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“Sometimes the jocks are the nerds…if that makes sense”: Boys’ Practice of Intra-gender Policing in a High School Where Staff Suggest Inclusivity

Abstract

Orthodox masculinity is defined by compulsory heterosexuality, homophobia, and anti-femininity. The literature suggests there is intense peer pressure for boys to conform to orthodox masculinity during adolescence. Boy’s use of intra-gender policing behaviors—joking, teasing, bullying and violence—is meant to force or reinforce strict orthodox masculine performance. Intra-gender policing often leads to shame and humiliation for many boys. Inclusive masculinity theory (Anderson 2009) suggests however, that boys’ culture is changing. The literature documents the existence of inclusive school-based peer cultures where boys are not homophobic, embrace the feminine, and eschew violence. Using inclusive masculinity as the theoretical framework, this study posed two questions: (a) What is the practice of intra-gender policing in a high school where staff have suggested inclusivity? and (b) What is the evidence of inclusivity in this setting? Data was collected using 45-minute semi-structured interviews of eight boys in their junior or senior year at Suburban High. Findings suggest the presence of boys who perform inclusive masculinities that include embrace of the once feminized (for example, participating in musical theater) and the intellectual acceptance of gay male peers. Intragender policing behaviors seem confined to subgroups who perform orthodox masculinities and include “play fighting” and homophobic discourse. An additional finding of adult gender policing is discussed. These findings seem to offer documentation of the second stage of inclusive masculinity theory described by Anderson (2009) as a time when in which two dominant but not dominating masculinities, orthodox masculinity and inclusive masculinity, will co-exist. Implications for execlead include support of student Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) clubs and the elimination of cultural barriers to hiring openly gay teachers. Additional implications for education, professional practice, theory, and future research are presented.

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“Sometimes the jocks are the nerds…if that makes sense”:

Boys’ Practice of Intra-gender Policing in a

High School Where Staff Suggest Inclusivity

By

Kelly Clark

Submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Ed.D. in Executive Leadership

Supervised by

Dr. Dianne Cooney Miner

Committee Member

Dr. James Colt

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. School of Education

St. John Fisher College

December 2015

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2015

Dedication

As I look back over my life,
And I think things over I can truly say that I've been blessed,
I've got a testimony!

-Reverend Clay Evans

Recognizing that I didn't have to live to see this day, I give thanks to God for allowing me to be a blessing to others. This work is dedicated to four boys whose lives have been irrevocably changed because of strict adherence to societal gender norms and violent intra-gender policing. As you read this, I ask that you speak their names out loud – Baby Roy Jones, age 17-months; Carl Walker Hoover, age 11; Larry King, age 15; and Brandon McInerney, age 14. If this work will save the life of even one boy, it will have been worth the time, the energy, the struggle.

I cannot express in words the thank you that lives in my heart for my number one fan, ever optimistic cheerleader, and shoulder to cry on—my life partner Paulette Hall. It goes without saying that I could not have done this without you! Thank you for allowing me to borrow your wife for just a little while, you may now have her back! To my daughter Eryn, thank you for cheering me on even though you could not possibly imagine why anyone would willing embark on such a journey. Your late night pep talks and Steven Universe got me through more rough patches than you know. Thank you for all of the sacrifices you endured. My mission now is to show you they were not for naught. To my son Mikal and daughter Cela, thank you for your support. I hope I have been an example to you of the never ending possibilities to grow and reinvent yourself. It is

never too late! To my mom Elaine Blyden, thank you for your tenacity, optimism, and social justice spirit. It is because of you that I am, in more ways than one! Thanks to my dad Bob, my brother Malik, and other family members for believing in me. Special shout out to my cousins Jaye and Langston – I couldn't let the youngins have all the fun!

To my friend Scott Fearing – a special thank you! You came along at just the right time to confirm a choice I had already made. You were just the right teacher/mentor. Your belief in me helped carry me down this road. We made it through some tough times but I wouldn't trade moment! I look forward to the next chapter in our friendship.

To my dissertation committee, Dr. Dianne Cooney Miner and Dr. James Colt, thank you for your guidance. I am forever appreciative of the wide birth you gave me to do my thing and the gentle pushes in the right direction. A very special thank you to inclusive masculinity theorist Dr. Eric Anderson who served as a reader for my dissertation proposal. Your support and insight was invaluable to my process. To Dr. Stephanie Townsend thank you for your patience and coaching. You have a gift for deflating the monster and making research simple and straight forward. To the professors, guest professors, and St. John Fisher College staff who support the DEXL program, a big thank you! You change lives and help dreams come true. What a special calling you all have and you do it with humility and grace! A special thank you to Betsy Christiansen for the laughter and friendship. You made DEXL a true home. Lastly, I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Jeannine Dingus-Eason for the gentle pushes and prompt answers to frantic text messages! I am forever grateful for your encouragement and support.

Biographical Sketch

Kelly Clark is the former Director of Community Safety Programs at the Gay Alliance in Rochester, NY. There she worked directly with LGBTQ victims of violence and discrimination. She has over 25 years of experience in social justice and cultural competency work. Ms. Clark attended the University of Rochester in Rochester, New York from 1981 to 1986 where she was enrolled in a 3-2 Program with the University's Warner School of Education. She graduated in 1985 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and again in 1986 with a Master of Arts degree in Counseling and Human Development. She came to St. John Fisher College in the spring of 2013 and began doctoral studies in the Ed.D. Program in Executive Leadership. Ms. Clark pursued her research on Boys' Practice of Intra-gender Policing in a High School Where Staff Suggest Inclusivity under the direction of Dr. Dianne Cooney Miner and Dr. James Colt and received the Ed.D. degree in 2015.

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Abstract

Orthodox masculinity is defined by compulsory heterosexuality, homophobia, and anti-femininity. The literature suggests there is intense peer pressure for boys to conform to orthodox masculinity during adolescence. Boy's use of intra-gender policing behaviors—joking, teasing, bullying and violence—is meant to force or reinforce strict orthodox masculine performance. Intra-gender policing often leads to shame and humiliation for many boys. Inclusive masculinity theory (Anderson 2009) suggests however, that boys' culture is changing. The literature documents the existence of inclusive school-based peer cultures where boys are not homophobic, embrace the feminine, and eschew violence. Using inclusive masculinity as the theoretical framework, this study posed two questions: (a) What is the practice of intra-gender policing in a high school where staff have suggested inclusivity? and (b) What is the evidence of inclusivity in this setting?

Data was collected using 45-minute semi-structured interviews of eight boys in their junior or senior year at Suburban High. Findings suggest the presence of boys who perform inclusive masculinities that include embrace of the once feminized (for example, participating in musical theater) and the intellectual acceptance of gay male peers. Intra-gender policing behaviors seem confined to subgroups who perform orthodox masculinities and include "play fighting" and homophobic discourse. An additional finding of adult gender policing is discussed. These findings seem to offer documentation of the second stage of inclusive masculinity theory described by Anderson

(2009) as a time when in which two dominant but not dominating masculinities, orthodox masculinity and inclusive masculinity, will co-exist. Implications for executive leadership include support of student Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) clubs and the elimination of cultural barriers to hiring openly gay teachers. Additional implications for education, professional practice, theory, and future research are presented.

Table of Contents

Dedication iii

Biographical Sketch v

Abstract vi

Table of Contents viii

List of Tables x

List of Figures xi

Chapter 1: Introduction 1

- Introduction 1
- Problem Statement 2
- Theoretical Rationale 10
- Statement of Purpose 15
- Research Questions 16
- Potential Significance of the Study 16
- Definitions of Terms 18
- Chapter Summary 19

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature 20

- Introduction and Purpose 20
- Methods 20
- Literature Review 21
- Chapter Summary 45

Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology 46
Introduction 46
Qualitative Inquiry 47
Research Context 47
Research Participants 48
Data Collection 50
Data Analysis 50
Chapter Summary 52
Chapter 4: Results 53
Introduction 53
Demographic Data 53
Findings 58
Chapter Summary 78
Chapter 5: Discussion 81
Introduction 81
Discussion of Findings 82
Limitations 93
Implications of the Study 95
Summary 102
References 107
Appendix A 114
Appendix B 120

List of Tables

Item	Title	Page
Table 4.1	Participant Demographic Comparison	54

List of Figures

Item	Title	Page
Figure 1.1	Stages of Inclusive Masculinity Theory.	14
Figure 5.1	Masculinity continuum	90

Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Schools are important sites for the production of adolescent masculinities (McCormack & Anderson, 2010; Plummer, 2001; Renold, 2002; Stoudt, 2006). Not a static reality, masculinities are performed differently, shifting over time and context. None-the-less, *hegemonic masculinity*—referred to here as orthodox masculinity—has been recognized by boys as the archetype against which they are most often judged (Connell, 2014). It is characterized by the performance of stereotypic Western male gender roles and distinguished by its anti-femininity, heterosexism, and homophobia (Connell, 2005; Kimmel, 2004). Though many individual boys resist orthodox masculine performance (Anderson, 2009; Kehler, 2007; McCormack & Anderson, 2010; Reichert, Nelson, Heed, Yang, & Benson, 2012), orthodox masculinity school-based peer cultures are well documented in the literature (Bortolin, 2010; Kehler, 2007; Phillips, 2005; Smith, 2007; Stoudt, 2006; Way et al., 2014). They are normative and rife with homophobic discourse and "intra-gender policing" (Duncan, 1999, p.106), in the guise of teasing and bullying (Nayak, & Kehily, 1996; Plummer, 2001; Stoudt, 2006, 2012). Recently however, masculinity researchers have begun to document a significant shift in school-based masculine peer cultures (Anderson, 2009; McCormack & Anderson, 2010; McCormack, 2011a). *Inclusive masculinities*, an archetype characterized by emotional authenticity, physical closeness, and lack of homophobia, have become the normative standard in a small number of schools and colleges (Anderson, 2005, 2008b; Anderson,

Adams, & Rivers, 2012). Boys who perform inclusive masculinities produce school-based peer cultures that are absent homophobic discourse, emotionally open and supportive, and in some cases absent interpersonal violence (Anderson, 2009).

Inclusive masculinity theorist Eric Anderson suggests this shift is likely broad in nature. In addition to these dichotomous cultures, Anderson has previously suggested there is a middle ground, where both orthodox masculinity and inclusive masculinities exist in the same setting (Anderson, 2009). Although he no longer finds this middle ground—instead finding only inclusive cultures—in his studies, this might be an artifact of the geographical location that he and other inclusive masculinity theorists have studied. Hence, examining for inclusive masculinity might be different in the Northeast United States. This co-existence is the focus of the present study.

Problem Statement

Early gender socialization. Psychologists and sociologists have long theorized about the personality and behavioral differences between men and women (Eagly & Wood, 1991, 1999, 2012). Our daily lives seem flush with evidence of these differences, which in Western societies are labeled masculinity and femininity (Eagly & Wood, 1999). They seem natural and innate, but social psychologists posit that it is the social structure of society that shapes these differences (Eagly & Wood, 1991). They suggest men and women behave in ways that are dictated by cultural norms for their gender (Eagly & Wood, 1999). The process of communicating and learning these norms is referred to as gender socialization (Eagly & Wood, 2012).

Gender socialization can start even before birth, with the gendered imaginations of parents-to-be. Krolokke (2011) found differences in the way both parents-to-be and

medical sonographers describe fetal behaviors/characteristics during prenatal ultrasound exams. For example, male fetuses with crossed legs were described as stubborn while female fetuses were said to be modest. Once born, babies are subject to parents' choice of name, color of clothing, room décor, and type of toys, which are all most often gendered choices (Fagot, Leinbach & O'Boyle, 1992). Raag and Rackliff (1998) found parents engage in active gender policing of toddlers. They are criticized and corrected for cross-gender play, specifically when playing with what parents perceived to be opposite gender toys. Boys are more strongly policed and more reluctant to participate in cross-gender play they think their fathers would disapprove of. By preschool, children have begun to internalize that there are right and wrong ways to be boys and girls, and peer gender policing begins (Ewing Lee & Troop-Gordon, 2011; Fagot, Leinbach & O'Boyle, 1992; Martin, 1998). Children criticize and correct other's play choices and even clothing they feel is incongruent with gender norms. By elementary school, boys have developed clear group standards of masculinity that often center on sports, bullying, and girls (Duncan, 1999; Renold, 2002). Boys regularly engage in homophobic discourse and intra-gender policing (Duncan, 1999; Renold, 2002).

Adolescent masculinity. During adolescence, the cultural pressure to conform to orthodox standards of masculinity is great. Many boys seem locked in a sometimes-fierce battle to achieve acceptable masculine identities (Duncan, 1999). Whitehead (2005) suggests this is due to the developmental process of transitioning from boyhood to manhood. During this transition, boys seek to amass social capital or the markers that give them legitimacy in the context of dominant cultural norms (Whitehead, 2005). Orthodox masculinity, defined by its heterosexuality, homophobia, and misogyny, serves

as a sort of compass by which boys judge both themselves and others (Heinrich, 2013). The performance of orthodox masculinity serves to secure and/or elevate the status of the performer, while simultaneously pointing out in contrast, the failed masculinity of others. Consequently, in orthodox masculine school-based cultures, any behaviors that could be considered feminine are suspect (Kimmel & Mahler, 2003; Reichert et al., 2012; Stoudt, 2006). Boys who are independent, athletic, stoic, able to take and dish out violence, and popular with girls are esteemed by their male peers as properly masculine. Boys who are homosexual as well as boys who identify as heterosexual but who are nerdy, smaller or overweight, engaged in arts or music, soft spoken, effeminate, or who otherwise deviate from orthodox masculine performance are labeled gay (Kimmel & Mahler, 2003; Klein, 2006) and subject to aggressive, homophobic, and sometimes-violent intra-gender policing (Stoudt, 2006, 2012).

The process of orthodox masculine gender socialization is recursive, where intra-gender policing acts as both the cause and the effect. Its dominance makes the association of boys with roughhousing, bullying, and violence seem normal as captured in the common phrase, "boys will be boys." However, the pernicious and sometimes violent intra-gender policing engaged in by some boys oddly seems to protect them from ridicule and shame as they negotiate the school day (Oransky & Marecek, 2009). Teasing and bullying behaviors are viewed by some boys as welcomed peer support. These incidents serve as cues that a boy has strayed too far from acceptable masculinity and provide opportunities to recover before losing what Anderson (2005) calls "masculine capital" (Oransky & Marecek, 2009). Boys who successfully fight back when bullied can gain the esteem of peers (Kimmel & Mahler, 2003). Boys who do not

may lose so much masculine capital that they become marked for the entirety of their adolescent years (Oransky & Marecek, 2009; Phillips, 2007). Some boys are proud to have withstood hazing rituals often associated with sports teams, another means to increase masculine capital (Stoudt, 2006).

Orthodox adolescent masculinity is a risk factor for both victimization and the perpetration of violence (Kimmel & Mahler, 2003: Stoudt, 2006; Suicide Prevention Resource Center, 2008; Whitehead, 2005). Danner and Carmody (2001) argue that orthodox masculinity does not cause violence however, but that violence is accessed as a resource for the performance of masculinity. Culturally sanctioned violence, engaged in as contact sports like American football, is one of the most effective means of amassing masculine capital and therefore increasing social power (Heinrich, 2013; Way et al., 2014). Some boys engage in excessive risk taking (Phillips, 2007). They seek out dangerous activities or violent pranks to prove masculinity. Injuries, from activities like skateboarding, are sometimes sought after as they are considered badges of honor that increase masculine capital (Phillips, 2007).

Effects of orthodox masculine gender socialization. Empirical research reveals that rigid gender socialization can have a negative impact on the psychological wellbeing and interpersonal relationships of boys and men, even before the first decade (Watts & Borders, 2005). Ridicule, humiliation, shame, and isolation are common experiences for boys who are part of orthodox masculine school-based cultures (Govender, 2011; Kimmel & Mahler, 2003; Phoenix, Frosh, & Pattman, 2003). Boys say that adherence to orthodox masculinity means they must show no vulnerability (Oransky & Marecek, 2009; Reichert et al., 2012; Way et al., 2014). Emotions must be kept private. Conversations

among boys about fears or worries are few, as are requests or offers of emotional support (Oransky & Marecek, 2009). Consequently, boys often have difficulty identifying their emotions and much is released as anger, often the only emotion they can name and feel free to share (Reichert et al., 2012).

Boys experience the decay of important male friendships as they reach late adolescence (Way, 2012, 2013). It is seen as a time when they are supposed to "man-up," which includes being more stoic and independent (Chu, 2005; Way 2012, 2013). Other consequences of intra-gender policing include increased loneliness and feelings of depression (Way, 2013); increased willingness to engage in acts of violence (Kimmel & Mahler, 2003; Klein, 2006; Phillips, 2005, 2007); increased risk taking (Phillips, 2007); and increased levels of victimization. For some boys the consequences are extreme. Both suicides and mass school shootings have been linked, by researchers, to intra-gender policing (Kimmel & Mahler, 2003; Klein, 2006).

Boys' resistance to orthodox masculinity. Gender socialization is not a one-way process in which children and adolescents are passive receptors of cultural beliefs, however (Way et al., 2014). Gender rules communicated by significant others, media, and other cultural institutions are not always followed blindly (Way et al., 2014). Many boys can and do resist the performance of orthodox masculinity through counter-orthodox discourse and practice.

Inclusive masculinity cultures. Researchers have recently found isolated incidents of entire masculine school-based peer cultures that are markedly different from what we have come to think of as the norm (Anderson, 2009; McCormack, 2011a, 2011b; McCormack & Anderson, 2010). Anderson (2012b) has labeled this brand of masculinity

inclusive masculinities. He attributes its development to a decline in the level of cultural homohysteria or degree to which, particularly men and boys, worry about being homosexualized. The heterosexual boys in these schools do not fear femininity, are not homophobic, and value platonic male intimacy (Anderson, 2009; McCormack, 2011b, 2014; McCormack & Anderson, 2010). They have developed cultures where homophobia is considered immature and absent homophobic discourse. They do not belittle each other or engage in bullying behaviors designed to enforce strict male norms. They are affectionate, empathetic, and develop deep and supportive male friendships. They often engage in tactility once viewed as taboo for males, like hand holding and kissing.

Social hierarchies are still important to the dynamics of these new inclusive masculinity cultures. However, in these cultures, masculine capital is defined very differently. Boys at the top, those with high levels of masculine capital, display four characteristics that are esteemed by their peers. They have charisma (McCormack, 2011b). They are the quick witted, funny boys who can garner the attention of their peers. This charisma likely supports the second characteristic, social fluidity (McCormack, 2011b). Popular boys move smoothly from one social group to another. Thirdly, they are caring and available to provide emotional support to their friends (McCormack, 2011b). Lastly, they are considered authentic in their personal presentation (McCormack, 2011b). In other words, they are valued for being genuinely themselves. Perhaps most importantly, in inclusive masculinity peer cultures, boys who are not popular are not targeted, bullied, or belittled. In fact, even they are valued for their authenticity. The quiet, studious, or artsy boys are simply accepted for who they are.

The generative process of inclusive masculinity school-based peer cultures is not yet understood (McCormack, 2011a). Some boys from these cultures say that they could not behave similarly at home for fear of reprimand, meaning intra-gender policing (Anderson et al., 2012). This suggests, given the right circumstances, that boys who experience orthodox masculine cultures at home, can, and do resist strict social norms. In fact, they are able to form dramatically different cultural norms, given the right circumstances. What those circumstances are remain unknown.

