-Authorship, however, rests upon the belief that examining the integration of these domains provides a more holistic understanding of development (Baxter Magolda, 2008). Consequently, after interviewing participants for this study I determined that the research questions should be modified to reflect the integration of the domains. Additionally, participant scores on the Masculine Behavior Scale (MBS) allowed me to examine how Self-Authorship is reflected according to how the participant scored on the inventory.

The research questions for this study were modified to the following, which provided a richer portrayal of the participants' experiences:

1. How is Self-Authorship expressed by college men who score high on a measure of masculine behaviors?

2. How is Self-Authorship expressed by college men who score moderately on a measure of masculine behaviors?

3. How is Self-Authorship expressed by college men who score low on a measure of masculine behaviors?

Another aspect of the methodology presented in Chapter Three was also modified to better represent the range of masculine behaviors of participants. The actual participant scores from the MBS ranged from +28 to -21. To determine high, medium, and low based on this new range, and significant breaks in the scores, I adjusted high to include scores between +28 and +13. The range for medium scores to +5 to -4. And, the low scores ranged between -9 to -21.

For each grouping of participant scores I established four iterations of coding. Participant comments were initially coded to reflect a broad array of experiences. Second, common codes were collapsed into groups. Next, I collapsed common groups into categories. Finally, the categories were merged to create broader themes for each domain of Self-Authorship for each group of men. My final analysis revealed themes for each of the participant groupings (high, medium, and low) and allowed me to paint a portrait of how Self-Authorship played out for each group.

Description of the Sample

The sample included a total of 16 respondents. It is important to note that only three respondents from Comprehensive University were interviewed. Repeated efforts to recruit more participants were unsuccessful. Even though I intentionally sought data from respondents at three institutions to mitigate any influence that campus type might have on the experiences of the participants, the results of this study need to be interpreted with the understanding that a limited number of participants were included from Comprehensive University. Table 1 summarizes the demographic characteristics of the sample, including which institution participants attended, along with their age and the activities in which they had been involved as undergraduates.

Of the 16 participants, five scored high on the measure of masculinity. The high scorers represented students from each of the three institutions. Their involvement on campus represented a variety of organizations including ROTC and club sports. With the exception of one participant, all were involved in at least two different areas of campus life. This group also included the only visibly ethnic participant featured in the sample – Bobby, who is of African-American descent. All other participants appeared to be Caucasian. No other identities were presented by any of the participants across the three institutions.

Eight participants were grouped together as medium scorers – representing a majority of the sample. The only institution not represented in this group was Comprehensive University. Campus life involvement for this group included areas like campus ministry, marching band, fraternity life, and academic organizations. All but one of these participants were involved in all-male organizations.

Finally, the low scorers included three participants: two from Liberal Arts College and one from Comprehensive University. While the low scorers included two students who were involved in athletic-oriented activities like recreational sports and varsity athletics, none of these respondents were involved in fraternities.

Summary of Findings

The findings are presented according to the revised research questions. In this chapter I report the results of participants who scored high based on the MBS score. In Chapter Five I reveal the findings of participants grouped as medium scorers on the MBS. Finally, in Chapter Six I present the findings of participants who scored low on the instrument. In all cases I

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Participants (N=16)

Group	Participant	MBS Score	Institution	Age	Involvement
High MBS Score					
	Ethan	27	CU	22	FSL*, Student Alumni Associates
	Mark	17	RU	22	FSL*, ROTC*
	Walter	15	LAC	21	SGA*, RA*, Tour Guide, Club Sports
	Blake	13	CU	20	Wesley Foundation, Young Life, RA*
	Bobby	9	RU	21	RA*
Medium MBS Score					
	Dean	5	RU	21	FSL*, SGA*, Pre-Law Association
	Donovan	2	RU	22	FSL*, Association for Computing Machinery
	Bill	1	LAC	22	Admissions Guide, Orientation Leader, FSL*
	Reid	0	LAC	21	Campus Ministry, RA*, Choir, Peer Educ.
	Paul	-1	LAC	21	FSL*
	Brandon	-2	LAC	22	SGA*, FSL*, RA*
	Danny	-4	RU	22	FSL*, Marching Band
	Ace	-4	LAC	22	FSL*
Low MBS Score					
	Mason	-9	CU	24	Recreational Sports, Personal Trainer
	Robert	-13	LAC	22	Campus Ministry, Choir
	Justin	-21	LAC	21	Varsity Athlete, Sustainability Club

Key: SGA = Student Government Association; FSL = Fraternity and Sorority Life; RA = Resident Assistant; ROTC = Reserve Officers' Training Corp;

organize the findings according to the Self-Authorship domains: Epistemological, Interpersonal, and Intrapersonal.

<div align="center">**Self-Authorship among High MSB Scorers**</div>

Table 2 summarizes the findings of the five men who scored high on the MSB. It should be read from the bottom up. I describe below each of the groups of comments and provide some of the evidence I used to create those groups. Next, I explain how the groups were collapsed into categories. Finally, I explain the themes that emerged from the categories in the final iteration of data analysis.

Epistemological

I initially identified eight groups of codes that emerged from my analysis of comments from high scorers about epistemology (see Table 2). The first four groups of codes were: *structure and organization leads to success*, *time management is important for success*, *I need to sustain a good GPA*, and *I need to earn my grade*.

When I heard participants make comments like "I enjoy the structure and the organization we have in my major," or "Just having that mindset and that structure of strong work ethic," I identified those as *structure and organization leads to success*. The high scorers talked at some length about how they worked better and more efficiently when structural boundaries were established in a class or for a task they needed to complete.

Participants also focused on managing their time. They seemed to have a fairly high need to be in control of how they spent their days. When I heard comments like "Just be prepared enough in time, just in case of any mishaps," or "Making time throughout your day," I identified these as *time management is important for success*.

Additionally, when a participant made comments like "I knew from the beginning I need to get As and Bs," or "All this responsibility on me to graduate on time, get a good GPA," I would note these comments as *I need to sustain a good GPA*. From comments like these I was able to observe that these participants were tightly focused on the objective of high academic achievement and felt the burden of having to aggressively pursue a strong GPA. Success was not defined by what was learned, but by what grade was earned.

This aggressive push towards good grades emerged as a distinct group in my analysis. "She was a hard teacher…you earned your grade," or "You saw how beneficial doing the

Table 2

Code Mapping for "High" Epistemological Experiences (N=16)

Themes

E1. Success measured by getting the work done and having strong GPA (categories: CE1, CE1a)
E2. Achievement happens through persistence and learning on your own (categories: CE1, CE1a)

Categories

CE1. Completing projects/assignments in class (groups: GE1a, GE1b)

CE1a. Having a good GPA (groups: GE1c, GE1d)

CE2. Being successful happens through self-reliance (groups: GE2a, GE2b)

CE2a. Stick with it until you figure it out (groups: GE2c, GE2d)

Groups

GE1a. Structure and organization leads to success

GE1b. Time management is important for success

GE1c. I need to sustain a good GPA

GE1d. I need to earn my grade

GE2a. Class affirms self-reliance

GE2b. Learning how to do things on my own

GE2c. Pushing myself in class

GE2d. Think through complicated problems

homework and actually doing those problems and the experience gives you a good grade." were comments that I coded as *I need to earn my grade*. These comments further demonstrated not only the importance of maintaining a strong GPA, but the effort that was required to accomplish that. While doing well in a class was the primary focus – the effort exerted in the process was a measure of accomplishment.

The remaining four groups of comments included: *class affirms self-reliance*, *learning how to do things on my own*, *pushing myself in class*, and *thinking through complicated problems*. Similar to their comments about controlling their time, the high scorers were also concerned about relying on themselves to succeed academically. When I heard comments like "It's up to you to get your own education," or "I have to put my work ethic into this class," I would identify these comments as *class affirms self-reliance*.

Comments like "It was hard in that there was really no guidance," or "You go through it at your own pace…I'm two weeks ahead of the schedule," were coded as *learning how to do things on my own*. While the previously discussed group of codes demonstrated the independence of participants, *learning how to do things on my own* provided good examples of how participants attributed most of their learning to themselves as opposed to faculty, classmates, or others. Learning on their own required them to independently figure out class content and develop their own strategies for learning to stay ahead.

When participants responded with comments like "I really had to push myself to not just give up on the class," or "Knowing to push myself and pay attention," I would code these as *pushing myself in class*. This was a common experience for those participants that also discussed their independence in learning. The self-reliance that developed from learning on their own required them to exert themselves at all times in and out of class.

Thinking through complicated problems was reflected through participant comments like "You really had to think about whether you were right," or "You learn more about thinking." The emphasis placed on the process of thinking through problems was the only time that I observed participants in this "high" group place any focus on the process of learning. These types of comments were made in conjunction with experiences of learning on their own and having to push themselves no matter what.

After identifying the eight initial groups, I collapsed them into categories in the second iteration. The first category consisted of two groups (*structure and organization leads to success*

and *time management is important for success*) that were collapsed into a category I called *completing projects/assignments in class*. The focus on comments in this category related to how respondents handled the work they needed to complete for their classes and how to ensure that they were successful in completing that work. For example, some participants described the success they experienced from learning and completing assignments in class. Walter shared:

> We read this book, read a couple of chapters, analyzed it, then we also discussed about the different topics in class. It was very factual because I learned tons about how to do the thinking about the environmental problem.

When Walter talked about *completing/assignments in class* he also attributed success to new homework strategies like "try to do it in the morning." Comments from participants about *completing projects/assignments in class* were centered around the gratification they achieved by completing assignments and identifying new strategies.

The second category, *having a good GPA,* included two other groups (*I need to sustain a good GPA* and *I need to earn my grade*) and reflected the importance that high scorers placed on grades. *I need to sustain a good* GPA was an important academic goal. It was a clear measure of success for students like Mark, who developed a plan to achieve this goal:

> I think that was my plan from the beginning of coming to college. When I'm in these beginning level classes, 100 and 200 level, to get As in them, because those are going to be easy classes, so I once I get to these higher classes like I am now, my GPA could handle these Cs.

Being organized was also critical to success. Blake noted that organization was "key to the semester and the key to getting a passing grade."

It was also clear from participant comments that they felt compelled to demonstrate academic competence – *I need to earn my grade*. This involved a mentality that grades had to be achieved and not simply considered gifts from professors. In fact, it would take away from the gratification and sense of accomplishment felt by these independent learners if they did not put in the work to receive a grade. As Mark described:

> I mean, I think higher education is something you want, so professors shouldn't give you an easy A. [Name of professor] definitely made me work for the B.

For these students, success could mean working hard in and completing the course particularly if the professor was difficult and they did not earn an A. Bobby reported, "She was a hard teacher. You earned your grade."

Two other categories emerged from the initial groups of codes: *being successful happens through self-reliance* and *stick with it until you figure it out*. Participants talked at great length about how success was tied to relying on themselves. For example:

> It was hard in that there was really no guidance so you really had to go through the book and through his examples, which really weren't on quizzes, but online resources like [name of resource] really helped me out with that class. [Mark]

Mark's experience meant more to him because he had to navigate this course by applying his own strategies for learning instead of relying upon the professor. Likewise, Bobby talked about his experience in a structured class and how it affirmed his work ethic. When discussing an early morning class, he repeatedly pointed to himself or tapped his chest. His body language emphasized that it was less about the professor and more about self-reliance that got him through the course.

The second group of initial codes that were part of this category emerged from the belief that participants needed to stick with it until they figured it out, regardless of the immediate challenge:

> I didn't get my highest grade even in her class even though I tried. I slept on the library floor trying to study for exams. [Bobby]

> You have to work but, overall, in the long run of things, it benefits you to do what you have to do. [Ethan]

These comments reveal that even though high scorers had major commitments inside and outside of class, they believed their efforts would pay off if they simply stuck with it and committed to long hours.

After re-examining the four categories that emerged from the eight initial groups of codes, I was able to ultimately fold the categories into two themes related to Epistemology and high scorers. The first two categories (*completing projects/assignments in* class and *having a good GPA*) were collapsed into the first theme, *success is measured by getting the work done and having a strong GPA*.

Getting the work done was a sign for participants that they had learned the content, but the effort and process was just as important as it represented knowing something about life beyond the course. Ethan captured this notion when he noted about a class unrelated to his major: "Learning actually to argue through logic and reason instead of emotions, which I

actually learned in a core class." Ethan's skill-development was achieved through completing the work in courses even if he felt the course content was not linked to his major.

For the high scorers, success related to the classes they chose to take and the grades they earned. Some classes the participants chose because of the benefit that class would bring them and their success after college.

> I think my economics courses were the most definitely influential in my life…everything that I try to achieve, it's like, what is the most efficient way to do this. [Ethan]

> My Finance 323 class. I'm a finance major so that class just really talked to me about what's next. It kind of drove me to get into the stock market, so I invest in the stock market. It's driven me to get myself more prepared for years from now. [Bobby]

> For my major, we got to do the lower level physics, but to be competitive, to pick up a scholarship for the Navy, I had to do the university calculus level physics. [Mark]

Note the words like "driven", "competitive", and "influential." Language like this reflected a high degree of masculinity or element of manhood. A high degree of masculinity in college men does not have to be associated with athletics, job performance, or how much alcohol can be consumed. It can also be reflected in the classroom as students aggressively pursue academic achievement.

A few participants noted that when earning the grade their satisfaction stemmed from how the professor contributed to this process. One professor was available to a high scorer and listened to his concerns, which encouraged him in class. Another appreciated that his professor was simply there to facilitate learning and not "give you an easy A." Even though high scorers all demonstrated significant self-reliance in striving to achieve they were willing to attribute a part of this success to faculty members.

The second two categories (*being successful happens through self-reliance* and *stick with it until you figure it out*) merged into a second theme: *achievement happens through persistence and learning on my own*. Comments and experiences shared through this stream of codes reflected the strong focus participants placed on the journey and process. Even if achievement did not include a good grade from a course, the participants did not discount what role the course had in their growth as a student.

> I didn't get a zero, but I didn't get an A either. [Walter]
>
> I took it and failed, and it brought my grade from a 76 to a 70, so that's a C, pretty close to D. I was kind of bummed about that. [Mark]

When describing these situations, respondents did not suggest that they felt defeated. They were upbeat and used the examples to illustrate that they did gain from the challenge of learning material on their own.

Comments from the high scorers reflected that college was an experience that was achieved through the hard work they were willing to put into their own learning. Mark observed that "you don't get any sympathy, it's up to you to get your own education." Bobby's experiences with a difficult professor forced him to realize that he had to push himself and pay attention if he wanted to do well. Ethan never attributed his challenges to the difficulty of a professor and took complete ownership for how well he would do in class, even using tough classes to figure the professor out. The pressure to make it to the end no matter the challenge was a prevalent theme throughout the comments associated with *achievement happens through persistence and learning my own*.

Interpersonal

The second domain of Self-Authorship is the Interpersonal, or the ways in which relationships with others influence development. I initially identified eight groups of codes that emerged from my analysis of comments from high scorers that I assigned to the Interpersonal domain (see Table 3). The first three groups of codes were: *I value advice from my parents*, *I will take advice from an authority figure and others if they're successful*, and *I relate best to professors who take an interest in me*.

When I observed comments from participants like: "Normally when I have a serious question, I'm gonna run it by her [Mom]," or "I really needed to talk it over with my parents", I identified these as *I value advice from my parents*. While these participants scored high on the MBS, an indication of their preference for independence, it was clear that significant contact with their parents was necessary when decisions needed to be made. In Self-Authorship, greater reliance on parents is associated with lower levels of Interpersonal development. This is paradoxical, but most participants felt the need to consult with parents before making the final decision by themselves.

Table 3

Code Mapping for "High" Interpersonal Experiences (N=16)

Themes

Ir1. Parents and professors play an important role in my life (categories: CIr1, CIr1a)
Ir2. Being direct and outgoing is necessary for friendships (categories: CIr2, CIr2a)

Categories

CIr1. Family members play a role in my choices, even though I make the final decision (groups: GIr1a, GIr1b)
CIr1a. It's important to develop a relationship with a professor (GIr1c)

CIr2. My opinion is important when dealing with others (groups: GIr2a, GIr2b)

CIr2a. Outgoing and decisive people make friends more easily (groups: GIr3a, GIr3b, GIr3c)

Groups

GIr1a. I value advice from my parents

GIr1b. I will take advice from authority figures and other if they're successful

GIr1c. I relate best to professors who take an interest in me

GIr2a. Having an opinion and being right matters

GIr2b. I can disagree with people and still assert my opinion

GIr3a. Having confidence is important around friends

GIr3b. Direct and decisive communication is important

GIr3c. I value friendships that help me be more outgoing

When I heard comments like "I really try to respect my elders and they obviously have more experience than I do," or "I could just see how they have utilized the lessons that they've learned" I would identify these as *I will take advice from an authority figure and others if they're successful*. As noted previously, being academically successful was important to high scorers. The advice they received from parents, professors, or club advisors was valued most when it originated from someone the participants considered successful. Being successful mattered and relationships with successful people in the position to teach them mattered most when respondents could achieve something because of the lessons learned.

Another traditional authority figure for college students is the professor. Some participants valued this relationship. When I heard comments like "He was so supportive of the students," or "[he was] one of those professors you go and talk about whatever", I identified these as *I relate best to professors who take an interest in me*. Expressions of care from a professor were reflected through out-of-class support and interest in the life of the participant. High scorers were invested in relationships with professors who valued them as students when they assumed ownership for their learning.

Two other codes focused around issues associated with opinions: *having an opinion and being right matters* and *I can disagree with people and still assert my opinion*. Some participants showed high confidence in what they knew and this was reflected through comments like "I tried to argue legitimately, in my opinion," or "I'm reading off to you what is actually written." I identified these comments as *having an opinion and being right matters* because they often reflected a belief by participants that they were correct either because they were knowledgeable about a policy/practice or because they had demonstrated their own success in a leadership role. It seemed that "being right" was synonymous with "winning." The comments suggested a competitive nature and that being right is more important than conceding to another person.

In addition to having an opinion and being right some comments reflected a feeling of *I can disagree with people and still assert my opinion*. Such comments included: "Obviously there's a reason why I believe this step wasn't necessary," or "We can work with you this way, but you're going to have to take my input as well." In these situations, participants were interested in the working relationship they had with someone else, but it was important when working with others to assert their opinion, which they believed to be correct. Having their voice

heard within a group was a way of exerting their influence over a situation – as opposed to backing down and remaining quiet.

The three remaining groups of codes related to issues of confidence and communication: *having confidence is important around friends*; *direct and decisive communication is important*; and *I value friendships that help me be more outgoing*.

When I heard comments like: "I always try to be the very best" or "I value friendships, and not feeling that I can be walked on" I identified these as *having confidence is important around friends*. Confidence came from their efforts to not only be the best, but to show that their position with friends would hold up regardless of the circumstance. This is closely tied to previous themes about being right, no matter what. Confidence helped them be more competitive in relationships.

Direct and decisive communication is important emerged from comments like: "I'm a very direct person" or "You should do things because you want to." Clear communication allowed high scorers to assert themselves within relationships and solidify their leadership. Being decisive meant having a clear plan for what they wanted and enacting that plan when communicating with others.

Being direct and decisive also stemmed from the ability to be outgoing. Comments like: "Let loose and express myself a little more" or "Now because of [name of friend] I can be, like, do you want to go out to party this weekend" were coded as *I value friendships that help me be more outgoing*. A few participants mentioned being outgoing as a reason why they valued certain friendships. These relationships helped them be less focused on themselves and more focused on getting to know people, which was viewed as desirable – particularly as men.

After identifying the eight initial groups of codes I collapsed these into four categories for the second iteration. The first category was labeled as *family members play a role in my choices, even though I make the final* decision, which consisted of codes *I value advice from my parents* and *I will take advice from authority figures and other if they're successful*. As I continued my analysis of this group of codes I begin to realize that participants eagerly sought the advice of their parents even if they already had made a decision or had an answer to an issue:

> I already had the thought that I want to do these, these, and these. But, I kind of just want to run it by her [his mother] to make sure I'm not being an idiot. I am always looking for a positive reply, being like 'Yeah, that sounds great.' I kind of

> always have the decision made in my head and that's why I call her to be like, 'Is there something else I should do? [Walter]

> I really talk to my dad for just about everything and I call him, at least, probably like once every other day just to talk about how the day's going. Whatever it is that comes to mind. [Ethan]

While high scorers were somewhat confident and independent in their lives, they still felt compelled to have consistent contact with their parents to discuss any situation that they were encountering. This was partially due to wanting their decision affirmed or challenged. Participants did so without considering that it might make them appear to be weak or without the capacity to make a decision for themselves.

By listening to successful people who demonstrated wisdom, participants acquired valuable advice, but also gained an appreciation for the value of relationships with successful people. These people could include family members, friends, or professors as long as they had wisdom to offer:

> When I was deciding my major, she [my sister] definitely helped me think about what I wanted to do with my life, but also how I could not benefit, but excel in a certain program. She's just older and she's a little bit wiser than me, of course. She's gone through similar experiences, and has just utilized her own experience with it to guide me through that experience. [Blake]

High masculine behavior includes a need to be in control of everything in one's life. Yet, high scorers still sought advice that they were willing to take from parents and other figures in spite of definitions of hyper-masculinity.

Another common thread for participants was how professors cared about their potential. The comments in the group *I relate best to professors who take an interest in me*, seemed to stand on their own, but I relabeled these comments into a category *it's important to develop a relationship with the professor*. The basis for these relationships was often the care expressed by the professor:

> I guess I'm most looking forward into a new semester – the internship and the opportunities, especially in the summer. The classes that I'm taking, they're with professors that I know and that I've been with through the years. We're just growing closer and I know that they can help me through the opportunities that arise. [Blake]

The relationship with a professor should be advantageous for their own success. Beyond that, high scorers genuinely want to know their professors and benefit from their mentoring role.

High scorers also preferred relationships with professors when they are not viewed as subordinates:

> What I enjoy most is the culture. Pretty much the way that it pushes you. I know a bunch of my teachers would go out of the way to embrace any ideas that I have. [Blake]

They like to engage in an open exchange of ideas with faculty and are not cowed by a professor's title or position of authority:

> My professor [name of professor], who, I think, just got promoted to the Vice Dean of the College of Business and Economics. I took my first finance class with him and he was so supportive of the students. He was so active, asking questions about how everything was going throughout our school experience. He definitely made a big impact on me. [Ethan]

In spite of how they scored on the MBS, which would indicate a preference for behaviors like independence, showing no emotion, and doing it on one's own, high scorers desired a relationship with their professors that both challenged and nurtured them as students.

The next group of codes were collapsed into a third category *my opinion is important when dealing with others*. This category consisted of two groups: *having an opinion and being right matters* and *I can disagree with people and still assert my opinion*. Consistent with previous themes, it was important for these participants to have ownership over their opinions and decisions. Being right was also important:

> He's [fraternity advisor] just trying to protect the fraternity, but obviously there's reasons [why] I believe this step wasn't necessary. I think I would try to be as cordial as possible, I wouldn't try to start an argument, but I would tell him what it has caused within the fraternity. [Mark]

> When I was president of a fraternity we had a Greek life advisor. We got into a few arguments where I personally felt he didn't have a certain authority to…how can I put it lightly…maybe to really guide the fraternities in more of his direction than he wanted that weren't really called for. It's really up to the fraternities and their votes to dictate what should be mandatory and what shouldn't be based on our judgment. [Ethan]

High scorers realized the need to be respectful, but stood firm in their beliefs about how issues should be handled. Their desire to persist in making an opinion known aligns closely with

the masculine characteristic of control and dominance even though they have figured out a way to address differences in a non-domineering manner.

I can disagree with people and be right was made apparent in experiences like the following:

> As much as I tried to argue legitimately, in my opinion, at least, in the end he was always right and that was where we butted heads a lot, because I felt like, but here I'm reading off to you what is actually written and you're kind of going against that. [Ethan]

> Eventually when he [club advisor] sat me down and he said, you've missed twice already, what's up? Are you okay? Also you need to be present and you have a responsibility. I referred back to the other guy that had missed much more than me and I said, I understand that I've missed, but what about this guy? I tried to point him in the wrong, the leader, and say, you're not holding me to the same standards as him, or you're not holding him to the same standards as I am. [Blake]

If participants believed they were correct due to their personal knowledge of a subject or understanding of themselves, they were likely to be comfortable in disagreeing.

