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Friendship Formation and Maintenance: Examining Friendship Patterns of Homosexual Men and Heterosexual Women in Close Relationships

Amanda G. Goodwin

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**FRIENDSHIP FORMATION AND MAINTENANCE: EXAMINING
FRIENDSHIP PATTERNS OF HOMOSEXUAL MEN AND
HETEROSEXUAL WOMEN IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS**

By

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B.A. University of Connecticut, 2001

A THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

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(in Communication)

The Graduate School

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May, 2003

Advisory Committee:

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Thesis Advisor: Dr. John C. Sherblom

An Abstract of the Thesis Presented
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The study of friendship has focused on various types of relationships involving same-sex and cross-sex friends. Heterosexuality has usually been assumed in these relationships, although recently research has been done involving homosexual friendships. The present study provides a quantitative analysis of personal-social characteristics and relational expectations, and a qualitative analysis of friendship formation, maintenance strategies, and relational importance of homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other. These analyses help in understanding why and how close friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women are formed and maintained.

A questionnaire combining elements of one developed by Savin-Williams (1990) to measure personal-social characteristics, and portions of one used by Nardi and Sherrod (1994) to measure relational expectations was modified for present use. In addition to the questionnaire, interviews were conducted to measure maintenance strategies and the

importance of the relationship. Responses from homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships were compared to responses from homosexual men and heterosexual women in casual relationships.

Quantitative analysis showed some support suggesting that homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships have more similar social-personal characteristics and relational expectations than do homosexual men and heterosexual women in casual relationships. Homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women reported being more forceful and aggressive than homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women; heterosexual women in close relationships with homosexual men reported being more forceful and aggressive, and having more close homosexual male friends than heterosexual women in casual relationships with homosexual men; homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women report being open, trusting, and truly themselves, discussing topics such as personal strengths and weaknesses, resolving conflicts as important, having conversational involvement, spending enjoyable time together, and engaging in social activities more than homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women; heterosexual women in close relationships with homosexual men report discussing topics such as personal strengths and weaknesses and spending enjoyable time together more than heterosexual women in casual relationships with homosexual men; and homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships may be more discrepant in their self-reported forcefulness than homosexual men and heterosexual women in casual relationships.

A cluster analysis of the interviews was conducted and dendograms were used to identify concepts that were important to friendships between homosexual men and

heterosexual women. The analysis revealed clusters containing word pairs which were interpreted within the context of the text of the interviews.

The results suggest that homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other are different from homosexual men and heterosexual women in casual relationships with each other. It also suggests that homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other maintain their relationships using many of the strategies used in other relationships, but that their relationships with each other offer something that other relationships do not.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Friendship Conceptualized

Aristotle described friendship as “a single soul in two bodies” (Aristotle, trans. 1984). Friendships of many kinds are portrayed in the Bible, Greek and Roman mythologies often proclaim the trials and triumphs of friendships, and modern cinema and television depict the stages and importance of friendship. Friendships have always had, and will continue to play a huge role in all of our lives. In our culture, friendships are “voluntary, informal, personal and private” (Jerrome, 1984, p. 696) relationships with social and personal benefits. They are “typically viewed as intimate, at least to some degree, and egalitarian” (Adams & Blieszner, 1994, p. 170). Friendships reflect “a strong spiritual attraction” (Rawlins, 1982, p. 344) and are “a relatively uninstitutionalized relationship without standard rituals, norms or nomenclature to guide the partners” (Adams & Blieszner, 1994, pp. 163-164) which can make the understanding and study of friendship difficult. Friendships are something we must study because they are with us from our youngest years, stay with us during our adult lives, and provide needed social support as we grow older.

There are many different types of friendships. To allow for a better understanding of friendship it is necessary to examine each kind separately and in relation to the others. Traditional social science conceptualizes friendship as a relationship between individuals of the same-sex (male-male, female-female) or cross-sex (male-female). Studies of friendship have excluded the individual sexuality. In light of feminist and lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgendered (LGBT) research however, researchers must also consider relations of sexuality. Using the older social science models as a guide, this

would mean to consider same-sex, same-sexuality (heterosexual male-heterosexual male, homosexual male-homosexual male, heterosexual female-heterosexual female, homosexual female-homosexual female); same-sex, cross-sexuality (heterosexual male-homosexual male, heterosexual female-homosexual female); cross-sex, same-sexuality (heterosexual male-heterosexual female, homosexual male-homosexual female); and cross-sex, cross-sexuality (heterosexual male-homosexual female, homosexual male-heterosexual female). However, this taxonomy only works if both sex and sexuality is considered to be a bi-polar/bi-modal opposition. The same-sex categories are compounded when intersexed and transgendered individuals are considered. Likewise, bisexuality challenges the opposition of either heterosexual or homosexual. Given that there are different types of friendship the reasons for friendship formation differ from type to type. Within the different types of friendships there are reasons why the relationships are maintained, and there are struggles and barriers that may hinder certain types of friendships.

The Need to Study Homosexual Friendships

Although, friendships have been studied throughout history, it has not been until recently that the friendships among homosexuals have been examined. Coates and Jordan (1997) question whether friendship is possible “across the potential divide of sexual orientation” (p. 215). They stress the need to study friendships among homosexual people by suggesting the need for an “exploration of *why* there is no division in this group, given that sexual orientation is an important and controversial aspect of a person’s identity in so many facets of life” (p. 216). Although this type of friendship may be similar to heterosexual friendships, there are differences. Homosexual people

experience the world differently than heterosexual people. They face different challenges and are viewed differently by the heterosexual and heterosexist society in which they live. Nardi and Sherrod (1994) argue that “sexual orientation is such a potent organizing influence on an individual’s social and familial relationships that ignoring sexual orientation in the study of friendship is a significant oversight that must be addressed” (p. 188). Studying homosexual friendships will not only help scholars understand homosexual relationships, but it may also provide some insight into the nature and variety of friendships in general.

Studying friendships among homosexual people is a large task and it is impossible to explore all of the variations in one study. Also, the study of homosexual friendships is relatively new to the social sciences which makes researching these types of friendships difficult. The study of friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women bridges traditional social scientific research on friendship with feminist and LGBT research.

This review explores the friendship between homosexual men and heterosexual women. The present study will review the literature on friendship formation, homosexual friendships, cross-sexuality friendships, friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women, and maintenance strategies used in friendships. Relational characteristics and expectations of the friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women will be explored. The present study will also examine how and why friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women are formed and how and why they are maintained.

CHAPTER ONE: REVIEW OF FRIENDSHIP RESEARCH

This chapter reviews the literature on friendships pertaining to the relationships of heterosexual men and women, and the literature concerning friendship patterns among homosexual people. To gain an understanding of the friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women, one must first take a closer look at friendships in general, but because this type of friendship is both a cross-sex and cross-sexuality relationship, these areas must be reviewed as well. A review of the research on these types of friendships can help the analysis of why friendships develop and exist between homosexual men and heterosexual women and the functions such friendships serve.

Friendship Formation

Friendships are formed differently and for various reasons, yet all friendships go through a formation process. Friendships are also formed because of various factors that influence the formation process. Once a friendship has begun to form, there are challenges that must be faced in order to form and maintain the friendship.

The Process of Friendship Formation

The formation of friendships is an ongoing process. We continuously meet new people, and therefore have never ending opportunities to create friendships. "Friendship formation occurs throughout life" (Blieszner, 2001, p. 49), from our early years of childhood to our later years as elders. Friendship is conceptualized as having phases, especially during the formation of friendship. According to Adams and Blieszner (1994), friendship formation "involves movement from stranger to acquaintance to friendship. The beginning phase of friendship involves identification of or attraction to a potential friend, initial meetings with the potential friend (if a stranger) and getting to know the

other and letting the other know oneself” (p. 172). Chambliss (1965) suggests that if friendship formation is viewed as a play, the ultimate goal for the actor is to create interactions between him or herself and the audience. In this sense, through interactions, friends help each other construct reality through dialogue to share meanings “which has implications for all areas of social life” (Jerome, 1984, p. 698). The interactions allow the actor and his or her audience “to elicit certain responses from one another...[to] try to decide what one another are like” and to then make evaluations (Chambliss, 1965, p. 370). These interactions continue between two people if they are validating, successful, and effective. People seek out friends, and select people who will validate their self-image. There are several factors that have influences on relationship formation. These factors are: environmental, individual, situational, and dyadic (Fehr, 2000; Nardi, 1999).

Factors of Friendship Formation

Environmental factors refer to the ability to have day-to-day contact with someone. Individuals do not have to share the same environment, per se, but their environment does have to allow them to keep in touch with their friends. Individual factors include “physical attractiveness, social skills, responsiveness, similarity” (Fehr, 2000, p. 71), or characteristics that make individuals desirable friends. These characteristics are what attract people to one another, and according to Cushman and Cahn (1985), liking is one of the most important aspects of forming a relationship. Situational factors are those aspects of the relationship that allow the relationship to develop. They include length of interactions and the frequency with which partners interact. Finally, dyadic factors refer to how each person in the relationship relates to the other. Reciprocity of liking and self-disclosure are important, as well as sharing similar

interests in leisure time and activities (Fehr, 2000). Nardi (1999) suggests that the most important features of these are similarity, environment, and social class.

Challenges of Friendship

In addition to these factors of friendship formation, O'Meara (1989) suggests that when studying cross-sex friendships, there are four challenges to forming and maintaining friendships that are unique to heterosexual male-female dyads: an emotional bond challenge, the sexual challenge, the equality challenge, and the audience challenge.

The emotional bond challenge. This challenge refers to the problems that men and women often have when communicating. Men and women do not always understand each other (Werking, 1997), and many women have different expectations of the relationship than do men. Often "women's expectancies for intimacy may be a source of dissatisfaction for them in cross-sex interactions, if these expectations are not shared by men" (Rose, 1985, p.64). Men and women may feel equally close to one another, but because they express their emotional feelings differently, they may not recognize how their partner feels about them (Wood, 2001).

The sexual challenge. This challenge plays a large part in heterosexual cross-sex friendships. Sexual tension can complicate the relationship, create conflict, and even bring it to an end (Pogrebin, 1987; Werking, 1997). Studies show that men feel cross-sex relationships can lead to romantic relationships (Rose, 1985) and that a sexual element in the relationship will create a deeper, more intimate friendship (Sapadin, 1988). If cross-sex friends do decide to allow a sexual element into their relationship, they run the risk of losing the friendship. "In cross-sex friendships involving sexuality, when the sexual relationship ends, the friendship often ends too" (Nardi, 1999, p. 77). In a study

interviewing nearly 150 people, no one successfully mixed sex and friendship without ending the relationship or drastically altering the friendship (Pogrebin, 1987).

The equality challenge. This challenge can create tension between the men and women in cross-sex relationships. This challenge exists because men, in general, have control over more “economic, political, educational, occupational, legal, and social resources, [and] they have more to offer each other in same-sex relationships than women can offer to men or each other” (Rose, 1985, p. 64). Men and women are not perceived socially as equal, and this often presents a problem in cross-sex friendships. “Because equality between the sexes has yet to be achieved, true and complete friendship between sexes is still unusual- except among those who have nontraditional attitudes or nonsexist educational or work experiences” (Pogrebin, 1987, p. 317).

The audience challenge. This challenge refers to those challenges cross-sex friendships face when in public. When one sees a female-male dyad, it is often assumed that they are romantically involved. It is hard for these friends to negotiate “the public image of their relationship” (Werking, 1997, p. 120). Pressure can come from family insisting that the partner is more than “just a friend”, and cross-sex friends frequently get frustrated because they must constantly remind people that their relationship is platonic (Nardi, 1999).

These challenges are not exclusive to heterosexual cross-sex friendships, however. These challenges are also present in the cross-sex relationships between homosexual men and heterosexual women. Before discussing the dynamics of these challenges in relationships between gay men and straight women, a description of the importance and characteristics of homosexual friendships is necessary.

Homosexual Friendships

Nardi (1999) suggests that “despite the intensity with which they [researchers] discuss friends, gay men remain overlooked in most research on friendship, even though sexual orientation may illustrate important variations within gender and may uncover the ways men (and women) differ in terms of how they enact friendship in every day life” (p. 16). The friendships of homosexual men have not been researched in great length, yet these relationships play an enormous role in their lives. It is important to study homosexual friendships because “an individual’s sexual orientation might be a possibly important mediator of the influence of gender on specific dimensions of friendship” (Nardi & Sherrod, 1994, p. 197). Vernon (2000) argues, “the ambiguity of friendship finds a new focus when thinking about the rise of gayness” (p. 67). Homosexual men tend to have more close friends than heterosexual men, and homosexual men’s friendships are different from those of heterosexual men. Although homosexual men do have heterosexual friends, their close friends are often other homosexual men (Nardi, 1999). Homosexual men’s friendships are often formed to create a network of support, and are therefore extremely valuable for that reason. “Gay men consider their friendships unique, special, and necessary for survival. Some have argued that their friendships may even be more intense than heterosexuals’ friendships, especially when the affection and mutual support that come from friendship enable the cultural survival of people who deviate from social norms and who suffer hostility and ostracism from others” (Nardi, 1999, p. 17). Many homosexual men feel that they cannot live without their friendships with other homosexual men.

The Healthy Aspect of Friendships

One of the important reasons friends are vital to homosexual people is because homosexual people often suffer from social, psychological, and emotional stress. Friends, heterosexual or homosexual, help homosexual people get through these problems. "Numerous studies have reported that substance abuse is more prevalent among lesbians and gay men than among heterosexuals" (LeVay & Nonas, 1995, p. 208). LeVay and Nonas also found that drug use, specifically marijuana and cocaine, is higher among homosexual people. Reports also show that suicide, "rejection from families and harassment and physical abuse" are more common among lesbians and gay men (D'Augelli & Rose, 1990). Psychological and social problems occur for many homosexual people after "coming out". Before the Stonewall riots in New York City in June of 1969, homosexuals would not publicly identify as gay for fear of criminal prosecution, incarceration, and loss of employment (Weston, 1991). Although these issues are not as prevalent today, others are. Weston (1991) reports stories that chronicle the varieties of challenges where "the protagonist was institutionalized, threatened with electro-shock therapy, kicked out of the house, reduced to living on the street, denied an inheritance, written out of a will, battered, damned as a sinner, barred from contact with younger relatives, shunned by family members, or insulted in ways that encouraged him or her to leave" (p. 61). High levels of stress suffered by homosexual people can also lead to psychological problems. "Gays and lesbians are more likely to feel under stress, and to believe that the stress in their lives is increasing. This increase in stress is felt equally in money matters, employment, in their relationships with their parents, and in their personal lives" (LeVay & Nonas, 1995, pp. 112-113).