Counter-orthodox discourse in orthodox masculinity cultures. Researchers have found many boys who engage in orthodox masculine performance are capable of counter-orthodox discourse in private interview settings (Blackbeard & Lindegger, 2007; Chu, 2014; Kimmel & Mahler, 2003; Oransky & Marecek, 2009; Phoenix, 2003; Reichert et al., 2012; Smith, 2007; Stoudt, 2006; Way et al., 2014). Boys seem to agree that their school-based peer cultures can be harsh. Boys admit that jokes and teasing are often hurtful and concede that they sometimes censor what they say specifically to avoid joking and teasing (Stoudt, 2006). Some boys confide that they do not like when other boys are "uncommunicative, thick-skinned, aggressive, and uncaring" (Phoenix et al., 2003, p. 185). Boys reason that sharing emotions is healthy but are afraid of the culture of orthodox masculinity, which swiftly marks them as weak and girly if they exhibit the need for emotional sharing (Oransky & Marecek, 2009; Reichert et al., 2012). Other boys seem disturbed by the homophobic discourse that so often surrounds them (Blackbeard & Lindegger, 2007; Bortolin, 2010) and wonder what is the big deal about being gay (Kehler, 2007). Some boys reason that orthodox masculine performance runs

counter to behaviors that drive academic and career success (Blackbeard & Lindegger, 2007).

Counter-orthodox performance in orthodox masculinity cultures. Some boys have been successful in finding opportunities and spaces within orthodox masculine school-based peer cultures in which to perform counter-orthodox masculinity (Kehler, 2007; Reichert et al., 2012). They seem to be successful at producing inclusive masculinities within orthodox masculine school-based cultures without serious reprisal (Kehler, 2007). It is as if they insist on being genuinely themselves without regard to their vulnerability as possible targets of intra-gender policing. Way et al. (2014) suggest that boys high in masculine capital work from a place of higher social power and therefore may have more success resisting orthodox masculine norms. These boys share characteristics with the most esteemed boys within inclusive masculinity school-based peer cultures (Kehler, 2007). They value being genuinely themselves, easily cross social groups, are caring and charismatic (Kehler, 2007; Reichert et al., 2012). Some of them seem to have an ability to read cues from their male peers and flex their masculine performance accordingly (Kehler & Martino, 2007). They gauge when they can be more open, emotional, and caring, and when they should maintain a more orthodox persona. Some boys engage in peer-negotiations in attempts to distance themselves from orthodox behaviors (Blackbeard & Lindegger, 2007). In many cases, these boys are not marked for intra-gender policing, and in some cases are held in high esteem by their orthodox male peers (Kehler, 2007; Kehler & Martino, 2007).

The documentation of entire inclusive masculinity school-based peer cultures as well as individual boys who resist orthodox masculinity yet suffer little to no intra-gender

policing, suggests adolescent masculinity is undergoing a significant shift (Anderson, 2013). Inclusive masculinity theory suggests the existence of both inclusive and orthodox masculinities within the same cultural setting. There exists a gap in the literature documenting the nature of this co-existence in a high school setting. Further, it is not understood to what extent boys' intra-gender policing behaviors are changed by this coexistence.

Theoretical Rationale

What is masculinity? Connell offers that masculinities, plural, "concern the position of men in a gender order" (http://www.raewynconnell.net/p/masculinities_20.html). Whitehead and Barrett (2001) offer that masculinity is a socio-cognitive identity construct based on the behaviors, languages, and practices commonly associated with males. It is also culturally defined as not female (Connell, 2005). Masculinity describes both a social performance as well as a cognitive destination as self (Whitehead & Barrett, 2001). It is plural, historic, and changing as both a collective class and individual identity (Whitehead & Barrett, 2001). Masculinity is something one does, not something one is or possesses. Consequently, men perform a wide range of masculinities largely influenced by other identity characteristics: age, race, ethnicity, nationality, economic class, religion, and disability (Connell, 2005; Whitehead & Barrett, 2001). Masculinity is also "done" as a matter of personal choice (Whitehead & Barrett, 2001).

Hegemonic masculinity. Connell (2005) contributed the germinal work in the field of masculinity studies. While acknowledging there are many masculinities, *hegemonic masculinity theory* posits that for patriarchal power to be established, one

dominant male archetype must rise above others (Connell, 1993). In contemporary Western culture, the ideal man is young, male-bodied meeting current standards of male attractiveness, heterosexual with children, White, of upper-middle class background, college educated, white-collar employed, with a proven record in sports (Connell, 2005). Connell's theory recognizes that most men are not this man, but suggests that all men are measured and indeed measure themselves against this hegemonic ideal (Anderson, 2009; Connell, 2005). Indeed, it is that most men cannot live up to this ideal (some men choose not to) that creates the stress which situates homophobia at the center of masculine identity production (Connell, 2005).

Of central importance to hegemonic masculinity theory is that maintenance of patriarchal power pivots on men's heterosexual orientation (Connell, 2005). It is not enough to define the dominant ideal (men) in simple opposition to the subordinate (women). The dominant ideal cannot in any way resemble the subordinate. It is both not being a woman and the act of not being feminine that support patriarchal power (Connell, 2005; Kimmel, 2004). Because homosexual men are stereotyped to be effeminate and effeminate men assumed to be homosexual, the dominant ideal man must always be heterosexual (Anderson, 2009; Kimmel, 2004). Thus "real men" are courageous, aggressive, able to take/dish out violence, withstand pain, and are above all heterosexual (Kimmel, 2004; Whitehead, 2005). Homosexual men become the lowest in the male hierarchy serving as the "repository of whatever is symbolically expelled from hegemonic masculinity" (Connell, 2005, p. 40).

Connell's theory has been roundly critiqued in the literature (Connell, 2005; Demetriou, 2001; Donaldson, 1993; Moller, 2007). Most importantly, researchers have

found much more complexity among what men say and do than seems to be conceptualized in the theory (Donaldson, 1993; Moller, 2007). Many researchers have also conflated Connell's theory that there exists hegemony in masculinity with the existence of a *hegemonic archetype* typically described as above (Anderson, 2009). In fact, Connell was astute at describing the contemporary archetype she believed was hegemonic at the time, but she also suggested that the hegemonic archetype will change as cultural standards change (Connell, 2005). In other words, under different cultural pressures and norms, the type of masculinity that achieves hegemony could be very different from the strong stoic masculinity of the time. Therefore, any reference to hegemonic masculinity as a static archetype as opposed to a social process misinterprets the theory (Anderson, 2009). As not to follow suit, this study follows Anderson (2009) in the use of the term *orthodox masculinity* to describe the archetype of traditional, dominating, patriarchal masculinity.

Inclusive masculinity. Anderson (2009) introduced *inclusive masculinity theory* to describe the shift he found in adolescent and late adolescent masculinity as boys began to exhibit masculinities that were more inclusive and less orthodox. No longer were boys and young men bound by homophobia and anti-femininity in their performance of masculinity. Free from these elements, his subjects seemed able to construct masculinities that were vastly different from those described in the masculinity literature (Anderson, 2009). They were not homophobic, valued close male friendships, and engaged in a level of socio-emotional intimacy and tactility more characteristic of adolescent girls (Anderson, 2005, 2008a, 2008b, 2009).

Inclusive masculinity theory is based on the notion of homohysteria, defined as the fear of being homosexualized (Anderson, 2009). Homohysteria occurs when (a) there is mass awareness that homosexuality exists as a static sexual orientation, (b) the cultural zeitgeist is one of disapproval of male homosexuality and the femininity associated with it, and (c) a culture of compulsive heterosexuality is used to avoid homosexual suspicion (Anderson, 2009). In other words, Anderson posits that homohysteria is the lynchpin for the underlying homophobia, anti-femininity, and heterosexism characteristic of traditional orthodox masculinity (Anderson, 2009). Anderson (2009) carves modern Anglo-Saxon societies into three timeframes: (a) periods of high homohysteria, (b) diminishing homohysteria, and (c) diminished homohysteria (see Figure 1.1). During periods of high homohysteria, Anderson posits homophobic discourse is traditionally the most important policing agent of masculinity (Anderson, 2009). Boys and men are compelled to act aggressively, use sports and muscularity to maintain masculinity, maintain homophobic and sexist attitudes, and keep emotional and physical distance from other men (Anderson, 2009). During periods of diminishing homohysteria, two dominant but not dominating masculinities will exist: conservative or orthodox masculinity and inclusive masculinities (Anderson, 2009). Orthodox masculinity will continue as during high homohysteria while boys and men who practice inclusive masculinities will demonstrate emotional and physical homosocial proximity, value heterofemininity, and include gay men as properly masculine (Anderson, 2009). While the practice of both orthodox and inclusive masculinities may still include homophobic discourse, inclusive masculinity males will not use such with the intent to degrade homosexuality (Anderson, 2009). Lastly, during periods of diminished homohysteria, homophobic discourse is

almost entirely lost or no longer maintains the power to stigmatize (Anderson, 2009). The esteemed attributes of men will no longer rely on domination and control. Masculinities that were once outcast will find social inclusion and masculinity will no longer serve as a primary method of stratifying men. During this time, multiple masculinities will proliferate with much less hierarchy, producing gendered behaviors of boys and men that will be less differentiated from that of girls and women (Anderson, 2009).

3 PERIODS OF ANGLO-AMERICAN SOCIETIES

HIGH HOMOHYSTERIA

During moments of high homohysteria, homophobic discourse is traditionally the most important policing agent of masculinity. Boys & men are compelled to:

- act aggressively
- use sports and muscularity to maintain masculinity
- maintain homophobic & sexist attitudes
- keep emotional [and physical] distance from other men

DEMINISHING HOMOHYSTERIA

During times of diminishing homohysteria, two dominant but not dominating or hegemonic masculinities will exist: conservative or Orthodox Masculinity and Inclusive Masculinity. Orthodox Masculinity will continue as during high homohysteria boys & men who practice Inclusive Masculinity will:

- demonstrate emotional and physical homosocial proximity
- value heterofemininity
- gay men will be included
- While both Orthodox and Inclusive masculinity may still include homophobic discourse, IM males do not use with the intent to degrade homosexuality.

DEMINISHED HOMOHYSTERIA

During times of diminished homohysteria, homophobic discourse is almost entirely lost or its meaning no longer maintains homosexualizing utility.

- esteemed attributes of men will no longer rely on domination & control
- masculinities that were once outcast will find social inclusion
- masculinity will no longer serve as a primary method of stratifying men
- multiple masculinities will proliferate with much less hierarchy & hegemony
- gendered behaviors of boys & men will be less differentiated from girls & women

Figure 1.1. Stages of Inclusive Masculinity Theory. Adapted from *Inclusive Masculinity: The changing nature of masculinities*, by E. Anderson, 2012, New York, NY: Routledge.

Anderson (2009) believes that we are living in a time of diminishing homohysteria as evidenced by dramatic shifts in cultural attitudes about lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people in a short period. The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press (2013) reported that in 2013, only 13% of the American public did not know an LGBT person. Some 55% of Americans said they would not be upset if their child came out to them (Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 2013). LGBT people have gained many civil rights, including the right to marry in all 50 states, with the June 26, 2015 U.S. Supreme Court ruling on marriage equality (http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/27/us/supreme-court-same-sex-marriage.html?_r=0). The right to serve openly in the U.S. military has also been gained. (http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2010/0610_dadt/). Anderson (2009) posits that this broad cultural shift is what has allowed some boys to develop entire school-based peer cultures with norms opposite those of orthodox masculinity.

In recent years, McCormack and Anderson (2014) have articulated six traits that are characteristic of male behaviors and relationships in settings of inclusivity. They are (a) the social inclusion of gay male peers; (b) the embrace of once-feminized artifacts—having manicures and wearing pink, for example; (c) increased emotional intimacy; (d) increase physical intimacy; (e) the erosion of the one-time rule of homosexuality in which just one same-gender sexual encounter branded a boy as gay for life, and (f) eschewing of violence.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative study was to document boys' practice of intra-gender policing in a high school setting where staff suggested the presence of inclusivity.

Inclusive masculinity theory (Anderson, 2009) served as the theoretical framework for the study. Intra-gender policing is a strategy used by boys who perform orthodox masculinity to force or reinforce strict male gender norms in their peers. Thus the presence of intra-gender policing and inclusivity in the same setting is suggestive of the second stage of inclusive masculinity theory. Ultimately, this study sought to document this stage in which two dominant but not dominating masculinities—orthodox masculinity and inclusive masculinity—coexist.

Research Questions

The specific research questions that were addressed are:

1. What is the evidence of inclusivity in this setting?
2. What is the practice of intra-gender policing in a high school where staff have suggested inclusivity?
    a. How do boys who perform these different masculinities police others?
    b. How do they experience being policed?
    c. What does gender policing mean to them?

Potential Significance of the Study

According to the U.S. Health and Human Services' website, StopBullying.Gov, all U.S. states have adopted laws and/or policies on bullying in schools (http://www.stopbullying.gov/laws/index.html). In July 2012, the Dignity for All Students Act took effect in New York State. The law "seeks to provide the State's public elementary and secondary school students with a safe and supportive environment free from discrimination, intimidation, taunting, harassment, and bullying on school property, a school bus and/or at a school function" (http://www.p12.nysed.gov/dignityact/). The

New York State Legislature found this law necessary to protect all students, not simply those already codified as members of a protected class (Dignity Act Task Force, 2013). In the first 3 years of reporting, schools in New York State (outside of New York City) reported an average of 20,000 "material incidents of harassment, bullying, and discrimination on school grounds or a school function" (http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/school_safety/school_safety_data_reporting.html) each year. Unfortunately the data is not reported by gender. Given boy's reasons for intra-gender policing can include weight, height, behavior, and interests, in addition to being gay, it is impossible to tell what percentage of these incidents could be considered intra-gender policing. Nonetheless, boys in New York State now have legal recourse when faced with intra-gender policing at school.

The Dignity Act goes further to amend a section the State Education Law to include:

> instruction in civility, citizenship, and character education by expanding the concepts of tolerance, respect for others and dignity to include: an awareness and sensitivity in the relations of people, including but not limited to, different races, weights, national origins, ethnic groups, religions, religious practices, mental or physical abilities, sexual orientations, gender identity, and sexes (Dignity Act Task Force, 2013).

The results of the present study have important implications for high schools and staff. It is incumbent upon school staff to understand the nature of gender socialization among boys. School staff must be aware that intra-gender policing is acted out as teasing, bullying, punking (public bullying), and even physical violence, if they are to

develop effective interventions and support boys in moving toward performance of more inclusive masculinities. Understanding the cultural shift suggested by Anderson (2009) is a first step to developing mechanisms that can support or even enhance what boys seem to be doing on their own.

The results of this study also can illuminate the second stage of Anderson's (2009) inclusive masculinity theory, which suggests that there will be a time when both inclusive masculinities and orthodox masculinities will co-exist, both being dominant forms of masculinity, while neither is singularly dominating. Research has clearly documented the existence of cultures made up exclusively of boys who perform inclusive masculinities. Research has also documented boys who struggle to perform inclusive masculinities within orthodox masculine school-based cultures. The reverse is also true —research exists that documents boys who perform orthodox masculinity, struggling to do so within a culture that is made up of mostly boys who perform inclusive masculinities (McCormack, 2011a). This study documents both inclusive masculinities and orthodox masculinity in a single high school setting.

Definitions of Terms

Intra-gender policing – For the purposes of this study, intra-gender policing is any behavior engaged in by boys meant to force or reinforce strict orthodox masculine gender expressions in other boys. These behaviors include, joking, teasing, punking (public bullying), bullying, and physical violence.

Inclusive masculinities –A broad archetype of men and boys who comfortably engage in gender practices that are typically coded feminine in Western cultures. These gender practices include behaviors and attitudes that have been traditionally marginalized

by orthodox masculinity: effeminacy; emotional intimacy and physical closeness among men; and homosexual inclusivity. Note: "Inclusive masculinities" is used to denote a broad archetype, while inclusive masculinity refers to an espoused theory (Anderson, 2009).

Orthodox masculinity – An archetype of men and boys who fit the normative gender practices that are coded as masculine in Western cultures. These gender practices include behaviors and attitudes that meet stereotypic gender role norms for men and are distinguished by anti-femininity, heterosexism, and homophobia (Anderson, 2009).

Chapter Summary

There is a shift occurring in the way some adolescent boys perform masculinity. The existence of inclusive masculinity school-based peer cultures suggests that homophobic discourse and intra-gender policing do not have to be part of the school experience of teen boys. This chapter provided a description of gender socialization and the orthodox and counter-orthodox practices of adolescent boys. Inclusive masculinity theory is introduced as a theoretical framework from which to examine changes in adolescent masculinity. Terms germane to the study are defined and proposed research questions articulated. Chapter 2 presents a more comprehensive review of the recent literature. Chapter 3 provides a detailed plan of the research methods, context, participants, data collection methods, and the data analysis. Chapter 4 presents the research findings, and Chapter 5 discusses the implications of those findings.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction and Purpose

This literature review presents the state of the research, from 2004-2014, on adolescent boys, masculine performance, and its reliance on anti-femininity and homophobia. Boys' masculine performance, as presented here, can be broken into three types. The majority of the studies examine boys who perform orthodox masculinity—Western traditionally esteemed, rigid, sexist, and stereotypically macho masculinity. There are four studies that introduce inclusive masculinity—one not built on homophobia. Lastly, five of the studies reviewed examine boys who manage to resist orthodox masculinity by performing masculinity in ways that are counter-normative to the school-based peer environments. These boys eschew homophobia, do not conform to macho stereotypes, and in some cases identify as gay and yet are popular among their male peer group.

Methods

The following terms were used to find empirical studies for this review: masculine, masculinity, masculinities, adolescent boys, and homophobia. Articles that included girls in the research population or "girls" and "female" in the abstract were excluded, as were articles related to health or HIV/AIDS. The databases APA Psych Abstracts, Sage Journals Online, Science Direct, Sociological Abstracts, Taylor & Francis, and the Web of Science were used for this search. There were 44 articles identified as a result of using the above criteria. The list was further narrowed to those

with the terms “homophobic” or “homophobia” in the abstract. This resulted in a total of 24 articles. Each article was back checked using the reference section for any additional studies. Ultimately, those articles that focused on boys and school achievement were discarded as the intent here is to focus on the effects of masculinity on identity and peer relations. As a result, 20 articles were reviewed for this study.

Literature Review

Traditional masculinity is hard work. The majority of the articles reviewed for this study examined the effects of identification with traditional stereotypic masculinity on adolescent boys. Borrowing from Anderson, the term orthodox masculinity is used to refer to the traditional and esteemed male archetype: rational, stoic, independent, competitive, non-emotional, aggressive, eschews the feminine, heterosexist, and homophobic (Anderson, 2009). This is done for ease of use and to avoid confusion and contention over the term hegemonic masculinity. The extant literature has already established that adolescent boys’ construction of masculinity relies heavily on anti-femininity and homophobia (Kimmel & Mahler, 2003; Nayak & Kehily, 1996; Phoenix, 2003; Plummer, 2001). Boys seem trapped by a culture of bullying, humiliation, and shame where they face ridicule, isolation, and violence. These studies seek to move beyond description of adolescent masculinity to exploration of its construction.

Korobov (2004) took on an innovative study to examine how boys construct both normative heterosexuality and anti-homophobia through language. Korobov used a discursive psychological approach to test his assertion that ideology and attitude are not fixed, able to be captured on a survey, but constructed in the moment through language and dialogue which is dependent on context. This qualitative study used discursive

analysis to examine a 7-minute block of dialogue from a larger longitudinal study of 54 adolescent boys in a large New England city. All of the boys were enrolled in public schools. The 7-minute block was unique in its dialogue around homosexuality during a semi-structured interview with a group of six boys, ages 14–15. Discursive analysis not only focuses on what is said but on "positioning" or "the ways that speakers use language to frame or situate themselves and others in talk" (Korobov, 2004, p. 180). During this discussion, one young man seemed to go to great lengths to assert his non-prejudice toward gays and lesbians, while he simultaneously sought to land at the top of the normative masculine pecking order, which relies on distance from femininity. This was a delicate performance, whose dips and turns Korobov analyzed as highly responsive to the reactions of the other boys present. Korobov's analysis suggests there exists a high level of complexity in normative masculine performance as the boys were reading their peers, acting and reacting in the moment to get the performance just right. He asserts that the boys did not hold a static idea of homophobia, but rather crafted their notions in the act of discourse and in reaction to each other.