Disagreeing with others and being right also applied to experiences with friends where participants demonstrated independence in their thinking and actions and could operate without an opinion even if their friends had one:

> I remember I had a really big talk with one of my female friends about women's issues and everything like that, like feminism, abortion, stuff like that. I don't have too much strong beliefs in that. I normally stick to the other subjects I feel like I can know. She was saying that…she started going off on a rant about feminism, abortions, pro- choice, stuff like that. I didn't disagree with her but at the same time, near the end I started wanting to just because she was going off about it so much. [Bobby]

Participants were able to engage in discussions where they disagreed and ultimately chose that accepting the difference in opinion was okay and the argument was not worth the time. In doing so, they restricted emotions and kept a cool head.

Being comfortable with a difference of opinion was important, particularly in relationships with friends:

> You['ve] got to realize that they have a different perspective on everything and you just have to trust that they [know] what's best for themselves and you know what's best for you. [Ethan]

The high scorers' belief that they knew what was right for their own lives was apparent in their comments about being right in spite of differing opinions by others.

The fourth group of codes were collapsed into the final category of comments that reflected *outgoing and decisive people make friends more easily*. Codes that fell within the groups: *having confidence is important around friends*, *direct and decisive communication is important*, and *I value friendships that help me be more outgoing* are included in this category. The comments of these participants demonstrated the characteristics, communication, and decision-making that were necessary for them to make and sustain friendships:

> I feel like he influences me through athletics by always trying to promote myself more. That's about it. We don't really do much other than that. [Walter]

> I value friendships, and not feeling like I can be walked on. Showing a side of me that is assertive at times, but also hopes that people value me as much as I value them. [Blake]

Friendships for high scorers seem to be based on their need to be with people that make them feel important. Seeking confirmation from others that a man is being ambitious in their pursuit to be successful represents high masculine behavior (Kimmel & Davis, 2011). They make the types of friends that will contribute to their pursuit of being successful, a trait associated with high levels of masculinity.

Aspects of hyper masculine behavior reflect that men will typically seek to demonstrate manhood through reckless attempts to be social and outgoing (Kimmel, 2008). However, these participants all seemed to remain composed in their outgoing nature and attempts to make and sustain friendships.

Through my analysis of the four categories, which emerged from the eight initial codes, I was able to identify two themes related to Interpersonal experiences and high scorers. The first two categories (*family members play a role in my choices, even though I make the final decision* and *it's important to develop a relationship with a professor*) were collapsed into the first theme, *parents and professors play an important role in my life*.

Parents and professors play a significant role in the lives of these participants, mostly through the ways in which they both care and challenge. The power of the relationship is important; it allows high scorers to trust these figures and value the wisdom they offer. While participants were asked to discuss how they learn from authority figures, it was rare when they

saw the relationship as authoritarian. There was respect for the role of the parent and/or professor, and they respected them more when care was expressed. As Ethan described when referring to his persistence in college:

> …It would really stress the load of class I would take every semester so that I could still graduate in time, so I really needed to talk it over with my parents. My father especially. He, again, saw the potential in me. He was like, 'I think you can do it. I mean, it will take a little bit of extra work, but it'll definitely be worth it. You'll learn a lot more.' He just kind of told me, 'Just trust me. I know you can do it.' – and so I did it and it worked out very well.

Challenge and support were important aspects of the role that parents and professors played in their lives. Walter remarked about a stern professor, that he believed to be "no nonsense." However, in describing the relationship with her he noted:

> I would feel very comfortable going over to the professor's [office] and talking to her because, while she does control the class, she's always very open to questions. We had a lab report due this week as well, but in class we talked being like, 'Hey, we have a class to study for as well as a lab report due. Could we postpone the lab report?' And, she was willing to do that. So she's always willing to at least listen to us and if it seems reasonable, appease us. But, if it's not reasonable, she just stands her ground being like, 'This is why it's not reasonable'.

Each of the participants that were part of this high scorer group verified that being firm and direct were important to them as students. Consequently, they respected and admired parents and professors that exhibited the same qualities even if that was frustrating at times.

Participants tended to view their relationships with professors as informal and the classroom environment also contributed to the feeling of an informal relationship:

> My advisor, I give her hell because of two majors and a concentration, it's very hard to fit into four years. I always come up with diabolical plans to get around and she always tries to poke holes in it and then we finally get a complete result and it's fantastic and she helps me out so much. It's great. [Walter]

While these participants scored high on the MBS, they were not inhibited with respect to seeking close relationships in academic spaces where they might feel successful and like an equal.

A second theme emerged from the Interpersonal experiences of high scorers based on the second set of categories: *my opinion is important when dealing with others* and *outgoing and decisive people make friends more easily*. In reviewing the comments within these categories I was able to collapse them into the theme – *being direct and outgoing is necessary for friendships*.

As I reviewed the stream of comments associated with this theme I noticed that a common thread was that participants believed that relationships with friends were most successful when they demonstrated strong social capacity. Descriptors like "outgoing" and "clear thinking" are commonly associated with high masculinity. Participants never attributed this nature to their concepts of being a man. However, they saw these descriptors as desirable in the context of developing relationships. When asked about the influence that a friend had over them, several noted that these friends helped them be less introverted in their lives:

> I'd say he altered my personality a bit more to more loose and less focused on the athletics and school and more experience life in general. Other than that, I wouldn't say I changed beliefs. I was very focused on athletics. I normally didn't want to go out that much. Now, mainly because of [name of friend], I can be like, 'Hey, do you want to go out to party this weekend?' And, he's like, 'Yeah, absolutely. Let's go.' So, it's more of like an option to go to parties. More to hang out in general, just with friends and watch TV. Other than that, I would normally sit in my room and watch a video or something like that. [Walter]

The need to be direct in communication was associated with being assertive. Being assertive allowed high scorers to be in friendships with people that would value this characteristic of them. Assertiveness, being direct, and sharing an opinion were necessary to be successful:

> In high school I was the cross country boy's team leader, and as team leader in a high school sport you don't have a lot of responsibilities, but you have a couple. One thing that encouraged me and helped me deal with it was just my coaches telling me, you've got to meet them halfway and you've got to say, we can work on it then, but we have to do it. We can work with you on this way, but you're going to have to take my input as well. [Blake]

Being outgoing and direct was a necessary component for establishing position and conveying that they are confident people. High scorers did not believe in overdoing this with people to the point that they would be viewed as aggressive and rigid. Relationships with others – parents, professors, or friends - were viewed as necessary for success in their roles as students and leaders. When describing these relationships, none of the participants talked in ways that demonstrated a deep, intimate, or emotional connection. They believed their relationships to be important for the care that they received from them, but not that they benefited emotionally beyond knowing someone cared about and believed in them.

Intrapersonal

It should be noted that some participant comments reflected both interpersonal and intrapersonal experiences, which affirms the assertion by Baxter Magolda (2008) that these domains cannot always be examined in isolation from each other. As such, I found that I was able to observe both domains in some of the participants' comments and that is reflected in the codes to follow.

I initially identified 12 groups of codes that emerged from my analysis of comments from high scorers about their intrapersonal experiences (see Table 4). The first four groups of codes were: *gratification or frustration from expressing my opinion*, *confront people when I need to*, *don't be a nobody*, and *I want to look my best*.

When I heard comments like: "It was really frustrating because as much as I could go over the rules…he more or less really forced his say," or "For me it kind of sucked and hurt," I identified those as *gratification or frustration from expressing my opinion*. In these situations, it was apparent that high scorers' feelings of anger stemmed from their belief that they were mature and confident leaders with the correct answer. Being told no or not having their opinion supported directly contradicted their sense of self.

Some participants, as a result of previous experiences or their high level of confidence, knew when to confront other people. When I heard comments like "We're going to let this play out" or "You're going to have to be adaptable" I identified these comments as *confront people when I need to*. In situations where differences of opinion existed the high scorers were firmly grounded in the belief that they were correct, and this strong sense of self determined when they chose to disagree with a peer or person with authority.

Don't be a nobody was another group of codes that emerged through my analysis of the comments. The high scorers' strong sense of self was reinforced by a belief that they had to demonstrate for others who they were. Comments like "I can't step back and just be a nobody" and "You have to speak up at times if you want to be heard" were commonly associated with situations where participants felt that they needed to prove themselves to others. The act of proving themselves was an important part of solidifying their self-confidence and reinforcing their beliefs about how to live.

Table 4

Code Mapping for "High" Intrapersonal Experiences

Themes

Ia1. Having a strong voice and values are important for others see me (categories: CIa1, CIa2, CIa3)
Ia2. As a man, leadership is proven through persistence, self-reliance, and responsible action (categories: CIa4, CIa5)

Categories

CIa1. My voice is important for my identity (groups: GIa1, GIa2)

CIa2. I care about how I appear to others (groups: GIa3, GIa4)

CIa3. I discover my values through many different circumstances (groups: GIa5, GIa6, GIa7, GIa8)

CIa4. Leadership as a man is shown through caring about others and self (groups: GIa9, GIa10)

CIa5. Showing and demonstrating responsibility in life is important (groups: GIa11, GIa12)

Groups

GIa1. Gratification or frustration from expressing my opinion

GIa2. Confront people when I need to

GIa3. Don't be a nobody

GIa4. I want to look my best

GIa5. My values changed through lows and highs

GIa6. My beliefs grow over time

GIa7. Figuring out how to be a man

GIa8. Men know they should persevere and lead

GIa9 Men take seriously their responsibility for others

GIa10. Demonstrating priorities is a sign of responsibility

GIa11. Will choose my academics over friends
GIa12. Regret missing a responsibility

The image they presented to others fostered a practice of *I want to look my best* to everyone they interacted with from peers to faculty members. When I heard comments like "You can tell a lot about a person by how they present themselves" and "Everybody's going to look at your actions" I felt these comments reflected participants' need to appear that everything was under control. If others believed that everything was fine, that reinforced that high scorers were in control of their own lives.

The second group of codes that emerged explored values and persistence. This group of codes included: *my values changed through lows and highs*, *my beliefs grow over time*, *figuring out how to be a man*, and *men know they should persevere and lead*. The experiences associated with these groups of comments reflected why participants possessed a strong sense of self.

When I heard participants make comments like "They [my values] continue to grow and continue to shape based off of how my environment continues to grow" or "Moments where I see them [beliefs], where I have my lows and my highs" I labeled them as *my values changed through lows and highs*. Personal challenges tested the resolve of participants to either refine or discard certain values they had. These participants wanted to grow as a result of their experiences. Their growth was tied to embracing challenges they encountered and expecting those experiences to fortify their personal code of values.

What also strengthened the values set for high scorers was when they could track the development of their beliefs. Comments like "Strengthened over time" or "Not very specific to a certain time in my life" were identified as *my beliefs grow over time*. As seniors in college some of the participants believed they had reached a higher level of wisdom and they appreciated that they could track this growth between high school and college. Beyond having an opinion and being right, appearing to have strong self-confidence, and asserting an identity, the expansion of beliefs over time meant that they should be viewed as capable and dependable adults.

Figuring out how to be a man was a factor in how some of these participants came to know themselves and formulate an identity. The third set of codes that emerged included comments like "I'm still growing in a role of a man" and "Their description of a male is going to be different than mine." In these situations, the high scorers reflected on experiences that helped them determine what their own definition of being a man should be. In most cases, they concluded that masculinity included perseverance, self-reliance, and responsibility. Some

participants viewed manhood as a role they needed to play to reinforce their positions either as students or leaders.

Lastly in this group of codes were comments that reflected for some participants that *men know they should persevere and lead.* "Knowing that a man has to get through a lot" and "I really had to push myself" were examples of comments that fell within this group of codes. For these participants, persistence was what men do because it is part of proving oneself and establishing one's identity. Perseverance also meant that they had passed through the types of challenges that make men stronger leaders and role models for others.

The final groups of codes reflected the feeling of responsibility that some participants attributed to their identities as students and leaders. These comments fell within the following groups: *men take seriously their responsibility for others*, *demonstrating priorities is a sign of responsibility*, *will choose my academics over friends*, and *regret missing a responsibility*.

A key factor in the development of masculinity was the idea of being strong for others. When I heard comments like "I had a lot of people relying on me" and "I try to be the example" I identified these as *men take seriously their responsibility for others*. These comments reflect the influence that leading responsibly had on participants. The image of a sturdy oak is a proper way to describe how these participants viewed themselves. Like a strong oak tree, they wanted to be viewed as people that could be depended on by others.

One of the ways that some participants demonstrated the value they placed on responsibility was how they managed their priorities. Comments like "This bulletin board's really nice, but no one's going to care about it after it's gone" or "I also valued work ethic a lot more" were expressed in situations where the participants wanted to express that *demonstrating priorities is a sign of responsibility*. An area of growth for many high scorers through college was becoming aware of the need to be focused on priorities. Being strong, confident, and well prepared for life after college meant showing they could place emphasis on doing things that mattered.

When managing priorities, some participants believed that the more challenging conflict was choosing between friends and commitments. When I heard comments like "She has chosen a different route to go down than I have" or "That's not what I have as a top priority", I labeled these as *will choose my academics over friends*. While these were close friendships that

participants were referring to, they felt strongly that being success-oriented meant leaving behind friends that might distract them from achieving their goals in school.

The last group of codes within this area of responsibility reflected *regret missing a responsibility*. For the high scorers in this study this was one of the few topics about which they expressed any regrets for their time in college. "I kind of feel responsibility to learn this stuff and pass it on" or "That's a stupid idea…I'm not going to do it again" were the types of comments made when participants reflected on decisions that conflicted with their ability to follow through on a responsibility to others. The feeling of regret was expressed as disappointment in themselves for straying from the path that leads to success and/or achievement.

After identifying the 12 initial groups of codes I collapsed these into five categories in the second iteration. The first category was labeled as *my voice is important for my identity*, which consisted of codes grouped together as *gratification or frustration from expressing my opinion* and *confront people when I need to*. Participant comments in this category were focused on knowing when to offer a challenging opinion and the importance of having a say. These situations reflected interpersonal experiences and how the participants operated in these situations reflected their intrapersonal development as well.

Feelings of frustration when not heard by others were apparent as high scorers expressed discontent when they knew they had the right answer or approach to a task. Often, these frustrations stemmed from knowing they had the expertise as a seasoned student leader and their insight was not being acknowledged. For example:

> For me it kind of sucked and hurt. I was like I did all this work and then we get to the show and you [supervisor] make the final decisions and it's to end here, but I'm telling you why we should extend it to here. [Bobby]

> In these occasions, it was really frustrating because as much as I could go over the rules and really read even the IFC constitution…I could go over like the school conduct rules, in the end he [Greek advisor] more or less really forced his say. [Ethan]

As goal-oriented leaders, high scorers demonstrated a high degree of confidence and capacity in their roles and their frustration stemmed from advisors and administrators who challenged their knowledge and expertise. Additionally, in some cases this inhibited their ability to effectively advocate for programs or peers they felt that they had responsibility for.

Some participants were comfortable in situations of conflict with peers, professors, or administrators due to their ability to determine when they needed to confront an issue and when they could let it go. Deciding when to challenge an issue reflected the control they wanted to maintain in situations and how they could remain steady in the face of conflict.

High scorers did not believe that going along with someone else's views meant agreeing with them. It simply allowed them to demonstrate how they could remain steady, never give in, and maintain control. Having the wisdom to know when an opinion should be challenged was associated with being a man. Challenging for the sake of challenging was not productive and a sign of weak manhood. Being steady and acting with resolve were underlying principles for how high scorers cultivated their leadership.

Self-assurance guided the decision whether to challenge an opinion. When high scorers believed they were not being treated with the level of respect they believed they deserved, then there was little value in forcing an opinion. The choice of who they would invest time in was another example of how they remained in control and decided what the outcome for a given situation would be.

The second category included the two groups of codes *don't be a nobody* and *I want to look my best*. When collapsing these two groups into one I identified the category as *I care about how I appear to others*. The concept of "self" for high scorers was tied to their appearance as students, leaders, and men. They believed that the more positive the appearance, the greater likelihood they would be respected and valued. These participants focused on what peers, subordinates, and teachers thought about them. It was important to them that they be viewed as being genuine and hard-working:

> Trust is a really big thing, I've learned. Seeing how others kind of manipulated…really, more when I got to college how people started manipulating other people for just different types of reasons and benefits. It's just not a quality that I see really fit for a person to have. There's better ways to get results than manipulating and causing consequences for that individual. [Ethan]

> My first teacher and my advisor was a woman and I feel that she was really feminine and sexist towards guys in a negative way. I tried my hardest to do better and do better work in order to impress her, almost. [Walter]

> I always want to make sure that I have a positive personality. I'm very happy, and I'm very concerned about other people being happy. I tend to go out of my way to make sure other people are smiling, laughing. Part of that may be to

> brighten up their day, or just giving them that sugar to release their energy to then brighten their day. Just knowing that being personally happy. [Bobby]

The appearance of being values-centered and genuine in their approach was important. It led to people looking at them as having positive attributes. Their appearance reflected a positive self-concept and self-control. There was a strong connection between the desire to appear strong and their belief that persisting through tough demands from others would affirm their strength as men.

A positive self-concept was built upon values developed over time through personal challenges. The third category of codes included comments from the groups: *my values changed through lows and highs*, *my beliefs grow over time*, and *figuring out how to be a man*. I collapsed these three groups into a category I identified as *I discover my values through many different circumstances*.

Personal change through lows and highs provided formidable experiences that shaped the values of high scorers. In some cases, they were eager for these challenges and saw them as necessary for achievement. Additionally, overcoming personal challenges and succeeding was another way of affirming their strength and confidence:

> He [the professor] listened to my concerns of my group, and he encouraged me in sticking with them and not giving up, but also adapting to their needs and their strengths, but also working with them on their weaknesses. The group setting was certainly a difficult aspect of the course. I did try to run and I tried to find another group. I tried to get out while I could, but the professor, when I sat down with him he said, you can, you have the option to fight…you do have the option to get out and get a new group if somebody will let you in. It was very difficult for me to learn how to work with them and show them they're not the strongest in the organization, but that I can help and teach them something. [Blake]

Pushing through a course or working with others was a way of demonstrating a strong work ethic and persistence. Succeeding was a recognition of their effort that they celebrated. High scorers developed a "stick it out" mentality in order to endure challenging situations. They learned how to draw on their own strengths to make a situation better. These participants discovered how they could shape their beliefs through challenging situations.

Over time, some of the participants realized how their beliefs could grow and how they could shift when applied in their lives:

> I can't really remember my first year in college too well because my first year in college, I was honestly, I came here just to run. I then realized that there was a lot

more than that. I also valued work ethic a lot more. Last year, I always valued doing everything I could do to get the job done for work. It was a lot more important. This year, I'm valuing school more. [Walter]

One thing, I guess, I didn't believe in before…Really just giving people maybe a second chance. He's very forgiving to some people while I am not, so he's kind of taught me that you can really…While you may not forget something, you can still forgive. [Ethan]

He's [fellow officer] pretty black and white in subjects, like financially or academically. Maybe I wasn't so black and white, and gave people leeway before I was president. But, when I took on president and talking with my VP…kind of made me see not giving people so much leeway, is probably a more effective leadership style, I guess. [Mark]

High scorers recognized their values and a variety of circumstances helped them shift priorities in practice. Through relationships, they learned that others played a role in their becoming a strong leader.

Changing beliefs was also tied to the different circumstances in which they discovered how to be a man. High scorers were inspired to push forward through challenges because they knew there were important lessons to be learned from sticking it out and finishing no matter what. These situations were descriptive of becoming a man:

I would say it is just not a definition of a man. It's more being strong, and not weights strong, but being strong and able to get through whatever life throws at you. I'm not saying a woman can't do it, but for a man it's like being strong and getting through it. Then, sometimes it's like from what you see on TV is you have to get through it by yourself. I guess that has shaped me to accomplish a lot of things. [Bobby]

Right now I'm still growing in a role of a man in the society versus a role of a man in the Bible and through our faith. [Blake]

I guess, not lying. I know it might seem very simple, but just being as honest as you can in everyday, everything that you do. If you make a mistake, admit it, because it will help you become a better person in the long run. Also, it's a lot harder to hide lies and mistakes than just to come out and be forward, be honest about it. [Ethan]

High scorers looked for opportunities to learn about being a man when they could witness examples of perseverance, accomplishment, spiritual fortitude, and acts of integrity. In shifting values and beliefs it was evident that Interpersonal and Intrapersonal experiences were closely

tied to each – particularly as relationships with other people influenced how high scorers viewed themselves. They viewed a change of belief as a positive because it allowed them to better understand their manhood in their work with others. Moreover, it reinforced the notion that the ultimate goal was being success-oriented.

The next category of comments emerged from two groups of codes: *men take seriously their responsibility for others* and *will choose my academics over friends*. I collapsed these groups into the category *leadership as a man is shown through caring about others and self*. When high scorers considered where they learned lessons about manhood, they realized that being a successful leader meant applying what they learned in their responsibilities. They took academics seriously and were willing choose it over commitments related to friends, leadership roles, etc.:

> I was like, you know, now all this responsibility on me to graduate on time, get a good GPA, and serve my country. I couldn't be out at night, got to just crack down on academics is my mission right now. [Mark]

> I really trust [my friend] overall, but then there are moments where if I have, again, school work that I need to do, then I can't really go out. I can't go to the bar as much as I want to. I just really have to be…I have to judge the occasion and judge the circumstances around it. [Ethan]

Setting priorities allowed them to focus on their goals. As effective role models and leaders for others they wanted to be viewed as willing to make sacrifices for what was most important throughout college. Persistence underscored the belief for participants that one dos whatever is necessary to accomplish one's most important goals. High scorers demonstrated that they could be depended on and were willing sacrifice relationships to ultimately achieve their goals.

High scorers believed that men should balance how they care for others with how they manage priorities that advance themselves. They felt confident in decisions they had to make for their own benefit versus the benefit of others. Achieving a proper balance was viewed as the action of a strong and competent leader.

> It's definitely shown me as a man, you have to step up at times and take care of others, but also be responsible. You know, just having a leadership, I think, has shown me that as a male in a leadership role, you've got to care for others, but you also have to be responsible in a sense of organization skills, but also how you handle others' emotions as well. [Blake]

> I try to be, just because of the positions that I held really rather quickly, I always try to be the very best. I try to be the example. I led by example. I was always the first person to volunteer for any event that would come up just to show others, 'Hey, I'm taking time out of my busy schedule to do this, so you guys should too. You guys can do it.' Just leading by example is definitely the best way. [Ethan]

> Watching how the officers that are in charge of my unit treat people. If I put myself in their shoes, how I'll want people to see me treat people. [Mark]

High scorers attributed how they led others to their masculinity. Leadership meant being strong enough to step forward and care for people regardless of the situation. High scorers set aside emotions, took charge, led by example, and worked hard to lead as men. They wanted to be viewed as dependable with inhibited affection when meeting the needs of younger men or others. High scorers valued caring for others even when pursuing their role as the one in charge.

The final category of codes examined the area of responsibility in the lives of these men. As such I labeled this category *showing and demonstrating responsibility in life is important*, which included the following groups of codes: *demonstrating priorities is a sign of responsibility* and *regret missing a responsibility*. Being competent and confident meant proving their responsibility as a student or leader:

> It definitely…it makes you feel, when you break the law it makes you feel kind of invincible at times, especially when you're young. You get away with it, too. It kind of just left me feeling like I could do anything I wanted, especially because I was on my own. My parents and my siblings were not around, so I could do what I wanted to do. It kind of left me feeling like I gave up what my mom and dad taught me early on, and especially in high school. It left me with this feeling of not following the rules and breaking them., you know, breaking their beliefs that they have set for me. [Blake]

> My freshman and sophomore year…I was on top of my studies, my social life, everything. Just never procrastinated. Everything went really well but my classes, of course, got really, it escalated in hardness, difficulty, but my freshman and sophomore year I never had to worry about my grades or anything. I always did my homework on time. It felt really, really good. [Ethan]

High scorers reflected a high degree of self-control in situations that required organization or having high personal standards. Personal responsibility affirmed their values. Fulfilling expectations by managing multiple responsibilities and prioritizing school demonstrated the importance of following through on expectations.