To deal with these high levels of stress, homosexual people turn to their social support networks. When asked to whom they turn for support Berger and Mallon (1991) state that homosexual people report that of the “three most supportive persons in their networks, close friend...emerged as the largest category by far” (p. 165). Other research shows that homosexual people are more likely to go to friends for support than to their partners, family, or co-workers (Kuredk, 1988). Having friends for social support to help deal with these problems is very important for homosexual men.

The “Family” Bond

Homosexual men consider their friends to be like family (Nardi, 1999), but they also use their friends as a support system when dealing with starting families of their own. Homosexual families are not recognized, and therefore not treated the same way as traditional families are in the U.S. In trying to understand why this is the case, Weston (1991) explains,

If heterosexual intercourse can bring people into enduring association via the creation of kinship ties, lesbian and gay sexuality in these depictions isolates individuals from one another rather than weaving them into a social fabric. To assert that straight people “naturally” have access to family, while gay people are destined to move toward a future of solitude and loneliness, is not only to tie kinship closely to procreation, but also to treat gay men and lesbians as members of a nonprocreative species set apart from the rest of humanity. (pp. 22-23)

Support from friends helps homosexual families cope better with the injustices they face when dealing with issues such as insurance coverage, filing taxes, custody of children, authorization to make life-and-death decisions, nursing home, prison, and hospital visits, disqualification from family discounts, and inheritance issues (Weston, 1991). Heterosexual families do not face these injustices, so many of the familial battles that homosexual families face are taken for granted by heterosexual families. Because

the government does not recognize homosexual families the way heterosexual families are recognized, they are not treated equally.

Friends are important to homosexual men because they provide support for the families homosexual men create, but they are also important because they fill the familial void often faced by homosexual men. Homosexual men can go through a lot when coming out to their family. They face the fear of disappointing their family, of being disowned, of causing shame to the family name, of bringing home partners, of being cut off financially, and of many other possible burdens. In a letter to his mother a homosexual man wrote, "Why have I not told you before? Mainly for fear of your rejection. Perhaps this was wrong of me. I know that you love me, and care about me, but I've always feared that knowing the whole truth about me could change your feelings. I hope I am wrong" (Saylor, 1992, p. 64). Another man said of his father, "I didn't want to honor him; I wanted to escape him" (Clarke, 1992, p. 145). It is not always their parents that homosexual men fear. One homosexual man wrote about his fear of harming his younger brothers with his homosexuality. "My brothers were fifteen and seventeen years younger than I was. I had no compunction about staying in the Boston area and being public about my homosexuality – it wouldn't have bothered me if it had embarrassed my parents at that point. But as I imagined how my brothers would react, how their schoolmates would taunt them, how they would be shamed" (Preston, 1992, p. 3). Homosexual people often lose touch with their family after coming out and do not always get support from their family (Nardi, 1999; Weston, 1991), so it is important that friends fill that void. Many homosexual men believe that "friends are like their ideal families and on a daily basis are more likely than is a biological family to provide

material and emotional assistance, identity, history, nurturing, loyalty, and support” (Nardi, 1999, p. 59). Biological family members are often not willing to support homosexual men, especially in their fight against oppression. “Friendships might sustain gay men in the face of oppression” (Vernon, 2000, p. 70), which is extremely important for the well being of homosexual men.

The support provided by friends helps homosexual men stay healthy mentally and physically, and homosexual men tend to use their closest friends as a network of counseling support (Nardi, 1999). Heterosexual people get this kind of support from family, friends, and society, whereas homosexual men generally receive it only from friends, thus making friends invaluable for the homosexual man.

Cross-sexuality Friendships

Cross-sex, cross-sexuality vs. Cross-sex, same-sexuality Friendships

It is important to look at cross-sex friendships when at least one of the partners is homosexual because this type of friendship can be very different from cross-sex friendships between heterosexuals. According to Nardi and Sherrod (1994), friendships between homosexual and heterosexual people can be compared to heterosexual friendships, but one must consider other factors. “If gay males and lesbians experience *different* childhood gender-role learning from heterosexual men and women, for either biological or social psychological reasons” (Nardi & Sherrod, 1994, p. 188), then friendships involving homosexual people may be different from heterosexual friendships. Additionally, if homosexual people “experience the *same* childhood gender role learning as heterosexual men and women but subsequently adopt different gender role behaviors

after self-identifying as gay and adapting to gay subcultures” (Nardi & Sherrod, 1994, pp. 188-189), cross-sexuality friendships, again, may be different from same-sexuality, heterosexual friendships. Same-sexuality, cross-sex friendships and cross-sexuality, cross-sex friendships are similar, however, and it is important to point out and understand the similarities and differences between the two.

According to Pogrebin (1987), the most common type of cross-sexual friendship is heterosexual woman-homosexual man, followed by heterosexual woman-homosexual woman, heterosexual man-homosexual man, and homosexual woman-heterosexual man. Pogrebin found that friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women are challenging because the heterosexual world stigmatizes the homosexual world, and it requires “explaining” the relationship. The partners in this type of dyad often have to ask themselves why they need that particular friend. They also must answer the same question for society. Cross-sexuality friends have to be very comfortable with each other and their respective life styles to have a successful friendship.

A Theoretical Perspective

Whether close cross-sex friendships are capable of occurring has been debated for years. Traditionally, it has been thought that when men and women form relationships, they do so for a sexual element, which is why it may be hard to conceive of a male-female relationship without that sexual element (Pogrebin, 1987). This sexual element and intimacy are often confused; intimacy is the level of closeness experienced in a relationship and can be completely void of sexual elements. The homosocial norm “refers to the seeking, enjoyment, and/or preference for the company of the same sex that prevails society” (Rose, 1985, p. 63). This norm also supports the idea that men and

women cannot have a relationship without the sexual element. The early encouragement of same-sex play and society's unequal view of men and women both contribute to the homosocial norm (Lipman-Blumen, 1976). Rose (1985) suggests that because men generally have more control than women over social and institutional resources, men feel as though women cannot offer them as much in a cross-sex friendship as men can offer to each other in a same-sex friendship. Because men have control over "economic, political, educational, occupational, legal, and social resources, they have more to offer each other in same-sex relationships than women can offer to men or each other" (Rose, 1985, p. 64). This suggests that the only need men cannot fulfill for each other is paternity, so therefore, they will initiate cross-sex relationships primarily for sexual purposes (Lipman-Blumen, 1976). This view ignores homosexuality because it uses a bi-polar definition of sexual attraction and it cannot explain why cross-sex, cross-sexuality relationships exist.

Although many cross-sex dyads claim they can have a friendship free of sexual tensions, others may disagree, partly because "sexual attraction were [*sic*] significantly more often viewed as ways of forming cross-sex friendships" (Rose, 1985, p. 70). A number of scholars believe that the level of sexual tension that occurs in cross-sex relationships will ultimately become too much for the partners to handle, and the friendship will inevitably reach termination. Researchers think that this tension creates a barrier for developing a relationship with someone of the opposite sex. "Potential romance and sexually expressed affection between cross-sex friends fuels the debate over whether bonds between women and men can be 'purely platonic'" (Werking, 1997, p. 87). Pogrebin (1987) and Werking (1997) suggest that the first challenge that needs to be

overcome for cross-sex relationships to work is letting go of the expectation that men and women can only be involved romantically. One of the greatest aspects of the friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women that set them apart from traditional cross-sex friendships is the perceived lack of the sexual relationship. Because the stereotypical male-female roles may not pertain to homosexual men and heterosexual women, they are able to "relate to one another simply as people" (Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999, p. 3). Afifi and Faulkner (2000) state that "the notion that cross-sex friendships are fertile grounds for developing romantic attachments...does not hold true for homosexual individuals" (p. 220). Homosexual men and heterosexual women get the benefits of a cross-sex friendship without the perceived sexual aspect.

Equality Among Cross-sex Friendships

Werking (1997) argues that in this society men and women have been taught that they need each other, but that the relationship is not based on equality. People have also been taught that friendships are based on equality, and therefore, a sense of ambiguity surrounds the cross-sex friendship (O'Meara, 1989). Adams and Blieszner (1994) suggest that in all friendships "power hierarchy, status hierarchy, solidarity and homogeneity reflect the internal structure of friend pairs" (p. 170). Werking (1997) believes that the only way a cross-sex friendship can work is if both partners treat each other as equals, have a nonhierarchical relationship, and display their true selves. Researchers believe that because both women and homosexual men have been rejected and ostracized from our society throughout history, that they are better able to treat one another as equals (Nahas & Turley, 1979; Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999). They have a mutual understanding of what it means to be judged and discriminated against, and both fight to

free themselves from that injustice. "Gay men are privileged by sex but marginalized by sexual identity, and straight women are privileged by sexual identity but marginalized by sex" (Tillmann-Healy, 1998, p. 29). It is possible that homosexual male-heterosexual female relationships work out so well because of the sense of equality that they both share (Tillmann-Healy, 1998; Malone, 1980). Werking (1997) suggests that a high level of initiative, effort, and commitment is also needed for a cross-sex friendship to be successful. If successful, this type of relationship can be beneficial, but it also allows for many challenges that the partners must be willing to take on. "Cross-sex friendship is humanizing. It is eye-opening. It is life-expanding. It's also very threatening" (Pogrebin, 1987, p. 329). Cross-sex, same-sexuality friendships face many of the same challenges that cross-sex, cross-sexuality friendships do, but there are differences.

Challenges and Benefits of Cross-sex Friendships

Because not all cross-sex friendships are the same it is important to distinguish between the challenges faced by cross-sex, same-sexuality relationships and cross-sex, cross-sexuality relationships. Generalizations made about cross-sex, same-sexuality relationships often do not apply to cross-sex, cross-sexuality relationships.

Men and women are different. As suggested earlier, one of the reasons that cross-sex friendships can be challenging is simply because of the differences in the way that men and women communicate. Men and women talk about different things and talk in different ways (Werking, 1997). What a man considers intimate, a woman may think is casual (Pogrebin, 1987). Women generally talk about themselves, their feelings, problems, family, relationships, joys, and fears, whereas men talk about work, sports, politics, current events, and cars (Pogrebin, 1987). One may wonder what it is that men

and women talk about together, and why they have these friendships. Interestingly, communication styles are usually not a challenge for homosexual men and heterosexual women because they have similar, rather than differing, communication styles. They often get together “just to talk” and feel comfortable talking about a wide range of topics (Nahas & Turley, 1979; Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999).

Barriers to cross-sex friendships. Unfortunately there are also many barriers to developing and maintaining cross-sex friendships. Let us consider the four challenges in cross-sex friendships described earlier in terms of homosexual men and heterosexual women: the emotional bond challenge, the sexual challenge, the equality challenge, and the audience challenge (O’Meara, 1989).

The emotional bond challenge for homosexual men and heterosexual women is different from heterosexual cross-sex friendships. The emotional challenge is not as prominent in cross-sex, cross-sexuality friendships as it is in cross-sex, same-sexuality friendships, but it can be present. Men and women in heterosexual cross-sex friendships often have misunderstandings and different expectations of intimacy, whereas research suggests that because “the speech communities of gay men and straight women might be closer than those of heterosexual men and women” (Tillmann-Healy, 1998, p. 27), the chances of misunderstanding each person’s emotional feelings are lower, but can still exist.

Friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women do run into the sexual challenge, but in a different way than heterosexual cross-sex friendships. Even the most accepting and open-minded heterosexual woman may develop a crush on her homosexual friend which could complicate the friendship. Homosexual men and

heterosexual women perceive very little, if any, sexual tension in these friendships, but it is possible (Nahas & Turley, 1979; Malone, 1980). There are times when these friendships can be “erotic” (Malone, 1980) and the relationship becomes sexual. Generally, however, the reduced sexual tension is one of the reasons friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women exist (Tillmann-Healy, 2001; Nahas & Turley, 1979).

As discussed earlier, equality plays a role in the friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women. Research supports the idea that because both homosexual men and heterosexual women have faced oppression from society, they tend to treat each other with more equality. However, “sexist attitudes and behavior” may be responsible for “impeding friendship between gay men and straight women” (Tillmann-Healy, 1998, p. 29). The historical use of the term “fag hag” and the “campy behaviors some gay men enact...can be offensive to women” (Tillmann-Healy, 1998, p. 28).

The audience challenge does occur for cross-sex, cross-sexuality friends. Many women are questioned as to why they spend time with homosexual men when they should be looking for a heterosexual man with whom to form a romantic relationship. Other homosexual people may harass homosexual men for spending time with heterosexual women because they dislike associating with members of the society that is not accepting of homosexuality (Moon, 1995). This situation could be due to how men are raised in our society.

In our culture, men who have sex with men are generally oppressed, but they are not definitively excluded from masculinity. Rather, they face *structurally-induced conflicts* about masculinity – conflicts between their sexuality and their social presence as men, about the meaning of their choice of sexual object, and in their construction of relationships with women and with heterosexual men (Connell, 1992, p. 737).

Homosexual men struggle with their masculinity and sexuality in a world that does not accept them. This may create internal conflicts in the way that they react to the heterosexual world. Moon (1995) argues that there are two points of contestation that homosexual men face when dealing with the heterosexual world: “(1) Given that heterosexist ideology would have all men love only women, can a gay man resist heterosexism and still love (or even like) women? (2) Given that the dominant culture often seeks to limit peoples’ sexual freedom by prescribing when, how, and with whom an individual should have sex, does rejecting that dominant culture mean that gay men should be limited from having ‘heterosexual’ relations?” (p. 491). Unfortunately, these conflicts may hinder cross-sexuality relationships.