Performance for the male gaze also emerged as a theme in a qualitative study of 32 boys from one large city high school in the United States (Phillips, 2007). For this study, Phillips employed individual interviews and three discussion groups—one of high school boys and two of middle school boys—that met weekly for 5 weeks. The boys, ages 12–18, were ethnically and economically diverse. Additionally, 23 episodes of TV, 382 TV commercials aired during those TV episodes, 251 news items from the front pages of major city newspapers, electronic games, and radio and TV news items were analyzed for themes that emerged from the interviews and group discussions. Media data

was also used for discussion topics in some of the group settings. Phillips was particularly interested in a discursive analysis of "popularity and the necessity of the outcast" (Phillips, 2007, p. 220) as the boys performed normative and marginalized versions of masculinity. Her findings are in keeping with previous research that shows boys rely on orthodox masculinity to produce a peer hierarchy. Those boys who best met the traditional esteemed ideal were at the top. Athletics and toughness also served to separate the popular boys from those who were marginalized. Beating up another guy was one way to become popular among the male peer group. Phillips's findings around what she terms *self-violence* seem unique in the literature. One informant described a group of boys in the school who had taken to videotaping themselves performing popular wrestling stunts and selling the tapes around school. One boy jumped off of a deck to land horizontally onto a bench on which thumbtacks had been placed facing up. This boy sustained injury that required medical care. When asked about this behavior, the informant described the concept of being "hardcore" or proving that you are tougher than the next guy. Another boy suggested that the whole point of his new skateboarding practice was to hurt himself, "You know, and no pain, no gain" (Phillips, 2007, p. 226). Phillips' findings seem to emphasize the role of public performance, especially for male peers, in the achievement of traditional masculinity at almost any cost.

Entering from a different vantage point, Klein (2006) sought to understand the cost to boys who fail at masculine performance. In this qualitative study, a constant analysis method was used to review hundreds of press reports of 10 school shootings that occurred in the US from 1996–2001. She documented a disturbing existence on the part of the shooters, who were all male. She argued that the shooters, having been targets of

homophobic intra-gender policing and harassment, were acting out of the shame and humiliation they could no longer endure. She found reports that the shooters were often picked on. They were called gay, faggot, pushed around, and beaten up. They were labeled in media reports as "skinny," "fat," "small," and "smart," the very characteristics that have been found to signal "failed masculinity" (Kimmel & Mahler, 2003; Klein, 2006). Many news reports included statements from fellow students or community members that normalized bullying behavior, "They should have been able to take it," said one schoolmate of the Columbine shooters (Klein, 2006, p. 48). The shooters' statements were straightforward in their proclamation that they did what they did in response to the bullying. One shooter said, "I'm not insane I'm angry!" (Klein, 2006, p. 54). Reclamation of failed masculinity was sighted as a motive for the school shootings as exemplified in this statement from another shooter, "I was feeling proud and more respected" (Klein, 2006, p. 47). Here too, the public performance of masculinity seems paramount and supports Phillips's (2005) findings on the role violence plays in this performance.

Stoudt (2006) also examined masculinity and violence in the school setting. He deliberately chose a population of upper-class, White, college-bound adolescent boys as he suggested much of the research on school violence has focused on inner city boys of color. Using a mixed-methods study, Stoudt administered a unique survey to 148 boys in a small elite all-male private school in the Northeastern US. The questions were designed to illicit students' social ideology about their school experience. He also conducted 14 semi-structured interviews and four focus groups designed to capture specific experiences. While focused on the boys' experience of orthodox masculinity and

violence, Stoudt was especially interested in the role of the institution in normalizing those experiences. He found the all-male setting contributed to the construction of orthodox ideals. The boys reported the male teachers were able to act more freely in the absence of female students, suggesting masculine behavior on the part of the faculty that would not be acceptable in mixed company. The staff clearly understood their role in preparing this next generation of leaders, suggesting a certain traditional masculine archetype. This attitude was also held by the boys who felt very clearly that they were being prepared for man's work in a man's world. Many, but not all boys, relished the absence of girls. One young man who missed the role girls played in his life lamented that in this school girls are thought of as objects for recreation. The message was boys come to school to work, connecting with girls was for their off time. This public/private concept has come up in other studies (Phillips, 2005). Traditional masculinity is meant for public consumption, while anything to do with emotion, emotional needs or intimacy —read feminine—was to be experienced in private space.

In this setting, violence and proving oneself tough enough (Klein, 2006; Phillips, 2005) were important as well. One young man spoke of the hazing rituals that existed in a number of social and sports contexts in the school. He felt proud of his ability to withstand the hazing he went through when he joined a sports team. He spoke of how it served to bond the team together like a family. He suggested that there should be more hazing as he felt it could serve to better bond the entire student body together. Of their experiences of bullying and violence, 54% of boys agreed that the environment could be cruel to those who stood out as different, 73% agreed that joking could be hurtful, and 66% admitted self-censoring to avoid joking and teasing. Only 22% of those surveyed

felt school was a “caring” place. As reported in Klein (2006), the terms “gay” and “homo” were used negatively by the boys to mean stupid or loser, not to refer to sexual orientation.

In her qualitative study involving 32 adolescent boys and the media they consume, Phillips (2005) learned of the practice of “punking.” She further interrogated this data, using discursive analysis, to explore punking as a useful practice in establishing and reproducing orthodox masculinity. From the boys’ descriptions of this practice, Phillips crafts the following definition: “a practice of verbal and physical violence, humiliation, and shaming usually done in public by males to other males” (Phillips, 2007, p. 158). The behaviors and consequences of punking are strikingly similar to bullying behaviors. Boys that fell outside of the respected norm of masculine performance were targets of both bullying and punking. Here too, Phillips finds evidence of the public/private nature of masculine performance when one boy argues there is no point to punking someone if there is no audience. It seems the audience is important to the performance of orthodox masculinity. Unlike some victims of bullying and punking behaviors who take out their frustration through mass school shootings (Klein, 2006), Phillips found victims of punking in her study to be sadly resigned to their lot. One young man, who confided he had been punked regularly since middle school, had this to say about his experience, “Oh, well. It’s the life of a boy teenager when you’re young” (Phillips, 2007, p. 165). The resignation in this statement is evidence of just how normalized this behavior had become in this school setting.

Like Stoudt (2006), Smith (2007) extends the examination of masculinity in schools by interrogating the role of what he calls “cultural accomplices” in the production

of masculinity. He employed qualitative methods that included being "embedded" with a group of six boys as their "study buddy." His setting was a public school in a port town in England where this group of high school boys produced particularly destructive levels of orthodox masculinity. They seemed to take their cues from the gritty, manual labor that characterized men's lives in the small working class town. They had almost completely disengaged from their academics and were disruptive to the point that teachers were fed up with their behavior. Smith described one scene in which the boys arrived to class together and took the six seats across the front row. They proceeded to talk, shuffle chairs, and rock back and forth in a disruptive manner as if to dare the teacher to try and teach the rest of the class seated in the rows behind them. Smith described the coping mechanisms employed by teachers and staff as complicit in the production of this masculine behavior and suggested that the teachers may indeed have fed the behavior in ways that made it worse. What Smith found through interviews and full day observation was that teachers, in an attempt to make any inroads with these boys, had positioned themselves as "one of the boys" (Smith, 2007, p. 189). One teacher had taken to impersonations of a flamboyant gay man, swooshing about to get the boys attention and cooperation. A female teacher was talked about by the boys as one of their favorites because she "packs a real punch" (Smith, 2007, p. 191), literally. They told Smith about a time when she shoved a boy so hard he was knocked back into a wall. Smith's conclusion is that the teachers and indeed the authoritative system of the school were complicit in the boys' performance. He suggests that boys do not need more male role models in school, unless they are counter-normative role models that will help boys interrogate masculinity and orthodox performance.

Using a qualitative design, Oransky and Marecek (2009) conducted private semi-structured interviews with 23 boys ages 14–16. These boys were students at a private school in the Northeastern US and were of upper-middle and upper class backgrounds. The boys were paid $10 each for participation in the study. Oransky and Marecek sought to examine masculinity, boys' emotional lives, and male friendships. Seven themes emerged from the study: (a) act invulnerable, (b) keep emotions private, (c) regulate other's show of emotion through teasing and ridicule, (d) short circuit potential displays of emotion to help peers save face, (e) appreciate emotional regulation by peers, f) view teasing and ridicule as helping to build other's masculinity, and (g) awareness of the toll masculine performance takes on boys.

Deviation from orthodox performance held great consequence in this school. One boy reported that once marked, even from just one incident, a boy may deal with the consequences for the rest of the school year. One suggested that if a friend needed to talk something through, he should find a girlfriend. Another suggested he would offer to take their mind off it by going for pizza or playing a game of basketball. Here again, the public/private expectations for boys lives emerge. Noteworthy is the boys' own awareness of their predicament. Some were able to articulate the hazards of keeping everything bottled in. They suggested that it is "therapeutic" to talk through your problems with someone else. Yet they did not do this. In fact, the boys viewed the efforts of their peers to help them remain stoic as helpful, as articulated by this young man's statement, "They didn't let me fall apart" (Oransky & Marecek, 2009, p. 231). Also noteworthy is the boys' assessment of teasing and ridicule as valuable. The boys felt that the teasing and pushing around, especially for those boys whose masculinity was

faulty, gave them opportunities to practice and raise their masculine capital. As one boy put it, “We push him because we care” (Oransky & Marecek, 2009, p. 233).

A qualitative study by Bortolin (2010) used individual interviews of 15 boys ages 16–18, from 11 different schools in the same Canadian province. Some of the boys had already graduated. The aim of the study was to examine how heterosexual boys contribute to the well documented “chilly climate” for LGBTQ students in secondary schools. Bortolin (2010) found heterosexual males did not want to associate with their gay peers for fear of being labeled gay themselves. The more popular boys—jocks and preps—set the tone for compulsory heterosexuality among their peers. Hanging out with girls or having too many girls as friends (and not engaging in sexual activity them) left boys suspect. Here too, “That’s so gay” was used ubiquitously throughout the school to mean something stupid. Boys were called gay to signify failed masculinity more so than homosexuality. The degradation of homosexuality seemed not to do with LGBTQ students themselves, but with the anti-femininity and homophobia inherent in orthodox masculinity. The orthodox performance of masculinity seemed to establish the chilly climate for LGBTQ students. Interestingly, there were a few boys who offered dissenting opinions toward homophobia and homosexuality, as exemplified by comments like “it sounds terrible to say” (Bortolin, 2010, p. 207), “I know one gay girl . . . she doesn’t bother me as much as guys, I guess it’s a gender thing” (Bortolin, 2010, p. 211), “I’ve never been in a class were we actually discussed like, being gay, which is weird but . . . ” (Bortolin, 2010, p. 213), or “like it was so politically incorrect [sic], he could have probably lost his job for that” (Bortolin, 2010, p. 214). These statements suggest some boys’ openness to more serious consideration of homosexuality as a legitimate identity.

Using field notes from a 2-year qualitative study, Barnes (2012) explored the role of humor in the maintenance of orthodox performance. The subjects were 12 boys ages 15–16 from a disadvantaged inner city school in Ireland. Barnes's specific intent was to examine the boys' reaction to the implementation of the Exploring Masculinities Programme, enacted in Irish schools to engage boys in discussions of alternate masculinities. The curriculum and classroom conversations were clearly seen by these boys to be threats to their traditional masculine views. Barnes (2012) found boys used humor, in four distinct ways, as they sought to re-calibrate and shore up orthodox masculinity. The boys used humor to regulate the performance of masculinity in the peer group and to defuse tension. Two boys regularly and successfully used humor to change behavior in the other boys. Their efforts to provoke laughter seemed to function as guideposts for the other boys, often employed when the conversation began to venture into uncomfortable territory. It signaled the group to re-establish orthodox masculine performance in the space. Oddly, while this joking was seemingly disruptive to the classroom, at times it was supportive of the teacher who was often at a loss for how to meaningfully engage the boys in conversations they were clearly resisting. Breaking the tension opened space for the teacher to re-enter and try again. The boys also used humor to establish a hierarchy within the group and to isolate those with failed masculine performance. Boys deemed failures were often the butt of these jokes, serving to further distance them from their peers. As in Korobov (2004), Barnes described this behavior as "continuous and on-going" (Korobov, 2004, p. 244), highlighting the tremendous amount of work that goes into sustained masculine performance.

Heinrich (2013) conducted a qualitative study of four boys who attended a quintessential all-American school in a small midwestern town. This school of 270 students served as a center of community life, with Friday night football and basketball games, homecoming parades, and graduation ceremonies. Heinrich engaged her subjects for one calendar year, which spanned two academic years. She observed the boys as juniors and seniors in their English classes and also conducted a number of individual and pair interviews. She chose English class with the hope of observing their public performance of masculinity in a setting where the discursive nature of reading and dialoging about texts might also allow for ample self-disclosure. The individual interviews offered the opportunity to observe masculinity as it was constructed in a private setting. Her goal was to illuminate the "influence of gendered ideologies" in these boys' lives (Heinrich, 2013, p. 10). Most interestingly, Heinrich found the boys able to reflect on aspects of orthodox masculinity as it affected them in the past but not in the present. For example, the boys talked quite often about how scared they were freshmen year and how they took on exacting constructions of masculinity in order not to end up the target of shame and ridicule. Heinrich lamented that they seemed incapable of identifying anything comparable in their current lives. They spoke of being over it and not caring anymore, yet their public performance in class seemed to suggest otherwise. Heinrich found two unspoken rules that every male student seemed to understand: eschew the feminine and embrace athletics. These were the top behaviors that mediated masculinity and helped boys avoid being made fun of or worse, being called gay. Heinrich offers that orthodox masculinity in itself is discursive, changing both within and

across contexts and settings. Yet at the same time seemed fixed and inherent in that it was always present as the esteemed ideal that all boys looked to for guidance.

These articles echo much of what was already known about how boys perform masculinity in school settings. The performance of orthodox masculinity is a public performance meant for the gaze of other boys. It seems to have two functions: to secure and even elevate the masculine status of the performer, while simultaneously pointing out, in contrast, the failed masculinity of others. It continues to center around anti-femininity and homophobia. However, these studies highlight that masculinity is not a fixed idea for these boys, but is constructed daily in the moment based on the feedback and performance of others, including teachers and staff. It points to the public/private nature of boys lives. Orthodox masculinity is the code they must live by in public. They work very hard to achieve and maintain this persona or pay the consequences. Privately they feel, worry, and even dream of breaking away from the orthodox performance but seem unable to do so.

Masculinity without homophobia. Five studies in this review stand out as their findings are to the contrary of every study cited above. These studies examined boys in a southern region of England in which inclusive masculinity (Anderson, 2009) peer cultures seem to have formed. They have been deemed *inclusive masculinities,* because they include all kinds of boys without regard to the orthodox masculine hierarchy so prominently exposed in the literature. These boys eschew homophobia, share emotions, and value male-male friendships.

In the first of these studies, McCormack & Anderson (2010) conducted a 5-month qualitative study of a sixth form school in the south of England. Using methods of

observation and semi-structured interviews, they explored the relationship between gender, homophobia, and sexuality among boys 16–18 years old. In a school of 200 students, the boys numbered 100. A unique design was employed where each researcher independently observed the boys throughout the school. One took on the drama space and the other took on the sports spaces. Both made observations of the commons room in the school where students often congregated without much teacher presence. They then pooled their data for analysis. Several months into the study and after mapping the friendship groups among the boys, the researchers specifically chose 22 boys, who represented a wide variety of masculinity archetypes, for individual 60-minute interviews. Unlike other studies in the literature of adolescent boys, McCormack and Anderson (2010) found boys whose masculine identity was not grounded in anti-femininity or homophobia. The boys in this school eschewed homophobia, informing the researchers "It's just not acceptable any more" (McCormack & Anderson, 2010, p. 851). There was no use of the term "gay" as derogatory. In fact, the researchers report they observed no homophobia during their entire time at the school. In individual interviews, the boys confirmed that if a student where to act in a homophobic manner, he would be considered immature and promptly set straight. The one openly gay boy in the school confirmed that he was treated very well, just one of the boys. The boys in this school had also developed deeper, authentic male-male friendships and were very tactile. They hugged, sat on each other's laps, and held hands with no fear of being labeled gay. A surprising additional finding was that there was not one fight at this school the entire school year. McCormack and Anderson suggest that the decrease or disappearance of homophobia allowed the boys to have a wider range of behaviors. Their lack of fear over

being thought girly allowed them to touch, talk, and emotionally connect in ways that seemed genuine and meaningful to the boys.

McCormack (2011a) conducted a 12-month qualitative study of adolescent boys, ages 16–18, in three sixth form schools in England—one public school, one private religious college, and one alternative school for boys with behavioral and other issues. His methods included participant observation and 44 individual interviews. The study sought to examine the influence of homophobia on the boys and their peer culture. Previous qualitative research on adolescent boys has shown high levels of homophobia and anti-femininity and that boys use homophobic discourse to police masculine performance in their peers (Kehler & Martino, 2007; Phillips, 2007). What McCormack (2011a) found in these schools, however, he termed declining "homohysteria"—or fear of being homosexualized. Consequently, homophobia held little influence on the heterosexual boys in these schools. He found boys to have developed "intellectual acceptance of homosexuality" (McCormack, 2011a, p. 334). In fact, in both the public and religious schools, the boys held pro-gay attitudes and supported gay rights. Gay male students at these schools reported no harassment. In one of the schools, an openly gay student who McCormack describes as exhibiting "flamboyant mannerisms" (McCormack, 2011a, p. 346) was elected student body president. Other boys were publicly supportive of his candidacy and readily admitted to voting for him. McCormack found that in the public and religious schools the term "gay" was never used to denigrate others and only occasionally negatively used by less than a handful of students at the alternative school. Instead, McCormack describes "gay discourse" in use in all three settings. Different from homophobic discourse, he suggests gay discourse is not meant to

demean or police other boys. In the one school in which homophobic discourse still existed, the alternative school, McCormack found most boys resisted this discourse. The one similarity McCormack found, in keeping with past research, was the heteronormativity inherent in the boys' discourse. While they believed there was nothing wrong with being gay, heterosexuality was still expected as the norm.

Lastly, McCormack found the level of tactility among the boys to be significant. In the public school, where most of the students had been in school together since kindergarten, the boys were the most tactile. They freely hugged, stroked, and held hands with no fear of teasing or ridicule. The boys at the religious school were less tactile, having come from lower schools across the region and thus knowing each other for less time. Still, occasional hugs or other displays of physical closeness or affection were not met with homophobic policing. The boys at the alternative school showed almost no physical contact. They had known each other for just 1 year and their peer group was made up of more traditional masculinity boys. With this study, McCormack showed that results from McCormack and Anderson (2010) were not simply an anomaly, but that boys across different types of schools in the same region were also less likely to be homophobic and capable of performing counter-orthodox masculinities.

Using data from his qualitative study of boys aged 16–18 at a sixth form school in the south of England (McCormack & Anderson 2010), McCormack (2011b) seeks to explain how boys, absent homophobic bullying and ridicule, create hierarchy in their peer structure. In this study, McCormack spent 5 months observing all 100 boys enrolled in the school. The major finding of this study was that these boys engaged in no homophobic bullying, harassment, or even discourse, that is, "That's so gay"

(McCormack & Anderson 2010). In fact, these boys valued male-male friendship and supported each other in ways not otherwise reported in the masculinity literature. McCormack did, however, find these boys to have a hierarchy of popularity. Boys at the top displayed four characteristics that were esteemed by their peers. The popular boys had charisma. They were the quick witted, funny boys who could garner the attention of their peers. This charisma likely supported the second characteristic of social fluidity. The popular boys were able to move smoothly from one social group to another. They were able to provide emotional support for their friends. They were caring. Lastly, they were considered authentic in their personal presentation. In other words, the boys valued people who were genuinely themselves, not trying hard to be something they were not. Perhaps his most important finding was that the boys who were not popular among their peers were not bullied or belittled in any way. In fact, they were valued for their authenticity—being quiet, studious, or loners. The boys accepted them for who they were.