Regret over not meeting expectations revealed how high scorers valued responsibility:

> I want to say there's like a fear of it. Just a fear that you're not living up to your expectations. That you really start to doubt maybe. You really question yourself. To why you're going against what you know and what you think and with that you might lose a little bit of confidence in yourself overall because in the end the results are that your grades aren't as good as you thought they would be and you start to doubt yourself really. That's one, like deep in there you feel doubt in yourself. [Ethan]

> When I took on president, I had a lot of people relying on me to get certain stuff done. If I didn't get them done, I would be failing my whole chapter. I guess, when more responsibilities are on me, I rise up to the occasion. [Mark]

Regret stemmed from fear, doubt, and lack of confidence when they failed to meet standards of balancing priorities. When they were not able to display confidence and strength it felt like failure and this was difficult for high scorers, who consistently strived to appear as, and be competent and capable leaders. Doubt held them back from achieving personal success and taking the necessary risks to ensure that success.

Through my analysis of the five categories, that emerged from the 12 initial groups of codes, I identified two themes related to Intrapersonal experiences and high scorers. The first three categories (*my voice is important for my identity*, *I care about how I appear to others*, and *I discover my values through many different circumstances*) were collapsed into the first theme, *having a strong voice and values are important for how others see me*.

The strength of participants' voice and their ability to hold firm in their values affirmed how they appeared to others. Voice was a critical means for being successful and strong. Common phrases like: "asserting my voice", "not being walked over", "don't be a nobody", and "having a viewpoint" reinforced what they believed about themselves as men.

As their values developed throughout college it was important to uphold those values and choose experiences that strengthened them:

> I want to say that it's really been strengthened. The things that I came in with, I really have stuck to, but now they are just through experiences and through just growing up, I've kind of improved them along the way. The things that I felt strong about before, I feel stronger about now. [Ethan]

> I won't say so much changed or stayed the same. I say they continue to grow and continue to shape based off of how my environment continues to grow and continues to shape. The quote...I'll use the third one I said. 'When you enter a new level, prepare for a new devil.' When I was graduating high school, college

> was my new level and now it's a different devil. Now that I'm getting ready to leave, I'm preparing for a different devil and a different level. [Bobby]

As strong leaders, high scorers remained focused throughout college on challenging experiences that would help them grow and refine their values. New environments and new experiences were opportunities for them to deepen their beliefs and affirm the values they held. Consequently, they felt strongly that they could offer opinions and be confident when confronting professors and administrators. Adhering to what they believed bolstered identity and strengthened their voice.

While having a strong and assertive voice was important, high scorers also wanted to appear balanced and considerate:

> I guess just how I value friendships, and not feeling like I can be walked on. Showing a side of me that is assertive at times, but also hopes that people value me as much as I value them. [Blake]

> I'll go ahead and explain myself, try to see the other person's point of view from it, but really try and convince people to see what I see and why I see it. [Ethan]

High scorers sought to assert themselves in a manner that demonstrated they were respectable and reasonable people. They considered the views of others by engaging with people and valuing relationships. High scorers sought not be overbearing, but to remain firm. Relationships could only be sustained if high scorers were receptive and open. Intrapersonal experiences involved high scorers understanding who they were through their values and how those values allowed them to be strong, reliable, and consistent in their actions.

The remaining two categories (*leadership as a man is shown through caring about others and self* and *showing and demonstrating responsibility in life is important*) were collapsed into the second theme, *as a man, leadership is proven through persistence, self-reliance, and responsible action*.

As previously stated, the strength of their voice and identity was important for how high scorers viewed themselves. Identity was formed through confronting challenges, hard work, independence, and assuming responsibility. Being a man and learning how to become a man challenged participants to develop a work ethic and create high expectations for themselves. In some cases, the ways that participants demonstrated leadership was by describing what it took to be successful:

> I'm a working student, so I have a full…I work 25 hours a week. Really realizing how you're at college to become educated. You have to work but, overall, in the long run of things, it benefits you to do what you have to do. [Ethan]
>
> Knowing that a man has to get through a lot, and then by themselves, is a reason why I have answers to your survey questions. Did a lot for my own. I have figured out a lot by myself. Learned how to Google a search or two. But just finding and understanding and now asking people for help. I've put myself in the mindset that I have to do it by myself because I am a man. I was doing a lot by myself, I wasn't talking to anybody. I wasn't getting feedback or I wasn't getting input. [Bobby]

Phrases like "long run of things" and "do what you have to do" were indicative of how high scorers maintained a focus on their goals while pushing themselves to make everything in life work towards their benefit. High scorers exerted a strong work ethic and persisted no matter what the endeavor was. Their concept of leadership was deeply connected to how they could show others how much they could manage without relying on others to do it for them. Being self-reliant was viewed as being successful and both resulted from their own persistence.

Yet, through Interpersonal experiences high scorers realized that friendships and relationships were necessary. Instead of remaining firm in doing it all on their own they knew that asking others for help would not be viewed as weak or lacking in confidence. The value placed on friendships and relationships indicated the degree to which these participants cared about others even if they were somewhat restrictive in their emotions or were not very affectionate:

> I really trusted him. We were really close buddies. We hung out just about every single day. I don't know. Things I've learned. Maybe just being myself, opening up. [Mark]
>
> My closest friend is my roommate, [insert name]. The ways that [he] influence[s] me, definitely just how we live our lives, not going out to a bar and drinking on a Friday night versus staying in, but also how I treat others. He definitely influences me in not talking about people, gossiping about people, but also just dealing with the issues that I have with some people in our leadership – but also some people that I just deal with on a daily basis. [Blake]

Being self-reliant and accepting the influence of others coincided for high scorers. Strongly agreeing with traditional notions of manhood did not have to be associated with a hyper-masculine identity.

The prominent themes of manhood were reflected in persistence, self-reliance, and responsibility as opposed to taking misguided risks, dominating others, and masking authentic behavior. Participants believed strongly that they should look their best every day because looking their best represented that they were doing their best:

> You never know who you're going to meet, or you never know when the occasion will occur that you need to just make a good first appearance. At first, I was…I don't want to say I was skeptical of people, but just always questioned why maybe some people didn't try their best every single day. [Ethan]

Physical appearance influenced what they believed about themselves. When they did not look good, they felt vulnerable:

> I had a stress fracture in my left foot so I wasn't able to run any of the races beginning right after the first indoor meet and going into the second semester of school. So that was very hard and at that point I called my parents partially the way through that semester and I was like, 'This is almost impossible, I'm not doing well in classes. I just want to run track. I don't want to do any of these other things. I'm not having that much friends anymore about I'm always so sad about track.' I really wanted to almost drop out of school. [Walter]

In navigating the scripts of manhood, high scorers could be true to themselves and speak with an authentic voice about their challenges. In doing so, they affirmed that persistence, self-reliance, and responsibility were important and come with their own challenges that, when successfully met, can further demonstrate strength.

Summary of High Scorers and Self-Authorship

Overall, the portrait of high scorers reveals an abundance of self-confidence mixed with some vulnerabilities. The Epistemological experiences of high scorers were characterized by working hard and earning a strong GPA to achieve success. Their depth of knowledge was revealed through their persistence to learn content and do it on their own. Gaining knowledge allowed high scorers to convey to others that they were capable as students and leaders. High scorers wanted to be recognized for being at their best. Knowledge was one particular asset that could be used to validate their masculinity.

High scorers demonstrated through the Interpersonal domain that relationships do matter, particularly those with parents and professors. They viewed these individuals as having wisdom that facilitated high scorers' success. Interactions with parents and professors were best when high scorers were comfortable challenging the views of these authority figures, especially when

they perceived a better outcome if they confronted them. Friendships mattered if high scorers could be direct and if the friendship enabled them to be outgoing. It was not necessary for high scorers to dominate in their friendships, but high scorers did not thrive in friendships where they were expected to be quiet and unassuming.

Finally, relationships with others were a driving force for Intrapersonal experiences for high scorers. What they thought of themselves was powerfully connected to how others viewed them. A strong voice and values-orientation were critical parts of their identity. High scorers strived to be leaders that proved themselves and demonstrated to others who they were through persistence, self-reliance, and responsible action. These three characteristics were embedded in their notion of masculinity. High scorers felt strongly that these actions were tied to how they should enact manhood.

Overall, Self-Authorship among high scorers was primarily expressed through a need for external validation. Specifically, high scorers were preoccupied by aspects of masculinity related to their status and power. For example, earning a high GPA (Epistemological), making certain that parents and faculty saw them in a positive light (Interpersonal), and ensuring that others see them as having a strong voice and values (Intrapersonal) were themes for this group of respondents. Across each domain high scorers sought validation that affirmed their position and recognized their capacity to take the lead as independent and confident men.

Chapter Five

Findings

Self-Authorship among Medium MSB Scorers

In this chapter I report the findings for participants who scored in the medium range on the MSB. The analytical approach mirrored that for the high scorers. I start by describing each of the initial groups of codes related to Epistemology and provide some of the evidence I used to create those groups. Next, I explain how the groups were collapsed into categories. Finally, I explain the themes that emerged in the final iteration of data analysis. I then repeat that process for comments assigned to the Interpersonal and Intrapersonal domains.

Epistemological

I initially identified seven groups of codes that emerged from my analysis of comments from medium scorers about epistemology (read Table 5 from the bottom to the top). The first two groups of codes were: *I need to be engaged in my learning* and *wanting to get the most from class*. These two groups were linked together because they demonstrated both a desire to actively engage in class and what medium scorers sought to get out of class.

When I heard participants make comments like "If I'm able to ask you questions" or "I had to teach to myself how to study", I identified these as *I need to be engaged in my learning*. Additionally, when I heard medium scorers say "When I take a finance class, it's not necessarily to make the make most money" or "I was definitely reading a lot more of the material" I identified these comments as *wanting to get the most from class*.

Medium scorers were interested in class beyond what was needed to pass the course. Their success was linked to their own active participation. They pursued knowledge for the sake of completing requirements and how it could help them build on their own self-understanding.

Participants also valued their own personal growth and the new perspectives they gained through classes. Three groups of codes were associated with such development: *I understand myself more because of class*, *my skills developed because of classes*, *expanding my views because of a class*. When I heard comments like "I learned about…the people I work well with" or "learn from my mistakes" I identified them as *I understand myself more because of class*. These comments all focused on how participants were impacted by their pursuit of knowledge.

Though learning about themselves was one result of their coursework, medium scorers also were concerned about learning skills. Comments like "the main underlying goal was all

Table 5

Code Mapping for "Medium" Epistemological Experiences (N=16)

Themes

E1. Learning for the sake of learning (categories: CE1, CE2)
E2. I consider my future because of learning experiences (categories: CE3)

Categories

CE1. Growth in class happens through active participation (groups: GE1, GE2)

CE2. Class experiences should me understand myself (groups: GE3, GE4, GE5)

CE3. My experiences have an impact on future goals (groups: GE6, GE7)

Groups

GE1. I need to be engaged in my learning

GE2. Wanting to get the most from class

GE3. I understand myself more because of class

GE4. My skills developed because of classes

GE5. Expanding my views because of classes

GE6. Realizing how a class connected to future needs

GE7. Using learning experiences to figure out career path

about your public speaking" or "learn the things…social skills and behavioral patterns" were grouped together as *my skills developed because of classes*.

When respondents offered thoughts like "being confronted with these different worldviews" or "I didn't know really that there was this other aspect of it", I assigned those comments to the group I labeled *expanding my views because of a class*. Medium scorers valued how their view on the world could be developed by being exposed to new and alternate ways of considering course material. This deepened the appreciation they had for classes.

Linking courses to the future was important for medium scorers. The final two groups of codes were labeled as *realizing how a class connected to future needs* and *using learning experiences to figure out career path*. The comments across these two groups reflected how learning impacted what respondents would do after college. Comments like "I can gear my business classes through the focus of ministry" or "I've learned to become a better writer" were identified as *realizing how a class connected to future needs*. Medium scorers drew from their class experiences an understanding of how knowledge or skills acquired in those classes could be useful beyond the course.

Similarly, medium scorers made connections between classes/learning experiences and a potential vocation. When I heard comments like "It kind of assured me what I'm going into" or "It's learning how can that be instrumental in the church" I identified these as *using learning experience to figure out career path*. These participants were engaged in the classroom because it helped solidify their post-college career interests.

Medium scorers consistently connected what they learned about themselves in classes to themselves, and to how they could deal with others. Their comments often suggested an overlap between the Epistemological, Interpersonal, and Intrapersonal domains. As previously noted, the domains of Self-Authorship cannot be studied in isolation from each other.

I collapsed these seven initial groups of comments into three categories for the second iteration of data analysis. The first category consisted of two groups (*I need to be engaged in my learning* and *wanting to get the most from class*) that I called *growth in class happens through active participation*. Active engagement in learning was necessary for medium scorers to gain the most from the experience. That meant being comfortable asking questions, digesting course material, and consciously considering connections to the future:

> If I'm able to ask you [professor] questions and feel comfortable asking you question, even if they're not stuck to those 20 pieces we to go over, then I'm going to be more engaged and I'm going to learn more. [Ace]

> It was in organic chemistry, which is a year-long, and I had to put in a lot more time just actually studying stuff on my own in addition to doing the required homework. Once I learned it for that class I was like, 'Oh, I can do it for this. I can pull off other classes if I put for that effort.' [Paul]

> You say something in class, he [professor] was going to argue with you in that professor way. He wanted to make you form your thoughts. Writing style…I learned to write in his class. [Reid]

Medium scorers valued the experience of learning and realized that active participation meant getting the work done and taking ownership in the process. They had to figure out the correct methods to do well. Although they did not express that their success was solely their responsibility, they knew they had a role in learning course material and succeeding academically. Learning was demonstrated through the development of perspectives and opinions. There was little value in succeeding for the sake of simply mastering the material or proving themselves to others. They sought to demonstrate to themselves that they were capable of learning on their own.

The second category included three groups of codes: *I understand myself more because of class*, *my skills developed because of classes*, and *expanding my views because of classes*. These groups were collapsed under the category of *class experiences should help me understand myself*. Medium scorers were interested in self-understanding and how class experiences helped them to both develop skills and shift their perspectives.

Skill development was cited as helpful for working with others, doing better in other classes, or helping with a chosen career:

> I never knew that theology or that you could talk about this stuff in more an academic way, it was always more Sunday school stuff. I didn't know really that there was this other aspect to it. I think that's probably where I learned the most, not only of what I believe and what I value, but also kind of giving me that worldview as well of why other people view it like this. [Reid]

> It's just that learning of maturing through college, um, not only as a student but as a person, and holding yourself accountable and responsible for, you know, you are paying thousands of dollars to go here. [Danny]

> The week that I spent writing, and I wrote that 60 pages, that was the most focused…I know there's this talk of flow in the world of psychology. That is the most focused and flowing, whatever, that I've ever been academically. That is the kind of experience and the feeling I go back to when I'm trying to do stuff now. It's like, 'I know I can do this, because wrote 60 pages in a week. This is it. This is how I know that I'm good at school. This is it.' [Brandon]

Beyond the process of developing skills to complete assignments, hold discussions about differing viewpoints, and becoming responsible for their efforts, medium scorers felt that classes exposed them to new ways to think about the world:

> My freshman year, my first semester, I was in the required freshman course. It was titled 'Who or What is God?' In that class, we looked at Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity and Confucianism, basically looking at how…what these religions…what they believe. Was there a god in their religion, and compared it and contrasted from Christianity and looked Christianity just as a single entity, not always comparing. I think that's the one class that changed my perspective on everything. [Reid]

> One class I probably learned most from is art history. Nobody will tell you that. Reason being, that was a 9:00 am course. I probably only attended like 2/3rds of the classes, just being lazy. But, the reason why was because in class, you had to visit five different art places. I was forced to go to five different places and find a piece and write about and I actually realized that I really enjoyed going to those types of places. Art museums, art exhibits, which I don't think I ever, ever would have figured otherwise. [Ace]

Gaining a new perspective was important for medium scorers as they navigated classes that were both within their interest/major area and completely outside of it. These participants expressed an openness to growing as a person. They were willing to adapt to what new experiences offered them as opposed to being rigid or stoic in their approach to coursework.

The third category of codes included the groups *realizing how a class connected to future needs* and *using learning experiences to figure out career path*. These two groups were collapsed into the category *my experiences have an impact on future goals*. Medium scorers' experiences in this area reflected connections they sought to make between learning from their experiences and what they wanted to accomplish in the future.

In some cases, campus experiences directly helped them make decisions through two ways: courses affirmed what they wanted to do in the future or co-curricular opportunities helped them develop a better understanding of the future. As participants that scored as medium on the MBS, their approach to making connections to future goals was modest and thoughtful. For

instance, medium scorers appreciated how their experiences in and out of class set them up to consider their future interests:

> It [Developmental Biology] was a really broad class, but you learned a lot of specific things at the same time. It kind of assured me of what I'm going into is what I want to go into. [Paul]

> As for what I'm doing after [graduation], not 100% sure on the direct career path. I have more less three plans…the third one which has most to do with working in admissions and getting to know a lot of people, would be doing something with higher education administration. … It's something important and something I've been interested in for a while. [Bill]

> I would say that, for me, because of my own values that I learned from Christian studies and being able to develop my theology through that, I can gear my business classes through the focus of ministry. When I take a finance class, it's not necessarily to make the most money, but it's to ... how will I be able to, as a young adult, be able to save and maneuver myself to be in a better position for me and my family 10, 15, 20 years down the road. When it's learning IT stuff for business, it's learning how can that be instrumental in the church. [Reid]

Medium scorers derived information from their learning experiences that connected to how they envisioned themselves in the future. Their choices in terms of campus experiences reflected what they valued or how these experiences challenged them to think differently. It was not about making the most money, being at the top of their professional field, or being thought of highly by others for these participants. They were motivated by using their learning to position themselves for future fulfillment.

As I continued my analysis of comments made by medium scorers I arranged the codes into two themes that emerged from the seven groups and three categories of comments. The first two categories (*growth in class happens through active participation* and *class experiences should help me understand myself*) were collapsed into the first theme *learning for the sake of learning*. What was evident about medium scorers is that they valued the process of learning and how they developed as a result of it. They sought outcomes for learning that assisted in their growth. Most comments about their success in courses included a remark about how they have become better people and learners:

> I went into college as a History major in the beginning, so I was like, "History's my thing, I really like history," and I came away with so much more ... It's kind of what's happened with a lot of the core curriculum classes at school. I know the one I took my second semester freshman year, the main underlying goal was all

about your public speaking, and I crushed that class. I was okay at presentations in high school, and I am so much better now. More confidence I guess. [Bill]

You know, go into the end goal knowing you're gonna need the education, it's not just a grade on a paper like it was in high school that you use to get into college. The lessons you're learning in class is your job. [Danny]

Also too, just group dynamic work that we have in the business world, or at least at the college when we did this final project, I learned so much more about group dynamics and the people that I work well with and the people that I don't necessarily work well with. But then, knowing that in ministry I'm going to have all different types of people and then how to best fit my personality to work with them. [Reid]

Medium scorers were excited about their learning experiences because they were growing as people and preparing for the professional world. Phrases like "more confidence", "learning of maturing", and "fit my personality to work with them" were each aligned with classroom experiences. Very little mention was made of earning the highest GPA, making an impression on others, or getting the best job upon graduation from college. *Learning for the sake of learning* for medium scorers meant doing well in college; success would be measured by how well they understood themselves, how much they engaged in the learning process, and the skills they were able to harness as a result of their coursework and co-curricular experiences.

The second theme that emerged in my analysis included the category *my experiences have an impact on future goals*. As I reviewed the groups of comments in this category I identified the theme *I consider my future because of learning experiences*. It was evident that the learning experiences of medium scorers had a significant impact on the direction of their lives after college. When necessary, these participants did not mind wavering from their chosen major or first-year professional interests. They cared about how their curricular and co-curricular opportunities enhanced their learning. The process of learning elicited passion that made them feel more confident about their future:

Honestly, I feel like I've learned more outside the classroom than I have in the classroom in college. I've had a wide variety of leadership experience and I just think I've learned way more about life than I have curriculum. [Dean]

I got into grad school and I committed to that. I'm going for fish farming. It's kind of like genetics developmental bio applied to fish farming. I've always just been a major fish enthusiast. I've had some pretty wild fish tanks and everything I currently do, and I like biology a lot, I've always been really interested in it. Just

kind of keeping fish, and water chemistry, and I didn't really start getting interested in developmental biology until [name of college]. It seemed kind of like the perfect balance. [Paul]

We did a class called the religious life of young adults. It's the capstone class for a youth ministries concentration. Basically we read six books, mostly sociological, some religious studies books about youth and young adult perceptions of religion, and trends, particularly in American culture. But, also worldwide in regard to Christianity. Reading those and then conducting our own interviews with our peers at college, as well as taking an extensive look inside on our own views and perspectives on our faith. All of us were Christian in the class, so looking at our own faith as well while doing this work was really eye opening, just to see what you think you believe and what people say in mainstream culture, the media, versus what a basic Christian would supposedly believe. [Brandon]

For medium scorers, figuring out what they wanted to do post-graduation was an iterative process in which in-class and out-of-class experiences intersected to help them think more clearly about their interests. None of the desired professional goals they had were tied to dominating a particular field, being the best leader, or achieving their goals at all costs. Rather, this group focused on finding meaning and a personal connection to their future aspirations.

As I reviewed my field notes to consider the characteristics of these medium scorers, I noted that in describing how they chose learning experiences they were relaxed and casual in their responses. They were willing to look at their learning comprehensively. College was not an opportunity for amassing a list of academic achievements. It was an intentional and thoughtful process of seeking meaningful opportunities to learn and be successful at the same time.

Interpersonal

To start my analysis of Interpersonal experiences for medium scorers I initially identified eight groups of codes that emerged from medium scorers' comments (see Table 6). The first three groups were *family relationships influence me*, *challenging authority figures*, and *having a relationship with a professor*. These groups of codes primarily placed focus on how connections to external individuals in authority or who had oversight in their lives affected them.

When I heard comments like "My brother…he was still very on top of me" or "I really valued her [aunt's] advice" I identified these as *family relationships influence me*. Medium scorers did not overly rely on their family for assistance. However, they were comfortable in seeking advice from people they felt knew them and knew how to challenge them.

Table 6

Code Mapping for "Medium" Interpersonal Experiences (N=16)

Themes

Ir1. How relationships are important for major decision points (categories: CIr1, CIr2)
Ir2. Choosing friends should be a deliberate process (categories: CIr3, CIr4)

Categories

CIr1. Others are helpful at major decision points (group: GIr1, GIr2)

CIr2. It's important to develop a relationship with a professor (GIr3)

CIr3. Wanting friendships to be productive (groups: GIr4, GIr5)

CIr4. Discerning bad relationships (groups: GIr6, GIr7, GIr8)

Groups

GIr1. Family relationships influence me

GIr2. Challenging authority figures

GIr3. Having a relationship with a professor

GIr4. Identifying good friendships

GIr5. Accomplishing goals with friends

GIr6. Not wanting to drink with friends

GIr7. What I dislike about relationships between friends

GIr8. Challenging male friends

"I didn't like the way one of the older guys said something" or "I don't agree with something my boss has done" were identified as *challenging authority figures*. These participants believed that challenging was important and it was just as important to think about how you challenged authority. A critical piece to challenging people in authority (older students in leadership roles or supervisors) was stepping forward when something felt wrong – not simply to have their voice heard.

Lastly, when I heard comments like "I have a lot of advisors that I really look up to" or "She cared genuinely about me" were identified as *having a relationship with a professor*. Medium scorers valued knowing their professors/advisors beyond needing something from them. Professors made an impact in their lives and these participants were open to letting others know when assistance was needed in-class or as they needed to make important decisions about their future.

The second group of codes consisted of *identifying good friendships* and *accomplishing goals with friends*. The commonality I observed between these groups of comments was that medium scorers were willing to talk about the positive influences of their friendships. Additionally, they were concerned about doing things with their friends that would be productive and meaningful. Through the attention they placed on the activities they did with friends they further determined the value of the friendship.