Three’s a crowd. Along with growing apart or turning the friendship into a romantic relationship, one of the biggest reasons that cross-sex friendships end is because one partner becomes romantically involved with another person (Werking, 1997; Pogrebin, 1987). Babchuk (as cited in Pogrebin, 1987) argues that half of married couples do not have cross-sex friendships, other than with their spouse, and Rose (1985) claims that 47 percent of women and 33 percent of men do not have cross-sex friendships outside of the marriage. When the heterosexual female in cross-sex, cross-sexuality friendship has a romantic relationship with a heterosexual man, the heterosexual man may not be accepting of her homosexual friends, or may feel threatened by or jealous of them. Although the boyfriend of the male friend probably would not feel threatened, he may feel jealous of the female friend because of the time they spend together and the level of intimacy that they share (Malone, 1980).

The benefits. Men and women both benefit from cross-sex friendships.

Heterosexual male-male relationships tend to be competitive, so one of the advantages of men having female friends is the lack of competitiveness (Werking, 1997; Pogrebin, 1987). Men also find these friendships to be very nurturing, intimate, caring, and supportive (Bahk, 1993; Pogrebin, 1987; Afifi & Guerrero, 1998). The benefits for homosexual men are similar to those of heterosexual men. According to Hopcke and Rafaty (1999), homosexual men find that talking with their female friends can be easier than talking with their male friends, regardless of their sexual orientation. Homosexual men also enjoy the support and intimacy they receive from women. "Gay men often describe their straight female friend as the one person most ready to accept their sexual orientation, while straight women often say that their gay male friend is more supportive and nurturing, and less judgmental, than his straight counterparts" (Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999, pp. 1-2). Women benefit from cross-sex friendships with homosexual and heterosexual men in similar ways. They enjoy the companionship provided by their male friends (Werking, 1997; Pogrebin, 1987) because it is different than that of their same-sex friendships. Also, being with a man may help some women feel they have more status (Pogrebin, 1987). Women also enjoy the company of men because it confirms their attractiveness and "feminine charm" (Pogrebin, 1987, p. 321), regardless of whether that male is heterosexual or homosexual. DeLucia-Waack, Gerrity, Taub, and Baldo (2001) suggest that when looking at gender role identity scores, women are "more of a woman" when in a friendship with men, bringing out their truer selves. Women also find cross-sex friendships more attractive because "the women did not experience many of the problems with their close male friends that they experienced with their close female

friends” (Werking, 1997, p. 61), and could often times reach the same level of confidentiality, trust, and intimacy as with their female friends. Some studies, however, show that women feel they cannot discuss personal problems with their heterosexual male friends (Parks & Floyd, 1996), and the women feel that the heterosexual men are less accepting and less intimate (Rose, 1985; Parks & Floyd, 1996).

Cross-sex friendships are beneficial to the dyad as well as to the individual partners. Many cross-sex friends describe themselves as brother and sister, and are therefore able to hug and kiss and show signs of affection without struggling with sexual desires (Werking, 1997). Cross-sex, cross-sexuality friendships also have a sibling-like bond because, as suggested earlier, friends often fill a family void for homosexual men (Weston, 1991; Nardi, 1999). Men and women can also help each other with romantic relationships by providing insight that a same-sex friend may be unable to provide. This aspect of the friendship is extremely beneficial to homosexual men and heterosexual women because they both seek out men when looking for romance (Malone, 1980). Furthermore, cross-sex friends often times feel less inclined to engage in impression management when with each other (Werking, 1997).

Cross-sex friendships can promote health and support. Winstead and Derlega (1992) suggest that there is a positive benefit from cross-sex friendships compared to same-sex relationships. They found that men and women were “less depressed after interacting with an opposite-sex friend” (p. 10). Winstead and Derlega also speculate that cross-sex friends are skilled in providing confidence and support for their partners.

Homosexual Men-Heterosexual Women Friendships

The cross-sex relationship between homosexual men and heterosexual women is more common than one might think. One report says two thirds of homosexual men have female friends (Pogrebin, 1987), and another claims that there are millions of homosexual men with some heterosexual female friends (Malone, 1980). Berger and Mallon (1991) found that although "most gay men had mostly male friends" (p. 169), on average they had three female friends included in their friendship networks. Hopcke and Rafaty (1999) claim that "most women today have at least one close friend or confidante who is a gay man, and gay men frequently have a number of close friends who are straight women" (p. 1). Friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women have an element of empathy, fulfillment (Nahas & Turley, 1979), companionship, and support (Nahas & Turley; Nardi, 1999). Both partners also view the relationship as a safe haven, free of sexual tensions (Werking, 1997; Pogrebin, 1987), and they will often compare their relationship to a family-like bond (Nahas & Turley, 1979).

Dealing With Homophobia

Homosexual men usually befriend other homosexual men, but, as suggested above, also have heterosexual friends. The most common type of cross-sexuality friendship occurs between a homosexual man and a heterosexual woman.

Research suggests one reason may be homophobia. In American society being "a man" means being homophobic (Marsiglio, 1993). Befriending a homosexual man could create a loss of masculinity in the mind of a heterosexual man. "'Straight' men are reluctant to behave in a manner that would provide others with cause to question their sexual orientation and masculinity" (Marsiglio, 1993, p. 16) because "to many people,

homosexuality is a *negation* of masculinity” (Connell, 1992, p.736). If homosexual men are seen as effeminate then heterosexual men would demonstrate masculinity by avoiding them. A heterosexual man would not dare befriend a homosexual man for fear of being seen as less masculine.

Studies have shown that men are significantly more homophobic than women (Malaney, Williams, & Geller, 1997; Mohr & Sedlacek, 2000; Marsiglio, 1993; D’Augelli & Rose, 1990; Mottet, 2000). Marsiglio (1993) found that “males with more traditional views about masculine roles would be more likely than their counterparts with egalitarian and less sex-typed views to hold negative attitudes toward gays” (p. 13). It was also found that “persons who hold negative attitudes toward homosexuals are most likely to be male” (Marsiglio, 1993, p. 12). When asked about their interest in learning about homosexual concerns, history, and culture, males reported being “very uninterested” (Malaney et al., 1997).

Marsiglio (1993) conducted a study to examine the likelihood of heterosexual men and women befriending a homosexual person. He found that men were more likely than women to have no desire in befriending a homosexual person. The factors that predicted the heterosexual men’s negative views and not wanting to befriend a homosexual person included men having traditional male role attitudes and men viewing homosexual activity as “disgusting”. Of those men who found homosexual activity disgusting, 38.5 percent “disagreed ‘a lot’ with the idea of personally being able to befriend a gay person” (p. 15). Similarly, Mohr and Sedlacek (2000) studied barriers to friendship with homosexual people and found that men were more likely than women to report discomfort as a barrier to friendships with homosexual people.

In a similar study, Mottet (2000) found heterosexual participants' willingness to befriend a homosexual person depended on when the heterosexual person discovered the homosexual person's sexuality. Mottet suggested that the predicted outcome value (POV) theory "may be a useful framework for examining how sexual orientation influences future interactions with gay and lesbian people" (p. 224). Results from the study propose that the heterosexual participants were more willing to form relationships with a homosexual person when they were told of the sexual orientation of the homosexual person after their initial interaction. In sum, "when the target was identified as heterosexual, POV was significantly related to more positive perceptions of liking, including agreeing to spend more time and agreeing to establish a personal friendship with the target. When the male target was identified as homosexual, predicted outcome values were significantly less positive and, as a result, perceptions of liking decreased" (Mottet, 2000, p. 235).

Studies show that women are more accepting of homosexuality and more likely than men to befriend a homosexual person (Mohr & Sedlacek, 2000; Malaney et al., 1997). Mohr and Sedlacek (2000) found that females were less likely than males to perceive barriers to friendships with homosexual people, and females were also more apt to want friendships with homosexual people. It has also been found that college women know more homosexual people than do college men (D'Augelli & Rose, 1990; Mohr & Sedlacek, 2000; Malaney et al., 1997). Additionally, Malaney et al. (1997) discovered that women had some understanding and knowledge of homosexual concerns, history, and culture. Based on these findings, it is reasonable to conclude that homosexual men and heterosexual women can form friendships. But why is it that homosexual men and

heterosexual women are able to form a bond? To understand this, one must examine why homosexual men and heterosexual women need each other.

Why Homosexual Men Need Heterosexual Women

Research suggests several reasons why homosexual men develop friendships with heterosexual women. Nahas and Turley (1979) found that homosexual men desire relationships with heterosexual women because women understand and accept homosexuality more than men do, and cross-sex friendships are non-threatening. Homosexual men can be themselves and enjoy not being judged when with women (Pogrebin, 1987).

Homosexual men may also use heterosexual women as friends as a “cover up” (Nahas & Turley, 1979; Pogrebin, 1987; Connell, 1992; Tillmann-Healy, 2001). Tillmann-Healy (2001) was asked by one of her homosexual friends to be his date to hide his homosexuality, and Connell (1992) reports that a homosexual man would have female friends come to his apartment to act as hostesses when entertaining his fellow businessmen. Some homosexual men and heterosexual women even take their relationship to the extreme and marry each other. Reasons for such actions benefit the homosexual man by improving employment prospects, inheritance, and succumbing to religious or social pressures (Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999). According to Hopcke and Rafaty (1999), although it does occur, the majority of homosexual male-heterosexual female friendships do not serve this purpose.

Why Heterosexual Women Need Homosexual Men

Women tend to distrust heterosexual men because of the underlying presumption that men ultimately want a sexual relationship (Rose, 1985). Therefore, one of the

biggest reasons that heterosexual women may seek homosexual men as friends is the lack of sexual tension. Women like having men around and feeling secure that these tensions will not ruin the friendship (Nahas & Turley, 1979; Pogrebin, 1987; Nardi & Sherrod, 1994). An interviewee said of her homosexual male friendships, “you can take the friendship to a deeper level right away. You go ‘Whew! I don’t have [to] play all these games.’ That is an attractive aspect about friendships with gay men. You can just start enjoying what you have in common and not have to worry about what he is thinking or not thinking about you as a woman” (Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999, p. 62). Women also enjoy the affection and innocent flirting they receive from homosexual men (Nahas & Turley, 1979; Tillmann-Healy, 2001). Women are able to “accept these compliments more easily or comfortably from gay men. Gay men may be engaging in a bit of flatter, but deep down the woman knows he isn’t after anything” (Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999, p. 161). Homosexual men and heterosexual women often verbally express their love and appreciation for each other with choruses of “I love you” and “You look so beautiful” (Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999; Tillmann-Healy, 2001). This level of attention and appreciation is an important part of this type of friendship. Women also feel more comfortable speaking with their homosexual male friends about sexual matters than they do with their heterosexual male friends (Malone, 1980; Pogrebin, 1987; Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999). One woman said, “When you’re around a straight man you wish it could be like this – that you could be this free, this casual, and have this much fun with someone who cares about you” (Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999, p. 28).

Although these reasons for why heterosexual women and homosexual men form relationships with each other seem healthy and acceptable, this type of relationship is not always viewed positively, especially within the homosexual community.

The Fag Hag

Those familiar with the homosexual community have most likely heard the term “fag hag” used in reference to heterosexual women who spend time with homosexual men. The definition of this term is not universal, although it is most often used negatively toward women (Moon, 1995; Nardi, 1999). Moon points out, though, that “the term has become more ambiguous as the value of a gay identity among nongays has become more ambiguous” (p. 504). The term can be used as an insult, as a label for a female friend of a homosexual man, or, depending on circumstances, as an acceptance into the homosexual culture. In close friendships it is a term of endearment, yet when used with acquaintances, it can be derogatory.

Moon (1995) suggests that there are two types of women who are called “fag hags”: women who “in some way challenge gay identity or the boundaries of a group, and those who affirm the value of being gay while challenging the limits of a strictly defined ‘gay culture’ that would be threatened by a woman in gay space” (p. 504). A fag hag could be a woman who is accepted by homosexual men into the homosexual culture or one who threatens the homosexual community. The meaning of the term lies in the perceptions of the homosexual men with whom these women associate (Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999; Moon, 1995). It is important to point out that “not all women who associate with gay men are fag hags, a woman’s presence among gay men can be perceived as threatening or not threatening at all” (Moon, 1995, p. 499). According to

respondents in a study done by Hopcke and Rafaty (1999), a woman is not considered a fag hag if she hangs “around with a gay man who is your hairdresser, decorator or other ‘service provider’ ...[or] if you consort with a gay coworker” (pp. 218-219). Regardless of its meaning, application to situations, or appropriateness, the term “clearly denotes a woman, usually a straight woman, who associates either exclusively or mostly with gay men” (Moon, 1995, p. 488).

“Fag hag” used negatively. The term “fag hag” has been used in the U.S. for decades (Moon, 1995). When used negatively it describes women as not accepting of homosexual culture, as against heterosexual society, and as fat, lonely women who are rejected by that heterosexual society (Moon, 1995). Interestingly, it also has a negative connotation when used by homosexual men who hate women or who feel rejected by heterosexual society (Moon, 1995). In this instance it refers to a heterosexual woman who does not accept homosexual culture when she does not understand that homosexual men do not have a sexual or love interest in women (Moon, 1995). Fag hags are often women who are rejected from heterosexual society, but have no understanding of what it means to be homosexual. They befriend homosexual men, hoping to have some level of acceptance. When asked what makes someone a fag hag, a respondent from one study said, “Some loneliness, a need to be accepted, and if a gay group accepts her, that’s important....she almost ignores her heterosexual society. A woman who is lonely, who has no boyfriend but would like one and who uses gay society as a substitute” (Moon, 1995, p. 491). Homosexual men are likely to label women fag hags if they try to date or become sexually involved with other homosexual men. Another respondent from Moon’s study suggested that the term “is a rather unflattering term but one does have to

wonder, if this person's entire social life is hanging out with gay men, um, it's as if they don't want a personal life or something because they're certainly not going to end up in a sexual relationship with any of the men" (p. 492). Many women, with complete disregard of their sexuality, will try to "convert" homosexual men. Although these women may associate with homosexual men, because of their lack of understanding, they are not considered close friends. Unfortunately for these women, the term "fag hag", when used to describe unattractive or close-minded women, is negative and derogatory. Therefore, "if a woman is not fully accepted as a member of a group of gay men, she may hear herself being called a 'fag hag.'" Interestingly, "if she is accepted by others in the group, she may still be called a 'fag hag,' odd though this may seem" (Moon, 1995, p. 500).