In further analysis of data taken from an earlier ethnographic study (McCormack & Anderson, 2010), Anderson (2012) explores the effects of the absence of homophobia on the sports culture of the school. McCormack & Anderson (2010) not only reported an absence of homophobia in this school, but that the boys, aged 16–18, valued male-male emotional connection and embraced homosocial tactility—physical closeness and touching among male peers. Anderson analyzed observations and 17 in-depth interviews for this report. Due to his coaching background, he was embedded within the sports arena of the school. Unlike research in orthodox masculinity settings that reports "jocks" at the top of the male hierarchy (Bortolin, 2010), Anderson reported the "absence of a

jock-ocratic school culture" (Anderson, 2012, p. 151). Instead of boys engaged in sports to gain valuable masculine capital, he found boys did sports for fun or love of the game. The athletes at this school were not more highly esteemed simply due to their sports participation. Those athletes who were at the top of the peer hierarchy had other qualities that supported their popularity. They were authentic, showed emotional support for friends and were able to establish friendships with boys across social groups. These are the same characteristics as reported in McCormack (2011b) of boys at the top of the school hierarchy. Of these boys, Anderson remarked "It's difficult to describe the overwhelming sense of openness, softness and kindness that boys expressed toward each other at Standard High" (Anderson, 2012, p. 159). In fact, there was not one fight in the school the entire school year. Anderson concludes that these boys were able to change the dynamic of esteemed masculinity in their peer culture even in the absence of changes to the physical education mandate or nature of competitive sports at their school.

McCormack (2014) adds to the understanding of inclusive masculinity theory by examining the intersection of gender and class. Using an ethnographic approach, McCormack's research setting was a small sixth form school of 30 students from the poorest areas of the local town. The male population of the school was 18 students between the ages of 16 and 19, all but two of whom qualified for the free lunch program as secondary students. McCormack used observation, participant observation, and participant interviews, along with questioning of other key informants at the school to collect data used for the study. The purpose of the study was to form an intersectional analysis of masculinities, class, and decreasing homophobia. McCormack found that with the exception of three participants, the boys did not engage in homophobic

discourse, in fact never used homophobic words at all. Like their middle-class counterparts (McCormack & Anderson, 2010) they accepted gay male peers, and several of them even had gay male friends. McCormack also found that these boys were not guarded in their use of physical space. They often sat in the same chairs or on each other's laps when using the computer lab in order to facilitate seeing the screen. They often touched arms and several boys had developed a habit of matter-of-factly drawing on each other's arms. While this tactility was not as extreme as that documented in middle-class schools (McCormack & Anderson, 2010) it nonetheless is significantly different from the extant literature. There were just three boys who maintained more orthodox masculine performance. The study documented that lower or working class boys of this school have also been effected by a decrease in homohysteria.

These five studies document something unique in masculinity research: adolescent boys who do not embrace anti-femininity and homophobia as central to their masculine identity performance. Instead, they seem to employ genuine and individual masculine performance because they have no fear of teasing, shame, and ridicule for some failed standard of masculinity. The presence of more than one setting in which inclusive masculinity seems the norm is promising of the existence of more spontaneous peer cultures like them.

Successful transgression. A small number of studies reviewed describe boys who are able to perform counter-orthodox masculinity in orthodox masculinity peer cultures and yet not incur the homophobic bullying, shame, and ridicule so often used in these cultures.

In a phenomenological study, Kehler (2007) examined four boys from a high school in the Midwestern US who are described by teachers and the principal as not like other boys. He sought to document the conflicts that arise for adolescent boys who perform orthodox masculinity when confronted with peers enacting alternative masculinities. Through the use of weekly observation and formal and informal interviews, Kehler learned that indeed these boys were not like other boys in the school. Most conspicuously they were not homophobic. One young man suggested, "There's so much stuff about gay that it doesn't mean anything anymore, or at least I hope it doesn't" (Kehler, 2007, p. 271). These boys, who were not in the same social groups, seemed to have both a strength of character and a sense of diminishing homophobia that perhaps allowed them to embrace masculinities that run counter to their peers. Like the boys in inclusive masculinity peer cultures described by McCormack & Anderson (2010), Kehler found that these boys valued affectionate, empathetic, and deep friendships with male peers. Yet, they managed to be popular within a peer culture that embraced orthodox masculinity practices, especially compulsory heterosexuality. An exchange with one of the subjects illustrates this dynamic. Hunter has had a homophobic incident at school. After an altercation during a lunchtime Frisbee game, another young man wrote HUNTER LOVES MEN in black marker across the Frisbee. As Hunter reflected on this incident, he suggested perhaps the other guys resent the way "he is" and offered that he is not mad at the other boy for thinking he is "a jerk or gay or anything like that. I don't think he knew me" (Kehler, 2007, p. 272). This attempt at gender policing clearly did not deter Hunter from his counter-orthodox masculine identity. In fact, he seemed to suggest that if the other boys knew him, in a genuine sense, that his counter-orthodox stance may

have the power to neutralize their orthodox performance and gender policing. Kehler suggests that these young men have managed to find opportunities and spaces in which to resist the orthodox norms of their peer culture.

In a study that extends analysis from an earlier article (Kehler, 2007), Kehler and Martino (2007) examined high school boys' ability to critique traditional orthodox masculine practices. This study used shadowing, observation, and audiotaped semi-structured interviews of three boys in Australia and four in the United States, ages 16-17. The researchers found (a) boys able to articulate the constructed and contextual nature of masculinity in school, (b) boys identification of fear as a great motivator for constructing identities, and (c) that boys seem to "do" masculine performance for each other more so than for the consumption of adults or even girls. This later finding is supportive of Korobov (2004) where boys were found to "read" each other and adjust their behavior appropriately as not to have their masculine performance labeled inferior. Significantly, the four American boys were able to construct counter-orthodox masculinities and yet remain respected and popular in their peer group. They seemed able to read and respond to the masculinity of other boys and provided examples of when and with whom they could be more genuinely themselves. The boys in the Australian sample had more complicated peer relations. One of the Australian boys was a good soccer player. According to previous research, he should have had the cultural capital to join the "jocks" at the top of the male peer hierarchy (Bortolin, 2010). Nonetheless he was labeled "gay" due to his personal characteristics. The fact of his smaller body build, that he had many girls as friends and few if any guy friends, and also expressed an interest in ballet made him vulnerable to this label, signaling failed masculine performance (Klein, 2006; Stoudt,

2006). The social capital he gained by being a good athlete was not sufficient to make up for the social capital he lost due to these non-masculine characteristics. In contrast, one of the other Australian boys was embedded within the "jocks" at the top of the male hierarchy. Not only did this boy not play soccer, he was very smart, near the top of his class academically. Other research has found that smart non-athletes are deemed masculine failures by their peers (Klein, 2006). This young man seemed to have other characteristics—good looks, charisma, quick wit, and playing drums in a rock band—that provided him with enough social capital to be an honorary member of this elite group. The popular boys in this sample seem to practice McCormack's characteristics (McCormack & Anderson, 2010) for popularity in the inclusive masculinity peer culture—charm, social fluidity, emotional support and authenticity. It is noteworthy that these boys had success with these traits clearly outside of an inclusive masculinity peer culture.

As in the U.S studies, a qualitative study of boys in South Africa by Blackbeard and Lindegger (2007) found the male peer group to be a central context for the construction of masculine identities, especially those deemed acceptable. Unique to this study was the use of auto-photography as a starting place to inquire about boys' lives in South Africa. Two schools were chosen, one fairly homogeneous in its racial make-up of black students in a rural township and one multiracial school in an urban setting. The 29 boys in the study were given one-time use cameras and asked to take photographs that best represent "My life as a young man living in South Africa today" (Blackbeard & Lindegger, 2007, p. 32). The photos were used as a starting place for individual reflective interviews. Researchers also conducted one group interview at each site,

though only the interview from the urban school was used due to the poor quality of the rural interview—multiple distractions and a noisy environment. Orthodox masculinity was a central theme in the data analysis. Drinking, smoking, conquests of girls, and athletic prowess were the acceptable masculine norm. Compulsory heterosexuality and homophobia were publically uncontested. Here too, labels like "gay" and "sissy" functioned as identity markers for failed masculinity, not to signal homosexuality. Here too, the performance of orthodox masculinity seemed to be for the male peer audience. In individual interviews, however, the boys spoke about issues like homophobia much more seriously than in the focus group setting. As in Barnes (2012), the boys used humor to deflect serious conversation in the more public setting. Some boys in this sample were however able to construct "counter normative discourses" (Blackbeard & Lindegger, 2007, p. 43) in which they esteemed maturity, academic success, and vocational aspirations. Some even engaged in peer-negotiations in attempts to distance themselves from orthodox behaviors they did not want to engage in or that they found to run counter intuitive to successful masculinity as they saw it.

Reichert et al. (2012) conducted a mixed methods study to assess the effects of a peer-counseling model developed at an elite all-male school outside of Philadelphia, PA. The school, in an attempt to be *the* elite school for boys took on the challenge of "the boy crisis" and developed this program with the following goals: (a) to build a mutual self-help structure that would build safety in groups and build new norms of trust and interdependence, (b) allow for open verbal and emotional expression, and (c) use the peer model to help normalize new skills and extend them into relationships outside of the group. The 2-year program was voluntary and open to boys entering their junior year.

All 21 program participants took part in this study. They were administered the Presence in Relationships Scale (Chu & Way, 2009) designed to measure the quality of relationships. Research also included qualitative methods: focus groups, interviews, and observations. Also unique to this study was the inclusion of boys from the program on the research team. This is the only study in this literature review that included the boys themselves in the planning of the study.

Reichert et al. (2012) found that the boys felt deeply constrained by the culture in general and the school culture in particular. They did not feel they could be themselves. They were constantly on guard, careful to perform masculinity in ways deemed acceptable by their peers. This vigilance was protective in that it kept them from being the target of shame and ridicule because of harsh gender policing. In contrast, the boys described the peer counseling group sessions, which they attended every 2 weeks for the full year, as a safe space for them to get things "off their chest" (Reichert et al., 2012). Researchers found the participants developed new skills as a result of participation in the program. They gained the ability to identify and name the emotions they experienced, as well as share openly about them. They became active listeners. They experienced a deepening of friendships and family relationships. In fact, several boys described how they used their new skills with siblings, parents, and tough situations at home. One striking finding was that the boys longed for this space and looked forward to it. As a self-selected group, it could be that the boys who were not keen on orthodox performance to begin with naturally gravitated to this program. It does show, however, that a percentage of boys seem to long for the opportunity to share, cry, hug, and develop deeper connections with each other and in fact will do so when supported and given a

safe space. As in many of the other studies in this review, this study also highlights the public/private nature of boys' existence. This program was able to create a semipublic space where boys could perform their private selves. Alan, one of the peer group participants, captured this sentiment perfectly in his description of the peer group space:

> And then, when you get there you kind of find out it's a place where a bunch of guys in an all-guys school can kind of shed of that stereotype that we're supposed to be tough, we're supposed to be unemotional, we're not supposed to be sensitive. And it can be two random people from the same school who never met each other before, and if it's in peer counseling they can just open up 100% to each other and that, in itself, is one of the coolest things at the school (Reichert et al., 2012, p. 64)

These studies highlight those boys who occupy the space in between orthodox and inclusive masculinity. They seem to long for opportunities to be genuinely themselves absent the prescription of masculine performance. Some of them have managed to break free from homophobic intra-gender policing so often described in the literature and manage to preform alternate, counter-orthodox masculinities without repercussion. Others sought out and valued safe space in which to turn off their orthodox performance to engage in much needed sharing and caring. Still others only imagine what it might be like not to have to live up to orthodox masculinity standards and confessed these desires when probed in confidence.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented a review of the literature from 2004–2014 that examined adolescent boys and their experiences with masculinity and homophobia in mostly school settings. It encompassed samples from the United States as well as England, Ireland, South Africa, and Australia. While the descriptions of orthodox masculinity are consistent across the studies and in keeping with previous research, there are a small number of studies from England whose subjects completely contradict the expected presentation of adolescent masculinity. Of the articles reviewed, five presented boys who engage in counter-orthodox discourse or practice even in the face of orthodox masculinity.

Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology

Introduction

Much of the research on adolescent masculinity is concerned with boys' development of orthodox masculine school-based peer cultures. These cultures are rife with homophobic intra-gender policing which can lead to poor outcomes for boys. McCormack and Anderson (2010) however, document that boys are capable of creating entire school-based peer cultures free of homophobia and intra-gender policing. Inclusive masculinity theory (Anderson, 2009) posits that boys may be moving from the production of orthodox masculine cultures to cultures of inclusivity. The purpose of this study was to examine this shift by documenting boys' practice of intra-gender policing in a high school where staff suggest the presence of inclusivity. The specific research questions addressed were:

1. What is the evidence of the inclusivity in this setting?
2. What is the practice of intra-gender policing in a high school where staff have suggested the presence of inclusivity?
    a. How do boys who perform these different masculinities police others?
    b. How do they experience being policed?
    c. What does gender policing mean to them?

To comply with ethical guidelines for human research, the researcher submitted an application to the St. John Fisher College Institutional Review Board (IRB) for full review. Once approval was granted, approval was sought and granted from the school

district in which the study took place. This chapter describes the research design, research context, participant recruitment process, and data collection and analysis methods used for the study.

Qualitative Inquiry

Qualitative methods are used by researchers to analyze the discursive nature of phenomena, to uncover the social practices at work in constructing phenomena, and to highlight areas of agreement and resistance in human experience (Olsson, 2008). The nature of this study was to examine intra-gender policing engaged in by boys as they negotiate the development of masculine identity in a setting where inclusivity was suggested to exist. Qualitative methods, therefore, are best suited for exploration of this discursive process. Semi-structured interviews were used (Schensul, 2008) with a theory-based sample of adolescent boys (Patton, 2002).

Research Context

In preparation for this study, the researcher had informal conversations with the staff members of several schools, in a mid-sized city in the Northeast United States, regarding the nature of inclusive and orthodox masculinities. This process identified one high school—Suburban High (pseudonym)—where staff described the popular boys (those high in masculine capital) as coming from two sub-cultures—sports and theater arts. Adolescent masculinity research has traditionally identified sports culture as representative of orthodox masculinity (Anderson, 2009), although Anderson's work also shows that today they are also represented by inclusive masculinities. Boys who participate in the arts, music, and theater have been identified among those at the receiving end of homophobic and sometimes violent intra-gender policing (Kimmel &

Mahler, 2003). It is therefore significant that popular boys at Suburban High were characterized as representative of both groups. It suggested in addition to orthodox masculine performance, the existence of boys who practice inclusive masculinity. Suburban High therefore seemed to meet the theoretical sensitivity of the study and was chosen as the exclusive site for the study.

Suburban High is located just outside of a northeastern city in the United States. The city and suburbs together make up a statistical metropolitan area of just over 1 million people. Suburban School District serves students from three commercial suburban areas and one rural agricultural town, totaling about 45,000 residents. It enrolls 5,700 pupils in grades k-12. Suburban High serves students in grades 10–12 and enrolls 1,302 students: 637 of them are boys. From the class of 2013, 89% of graduates went on to 2- or 4-year colleges, 5% to the military, and 6% to full-time employment.

Research Participants

Research suggests that older boys, ages 16–18, can be deeply affected by peer group pressure to conform to orthodox masculinity (Chu, 2005; Way, 2012, 2013). Therefore, purposive sampling was used to identify boys in the 11th and 12th grades at Suburban High as they were more likely to be 16–18 years old and also more likely to be well acclimated to the cultures of the school. Permission packets (Appendix A) that contained a letter of introduction, a parental consent form, a participant assent form, and a short participant demographics sheet, were prepared in accordance with Institutional Review Board standards. The short demographics form solicited age, class year, and school activities. An exhaustive recruitment process took place over three distinct

academic periods—the spring of the 2014-2015 school year, 2015 summer school, and fall of the 2015-2016 school year.

This protracted recruitment process was a result of beginning recruitment late in the academic year, approximately 6 weeks before the end of the school year. Consequently, only two participants were initially recruited, forcing recruitment to move into summer. In June, additional IRB approval to provide a thank-you gift was sought and granted. A $10 gift card to a favorite teen store, Five Below, was chosen. The value of the gift card was roughly equivalent to one hour's minimum wage and seemed appropriate to thank participants in exchange for their time. Recruiting during summer school yielded two additional participants. Thus, recruiting moved into the fall of the 2015-2016 school year. Active recruitment started in October and four additional participants were quickly recruited. This supported the researcher's opinion that it was timing rather than any other factor that constrained recruitment during the previous school year.

A combination of recruitment strategies was used as directed by school administrators. The researcher tabled outside of the cafeteria distributing permission packets to interested students; handed out packets during several class periods (psychology, sociology, math, and social studies); and addressed the football team and the Gay Straight Alliance school club. Packets were provided to every male student in those settings so as not to force self-identification in front of peers. Three specific eligibility criteria used to qualify participants for the study were (a) participants identified themselves as male, (b) were enrolled as students in Suburban High, and (c) were either in their junior or senior year. Boys who expressed an interest in participation were

directed to return the permission packets to either the assistant principal or to the office of the director for academic services. The researcher was notified on a rolling basis as permission packets were received. This recruitment process yielded a total of eight participants.

Data Collection

The eight study participants served as informants regarding the male culture of the school. Each boy participated in one 45-minute semi-structured interview (Appendix B) which was held in a private office in the school during the school day. Six of the eight participants received the Five Below gift card immediately following their interview. Two gift cards were left with school administrators to be mailed home to the two spring 2015 participants, both of whom graduated in June. A consequence of the poor timing of the original recruitment process was the elimination of the 45-minute member check that was part of the original research methodology.

Interviews were audio-recorded. Each participant was given the option of not having his interview recorded, however all gave verbal permission. This allowed the researcher to be fully engaged with each participant during the interview. Original recordings are kept on a dedicated USB storage drive and locked in the researcher's home office.

Data Analysis

The Listening Guide. The Listening Guide is a four-step method of analysis developed by Gilligan (Gilligan, Spencer, Weinberg, & Bertsch, 2006). The Listening Guide acknowledges that human development occurs in relational contexts and that participants have multiple voices (Gilligan et al., 2006). The Guide suggests multiple

structured readings of the same text to discover different meanings and builds in a specific round of researcher response to support bracketing (Gilligan et al., 2006). Sequential listening allows the researcher to engage with a particular aspect of the participant as each round amplifies a different aspect of the participant's voice (Gilligan et al., 2006). Coded text from each round are then brought together to create a full and multilayered understanding of the participant's experience (Gilligan et al., 2006). This method has been used by many researchers to explore a range of phenomena including, "girls' sexual desire (Tolman, 1994), adolescent girls' and boys' friendships (Way, 1998), girls' and women's experiences with anger (Brown, 1998; Jack, 1999), women's experiences of motherhood and postnatal depression (Mauthner, 2000), and heterosexual couples' attempts to share housework and childcare (Doucet, 1995)" (Gilligan, 2006, p. 255). This data analysis method seemed appropriate for a study on the performance of adolescent masculinity.

Data analysis of transcribed interviews using the Listening Guide (Gilligan et al., 2006) proceeded in three distinct "listening" sessions—first to listen for plot, then for inclusive masculinity, and lastly for orthodox masculinity. Coding of the data proceeded using a combination of a priori codes informed by the study's theoretical framework and inductive codes derived from the listening sessions. Analytic induction (Erickson, 1986) was used to develop and test assertions. Finally, assertions were grouped into these themes which are presented at length in Chapter 4: (a) acceptance of gay male peers, (b) performance of inclusive masculinities, (c) play fighting, (d) homophobic discourse, and (e) adult gender policing.

Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined the research design and methodology for the present qualitative study, the purpose of which was to document intra-gender policing in a high school where staff have suggested inclusivity. An exhaustive recruitment process followed IRB approval from St; John Fisher College and the School District of Suburban High School, the research setting. Participants were recruited using a purposive sampling criteria that recognized older adolescent boys, ages 16–18, as being especially susceptible to peer pressure to conform to orthodox masculinity. Eight boys volunteered to participate in one 45-minute semi-structured interview, which was audio-recorded and transcribed. Boys were provided with a $10 store gift card as a thank you. Data analysis employed the Listening Guide (Gilligan et al., 2006), to conduct structured reviews of the data. A priori codes as well as inductive codes developed during the listening sessions were used to code the data. Analytic induction was then used to develop and test assertions. Themes emerged from this process and are presented as findings in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

This chapter presents the demographics summary and data analysis and results of this qualitative the study. The purpose of this study was to document boys' practice of intra-gender policing in a high school setting where staff suggested the presence of inclusivity. Inclusive masculinity theory (Anderson, 2009) served as the theoretical framework for the study. Eight participants were selected from the research setting. This qualitative data was collected using semi-structured interviews. Data analysis proceeded using both a priori and inductive coding and produced the themes presented in this chapter. Each theme is presented along with the research question it answers and is supported by excerpts from participant interviews.

Demographic Data

Demographic information was collected from each participant on a short form included in the permission packet soliciting age, class year, and school activities. While ethnic/racial background was not formally collected, perceived racial make-up of the sample was diverse. Demographics of the research sample included at least one African American, Asian, and Southeast Asian student, as well as Caucasian students. Pseudonyms are used here to identify participants and school activities are aggregated to help protect confidentiality. A demographic summary of participants can be viewed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Participant Demographic Comparison

Name (pseudonym)	Grade	Age	School Activities
Brice	11	16	Student Leadership, 1 Sport, Service Club
Mike	11	16	1 Sport, Academic Club
Steve	12	16	None
Tony	12	17	Theater and Music Performance, 2 Student Leadership
Quentin	12	17	Musical Performance
Kevin	12	17	2 Varsity Sports
William	12	17	2 Sports, Art
Allen	12	18	2 Affinity Clubs

Following is a short description of each participant providing information about how they characterize themselves and why they chose to participate in the study.

Steve. Steve was a 16-year-old rising senior at the time of his interview. When asked why he chose to participate in the study he said, "I don't know, I just thought it would be interesting to hear what questions you were going to ask and stuff like that." In fact, Steve turned out to have a lot to say about masculinity. When asked what subculture of the school he felt he belonged to he replied:

> No group. I don't have a group. I just, I'm kind of the kid who has like a select friend who they sit with at lunch and if he doesn't have someone at lunch, he sits in the stairs and the hallway or something like that. I'm very closed off.

Steve used to have lots of friends, but something happened in his life that he didn't disclose, ". . . in tenth grade when things started going bad for me . . . ." He told a few friends and it got around school. Trust became a big issue for him. Now he says he is focused on getting credits so he can graduate. Steve listed "after school job" on the section of the demographics form that asked participants to list their school activities.

Allen. Allen was an 18-year-old senior who without prompting, identified himself to the researcher as gay. He saw the flyers for the study around school and was also encouraged by the advisor to one of the student clubs to which he belongs to participate. It turned out, Allen had a lot to say about masculinity as well. "I know most of the guys here are typical teenage boys, the straight, macho dudes and I have a different perspective on things," he said when asked why he chose to participate in the study. Allen is a member of two affinity clubs at school. When asked what subculture he belonged to he replied, "I honestly don't know. Most of my friends are girls, of course. We don't belong to a specific group, I would say. We're just nerdy but not like the extreme nerds that you see on TV, that kind of thing." Allen offered that he has a clear prejudice against "jocks."

Tony. Tony was a 17-year-old senior who was very active in the performing arts in school. He was a member of three different singing groups, acts in the school plays, and holds student leadership positions. When asked why he chose to participate in the study he said he was "interested in telling people about what it's like to actually be in

high school." Tony was the target of pretty severe cyber-bullying while in eighth grade, which caused him to transfer middle schools. Of that time period Tony said, "At this point, I've just forgotten about it because it was so long ago, and the people that were involved in it . . . we just don't talk to each other and that's fine."

Quentin. Quentin was a 17-year-old senior and gifted singer. His school activities consisted of three singing groups, band, and musical theater. Though Quentin prides himself in trying to be unbiased in his beliefs, he admits that he can be a bit biased when it comes to music. Of musicians and athletes he says, " . . . they can argue that music does change people's lives . . . what is a soccer player doing? They're playing for personal gain." Of participating in the study, he said that it sounded interesting and that he would be helping, so he felt good about it.

William. William was a 17-year-old senior who seemed to have a spontaneous period of activity and doing well and decided that participation in the study was another "something good to do." He lists art and two sports teams, along with advanced placement (AP) classes as his school activities. William's location of himself in the subcultures of the school is illustrative of the inclusive masculinity performed in the school. He said,

> I wouldn't actually consider myself in the regular athlete group. I consider myself like, umm, halfway between, I don't know between three points of like the normal average guy, the AP guy, and then a little bit of the burnout cause then I struggle with homework all the time . . . .

Brice. Brice was a 16-year-old junior at the time of his interview. He lists one sports team, a service club, and a student leadership role as his school activities. Brice

was one of several students who indicated that he participated in the study out of empathy for the researcher and his involvement as a student leader:

"I thought it would be interesting . . . . And I also know how like, umm, trying to collect data from people . . . we try to collect like umm what people would like to be seen changed around the school and everything.

Brice considers his social group to be an 11th grade athlete group of boys who have gotten to know each other through sports.

Kevin. Kevin was a 17-year-old senior who was proud of the fact that he was taking multiple AP classes. Currently a varsity athlete, Kevin had played both club and school sports from an early age. His core social group were other athletes he had known since early childhood. Kevin was extremely articulate and said of his decision to participate in the study:

> . . . I thought it would be helpful for me to share my opinions. Even just through such a basic level psychology class trying to ask people to answer a four question survey, it's hard to find 10 volunteers, so I can only imagine for a 45-minute survey where you have permission slips and everything.

Mike. Mike was a 16-year-old junior who participates in one school sport as well as one academic club and one service club. Of participating in the study Mike said, "I know where you're coming from having to get a lot of data for a certain subject and I know it's hard to ask for people to volunteer so I empathized for you . . . ." His own experience in asking for volunteers comes from his school club involvement. Mike identifies as part of the "nerd" group at school as he cares deeply about getting good grades. When asked if he had anything else he wanted to add before wrapping up the

interview Mike replied, “I believe I have an easy life. I don’t think I have that much problems compared to some people I know, and like I’m grateful for that . . . .”

Findings

The process of data analysis led to creation of the following themes: (a) *acceptance of gay male peers, (*b) *performance of inclusive masculinities,* (c) *play fighting,* (d) *homophobic discourse,* and *(*e) *adult gender policing.* In the sections that follow, each theme is discussed in relation to the research question it answered.

Research question 1: What is the evidence of inclusivity in this setting? Participant responses, which clustered into two overarching themes, *acceptance of gay male peers* and *performance of inclusive masculinities,* provided evidence of the existence of inclusivity.

Acceptance of gay male peers. This study found boys at Suburban High to be well aware of the presence of gay male peers. All participants agreed that openly gay male students attend Suburban High. Most participants estimated the number to be small, as illustrated by comments such as:

> **William:** “Yeah there are two of them” (#3, p.13).
>
> **Mike:** “Yeah I’ve only saw like one or two that actually come out” (#2, p.8).
>
> **Kevin:** “Yeah I mean I hmm, I think openly I’ve heard them say it clearly to me, maybe like one. And I think I’ve heard that someone else has come out openly, maybe two” (#8, p.10).
>
> **Quentin:** “Oh, yeah. There's like four or five of them, or three, I don't know” (#6, p. 11).

Participants offered a range of perceptions regarding the acceptance of gay males by other boys in the school. William illustrated that some boys have homophobic mindsets:

> Treated pretty well by most, except for the negative groups like the thugs, or some of the burnouts, they won't outwardly say it but they kind of dislike them. And in the burnout group, there's this, I don't want, kind of this red necky kind of group, not to use, for lack of a better word, who will, you know generally hate them… Also the normal group, the normal group you know is still kind of immature, kind of (#3, p. 13).

When asked directly if these attitudes translate into bullying behaviors, William responded, "No. Yeah, just people still aren't used to it. Still uncomfortable around it." (#3, p. 13). While other participants echo his observation that direct bullying just does not happen, participants did indicate that gay males are the targets of indirect comments and jokes:

> **Allen:** "I can't really recall a specific experience but there have always been moments where someone has said something and then I just heard someone in the back of the room make a comment or something that's offensive or rude but it's never loud enough for anybody to hear it except for people there" (#4, p.3).
>
> **Mike:** ". . . like they don't get bullied in terms of straight out they get bullied in like behind their back or if they saw them over there then they would talk about them but nothing up to their face" (#2, p.8).
>
> **Brice:** ". . . its more, off of like social networks and everything and . . . . Just like different remarks to different people . . . . Or actually if they see something,

they'll like make a joke about someone else because it kind of relates to them" (#1, p.11).

William's observation or feeling of change, "people still aren't used to it," is reflected in other participant statements:

Tony: " . . . I think it's something that's happening now. I think it's going to continue to grow as time goes . . . . Acceptance in anything. Marriage equality just happened, so (#5, p. 14).

Kevin: "No, I think once you come out or once it's like known, I don't think you can be made fun of for it" (#8, p. 10).

Brice: "Kind of it really depends on who you are. I mean whether you support it. Obviously there are people that support them otherwise they probably wouldn't be openly gay" (#1, p. 10).

Steve: " . . . here are a lot of people where it is accepted and stuff like that. Personally, myself, I totally accept that. I mean, you're still humans, it's just you're not, you do you and I do me, like" (#7, p.7).

Indeed, support and safety for gay male students comes from school staff, the presence of openly gay male teachers, and the school's Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) student club:

Allen: "There are definitely people, guys like me, who aren't afraid to speak in class about like this type of situation because this school feels a little more safe than other schools may feel . . . .There's not much outright ridicule. The staff feels very accepting. You can count on teachers for the most part" (#4, p.10).

Steve: Homophobic bullying "gets taken care of instantly, you know. The principal and the teachers don't tolerate it. We have an openly gay teacher in our school, and he is very great . . . he's like probably one of the best teachers. A lot of people go to him for advice or just to talk to him, because he's the realest, nice person" (#7, p. 7).

Mike: " . . . but there's some gay teachers so that supports it. We have a gay straight bi club which supports that" (#2, p.8).

When asked about witnessing teasing or bullying, Quentin suggests, "Gays here, gays, bis, all those stuff, they're treated very well, very well here" (#6, p.10). Quentin was asked to clarify specifically if the *other boys* treat them well, which led to this exchange:

Quentin: I think they're pretty well. I think a lot of guys are really comfortable with it. I've seen guys who have been on top of each other, but they're okay. I think they're really just fine with who that person is.

Researcher: When you say on top of each other, do you mean all of these posters—I love these posters-that I see around the school about PDAs? They're in a relationship on top of each other?

Quentin: No, they're just such good friends, they're like, "Hey dude, what's up"?

Researcher: It's not a big deal.

Quentin: Yeah.

Researcher: They're not worried about being stereotyped as maybe they're gay because they're . . .

Quentin: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. I remember back in the old days, people would necessarily keep their distance, but like oh okay, but they were still kind of okay with it. Now, I think people are really okay with it (#6, p.11).

Two participants reported an active, even enthusiastic acceptance of gay male peers. Tony suggested that it was difficult for gay students to come out because they would be "swarmed with attention" (#5, p.15). When asked to clarify what he meant, he offered:

Tony: Because there's just not a lot of openly gay people here at SSH. There's a few that you'd know and you'd know them because it's like, "That person came out" and he was the only one of like 500 people in the school so of course you know that guy. If another guy does it, it's like something, "Now we know this guy too" but if . . .

Researcher: When you say swarmed with attention is that good attention or negative attention or do you mean bullying?

Tony: It would be more positive thing, good attention, honestly (#5, p.15).

Quentin's perceptions are that of a cultural moment gone awry:

Quentin: Sometimes I feel like just because they're gay or bisexual, they get treated better than other guys who aren't.

Researcher: Sometimes it's almost kind of cool?

Quentin: Yeah. Not that I think that anyone should be treated better than anyone else, because I support anyone. I think sometimes the LGBT like movement, they're pushing so hard that they're, they want to be accepted, but at the same time sometimes I feel like they want it to be the new norm, and I feel like a lot of guys,

even if they aren't gay, they're just coming out and they're like, "Oh, I'm gay," and they're like, “Oh, you are”?! [celebratory] I know that's kind of extreme. But ummm . . . sometimes it feels like, yeah, it is okay to be gay, but, no, “It's really cool to be gay [mockingly]” (#6, p. 11).

Perceptions of how much openly gay boys were included in male social groups was mixed, making actual levels of social inclusion hard to gauge:

Tony: “He is very openly gay and everyone is friends with him” (#5, p.16).

Quentin: “People practically worship them” (#6, p.11).

Kevin: “It’s like a mixed gender group that he’s friends with but I don’t know he’s a likeable guy, I like him enough he’s friends, he’s nice enough to me” (#8, p10).

Mike: “They hang out more with the girls, but they are not like, they’re not not friends with the guys, but they’re more closely friends with the girls” (#2, p.8).

William: “Uh, the openly gay guys here don’t really hang out with the guys . . . . The gay guys here though hang out with all girls I’ve seen.”

Allen: “I really only have one legitimate male friend” (#4, p. 7).

Only one participant spoke enthusiastically about including a gay friend as one of the guys:

William: “But my openly gay friend does hang out just as one of the guys but we make, we do we do like tease him because he is openly gay he will like point out a guy that he thinks . . . .” (#3, p. 13).

Performance of inclusive masculinities. Inclusive masculinities refers to a broad archetype of men and boys who comfortably engage in gender practices that are typically

coded feminine in Western cultures. At Suburban High, boys' inclusive masculine performance includes: (a) embrace of high academic standards; (b) engagement in activities previously coded as gay such as, theatrical performance; (c) embrace of once-feminized artifacts such as, wearing pink; and (d) esteem of peers who perform inclusive masculinities.

High academic standards are embraced by many young men as suggested by this statement from Mike, "well sometimes the jocks are the nerds if that makes sense" (#2, p. 2). He goes on to explain:

> I don't know, I think the nerd or being like smart or like showing their intellect is something that's becoming more popular, so people are being more open about it. "Oh yeah I'm so smart in this class" and like "I'm smarter than you in this class." So there's more competitive in terms of like GPAs or what you got on the test. So a lot of the jocks and stuff like that, like I sit with them but, I sit with them and like they talk about their grades and I talk about my grades . . . . (#2, p. 2).

This notion that boys can now embrace academics is expressed by several participants. When asked about boys who inhabit more than one subculture in the school, Kevin offered himself as an example.

> **Kevin**: I'd say I'm a pretty good example of that. Like I hang out with almost all athletes but I don't have a problem fitting in with the more techie guys in my AP classes. I could pretty easily shift between the two.
>
> **Researcher**: Okay, and you don't get teased in either space?

> **Kevin**: Uh, not me directly. I think in both groups the other, like in the AP group they think my friends are just idiots and my friend group, they think the other guys are just nerds and geeks, so like I don't get anything cause I can fit into both.
>
> **Researcher**: Right okay, so do you have a sense of why you fit into both? Or like what do you do that allows you to move between those to spaces?
>
> **Kevin**: Well, I'm pretty aware of my situation. So, and well I have the raw intelligence and the raw athletic ability to fit into both, but when I'm with my friends, I don't spend my time talking about my AP physics test as I know it's just not a relatable thing for everybody. And when I'm with the AP kids, I don't talk about playing soccer with my friends because it's not relatable for them . . .
>
> **Researcher**: So you're flexing in the space to fit into those spaces?
>
> **Kevin**: Yeah, I don't change who I am I just choose which one (#8, p.9).

When asked what subcultures he would advise a boy new to the school to stay away from, Kevin suggested the "not-real-tough guys" and the "not-real-farmers" (#8, p.4). In this response Kevin, both elevated the role of academics and articulated a view of masculinity that does not rely on orthodox masculine standards:

> I think both of them have kind of adopted like a mindset that school is an enemy and like, and that you need to like constantly try to assert yourself as someone who's important and powerful and strong and like that's just not the case to be successful. (#8, p. 4)

When asked to locate himself within the male subcultures of the school, William also described a more inclusive identity which includes a serious academic focus:

> I consider myself like, um half way between, I don't know, between three points of like the normal average guy, the AP guy, and then a little bit of the burnout cause then I struggle with homework all the time . . . . (#3, p. 4)

Arriving at this identity was not easy for William. In fact, it seemed a bit difficult for him to even articulate. In the following passage, he shares how he overcame the shame he felt because of his academic success and the excitement of being grounded in his new identity:

> I remember in ninth grade I was great at biology. But I don't know. Then I had this one not as good kid, really disobedient kid sit next to me but. And then, I don't know he always whenever I got the 90s said, "Aw it's you!" I kind of felt a little embarrassed by that. Being that high of a grade. But then as a sophomore, sophomore year I also took off, I didn't take AP classes. Then junior year, I kind of made a big turnaround [inaudible] AP classes and sports, then I realized I don't have to, I really don't have to be ashamed about that. It's when I kind of matured up. That's when I'll study anywhere. I'll talk about classes. I'll try to encourage people to take these classes (#3, p.12).

Boys who participate in both sports and the performing arts is another example of inclusive masculine performance. Most participants agreed that boys could play sports and be musical or try out for the school play without it being particularly remarkable:

> **Allen:** "There are some musical guys who are into sports. They ran track but they also sing in chorus. There are a few of those" (#4, p. 8).
>
> **Steve**: "I know a lot of guys. This guy named Doug who does football, plus he does band. He's been doing band for a couple of years, and there's a lot of the

sports kids that do like golf or soccer or something like that, but they're also in like in chorus and stuff (#7, p. 10).

Kevin: "Yeah, someone I mean, I used to be pretty good friends with I don't know if he's the greatest athlete but he's also like in [school singing group] and he like was the lead role in the play so yeah . . . . He still played soccer this year" (#8, p. 11).

Tony: "We have an incredibly amazing opportunity for young athletes. There has been times where like, I'll take one of my friends for example, he was a wrestler for I think the first 2 years of his high school, so 9th and 10th grade. Then he wanted to audition for one of our shows, but it was either, can you do sports or you have to pick because, otherwise, it's not more or less like. He's not being pressured because of why he wants to do it. It's like it's a scheduling thing" (#5, p. 13).

Tony was asked if his friend decided not to audition: "No, he did auditioned. He just left sports. He had to make a choice" (#5, p. 13). He didn't know if his friend got any flak for quitting sports, but added " . . . but judging from his character and just people in general, I don't think they would have . . . . No, I don't think they insulted him or made fun of him for doing it" (#5, p. 13).

When asked to describe the popular boys or groups in the school, those that other boys look up to, participants who were athletes identified other athletes:

Brice: " . . . there's just a group of athletes that are from every sport . . . " (#1, p. 3).

Kevin: “I’d say that the group with the most social influence is probably the football player boys. I think what they deem is like cool or in is pretty generally accepted” (#8, p. 3)

William: “It’s kind of spit down the middle, there two top groups, there kind of the quarterback and a few of his friends, well he used to be the quarterback and then a some other guys who are maybe they don’t always do sports but they’re very confident and everything. And then there this other group I know who I’m friends with, more friends with than the other group, is a group of wrestlers who are, you know they just host parties sometimes or hosting together, really really fun group” (#3, p. 5).

Without prompting, William made an interesting observation that was echoed by other participants at varying times during their interviews. He remarked of the quarterback, “our quarterback is a really nice guy” (#3, p. 5), and of the wrestling crew, “Like one guy I know in there is really genuinely super nice guy and everything” (#3, p. 5). Participants who were performing artists or nerds identified a much more inclusive masculine group at the top of the male hierarchy, if any group at all:

Quentin: They’re not like errr [growls], but they’re very . . . . They're a leadership figure, and they're not rigid about, “This goes like this, this goes like this, or you have to do it like this, the manly way”! But they're not all like, "Oh my gosh, suns, rainbows, and flowers." They're in between (#6, p. 13).