Comments like "One of my biggest lessons I've learned from her" or "Having a Christ-centered relationship" were identified as *identifying good friendships*. Phrases like these reflected the value respondents in this group placed on close friendships and the importance they placed on surrounding themselves with people who could help them improve themselves. A good friendship was not transactional in nature, but one that medium scorers could learn from. This led to participants reporting on what types of activities they participated in with good friends.

Once positive friendships had been identified, medium scorers wanted to do something more important with their friends. When I observed comments like "They pushed me academically" or "They've [friends] just reassured what I've already learned" I identified these as *accomplishing goals with friends*. For these participants the goal was often becoming a better person. Comments from medium scorers reflected that it was in environments with friends that they moved towards their goals.

The final groups of codes to emerge in my analysis represented negative experiences of friendships amongst medium scorers. These included *not wanting to drink with* friends, *what I dislike about relationships between* friends, and *challenging male friends*. Medium scorers described poor relationships and what they did to resolve these challenges.

When I heard comments like "Who can drink this beer quicker" or "It [getting hammered] just kind of got old for me" I grouped these codes together as *not wanting to drink with friends*. Medium scorers were not opposed to alcohol consumption with their friends and even engaged in drinking with them in college. However, over time they came to realize they were not getting anything from these experiences with friends and drinking (particularly in high-risk situations) was inhibiting their personal success.

What I dislike about relationships between friends was represented by comments like "There were some skeptical things going on" or "There's not as much in common anymore." Medium scorers reported why, at times, friendships had ended, typically the result of diverging interests or values. They were comfortable discontinuing a friendship or letting it naturally dissolve. Maintaining a "bro" relationship, where men keep the friendship intact no matter what (Kimmel, 2008) was not characteristic of medium scorers.

When I observed comments like "Don't say what you're saying" or "I stepped up" I identified these situations as *challenging male friends*. Medium scorers were confident in their decisions to challenge a comment or action by friends that they believed was undesirable. In experiences where a friend's actions did not align with their personal values, their concern for the friendship was not as important as doing what was right. I found with medium scorers that they were okay with not appeasing their friend that were men for the sake of popularity or increased status.

As I continued my analysis I collapsed groups in the first iteration of data analysis to create four categories. The first category emerged from the two groups: *family relationships influence me* and *challenging authority figures*. I collapsed these two groups and identified a category called *others are helpful at major decision points*. Medium scorers asserted that nurturing and challenging relationships with family and other persons of authority were critical to their success. They were uninhibited in their choices to use these individuals when important decisions were needed:

My aunt actually works at the college. I'm in her office, more just to say hey, what's up, or just talk, probably three or four times a week just to chat. I think she was really vital as well in the breakup process of really figuring that out, and being able to really ...Now I'm going to backtrack ... To show ... Take the God out of all of it and to show this is what I see, this is not necessarily a secular point of view 'cause she's very religious and we have a lot of good conversations, but with her discipline being in mental health and physical health, how is this impacting you more on the physical and emotional side rather than the spiritual side. Noticing things and me saying, 'Reid, I don't see this as healthy', or, 'I think this is what you probably need to do. As something that ... I really valued her advice and acted upon it a lot of the times as well. [Reid]

The professor was also my advisor at the time, and there were a couple of times where I was thinking about leaving school, going to community college, and she was really on top of me. [Bill]

We're [fraternity brother in charge of his chapter education] still like best friends… we talk every day. He's really my go to, one of my top two, three go to friends, for any kind of advice that I need. So, the relationship is indescribable as far as any relationship that I've ever had with an older not necessarily peer educator. [Danny]

Medium scorers saw the personal relationships with authority figures as being the best way to take full advantage of their assistance, even in challenging situations. They could assert themselves in these relationships that allowed them to express independent thought, but not for the sake of demonstrating that they were capable leaders. What was most apparent is that medium scorers were comfortable challenging and being challenged by others.

Specifically, as medium scorers considered their academic success, they wanted a personal connection to their professors. The second category that emerged in my analysis stemmed from *having a relationship with a professor*. As I continued to review medium scorer comments I identified the next category as *it's important to develop a relationship with a professor*.

Medium scorers not only desired relationships with professors, but saw such relationships as important to their success and growth in college. They valued how professors related to them and cared for their experience:

I would say it was definitely a professor-student relationship. It was "you're going to call me Dr." "You're going to ask questions, I'm going to answer, I'm going to challenge you." I know people definitely didn't like his style of teaching, especially grading, I would say it's probably what people didn't enjoy the most.

But, I still talk to people in that class and they say that's one of the more thought-provoking classes. I think he knew how to rile you up, to push that button that you didn't think that could be pushed, and he was able to. I think he had genuine concern for everybody to make sure that their freshman experience and their whole college career was good. I'm still in contact with him today and he's not even at the college anymore, so he still reaches out. [Reid]

Professor [name] is without a doubt one of the best professors I've had here. A very caring guy. A little bit of a goofball at times, but a brilliant, brilliant professor, brilliant person, very compassionate. He's one of the reasons the class was as impactful for me as it was. [Donovan]

She was a little rough as a professor, very hard grader, had high standards, and she wanted all of us to meet the standards. But there was a while when I would go talk to her more as an advisor than a professor, and she showed that she genuinely cared about me. One time I was having a mental breakdown basically, and she was just like, "Stop, we're not going to talk about school," took me off the subject, calmed me down. Brought the subject back in gradually, and she showed that she cared genuinely about me, and I feel like she was that way with all of her students. She was just there for me. Still, I haven't had a class with her since then, but when she sees me on campus she checks in. [Bill]

Phrases like "cared genuinely about me" and "genuine concern for everybody" were common among medium scorers as they described what they valued about relationships with professors. They wanted to be cared for as individuals and desired connections with faculty in which the professor would ask about their lives in general. Medium scorers were not restrictive in expressing their emotions with professors, which they felt allowed them to gain more from their classes. They hoped for a long-term relationship with a professor beyond completing the course. Making an impression as a hard-working, top student did not appear to be valuable to medium scorers.

Likewise, medium scorers chose peer relationships for these same reasons. The next category to emerge in my analysis consisted of comments from the groups *identifying good friendships* and *accomplishing goals with friends*. I collapsed these two groups to establish the category *wanting friendships to be productive*. I found that medium scorers reported specific ways that positive friendships benefited them through either productive activities or interactions:

One of my close friends is a female, Jewish lesbian. I think one of my biggest lessons I've learned from her is she'll call me when I have white male privilege or what have you. I haven't had that [extensive] of a dialogue about safe spaces with her, but I think she would push me back and say, "Well, this is why we do need these. You don't know the shit that whoever goes through." I think that's

important. I think I've learned a lot more from my friends who are not white men. I don't want to bring race into it, but I'll bring straight too. I'll bring sexual orientation into it too. [Brandon]

The people in the IFC aren't even fraternity brothers they're just friends I've made. Just the community as a whole has been supportive with it. I think it's given me a lot more confidence… You can see that other people not only support it but actually find value in it and actually want it to do well. On a certain point it's more about doing it for the community that's supporting you than for your own personal venture. It definitely gives you a huge level of confidence and a new motivation to accomplish things. [Donovan]

I'm very, very type A so for me I want to know when we're doing things, what we're doing currently, this, that, and the other but he's polar opposite so just being around him, hanging out with him a lot more, especially this semester, that's helped me to chill a little bit. Kind of bring me back to the middle and not be so overbearing with being type A and wanting to know when and where and how all the time so I don't know if that even qualifies. [Ace]

Medium scorers identified friendships that had the most impact on them as being those where they experienced personal growth as a result of the relationships. Some of these relationships were centered in organizations like fraternities or simply having shared interests and lifestyles. What sustained the friendship was the constructive nature of the time they spent together. Medium scorers found they could be vulnerable, authentic, and uninhibited in relationships that were productive.

In order to know how friendships could be beneficial to medium scorers, they also had to know which relationships would be detrimental to them. The last category I identified in my analysis combined the three groups *not wanting to drink with friends*, *what I dislike about relationships between friends*, and *challenging male friends*. After reviewing the comments within these groups I identified this category as *discerning bad relationships*. What I observed as common among these groups was a willingness by medium scorers to say that a relationship was undesirable.

In some cases medium scorers reported the basis for bad relationships being connected with alcohol/drug consumption or simply a difference in lifestyles/values. These relationships were found both in and outside of fraternities:

He was one of the first people to push me socially, and wanted me to be a social butterfly. I kind of account a lot of me coming to college and growing as a social person to him. A bad thing, to put it bluntly, he's kind of a dick. He will be mean

> to people for no reason. That's one thing that conflicts with me on a moral level. He's a little judgmental. [Bill]

> By the time he [fraternity brother] graduated he had pretty much alienated himself from the whole ... He'd stolen from brothers. Really the stealing thing is the big thing. I don't know, he resigned from the fraternity because he wasn't paying dues. [Dean]

> But coming to college, we learned two different things, and went down two different paths. I will focus on academics more, where he will just decide to get hammered on a random day. It's just a different mindset that we both have now. I don't know. We just kind of drifted apart as a whole, because he likes to drink constantly. [Bill]

Medium scorers expressed little regret about discontinuing a friendship due to differences in lifestyles, values, or activities. Regardless of how they were connected to friends, medium scorers were willing to dissolve a friendship if they determined that it was detrimental to who they were. These experiences reaffirmed the preference medium scorers had for genuine and mutually beneficial relationships, particularly with other men. They challenged friendships either directly or indirectly by simply being clear that they had no interest in being around the person or the activities in which that person was involved.

Through the emergence of these four categories of Interpersonal comments (*others are helpful at major decision points*, *it's important to develop a relationship with a professor*, *wanting friendships with friends to be productive*, and *discerning bad relationships*) I identified two themes. Experiences for medium scores fell within two major areas *how relationships are important for major decision points* and *choosing friends should be a deliberate process*.

How relationships are important for major decision points emerged from the categories of experiences found within *others are helpful at major decision points* and *it's important to develop a relationship with a professor*. The Interpersonal experiences of medium scorers reflected a need to be connected to people that cared about them when they were making academic, personal, and some career-related decisions. They sought positive relationships that allowed for reciprocal challenge, support, and care during times when they were faced with transitions:

> I guess I would say the biggest problem is being confronted with these different world views and trying to figure out, for yourself, what they mean to you and then how what you were raised with either conflicts or confirms whatever a religion or world view says. I would say the way I solved it was processing. I'd not only talk

to my professor and go to his office hours, but I would talk to friends about the class, I would talk to family. That external processing of this is what I'm learning; it's challenging, but then also being able to say I know this because of this, or something like that. [Reid]

I'm the youngest of four boys. Asking for help wasn't really frowned upon, but my brothers were very adamant about me doing things for myself. My mom was the same way, so I was like, "I have to do everything for myself, I can't rely on anybody else." I still have that mentality sometimes, which isn't the best one to have, but at that time I went to her [professor/advisor] and I was asking for a lot of help because I got a 50 something on a test I think. It was the first time that I asked for someone else's help on something when it came to education. High school was a breeze for me. She was genuinely helping me through it, and I realized that maybe not everyone is a terrible person. Maybe people actually do want to try to help you, so I've tried to be more reliable to people if they need help. Because one thing I developed from that also is I care about people more now. But then also realizing I can rely on other people at times if I need to be. [Bill]

Medium scorers enjoyed demonstrating the ability to make their own decisions and manage themselves throughout college. However, they valued a healthy interdependence and sought the assistance of others when they needed to. Rather than going their own way and trying to prove their independence when addressing challenges, they actively elicited help from others. The respondents in this group viewed relationships that helped them grow as a sign of strength, rather than a sign of weakness. Masculinity was not a limitation to their desire to gain the most from a relationship.

In order for medium scorers to value relationships they wanted to be intentional in who they chose to be surrounded by. The second theme emerged from the two categories *wanting friendships with friends to be productive* and *discerning bad relationships*. When I converged these two areas of comments I identified the theme *choosing friendships should be a deliberate process.* Identifying positive and negative friendships sharpened their discernment and forced them to be intentional with relationships – particularly because they wanted to benefit from challenge, support, and care.

The deliberate nature of how they chose friends occurred through lessons learned from friendships that did not flourish. Medium scorers used these experiences to identify specific traits in others that did, or did not, align with how they approached life:

Don't assume innocence in people. Don't assume guilt, but don't just assume innocence. Nobody's fully innocent, I'm not either, but just know that there's a

line and if you think there's a chance someone could be ... Basically, someone's got to prove that they're not near the line or you can assume it. Now, you can't assume that they're over the line until they prove it. I guess there's like 1 being fine, and 10 being no, and 5 obviously is in the middle, if you just don't think they're in these little numbers then just don't be like you've got to prove yourself to me, just observe. Actions really will tell. [Dean]

He's just a really genuine person. A lot of his mindsets are similar to mine. We're very introspective and inquisitive about the world and reality as a whole. I find people that can ask those kind of questions, and be intrigued by why. Why are certain things run the way they are? Why do people act how they do in certain situations? People that can kind of ... Analyze more macro-trends tend to be more intellectual and more empathy-driven. I tend to trust people like that more. [Donovan]

Medium scorers learned to not assume much about someone before starting a friendship but to pay attention to the actions of their peers and what they actually cared about. Experiences in which medium scorers deliberately chose to not continue friendships ranged from issues of theft to misuse of alcohol. The mentality often associated with Kimmel's (2008) "bros before hoes" was not evident in the medium scorers' experiences. This led me to believe that they cared deeply about relationships; they learned that sacrificing their personal beliefs for the sake of a friendship was not necessary.

Medium scorers I interviewed did not always enact traditional masculine behaviors with respect to how they viewed and operated in relationships with others. They leaned away from wanting friendships for the sake of pleasure/utility and towards friendships for the sake of goodness (Shushok, 2008). It was friendships for the sake of goodness where they thrived and learned the most about themselves. These relationships also impacted how they operated in the Intrapersonal domain.

Intrapersonal

I initially identified seven groups of codes that emerged from my analysis of comments from medium scorers about Intrapersonal experiences (see Table 7). The first two groups were *understanding masculine behaviors* and *knowing my role*. These two groups were linked because they demonstrated how medium scorers unpacked their manhood through their behaviors and the roles they held.

When I heard comments like "being a man" or "I would normally go to a guy" I identified these as *understanding masculine behaviors*. Medium scorers acknowledged their

Table 7

Code Mapping for "Medium" Intrapersonal Experiences (N=16)

Themes

Ia1. Being a confident man (categories: CIa1, CIa2)
Ia2. Striving to be better. (categories: CIa3)

Categories

CIa1. My position with others is connected to being a man (groups: GIa1, GIa2)

CIa2. Having the confidence to discern good and bad in people (groups: GIa3, GIa4)

CIa3. Becoming the person I want to be (groups: GIa5, GIa6, GIa7)

Groups

GIa1. Understanding masculine behaviors

GIa2. Knowing my role

GIa3. Knowing myself when relating to others

GIa4. Judging the actions of others

GIa5. Developing my own voice

GIa6. Being a leader

GIa7. Sticking with my values

understanding of hyper-masculine and hypo-masculine behaviors as those behaviors related to figuring out who they wanted to be. Their comments reflected being in the middle – knowing when one set of behaviors was more desirable than another. Medium scorers commonly reflected on the influence of traditional scripts of masculinity when attempting to understand their own behaviors.

As they developed an understanding of masculine behaviors and how those behaviors might confirm stereotypes about men, medium scorers could see how this intersected with the roles they play. When I heard comments like "solo soldier" or "I have to do everything myself" I identified them as *knowing my role*. Similar to their Interpersonal experiences, medium scorers were challenged by debating whether their role should be "the person that independently gets everything done." They reconciled this through deepening their own understanding of their role as shaped by their values.

Medium scorers developed a deep understanding of their roles as men and this impacted what they wanted to know about themselves when interacting with other people. The next two groups of comments fell within *knowing myself when relating to others* and *judging the actions of others*. These comments were Intrapersonal in nature because they typically represented introspective thoughts or assessments of character respondents made when thinking or dealing with other people.

When I heard language like "I cared enough" or "acting selfishly" I identified them as *knowing myself when relating to others*. Medium scorers were judicious in acknowledging how their characteristics impacted other people. In some cases they took risks when making decisions that impacted others. Additionally, they often reflected on whether they were helpful in their efforts. Understanding themselves and whether they appeared as dominating or uncaring were critical aspects to how they developed their own identity.

For medium scorers it was important to know themselves in relation to others. It was necessary to understand when *judging the actions of others* was necessary to demonstrate who and what they cared about. Comments like "actions really will tell" or "friends with a girl who does too many things" were included in this group. Medium scorers had a clear sense of being able to openly judge the actions of other people to determine if these were traits that they valued.

They paid close attention to what friends and non-friends did, and used their observations as a guide for determining what their own actions would be.

Developing my own voice, being a leader, and sticking with my values were the final three groups of codes. Common among these comments were experiences respondents believed were critical to their personal development. As their medium scores on the MBS would suggest, none of the experiences reported were extreme in any manner.

When I observed comments like "I don't buy into that paradigm" or "this is how I interpret our rules" I identified these as developing my own voice. Medium scorers utilized peer leadership roles and experiences challenging others to assert their opinions and establish their identity. This was achieved through how they spoke to others and the viewpoints they formed to support their contentions. Medium scorers were firm and confident in their ability to convey what they believed or felt.

Having a firm identity contributed to their desire to exemplify leadership in their roles. Comments like "given them the confidence" or "I have to pick up the pieces" were labeled as being a leader. Medium scorers took pride in how they could influence others because of the confidence they had as leaders. It was important for them to be a role model and that meant being able to demonstrate commitment and growth.

As leaders, medium scorers saw their strength as being values-based men. When I heard comments like "incorporating those values into my daily life" or "treat someone the way I want to be treated" I identified these as sticking with my values. Experiences like these for medium scorers occurred most in situations that involved interactions with others. Additionally, medium scorers that were fraternity men often made references to their chapter's values when reflecting the desire to hold true to their values no matter the situation.

After identifying the seven groups of comments, I collapsed them into three categories in the next iteration of my analysis: my position with others is connected to being a man, having the confidence to discern good and bad in people, and becoming the person I want to be.

The first category my position with others is connected to being a man consisted of two groups: understanding masculine behaviors and knowing my role. Medium scorers were cognizant that their position in relation to others was impacted by how they understood their manhood. Manhood did not strongly establish their identity, but they were conscious of how it might influence their views on the world and other people:

I think that even though I was raised in a pretty neutral household there's definitely still the identity of manhood. I've got to be the one to hold the fort down, I've got to be the provider, I've got to be the one who doesn't lose it. I've got to be the one who keeps their cool and keeps everyone else in line. [Dean]

I've figured out the world and what being a man means a lot faster than a lot of boys that go to our college. I think I have a pretty good sense of ... I'll be loyal or whatever, friendly to my fraternity brothers for as long as they're alive, but a lot of them are just not smart. They're not making good decisions. They're barely making it in college, for whatever reason. They mess around with a lot of girls that they don't need to or do stupid drugs. I'll call them on that. I'll say, "Really? You got to do that? I don't think that's necessary." I think people know in the peer side of things that I feel that I'm not set apart, but I think people know that I'm coming at things with a different perspective than a lot of others are. [Brandon]

You're expected to do things that would come off as masculine I guess. I don't know. Just being in a fraternity in general like talking to women or newly single, obviously a lot of pressures there like, "What are you doing? Like go talk to her or like, why didn't you talk to this girl?" This, that, and the other. I think tying it in to like you're saying experiences. Even just giving into peer pressure a little bit or taking advice is how I should go about something which is obviously tied into the fact that I'm a man and I should act a certain way and it changes the experience a little bit because maybe I'm not doing it the way I want to do it. [Ace]

Medium scorers demonstrated that they had not completely figured out how to enact manhood, and their Intrapersonal understanding of this concept involved a constant inner dialogue that attempted to make meaning of masculinity in any new situation. They rested in the middle of the continuum between wanting to assert the tendencies of a hyper-masculine man and hypo-masculine man. Medium scorers did not want to be pushovers, but they also did not want to come across as overbearing or domineering. The positive traits of masculinity were desirable to them, while they tried their best to resist the negative attributes of being men.

The second category of comments emerged from *knowing myself when relating to others* and *judging the actions of others*. Comments in these groups were collapsed into the category *having the confidence to discern good and bad in people*. As medium scorers were able to understand who they were they realized their keen ability to decipher what they valued, or did not value, about other people:

I don't want to be like people are worthless, but you just really do learn ... Like my dad was always like, "You can't count on anyone", and I'm like whatever. I

> was in high school I never really had to count on anyone for anything. My parents stocked my lunch account at school and that's all I needed from anyone. Now, I just learned that people really are so self-motivated. If they do not benefit from it they're probably not going to do it and you never know the true character of someone until a decision could hurt them. It's like maybe they're not going to benefit from this, but it's not going to hurt them either, so they're going to do it because they're a good person or whatever, which is fine. [Dean]

> Dedication to a cause. Because I've seen them [fraternity brothers] both be extremely driven, and dedicated to something, and I've also seen them both be wishy washy on some things. It comes more from seeing them be so dedicated to the thing, like the one with the philanthropy event, or the other one with his research. One of my friends' dad said, "Don't half-ass two things, whole ass one thing." That's a mentality that I've come away, from seeing them. [Bill]

Medium scorers demonstrated confidence in knowing whether a friendship was valuable for them and how to maintain who they wanted to be in relationships with others. Although they appreciated friendships, they were unwilling to lose themselves in their relationships. Maintaining a strong and independent identity was important to them. Relationships exemplified what medium scorers valued, and the confidence to discern good and bad was a statement about how they viewed their own identity.

Possessing an understanding of who they were as men and how they judged good and bad relationships were parts of the process medium scorers used to further their development. The final category consisted of the groups *developing my own voice*, *being a leader*, and *sticking with my values*. These groups were collapsed to form the category *becoming the person I want to be*. Medium scorers were willing to be introspective about who they were becoming and enjoyed what they were learning about themselves. Through leadership experiences that allowed them to hone a voice and identity, they sought opportunities in college to enact a personal values-set.

I heard about a number of situations where medium scorers took advantage of challenging situations that tested their fortitude to remain committed to a belief. These situations mostly occurred in places of difference. Medium scorers wanted to be stretched in how they thought about people and the world:

> The multi-cultural affairs program is there to take care of kids who are different versus to help everyone else figure out to help integrate. It's very self-secluding. All the programming is in house, and it's for them. The perception is you don't go to the events, unless you're black, unless you're Asian. Very few kids are included in that circle who aren't a minority. That drives me fricking crazy. I think that's the biggest waste of an office. I'm all for the safe space thing, like you

need your safe space, but if you're going to come to college for a safe space, you're not going to grow. You're not going to learn shit. When you graduate you're going to be really disappointed. I understand safe spaces, but I don't think this rhetoric of everything has to be safe. That drives me crazy. If you have diversity, why are you going to separate it out? Why aren't you going to mix it up? [Brandon]

I think joining a fraternity that has the same values helps a lot because everyone in the organization is supposed to fit that one aspect or another. That makes it a lot easier where as joining another organization or whatever else, always having it challenged all the time. That's when I think people change a little bit more. Exposed to different things heavily. [Ace]

I would definitely say yes. I mean, I think more on just a human level of respecting everybody, seeing everybody for their difference, for the value ... Really looking at the value that they have, not only on the college campus but also where they can be in the world. Really valuing the love and serving the neighbor has really changed. It's become not necessarily so centered here that it only includes your family, but it really does include everybody that you encounter. [Reid]

Whether or not medium scorers chose to be around people that are just like them, they also wanted to be stretched and challenged. The journey to becoming who they want to be was just as important as figuring it out. Situations where they might be uncomfortable or disrupted in their thinking affirmed the confidence they had in their own identity. Medium scorers valued not only Epistemological learning, but Intrapersonal learning also. They believed that the most substantial learning occurred when they were stretched through new experiences.