"Fag hag" used positively. If a woman is accepted into homosexual culture, "fag hag" is used as a term of endearment. Moon (1995) suggests that "women are not *assumed* to be part of the gay community, but must one at a time prove themselves worthy of membership" (p. 499). Through her study, she found that it is not uncommon for women to be accepted into the homosexual community. Women who are accepted into homosexual society are, according to an interviewee, "women who choose to participate with homosexual men...because they relate best to them, they don't relate well to other women maybe, and not to straight men either, it's just that's the group they relate best to" (Moon, 1995, p. 488). When the term is used positively, it is because the women are accepting and understanding of their homosexual male friend's way of life. Moon (1995) found that homosexual men use the term "symbolically to establish and reaffirm a woman's membership in the group of friends" (p. 502). During an interview,

in response to the question "What do you think makes someone a fag hag?", a respondent answered, "an open-minded liberal attitude, so not being hung up, on sexuality to begin with, um, having met and had a positive relationship with someone who is gay or lesbian, so that you are not afraid that they're abnormal or perverse people and they're just normal people" (Moon, 1995, p. 488).

Not all women who are accepting of homosexual men are called fag hags (Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999; Moon, 1995). The women who *are* considered fag hags are very much a part of the group of homosexual men. A level of closeness and mutual acceptance is needed when the term is used positively. Often the term is used as a joke, or as if to say "You may not be gay, but you're a fag hag, so you're cool now" (Moon, 1995, p.502). Those women who do not threaten homosexual society, but are not yet fully accepted, are not deemed fag hags.

Negative implications for homosexual men. One might think that by using the term "fag hag", women may get offended and hurt. This may be the case, but the feelings about homosexual men who use the term must be examined as well. Not all homosexual men call their female friends and acquaintances fag hags, and those that do not are often frustrated by those who do (Moon, 1995). Many homosexual men feel that by allowing women to be part of their community, the meaning of such communities is lost. The use of the term creates "tension within the ongoing discourse of what *being* a gay man means to gay men themselves" (Moon, 1995, p. 490). Some homosexual men feel that by using the term "fag hag", they are expressing "'self-hatred' or 'insecurity' about being gay" (Moon, 1995, p. 493). Homosexual men feel that by associating with heterosexual

women, some homosexual men are not fully comfortable with their sexuality, or do not fully accept that they are homosexual.

Another reason why many homosexual men do use the term is because of what the term implies (Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999; Moon, 1995). “‘Fags’ are not real men, and it is that implication which is embedded in the term ‘fag hag.’ A woman hangs around with defective examples of masculinity because she herself is defective as a woman. She can’t ‘get’ a man so turns to a ‘man substitute’” (Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999, p. 229).

On the other hand, “people who use the term *fag hag* positively view the term as empowering for the gay community as a whole; they use it not to make an issue of the woman’s behavior or sexual identity, but to reclaim the label for their own empowerment” (Moon, 1995, p. 503). For these people, the term does not create tension.

Regardless of how the term is used and what it means, it is debatable whether true friends would allow the term to be used (Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999). Even though the term may be used jokingly among close friends, it is often perceived as derogatory.

Friendship Maintenance Strategies

According to Adams and Blieszner (1994), the maintenance stage of a friendship is “the most variable period both in terms of the processes that occur and in terms of the degree to which partners consciously attend to the relationship” (p. 172). In accordance with much research Dainton and Stafford (1993) suggest that maintenance is defined as a process in which partners accept and regulate “patterns of exchange based on relational intent” (p. 257) and as “efforts invoked by partners to sustain satisfactory relational definitions” (p. 257). Friendships in general are maintained for many of the same reasons that particular friendships were formed in the first place. Stafford and Canary (1991)

state that “all ongoing relationships require maintenance. It is implicit in developmental models that a necessary condition for escalating to a new stage is the maintenance of a previously defined stage” (p. 220). Guerrero, Eloy, and Wabnik (1993) also argue that “maintenance behaviors function to keep couples together over the long haul, but they also probably pave the way for relational growth” (p. 274). Maintenance is necessary to keep a relationship going, and the four factors discussed earlier (environmental, individual, situational, and dyadic) are equally important for maintaining friendships as they are for forming them. “Previous research has established that maintenance behaviors vary within relationship[s]” (Canary, Stafford, Hause, & Wallace, 1993, p. 6) and therefore, because of the many challenges faced by friends in cross-sex and cross-sexuality relationships, it is important to look at other factors that help those involved maintain their friendships. But first, a review of maintenance strategies is necessary.

Dainton and Stafford (1993), Canary, Stafford, Hause, and Wallace (1993), and Messman, Canary, and Hause (2000) suggest that the most commonly used maintenance strategies are openness; assurances; positivity; joint activities; cards, letters and calls; and avoidance. Openness refers to the ability for partners to express thoughts, offering listening and advice, and is dependent on self-disclosure. Assurances are a strategy that “implicitly or explicitly involves reassuring the partner about the future of the relationship [and] stressing commitment” (Dainton & Stafford, 1993, p. 261). Positivity involves favors and gifts and proactive and reactive prosocial behavior. Joint activities indicate that the partners spend time with one another and “reflect direct and indirect communication approaches to sustaining relationships” (Canary et al., 1993, p. 12). Cards, letters, and calls help sustain a relationship and can include mediated

communication (Dainton & Stafford, 1993). Avoidance refers to excluding certain topics of conversation, avoiding conflict, or avoiding the person. These maintenance strategies can apply to all kinds of relationships, although they are most commonly used by researchers to examine romantic relationships and friendships. Whether they apply to cross-sex friendships or to homosexual friendships has not yet been studied, but it appears that the maintenance strategies of homosexual men and heterosexual women, as discussed below, fall under these commonly accepted strategies.

Heterosexual Women and Homosexual Men as Nurturers

Women in our culture have been socialized to be nurturers and caregivers (Wood, 2001). Homosexual men also seem to be more nurturing and compassionate than heterosexual men (LeVay & Nonas, 1995). Women and homosexual men are prominent in the helping professions, perhaps because of these characteristics. “Women have most certainly been raised in our culture to nurture and give aid, and along with the arts, the helping professions are another place where women and gay men have come out in force – as nurses, as counselors, as teachers. Women and gay men are, in short, people who call upon their own capacity to give and to nourish” (Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999, pp. 234-235). This is important for maintaining friendships in two ways. First, if heterosexual women and homosexual men share the same professions, it is easy for them to have access to each other, to spend time with each other, and to experience one another. Work friendships often turn into friendships of choice because of the opportunity to get together after work or at workplace gatherings (LeVay & Nonas, 1995). It is much easier to maintain a friendship when the friends can spend time together. Secondly, if women and homosexual men are more likely to be nurturers and care givers, then they would be able

to care for and look after one another. In many heterosexual cross-sex friendships women feel that they do more of the listening and caring but do not get it in return (Rose, 1985). Reciprocity is important for maintaining relationships. Compared to heterosexual women, heterosexual men expect less reciprocity (Weiss & Lowenthal, 1975) and have less intimacy in their friendships (Caldwell & Peplau, 1982). Homosexual men and heterosexual women are able to nurture and care for each other equally. Homosexual men and heterosexual women also use actions to show how they care for each other more so than men and women in a heterosexual cross-sex friendship. "Gay men send flowers, write letters, remember birthdays and pick up that little something special their female friend has been looking all over town for. Women do these same things for their gay friends" (Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999, p. 128). These friends make it a point to schedule regular dates, spend holidays together, and be there emotionally for each other. Every aspect of the relationships between homosexual men and heterosexual women is reciprocal.

Common Interests

Another way homosexual men and heterosexual women maintain their friendship is by doing things together. Hopcke and Rafaty (1999) found that these friends spend much of their time "going to the movies, theater, or other artistic events; going out to dinner; and going shopping together" (p. 34) and suggest that for some friends, "shopping together, and helping the other look their best, is one of their basic bonding rituals" (p.165). The number one activity that homosexual men and heterosexual women engage in, however, is getting together "just to talk". Getting together to talk is easy for homosexual men and heterosexual women because they feel comfortable with each other

and the relationship is much more intimate than friendships with other people. Women do not feel as comfortable and intimate with heterosexual men (Rose, 1985), and homosexual men often find it easier to talk with women. Women appreciate being able to talk because, according to one homosexual man, “they are finally in a friendship where they can explore themselves freely. This is possible because they are in a relationship with someone who doesn’t judge them and who doesn’t have an enormous number of preconceptions about what they should be” (Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999, pp. 250-251).

Comfort Levels

As mentioned earlier, one of the topics that homosexual men and their female friends discuss is sex and romantic relationships. This freedom to talk about these topics and gain insight about how to treat their respective lovers is a benefit of this friendship that keeps the relationship going. On the one hand, homosexual men are able to help women “understand what men are really thinking, without relying solely on what they might be saying. A woman will often turn to a gay man when she just can’t decipher what a straight man is trying to communicate to her” (Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999, p. 112). On the other hand, women share their tips and secrets to seducing men with their homosexual male friends. A respondent to a survey said, “My female friends are more relationship oriented; it’s something they want to talk about. I don’t think that guys, straight or gay, really want to talk about relationships with me. I’ve just found that my straight female friends are the people I can talk to about that” (Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999, pp. 110-111). Because they share so much about each other’s love lives, and they are both interested in men, another popular activity that homosexual men and heterosexual women partake in is “cruising” for suitable dates for each other. They expect and value

their friend's opinion of their respective boyfriends (Malone, 1980; Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999). It is important to note, however, that just like in most friendships, homosexual men and heterosexual women's lives are not an open book.

"Forbidden" Topics and Relational Barriers

As stated earlier, one maintenance strategy is to avoid discussing certain topics. Afifi and Guerrero (1998) suggest that the "topics of sexual experiences, dating experiences, and relational issues were avoided" (p. 240) in cross-sex friendships. They further argue that avoiding certain topics is more beneficial to some relationships than harmful. According to Hopcke and Rafaty (1999), there are certain things that women and homosexual men do not talk about. Of the "forbidden" topics they discovered, the most significant one was "the intimate and graphic details of the sex lives of gay men" (p. 136). An explanation for this could possibly be that because homosexual men are still men, "they too experience the social pressure to act like 'gentlemen' around women, and clearly understanding what is appropriate locker room conversation with the guys versus what is appropriate talk when women are around" (Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999, p. 142). Although some friends do discuss in detail each other's private experiences, it should be noted that topics such as homosexual sex toys and gay sexual practices, "which exclusively pertain to gay rather than heterosexual sex" (Hopcke & Rafaty, 1999, p. 136), are generally not discussed by any friends.

These "forbidden" topics of conversation are not usually to blame for friendships breaking up between homosexual men and heterosexual women. There are, however, many barriers that can either prevent friendships from occurring, or that can end established friendships. In a study done by Mohr and Sedlacek (2000), the researchers

examined three potential barriers to friendships with homosexual people. The potential barriers were lack of acceptance of homosexual sexual orientations, assuming having nothing in common with homosexual people, and “discomfort with the thought of befriending” a homosexual person (p. 71). Mohr and Sedlacek (2000) later found that “the two most common barriers to friendship were expectations of discomfort in friendship” (p. 76) and lacking acceptance of homosexual orientations. They also discovered that shy people were less likely to befriend a homosexual person as well as people who “tended to value racial/religious diversity less than other participants” (p. 76). Despite the negative attitudes toward befriending a homosexual person, “42 % of the participants stated that they have or would want to have gay friends” (p. 76). This statistic only proves that it is necessary to study friendships among homosexual people.

In reviewing the literature, it is apparent that there is a need to study relationships among homosexuals and relationships between homosexual and heterosexual people. The literature was lacking in information pertaining to those relationships, but the information available on friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women suggests this type of relationship is valuable. Therefore, to obtain a clearer understanding of why these friendships are so important, one must question how and why these relationships form, and how they are maintained.

The Purpose of the Present Study

The aim of this study is to examine the personal-social characteristics of homosexual men and heterosexual women and relational characteristics and expectations of friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women, and to understand how and why their friendships are formed and maintained. Personal-social characteristics

include how homosexual men and heterosexual women self-describe themselves and their self worth. Examining these characteristics may help in understanding why homosexual men and heterosexual women are attracted to each other. Relational expectations include elements such as the degree to which homosexual men and heterosexual women self-disclose to each other, activities in which they participate, and resolving conflict. Examining these expectations may help in understanding why homosexual men and heterosexual women maintain their relationships with each other.

This study also explores personal-social characteristics and relational differences of homosexual men and heterosexual women who have close relationships compared to the relationships between homosexual men and heterosexual women who have only casual friendships. Comparing these relationships will help in gaining a deeper understanding of why not all relationships between homosexual men and heterosexual women are close. Research suggests that close friendships are important to homosexual men and by comparing these relationships we can further understand why they are so important.

Research has been done suggesting why homosexual men and heterosexual women initiate friendships, but little has been done to examine why and how these friendships are maintained. The different characteristics of the individuals involved in a friendship dyad play a role in the formation and maintenance of their relationship. Characteristics influence factors such as attraction, interactions, and self-disclosure in relationships. Based on this research, the following hypotheses will be examined:

H1: Homosexual men who have close relationships with heterosexual women have different personal-social characteristics than homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women.

H2: Heterosexual women who have close relationships with homosexual men have different personal-social characteristics than heterosexual women in casual relationships with homosexual men.

Fehr (2000) suggests that having social skills and being responsive is important in friendships. Also, people desire friends who will validate their self-image. Taking these factors into consideration, the following hypotheses will be examined.

H3: Homosexual men who have close relationships with heterosexual women have different expectations of the relationship than homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women.

H4: Heterosexual women who have close relationships with homosexual men have different expectations of the relationship than heterosexual women in casual relationships with homosexual men.

Research suggests that similarity, reciprocity of liking, self-disclosure, and sharing similar interests is important in friendships (Fehr, 2000). Therefore, the following hypotheses will be examined.

H5: Homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships will have more similar personal, social characteristics to each other than homosexual men and heterosexual women in casual relationships will have to each other.

H6: Homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships will be more similar to each other in their relationship expectations than homosexual men and heterosexual women in casual relationships.