Allen: “They have . . . I don't want to say power but they definitely are visible in a certain way. It's the nerds or the jocks or the theater kids” (#4, p. 3). “I guess, theater kids, like theater guys, they're more in the middle to upper ranks of social

hierarchy actually because there are a lot of people involved in music and then people see that they're talented and are like, "Oh, you're cool and awesome so I look up to you." That's actually the situation with those kind of people" (#4, p. 8).

Mike: "hmm I don't I think so . . . like I know like media help, movies help paint that picture but honestly I don't think there's one, there's no dominant group like at all" (#3, p. 3).

Tony: "In this stage, in this high school, I don't think, for me at least, I don't think that exists . . . . Maybe in each clique, maybe there is one of those. Like there's one person that's more outgoing, more confident than the rest, who is like, "Hey, guys, let's get together at this point and meet and stuff" and everyone is friends within that group" (#5, p. 8).

Steve, who was not an athlete or performing artist, remarked, "Just the sports kids are the highest. The guys. Teachers like them the most, the coaches, they're their favorite" (#7, p. 4).

Being a genuinely nice person seemed an important trait of leaders for participants:

Quentin: ". . . he's a really nice person, and he does community service and stuff, and he's genuinely set on helping others. That's what a role model really is." (p.?)

William: ". . . he's tall, he's athletic, smart and has confidence. He's Christian. All that stuff. And you know he's a genuinely nice person too. I've barely ever heard him say anything negative about somebody" (#3, p. 3).

Tony and Allen each talked of two popular seniors who were gifted leaders:

Tony: “I don't know. If they went into a room and had a goal, they could get that goal accomplished because they were very brave leaders, extremely outgoing” (#5, p. 9)

Allen: “Basically, the two main class leaders . . . I don't know if they're on student council but they're pretty popular and they coordinate most of the things for our class like the prom, senior ball, everything. They're really looked up to and they do theater and music (#4, p. 9).

Embrace of once-feminized artifacts also plays a role in boys’ performance of inclusive masculinities. When asked about boys wearing pink for instance, participants said:

Allen: “Yeah, like a lot of jocks wear bright colors, like pink . . . there are certainly things that would have been deemed extremely feminine for guys to do years and years go like wearing pink that people can get by doing” (#4, p. 7).

Kevin: “Oh yeah it’s not an issue” (#8, p. 8).

Quentin: “Nowadays it's weird, because now you see guys who are like, "Oh, I'm wearing pink," and they're like, "Oh, man, you're wearing pink. Yeah, man! All right, now. Real men wear pink!"” (#6, p. 10)

While Quentin went on to say he believes that in the back of many boys’ minds it still isn’t acceptable, they all agreed that no one gets teased or bullied for wearing pink. Steve launched into this long monologue on the subject:

. . . topics such as pink being for breast cancer, so, you mess around and say, “Oh, you're wearing a pink shirt!” and they go, “Oh, my grandmother died of breast cancer and this is an honor for her.” You don't know that. When you get older,

> you start connecting outside life with the internal stuff like that. You can't really judge it, it's just a color. It would make you seem immature if he's wearing pink, which shows the definite distinction and difference between an immature person and a mature person, a person who's become more of an adult in the higher grades of high school, and the ones that are not. So if you pick on someone about color, everyone around you is going to be, "Dude! What are you doing? You make no sense of that, that's middle school stuff" (#7, p. 7).

When asked for an example of things that boys do that could be considered more feminine, William offered this list:

> Pink has kind of become more like, it hasn't really be that feminine anymore. You kind of wear it as a male thing still, like I'll see pink shirts and stuff like that occasionally. But more feminine things like brightly, like dyed colored hair I guess. That's still a little weird but people get over it. Or, feminine, like big comfy socks, people are more confident they can just wear big comfy socks now with patterns on them. And they can use scented candles and enjoy those (#3, p. 10).

Mike provided a different example, the new jogger pant:

> Yeah, like um with the introduction to the new pants, the joggers with the elastic cuff on the bottom, those are more popular, they're obviously tighter pants than guys usually wear, but they're getting up, so I think skinnier products are getting known, something new (#2, p. 5).

Two participants spoke of their own experience with once-feminized artifacts. Brice had had a manicure.

> I mean I've gotten one on my nails, like just because. I went with my mom one time. And um it's kind of like, I guess it's just now the way we live, and just everything's changing and the fact that obviously stuff that's in style now wouldn't be, wasn't in style like 50 years ago. And definitely like there's now, there's different, how do I say, styles that um wouldn't be acceptable back them that are now (#1, p. 8).

Without prompting, Brice admitted, "It felt good" (#1, p. 8). Brice's social group did not make fun of him for having shiny nails, in fact he estimates that three of his male friends have also had manicures. Kevin also spoke of his personal experience:

> Um I've had my eye brows waxed which I don't think like 30 years ago anyone would have thought of and like I try to be pretty fashionable. Like I try to match the shoes I'm wearing with the shirts I'm wearing which like my dad frowns upon but my mom thinks is nice. (#8, p. 7).

Kevin believes that one of his male friends has also waxed his eyebrows. Like Brice, he was not teased about his choice. When asked about his friends' reactions, he offer what seemed a surprisingly orthodox masculine response for him:

> I think being I don't know 60 lbs. heavier than any of my friends kind of stops them cause I think they know they don't want to start it. Um but I'd say pretty generally like supportive of each other in my friend group, so like I don't know, do what makes you happy I guess (#8, p. 8).

Research question 2: What is the practice of intra-gender policing in a high school where staff have suggested inclusivity? Analysis of participant responses, as reported in the previous section, show very little evidence of intra-gender policing.

Collectively, participants painted a picture of a male school-based peer culture where acts of intra-gender policing—the use of joking, teasing, punking, bullying, and physical violence specifically to force or reinforce strict orthodox masculine standards—is seldom used. Participants report that boys are able to stray pretty far from stereotypic male gender norms without negative consequences.

The limited evidence offered by participants of intra-gender policing falls into three themes, *play fighting, homophobic discourse,* and *adult gender policing.*

Play fighting. Play fighting is described by participants this way:

> **Mike:** The new thing I guess is like, I don't know how to explain, like play fighting almost, like you go for 30 seconds and you just like try to slap each other, rough each other up, but it's not like. They'll fight for 30 seconds and then they be friends again (#2, p. 4).
>
> **Brice:** "They kind of like create a scene and just like try to get everyone's attention. It looks like their actually fighting but they're not" (#1, p. 10).
>
> **Kevin:** "Um ok like this morning my friend was being an idiot so I like lightly smacked him across the face. Like not hard . . . . Like I don't know, I'd say you can only do it with someone you're close with and you know the boundaries. I wouldn't dare do it with someone who's not in my close friend group" (#8, p. 7).

Participants concurred that play fighting is practiced within boys' subcultures not across subcultures:

> **Brice:** "Yeah it's kind of just between two friends . . . " (#1, p. 10).
>
> **Mike:** "No, it's more it's like the closer they are the more they fight in terms of like play fighting and stuff like that" (#2, p. 5).

Tony: “It's something that they had talked about over Facebook. Like, "Hey, I bet you won't fight me for a $1." He was like, "Okay." They did it. I'm not sure if it was a really heated fight for any reason over, other than, "I bet you won't do this right here and right now" (#5, p. 11).

When asked about the purpose of play fighting, participant answers seemed to include that play fighting has a gender policing utility.

Tony: “No, I don't really think there has been any, at least that I've witnessed, any fights that have been over a specific reason other than something like, ‘Let's just fight because we can’" (#5, p. 12).

Mike: “ . . . it serves like the precedent that they will get down if they feel threatened, and stuff. Like they will fight someone” (#2, p. 4).

Play fighting is not without its consequences. William suggests, “It normally leads to a lot of hurt feelings, more than people would like to admit . . . . Hurt pride yeah.” (#3, p. 7). School administrators treat play fighting the same as real fights. Participants reported boys have received both in-school and out of school suspensions for such incidents.

Homophobic discourse. Participants who were asked directly if they hear comments like “fag” and “that’s so gay” said yes:

Steve: “All the time . . . . It's all just, you know, kidding around and stuff. I feel like they think that it's just funny to say oh, you're a fag and stuff like that. It’s not something. It's just stupid.” (#7, p. 8).

Kevin: “Um like a teacher assigns a big project over a weekend, you’re like “That’s so gay.” Like I’d say people subconsciously are not even paying attention to use it synonymously with bad. But I’d say when it actually comes down to “I

> am gay," I don't think people would be like "oh that's bad" like. They'd understand the difference" (#8, p. 10).

While Steve's and Kevin's interpretation of this banter is that is has no real homosexualizing utility, as a gay student, Allen experiences it much differently. It might be fair to say that Allen's participation in two identity affinity school clubs has given him deeper insight on issues of gender and sexuality as well as the language with which to talk about his experiences. While Allen is the only participant to talk about the homosexualizing utility of the discourse he witnesses, the depth of his analysis makes it worth noting:

> . . . they do have a negative impact on a lot of people because of some of the things they say. The male locker room, especially during the swimming unit, it's the most homophobic place in the school. That's literally all that is talked about. It's just like homophobic slurs left and right but I think it's basically like a brotherhood. It's this camaraderie and this friendship that's based off of this behavior. They just feel each other and then that impacts people around them (#4, p. 4).

He provides an example of what he has witnessed:

> When I say that the locker room is an extremely homophobic place, it's more along the lines of, "Oh, dude, that's so gay. Blah blah blah . . . " and then they call each other faggots. They don't really call other people (#4, p. 5).

He admits that even though this language and behavior is not directed at him, it nonetheless creates a hostile environment for him and other boys:

> It's just really uncomfortable. Somebody might tell them off but they just brush it off. They're just an overwhelming presence and then the other people are just there wanting to get out of there (#4, p. 4).

When asked if this behavior was just joking and teasing as Kevin and Steve have suggested, Allen offers this rather sophisticated critique:

> Whenever they say stuff like that, it's when someone falls out of line and does something that may seem feminine or gay or anything. You know, locker room, when you're surrounded by a bunch of naked dudes and that's when it comes out because they feel threatened by other people possibly checking them out so they feel a need to keep other people in line by creating this hostile environment (#4, p. 5).

While there is no direct bullying of gay male peers reported by participants, homophobic discourse is used indirectly:

> **Allen:** "There's not much direct targeting but you definitely feel the hostility" (#4, p. 5). "I can't really recall a specific experience but there have always been moments where someone has said something and then I just heard someone in the back of the room make a comment or something that's offensive or rude but it's never loud enough for anybody to hear it except for people there" (#4, p. 3).
>
> **Mike:** ". . . like they don't get bullied in terms of straight out they get bullied in like behind their back or if they saw them over there then they would talk about them but nothing up to their face" (#2, p. 8).
>
> **Brice:** ". . . its more, off of like social networks and everything and . . . . Just like different remarks to different people . . . . Or actually if they see something,

they'll like make a joke about someone else because it kind of relates to them" (#1, p. 11).

Adult gender policing. Three participants, without prompting, brought up adult expectations of masculinity during their interviews:

Quentin: ". . . it also ties into a historic thing. What masculinity really is. As guys grow up, their fathers always teach them, "Oh, this is what being a man is, and this is what being a man is…I think it ties into everyone has a different idea of what masculinity is, and back in the day the majority taught that men were this power authority figure who set the rules, ran the household, and all that stuff" (#6, p. 10).

Kevin: "I try to be pretty fashionable. Like I try to match the shoes I'm wearing with the shirts I'm wearing which like my dad frowns upon but my mom thinks is nice. . . . He just thinks it's ridiculous to like try and be fashionable all the time I guess . . . . He just doesn't think it matters at all" (#8, p. 7).

Steve: "There's a lot of pressures coming from dads and parents that have come from right before the 2000s and the 1970s and stuff. They were raised to be "You're a man, you work. You do sports, you know, you don't mess around with bands and theater because that's considered a faggish thing" and stuff like that" (#7, p. 10).

Steve was the most vocal in this area. Both parental and teacher/staff expectations were woven through Steve's interview responses. Because of the nature of this study, the themes of adult gender policing by parents and school staff brought up by Steve were not explored in other interviews. Nonetheless, Steve's responses are shared here as they

represent an area of concern—especially as they relate to school staff—that should be explored in future research. Steve continues:

> I feel there's a lot of pressure on us having our parents being strict with certain things like you can't do this because you're a guy. You know, that's definitely a lot of issues and also why a lot of guys treat girls bad in my school . . . but I feel like there's a lot of pressure on us, too. Even from teachers, you get it a lot. Are you going to do sports? You know, every time, there's like, every time I talk to a man figure in my life or something like that, or a person who is like, they are always asking, do you do sports? You know, men, sports, sports, sports, and if you do anything else they're just like you're gay or something like that (#7, p. 11).

Chapter Summary

In this chapter the researcher introduces readers to the sample of eight study participants. Findings were presented in the following themes in the order in which they answered the research questions: (a) acceptance of gay male peers, (b) performance of inclusive masculinities, (c) play fighting, (d) homophobic discourse, and (e) adult gender policing.

The study finds that boys at Suburban High have at minimum, an intellectual acceptance of their gay male peers. Participants report though there are a small number of openly gay boys, they are treated well and in some cases as one of the guys. Even those boys who engage in homophobic intra-gender policing behaviors do not target gay males. The only openly gay male participant agreed that the school felt safer than most and credited the staff with setting the tone for acceptance. This finding is suggestive of inclusivity in the setting.

Participants report that boys freely perform inclusive masculinity within the setting without repercussion. Inclusive masculine performance at Suburban High includes, engaging in once-feminized artifacts like wearing pink, having a manicure, or wearing tight pants. Boys also engage in a wide variety of activities ranging from music and theater to volunteer work and planning the prom. Perhaps most interesting is the finding that athletes can be serious about their academics and participate in music and theater without it being particularly remarkable. Lastly, the finding of male esteem of the "nice guy" is in keeping with findings of other inclusive masculinity studies (Anderson, 2009). Even among the high social capital athletes, participants made a distinction between athletes who were nice guys and those who could be mean. This finding supports that Suburban High is a setting of inclusivity.

Findings of intra-gender policing were limited however to play fighting, homophobic discourse, and adult gender policing. Play fighting is described by participants as friends "slapping up" for "30 seconds." It looks like they may be fighting but there is no conflict. Participants report that one reason to engage in this behavior is to prove that you could fight if you had to. Play fighting receives the same consequences from staff as real fighting however. Interestingly, this behavior is said to only be engaged in between good friends, it would never be used to target gay boys. Homophobic discourse as one participant describes it creates a hostile environment even though no individual boys are targeted. Allen talked about the boys' locker room as the most homophobic space in the school, especially during the swim unit. He reported hearing that's so gay and witnessing boys calling each other faggot. Here again however, this behavior seemed reserved for boys within a particular friend group or subculture, and

not used to target boys who might identify a gay. Lastly, some participants provided unsolicited reports of adult gender policing within the setting. Steve reported feeling pressured by teachers and coaches to play sports, for example. These findings suggest that orthodox masculinity is still present at Suburban High.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

Intra-gender policing plays a significant role in the reproduction of masculinity among adolescent boys (Duncan, 1999; Kimmel & Mahler, 2003; Plummer, 2001; Stoudt, 2006, 2012). Intra-gender policing is defined as any behavior that is meant to force or reinforce strict norms of masculinity among peers (Duncan, 1999). These behaviors include teasing, joking, bullying, punking, and physical violence. Schools can be rife with intra-gender policing (Klein, 2006; Phillips, 2007) leading to poor outcomes for many adolescent boys. Intra-gender policing among boys contributes to the decay of important male friendships (Way, 2012, 2013); increased loneliness and feelings of depression (Way, 2013); increased risk taking (Phillips, 2007); increased levels of victimization; and increased willingness to engage in acts of violence (Kimmel & Mahler, 2003; Klein, 2006; Phillips, 2005, 2007) including, suicide and mass school shootings (Kimmel & Mahler, 2003; Klein, 2006). Recent research suggest however, that in some cases boys' performance of masculinity is changing from strict adherence to stereotypic male gender norms to allow for a wider expression of self that may include things often deemed feminine. Anderson (2009) terms this new form of masculinity, inclusive masculinity.

The purpose of this study was to document young men's practice of intra-gender policing in a high school where staff suggested the presence of inclusivity. The major assumption which governed the study is taken from the second stage of Anderson's

inclusive masculinity theory (2009) which posits male reaction to living during times of diminishing homohysteria. In this second stage, Anderson describes a time when two dominant but not dominating masculinities—orthodox masculinity and inclusive masculinity—will co-exist. During this stage, boys and men who perform orthodox masculinity will continue as before, while those who perform inclusive masculinity will demonstrate emotional and physical homosocial proximity; value heterofeminity; and be socially inclusive of gay males (Anderson, 2009). Paramount to this study then, was the confirmation of inclusivity in the research setting. Documentation of intra-gender policing practices among boys serves to confirm orthodox masculinity in the setting and provide a record of orthodox masculine behavior during the second stage of the theory.

This chapter presents a discussion and interpretation of the results of the study found in Chapter 4. The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section is a discussion of findings. The second section discusses implications of the findings as they relate to executive leaders, professional practice, education, theory, and future research. The third section describes the limitations of the study. The final section provides a summary of the study.

Discussion of Findings

Boys school-based peer culture. Research in the U.K. reveals that boys are capable of creating entire school-based peer cultures where inclusive masculinity is the esteemed norm (Anderson 2009). These cultures can be entirely absent homophobia and intra-gender policing leaving boys free to engage in a wide variety of behaviors and activities, including those coded as feminine or girly (Anderson, 2005, 2008a, 2008b, 2009; McCormack & Anderson, 2014). Boys in these cultures seem to also develop close

emotionally supportive male-male relationships not previously seen in the literature (Anderson 2009, 2012). Of one such culture, Anderson says, "It's difficult to describe the overwhelming sense of openness, softness and kindness that boys expressed toward each other at Standard High" (Anderson, 2012, p. 159). Given the extant literature which paints a picture of adolescent boys trapped by school-based peer cultures where bullying, humiliation, and shame are common place (Klein, 2006; Phillips, 2007; Stoudt, 2006), it is as difficult to comprehend the inclusive culture Anderson documents as it is for him to describe. Findings of inclusivity among U.S. boys, as in the present study, suggest boys here may be moving toward developing similar cultures. This is significant, especially for boys.

While not free of homophobia or intra-gender policing, participants in the present study describe a culture where many boys seem to be free from the fear associated with failed masculine performance. Phillips (2007) finds that boys who fail at masculinity become "outcasts." She says:

> Pathways to this representation and identity included wearing off-brand clothes (less expensive) and tight pants, being scrubby, geeky, wimpy, weak, and small, in addition to being smart or shy, wearing glasses, and being classified as nerdy, poor, homo-sexual, nonathletic and not into sports, and unwilling to fight (Phillips 207, p. 163).

Kehler and Martino (2007) suggest that the fear of failed masculinity or being marked as an outcast comes from the lived experience of having one's gender policed. Indeed Stoudt (2006) found 66% of boys in his study reported self-censorship as a strategy to avoid being targeted for gender policing. To the contrary, boys at Suburban High engage

in a wide variety of behaviors and interests—wearing pink or tight pants; participating in performing arts; setting and achieving high academic goals; having a manicure and waxing eyebrows—with little fear of being labeled outcasts. Additionally, even the boys who perform orthodox masculinity at Suburban High seem to expend very little energy on intra-gender policing of either openly gay boys or those who perform inclusive masculinities. This suggests boys at Suburban High have recalibrated or are in the process of recalibrating what is considered "normal" masculine performance.