My analysis of the Intrapersonal comments made by medium scorers led to two themes: *Being a confident man* (*my position with others is connected to being a man* and *having the confidence to discern good and bad in people*) and *striving to be better* (*becoming the person I want to be*). These men believed they had arrived at a good place in their identity development, but recognized that it was an iterative process.

Confidence in medium scorers was expressed in those situations where they could offer leadership to others, model effective behaviors, and remain strongly rooted in their beliefs. Medium scorers believed in exerting strength as a man, but in a moderate way. Being overbearing or domineering detracted from what they valued about getting along with others and fostering a healthy interdependence. To a certain degree, self-reliance was a factor, but to a much lower degree than high scorers. They reflected on their confidence as good, quality men:

I think some of my beliefs for being a man are definitely traditional in the sense that bring home money, that you're important, you're the person who should support the family. I don't necessarily think that's a bad belief to have, because I think it sets a standard for me. But I also grew up and I've learned throughout that it's okay to share emotion, that it's okay to hold onto the Bible and hold onto Jesus and believe in the Trinity and to believe in my faith, where sometimes guys just don't do that. [Reid]

I think people associate boldness and a certainty with it [being a man]. … I think being a man, being a leader and being confident in yourself is analyzing the information that's coming to you. Not just blindly following it. Actually processing it and making a decision if an advisor says something that you personally disagree with, disagree with them and back up why you disagree with them and act accordingly. If they need to get it done they can have someone else do it. I think it's standing true to your own beliefs even when it's kind of the harder thing to do. [Donovan]

I just immediately think of this past summer where I was working for an asshole. The guy just, he was just kind of ... It's hard to describe it but he had a lot going on for him and he just took it out on everybody else. Just in my opinion that wasn't being a man that was just being kind of a little, I don't know, sort of like a piece of shit. Bad person, and there's no need to be, it's just unnecessary and just kind of being dramatic. I guess just kind of sucking it up and dealing with stuff and try to do good where you can because ideally that will make your life better and the people around you better and they'll hopefully pass that on. [Paul]

While medium scorers were moderate in their approach to enacting characteristics of manhood, they remained confident in holding to what they knew to be the right way to live and lead. There was a willingness to bend for the sake of learning, but their identities were based in what they valued. The confidence that they wanted to reflect as men was strongly rooted in a belief system.

In spite of their firm stance in being the man they wanted to be, medium scorers valued continued growth and development. The second theme in the Intrapersonal arena emerged from a category of comments that reflected their pursuit of growth and learning. *Striving to be better* reflect the comments included in the *becoming the person I want to be* category. Striving meant continuing to accomplish milestones in their own development by dealing with challenging experiences, values conflicts, and missteps that prompted them to question what they believed.

Medium scorers were set on achieving personal success through wanting to be better after seeing situations in which they had not been at their best:

I'd say I definitely would wanna see my leadership qualities grow. I don't think that you can ever stop growing there, I think there's always gonna be places where you can improve and grow them. I would definitely wanna see that part of me that, you know, feels the need to lie to get an extension, or to take a couple cheat days…I'd like to leave that behind. [Danny]

She was a personal friend, not romantic in any way, which was definitely for the better, at least from my side. We led this trip together. It went well I thought. Everything seemed fine. Then a couple weeks later she sat me down on a bench outside my dorm and was like, "Hey. Can we meet up to talk about something?" I sat down and she was like, "I just don't feel like we can be friends anymore." I was like, "What? Sorry?" She was like, "I'm just ... I need a break." I was like, "Are we dating? What? What are you talking about?" I just had no idea. She said, "Let's not talk or communicate for a couple months, and then see where it goes from there." I was like, "Okay." Two months went by and I never reached out again, because I was just so blown away. I had no idea. I don't know what I did. I don't know if I said something. [Brandon]

I would say that class challenged that [religious views], and different ... We have a very big interfaith dialogue on campus. We also have this event on Monday nights that the chaplain holds, it's called Theology on Tap, where he brings these different ... I mean, people from all over campus. Literally, every person from every single thing comes to this, where you have so many different opinions and it's so awesome. But what people say really make you think and challenge what you say. [Reid]

Striving to be better required a desire for growth and could only occur through introspection. Medium scorers were not afraid to engage in self-thought in which they would question or challenge their own views or experiences. It was not viewed as a sign of weakness to do so. Rather, it simply bolstered the confidence they had to be good students and men. Most situations they encountered were opportunities to pursue their own development. With introspection, medium scorers cared about who they were and how they were becoming.

Summary of Medium Scorers and Self-Authorship

Overall, medium scorers approach development by taking advantage of opportunities and people to learn more about themselves. Their Epistemological experiences were characterized by active participation in curricular and co-curricular learning in which they sought to understand themselves. This knowledge propelled them to consider future goals. Medium scorers made strong connections between learning experiences and what their vocational future could be. Learning was pursued for the sake of learning and not to gain status or reputation.

Medium scorers utilized Interpersonal experiences to help them in their continued growth. They realized that family, peers, professors, advisors, and others could play a role in situations where major and life-changing decisions had to be made. They actively sought relationships with people they could learn from. Consequently, it was critical that they have friendships that were productive and not inhibitive. The deliberate nature by which medium scorers engaged in relationships reflected the thoughtful approach they took in most situations in their lives.

There was significant overlap between the Interpersonal and Intrapersonal domains for medium scorers because relationships with others were how they best learned who they were. In the Intrapersonal domain, medium scorers defined their own identity through how and why they related to other people. Through these interactions, medium scorers developed confidence in what they believed. As they identified and cultivated their beliefs, they viewed development as an iterative process in which their pursuit to be better as ongoing. Intrapersonally, medium scorers spent a great deal of time thinking about their manhood and enacting it ways that were productive and served them well.

Overall, for medium scorers Self-Authorship has less to do with external validation, relying primarily on internal validation. For example, learning for learning's sake (Epistemological), choosing friends deliberately (Interpersonal), and striving to be better (Intrapersonal) were all themes for medium scorers. While they were concerned about aspects like status and recognition for their efforts by others, they remained confident in their sense of self when navigating learning and relationships. In contrast to Kimmel's framework of masculinity in which emotions are suppressed, medium scorers were more likely to express emotion in a reserved manner that strengthened their connections to others.

Chapter Six

Findings

Self-Authorship among Low MSB Scorers

In this chapter I report how Self-Authorship is expressed by college men who scored low on the MBS. The analytical approach mirrored the steps taken for the medium and high scorers. Below I describe each of the initial groups of codes related to the Epistemological domain and provide some of the evidence I used to create those groups. Next, I explain how the groups were collapsed into categories. Finally, I explain the themes that emerged in the final iteration of data analysis. I then repeat that process for comments assigned to the Interpersonal and Intrapersonal domains.

Epistemological

I initially identified eights groups of codes that emerged from my analysis of comments from low scorers about epistemology (read Table 8 from the bottom to the top). The first two groups of codes I identified were *I wanted to be excited about my major* and *the professors helped my learning*.

When I heard comments like "I took an intro to environmental science…I really enjoyed it" or "being able to physically see the human body…was really good for me" I labeled these comments as *I wanted to be excited about my major*. Similar to medium scorers, low scorers were eager to gain something from their coursework beyond academic credit and a high GPA. The course content excited them and made them eager to acquire more knowledge related to their major.

Related to their enthusiasm for their chosen major was the role the professor played in their courses. Their learning in class was facilitated by the environment fostered by professors. The next group that emerged in my analysis were comments I identified as *the professors helped my learning*. These comments consisted of statements like "professor played such a major role" and "he helped us, but at the same time he led us." Low scorers recognized that a teaching style characterized by openness, challenge, and support were vital to their enthusiasm to learn more and enjoy their chosen major. While they wanted to take ownership for their own learning they understood that it happened as a result of the environment facilitated by the professor.

Low scorers described course rigor as being a major factor in how they learned throughout college. Their ability to be excited about their major and the role of the professor

Table 8

Code Mapping for "Low" Epistemological Experiences (N=16)

Themes

E1. Learning experiences should lead to career choice (categories: CE1, CE2)

E2. Personal growth through learning (categories: CE3, CE4)

Categories

CE1. Wanting ownership for learning in class (groups: GE1, GE2)

CE2. Challenging content and professors are beneficial (groups: GE3, GE4)

CE3. Changing approaches to school (groups: GE5, GE6)

CE4. Classes stretched me (groups: GE7, GE8)

Groups

GE1. I want to be excited about my major

GE2. The professor helped my learning

GE3. Taking hard classes

GE4. Some classes are difficult because of hard professors

GE5. Learning how to tackle a problem

GE6. Working hard to grasp class content

GE7. Strong opinions about views offered by others in course

GE8. Expanding my views because of learning

was based upon a willingness to acknowledge that college courses were difficult.

The next two groups of comments I observed were *taking hard classes* and *some classes are difficult because of hard professors*. Their experiences with *taking hard classes* were reflected in comments like "hard memorization" or "massive flow of information." Low scorers expressed the mental and sometimes emotional fatigue resulting from their courses, yet they appreciated how they could persist through these travails to do well in a course. The motivation for persistence differed significantly from high scorers who viewed it as a reflection of their expertise and leadership. Low scorers took challenges in stride and were unafraid to admit that the process of learning was difficult.

Just as professors helped them be excited about their major, faculty also contributed to the difficulty of classes. When I observed comments like "mixed bag of the difficulty and how they view the professor" and "professors whose teaching styles have not been perfect for me" I labeled these as *some classes are difficult because of hard professors*. Low scorers described professors as hard either because of the challenging environment or amount of content delivered in the class. They were eager to learn in spite of feeling overwhelmed at times. Difficult professors did not dissuade them from taking advantage of learning opportunities.

Challenging classes and professors provided low scorers with the chance to develop new skills and approaches to learning and being successful. The next two groups to emerge in my analysis were *learning how to tackle a problem* and *working hard to grasp class content*. These comments reflected the process that low scorers used to succeed in courses and how they applied themselves to their learning.

When I observed comments like "trial and error" or "looking at the organisms or flashcards" I labeled these as *learning how to tackle a problem*. Low scorers reported that techniques like reviewing unfamiliar coursework and working with new study strategies presented new challenges for them. Figuring out problems while learning how to do something different in the process was beneficial for them. Their eagerness stemmed from how well prepared they felt for more advanced classes.

Navigating new problems and challenges in class resulted in circumstances where low scorers had to work hard to understand their coursework. When I heard comments like "I definitely spent more time with it" or "freshman year it would have been time management for me" I labeled these comments as *working hard to grasp class content*.

Like medium and high scorers, low scorers described how hard they worked to understand their classes through the amount of time they devoted to them. Low scorers acknowledged that their greatest area of difficulty was time management and initially underestimating how much time class preparation took. These participants were not overly confident when approaching new classes and put significant effort into content that was not familiar to them. Most important, they were willing to acknowledge their uncertainties.

The final two groups of comments were *strong opinions about views offered by others in course* and *expanding my views because of learning*. These two areas stemmed from experiences when their worldview or views of others enhanced what and how they learned. Low scorers were intent on using these situations as opportunities to deepen their own knowledge.

Strong opinions about views offered by others was reflected through comments like "I think pretty rationally" and "give people a chance to explain their point of view." Low scorers had strong opinions but they were careful not to aggressively impose those opinions on others. Having an opinion in class rendered them comfortable to express their thoughts and the environment of the classroom facilitated such expression. The strength of their opinions was typically connected to how serious the discussion was or whether the course content aligned with a passion or interest. Low scorers expressed their strong opinion at ideal times when they believed their voice would matter.

When low scorers had strong opinions they still remained open to allowing their perspective to shift if they believed such a pivot would increase their knowledge. I observed comments like "worldview was transitioning" or "learned more about inequalities" and labeled these as *expanding my views because of learning*. Low scorers were open to developing a new view as a result of their interactions through classes. They expected that challenging course content, difficult professors, and knowledgeable peers in class would present opportunities to learn something new. Submitting to a new view did not challenge their sense of what it meant to be a man in these learning situations.

As I continued my analysis I created four categories that represented my initial eight groups of comments. These categories were: *wanting ownership for learning in class*, *challenging content and professors are beneficial*, *changing approaches to school*, and *class stretched me*. Each of these categories included two groups of comments and further elaborated

on the factors that significantly impacted how low scorers learned through their academic experiences.

The first category was *wanting ownership for learning in class*, which consisted of two groups: *I want to be excited about my major* and *the professor helped my learning*. Low scorers took seriously their role as a learner even if they valued how others contributed to this process. Ownership for learning by low scorers was reflected in experiences where they realized why they wanted to learn, what was gained in the process, or how they made connections between courses and issues:

> It was a mixed bag of either people enjoyed his [professor] teaching style and him keeping it lively or they just didn't really enjoy it. As a general ecology class, we learned a lot. It [professor's style] was very helpful for environmental science because [I] learned about the interrelationships between species…a greater understanding of the overall environmental system. [Justin]

> It's just more learning the structures, and the theoretical paradigms, surrounding some economic issues, and learning how really, even within a capitalistic society, the inequalities that so many people face on a daily basis, that was probably my distinguishing class for me that kind of opened up my eyes the most. [Robert]

Low scorers were most excited when they mastered knowledge and could identify how they gained that knowledge. By identifying how they learned the most, low scorers established that their knowledge was based in their own ability to consider the information, determine its usefulness, and apply it to other courses, topics, or discussions. Their pride was not about what they achieved (e.g., good grade), but how they could claim the knowledge belonged to them.

Ownership of learning was heightened in experiences that low scorers could identify challenging. I collapsed the groups *taking hard classes* and *some classes are difficult because of hard professors* into my next category, *challenging content and professors are beneficial*. Low scorers were eager to confront difficult situations in class because of the benefits such situations offered for growth.

Challenging content and professors are beneficial was reflected in how low scorers at times felt overwhelmed or intimidated by complex situations. Low scorers were willing to admit when they encountered a tough course or professor, particularly in circumstances where they initially felt they did not have the skills to succeed:

> My criminal justice classes…those were very challenging because it was when you would get into say court cases, it was a lot of memorization. On the exam

there would be a question, State versus Jones, or State versus Smith, and which was which…I tend to do better when I can relate what I'm learning to something I know rather than memorization. [Mason]

This class [biology course] covered three themes. I didn't feel like the information we were learning, these organisms we were memorizing, was really helping in that respect in those themes. I had also talked to the program advisor about that because he had called me in to discuss my progress. I'm not sure exactly how I resolved ... I just gave professor some time to do what he wanted to do in the first part and then he said he'd expand on that and apply it to the themes later in the semester. [Justin]

Low scorers could easily identify why classes were difficult and how the challenge was heightened by a difficult teaching style. However, in these situations low scorers were willing to work through the problems they encountered because they were aware of the opportunity they had to learn something new.

Low scorers could also identify why challenging courses and professors, at times, did not help them and what would have made the content easier to learn and apply. These students were not interested in learning information just because it needed to be learned – they wanted to apply it across their academic experiences and into a major, like their medium scoring counterparts. As such, they persisted in hopes that the difficult situations would result in a positive outcome.

One of the primary benefits that resulted from low scorers encountering difficult academic situations was how they gained confidence in discovering new strategies. I collapsed the next two groups of codes (*learning how to tackle a problem* and *working hard to grasp class content*) into my third category, *changing approaches to school*. Within this category, low scorers expressed how challenging courses enabled them to figure out methods for learning content that would make them more successful.

Low scorers were eager to learn new strategies because it helped them grow as a student and they could transfer these skills to other academic challenges. New strategies consisted of either study methods or how to better engage unknown topics:

In addition to all my other responsibilities, both academic and extracurricular, this biology class was very difficult because we had to memorize a lot of organisms and a lot of other information. For a while there, I really struggled with the class and my grade, which is not something I normally am used to. I'm not really sure exactly how I resolved it. I definitely spent more time with it, I went to office hours, all those good things they teach you going into college. I'm not sure if

there was any one magical thing. I guess [I] treated it more seriously. It's an intro-level class, which I think I wasn't exactly prepared for the difficulty. [Justin]

I would just say my approach towards school. I've never been a very…I've never really been that excited about academics. Even going all the way back to elementary school. At [name of another institution attended], I was in the firm mindset, if you will, the phrase, "Cs get degrees." I followed that pretty strictly. I did the bare minimum. I did my work. That was about it. I realized, hey, I actually really need to try. Now, coming to [name of current institution] I've really been trying. Though school still is not my favorite thing by any means, I've been trying my hardest and working hard to keep my GPA up. [Mason]

Developing new approaches to learning in school created a positive outlook for low scorers as they saw how they personally grew through having to resolve complicated experiences in classes. At the outset of difficult classes, they were simply under-prepared and underestimated the difficulty of the course. Yet, their willingness to become better students helped them navigate challenging circumstances in school. Overcoming a difficult class so they could boast of their abilities was not gratifying to low scorers. Rather, overcoming a difficult class so they felt more confident was important to them.

I identified the final category of comments through collapsing the last two groups *strong opinions about views offered by others in course* and *expanding my views because of learning*. My analysis of these comments results in the category *classes stretched me*. The difficulty of some classes and professors was reflected in how low scorers interpreted their exposure to a new topic, way of thinking, or belief.

Low scorers were confident in their views but grew from incidents in classes that disrupted previously held thoughts. In these situations, low scorers recognized when they should express a view or hold their opinion so they could see the usefulness of a new worldview:

I come from a more conservative background, my family is more conservative, and I kind of leaned that way. When I entered sociology I was thrown into a very liberal perspective, and I even said it was liberal garbage being thrown at me. This professor kind of shared the same views of course, but instead of forcing it on us, more presented it in a way that I could understand it a little better, analyzing both perspectives. [Robert]

I think a class like that in which there's a mixed bag of the difficulty and mixed bag of how they view the professor or the instructor is definitely something to move forward, understanding how people react to different things. [Justin]

In these situations, low scorers were driven to find how a different way of thinking about a topic, discussion, or view could be helpful to them. Classes allowed for a free exchange of ideas between students and professors. Low scorers valued the opportunity to grow from these experiences. Moreover, they were encouraged to learn from others in environments where they were not compelled to think poorly of their own views. While being stretched to expand their views in class, low scorers developed along the Epistemological and Interpersonal domains. Relationships were sought after because of opportunities like being stretched in class through differing views and perspectives.

My next step in the analysis of comments made by low scorers was to arrange the codes into two themes that emerged from the four categories of comments. The first two categories (*wanting ownership for learning in class* and *challenging content and professors are beneficial*) were collapsed into the first theme *learning experiences should lead to career choice*. Low scorers were interested in connecting their learning experiences in and out of class to a career path. When they described courses they gained the most from it was typical for this to be associated with a vocational path:

> I had an ecology class a couple semesters ago, just a general ecology class in which I learned basic ecological principles and how organisms interact and all these basic things, which actually introduced me to the biology degree, which led me to pursue the biology minor. [Justin]

> I haven't had that much in my specific field of study, but it was probably just general anatomy. Anatomy gave me the ability to get more in depth with the human body, especially since at [name of institution] we do have a cadaver lab. [Mason]

If a class was more difficult, low scorers were motivated by the opportunity to be in the course and make the connection to their area of study or intended career. Low scorers felt confident tackling tough courses because they believed they could gain so much from them. Their choice of major or career was often influenced by which courses they enrolled in. Their willingness to succeed was reflected through their hopes for a satisfactory grade and being prepared for a career.

As I continued my analysis of the Interpersonal and Intrapersonal experiences of low scorers I often found they capitalized on experiences in and out of class as learning moments. Their decision to engage in an endeavor was guided by careful consideration of how the choice

would lead them towards their career goals. In this way, low scorers exhibited commitment and unwavering determination similar to high scorers.

The second two categories (*changing approaches to school* and *classes stretched me*) were collapsed into the second theme *personal growth through learning*. As noted previously, low scorers were intentional about connecting their classes to their learning and this occurred because they were also interested in their overall personal growth. Low scorers did not view themselves as students who had everything figured out. Learning experiences yielded opportunities for personal growth that helped them become better people:

> My very first semester I never really got that groove, but my second semester I added another class and got involved with more, took on a couple leadership positions. That way I was always driven to do something, instead of going back to my room and sleeping for three hours, and gaining weight in the process, after eating. Adding that fifth class, I was definitely more driven and was able to add some structure to my day. Just adding some structure is good. My GPA went up about three quarters of a point. [Robert]

> I think it's important for you to talk with the instructors and know where they're going and also present to them where you come from. What type of learning styles benefits you and what your perspective on the matter is. [Justin]

Low scorers believed that learning experiences occurred when discovering new approaches to learning content and in the exchange of ideas with other people. Comments from low scorers did not demonstrate that achievement and success were their primary goals. Rather, low scorers found satisfaction simply in learning from classes, forming relationships with peers, and connecting to professors.

Interpersonal

I initially identified eight groups of codes that emerged from my analysis of comments from low scorers about their Interpersonal experiences (read Table 9 from bottom to top). The first two groups were *connecting with a professor beyond their formal role* and *teaching style helps relationships with professors*. Comments in these groups demonstrated why low scorers valued a relationship with their faculty members.

When I heard comments like "connected with her on another level" or "personal connection" I labeled these *connecting with a professor beyond their formal role*. Low scorers took advantage of opportunities to know their professors and were comfortable with developing a personal relationship with a faculty member. Attending office hours when not required to and

Table 9

Code Mapping for "Low" Interpersonal Experiences (N=16)

Themes

Ir1. Enjoying the influence of parents, professors, and advisors (categories: CIr1, CIr2)
Ir2. Close friendships are important for me (categories: CIr3, CIr4)

Categories

CIr1. Eager for relationships with authority figures (groups: GIr1, GIr2)

CIr2. Seeing myself as an equal with authorities and parents (groups: GIr3, GIr4)

CIr3. Understanding why friendships matter (groups: GIr5, GIr6)

CIr4. What makes a good friendship (groups: GIr7, GIr8)

Groups

GIr1. Connecting with a professor beyond their formal role

GIr2. Teaching style helps relationship with professors

GIr3. Feeling able to be direct with authority figures

GIr4. Taking advantage of close environment and access to authority

GIr5. Wanting good friendships

GIr6. Being challenged by friends

GIr7. A feeling of openness with friends

GIr8. Having things in common with friends

wanting to call professors by their first name represented this level of comfort. Having a personal connection advanced their relationship with a professor beyond just a transactional exchange.

The desire to seek a relationship was made easier by the ways in which professors approached their teaching duties. When I heard comments like "keep the class lively" and "very open professor" I identified these as *teaching style helps relationships with professors*. Each time that low scorers described a professor they wanted to know personally they offered descriptors like these to represent their faculty member's teaching style. Low scorers enjoyed faculty styles and as they got to know them they realized that these were attributes in general that help them relate better to others. Consequently, low scorers respected professors not just for the lessons they learned in class, but how professors made an impact on them personally.

Professors were examples of authority figures for low scorers and how they related to them influenced how they dealt with all authority roles (e.g., advisors, parents). The next two groups of codes that emerged in my analysis were *feeling able to be direct with authority figures* and *taking advantage of a close environment and access to authority*. Low scorers were more confident about their relationships with any authority figure when they could be direct in an open environment could facilitate open communication.

When I heard comments like "voice my opinion" and "you could talk to them" I labeled these comments as *feeling able to be direct with authority figures*. Low scorers felt confident to express their views towards people in authority, but they did so in a respectful way, not wanting to disappoint that authority figure. Given their desire for relationships with professors or others in authority, being direct was a reflection of how well the relationship had progressed. Low scorers were not direct simply for the purpose of achievement, obtaining status, or establishing their voice. Rather, their candor with those in authority was based in their sense of self-confidence and competence.

The ability of low scorers to be direct in their interactions with authority figures is due in part to open, accessible, and close environments. When I heard comments like "size of school helps" and "available to them" I identified these as *taking advantage of a close environment and access to authority*. Low scorers benefitted from being at either small schools or in small classes. It allowed professors, advisors, and supervisors to know them personally.

Consequently, they relied heavily on the absence of barriers to relationships that would counteract their relationally driven preferences.

Low scorers were relationship-centered and this also extended to their peer-to-peer friendships. The next two groups comments that I analyzed were *wanting good friendships* and *being challenged by friends*. Similar to medium scorers, low scorers were most interested in friendships for the sake of goodness (Shushok, 2009).