Cross-sex, cross-sexuality friendships can be beneficial. Homosexual men and heterosexual women can benefit from the companionship (Werking, 1997; Pogrebin, 1987), support (Winstead & Derlega, 1992), and comfort levels provided by their friendship. To further enhance an understanding of the friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women, the following research questions will be considered:

R1: Why are close friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women formed?

R2: Why are close friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women maintained?

R3: How are close friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women maintained?

CHAPTER TWO: METHODS

The present study examines friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women. This research employs both qualitative and quantitative methods. The first section describes the sample population, the second section describes the measures used to obtain data, the third section explains the procedures taken to perform the study, and the fourth section describes the analysis of the data.

Sample

The sample population for the present study was drawn from self-identifying, openly homosexual men from a large northeastern university and the New England area and their heterosexual female friends. Members of an on-campus GLBT group were asked to participate. Participants were also solicited via an electronic gay-themed newsletter, and those responding to the newsletter were included in the sample. A snowball sampling technique was simultaneously used to gain access to additional potential participants. To obtain a sufficient number of participants, those who chose to participate were asked to refer a friend to take part in the study. A pencil and paper questionnaire was given to all participants (see Appendix A).

Seventy-four questionnaires were distributed and 60 questionnaires were completed and used. Of those 60 questionnaires, 15 were answered by homosexual men each of whom had a casual heterosexual female friend, 15 were answered by heterosexual women each of whom had a casual homosexual male friend, 15 were answered by homosexual men each of whom had a close or best heterosexual female friend, and 15 were answered by heterosexual women each of whom had a close or best homosexual male friend. The following demographic information was collected: sex, age, race,

community, and sexual orientation. Fifty percent of the sample was female (n=30) and 50 percent was male (n=30). The average age of the female participants was 23.90 and the average age of the male participants was 24.20. Ninety-three percent of the sample was white (n=56). Two percent of the sample was Asian American (n=1), 2 percent was black (n=1), and 3 percent was Puerto Rican (n=2). Thirty-seven percent of the sample (n=22) grew up in a small town (less than 50,000 people), 35 percent (n=21) grew up in a medium-size town or suburb (50,000-99,000 people), 12 percent (n=7) grew up in a small city or large suburb (100,000-249,000 people), 10 percent grew up in a rural area (n=6), 5 percent (n=3) grew up in a city (250,000+ people), and two percent grew up on a farm (n=1). One hundred percent of the female sample (n=30) reported being exclusively heterosexual. Eighty percent of the male sample (n=24) reported being exclusively homosexual and 20 percent (m=6) reported being predominantly homosexual, but significantly heterosexual. None of the participants reported being bi-sexual.

Participants were asked to take part in a voluntary follow-up interview. The informed consent forms (see Appendix B) attached to the questionnaire explained the purpose of and described the interview. Participants indicated interest in the follow-up interview by completing the contact information on the instruction sheet of the questionnaire. Those respondents indicating they would participate in the follow-up interviews were contacted. The interview was conducted with both the homosexual male and heterosexual female participants from the friendship dyad who self described themselves as close or best friends. Eight interviews were conducted using a standard interview agenda (see Appendix C). Participants were required to sign an informed

consent form (see Appendix D) and were notified that the interviews would be audiotaped.

Measures

The questionnaire is an adaptation of Savin-Williams' (1990) Gay and Lesbian (GAL) Questionnaire and Nardi and Sherrod's (1994) questionnaire on the friendships of homosexual men and women (see Appendix B). Savin-Williams developed the GAL Questionnaire for the purpose of examining self-descriptions of personal characteristics of gay and lesbian youths. Although the questionnaire has not been widely used, it serves as a starting point to understanding the characteristics of homosexual people. Questions regarding demographics and characteristics in the present study were taken from the GAL Questionnaire. Nardi and Sherrod's questionnaire examines friendship salience, friendship behaviors, and sexual behaviors in the lives of homosexual men and women. Questions used in the present study were taken from the self-disclosure portion of Nardi and Sherrod's questionnaire which has a reliability of .878 (Cronbach's alpha).

For purposes of comparison, respondents were asked questions regarding their friendship intimacy level: casual, close, and best. These categories are based on past research (Wright, 1982). The definitions of casual, close, and best friends and items that query friendship patterns and expectations in the present questionnaire are taken from Nardi and Sherrod's questionnaire. A casual friend is defined as "someone who is more than an acquaintance, but not a close friend; your commitment to the friendship would probably not extend beyond the circumstances that bring you together; for example, a work friend or neighbor" (Nardi & Sherrod, 1994, p. 191). A close friend is "someone to whom you feel a sense of mutual commitment and continuing closeness; a person with

whom you talk fairly openly and feel comfortable spending time” (Nardi & Sherrod, 1994, p. 191), and a best friend is defined as “the friend to whom you feel the greatest commitment and closeness; the one who accepts you ‘as you are’, with whom you talk the most openly and feel the most comfortable spending time” (Nardi & Sherrod, 1994, p. 191). The present study is comparing close and casual relationships of homosexual men and heterosexual women, so the categories of close and best were collapsed into one category. This resulted in two categories, close and casual.

The intent of the present questionnaire is to learn about the respondents’ personal backgrounds and personal-social characteristics, as well as friendship patterns among the respondents. The questionnaire is used to examine personal-social characteristics which include issues such as self-concept, religion, and affiliation within the homosexual community, and friendship patterns and expectations among the respondents. Questions such as how would you realistically describe yourself in terms of compassion, ambition, and understanding of others and how important is your career or close friends to your sense of self-worth will examine characteristics of self-concept; questions such as “How often do you go to gay bars or clubs?” and “During the last year how involved have you been in any organized gay activities?” will explore participation in the gay community. These questions will help in gaining a better understanding of the characteristics of homosexual men and heterosexual women who have close relationships with each other and will be used to answer hypothesis 1, hypothesis 2, and hypothesis 5. Other portions of the questionnaire ask respondents about time spent with their friend and characteristics about the friendship. Questions such as “In a typical week, approximately how much time do you spend with this friend?”, “How satisfied are you with the quality of this

friendship?”, and “How often do you experience major conflicts or disagreements with this friend?” will examine friendship patterns and expectations within the dyad and will be used to answer hypothesis 3, hypothesis 4, and hypothesis 6.

A Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 to 9 is used for most of the questions. Savin-Williams' GAL Questionnaire used a 9-point scale where 1 indicated agreement or a positive response and 9 indicated disagreement or a more negative response. For the present questionnaire, the scale was reversed so that 1 indicated disagreement and a more negative response and 9 indicated agreement or a more positive response. The portion of the questionnaire taken from Nardi and Sherrod was modified from a 5-point scale to a 9-point scale to conform with the Savin-Williams portion of the questionnaire. The scales from the GAL Questionnaire were reversed to be consistent with the questions taken from Nardi and Sherrod's questionnaire.

The results for the friendship patterns should help in determining expectations in friendships, why friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women exist, and how they are maintained. Follow-up interviews were conducted after completion of the questionnaires for those respondents who self-labeled themselves as close or best friends and who were willing to participate. The purpose of the follow-up interview is to gain a better understanding of why and how the friendships are maintained, to obtain responses regarding closeness within the friendships, and to recognize the differences between cross-sex, cross-sexuality friendships and other relationships.

Questions are asked about the formation and maintenance of the relationship and the relationship itself. Sample questions include: What attracted you to each other?, What activities do you participate in when you spend time together now?, When did you

realize this friendship was important to you?, and How does this relationship compare to your relationships with other people? Research Question 1 is answered using questions from the friendship formation portion of the interview, Research Question 2 is answered using some question from the friendship formation and all questions from the relationship portions of the interview, and Research Question 3 is answered using some questions from the friendship formation and relationship sections and all questions from the maintenance section of the interview. Responses from the interviews were used in relation to information gathered through the questionnaire to obtain a deeper understanding of this type of friendship.

Procedures

The questionnaire was distributed to homosexual male volunteers and their heterosexual female friends. Volunteers in the immediate area had the option of having the questionnaire mailed or hand delivered. Volunteers not in the immediate area had the questionnaire mailed to them. Included with each questionnaire was an informed consent form, instructions, and a stamped, pre-addressed envelop in which to return the questionnaire. Questionnaires were also distributed through participants via the snowball sampling technique. Participants were asked to distribute additional questionnaires to potential participants. This technique was used to obtain a sufficient number of respondents, and has been used by other researchers who studied aspects of the lives of homosexual people (for example, Moon, 1995; Weston, 1991). Weston (1991) used personal contacts and asked interviewees for the names of potential participants in her study on familial kinships among homosexual people.

Following the completion of the questionnaires, all participants who self-described as being close or best friends and who completed the contact information on the questionnaire were asked to take part in an interview session which lasted between 45 minutes and one hour. The interviews were conducted with both members of the friendship dyad present. Interviews took place at a location chosen by the participants for those participants in the immediate area. For those not in the immediate area, interviews were conducted via the telephone. Three-way calling was used so both members of the dyad could be present. All interviews were audiotaped and transcribed. Respondents participating via the phone were told that the interview would be on speaker-phone so that it could be audiotaped.

Analysis

The quantitative data from the questionnaire was used to identify the characteristics of homosexual men and heterosexual women who have close friendships as well as the expectations of friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women. Most of the items on the questionnaire were analyzed using ANOVA, however, because some items lack interval level responses, chi-square was also used. Questions 4, 5, 8-11, and 15-17 were analyzed using ANOVA to test hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2. Questions 7, 12, 13, and 14 from the questionnaire were analyzed using chi-square and to test hypothesis 1. Question 7 was also used to analyze hypothesis 2. Both hypothesis 3 and hypothesis 4 were tested using questions 18-27 and 29, which were analyzed using ANOVA. Question 28 was also used to test hypothesis 3 and hypothesis 4 and was analyzed using chi-square. Hypothesis 5 was tested using difference scores from questions 4, 5, 8-11, and 15-17. Hypothesis 6 was tested using difference scores from

questions 18-27 and 29. The differences of the responses of homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other were compared to the differences of responses of homosexual men and heterosexual women in casual relationships with each other.

Those participants indicating they would participate in a follow-up interview were contacted. The interview asked respondents about: (a) friendship formation, (b) maintenance of their friendship, and (c) their relationship. A content analysis of the interviews was conducted using these data. Information from the interviews was used to help in the interpretation of the other information gathered.

Content analysis

Content analysis was used to analyze responses from the interviews. Content analysis is helpful in recognizing relationships within messages and is useful for investigating the socially constructed meaning of a text. "As a method in psycholinguistic, rhetorical, and literary research...it guards against distortion by selective perception" (Bowers, 1970, p. 292). Meaning is found within the text and "content analysis is useful for investigating these socially constructed meaning processes, as evidence of them is found in the text of the message" (Sherblom, Reinsch, & Beswick, 2001, p. 37).

Traditional content analysis requires pre-selected categories (Rice & Danowski, 1993; Salisbury, 2001). However, for certain kinds of research, such as the present study, pre-selected categories and units are not always appropriate. Some types of content analysis, such as cluster analysis, allow categories and units to emerge from the data (Bowers, 1970). Therefore, cluster analysis was used to analyze the present interview

texts. "Clustering seeks to group or to lump together objects or variables that share some observed qualities or, alternatively, to partition or to divide a set of objects or variables into mutually exclusive classes whose boundaries reflect differences in the observed qualities of their members" (Krippendorff, 1980, p. 259). Cluster analysis results in "qualitative information yielded by quantitative procedures" (Danowski, 1998, p. 387).

Cluster analysis is not only able to determine the frequency of occurrence of words within a text, but it examines the co-occurrence of words. If certain words appear together within the text at a high frequency, there is a relationship between those words that helps in understanding concepts within the text. "Those words that co-occur most frequently represent the most commonly experienced concepts within the set of responses" (McDonald, 2000, p. 43). This analysis allows the concepts about friendship which are most important to homosexual men and heterosexual women to emerge. For the purpose of the present study, cluster analysis will be used to examine word relationships that emerge in the text (Rogers & Sherblom, 1995).

Open-ended questions from the interviews elicited responses from participants. Cluster analysis allows conceptual clusters to emerge from the open-ended questions rather than researcher imposed categories. This analysis is useful for this study because implicit connections and patterns among the concepts discussed in the interviews emerge.

CATPAC

The CATPAC program (Woelfel, 1990) is a computer software program that provides cluster analysis. "CATPAC systematically follows a set of research procedures as part of its content analysis feature, therefore satisfying the objectivity concerns associated with content analysis. Since CATPAC is a computer-based neural network

analysis program, quantitative analysis may be conducted without any preconceived notions or bias from the researcher” (Salisbury, 2001, p. 68). This program allows for emergent categories and was used to generate the frequency of and the relationships and clustering of words used by respondents in the interviews.

This type of semantic network analysis functions by focusing on the importance of words and how frequently they occur within the text (Rogers & Sherblom, 1995) and produce “as simple (parsimonious) and well-representing (‘goodness-of-fit’) a model of the data as possible” (Sherblom et al., 2001, p. 37). Text is analyzed “to determine some measure of the extent to which words are related...[and] the extent to which word pairs co-occur within a given meaning unit” (Rice & Danowski, 1993, p. 373). This type of analysis has been used by a number of researchers to study the text of communicative acts (Sherblom et al.; Salisbury, 2001; Danowski, 1988; Rice & Danowski; McDonald, 2000; Rogers & Sherblom, 1995). This network analysis provides a quantitative analysis of the words used in a text and produces a qualitative picture showing the larger patterns among the most predominant concepts in a text and the relationships among these concepts (Danowski, 1988). The analysis allows patterns within the text to emerge which leads to the recognition of concepts within the messages. Using a computer program to analyze the interviews allows for unbiased and consistent treatment of each of the interviews. There is also no inter-rater reliability.

Transcribed responses from each interview session were entered into CATPAC where a frequency analysis occurs. All responses for each of the portions of the interview were grouped together. Responses from the friendship formation, maintenance, and relationship sections of the interview were entered into the program separately.

Numbers were used to identify each voice. Each participant was given a number 1 through 16. Responses from the women were labeled with an odd number and responses from the men were labeled with an even number. The dyads were distinguishable using these numbers (i.e. the first dyad contained participants numbered 1 and 2, the second dyad contained participants numbered 3 and 4, and so on.). The program analyzed each utterance.