Evidence of this recalibration can also be seen in a review of the findings related to the male hierarchy in the school. Participants were split in their assessment of young men or male social groups that carry influence within the male peer culture of the school. Boys for whom athletics is a central part of their identity report that various athletes carry the most influence among peers. Boys who identify themselves as nerds or performing artists feel that influence is spread out among various groups depending on who you are. There is also some sentiment that perhaps there is no group that holds that type of influence. All participants however, describe boys who are leaders or role models as nice, genuine, happy people regardless of their affiliation with sports. In fact, two of the most influential and popular boys at Suburban High were not athletes, but boys who participated in theater and music. This is in stark contrast to Phillips (2007) whose participants attached expectations like "athleticism," "heterosexuality," "strength," "toughness," and the "ability to fight and win fights" (Phillips 2007, p. 163) to those boys considered popular.

Further evidence that inclusive masculinities are not simply practiced but esteemed at Suburban High can be seen in further exploration of the two influential class

leaders mentioned above. Participants describe the two senior class leaders from last term as gifted leaders, very outgoing, able to command a room, set a goal, and get that goal accomplished. They participated in theater and music and coordinated most programs for the class, like the prom. One participant said, "nobody didn't like them." Based on these descriptions, it seems these two young men possessed the same traits McCormack (2011b) identified as most esteemed in boys atop the inclusive masculinity social hierarchy—charisma, caring, authenticity, and social fluidity.

In addition to opening space for boys to perform inclusive masculinities, the underlying message sent by a culture where so many boys no longer fear being labeled gay is that being gay is normal. Some boys at Suburban High have achieved the normalization of gay identity as in Steve's statement, "Personally, myself, I totally accept that. I mean, you're still humans…" McCormack (2011a) refers to this as intellectual acceptance of homosexuality. This is in contrast to findings in Bortolin (2010) where boys' maintenance of heterosexual identity was compulsory and boys disassociated from gay male peers for fear of being labeled gay themselves. At Suburban High however, one might argue the lack of intra-gender policing by young men who have a personal dislike of homosexuality, indicates that even these young men have intellectualized a certain level of gay acceptance. Though that acceptance may be as simple as agreeing that gay peers are off limits for negative attention, it none-the-less conforms to a new cultural reality.

Imagine then what this new intellectual acceptance of homosexuality will mean for boys who are openly gay. One participant suggests that boys who come out may be "swarmed" with positive attention. Another felt being openly gay at Suburban High had

achieved a level of social esteem, to the point that some boys may pretend to be gay. At least one participant had a gay male friend who was treated as just one of the guys. Suburban High may be open to gay male participation in ways not before seen. Perhaps McCormack's (2011a) report of a very effeminate gay male student who was elected as student body president with enthusiastic support of his straight male peers, provides an example of what may be possible. For some boys, this acceptance may be what leads them to feel comfortable openly questioning and exploring their sexual identity.

Lastly, a school-based peer culture in which the esteemed male traits include being nice, happy, and caring rather than unfeeling and able to fight—may effect boys' emotional closeness. Oransky and Marecek (2009) found that while boys in their study lived by a strict code of stoicism, some of them expressed distress at not being able to share emotions feeling that it could even be "therapeutic" (Oransky & Marecek 2009, p. 327). While participants in the present study did not report emotional intimacy among boys, emotional intimacy is a hallmark of the whole inclusive masculinity school-based peer cultures reported in the U.K. (Anderson 2009). The level of inclusivity present in Suburban High would suggest that boys are moving toward a culture that might allow them to maintain or develop deep male-male friendships with a level of kindness and caring seen by Anderson (2012).

In general, boys at Suburban High are living with less fear than their counterparts. Homophobic bullying and shaming seem absent from this setting. Openly gay males feel safe and supported. Boys are able to engage in a wide range of activities and self-expression, which supports emotional development and self-discovery. Yet this new normal of inclusive masculinity put them at odds with some adults in their environment.

Several participants have already experienced conflict between adult expectations of them, as in Steve's comment—"which my dad frowns upon"—and their understanding of what is appropriate based on the cultural shift as they are experiencing it. Boys at Suburban High will also will have to maneuver around adult expectations of proper masculine behavior.

Intra-gender policing. The findings of intra-gender policing at Suburban High are limited. Perhaps this is not surprising as findings also suggest that Suburban High is a setting of inclusivity. McCormack (2011b) found that in the inclusive masculinity school-based peer culture he documented, even though boys had an esteemed hierarchy, the boys who were not popular were respected nonetheless. Boys in that culture did not use intra-gender policing to force conformity to esteemed traits or standards. Similarly, findings from Suburban High suggest that boys who perform inclusive masculinities do not use intra-gender policing to force conformity. In fact, the findings of intra-gender policing in the form of homophobic discourse and play fighting seem limited to boys who perform orthodox masculinity in this setting.

Participants described play fighting as "slapping up" or creating "a scene" where boys get everybody's attention and pretend to fight for about 30 seconds just because. Play fighting is only engaged in between close friends and does not seem to be based in conflict. Not confined to Suburban High, participants relayed that one can find videos of play fighting online. When asked why boys engage in this behavior, one participant suggested that it serves to put others on notice that one could fight if they had to. Play fighting seems to fit a pattern among boys who perform orthodox masculinity, that of public display for the male gaze (Korobov 2004, Phillips 2007). Even the language used

to describe it—creating a scene—is suggestive of public performance. It would seem though done in jest, there is an intra-gender policing utility to play fighting. It is a public display of fighting prowess. One participant felt that boys were not willing to admit that play fighting could lead to wounded pride. Phillips (2007) found that beating up another boy was one way to gain popularity among peers. Play fighting seems a less aggressive way of accomplishing the same goal.

Homophobic discourse is the second finding of intra-gender policing among boys at Suburban High. Allen describes the locker room as an extremely homophobic place, in fact during the swim unit he terms it "the most homophobic place in the school." He attributes the intensity of hypermasculine behavior and homophobic discourse to a response to being "surrounded by a bunch of naked dudes." Might this behavior be overcompensation for the discomfort brought on by nakedness? Interestingly, Allen's use of the terms "brotherhood," "camaraderie," and "friendship" to describe the atmosphere in which boys engage in homophobic banter in the locker room suggests here too this behavior is confined to friendship groups within the subculture of boys who perform orthodox masculinity. Not used to target openly gay boys, Allen feels the banter is used to keep boys' behavior within the friendship group from straying too far from orthodox masculinity. While it is important that openly gay males are not targets of this behavior, it nevertheless creates a hostile environment for the boys in the space. The concern here is for boys who identify as gay but are not open about it or boys who long to escape orthodox masculine performance and the damage that can be done to their self-esteem and psychological well-being.

Supporting role of professional staff. Unlike the inclusive masculinity studies presented in the literature review in Chapter 2, the findings of the present study suggest that school staff do have a role to play in supporting inclusivity. Participant interviews reveal the staff at Suburban High have made a strong impression on the boys of the school. They are unlike staff reported by Smith (2007) who are complicit in supporting or even encouraging hypermasculine behavior. Nor does the staff support a formal program like that reported in Reichert et al. (2012) where boys can participate in voluntary peer counseling. What the staff at Suburban High seem to have done is simple. They have set expectations and standards and applied them consistently in the school. Participants report that homophobic bullying is instantly addressed. They also report that play fighting is subject to the same consequences as real fighting, thus setting a tone that any behaviors that seem aggressive are not tolerated. Suburban High has gone beyond support of the Gay Straight Alliance student club, to hire at least one openly gay male teacher. In other words, there is a general feeling that staff at Suburban High walk the talk. Most notable is that this has been accomplished even while there are only a handful of boys who openly identify as gay.

Inclusive masculinity theory. The review of the literature in Chapter 2 is presented in three categories: (a) *traditional masculinity is hard work ,* documenting boys' construction of orthodox masculinity; (b) *masculinity without homophobia*, documenting inclusive masculinity with entire peer cultures which eschew homophobia and embrace feminine attributes as appropriately masculine; and (c) *successful transgressions*, documenting boys who are successful in performing counter-orthodox masculinity within orthodox masculinity school-based peer cultures without becoming

the target of intra-gender policing. While presented as distinct, when viewed through the lens of Anderson's inclusive masculinity theory (2009) these categories can be thought of as points on a continuum of masculine performance. Following the stages of the theory from cultures of high homohysteria to cultures with diminished homohysteria, this continuum ranges from orthodox masculinity to inclusive masculinity. The major assumption which governed this study is taken from the second stage of Anderson's theory (2009)—cultures of diminishing homohysteria. In this time of transition, Anderson posits that two dominant but not dominating masculinities—orthodox masculinity and inclusive masculinity—will co-exist. Following this logic, it would seem the boys-in-between might represent the first hints of inclusivity within a setting, while the findings of the present study represent a culture closer to the inclusive masculinity end of the continuum, as depicted in Figure 5.1.

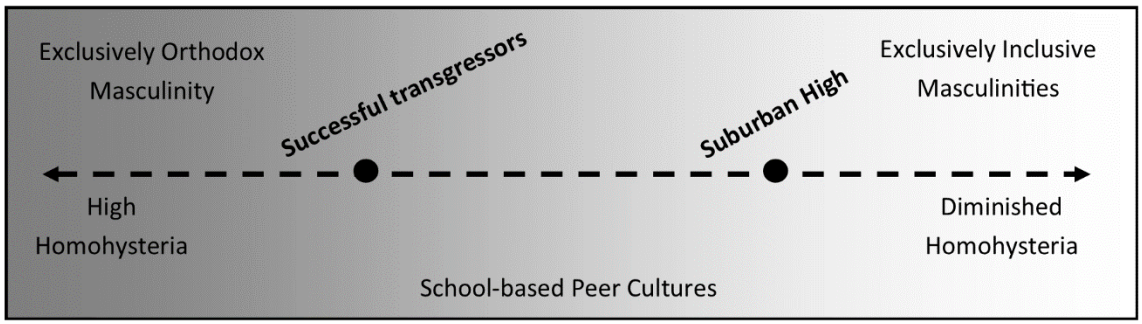

Figure 5.1. Masculinity continuum related to states of homohysteria as implied by Anderson's inclusive masculinity theory (Anderson, 2009).

Like the successful transgressors, many boys at Suburban High are capable of sustained counter-orthodox masculine performance without being targeted for intra-gender policing. It would seem that the difference between Suburban High and the settings highlighted in the boys-in-between studies, is critical mass. While the boys-in-

between studies document individuals or small groups of boys, Suburban High seems to have reached a critical mass of boys who perform counter-orthodox masculinity, thus allowing it to be read as a setting of inclusivity. Yet, as might be expected of a setting in transition, not all markers of inclusivity as defined by McCormack and Anderson (2014) are present. For example, little evidence of emotional and physical intimacy among young men in the setting was found. In other instances, inclusive masculinities were found to be performed among some subcultures of young men and not others. For example, inclusive masculine performance was lauded by most participants in the study, but they also revealed that other subcultures of boys in the school continue to label boys who perform inclusive masculinities as feminine. And in some instances, subcultures were at different stages of inclusivity. For example, data reveals that young men from orthodox masculine subcultures at Suburban High reluctantly accept the presence of gay males while some enthusiastically include gay male peers as one of the guys. Nonetheless, these findings seem to confirm and document Anderson's second stage.

Beyond the markers of inclusivity as defined by McCormack and Anderson (2014) however, the findings suggest additional important markers that may signal a culture in transition. While the young men of Suburban High embrace many once-feminized artifacts, one which deserves note—as it is not typically included in what McCormack and Anderson articulate—is the embrace of high academic standards. Mike's comment that "sometimes the jocks are the nerds" is not only illustriative of this point, it also shows an interesting trend at Suburban High of young men who identify as athletes in particular, embracing the once-feminized.

Athletic prowess has long been a trait of traditional orthodox masculinity (Anderson, 2009, 2011; Heinrich 2013; Phillips 2007). Mastery of the culturally esteemed combat sports, like football, is especially used by men and boys to distance themselves from femininity (Anderson 2009, Heinrich 2013; Phillips 2007). When thinking about a germinating point for settings of inclusivity, it seems plausible that of all of the young men in the school who could embrace the once-feminized without repercussions, it would be the high social capital athletes. It is noteworthy then that some athletes from those esteemed sports at Suburban High embrace high academic standards; engage in musical and theatrical performance; and can wear pink or wax their eyebrows, for example, without consequence. Perhaps as esteemed athletes who set the norm for masculine behavior, they are inately protected from intra-gender policing?

The findings of the study also suggest that male esteem has found a new subject at Suburban High—the nice guy. Participants described male peers who are leaders and role models as nice guys. "Genuinely nice guy," "really nice guy," and "genuinely happy" are just some of the adjectives used to describe them. This finding is supported by Anderson (2009) who found this characterization of the nice guy among young college men who perform inclusive masculinities. These nice guys do not constitute their own subculture within the school however. Nice guys seem to be spread among the many male subcultures of the school. Participants even described the most esteemed athletes as nice guys, careful to point out that they were unlike some other athletes who could be mean. As a result, it seems that the social capital typically concentrated among male athletes—what Anderson (2012) terms jock-o-cratic culture—is also being spread throughout male subcultures. This may speak directly to the finding that orthodox

masculine subcultures at Suburban High seem not to wield enough social power to dictate masculine standards among many boys, as seen in Kevin's admonishment of the poor attitudes held by the not-real-tough guys and not-real-farmers. He feels it is not true that to be successful "you need to like constantly try to assert yourself as someone who's important and powerful and strong…" as these two groups would suggest. Clearly their orthodox masculine standard is lost on him. This study would suggest that diffusion of social capital across male subcultures of a school may also be a marker of stage two of inclusive masculinity theory.

Lastly, that emotional intimacy was not found in the present study might suggest an order to the development of inclusive masculinity traits among boys. The discussion of a peer counseling program in Reichert et al. (2012) designed to help boys express their emotions and find support among peers, would suggest that the development of emotional intimacy among boys is possible with lots of support from staff, in a private setting, with strict rules of confidentiality. The apparent difficulty boys have in expressing emotions even with support, would make it plausible that even in settings with reduced fear of failed masculinity, emotional intimacy may be the last inclusive masculinity trait to develop.

Limitations

This section describes the limitations of the study that may impact the results and findings. The boys who participated were all selected from one suburban high school where the staff suggested inclusivity, thus any generalizations that may be inferred are limited to similar settings where inclusivity is suspected. One important limitation of the study is that all participants in the study performed inclusive masculinities. No boys

from exclusive orthodox masculine subcultures of the school volunteered for the study. Participants acted as informants about the school culture and it is assumed that participant observations of orthodox masculine behavior were accurate. Nonetheless, the study would have been enhanced by first-hand accounts of boys who perform orthodox masculinity. The addition of orthodox masculine participants may have unearthed additional examples of intra-gender policing not seen or experienced by boys who perform inclusive masculinities.

The small sample size of 8 participants, time limitations imposed by the school of just one-45 minute class period for interviews, and the elimination of the member check all combined to create additional limitations to data collection. A larger sample would have contributed to richer data, as would a longer interview. While saturation was reached for the findings presented, with a few exceptions that are explicitly stated, more data may have allowed for richer detail and descriptions. The member check would have allowed the researcher to fill in minor gaps in thought and conversation during the interviews, as well as correct inaudible sections of the interview tapes. It would have also given participants the opportunity to correct any misrepresentations in their answers.

Lastly, there was no opportunity to build triangulation of the data into this study. Participant observation in key areas of the school—lunch room, study halls, hallways between classes—would have enhanced data collection. Observation of spaces assumed to be more highly orthodox—football practice, shop and mechanics classes—would have provided additional data about orthodox masculine performance even absent of orthodox masculine participants in the sample.

Implications of the Study

The findings of this study suggest implications for executive leaders, professional practice, education, theory, and future research which are shared in this section.

Implications for executive leaders. In recent years, executive leaders—principals, superintendents, and school board members—have had to lead through extremely difficult times due to circumstances that have been partially driven by intra-gender policing. Student suicides and mass school shootings resulting from homophobic bullying have been the subject of much conjecture and debate (Vossekuil, Fein, Reddy, Borum, & Modzeleski, 2002). Schools regularly train for what is now termed "targeted school violence" (Vossekuil et al., 2002). The United States Secret Service, Department of Education, Department of Justice, the National Institutes of Health, Centers for Disease Control, the New York State Department of Education, college and universities, plus countless nonprofit organizations now produce resources and trainings on school violence for use by school administrators (http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/56917.htm). Much of this information is aimed at preventing mass school shootings through threat assessment and development of bystander programs. Implications of the present study, however, suggest there may be another way. Through strong leadership and policy implementation, the nation's school leaders are perhaps best positioned to support boys in their transition from orthodox masculinity school-based peer cultures rife with ridicule, shame, and violence to cultures of inclusive masculinity where boys care deeply for one another.

If Anderson's theory is correct, boys' move to inclusive masculine performance is predicated on reduced fear of being homosexualized. It would make sense then that the

cultural shift in LGBT acceptance is part and particle of this transition. School leaders seeking to support boys' move toward inclusive masculinity must first recognize that schools do not exist in a vacuum. Students as well as staff are effected by the cultural shift in LGBT acceptance occurring in the society-at-large. It is not enough however, to expect that because a larger cultural shift is taking place that everyone has adopted a new and accepting attitude. William's remark—"not everyone is used to it yet" reminds us of this. The findings of the present study suggest that to support greater LBGT acceptance, school leaders must:

- Support schools in creating Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) student clubs, provide caring knowledgeable staff advisors, and offer the same resources to operate as other school clubs receive.
- Remove attitudinal barriers to hiring, training, and advancing openly gay teachers and other staff by providing professional development around LGBT cultural competence for all personnel and school board members.
- Update code of conduct policies to limit tolerance for aggressiveness, including fighting, bullying, and "play fighting." Executive leaders must clearly communicate those standards and support staff in being consistent in the application of consequences for deviating from them.

Just as Allen was quick to point out that as a gay student, Suburban High felt safer to him, he was also quick to point out the homophobia still present in the school. For all of the effort the staff at Suburban High take to eliminate homophobic bullying, the locker room scene painted by Allen stands out as an area sorely in need of attention. This finding suggests that principals and other building leaders must:

- Be aware that the absence of targeted homophobic bullying does not mean that a school is a safe environment or free of homophobia.
- Understand that homophobic banter, that seems like light-hearted joking among friends, is actually a form of intra-gender policing and can create a hostile environment for boys who identify as gay as well as others. Leaders must understand that zero tolerance policies for targeted homophobic bullying may not reduce this type of homophobic discourse.
- Be aware that because this homophobic banter is not used to bully a specific target, it may be easy for staff to dismiss this behavior under the heading "boys will be boys." It is important for leaders to include homophobic discourse in what is considered aggressive and unacceptable. Staff should be supported in learning how to diffuse the behavior and given clear expectations of the consequences of engaging in it.

While adult gender policing was not the focus of this study, participants offered unsolicited examples. Significant to this study were the limited examples of gender policing by teachers or coaching staff offered by Steve. Steve reported having heard coaches say things like "stop running like a girl" to motivate boys and felt pressure from teachers to play sports simply because he is male. Given these limited finings, it is important for school leaders to:

- Set a tone of encouragement and diversity of experience and self-exploration so that boys feel school is a safe place to explore all interests regardless of gendered expectations.

- Support staff is checking their gendered expectations through training and staff development.
- Set explicit standards that adult gender policing of students will not be tolerated.

Implications for professional practice. Teachers, coaches, and other frontline professionals have a tremendous opportunity to support boys as they create settings of inclusivity. Findings of the study show that staff have had a strong impact on the school's culture, in particular by quickly responding to homophobic bullying, supporting an active GSA, and creating a safe space for openly gay teachers. These findings further suggest it is important for school staff to:

- Understand and consistently enforce school behavior standards.
- Work to identify their own gendered assumptions and check their gender policing behaviors toward students.
- Learn to interrupt intra-gender policing among boys when they witness it.
- Applaud boys' individual commitment to school activities and accomplishments without regard to gendered expectations of participation or achievement.