When I observed comments like "be there for him" and "she's taught me" I labeled these as *wanting good friendships*. When describing good friendships, low scorers often reflected on what made a friendship important. Among the attributes reported, low scorers were interested in relationships with people for a long term and believed that mutual assistance was vital. A good friendship from low scorers occurred when both people benefited and became better people as a result of it.

A necessary part of the relationship was the ability for low scorers to have differences in opinion that were challenged by their friends. When I heard comments like "angel on your shoulder" and "called me out" I labeled these as *being challenged by friends*. A friend challenging their thoughts and offering input about their lives did not intimidate low scorers. A challenging opinion from a friend was met with gratitude and appreciation for their help. Having this type of support was welcomed and sought after and low scorers did not feel less confident about themselves because of it.

The final two groups that emerged from my analysis of low scorers' Interpersonal experiences were *a feeling of openness with friends* and *having things in common with friends*. Low scorers strongly believed in a true connection with friends and it meant that they counted fewer people as friends than high and medium scorers.

Low scorer friendships were made stronger when the relationship was built upon vulnerability. When I observed comments from low scorers like "that friend opened up to me" and "I'm struggling in different ways, he's there for me" I labeled these as *a feeling of openness with friends*. Low scorers believed that if they could not be open in a friendship about who they were and what their challenges were then it was not a close relationship that would benefit them. They described very few limitations for being in friendships with men or women that inhibited their vulnerability. In order to be a good friend, low scorers felt that complete authenticity was necessary.

Low scorers, were also not intent on having the most friends and described connections with only a few other people. Consequently, fewer friendships resulted in more shared interests. Comments from low scorers like "relationship through our faith" and "hang around and do nothing" were labeled as *having things in common with friends*. As demonstrated by the organizational involvement of low scorers, they were not members of groups with a high number of people (i.e., fraternities or resident assistants). Instead, low scorers wanted a depth to their friendships that could be realized through spirituality, weightlifting, or doing nothing at all.

As I continued through my analysis of low scorers I arranged my groups of comments into four categories: *eager for relationships with authority figures*, *seeing myself as an equal with authorities and parents*, *understanding why friendships matter*, and *what makes a good friendship*.

Eager for relationships with authority figures was comprised of two groups of comments: *connecting with a professor beyond their formal role* and *teaching style helps relationships with professors*. Eagerness by low scorers was reflected through how they took advantage of opportunities to develop a relationship with authority figures. These students respected the position of authorities and wanted to be influenced by them. In their descriptions of such relationships I observed an enthusiasm about spending time with authority figures and valuing their role:

> He [professor] would always make jokes. He would always engage the class. We had those little electronic clickers so he can gauge our ... How we're learning things, how the concepts are being absorbed by the students. He was always good with engaging us and keeping the class light while also teaching us a lot of information. [Justin]

> Even in high school, I quickly figured out if you can make some sort of personal connection with your teacher or professor, then they're going to remember you and when time comes to give grades, they're going to be like, "Oh, that is person X, I know them. They're a good person. Maybe I'll be more likely to help them out." [Mason]

Low scorers entered situations with authority figures wondering about the possibility of developing relationships. Their desire was genuine even if they knew that a benefit could be a better grade. More specifically, low scorers knew they could draw on the assistance of authority figures if there was a personal connection. They were willing to openly admit that they were not

perfect students or leaders. Professors, advisors, and administrators could be valued for the assistance they could offer in helping these students become better people.

I collapsed the groups *feeling able to be direct with authority figures* and *taking advantage of close environments and access to authority* to create my second category – *seeing myself as an equal with authorities and parents*. Being equal did not mean that low scorers felt they had the expertise of those in authority. It meant they viewed the relationship as flat and without hierarchy.

The relationship was beneficial for low scorers because they felt confident to talk with authority figures about most topics and viewed them as approachable, invested, and understanding. Access was described as the ability of low scorers to interact with authority figures and parents as needed:

> I think just as I was transitioning, or my worldview was transitioning, and she [advisor] was helping that along, that access to her, and willingness to be patient with other students who may have even been from other socioeconomic backgrounds, but may have other worldviews, but to be able to see the same worldviews. [Robert]

> I don't feel like there were many situations in which they [professors and advisors] were wielding that power, as if they were saying, "I'm the doctor and you're the student. This is how it should be." I think there was a little bit more of understanding that you could talk to them and understand where they were coming from. [Justin]

A close-knit environment was important to low scorers as it allowed them to view authority figures as equals even if those figures had more years of experience or credentials. Low scorers did not strive to be an equal for the sake of exerting their confidence as students or leaders. Unlike high scorers, low scorers were not motivated by a need to impress people in authority. Small and accessible environments allowed low scorers to engage in honest relationships.

The third category consisted of the groups *wanting good friendships* and *being challenged by friends* and these were collapsed to form *understanding why friendships matter*. Low scorers cultivated relationships with friends in the same way they grew such relationships with older adults. Understanding the nature of the friendship allowed low scorers to better ascertain why the relationship was important:

> On the cross country team there's a girl...we've been on the team for four years together and she lives in this off-campus house with me. I think we're probably best friends, I would consider. She's a model citizen. She's involved with cross country and various religious organizations. She's a superb student and involved in all these other things. In some respects, she's just a good role model. [Justin]

> We stay in contact. We help each other with class. If there's an issue, we'll come to each other for help and go through exams and stuff like that. [Mason]

Friendships mattered to low scorers because they were strongly influenced by these people and the relationships remained intact throughout college. Low scorers admired relationships because they reflected what they believed and how they developed as students. Similar to medium scorers, friendships for low scorers endured because there was depth to the relationship. Low scorers did not consider transactional friendships as important, the pattern I observed in high scorers.

The final category was *what makes a good friendship* and it emerged from collapsing groups *a feeling of openness with friends* and *having things in common with friends*. At the core of a good friendship for low scorers was intimacy (non-romantic) and a high degree of vulnerability. Low scorers did not believe that it was necessary to mask who they were in their relationships:

> I have a really close friend, a long time childhood friend and up to this day we're still very close. I mean, it's good to have a really close friend you can talk to about really anything. If there's things going on in your life, any sort of difficulties, anything like that, you have someone you can discuss it with. [Mason]

> We'd both been through a lot of struggles relationally. He went through a breakup one year after being in a relationship for about two years, and I was able to be there for him then, and now that I'm struggling in different ways, he's there for me. [Robert]

As noted earlier, low scorers in this study did not belong to organizations comprised of a lot of people. They thrived in smaller groups where they could build deeper relationships. These friendships were built upon a willingness to share with each other aspects of who they were, what their limitations were, and how they could be better men. Low scorers described open friendships with other men, which counters traditional masculinity. Being open to a male friend was not seen as a threat to their manhood and it was one example of how low scorers enacted very few traditional behaviors of high masculinity.

My analysis of the Interpersonal comments made by low scorers resulted in two primary themes. The first theme was *enjoying the influence of parents, professors, and advisors* (*eager for relationships with authority figures* and *seeing myself as an equal with authorities and parents*). The second theme was *close friendships are important to me* (*understanding why friendships matter* and *what makes a good friendship*). Low scorers developed close relationships built upon mutual assistance.

Low scorers felt strongly that they learned the most from people whose influence could help them grow. Influence from older adults occurred through conversations about new perspectives, back and forth about serious topics, and consultation when important decisions needed to be made:

> She was the most strenuous professor I've had, ever, but I kind of connected with her on another level. I ended up requesting her as my advisor. It was being able to talk to her about things outside the classroom, and being able to just listen to her. [Robert]

> I've always been really close with my family. They've helped me through pretty much everything to do with college. There's been lots of difficult decisions to make. I guess one of the bigger ones that relates to this would be going back to school and transferring to [name of current institution]. My dad… kind of put in ways of thinking that I could either stick around in a job I don't like for five years and almost be 30 at that point, or I could go to school for five more years and be doing something that I really want to do. [Mason]

When low scorers identified a positive relationship with someone in authority they took the necessary steps to sustain the connection. These students were influenced by older adults who cared about them and relationships were strongest when the students cared about the adults in return. Personal successes in college were connected to how well they built mentor/mentee relationships that would exist beyond college. Low scorers and medium scorers shared similar experiences of caring about authority figures and making an emotional attachment in these relationships.

Friendships were characterized by low scorers as being a significant factor in how they matured in their beliefs, enhanced their leadership skills, and achieved academic success. Low scorers reported that friendships would not be sustained with other men when manhood was enacted in the wrong way. Aspects like competition, over-confidence, and risky behaviors inhibited close friendships:

> I would say with the ultimate Frisbee team, there is one individual in particular, who is a year below me, so I was a sophomore when he arrived, and he kind of began to take over the culture of the team and try to turn it into something much more competitive, that I and several others didn't want. He actually kind of overlaps in some other organizations that I'm involved with. We were closer at one point, but now that he's completely taken over that organization and turned it into something very intense, which I had no desire to make it, and after several times he berated me on the field, I kind of stepped away from that. [Robert]

> I think a big part of that is understanding that you don't always have to be as headstrong and sure of yourself as the stereotype of men in their roles. A big part of that is being able to accept advice and being open to accepting lessons or advice from others. [Justin]

These students gravitated towards friendships with men where they could share their weaknesses and be emotional. Low scorers believed that relationships were important because they could be themselves. This was characterized by talking openly, not taking misguided risks, and wanting to learn from their friends.

Intrapersonal

In my initial analysis of Intrapersonal experiences of low scorers, I identified eight groups of comments (read Table 10 from bottom to top). The first two groups were *going against my beliefs* and *not wanting to go with the flow of others*. Low scorers were keenly aware of circumstances and people in their lives that were not aligned with their personal beliefs.

When I observed low scorers make comments like "it was pretty tough" or "I did not a lot of drinking" I labeled these as *going against my beliefs*. Low scorers were able to pull themselves back from indulging too much in behaviors that were counter to their beliefs. Additionally, they were harsh critics of themselves when they chose behaviors not supported by their beliefs. The difficult nature of these situations stemmed from strong convictions about how deeply impacted they were when they did not follow through on beliefs.

As a result of striving to have a strong moral center, low scorers understood how the actions of others could contribute to not enacting their beliefs. When I heard comments like "wanted to stay away from" or "it really comes down to me" I identified these as *not wanting to go with the flow of others*. Low scorers expressed high confidence in situations where they needed to withstand the pressure of friends and make their own decisions. Their confidence stemmed from core beliefs, which also impacted who they chose to as friends.

Table 10

Code Mapping for "Low" Intrapersonal Experiences (N=16)

Themes

Ia1. I have confidence in who I am (categories: CIa1, CIa2)
Ia2. Being a good person is enough for me (categories: CIa3, CIa4)

Categories

CIa1. Having a firm system of beliefs (groups: GIa1, GIa2)

CIa2. Varying viewpoints help me understand myself (groups: GIa3, GIa4)

CIa3. Desiring healthy masculinity (groups: GIa5, GIa6)

CIa3. I want to be a benefit (groups: GIa7, GIa8)

Groups

GIa1. Going against my beliefs

GIa2. Not wanting to go with the flow of others

GIa3. Figuring out how to consider other viewpoints

GIa4. Listening to parents and supervisors does not reduce who I am

GIa5. Men are stereotyped into certain roles

GIa6. Reconciling thoughts on being a man

GIa7. Building a concept of what it means to be a good person

GIa8: College has helped me grow

The next two groups of comments in my analysis were *figuring out how to consider other viewpoints* and *listening to parents and supervisors does not reduce who I am*. As I described through the Interpersonal experiences of low scorers, there was a strong appreciation for being influenced by others and they were easily able to discern how this should shape their own identity.

I observed comments like "step back a little bit" and "have different experiences and meet different people" and labeled these as *figuring out how to consider other viewpoints*. Low scorers maintained strong opinions spurred by a robust belief system. Yet, they were willing to listen and learn from others if it could stretch their perspectives. Submitting to another person was only viewed as a weakness if it meant that low scorers strayed from their beliefs. It was necessary to consider other viewpoints in order to sustain good friendships.

Similar to their willingness to listen and learn from friends, low scorers did not feel they limited themselves by doing the same with parents and supervisors. When I heard comments like "love hearing advice" and "what I want moving forward" I labeled these *listening to parents and supervisors does not reduce who I am*. Low scoring participants valued relationships and influence of older adults as described in the Interpersonal section. When receiving assistance, it was important for low scorers to be receptive to all input and not view themselves as less of a man for seeking help.

Just as asking for help could be viewed as emasculating, low scorers recognized other circumstances that could be challenging for men. The next two groups of comments in my initial analysis were *men are stereotyped into certain roles* and *reconciling thoughts on being a man*.

When I observed comments like "men are held to an incredibly high standard" and "headstrong" I identified these as *men are stereotyped into certain roles*. Low scorers were conscious of how manhood is typically described. It concerned them that there were expectations about what they should do and how they should treat people based on their gender. Low scorers made intentional decisions to not enact traditional roles of men and knew these stereotypes would negatively impact how they interacted with other people.

As low scorers considered traditional stereotypes of men they described how they internalized societal expectations about them. When I heard comments like "felt a shame for being a male" or "how does that apply to me" I labeled these as *reconciling thoughts on being a man*. Both high scorers and medium scorers were able to identify similar concerns about being

men. However, low scorers reported more self-examination about traditional roles of men and a stronger desire not to be stereotyped in this manner.

Given their thoughts on having a well-formed belief system and avoiding stereotypical manhood, low scorers significantly focused on being a good person. The final two groups of comments consisted of *building a concept of what it means to be a good person* and *college has helped me grow*.

When I observed comments like "accept responsibility" or "performing well influences them" I identified these as *building a concept of what it means to be a good person*. Low scorers associated accountability, doing their best for others, and being respectful as part of what it meant to be a good person. This stemmed from their genuine desire to be generous and thoughtful. When they could win though generosity, care, and commitment they had a deeper sense of achievement.

Low scorers built a strong self-concept as a result of experiences in college that fostered their maturation and development. When I heard comments like "values set has changed" and "learned that substances are not something to cope with" I labeled these as *college has helped me grow*. Low scorers reported that they were content not measuring their growth based on awards, honors, and status. Rather, they attributed their overall growth in college to circumstances like exposure to different identities, making mistakes, and failed friendships. Consequently, much of their learning occurred out of class and as a result of relationships with peers and authority figures.

As I continued my analysis I organized the eight initial groups of comments into four categories: *having a firm system of beliefs*, *varying viewpoints help me understand myself*, *desiring healthy masculinity*, and *I want to be a benefit*.

I collapsed *going against my beliefs* and *not wanting to go with the flow of others* into the first category *having a firm system of beliefs*. Low scorers strengthened their belief system through their groups of friends, strong mentors, and a willingness to learn about themselves under a variety of circumstances. Stable beliefs permitted low scorers to be exude confidence and commitment to what they stood for:

> I think there's been a lot of situations that I realize that's not what I want to do in regards to being a man and this is what I want to do. I think a big part of that is leading by example, whether it's just doing what the coach asks or maybe even

questioning the coach if the workout doesn't seem beneficial. I think the biggest things I pulled out of that is leading by example. [Justin]

I believe in being upfront with people. I don't like lying. I like to be very straightforward with people. I like people to be the same with me. When you're straight up with them [people], they tend to be more receptive to you. I think they appreciate you being honest. [Mason]

Low scorers were firmly rooted in their values and this helped prevent them from experiencing major setbacks in college. Enacting their beliefs was not a significant challenge as they chose not to engage in high-risk behaviors given how much those behaviors would result in their deviating from what they knew was right.

I collapsed the groups of comments *figuring out how to consider other viewpoints* and *listening to parents and supervisors does not reduce who I am* to arrive at my next category – *varying viewpoints help me understand myself.* Given the fortitude of their belief system, low scorers thrived in discussions and interactions with others that helped develop their self-understanding. In spite of strong religious orientations and life experiences, low scorers understood themselves better when they were exposed to different people:

My eyes have opened to more social justice issues, and that's actually something that I want to encounter in my career. That's not something I necessarily would have thought about entering college at all. [Robert]

I think to me being a man is at a certain point being strong and doing what you believe is right, but at the same time also being strong enough to accept that others may have a different perspective than they do. Being strong enough to accept that you may be wrong in a given situation. [Justin]

Low scorers were receptive to seeing new perspectives because it contributed to their growth and learning – most specifically how they came to understand themselves. College made an impression on low scorers because of the opportunities they had to test the strength of their views against others. Multiple perspectives contributed to the introspective nature of low scorers in more profound ways than it did for medium or high scorers.

The third category was *desiring healthy masculinity* which consisted of the groups *men are stereotyped into certain roles* and *reconciling thoughts on being a man*. Low scorers did not believe that masculinity was a hindrance to what they learned about themselves and how they developed into adult men. Enacting healthy masculinity meant living in a respectful manner,

understanding the importance of good relationships, and realizing the privilege associated with their gender:

> I like to think that I get to stay pretty grounded in the privilege, if you will, that I have as being a man…whenever I do something or say something or see something even, I've become much more aware of how being a man is different and a lot of people think that it is not. I do think that the gender disparity is getting better. I do not think that it's totally better, but she, my girlfriend, has really helped me keep myself aware of the differences and the benefits and challenges that I face as a man. [Mason]

> It's just, having white privilege, having white male privilege, but just understanding that equality needs to be shared. That in order for equality to happen, some privilege needs to be shared. I would definitely say that, that in some cases my perspective is definitely different, and taken some of the things that I see I take for granted. [Robert]

Low scorers had disdain for how manhood can drive some to overuse substances, aggressively compete against others, and mask their flaws. Instead of viewing aspects of masculinity through a lens of what it can get them, low scorers realized that aspects of gender and in some cases race, places them in a privileged position. Being a strong, healthy man meant using that privilege to the benefit of the greater society.

As low scorers reflected on being better men it was evident that making a contribution was a critical factor in their identity. Groups of comments within *building concept of what it means to be a good person* and *college has helped me grow* were collapsed to create the fourth category, *I want to be a benefit*. Low scorers wanted to give back and make meaningful contributions. Whether it was serving as role models, teachers, or advocates, an important step in fulfilling their ideal self was challenging their groups to make change:

> With [name of club], one of their focal points in campus ministry is bringing in students form all ethnicities and all backgrounds for complete equality. Being here, we're about 86% white, and our chapter is a little bit better, or doesn't reflect that quite as much. We have a higher capita of people of color. But as I've tried to make progress in this way, I've gotten a lot of pushback. [Robert]

> I'm on the cross country team. A big part of running is recovery. In college, people are inclined to do things that may not be the best for recovery, whether it's staying up late or consuming the wrong beverages or food or whatever. I think there's been a couple situations in which I've let my teammates or myself participate in these things when actually I'd rather keep us all on the right path for running well, I guess. [Justin]

Low scorers gave significant thought to how being their best was important for the progress of others. Being a benefit was not aligned with recognition from others and or accomplishments. College provided low scorers with the opportunity to grow and they were conscious of how their talents could be used to positively influence others. Being a benefit was described by low scorers as the right way to live and how low scorers evaluated their strength as students and leaders.

My analysis of the Intrapersonal comments made by low scorers led to two themes: *I have confidence in who I am* (*having a firm system of beliefs* and *varying viewpoints help me understand myself*) and *being a good person is enough for me* (*desiring healthy masculinity* and *I want to be a benefit*). Low scorers were confident in their ambition to be good people that cared about others.

The confidence of low scorers was reflected through a strong moral center in which there was little doubt about what they believed about life. Low scorers were not compelled to make decisions for the sake of impressing peers or authority figures. The perception they wanted others to have of them is that they would be reliable because of their courage to hold firmly to productive beliefs. Their ambition was characterized by attempting to always live their values – no matter what:

> I guess a behavior or habit is like I mentioned on the phone when we talked, I'm a personal trainer at [name of school]. People will often come to me with advice on fitness and wellness and stuff like that. I'm always more than happy to help my friends out in those situations, because I know it's very difficult for lots of people. I enjoy helping people. That's why I want to get into this field is I get satisfaction from helping people. When I can see my friends achieving their goals when it comes to fitness, for example, and know that I had a part in making that happen, it makes me feel good. [Mason]

> I think that some people can go out and are personally driven to run and succeed the best they can. I think for me, a big part of it is my teammates and how they're doing and how me performing well influences them and the team as a whole. I think definitely that accountability between friends and teammates is a big part of that. [Justin]

The only recognition that low scorers sought was feeling good about being committed to making the right decisions. These students did not continue to engage in behaviors or actions that were counterproductive. Consequently, they were comfortable walking away from peer

groups characterized by a shallow belief system. It was important that they spend their time with people and in circumstances that affirmed their values and purpose in life.

High scorers sought leadership in order to advance an agenda or future goals. Medium scorers sought leadership for how it could allow them to be productive with other people. Low scorers, on the other hand, sought leadership for altruistic reasons that reflected a simple desire to be good people. In reporting their experiences with leadership and involvement, low scorers did not boast of programs or initiatives they pushed forward. Being a good person and accountable for their beliefs was enough for them and was reflected through an understanding of what mattered to them:

> I think having friends and teammates there that are holding you accountable to what you believe in and what you signed up for was really influential in keeping me on the right track. [Justin]

> I definitely learned that substances are not something to cope with, and that the support of my community, of a good community that supports me, is so much more important. [Robert]

In order to be a good person, low scorers described that they needed to be accountable for themselves and for how they affected others. These respondents experienced failure when they way were not altruistic leaders. Being selfless was integral to how they shaped their experiences in college and what they felt would prepare them best for post-college life. Low scorers reported that it was not possible to be a good person if you were willing to be a bystander to harmful behaviors and risk-prone situations.

Summary of Low Scorers and Self-Authorship

The portrait of low scorers reveals that their Epistemological experiences were characterized by wanting to extend their knowledge from learning experiences beyond college to a career. This was reflected primarily through how they intentionally chose challenging courses, which forced them to think about their future. They were also challenged by professors who compelled them to move beyond simple techniques for learning to developing new strategies for success. Low scorers internalized their learning so it could also assist in their personal growth, which resulted in expanded views and perspectives. Gaining knowledge for the sake of power and status served little purpose to low scorers.

Interpersonally, low scorers were eager to be influenced by adult figures (parents, professors, supervisors, etc.) and close peers. These relationships influenced the sense of self in

low scorers. They wanted to grow personally from their relationships that were characterized as vulnerable, challenging, and based in goodness. Low scorers believed that a close environment was necessary for them to forge new friendships. Two questions that low scorers sought to answer in their relationships were: "Why do friendships matter?" and "What makes a good friendship?" Consequently, low scorers intentionally chose relationships with adults and peers who could help them make meaning of the world.

In the Intrapersonal domain, low scorers were confident students who were driven to be good people. As they navigated close relationships, these students successfully integrated external and internal voices to establish a core belief system. Multiple perspectives were integral to how they understood themselves in relation to others. The internal foundation of low scorers was characterized by enacting masculinity in healthy ways and wanting to be a benefit to other people. Low scorers were altruistic in nature and believed that generosity was necessary to successfully balance who they were in relation to peers.

Like medium scorers, low scorers relied strongly upon internal validation as they expressed Self-Authorship in their collegiate experience. For instance, personal growth through learning experiences was more important than grades (Epistemological), close friendships were important (Interpersonal), and being a good person was essential (Intrapersonal) for these participants. Low scorers operated in stark contrast to Kimmel's framework of masculinity as they were not driven by status or power and they were willing to share their emotions with others – particularly other men. Traditional scripts of masculinity were rarely applied by low scorers even as they considered their roles as men.

Chapter Seven

Discussion and Implications

I modified the original research questions posed in the study in order to provide a holistic understanding of Self-Authorship for each group of participants. I did this because Baxter Magolda (2008) suggested that the three domains could not be observed in isolation from each other. In Chapters Four, Five, and Six I reported the experiences of participants organized by MBS score. After further consideration, however, I realized that the key findings of my data related to differences in how MBS groups experienced the individual domains of Self-Authorship (Epistemology, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal) so that is the way I have approached my results.

In this chapter, I start by discussing the three key findings of the study. Next, I explore the relationship of my findings to prior research on Self-Authorship and masculinity. I then describe limitations of my study. Finally, I offer implications for practice, research, and policy and draw a general conclusion to the study.