The CATPAC program counts the number of times each word appears in the text, thus helping to determine the words most often used by homosexual men and heterosexual women to describe their friendships with each other. The more frequently a word appears within the text, “the more active the concept it represents and the more important that concept is considered to be” (Rogers & Sherblom, 1995, p. 57).

After the cluster analysis has been completed, the most frequently occurring words are charted in a dendogram which shows the clustering of the words. Krippendorff (1980) suggests that dendograms are “the most important form of representing clustering results” (p. 275). Dendograms are visually useful because “word clusters are indicated by side-by-side juxtaposition. The height of the arrow at the bottom of each word entry suggests the strength of the word relationships...and indicates what words cluster together” (Rogers & Sherblom, 1995, p. 59). Word pairs and words that form a peak on the dendogram have a relationship. Once all of the relationships between word pairs and words have been recognized, the relationships need to be interpreted, however, the concepts that emerge from the cluster analysis must be interpreted within the context of the responses.

The purpose of the interview questions is to elicit responses that provide a conceptual understanding of why and how friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women are formed and maintain. The emergence of conceptual clusters from the text of the interviews enables this understanding. The CATPAC program allows these conceptual clusters to emerge which are then interpreted within the context of the interview text. The research questions pertaining to how and why friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women are formed and maintained are addressed through the interpretation of the conceptual clusters that emerge from the analysis conducted for each of the three portions of the interview: friendship formation, maintenance, and relationship.

CHAPTER THREE: RESULTS

This chapter reports the statistical operations and the findings of the present study. The quantitative data is explored through an analysis of variance and the qualitative data is explored through cluster analysis. The cluster analysis is broken down into friendship formation, maintenance, and relationship clusters.

Analysis of Variance

To reduce the likelihood of making a Type I alpha error due to the cumulative alpha effect, the significance level for rejecting the null hypotheses and finding support for the research hypotheses was adjusted. For hypotheses 1, 2, and 5, because forty tests were run, the significance cut-off was set at $p=.001$ ($.05 \div 40 = .001$). For hypotheses 3, 4, and 6, because seventeen tests were run, the significance cut-off was set at $p=.003$ ($.05 \div 17 = .003$).

Using these adjusted alpha levels the present study found some support for hypotheses 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. No support was found for hypothesis 6.

H1: *Homosexual men who have close relationships with heterosexual women have different personal-social characteristics than homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women.*

The present study found some support for hypothesis one (see Table 1). Homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women reported themselves to be more forceful ($F=15.78$; $df=1, 28$; $p=.0005$; close $m=4.27$; casual $m=1.87$) and more aggressive ($F=15.91$; $df=1, 28$; $p=.0004$; close $m=5.27$; casual $m=3.07$) than did homosexual men in the casual relationships with heterosexual women.

H1: Homosexual men who have close relationships with heterosexual women have different personal-social characteristics than homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women.

	Means			
	Close	Casual	F	p
Forceful	4.27	1.87	15.78	.0005*
Aggressive	5.27	3.07	15.91	.0004*
Importance of religion	6.47	6.40	0.01	.93
Religious	7.00	6.40	0.74	.40
Accomplished in chosen field	6.33	6.80	0.62	.44
Compassionate	7.73	7.80	0.03	.86
Outgoing	7.00	6.80	0.12	.73
Express tender feelings easily	7.07	5.87	8.25	.008
Affectionate	8.00	7.67	0.66	.42
Competitive	5.73	3.47	8.52	.007
Shy	3.67	4.33	0.68	.42
Self-sufficient	7.00	5.47	6.70	.02
Ambitious	6.60	6.53	0.02	.90
Romantic	6.87	7.07	0.20	.66
Athletic	5.33	4.60	1.08	.31
Understanding of others	8.33	7.93	2.36	.14
Patronizing gay bars and clubs	2.76	2.67	0.02	.89
Patronizing gay or lesbian coffeehouses, centers, dances	1.87	3.23	2.62	.12
Involved in gay community	4.73	5.67	1.19	.29
Care if heterosexuals know about homosexuality	2.27	1.87	0.83	.37
Importance of career to self-worth	7.60	6.93	2.01	.17
Importance of being in a lover relationship to self-worth	7.00	7.13	0.04	.84
Importance of having children to self-worth	4.80	5.13	0.15	.70
Importance of social life to self-worth	7.33	7.13	0.22	.65
Importance of having female friends to self-worth	7.33	6.60	1.79	.19
Importance of academic success to self-worth	7.40	5.80	10.75	.003
Importance of having male friends to self-worth	7.33	7.27	0.03	.87
Importance of relationship with parents to self-worth	7.40	6.13	8.15	.01
Importance of religion to self-worth	3.14	3.93	1.05	.31
Number of gay male relatives	0.40	0.07	4.66	.04
Number of lesbian relatives	0.33	0.07	2.14	.15
Number of bisexual male relatives	0.00	0.00	NA	NA
Number of bisexual female relatives	0.13	0.00	2.01	.17
Number of close friends	12.27	8.93	2.75	.11
Number of close gay male friends	3.07	4.00	1.93	.18
Number of close lesbian friends	0.60	0.67	0.04	.84
Number of close bisexual male friends	0.20	0.40	0.84	.37
Number of close bisexual female friends	0.40	0.27	0.57	.46
Number of close heterosexual male friends	2.27	2.20	0.02	.89
Number of close heterosexual female friends	5.73	1.40	8.35	.007

*Significance level set at $p=.001$

Table 1: Results Testing Hypothesis 1

The other results, as reported in Table 1, show non-significant differences between the close and casual relationship groups. The chi-square results for hypothesis one were not significant.

H2: *Heterosexual women who have close relationships with homosexual men have different personal-social characteristics than heterosexual women in casual relationships with homosexual men.*

Some support was also found for hypothesis two (see Table 2). Heterosexual women in close relationships with homosexual men reported themselves to be more forceful ($F=22.19$; $df=1, 28$; $p=.0001$; close $m=3.43$; casual $m=1.53$) and more aggressive ($F=17.49$; $df=1, 28$; $p=.0003$; close $m=4.73$; casual $m=1.87$) than heterosexual women in casual relationships with homosexual men. Heterosexual women in close relationships with homosexual men also reported having at least one close homosexual male friend and many other gay male friends ($F=15.41$; $df=1, 28$; $p=.0005$; close $m=1.93$; casual $m=0.00$) than did heterosexual women in casual relationships with homosexual men. Non-significant differences were found in numerous other personal-social characteristics distinguishing heterosexual women in close and casual relationships with heterosexual men. The chi-square results for hypothesis two were not significant.

H2: *Heterosexual women who have close relationships with homosexual men have different personal-social characteristics than heterosexual women in casual relationships with homosexual men.*

	Means			
	Close	Casual	F	p
Forceful	3.43	1.53	22.19	.0001*
Aggressive	4.73	1.87	17.49	.0003*
Number of close gay male friends	1.93	0.00	15.41	.0005*
Importance of religion	5.53	4.40	1.78	.19
Religious	6.20	4.67	4.16	.05
Accomplished in chosen field	6.93	7.27	0.90	.35
Compassionate	7.73	7.93	0.38	.54
Outgoing	6.33	5.67	1.59	.22
Express tender feelings easily	5.47	4.67	2.13	.16
Affectionate	7.33	7.27	0.03	.86
Competitive	4.93	3.60	4.64	.04
Shy	4.53	4.67	0.03	.86
Self-sufficient	7.13	7.27	0.05	.82
Ambitious	7.07	7.33	0.44	.51
Romantic	6.80	7.87	3.73	.06
Athletic	4.60	5.33	1.33	.26
Understanding of others	7.73	7.93	0.35	.56
Patronizing gay bars and clubs	0.60	0.00	8.40	.007
Patronizing gay or lesbian coffeehouses, centers, dances	0.47	0.00	2.99	.09
Involved in gay activities	2.73	1.00	8.89	.006
Importance of career to self-worth	7.53	7.47	0.04	.84
Importance of being in a lover relationship to self-worth	7.00	7.67	1.02	.32
Importance of having children to self-worth	5.93	7.93	8.95	.006
Importance of social life to self-worth	7.00	7.47	10.28	.27
Importance of having female friends	7.27	8.60	9.69	.004
Importance of academic success	7.47	7.67	0.25	.62
Importance of having male friends	7.27	7.60	0.68	.42
Importance of relationship with parents to self-worth	6.86	8.21	4.92	.04
Importance of religion to self-worth	3.93	5.40	3.57	.07
Number of gay male relatives	0.29	0.13	0.99	.33
Number of lesbian relatives	0.07	0.00	1.07	.31
Number of bisexual male relatives	0.07	0.00	1.07	.31
Number of bisexual female relatives	0.14	0.00	1.07	.31
Number of close friends	10.53	8.13	4.21	.05
Number of close lesbian friends	0.29	0.13	0.43	.52
Number of close bisexual male friends	0.21	0.00	2.06	.16
Number of close bisexual female friends	0.29	0.00	3.29	.08
Number of close heterosexual male friends	2.57	2.13	0.37	.55
Number of close heterosexual female friends	6.00	5.87	0.03	.87

*Significance level set at $p=.001$

Table 2: Results Testing Hypothesis 2

H3: *Homosexual men who have close relationships with heterosexual women have different expectations of the relationship than homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women.*

The most support was found for hypothesis three (see Table 3). Homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women reported feeling more open, trusting, and “truly themselves” when with their friend ($F=6.16$; $df=1, 28$; $p=.00001$; close $m=8.73$; casual $m=7.00$); discussing topics such as personal strengths and weaknesses to a greater extent ($F= 45.74$; $df=1, 28$; $p=.000001$; close $m=2.87$; casual $m=6.87$); resolving major conflicts with their friend as more important ($F= 13.44$; $df=1, 28$; $p=.001$; close $m=8.40$; casual $m=6.67$); more conversational involvement compared to other relationships ($F= 15.57$; $df=1, 28$; $p=.0005$; close $m=8.13$; casual $m=6.47$); more enjoyable time spent together compared to other relationships ($F=21.78$; $df=1, 28$; $p=.0001$; close $m=8.53$; casual $m=6.07$); and more social activities compared to other relationships ($F= 14.75$; $df=1, 28$; $p=.0006$; close $m=7.13$; casual $m=4.00$) than homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women. There were also numerous non-significant differences found in these expectations. The chi-square results for hypothesis 3 were not significant

H4: *Heterosexual women who have close relationships with homosexual men have different expectations of the relationship than heterosexual women in casual relationships with homosexual men.*

Little support was found for hypothesis four (see Table 4). Heterosexual women in close relationships with homosexual men reported discussing topics such as personal strengths and weaknesses to a greater extent ($F= 71.36$; $df=1, 28$; $p=.000001$; close

m=2.67; casual m=7.27) and more enjoyable time spent together compared to other relationships ($F= 13.40$; $df=1, 28$; $p=.001$; close m=8.60; casual m=6.47) than heterosexual women in casual relationships with homosexual men. There were numerous non-significant differences found in these relationships as well. The chi-square results for hypothesis 4 were not significant.

H3: Homosexual men who have close relationships with heterosexual women have different expectations of the relationship than homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women.

	Means			
	Close	Casual	F	p
Open, trusting, truly themselves	8.73	7.00	6.16	.00001*
Discuss topics such as personal strengths and weaknesses ¹	2.87	6.87	45.74	.000001*
Resolving conflicts important	8.40	6.67	13.44	.001*
Conversational involvement	8.13	6.47	15.57	.0005*
Enjoyable time spent together	8.53	6.07	21.78	.0001*
Social activities	7.13	4.00	14.75	.0006*
Importance of having friends	8.53	8.00	3.37	.08
Time spent with friend	5.00	4.00	2.76	.11
Satisfied with relationship	8.13	6.93	9.86	.004
Discuss topics such as hobbies and interests ¹	1.67	2.60	7.89	.009
Discuss topics such as wants and needs ¹	2.07	4.07	9.78	.004
Frequency of experiencing conflict	2.07	1.33	3.73	.06
Degree to which bothered by conflict	6.33	6.73	0.20	.66
Intellectual involvement	7.67	6.07	8.37	.007
Emotional support	8.00	6.13	8.74	.006
Physical activities	3.80	2.93	1.13	.30
Spiritual meditations	2.33	1.13	5.12	.035

*Significance level set at $p=.003$

¹Reversed scale where 1= "discussed all important details" and 9= "discussed not at all"

Table 3: Results Testing Hypothesis 3

H4: *Heterosexual women who have close relationships with homosexual men have different expectations of the relationship than heterosexual women in casual relationships with homosexual men.*

	Means			
	Close	Casual	F	p
Discuss topics such as personal strengths and weaknesses ¹	2.67	7.27	71.36	.000001*
Enjoyable time spent together	8.60	6.47	13.40	.001*
Importance of having friends	8.53	8.73	0.97	.33
Time spent with friend	4.43	4.20	0.11	.74
Open, trusting, truly themselves	8.20	6.80	6.16	.02
Satisfied with relationship	8.20	7.00	7.49	.01
Discuss topics such as hobbies and interests ¹	1.53	2.40	5.77	.02
Discuss topics such as wants and needs ¹	2.40	4.00	6.43	.02
Frequency of experiencing conflict	2.27	1.27	4.21	.05
Degree to which bothered by conflict	6.79	5.87	0.84	.37
Resolving conflicts important	8.27	6.73	5.15	.03
Intellectual involvement	7.47	6.67	2.13	.16
Emotional support	7.47	6.00	4.44	.04
Physical activities	4.47	2.67	4.69	.04
Conversational involvement	8.20	6.47	9.84	.004
Social activities	6.40	4.07	7.12	.01
Spiritual meditations	2.87	1.00	10.49	.003

*Significance level set at $p=.003$

¹Reversed scale where 1= "discussed all important details" and 9= "discussed not at all"

Table 4: Results Testing Hypothesis 4

H5: *Homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships will have more similar personal, social characteristics to each other than homosexual men and heterosexual women in casual relationships will have to each other.*

Little support was found for hypothesis five (see Table 5). Homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships may be more discrepant in their self-reported forcefulness ($F=13.41$; $df=1, 28$; $p=.001$; close $m=2.17$; casual $m=0.60$) than homosexual men and heterosexual women in casual relationships. Near significant results suggest that homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships may be more discrepant in their numbers of heterosexual male friends ($F=13.09$; $df=1, 28$; $p=.0012$; close $m=2.29$; casual $m=0.60$) than homosexual men and heterosexual women in casual relationships. Homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women have an average of 2.27 heterosexual male friends while the women in these relationships had an average of 2.57 heterosexual male friends.