Implications for education. Teacher preparation programs do not only support future teachers in gaining content knowledge and classroom management skills. Programs in secondary education also include classes on adolescent development, special issues, and special populations. The long standing western cultural view of masculinity as the norm however, has meant that boys and men are typically not the focus of classes that examine the needs of special student populations. Given the extant literature on boys

and masculinity, one could argue that adolescent boys are indeed a population in special need of attention. Implications of the present study suggest that schools of education:

- Include adolescent boys as a special population and provide future teachers with an understanding of the risks associated with orthodox masculine performance and orthodox masculine school-based peer cultures.
- Educate teachers on the changing nature of adolescent masculine performance, giving them insight into boys' development of inclusive masculinities.
- Support future teachers in exploring their own gendered assumptions, understanding intra-gender policing among boys, and identification of adult gender policing in schools.
- Include working with LGBT populations in special populations coursework.

Implications for theory. The findings of this study suggest that Anderson's inclusive masculinity theory is correct in its prediction that as homohysteria or fear of being labeled gay decreases, boys will be free to perform a wider variety of masculinities, including engaging in behaviors considered feminine. Furthermore, the study would suggest a germinal point and order to the development of settings of inclusivity. It is suggested that:

- Combat sports athletes be considered as the germinal source of inclusive masculinity in a setting. Given their cultural capital and ability to set the standards of masculinity, it would be plausible that as these athletes adopt inclusive masculinity traits they could both escape negative censorship and move a culture in a new direction.

- The following order of the development of settings of inclusivity be considered: (a) intellectual acceptance of homosexuality, (b) embrace of once-feminized artifacts, (c) inclusion of gay male peers, (d) increased physical proximity, followed by (e) increased emotional proximity.

In addition, the findings of this study suggest a mechanism for the spread of inclusive masculinity within a setting:

- Esteemed masculine traits shift from traditional stereotypic norms to "the nice guy." Boys who perform "nice guy masculinity" can be found in many subcultures throughout the school.
- No longer are the esteemed masculine traits held by one dominate subculture—typically the athletes—resulting in two dominant but not dominating masculine subcultures.

Implications for future research. The extant literature provides evidence of orthodox masculinity school-based peer cultures and their detrimental effects on boys. Inclusive masculinity research provides evidence of entire school-based peer cultures that have adopted inclusive masculinities and the tremendous transformation in young men's masculine performance that can happen. This study now provides evidence of stage two of inclusive masculinity theory, a culture in transition. Yet these studies are distinct and static snapshots of various cultures and masculine performance, it is recommended that:

- A longitudinal research study track one school-based peer culture to document transformation through the stages of inclusive masculinity theory.

Additionally, the extant literature offers very few studies of specific populations of interest, therefore it is recommended that:

- This study be repeated in the following settings: an inner city school, where issues of race and class tend to exacerbate hypermasculine performance; a rural school, where LGBT acceptance may not be as prevalent; and an all-male school, where the dynamics of masculine performance have been shown to be different from the co-ed experience. Such studies would provide additional documentation of how cultures of diminishing homohysteria effect different boys.

As inclusive masculinity theory predicts, as the fear of being homosexualized has decreased, the young men at Suburban High are experiencing a shift in what it means to be masculine. If masculinity is no longer held in opposition to femininity, there are several questions that can be asked:

- What does being masculine mean to young men who perform inclusive masculinities?
- Is there a masculine performance that constitutes failed masculinity for young men who perform inclusive masculinities?
- How will academic success be effected as young men adopt acceptance of high academic standards?

The implications of gay adolescents finding new acceptance, and in some cases popularity, are another important area for study:

- What affect is greater acceptance having on individual young men who identify openly as gay?
- How do young men who openly identify as gay make connections and build friendships with their male peers who do not identify as gay?

- In what ways does being included as "one of the guys" impact young men who are gay?

Additionally, the inclusion of gay young men in boys' school-based peer cultures is likely to impact boys who do not identify as gay:

- How do young men who do not identify as gay make connections and build friendships with their gay male peers?
- What is the impact of having openly gay male friends on young men who do not identify as gay?

Lastly, it seems that young men will continue to develop inclusive masculine identities that seem foreign to adults:

- How do young men who perform inclusive masculinities negotiate adult gender policing?
- What impact does adult gender policing have on young men who perform inclusive masculinities?

Summary

Adolescence can be difficult for boys as they negotiate cultural expectations of manhood. High schools are important places for learning and performing masculinity. The extant literature reports that hegemonic or orthodox masculine performance, characterized by anti-femininity and homophobia, has been the esteemed masculine standard. Intra-gender policing in the form of teasing, joking, bullying, punking, and inter-personal violence is often used by boys to police the gender performance of others. The extant literature reports there can be severe consequences for boys deemed failures at masculinity by their peers. Recent studies however, find that boys' school-based peer

cultures are changing. Anderson's inclusive masculinity theory suggests that a broad cultural shift in acceptance of LGBT people has created a climate of diminishing homohysteria, a term he uses to mean the fear of being homosexualized or thought to be gay. As the fear of being branded gay diminishes, Anderson posits boys and men will engage in a wider range of behaviors, including those labeled feminine. These climates are termed inclusive settings, indicating that they are inclusive of a gay males and indeed a range of masculine performance much broader than the narrowly defined orthodox masculinity.

The primary purpose of this study was to document boys' practice of intra-gender policing in a high school where inclusivity was suspected. The study first sought to confirm inclusivity in the high school selected as the research setting and then to document intra-gender policing behaviors. The research methodology was qualitative using semi-structured interviews to collect data. Study participants were adolescent boys in their junior and senior year of high school. They served as informants about the boys' culture of the school.

The findings of this study suggest that the research setting is a setting of inclusivity as suggested by the presence of inclusive traits (McCormack & Anderson, 2014). Data reveals boys' willingness and ability to engage once-feminized artifacts and traits such as embrace of high academic standards, wearing pink, and getting manicures without fear of failed masculinity. Boys also demonstrated a range of acceptance of their gay male peers. Most notably, participants reported little evidence of intra-gender policing. Findings of intra-gender policing seemed limited to homophobic banter and play fighting among boys who perform orthodox masculinity, which interestingly did not

target openly gay boys or boys who perform inclusive masculinity. A participant's discussion of the purpose of play fighting included an intra-gender policing utility but seems only engaged in with one's closest friends. Without prompting, participants also offered evidence of gender policing by the adults in their environment:parents, teachers, and coaches. Together, these findings provide evidence of inclusivity and suggest that boys' experience of intra-gender policing is confined to behaviors within subcultures of boys who perform orthodox masculinity.

These findings offer implications for professional practice and for adolescent boys themselves. Findings suggests that school staff play an important role in establishing a safe environment for LGBT students. Strict standards of behavior that are clearly communicated and consistently applied make the school feel safe. The support of an active Gay Straight Alliance school club and hiring openly gay male teaching staff supports intellectual acceptance of gay male peers. Perhaps the most notable implication for boys is that acceptance of gay male peers will allow young men who identify as gay to inhabit and experience school in ways very different from their predecessors. Boys may also find it easier to question and explore their sexuality in settings of inclusivity. Embrace of high academic standards may improve boys' academic performance. Young men's performance of inclusive masculinities holds the possibility that they may develop greater emotional intimacy which will support their psychological well-being. Unfortunately, boys will have to learn to negotiate gender policing pressures from adults, as they continue to perform masculinity in ways that differ from adult expectations and assumptions.

The findings also suggest theoretical implications for Anderson's inclusive masculinity theory. The data support the second stage of inclusive masculinity which posits both inclusive and orthodox masculinities can exist in one setting with neither dominating. An additional feminine marker embraced by boys who perform inclusive masculinities—high academic standards—was found in this setting. Additional findings suggest that athletes may be first to perform inclusive masculinities successfully in a setting. This study found no evidence of emotional intimacy among boys at Suburban High suggesting that there may be an order in which inclusive traits are adopted with emotional intimacy be last to develop.

The findings of the study suggest several recommendations for additional research, professional practice, and theory. Key recommendations include (a) exploration of the impact of LGBT acceptance on openly gay male students; (b) exploration of the impact of adult gender policing on boys who perform inclusive masculinities; (c) creation and support of Gay Straight Alliance school clubs, even if there are only one or two openly gay students; (d) removal of attitudes and barriers to hiring openly gay teachers and other staff; (e) exploration of athletes as the germinal point for the creation of settings of inclusivity; and (f) a longitudinal study to document the development of inclusive masculinity school-based peer cultures.

Evidence of inclusivity found in this study suggests a hopeful turnaround, similar to that reported in the UK, may be possible for adolescent boys in the US. It documents that boys are capable of a wide range of masculine performance, including acceptance of openly gay male peers. It also demonstrates that intra-gender policing to force strict stereotypic masculine performance is not rampant in all schools. The sophistication of

insight that some participants displayed also suggests that some boys are capable of deep thinking about masculinity and the circumstances that surround their own development as young men. It is hoped that these findings will encourage adults, especially school staff, to support boys as they continue to broaden what it means to be masculine in today's society.

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Appendix A

Study Permission packet

Dear Parents and Students,

My name is Kelly Clark and I am a doctoral candidate at St. John Fisher College. I am interested in learning about 11th and 12th grade boys' behaviors, friendships, and activities in school, in other words the culture boys build together during their years in high school. I have chosen [redacted] High School because the male students seem to have built a rich and dynamic culture there. If your son decides to participate in this research, he will be asked to attend one 45-minute interview with me and one additional 45-minute meeting to have the opportunity to read a written transcript of his interview.

Each session will take place during a free period, before, or after school as not to interfere with his classes. While, it is preferable that interviews be audio-recorded, allowing me to be fully engaged with each participant, the boys will be given the choice not to be recorded. For those boys wishing not to be recorded, interviews will proceed with the use of hand written notes. All information provided in the interview will be strictly confidential and only myself and the transcriptionist will see the original transcripts. To ensure confidentiality, boys will be given a pseudonym. Their real names will not be used to identify them. They will also be asked not to name others in their responses to interview questions.

Each generation faces new and differing cultural challenges. The purpose of this study is to understand more about what's going on with this generation of boys in school, and will include questions related to the dynamics of male friendships as well as tensions between boys. I hope this information will help us understand more about how to support adolescent boys during one of their most important developmental periods, the time just before adulthood. The information your son can share may help with this. Participation is entirely voluntary. Your son may choose not to answer certain questions or to discontinue participation at any time without any penalty. Should your son bring up any issues related to bullying in school, he will be provided with information on the school's bullying policy and how to seek help for any such issues.

Please be advised that this study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at St. John Fisher College and the [redacted] School District. I have also completed the National Institute of Health training on conducting research.

I sincerely thank you for your consideration. If your son decides to participate, please complete the enclosed Parental Consent Form, Student Assent Form, and Student Demographic Profile Form. Return these forms to Assistant Principal [redacted] as soon as possible, but no later than May 15, 2015.

Thank you,
Kelly Clark
Doctoral Candidate
Ralph C. Wilson, School of Education
St. John Fisher College
Rochester, NY

St John Fisher College

Institutional Review Board

Parent Informed Consent Form

(For use with minors)

Title of study: Adolescent Boys' Interactions with Other Boys in School

Name(s) of researcher(s): Kelly Clark

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Diane Cooney-Miner **Phone for further information:** 585-385-8472

Purpose of study: The purpose of this research is to explore boys' behaviors, friendships, and activities in school, in other words the male culture they build together as students. Your son is being asked to participate because as a male student, he is most knowledgeable about boys' culture at Rush Henrietta Senior High School.

Approval of study: This study has been reviewed and approved by the St. John Fisher College Institutional Review Board (IRB). The members of the IRB may be contacted at IRB@SJFC.EDU.

Place of study: Rush Henrietta Senior High School, Counseling Office

Length of participation: Two 45-minute sessions.

Involvement: If your son decides to participate in this research, he will be asked to attend one 45-minute interview with the researcher and one additional 45-minute meeting to have the opportunity to read a written transcript of his interview. In that meeting, he will have the opportunity to make corrections or add additional thoughts.

Each session will take place during your son's free periods, before, or after school as not to interfere with class time. While, it is preferable that interviews be audio-recorded, allowing the researcher to be fully engaged with each participant, boys will be provided the choice not to be recorded. For those boys wishing not to be recorded, interviews will proceed with the use of hand written notes.

Potential risks: There is minimal risk to participating in this study. Your son may bring up issues related to bullying among boys in the school. If he should, he will be provided with additional information on the school's bullying policy and how to seek help for any such issues. If you decide to let your son participate in the study, your son's identity will be protected at all times.

Potential benefits: There are no direct benefits to individuals that participate in this study. I hope the information learned through this study will help us understand more about how to support adolescent boys during one of their most important developmental periods, the time just before adulthood.

Method for protecting confidentiality/privacy: Your son's name will be kept confidential and anonymous. He will be assigned a pseudonym to be used for identification purposes. Recordings will be labeled with the pseudonym and transcribed by a transcriptionist. Any references or direct quotes from your son's interview to be used will be attributed to his pseudonym. He will be instructed not to name individuals in his response to interview questions. All information will be locked and stored in a safe place.

Your rights:
As a parent/guardian of a research participant, you have the right to:

1. Have the purpose of the study, and the expected risks and benefits fully explained to you before you choose to allow your minor child to participate.
2. Withdraw your child from participation at any time without penalty. Your child's participation in this study is VOLUNTARY.
3. Tell your child to refuse to answer a particular question without penalty.
4. Be informed of appropriate treatment that might help your minor child.
5. Be informed of the results of the study.
6. Receive a copy of sample survey statements to review BEFORE you give your child permission to participate.

Consent for a minor child:
I, the parent of _____, a minor, _____years of age, consent to his participation in the study: **Adolescent Boys' Interactions with Other Boys in School.** I have read the above, received a copy of this form, and I agree to have my child participate in the above named study. I give my permission for my child's interview results to be used in presentations and publications. I understand that my child's identity will be protected at all times.

_____	_____	_____
Print name (Parent/Guardian)	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Print name (Child/Participant)	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Print name (Investigator)	Signature	Date

If you have any further questions, please contact the researcher at 585-520-6188 or by email at kc09144@sjfc.edu.

St John Fisher College

Institutional Review Board

Student Assent Form

(For use with minors)

Title of study: Adolescent Boys' Interactions with Other Boys in School

Name(s) of researcher(s): Kelly Clark

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Diane Cooney-Miner **Phone for further information:** 585-385-8472

Purpose of study: The purpose of this research is to explore boys' behaviors, friendships, and activities in school, in other words the male culture they build together as students. You are being asked to participate because as a male student, you are most knowledgeable about boys' culture at Rush Henrietta Senior High School.

Approval of study: This study has been reviewed and approved by the St. John Fisher College Institutional Review Board (IRB). The members of the IRB may be contacted at IRB@SJFC.EDU.

Place of study: Rush Henrietta Senior High School, Counseling Office

Length of participation: Two 45-minute sessions.

Involvement: If you decide to participate in this research, you will be asked to attend one 45-minute interview with the researcher and one additional 45-minute meeting to have the opportunity to read a written transcript of your interview. In that meeting, you will have the opportunity to make corrections or add additional thoughts.

Each session will take place during your free periods, before, or after school as not to interfere with class time. While, it is preferable that interviews be audio-recorded, you will be provided the choice not to be recorded. For those boys wishing not to be recorded, interviews will proceed with the use of hand written notes.

Potential risks: There is minimal risk to participating in this study. You may bring up issues related to bullying among boys in the school. If you do, you will be provided with additional information on the school's bullying policy and how to seek help for any such issues. If you decide to participate in the study, your identity will be protected at all times.

Potential benefits: There are no direct benefits to individuals who participate in this study. I hope the information learned through this study will help us understand more about how to support adolescent boys like yourself during an important time of life, the time just before adulthood.

Method for protecting confidentiality/privacy: You name will be kept confidential and anonymous. You will be assigned a pseudonym to be used for identification purposes. Recordings will be labeled with the pseudonym and transcribed by a transcriptionist. Any references or direct quotes from your interview to be used in the study report will be attributed to this pseudonym. You will be instructed not to name individuals in your response to interview questions. All information will be locked and stored in a safe place.

Your rights:
As the research participant, you have the right to:

1. Have the purpose of the study, risks, and benefits fully explained to you before you participate.
2. Withdraw from participation at any time without penalty. Your participation in the study is VOLUNTARY.
3. Refuse to answer a particular question in the interview without penalty.
4. Be informed of treatment, if any, that might help you.
5. Be informed of the results of the study.
6. Receive a copy of sample survey statements to review with your parent/guardian BEFORE giving permission to participate.

I have read the above, received a copy of this form, and I agree to participate in the study: **Adolescent Boys' Interactions with Other Boys in School**. I give my permission for my interview results to be used in presentations and publications. I understand that my identity will be protected at all times.

_____	_____	_____
Print name (Participant)	Signature	Date

_____	_____	_____
Print name (Investigator)	Signature	Date

If you have any further questions, please contact the researcher at 585-520-6188 or by email at kc09144@sjfc.edu.

Adolescent Boys' Interactions with Other Boys in School

Demographic Profile Form

First Name Only: _____ (Please write clearly)

Age: _____ Grade:_____

Please list all of the **school activities** you participate in:

_____

_____

_____

_____ _____

Please indicate your preference for study hall, homeroom, before or after school time to schedule your interview.

___ Study Hall Day/Time: _____

___ Homeroom Best Day: _____

___ Before School Best Day: _____

___ After School Best Day: _____

Appendix B

Adolescent Boys' Interactions with Other Boys in School.

Interview Protocol

Date: Participant: _____

Time: Alias: _____

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study. As you know, I am researching boys' culture in high school. I'm interviewing you because as a boy in high school, you are one of the experts! We'll spend about 45 minutes talking today. I have a mix of questions that will help me better understand what it is like to be a male student here. If I ask a question you would rather not answer, just let me know and we can skip it.

I want to remind you about confidentiality. Although I know who you are, I will not share your name with others; when I write up the report of what I learned, I will be focusing on common themes I hear from many interviews; if I use a quote to illustrate a point, it will be anonymous or I will use the alias you came up with - _____.

It helps me to record these interviews, this way I can concentrate on talking with you and not taking notes, is that okay? [If yes the interview will proceed, if no the interview will proceed without the recorder] *Do you have any questions before we start?*

1. **Opening Question**
   1.1. Can you tell me what seemed interesting to you about this study, why did you want to participate?

2. **Main Questions**

2.1. Some of the research studies I have been reading suggest that in some places boy's culture at school is changing, do you think that's true? PROBE: Like boys can do more – like be really into art and play sports.

2.2. Some of your faculty and staff tell me that the popular boys in the school are athletes but some are also boys who do theater. What do you think? Have you observed differences in how boys who are athletes and boys who do musicals are treated by other boys? Can you give me an example or two?

2.3. Who are the unpopular boys? PROBE: What activities do they do? What kind of personality do they have? What kind of students are they?

2.4. Can you remember a time when there was a physical fight between two boys at school? PROBES: Can you tell me a little about it? Where did it happen? Who was involved? What do you know about what started it or lead up to it? Was there an audience? If so, what did they do? How did it end?

2.5. If you were upset, could you talk to a male friend at school? Can you give me an example? PROBES: So if your friend gave you a hug in that example that would…? Help, make it worse, etc? Have you observed guys hugging other guy friends at other times? Can you give me an example?

2.6. So what are some other ways that boy's culture could be changing…well have you observed boys wearing pink at school? Can you give me an example? What was the reaction of other boys?

2.7. Are there boys who are gay and out here? What have you observed about how they are treated by male peers? Can you give me an example? PROBES: Are they treated like one of the guys? Are they excluded by other boys?

2.8. Is there anything you would like to add that would help me understand more about the boys' in this school?

3. Closing

Thank you for your time today. I have one more task for you. Next week, I'll return with this interview all typed up. I'd like you to sit down and read through it one time. I ask participants to do that just to be sure that there isn't anything that is misunderstood, anything you would want to clarify, or anything that comes to you later that you would want to add.

Since we talked about bullying today, I'd like to be sure you know about the school's bullying policy and who to talk to if you have any concerns about yourself or someone else. [Provide handout to be obtained from school counseling office]