Discussion of the Findings

My analysis of high scorers, medium scorers, and low scorers yielded three key findings regarding the influence of masculinity on the domains of Self-Authorship. With each finding I demonstrate that there were clear differences between high scorers and the other two groups. Differences between medium and low scores were nominal, however. In Table 11 I offer a summary of the themes by group by Self-Authorship domain.

My three key findings were: *MBS scores declined as motivation to learn moved from external to internal factors*; *high scorer relationships were formed to affirm their abilities and medium/low scorers developed mutually beneficial relationships*; *high scorers sought external validation, while medium/low scorers relied upon internal validation.*

External and Internal Motivating Factors to Learn

High scorers demonstrated that their motivation to learn new skills and earn high grades in class was grounded in a desire to be admired for their persistence. Their work ethic was described by Ethan when he reported: "I would leave class, go straight to work, fall asleep, and did the same thing over again the next day." It was important for high scorers to constantly push towards being the best. They were motivated by status and power, the need to confront authority, and their desire to be better than their peers.

Table 11

Summary of Self-Authorship across Groups and Domains

Group/Domain

	Epistemological	Interpersonal	Intrapersonal
High Scorers	1. Success measured by getting the work done and having strong GPA. 2. Achievement happens through persistence and learning on your own.	1. Parents and professors play an important role in my life. 2. Being direct and outgoing is necessary for friendships.	1. Having a strong voice and values are important for others see me. 2. As a man, leadership is proven through persistence, self-reliance, and responsible action.
Medium Scorers	1. Learning for the sake of learning. 2. I consider my future because of learning experiences.	1. How relationships are important for major decisions. 2. Choosing friends should be a deliberate process.	1. Being a confident man. 2. Striving to be better.
Low Scorers	1. Learning experiences should lead to career choice. 2. Personal growth through learning.	1. Enjoying the influence of parents, professors, and advisors. 2. Close friendships are important to me.	1. I have confidence in who I am. 2. Being a good person is enough for me.

They demonstrated status and power by their willingness to effectively balance working 20+ hours each week and doing whatever it took to show that they could confidently master the material in classes or learn necessary policies as student leaders. Recognition by accomplished professors and parents reinforced their need to achieve no matter the personal cost. As Kimmel reported, a focus on status and power is common among college men (2013). In this study, experiences of Self-Authorship for high scorers revealed that the reason these men learned was influenced by their drive to be recognized as high performing students.

Earning the highest GPA and navigating their decidedly structured days gave high scorers the confidence to confront and challenge authority figures. While questioning authority was initiated for a reason (e.g., more time needed to complete assignments, desire to defend an organization), high scorers were driven to achieve partly because they believed good grades allowed them to speak as experts when interacting with those in power. Moreover, high scorers were not interested in admitting to an authority figure that they lacked knowledge or the ability to succeed.

Successfully completing a project or speaking up in class were opportunities for high scorers to sustain their status as high achievers. "I felt very confident in the project as a whole as it was successful in front of thousands" [Bobby]. Doing well in front of others was evidence for high scorers of how much they knew and the status their knowledge solidified for them. Getting the best grade on the toughest exam or assignment were ways for high scorers to show that persistence mattered if one wanted to win.

Medium and low scorers were less interested in achieving power and status (one measure of masculinity) through the learning process. Rather, the process of learning was their motivation to do well. Their enthusiasm stemmed from figuring out what was necessary to gain knowledge in class and other learning settings. Both medium and low scorers wanted to connect the process of learning to figuring out their calling in life:

> I preached one time. I just felt this overwhelming…that just started the discernment process of where in the church do I want to serve, if it's going to be more of church counsel and a Sunday school teacher, or is it more serving people through the church by being more of an administrative, shepherding kind of position. That's what I've kind of gleaned the past three and half years at school. [Reid]

Status and power were not motivating factors as moderate/low scorers focused more on getting the most out of class, understanding their strengths and weaknesses better, and expanding their views. For these men to get the most out of class they recognized the value of working with professors and viewing faculty as friends. Confronting a professor was done merely for the purpose of wanting to be challenged so they could grow as individuals. While they were cautious to admit when they did not know something, medium scorers knew that it was likely they would not be "the best" in all instances, nor did they strive to be. Low scorers expressed only that they wanted to get the most out of experiences and did not report a need to be the best in any situation.

Students in these two groups discovered their strengths and limitations by transferring learning from one setting to another. "Kind of applying that (training for track) towards classes, which I didn't really have to here either until my sophomore year [Paul]." Medium and low scorers made many connections among their learning experiences in their quest not to gain power and status, but to be well-rounded. For them, status meant being balanced in their accomplishments versus being in charge.

New knowledge and situations also allowed both medium and low scorers to expand their views and perspectives about themselves and the world around them. Thinking through an unknown topic or a difficult question posed by a faculty member allowed them to resolve on their own what they believed to be true. "Figuring it out" was how they exuded confidence as men.

Relationships that Affirm Abilities or Offer Mutual Benefit

Beyond epistemological issues, differences also emerged with respect to Interpersonal development, the second key finding of the study. High scorers valued interpersonal relationships for how those relationships affirmed their ability to succeed, master knowledge, or establish in-group status. High scorers were confident in their relationships with authority figures and peers because they could either demonstrate their ability to make their own decisions or demonstrate an outgoing lifestyle.

Family members and professors played an important role in the lives of high scorers, and they were not hesitant to rely on those with authority when making choices. Yet, even when seeking help high scorers needed to believe that they made the final decision. Blake reported: "I'd probably say if I had to put it into a figure, 75% is my own decision, but a quarter of it is her

(sister's) advice and her experiences." High scorers did not mind acknowledging the help of someone particularly if they could also substantiate the need for assistance by acknowledging the success of the person. Thus, these participants made it known that they chose to be guided by the "best" people they knew.

Being outgoing and decisive among friends allowed high scorers to show that they could be relied upon to take control. It also reaffirmed their need to aggressively move forward in situations that could have been risky for their own personal success or the accomplishments of the group. Note that aggressively moving forward is one of Kimmel's (2013) characteristics of masculinity. High scorers felt very much at ease when telling supervisors they (high scorers) had a better approach to a situation or disagreeing with university administrators who could control the fate of their organizations. For example, Ethan was very vocal in his opposition to a Greek Life advisor and judicial board for placing his fraternity on probation.

Relationships mattered because they enabled high scorers to demonstrate that they had the capacity to be role models, to take care of others, and to lead the way when called upon. As men, they were willing to respect authority figures, but believed that men explicitly stated their personal views.

On the other hand, medium and low scorers saw relationships as opportunities to surround themselves with people that could be helpful to them. They chose their relationships with intention. In a transactional relationship, the intention may be based on aspects like "this person can get me elected" or "working with this person could get me an A in class (Rosenbusch & Townsend, 2004)." For medium and low scorers, others mattered not for transactional purposes, but because together they could accomplish goals, challenge each other to do better, and display vulnerability.

Wanting to achieve goals together was best evidenced through affiliations with fraternities and athletic teams. These groups allowed medium and low scorers to figure out that college was more interesting and impactful when doing things with others:

> I was a very individualistic person when I first went in, and now it's more of a wholesome, family aspect in my mind. It's definitely changed from the, "I do everything on my own," to, "Teamwork makes the dream work," kind of thing. It's definitely been the school that's influenced me to change in that way, along with the people that I surround myself with. [Bill]

Being with people that mattered to them supported their belief that relationships should help them consider new thoughts and reflect on their own personal choices. When asked to describe the closest friendship they had in college, medium and low scorers talked about people that believed in their ability to do better. Dean reported: "I guess he (fraternity little brother) just influences me and he shows that there's a different lifestyle in college." Medium and low scorers did not deem relationships that offered something fun to do as being the most beneficial to them. Nor did they value forced relationships like an assigned roommate or club officer that they were obligated to know. The men in these two groups sought relationships that were mutually beneficial and satisfying.

Medium and low scorers grew personally through their relationships with chosen friends because of their willingness to be vulnerable and non-restrictive in their emotions:

> I've learned, obviously by being a man, embrace the fact that you are one, obviously share your opinions, but also know that you need to do it with a little bit more empathy and love and care because of that. [Reid]

These men were comfortable expressing that they cared for others, particularly other men, and wanted to sustain relationships in which they could grow. Whether it was overcoming feelings of depression or a failed dating relationship, medium and low scorers sought friendships that could help them deal with their difficulties. Lower MBS scores corresponded with behaviors like discussing feelings and disclosing emotions of happiness, sadness, or excitement.

External and Internal Validation of Beliefs

The third key finding of the study related to Intrapersonal issues. High scorers were characterized by cultivating a core set of beliefs for the purpose of having others affirm their values or recognize their leadership. Values shaped how they appeared to others. They tended to be external processors when they felt confident. That is, they openly talked about their values which allowed others to know their opinions and where they stood.

For example, one respondent talked extensively about becoming self-reliant, yet he reported: "not letting others know that times are low or times are tough, but making it seem like everything is peaches and cream" [Bobby] was important for him. High scorers wanted to be viewed by others has having their life in order. The more others viewed them in this way, the more confidence they had in themselves.

Strength of voice mattered because it reinforced strength of identity. "Confronting someone is much more effective than talking behind their back [Blake]." High scorers wanted to be known for their ability to speak up and make a point under various circumstances. When they encountered challenges as a result of voicing their opinions, their persistence affirmed their identity as someone who could be depended upon by others. As high scorers earned recognition for a strong voice and identity, their desire to demonstrate responsibility deepened as well. Validation from professors and peers, in particular, held greater significance for high scorers versus medium and low scorers.

Due to this reliance on validation from external sources, high scorers believed they knew what it meant to be a man and how perseverance and status were tied to masculinity. They wanted others to know that their success and achievement were due to their own efforts:

> A man has to get through a lot, and then by themselves. I have figured out a lot by myself. I've put myself in the mindset that I have to do it by myself because I am a man. The quotes [referring to quotes he uses every day] come in because when I was doing a lot by myself, I wasn't talking to anybody. I wasn't getting feedback or I wasn't getting input. [Bobby]

A high score on the MBS is indicative of highly masculine behaviors and these participants were mindful of societal expectations that were attributed to them because of their gender. Yet, their behaviors were not detrimental to others, based on a need to fortify bonds, or meant to police masculinity in others – common characteristics of hyper-masculinity (Adams, Anderson, & McCormack, 2010).

Unlike their high scoring counterparts, for medium and low scorers, internal validation was key. As was the case for the other two domains of Self-Authorship, those in the medium/low scoring groups were similar in how they formed their beliefs and how those beliefs were enacted in college. In both groups, participants' confidence stemmed from having core beliefs and being able to value the beliefs of others. Medium and low scorers strived to be good people because that was how they could be of benefit to others.

Medium and low scorers revealed that their goal for relationships was to learn something and become better in the process. For example, Justin believed that self-care was important for his friendship with a teammate:

> The fact that she was hurting herself in this relationship, that she was continuing, I think that was probably the toughest part. Not the fact that she was disagreeing with me or held a different belief system, but that she was hurting herself in the process.

The men in these two groups reported that through their care for friends they could enact their beliefs and deepen a commitment to what they stood for. While external influences were important, in any given situation they behaved in a way that internally was the right thing to do. Friendships and personal relationships allowed them to strengthen their internal foundation.

Medium and low scorers also endeavored to better themselves in each situation they encountered and reported that their intrapersonal development was impacted by those around them. As noted through their Interpersonal experiences, they were intentional in who they chose as friends because they wanted to be influenced by others who were striving simply to be good, productive people.

Participants in both groups of scorers wanted to cultivate their voice and believed that listening to authorities and/or peers did not diminish who they were as people. Knowing themselves when relating to others was critical for medium/low scorers. It allowed them to affirm that their identity was built upon a solid, but evolving foundation:

> I think people know in the peer side of things that I feel that I'm not set apart, but I think people know that I'm coming at things with a different perspective than a lot of others are. [Brandon]

Medium and low scorers wanted to enact masculinity in a healthy way (positive use of strengths, emotions, and values) and viewed the influence of others as important to their drive to be good people (Englar-Carlson & Kiselica, 2013). They remained committed to their values in situations that tempted them to act in ways that contradicted what they believed in – alcohol/drug use, underperformance, or cutting people a break. Peer settings did not compel them to act in opposition to their internal foundation of beliefs. Ultimately as men, they felt validated by their own confidence.

Relationship of the Findings to Prior Research

It is illuminating to look at the findings from my study in relationship to prior research. The research on the influence of masculinity on Self-Authorship is quite limited. Baxter Magolda's (1992) earliest stage of her longitudinal study of men and women in college identified gender-related patterns of development. That is the only prominent study that considered the

intersection of gender and Self-Authorship, however. My study adds to Baxter Magolda's work and other prior research related to men in college and their experiences of masculinity and Self-Authorship.

Epistemological experiences of students are characterized by dynamic ways of knowing and they will often take advantage of a variety of methods to acquire knowledge (Love & Guthrie, 1999; Mazzarone & Grove, 2013). My study confirmed this by reporting experiences of college men that would fully engage in learning experiences through either pursuing challenging topics in class or figuring out who they could learn from. Medium and low scoring participants particularly took advantage of a variety of methods so they could learn for the sake of learning.

The literature also included studies that demonstrated how students integrate knowledge from others into their own understanding (Magolda, King, Taylor & Wakefield, 2012). While this study examined how masculinity influenced knowledge gleaned from others, it was evident through reported experiences that participants in my study were motivated to integrate the knowledge from a variety of people, including professors, advisors, parents, and peers. Ultimately, these participants demonstrated that they valued this process because it helped them arrive at their own conclusions.

Although there is no research that has confirmed specifically how masculinity influenced men to engage in this process, there are gender-related studies that demonstrate that status and power are motivating factors for college men (Kimmel, 2010). Mastery of knowledge in the classroom is one way for college men to demonstrate through an interplay with professors that they are competent and confident learners (Baxter Magolda, 2004) and my study confirmed this finding. Nowhere was this more evident than in the reported experiences of high scoring participants who were eager to learn because such learning affirmed their status as a high-achieving student.

Research on the Interpersonal dimension of Self-Authorship demonstrated that relationships matter in the development of students (Baxter Magolda, 2009). My study confirmed this finding as each group of participants vocalized their appreciation for the different types of relationships they were able to foster throughout college. Students report that relationships play a key a role in how they shape their own worldview (King, 2010). Medium and low scorers throughout my study revealed that they were willing to allow their views on the world to be shaped by other people – a primary reason why they intentionally chose their peers.

Prior research has established that a need for positive social learning and social support is critical in the lives of men (Franklin, Bouffard, & Pratt, 2013). My findings confirmed that participants desired productive and mutually beneficial relationships – particularly with peers. However, my study contradicted prior research that reported that, historically, men have viewed their manhood through self-reliance and independence from authority (Syrett, 2009). Not even the high scorers felt they were fully self-sufficient or totally autonomous from authority.

Participants in all groups reported the value of interdependent relationships with authority figures like parents and professors. They utilized these individuals for important decisions like choice of major, but were comfortable relying on their own knowledge to arrive at a final decision. Prior research has recognized the positive attributes of self-reliance in men as helpful when providing institutional support (Englar-Carlson & Kiselica, 2013). As confirmed through my study, self-reliance (done positively) enabled participants to navigate relationships with peers or authority figures in productive ways.

Making meaning of external influencers when establishing an internal voice is a leading factor for Intrapersonal development (Jones & Abs, 2013; Kroger, 2004). Most studies that have examined relationships among men have found that relationships helped them make meaning of themselves and imparted lessons about manhood (Grundy, 2012; Parks, Jones, Ray, & Hughey, 2015). In terms of developing a concept of their own manhood, participants in my study relied heavily on the influences of other college men – confirming this prior research. Medium and low scoring participants were critical of other men who exhibited negative attributes like over-indulging in alcohol or working out excessively. Consequently, they chose friendships deliberately so they could use relationships to be more confident and become the man they wanted to be. Conversely, high scorers valued relationships for how they helped them develop their persistence, self-reliance, and responsibility as men.

This would seem to contradict prior research on masculinity development, which has revealed that men are unwilling to negatively judge acts of hyper-masculinity in their peers that are men – particularly in groups like fraternities or athletic teams (Kimmel, 2010). Throughout my study, I encountered participants who confronted negative behavior and disengaged from friendships that would have negatively influenced how they made meaning of their manhood.

The experiences of high scorers in my study confirm prior studies that revealed how relationships between men can also offer opportunities to fortify their status and build social

capital (Anderson, 2005; Michael 2013). High scorers leveraged their relationships with other men to build on the status they earned in groups like fraternities or athletic teams. Specifically, they were interested in building social capital through acts of responsibility for others, challenging authority figures, and mentoring younger men.

When college men are able to identify positive relationships with other men they have a more positive experience and use their internal voice to clarify their beliefs (King, Baxter Magolda, Barber, Brown, & Lindsay, 2009). Students are influenced both by external and internal validation of who they are. My study confirmed this through the experiences of medium and low scorers who chose positive relationships to enhance their values. As such, my research added to the literature that examined the nexus of positive relationships and an internal voice.

Finally, past research has noted that environments influence the development of an internal foundation (Pizzolato, Nguyen, Johnston, & Wang, 2012) and that friendships based on mutual benefit can strengthen a student's experience (Shushok, 2008). My study confirmed this in the experiences of medium and low scorers, who expressed that they sought genuine and authentic relationships that fostered their personal development. This study also confirmed the research that environment does matter in Intrapersonal development as participants felt most comfortable growing as an individual in spaces where authentic relationships and discussions could take place.

Limitations of this Study

There were several limitations to this study related to my methodological approach. Limitations existed with respect to: sample, instruments, and data collection.

My study utilized two samples: students and institutions. The first limitation was associated with the student sample. I initially sought 6-8 students from three institutions to limit the influence that institutional context might have. I only conducted three interviews at one of these institutions (CU), which did not allow me to fully achieve this goal. My sample had a lower number of total participants, which limited a broader interpretation of the results and offered me less usable data though I did reach data saturation. Consequently, the results should be interpreted accordingly.

My next two limitations were related to the instruments utilized for this study. Masculinity development is complex and dynamic. Thus, instruments used to assess behaviors related to it should be extensive and go beyond the surface. The first instrument was the

Masculine Behavior Scale (Snell, 1996), that measured masculine-related behaviors along four dimensions: Success Dedication; Restrictive Emotionality; Inhibited Affection; and Exaggerated Self-Reliance & Control. The MBS measured masculine behaviors through 20 items, which may not have included a sufficient number of items to capture a participant's degree of masculinity. Additionally, there may be other dimensions of masculinity not captured by the MBS that would have been relevant.

The second instrument in this study was the interview protocol. Similar to the MBS, the interview protocol included 17 items related to respondents' collegiate experiences. Breadth and depth of data enhances the rich and full nature of qualitative research. My interview protocol may not have utilized enough questions to elicit a complete understanding of participant experiences with Self-Authorship or masculinity.

A final limitation was associated with data collection. The data utilized for this study were collected through one 60-90 minute interview. Participants were asked to describe their experiences in college, and I relied on their honesty and what they could recall about their college years. There was no way to confirm that this self-reported information was accurate. The reported experiences of these participants represented a snapshot of their recollections at a particular point in time. Consequently, the results can only be interpreted in this context.

Implications for Practice, Research, and Policy

Despite these limitations, the findings of this study have implications for practice, research, and policy. I offer implications as they relate to each of my key findings.

Practice

My first key finding was that MBS scores declined as motivation to learn moved from external to internal factors. When designing interventions for college men, practitioners should consider how to foster intrinsic motivation in these students. For example, faculty advisors may want to pay attention to my finding that learning for the sake of learning is achieved through understanding the value of education beyond GPA or degree attainment. Linking learning to the development of personal strengths might help college men better appreciate the value of learning.

To assist the work being done by faculty advisors to redirect college men towards learning for the sake of learning, new student and family programs administrators might want to consider developing programs for parents (identified in my study as strong influencers on

participants) that focus on the intrinsic value of an education beyond getting a degree or job post-graduation. Programs for parents should highlight that motivating their students to do well simply for a high GPA or job offer could diminish their internal drive. Such programming could prevent parents from motivating their students to perpetuating hyper-masculine behavior in their students as young men may associate achievement with power and status.

Given the attrition of men on college campuses, student advocacy professionals and academic advisors should consider how my study revealed that some students learn for extrinsic reasons. When working with college men who are struggling for academic reasons, these staff members can utilize men's motivation for learning to help them achieve better personal and academic success. For instance, staff members might develop questions for men that focus not only on the technical skills needed to succeed academically, but also on what advisees believe about learning and the purpose of an education.

My second finding was that high scorer relationships were formed to affirm their abilities while medium/low scorers developed mutually beneficial relationships. Counseling center staff members may want to implement interventions and mentoring programs that utilize this finding. For example, men who seem to be very assertive and who seek status and power may benefit from programs that focus on confidence-building and self-affirmation. To start, men participating in these programs should be challenged to examine who they are and how they may use relationships to mask their own identity. For example, a student who believes that he may need to drink excessively because he perceives that all of his friends do might be encouraged to examine that belief more closely.

Staff in counseling offices and mentoring programs offer the opportunity to establish positive one-on-one relationships between men. In my study, it was evident that respondents strived to be candid about their experiences and that they valued the influence of older adults. University administrators overseeing counseling/mentoring efforts might pay close attention to how one-on-one relationships can foster more authentic conversations between a staff member and student. As such, staff members could be trained to provide individualized interventions that focus on forming close relationships with college men. Staff members must be skilled in asking reflective questions and engaging in dialogue that goes beneath the surface and promotes the free exchange of ideas. Participants in my study valued this free exchange because it made them feel they were in non-hierarchal relationships with older adults.

Stronger and genuine relationships lead to positive engagement and involvement in campus life. Consequently, senior student affairs administrators should consider my study and develop systemic approaches that address the value of friendships and mutually beneficial relationships. Among these approaches may be workshops geared towards small groups of men across campus that would make it easier for students to develop relationships for the sake of achieving a goal, having a good social life, or leading an organization. Specifically, administrators for residence life, fraternity and sorority life, or student organizations could incorporate lessons about genuine friendships into leadership programs and retreats.

My third finding revealed that high scorers needed external validation of beliefs, while medium/low scorers relied upon internal validation. University administrators might consider creating men's centers that include a focus on character development through personal and peer-to-peer reflection. Opportunities for personal and peer-to-peer reflection would allow men to better understand the ways in which social settings influence how they form values. A one-semester facilitated dialogue in small group format is one example of such a program. Bringing a small group of men together to talk about how each area of their lives (e.g., jobs, friends, relationships with faculty) influences what they believe might allow them to deepen their self-understanding and relationships with other men.

Student conduct administrators could utilize my findings to address college men who act in opposition to their beliefs in group settings. Students who align with highly masculine behaviors may engage in misconduct in an effort to seek validation from others – in many cases validation from other men. Hearing officers might issue educational sanctions to such students that challenge them to think about who they seek validation from and where they choose to find it. For example, a student could read an article on how hyper masculinity affects groupthink and write a reflection paper. Alternatively, they could watch videos that help them examine if they are choosing to engage in misconduct to mask their own vulnerabilities. Extensive work of this nature might help men offend less frequently and lower the risk associated with their behaviors.

Research

There were implications for research as it pertains to my first finding (MBS scores declined as motivation to learn moved from external to internal factors). For example, a longitudinal study examining how pre-college characteristics of masculinity influence the motivation for learning in a collegiate environment might help put my findings into context.

Prior research into masculinity has demonstrated that men arrive at college with established gendered attitudes and behaviors (Harper & Harris, 2010). A future study could identify men in the first year of high school and follow their development through the conclusion of college in order to better understand how masculinity evolves and influences overall development over time.

Future studies might also consider influences of masculinity and other factors that contribute to or inhibit the motivation to learn. This study did not examine the role that race, socio-economic status, or ability played in the motivation of participants. Each of these identities, along with gender, factor into the life of a student. It would be interesting to replicate this study examining the influence of the intersectionality of multiple identities on the motivation to learn.