H6: *Homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships will be more similar to each other in their relationship expectations than homosexual men and heterosexual women in casual relationships.*

No support was found for hypothesis six (see Table 6).

H5: *Homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships will have more similar personal-social characteristics to each other than homosexual men and heterosexual women in casual relationships with each other.*

	Means			
	Close	Casual	F	p
Importance of religion	2.40	3.20	1.02	.32
Religious	1.87	2.93	2.05	.16
Accomplished in chosen field	1.93	1.27	2.13	.16
Compassionate	0.93	0.80	0.24	.63
Outgoing	1.20	2.33	7.15	.012
Aggressive	1.60	2.00	0.63	.44
Express tender feelings easily	1.60	2.13	1.52	.23
Forceful	2.17	0.60	13.41	.0010*
Affectionate	1.33	1.07	0.57	.46
Competitive	2.27	2.00	0.20	.66
Shy	2.60	2.33	0.16	.69
Self-sufficient	1.47	2.00	1.43	.24
Ambitious	1.13	0.93	0.34	.56
Romantic	1.67	1.07	1.71	.20
Athletic	1.93	1.93	0.00	1.00
Understanding of others	1.00	0.53	2.32	.14
Patronizing gay bars and clubs	2.16	2.20	0.00	.95
Patronizing gay or lesbian coffeeshouses, centers, dances	1.53	3.23	4.19	.05
Involved in gay activities	2.27	4.67	8.27	.008
Importance of career to self-worth	1.13	0.80	1.29	.27
Importance of being in a lover relationship to self-worth	2.00	1.33	1.18	.29
Importance of having children to self-worth	2.73	2.93	0.08	.78
Importance of social life to self-worth	1.13	1.00	0.15	.71
Importance of having female friends	1.80	2.13	0.51	.48
Importance of academic success	1.27	1.87	2.64	.12
Importance of having male friends	1.13	0.60	3.45	.07
Importance of relationship with parents to self-worth	1.87	2.07	0.14	.71
Importance of religion to self-worth	2.00	2.40	0.26	.62
Number of gay male relatives	0.43	0.14	2.89	.10
Number of lesbian relatives	0.29	0.07	1.44	.24
Number of bisexual male relatives	0.07	0.00	1.00	.33
Number of bisexual female relatives	0.29	0.00	3.06	.09
Number of close friends	5.73	2.40	3.50	.07
Number of close gay male friends	2.33	4.00	5.54	.03
Number of close lesbian friends	0.43	0.67	0.66	.42
Number of close bisexual male friends	0.43	0.40	0.01	.91
Number of close bisexual female friends	0.57	0.27	2.85	.10
Number of close heterosexual male friends	2.29	0.60	13.09	.0012
Number of close heterosexual female friends	3.21	4.47	2.39	.13

*Significance level set at $p=.001$

Table 5: Results Testing Hypothesis 5

H6: *Homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other will be more similar to each other in their relationship expectations than homosexual men and heterosexual women in casual relationships.*

	Means			
	Close	Casual	F	p
Importance of having friends	0.67	0.73	0.06	.81
Time spent with friend	0.93	0.60	0.86	.36
Open, trusting, truly themselves	0.67	0.60	0.02	.88
Satisfied with relationship	0.87	0.87	0.00	1.00
Discuss topics such as hobbies and interests ¹	0.27	0.87	5.97	.02
Discuss topics such as wants and needs ¹	0.73	0.87	0.22	.64
Discuss topics such as personal strengths and weaknesses ¹	1.00	0.93	0.03	.87
Frequency of experiencing conflict	1.00	0.47	1.67	.21
Degree to which bothered by conflict	1.14	1.53	0.35	.56
Resolving conflicts important	1.07	0.73	0.59	.45
Intellectual involvement	0.73	0.73	0.00	1.00
Emotional support	0.67	0.93	0.74	.40
Physical activities	1.07	0.53	1.83	.19
Conversational involvement	0.60	1.33	4.19	.05
Enjoyable time spent together	0.60	0.80	0.35	.56
Social activities	0.87	0.47	1.43	.24
Spiritual meditations	1.07	0.13	3.92	.06

¹Reversed scale where 1= "discussed all important details" and 9= "discussed not at all"

Table 6: Results Testing Hypothesis 6

Cluster Analysis

Cluster analyses of the interview texts were used to answer the following research questions: Why are close friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women formed; Why are close friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women maintained; How are close friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women maintained. A separate analysis was conducted on each of the sections of the interview. For each section clusters emerged by taking the forty most frequently occurring words from the interviews and clustering them. Several words did not appear in the clusters produced by the initial analyses because different forms of the words were used. Therefore, certain words with a common root were treated as the same word in the analysis. Hence, the words hang, hung, and hanging were treated as hang; the words help, helps, helping, and helped were treated as help; the words honest and honesty were treated as honest; the words talk, talks, talking, and talked were treated as talk; the words trust, trusts, trusted, and trusting were treated as trust; the words plan, planning, plans, and planned were treated as plan; the words attract, attracted, attracts, attracting, and attractive were treated as attract; and the words laugh, laughs, laughed, and laughing were treated as laugh.

The clustering of the words is represented by the dendograms. A dendogram is a visual representation of the word clusters; word clusters are listed across the top with the number of occurrences charted below. The height of each peak represents the frequency of occurrence of the word clusters. The visual representation of the word clusters provides a means of determining the importance of concepts that have emerged from the interviews.

Friendship Formation Clusters

The responses to the friendship formation interview questions elicited responses describing how the homosexual men and heterosexual women interviewed formed their relationship. Participants were asked to respond to questions such as how they first met, how much time they spent together after first meeting, what attracted them to each other, and what motivated them to form their relationship.

Words occurring in less than half of the interviews will not be discussed. If at least half of those interviewed did not mention a particular word then that word is not important to understanding the friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women. The words “help”, “fun”, “bar”, “week”, “laugh”, “person”, “phone”, “life”, “looking”, and “long” each occurred less than four times in the friendship formation portion of the interview. Therefore, these words will not be discussed, and only major clusters will be discussed.

The cluster analysis for Friendship Formation produced twelve clusters, five of which are major clusters (see Figure 1). Distinct breaks, as shown in the dendogram, occur between each of the clusters.

Cluster #1: Common, funny different. The cluster “common/funny” (14 occurrences/10 occurrences) suggests that something homosexual men and heterosexual women have in common is humor; they both like funny things. The cluster begins with the word “different” (11 occurrences) followed by the word pair. Homosexual men and heterosexual women are attracted to each other if they perceive each other to be funny (“Funny too, I thought you were really funny” “He was just really funny”).

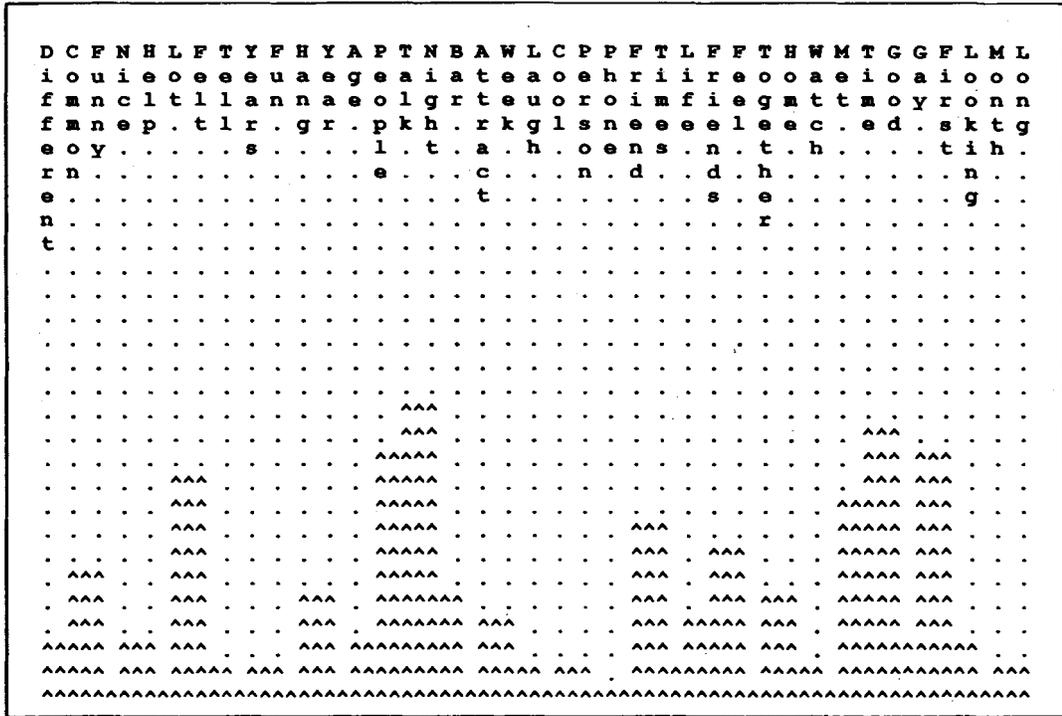


Figure 1: A dendrogram showing the clusters of words used frequently to describe Friendship Formation in close relationships between homosexual men and heterosexual women.

The word “different” in this cluster refers to several things. Partners describe themselves as different (“Funny things we have in common. It’s just odd little things that we have in common despite the fact that we’re very different individuals”) and describe the different reasons they were motivated to form the relationship (“I was motivated for a different reason too at the beginning cuz I had a crush on him. But then it changed when we found out that we had a lot in common”). Homosexual men and heterosexual women may have different reasons for wanting a friendship, but they are attracted by a common interest in being with someone who is funny.

Cluster #2: *Feel and tell a lot.* The word pair “lot/felt” (38 occurrences/14 occurrences) and the word “tell” (8 occurrences) co-occur with each other in the text of the interviews. This cluster begins with “lot/felt” followed by the word “tell”. The unit measures on the dendrogram indicate a slight relationship between this word pair and word. The word pair “lot/felt” is significant in that those interviewed talked about how they felt about each other and the relationship (“I felt from the beginning that I could be one hundred percent with him” “it felt real, it felt genuine”), and used the term “a lot” to qualify those feelings (“We just were a like in a lot of ways. We felt similarly about a lot of different things” “we felt the same way about a lot of the things”). Using these words the participants described what made the relationship desirable.

Although the co-occurrence was not frequent, the word “tell” did occur with the word pair “lot/felt”. In reviewing the text of the interview this occurrence suggests that when the couples first met, the homosexual man was not telling a lot of people about his sexuality (“I felt like I could be gay, but I didn’t tell a lot of people right a way” “I was just starting to tell people that I was gay or whatever. It was because I had gone through a period where I had friends, but then I really didn’t feel like they were my friends”). This type of disclosure also suggests that friendship between homosexual men and heterosexual women is desirable. The homosexual man feels comfortable telling his heterosexual female friend about his sexuality before he does telling other people. Therefore, the homosexual man finds the heterosexual woman to be a desirable friend.

Cluster #3: *Talk at night.* This cluster is striking and includes the highest peak on the dendrogram. The cluster begins with the single word “age” (8 occurrences) followed by the single word “people” (20 occurrences). The word pair “talk/night” forms

the apex of the cluster and is followed by the word “bar” (6 occurrences). The words “talk” (30 occurrences) and “night” (14 occurrences) refer to what homosexual men and heterosexual women do when they are forming a relationship. Their responses from the interviews indicate that they will often hang out at night (“after we started hanging out we joined a book club, so we had that every Tuesday night” “But then we started hanging out way more. And either I was in your room or you were in my room, what three or four times a week, like at night”), and talk at night (“We talked a lot at night” “we ended up talking in the corridor...all night long” “we did talk every night on the phone”). Homosexual men and heterosexual women will often just “hang out and talk”. Being together and talking is important when forming a relationship with someone, as is evidenced by the dyads interviewed.

The word “people” is associated with the word pair “talk/night”, but in reviewing the text of the interview, there does not seem to be a specific reason why. These words seemed to have co-occurred simply because of particular stories told by the homosexual men and heterosexual women about how they first met (“some other people there had asked me join them out that night for a few drinks...some people in his department had asked him out that night too, so we end up at the same bar, so we talk for a bit” “We started talking about the fact that he was new to the gay scene...And he didn’t mind and I found that refreshing as opposed to some people being offended and not wanting to talk about it”).

Cluster #4: *Friend time and feelings.* The word pair “friend/times” (17 occurrences/11 occurrences) is somewhat related to the word pair “friends/feel” (24 occurrences/6occurrences). This cluster is also rather striking. These word pairs are

connected by the single word “life” (11 occurrences). The word pair “friend/times” forms the highest peak in this cluster.

At first glance the word pair “friend/times” seems a bit puzzling, but in reviewing the text of the interviews it is clear that this pairing refers to periods in the friendship formation process where partners refer to other friends in relation to this friend. Phrases such as “there were times when my friend would”, “I’m not saying I don’t have good times with my best girl friend”, or “my other friend got a little bit jealous at times” indicate that the homosexual men and heterosexual women compare their friendship to other relationships, suggesting that when forming a new relationship is it important to them to keep their older relationships intact.

The word pair “friends/feel” suggests feelings about the relationship that homosexual men and heterosexual women have with each other as well as how they feel about their relationships with other friends (“It was because I had gone through a period where I had friends, but then I really didn’t feel like they were my friends” “I didn’t feel tense or uncomfortable or anything. He was kind of laid back. With my other friend we had become friends before I knew he was gay, so I’ve had gay friends over the years, but he’s a much tighter, stronger friend”). As with the word pair “friend/times”, the word pair “friends/feel” indicates that homosexual men and heterosexual women compare their friendship with each other to their other relationships by expressing how they feel about their relationships.

The next cluster includes the word pair “together/home” (13 occurrences/12 occurrences) with the single word “watch” (6 occurrences). However, this is not a significant cluster.