My study was designed to include participants from three different campus types to mitigate influence that campus type might have on their experiences. However, my anecdotal data suggested that community and culture may play a role in masculinity development. A future study may want to further explore this impact by examining how the environment at a large, research university influences relationship-building among college men versus the environment at a small, liberal arts college.

Other studies might be conducted to expand on my second finding that high scorer relationships were formed to affirm their abilities and medium/low scorers developed mutually beneficial relationships. Future scholars may want to explore differences that may exist between medium scorers and low scorers on the MBS. My study found distinct differences between high scorers and these two groups. However, the experiences between medium scorers and low scorers were too similar to demarcate. Additional research might be helpful to administrators as they consider interventions for the entire population of men on university campuses.

Additional research on interpersonal relationships could examine the relationships that occur across all genders as it relates to each group of participants. The college campus is a dynamic environment and the success of men is due to their ability to interact with everyone in their environment. My study included experiences that participants had across genders, but it was not designed to specifically consider how different genders might influence the development of interpersonal relationships among college men. A future study might examine whether the gender of peers has any influence on the formation and maintenance of relationships with others.

Researchers in the future might also explore the experiences of men who are not members of peer organizations like those included in my study. Replicating this study with college men in their final year of study who did not choose to join such organizations might be helpful to better understand their motivation to engage in relationships with other students. These students may not be as visible as men in student organizations and they make-up a large percentage of the student population so learning more about their experiences with others on campus would be illuminating.

Finally, there were some implications for research related to my final finding that high scorers sought external validation of beliefs while medium/low scorers relied upon internal validation. Additional studies could elicit data about how college men develop personal values. My study revealed that participants were cognizant of their values and how those values influenced their views of others. Additional data on how those values are formulated would be interesting.

A second study might examine external and internal validation for men as first-year students. My study reflected experiences of men who were at the end of their collegiate experience. Research that examines how validation occurs in the first year might be useful in identifying strategies to help men gravitate towards positive meaning-making experiences. The new study might answer questions about who men are most likely to learn from and what student organizations or class environments help them make positive choices in the process.

Policy

Finally, the findings of my study have implications for future policy. In terms of the shift from external to internal motivation to learn as MBS scores decline, faculty polices might require professors to demonstrate (in annual reports, for example) an understanding of gender-related patterns of knowing. My study demonstrated that participants value relationships with faculty and they play an important role in the process of development. Policy statements in faculty handbooks could reflect the priority placed on deepening relationships with students.

My second finding related to the reasons that men formed relationships (to affirm abilities versus to be mutually beneficial). Academic policymakers might consider policies that limit class sizes to allow for stronger relationships among students. My study confirmed that participants in smaller class settings tended to engage in more mutually beneficial relationships because they were compelled to have more interactions. Smaller class sizes do not allow a

student to avoid challenging situations with peers that could help them develop stronger relationships.

Title IX policy makers might consider policies on gender-based violence training for students. Such programs might include education about how the motivation behind interpersonal connections impacts how men maintain intimate relationships. High scorers in my study developed relationships that affirmed their strength, status, and risk taking. Policy makers may want to consider the propensity for aggression when men exert themselves in this manner in intimate relationships. Requiring such education for students could strengthen Title IX policies on campuses.

My third finding centered on external versus internal validation of beliefs. University administrators may wish to use this finding to reconsider policy statements about hazing behavior. Man-making activities are common when introducing students to all-male peer groups and hazing responses should take into consideration the influence of external validation as men attempt to prove themselves (Grundy, 2012). Solely relying on punitive measures articulated in student handbooks may not be helpful as my study demonstrated the challenge for participants when balancing external and internal validation of their identity.

Finally, policymakers may want to implement a requirement that centers to support the needs of men be developed on campuses. These centers could focus on programs and services that help them foster a stronger identity and learn positive attributes of manhood. A policy requiring such a center might symbolize the support that is needed to enrich the college experience of men, help them persist towards graduation, and reduce the likelihood that they will act out while seeking external validation. A men's center could centralize efforts to holistically provide for their needs and prioritize funding for educational interventions that could be geared towards college men.

Conclusion

To conclude, my study extended the field of research that views holistic development (Epistemological, Interpersonal, and Intrapersonal) as necessary when creating learning environments for all college students – specifically men. Participants demonstrated their growth through academic, social, and personal experiences and revealed that notions of masculinity influence this journey.

In this study, men who exhibited higher degrees of masculine behaviors were motivated by external factors like status, power, and affirmation from others. Conversely, lower degrees of masculine behaviors corresponded with a desire to build a strong internal foundation motivated by a genuine desire to grow and learn.

Men continue to engage in serious incidents of misconduct related to: decreased confidence, a misunderstanding of power and privilege, restrictive emotions, and aggressive risk taking (Courtney, 2006; Kimmel, 2010; Shamir & Travis, 2012). Factors like this inhibit the achievement of men, even as they reap the benefits of a social system that is designed to promote their success. My findings suggest that with assistance, men can find more meaningful pathways to healthy confidence, competence, and status in their learning environments.

My study adds to the understanding that identifying external and internal motivators for learning and relationship-building for men in college is critical for their retention and persistence to graduation. With this knowledge, university administrators can structure campus environments that facilitate stronger academic and personal success for college men.

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Appendix A

Email to SSAO Requesting Study Involvement

Dear _____,

My name is Byron Hughes and I'm a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech in the Higher Education graduate program. I am studying the influence of masculinity on Self-Authorship in college men that are in their final year of study. Your institution meets the criteria for a campus that could be included in this research.

I would appreciate your assistance and support as I attempt to identify candidates on your campus that could potentially participate. First, I intend to contact the department heads for your Fraternity and Sorority Life, Residence Life, and Recreational Sports areas to request that they forward a flyer to students that would meet the criteria. I would like to copy you on this request as an indication that you are aware of the study.

Next, I would need to work with a staff member in your office to secure a private, conference room on your campus that I could conduct approximately 5-8 60-90 minute interviews with interested participants during my visit to campus in the next two months.

A pseudonym will be created for your university to protect the anonymity of both the students and the institution.

Would it be possible for me to schedule a 10-minute conversation by phone to further explain the study and the assistance that you could provide me? Please let me know at your earliest convenience, as I would like to conclude my interviews by October 15th of this year.

Thank you,

Byron Hughes
Doctoral Candidate in Higher Education
Virginia Tech

Appendix B

Institution Pre-Screening Protocol

Institution Name: _____   Pseudonym:_____

Location: _____

Combined Undergraduate and Graduate Enrollment:_____

Date/Time of Call: _____

Describe purpose of study to SSAO and thank them for their interest.

Campus type confirmed:
- Small, four-year college, highly residential (private, not for profit) _____
- Medium, four-year, primarily residential) _____
- Large, four-year, primarily residential) _____

Willingness to allow a staff member to assist with reserving space? _____

HRL, FSL, and Rec Sports confirmed as reports to SSAO: _____

Contact Information for staff member: _____

Contact Information for Director of HRL: _____

Contact Information for Director of FSL: _____

Contact Information for Director of Rec Sports: _____

Selected: _____

Appendix C

Masculine Behavior Scale

By completing this inventory you agree to participate in my study, which is designed to explore the experiences of college men. The results of this study will be published in a dissertation, and your identity will remain anonymous. The data collected from the inventory below will be used for analysis purposes. Your participation is voluntary and confidential. You may contact me at bahughes@vt.edu or 540-231-6887 if you have any concerns.

Additionally, should have questions or concerns about the study's conduct or your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board Chair, Dr. David Moore, at moored@vt.edu or 540-231-4991. Consent is indicated with the submission of the questionnaire.

To complete the survey, please click on the link below. By doing so, you are agreeing to participate in the study.

Thank you.

The Masculine Behavior Scale was developed by William Snell Jr. for research purposes.

OPINION INVENTORY INSTRUCTIONS: The items listed below inquire about some of your attitudes, beliefs, and opinions. As such, there are no right or wrong answers, only your responses. For each item you will be asked to indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statement listed in that item. Use the following scale to indicate your degree of agreement/disagreement with each item:

  1 = Agree.
  2 = Slightly agree.
  3 = Neither agree nor disagree.
  4 = Slightly disagree.
  5 = Disagree.

The letter that best describes your reaction to each statement is the one which you will darken for that item on the computer scoreable answer sheet.

Now, go ahead and respond to the statements. Be sure to answer every question, even if you are not sure. Also, please be honest in your responses.

1. I spend a great deal of my time pursuing a highly successful career.

2. I don't usually discuss my feelings and emotions with others.

3. I don't devote much time to intimate relationships.

4. I try to be in control of everything in my life.

5. I am very ambitious in the pursuit of a success-oriented career.

6. I am not the type of person to self-disclose about my emotions.

7. I don't involve myself too deeply in loving, tender relationships.

8. I make sure that I "call all the shots" in my life.

9. I devote extensive time and effort to the pursuit of a professional career.

10. I don't often talk to others about my emotional reactions to things.

11. I don't become very close to others in an intimate way.

12. I don't take orders (or advice) from anybody.

13. I do whatever I have to in order to work toward job success.

14. In general, I avoid discussions dealing with my feelings and emotions.

15. I don't often tell others about my feelings of love and affection for them.

16. I don't let others tell me what to do with my life.

17. I work hard at trying to ensure myself of a successful career.

18. I don't often admit that I have emotional feelings.

19. I tend to avoid being in really close, intimate relationships.

20. I don't allow others to have control over my life.

Scoring Instructions for the Masculine Behavior Scale (MBS)
The Masculine Behavior Scale (MBS) consists of four subscales,
each containing five (5) separate items.
The labels and items for each of these subscales are listed below:

1. SUCCESS DEDICATION SUBSCALE (defined as behavior characterized by an excessive concern with attaining success):

1. I spend a great deal of my time pursuing a highly successful career.
5. I am very ambitious in the pursuit of a success-oriented career.
9. I devote extensive time and effort to the pursuit of a professional career.
13. I do whatever I have to in order to work toward job success.
17. I work hard at trying to insure myself of a successful career.

2. RESTRICTIVE EMOTIONALITY SUBSCALE (defined as behavior characterized by the public restriction of privately felt emotions):

2. I don't usually discuss my feelings and emotions with others.
6. I am not the type of person to self-disclose about my emotions.
10. I don't often talk with others about my emotional reactions to things.
14. In general, I avoid discussions dealing with my feelings and emotions.
18. I don't often admit that I have emotional feelings.

3. INHIBITED AFFECTION SUBSCALE (defined as behavior characterized by an inhibition of feelings of affection for loved ones):

3. I don't devote much time to intimate relationships.
6. I don't involve myself too deeply in loving, tender relationships.
10. I don't become very close to others in an intimate way.
14. I don't often tell others about my feelings of love and affection for them.
18. I tend to avoid being in really close, intimate relationships.

4. EXAGGERATED SELF-RELIANCE & CONTROL SUBSCALE (defined as behavior characterized by an exaggerated concern with self-reliance and personal control):

4. I try to be in control of everything in my life.
8. I make sure that I "call all the shots" in my life.
12. I don't take orders (or advice) from anybody.
16. I don't let others tell me what to do with my life.
20. I don't allow others to have control over my life.

CODING INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MBS ITEMS:

Each and every item is coded so that: Agree = +2 Slightly Agree = +1 Neither Agree Nor Disagree = 0 Slightly Disagree = -1 Disagree = -2 The five items on each subscale are then summed, so that more extreme positive (negative) scores correspond to greater agreement (disagreement) that the items on the Masculine Behavior Scale are descriptive of oneself.

Appendix D

Consent from Author of Masculine Behavior Scale

Dear Byron,

You have my permission to use the MRI and the MBS in your work (free of charge). You can find all of the information that you need at the following websites (see below), where I have summarized that information in an "electronic book" (the first website below) and where copies of my psychological instruments can be found (the second website below).

If I can be of any future assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you need to translate the MBS, please feel free to do so. Good luck with your project.

http://cstl-cla.semo.edu/snell/books/

http://www4.semo.edu/snell/TESTING.HTM

Take care,
Bill Snell

Dr. William (Bill) E. Snell, Jr.
Department of Psychology-MS5700
One University Plaza
SE Missouri State University
Cape Girardeau, MO 63755
wesnell@semo.edu
573.651.2447

From: Hughes, Byron [mailto:bahughes@vt.edu] **Sent:** Tuesday, October 20, 2015 8:03 AM **To:** wesnell@semo.edu **Subject:** Masculine Role Inventory

Hi Dr. Snell,

I'm a doctoral candidate in the Virginia Tech higher education administration program. I'm currently writing a dissertation on self authorship and how it's influence by masculinity development. In researching different inventories that would allow me to understanding the masculinity level of each participant I discovered your MRI, which could be helpful in my research. I have a couple of questions for you regarding the instrument:

1 Was there a conceptual framework that you used to create this inventory? How did it inform the development of the instrument?

2 From what I can tell from the instrument there is a means for coding it based on the
   instructions I found listed on this site: http://www4.semo.edu/snell/scales/MRI.htm. Does
   the inventory provide an overall score for masculinity? Would I be able to determine a
   level of masculinity from a participant's the results of this inventory?
3 And of course, would I have your permission to utilize this inventory in my qualitative study?
   If additional information is needed for background on the study, please let me know. I'm
   currently in the phase of writing methodology.
Thanks for any and all help you're able to provide!

Best regards,
Byron

Appendix E

Email to Directors Requesting Study Involvement

Dear ____,

My name is Byron Hughes and I'm a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech in the Higher Education graduate program. My dissertation topic involves studying the influence of masculinity on Self-Authorship in college men who are in their final year of study. I have copied on this email your Vice President for Student Affairs, with whom I have spoken about the study.

I am interested in conducting one 60-90 interview with males who are 21-23 years old and in their final year of study. Given the nature of work in your department, I am asking that you share the attached flyer with male students that you work closely with. If they participate fully in my study they will receive $15 as an incentive for their assistance.

A pseudonym will be created for them and your university to protect the anonymity of participation.

Please share this flyer at your earliest convenience. I would like to conduct my interviews with students on your campus in the near future. If you have questions about this study please let me know (bahughes@vt.edu, 540-231-6887).

Thank you,

Byron Hughes
Doctoral Candidate in Higher Education
Virginia Tech

Appendix F

Participant Flyer

VirginiaTech

Would you like to talk about your experiences throughout college?

This summer and fall I'm planning to interview male students as part of a dissertation study to learn more about their transition throughout college. You'll be asked to answer a short questionnaire and participate in one 60-90 minute interview.

You'll be paid $15 for your participation.

If the following apply to you, then I'd like to meet with you:

- Are you a male
- Are you in your last year of study
- Are you an undergraduate between 21-23 years old
- Are you part of a student organization

If this applies to you, then contact me at:

Byron Hughes
bahughes@vt.edu
540-231-6887

Please note: your participation in this study will not impact your current involvement on campus.

Appendix G

Email to Students Interested in Participation

Dear ____,

My name is Byron Hughes and I'm a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech. I am studying the experiences of college men, who are in their final year of study. The results of this study will be included in my dissertation. Thank you for indicating interest in this study.

Your potential participation in my study will be limited to completing a short questionnaire and participating in one 60-90 minute in-person interview to be conducted on your campus. If you participate fully in my study you will be paid $15 for your assistance.

A pseudonym will be created for you and your university to protect the anonymity of your participation.

If you are willing to assist me please let me some days/times when we might be able to chat by phone or Skype, whichever you prefer, to review the study and determine if you will qualify to participate. In your reply, please indicate your preference for either Skype or phone, and either your username or telephone number. If, after our conversation, you choose not to participate no details from this conversation will be included in my research.

Thank you,

Byron Hughes
Doctoral Candidate
Virginia Tech

Appendix H

Participant Pre-Screening Protocol

Hello, my name is Byron Hughes, a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech.

Thank you for your interest in this study about the experiences of men throughout college. The purpose of this conversation is to determine if you will be able to participate in the study as several criteria are necessary for being included. The information you share with me today will only be included in my research if you agree to participate, and we will agree on a pseudonym that you will go by for the purpose of the study to ensure anonymity for any results reported.

Before we continue, are you willing to participate in today's conversation about your eligibility?

Name: _____   Pseudonym: _____   Date: _____

Cell number/Skype: _____   Email address: _____

1. Gender: _____

2. Age: _____

3. College: _____

4. Year in college: _____

5. Anticipated graduation date: _____

6. Student organization involvement:

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

7. Willingness to be interviewed? _____

8. Willingness to complete inventory? _____

9. Verbal consent to participate? _____

Interview date/time: _____

Appendix I

Informed Consent Form

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY
Informed Consent for Participants
in Research Projects Involving Human Subjects

Project Title:

The Influence of Masculinity on Self-Authorship in College Men

Investigator:	**Faculty Advisor:**
Byron Hughes	Dr. Joan B. Hirt
Doctoral Candidate	Professor
EDHE – Higher Education	Higher Education
117 New Hall West (0428)	1750 Kraft Dr., 2007
190 W. Campus Dr.	Virginia Tech CRC (0302)
Blacksburg, VA 24061	Blacksburg, VA 24061
443-366-3284 (cell)	540-231-9700
bahughes@vt.edu	jbhirt@vt.edu

Purpose of the research:

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore how constructs of masculinity influence Self-Authorship in college men. The data from this study will be published in my dissertation.

Procedures:

You have identified yourself as someone who may be interested in participating in this study. If so, you will complete a 20-item masculinity inventory. Additionally, you will participate in one 60-90 minute interview that will take place on your campus. If you agree, your interview will be digitally recorded and transcribed so I am sure I accurately interpret your information.

Risk:

There are minimal risks involved with participating in this study. Given the nature of the topic, it is possible that the questions may create some discomfort. Your interview is being held in close proximity to one of the following offices; the counseling center, services for students with disabilities, or the dean of students. If at the end of the interview you would like to speak to a professional, I can take you to someone that you can talk with. I will also provide you with information about the counseling services available at your institution. If you must seek medical or counseling services as a result of your participation in this study, however, neither the investigators nor the University have funds to pay for such services.

Benefits:

As a participant, you may benefit only indirectly from this study. You may gain insight into your college experience. No promise or guarantee of benefits has been made to encourage you to participate. The findings of this study will provide information to other researchers and college administrators about the experiences of college-aged men. This information may improve services provided to such students. You may contact the investigator at a later time for a summary of the research results.

Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality:

To maintain anonymity, you will be identified by a pseudonym that you select. Your identity will not be divulged to anyone. At no time will I release the results of the study to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your written consent. Only my faculty advisor and I will have access to the data. All electronic questionnaires, forms, transcripts and digital voice files will be stored on a password protected drive. All printed forms, transcripts, and field notes will be stored in a locked drawer within my office. It is possible that the Institutional Review Board at Virginia Tech may view the data for auditing purposes. The IRB is responsible for the oversight of the protection of human subjects involved in research. All data will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study, with the exception of the transcripts that will be saved indefinitely under a pseudonym.

Compensation:

You will receive $15 at the end of the interview.

Freedom to Withdraw:

You are free to withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. You will be compensated if you participate in any portion of the interview. You are free not to answer any questions without penalty.

Subject's Responsibilities:

I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I have the following responsibilities:

- To complete a masculinity inventory.
- To participate in one 60-90 minute interview
- To review the transcript from my interview to ensure that it accurately reflects what I said during the interview.

Subject's Permission

I have read the Informed Consent Form and the conditions of this study. I have had all my questions answered. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary consent:

_____

Participant's Signature   Date   University

Should I have any pertinent questions about this research I may contact:

Byron Hughes   Dr. Joan Hirt (faculty advisor)

443-366-3284   540-231-9700

bahughes@vt.edu   jbhirt@vt.edu

Should I have any questions about the study's conduct and research subjects' rights, I may contact:

Dr. David Moore, VT IRB Chair

540-231-4991

moored@vt.edu

Appendix J

Interview Protocol

Name: _____   Pseudonym: _____

Age: _____   Gender: _____

Date/Time: _____   Location: _____

Informed Consent Form Received: ___ Yes ___ No

RQ1: How does masculinity influence the epistemological experiences of college men?

RQ2: How does masculinity influence the interpersonal experiences of college men?

RQ3: How does masculinity influence the intrapersonal experiences of college men?

Opening questions

1. How have things been since the last time we spoke?

2. Tell me about your plans after May.

    a. How are you feeling about these plans?

Epistemological [RQ1]

3. Can you tell me about the class in which you learned the most in college?

    a. Who was the professor and what role did that person play in the class?

    b. Tell me about the other students in that class.

4. Describe a difficult problem you've faced in a class.

    a. How did you solve this problem?

    b. Was there any previous knowledge that you used when trying to solve this problem?

5. Tell me about a time when you disagreed with what a professor said.

    a. How did you figure out if either of you had the right answer?

Interpersonal [RQ2]

6. Who is the closest friend you have right now?

    a. Can you describe the ways this person influences you?

    b. Tell about something you now believe in that you didn't believe in before you met.

7. Tell me about someone you were once friends with but now are not friends with.

    a. Why did this friendship end?

    b. What are some things you learned from that friendship?

8. Describe a time when a member of your family helped you reach a decision.

    a. What has been helpful about using this family member for other important decisions?

Intrapersonal [RQ3]

9. Can you share with me a specific time when your values/beliefs were challenged in college?

    a. Tell me what effect that experience had on you

10. Conversely, describe a time when your values/beliefs were supported.

    a. Tell me how that experience affected you

11. Have your values changed since your first year in college?

    a. What caused them to change or stay the same?

12. What have you learned about yourself as you prepare to graduate from college?

    a. What advice would you give to an incoming freshman based on what you've learned about yourself while you were in college?

Masculinity

13. Tell me about a time when being a man influenced you in a class.

14. Tell me about a time when being a man influenced your relationship with another person or other people.

15. Tell me about a time that being a man influenced the person you believe yourself to be.

Closing questions

16. Is there anything that I have not covered in this interview that you would like to add?

17. May I follow up with you if I have additional questions?

Appendix K

IRB Approval Letter

VirginiaTech

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 12, 2017

TO: Joan B Hirt, Byron A Hughes

FROM: Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (FWA00000572, expires January 29, 2021)

PROTOCOL TITLE: The Influence of Masculinity on Self-Authorship in College Men

IRB NUMBER: 16-450

Effective April 11, 2017, the Virginia Tech Institution Review Board (IRB) Chair, David M Moore, approved the Continuing Review request for the above-mentioned research protocol.

This approval provides permission to begin the human subject activities outlined in the IRB-approved protocol and supporting documents.

Plans to deviate from the approved protocol and/or supporting documents must be submitted to the IRB as an amendment request and approved by the IRB prior to the implementation of any changes, regardless of how minor, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. Report within 5 business days to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.

All investigators (listed above) are required to comply with the researcher requirements outlined at:

http://www.irb.vt.edu/pages/responsibilities.htm

(Please review responsibilities before the commencement of your research.)

PROTOCOL INFORMATION:

Approved As:	**Expedited, under 45 CFR 46.110 category(ies) 6,7**
Protocol Approval Date:	**May 10, 2017**
Protocol Expiration Date:	**May 9, 2018**
Continuing Review Due Date*:	**April 25, 2018**

*Date a Continuing Review application is due to the IRB office if human subject activities covered under this protocol, including data analysis, are to continue beyond the Protocol Expiration Date.

FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS:

Per federal regulations, 45 CFR 46.103(f), the IRB is required to compare all federally funded grant proposals/work statements to the IRB protocol(s) which cover the human research activities included in the proposal / work statement before funds are released. Note that this requirement does not apply to Exempt and Interim IRB protocols, or grants for which VT is not the primary awardee.

The table on the following page indicates whether grant proposals are related to this IRB protocol, and which of the listed proposals, if any, have been compared to this IRB protocol, if required.

Invent the Future

Appendix L

Email Request to Participants to Review Transcript

Dear ____,

Thanks once again for your participation in my research study that is examining experiences of college men. Since our interview, I have had the audio file of our conversation transcribed for analysis. Attached to this email is a copy of the transcription. Please take a moment to review it for the purpose of accuracy and return to me with any corrections within seven days. If I don't hear back from you I will assume that is okay as is.

Once again, I appreciate your involvement in this study.

Thank you,

Byron Hughes
Doctoral Candidate
Virginia Tech