Cluster #5: First time, good time. The word pair “time/good” (47 occurrences/25 occurrences) is clustered somewhat closely with the word “met” (28 occurrences). The word pair “time/good” forms the highest point of this cluster and is followed by the word pair “gay/first” (38 occurrences/22 occurrences). The single word “looking” (6 occurrences) has a slight relationship with the word pair “gay/first”. The word “met” is related to the word “time” because throughout the text of the interviews, participants would say things such as “the first time we met” or “when we met for the first time”. This may suggest that memorable or significant things happen when homosexual men and heterosexual women meet for the first time, or that they simply like to talk about how and when they first met.

The word pair “time/good” implies that during the friendship formation period, homosexual men and heterosexual women have a good time with each other. This may also be something that attracts them to each other and inspires them to form relationships with each other. When asked what motivated them to form the relationship, responses were “He always was laughing and looking for a good time”, “I just have a really good time with him”, and “We can make a good time out of anything”. Having a good time is a reason why homosexual men and heterosexual women form friendships.

Although there is not a strong relationship, the words “gay” and “first” appear together frequently throughout the text forming the last word pair of the cluster. The pairing of these words implies that the heterosexual female makes a judgment about the homosexual male’s sexuality upon meeting him. In the interviews the women would often recollect what they thought, in terms of sexuality, when they first met the men (“I do remember that when I first met him I didn’t think he was gay.” “he didn’t strike me as

gay right away. Like if I didn't know I might not have guessed at first." "That was my first clue that I was gay!"). This suggests that for women who did not know that their friend was homosexual, his sexuality was not an issue when she did find out. For these women, sexuality had nothing to do with whether they would form a relationship with the man or not.

Maintenance Clusters

The maintenance portion of the questionnaire elicited responses describing behaviors used by homosexual men and heterosexual women to maintain their friendship. Questions such as what activities do you do together, how much time do you spend together, and how do you get in touch with each other provided these responses.

As with the friendship formation portion of the interview, words occurring in less than half of the maintenance portion of the interviews will not be discussed. The words "person", "house", "weekend", "boyfriend", "family", "tell", "days", "today", "away", "hours", and "movies" each occurred less than four times in the maintenance portion of the interview. Therefore, these words will not be discussed, and only major clusters will be discussed.

The cluster analysis for Maintenance produced eight clusters, five of which are major clusters (see Figure 2).

Cluster #1: Hang out together on weekends. The first major cluster contains the word pair "week/hang" (14 occurrences/10 occurrences) which is followed by the single word "weekends" (7 occurrences). The word pair "week/hang" forms the highest peak in this cluster. There is a slight relationship between these words and the remaining words in the cluster. Following "weekends" is the word "eat" (7 occurrences). This word is

somewhat related to the word pair “plan/night” (19 occurrences/7 occurrences). The word pair “week/hang” along with the word “weekends” indicates that the homosexual men and heterosexual women who live near each other hang out with each other during the week and on weekends (“we definitely hang out on the weekends, and then probably once or twice a week, depending on the week” “during the week we just hang out” “during the week we more or less just call each other up and see if the other wants to hang out”), and that the friends who do not live near each other only hang out on the weekends (“if I see him usually it’s a weekend”). These responses suggest that they make time to see each other as often as possible, whether it be several times per week or just on the weekends. Maintaining their friendship requires being with each other and having time for each other.

When asked how often they got together and what they did, one participant said, “Like, every other night and a lot of time on the weekends. We go out to eat. We just hang out a lot too.” This statement creates a nice segue to the remainder of the cluster. The word “eat” emerged in this cluster, and one of the things that homosexual men and heterosexual women do when they hang out or get together on the weekends is eat. The word “dinner” emerged in a later cluster so the emergence of the word “eat” is not surprising. Many of the respondents said that they go out to eat or get together to eat (“we eat food, that’s what we do. We go out to eat a lot” “we still go out to eat a lot. Yeah, we like to eat”).

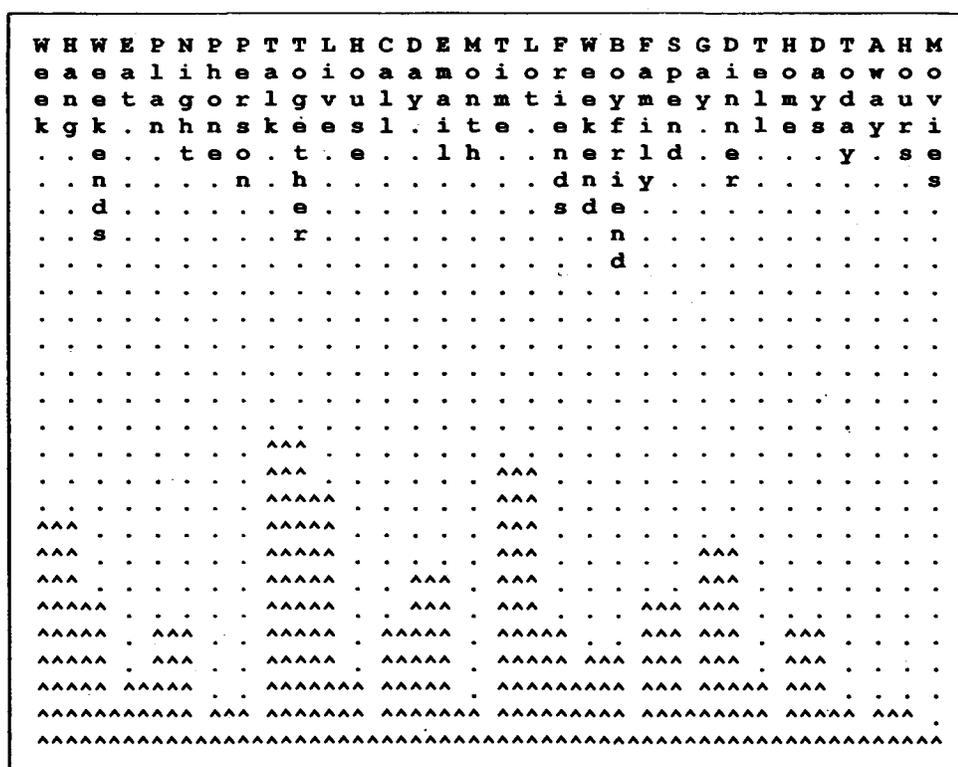


Figure 2: A dendrogram showing the clusters of words used frequently to describe Maintenance in close relationships between homosexual men and heterosexual women.

The last word pair of the cluster is “plan/night” suggesting that homosexual men and heterosexual women either do (“we plan events” “we do have to plan more cuz we’re not geographically close anymore”) or do not make plans (“we don’t really make plans. Even though we don’t live near each other it’s spur of the moment” “we don’t really plan, it’s more spur of the moment”), and if they do, they plan to be with each other at night (“we plan week night events and things” “we usually talk on Wednesday or Sunday nights, so we kind of keep that time separate and don’t make plans). Making plans or setting aside certain nights helps homosexual men and heterosexual women manage their relationships.

Cluster #2: *Talk together.* The word pair “talk/together” (28 occurrences/23 occurrences) is closely related to the word “live” (10 occurrences). This cluster is striking and contains the highest peak in the entire dendogram. This peak is formed by the word pair “talk/together”. The word “house” (7 occurrences) does not have a very strong relationship with the other words in this cluster.

The word pair “talk/together” suggests that homosexual men and heterosexual women maintain their relationship with each other by getting together to talk or by being together and talking (“we’ll get together just to drink tea or wine and talk. We’re perfectly happy just relaxing and talking” “we sit down and make dinner together and eat dinner together and talk”). The word “live” appears in this cluster because two of the dyads interviewed live together, and spoke of living together in the interview. When asked how much time they spend together, one dyad answered, “Well, we live together, so I don’t know. *A lot* of time. Basically if we’re both home and not sleeping or in the shower or something, we’re hanging out.” There is not a strong relationship with the word “home”, but there were instances during the interviews when participants would talk about being home and spending time together (“right before Christmas he came home and we spent a lot of time together then”). Talking and being together allows homosexual men and heterosexual women to keep their relationship going.

Cluster #3: *Call, email everyday.* The word pair “day/email” (17 occurrences/10 occurrences) is related to the word “call” (14 occurrences) and only slightly related to the word “month” (6 occurrences). The single word “month” does not have a strong relationship with the rest of the cluster. The relationship of these words would suggest that one of the ways homosexual men and heterosexual women maintain their friendship

with each other is through daily emails and phone calls. In reviewing the text of the interview, they do indeed use these means of communication to stay in touch. (“we email like, every day” “usually we email at least every day” “we’re on the phone every day” “email every day and call maybe once or twice a week” “but mostly we just call each other, well we call to make plans, we email and IM more just to chat”). Phone calls and email are especially important for the homosexual men and heterosexual women who do not live near each other (“we *are* together every day. It’s not in person, but on the phone” “So when we’re around, we see each other a lot, but when we’re not, we just call or email”).

Cluster #4: *Share a lot of time and friends.* The next major cluster is also a striking cluster and contains the word pair “time/lot” (21 occurrences/20 occurrences) followed by the word “friends” (9 occurrences). The word pair “time/lot” forms the apex of this cluster. The concept that emerged from this cluster is the amount of time homosexual men and heterosexual women in close friendships spend with each other. The word pair “time/lot” refers to the time they do spend together. To maintain their friendship, they spend a lot of time together. When asked how much time they spent together, many partners answered saying simply, “a lot.” It is clear by the responses that spending time with each other is very important to homosexual men and heterosexual women (“a lot of time. Like, every other night and a lot of time on the weekends” “we definitely do spend a lot of time together when we can”).

The word pair “time/lot” is related to the word “friends” which represents an important concept for homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships. This is important because it refers to how homosexual men and heterosexual women

balance their friendship with their relationships with other friends. This is obviously more of a challenge for those pairs who live near each other. It can be tricky to maintain several relationships at the same time, but as indicated in the interviews, it is important that the homosexual men and heterosexual women maintain their relationship with each other while maintaining other relationships that they have. Fortunately for most of them, they have mutual friends with whom they get together (“we have a lot of the same friends, so we see them a lot too” “we have a lot of mutual friends, so we do stuff with them too”), which makes it easier to maintain all of their relationships.

Cluster #5: Gay bars, dinner. The word pair “gay/dinner” (11 occurrences/9 occurrences) is an important concept to homosexual men and heterosexual women. This cluster is also rather striking and begins with the word pair “family/spend” (10 occurrences/6 occurrences) which is related to the word pair “gay/dinner”. Following this pairing is the single word “tell” (6 occurrences). The word pair “gay/dinner” forms the apex of this cluster.

By itself this pairing seems puzzling, but when put back into the context of the interview, it refers to the activities that homosexual men and heterosexual women do together. This word pair is also somewhat related to the word “spend” which implies that they spend time together. Homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other suggest that they often do things like go to gay or straight bars and clubs, go out to dinner together, or cook dinner together. When asked what kinds of activities they did together one couple answered that they went to “mostly regular bars, but sometimes a gay bar. Actually when I visited him last month we went to a couple gay bars and it was fun. So we go dancing, we make dinner a lot and play cards.

We'll have nights where we make a dinner and then just play cards all night." Another couple answered the same question with "on the weekends we'll cook dinner or go to a movie. Sometimes we'll head out to a bar or club, sometimes gay, sometimes straight." Doing things together is important in maintaining a relationship, and because each member of the dyad has a different sexual orientation, it is important that when going out, they choose both gay and straight establishments. This indicates that they are accepting of each other and that it is important to recognize their differences in order to maintain their friendship.

Relationship Clusters

Questions from the relationship portion of the interview elicited responses that describe the friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women. Participants responded to questions asking them to describe their relationship, when they first realized it was an important relationship, and how it is different from other relationships they have.

Words occurring in less than half of the relationship portion of the interviews will not be discussed. The words "mom" and "world" each occurred less than four times in the friendship formation portion of the interview. Therefore, these words will not be discussed, and only major clusters will be discussed.

The cluster analysis for Relationship produced ten clusters, nine of which are major clusters (see Figure 3).

Cluster #1: Telling anything and trust. The word pairs “tell/person” (48 occurrences/27 occurrences) and “people/trust” (37 occurrences/26 occurrences) are special to homosexual men and heterosexual women. The word pair “people/trust” forms the highest peak in this cluster. One of the most frequently stated responses in the interviews was that homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships can tell each other anything, and that they are more apt to tell each other than any one else. They feel extremely comfortable with each other, and know that they can trust each other which makes it easy for them to tell each other anything. Their level of trust plays a big role in their ability to tell each other things (“He is the only person I will tell things, anything, to. I’m not very expressive usually, but I am with him” “I can tell him anything. I trust him completely”). This element of trust and being able to tell each other things that they do not tell other people suggests that this friendship is very important to homosexual men and heterosexual women. They also trust each other more than they trust other people with whom they have relationships (“I’ve learned my lesson about trusting people too soon and not really knowing if they’re really friends or not. So trust is a big thing, and I know that I trust her with anything” “It’s good too because I really trust him. It’s sometimes hard for me to trust people because they don’t know my past, but more because I don’t know theirs. I know his, I know what he’s been through, I know what kind of person he is, so that makes it really easy for me to trust him” “I didn’t think other people wouldn’t accept me, but I wasn’t sure how they would react, but I knew that me coming out to her wouldn’t change anything about our friendship....She was, I felt, the only person I could really trust at time”), which also suggests that this relationship is

very important to homosexual men and heterosexual women and that it offers something that other relationships may not.

Cluster #2: Hanging out like family. This cluster includes only one word pair, “family/hang” (28 occurrences/19 occurrences), which is puzzling. Although this pairing occurred fairly frequently, it is not closely related to any other words. These words co-occur when participants were comparing hanging out with friends to hanging out with their families (“I like my family and like hanging out with them, but I still have the most fun with her”). In reviewing the interviews, however, it seems that the word “family” was mentioned by homosexual men and heterosexual women more as a comparison of their friendship than of time spent hanging out. Six out of the eight dyads interviewed said that their friendship had some elements that were more like a familial relationship than a friendship.

Cluster #3: Feel comfort, complete honesty. This cluster contains two word pairs that are closely related. The word pair “feel/comfortable” (40 occurrences/18 occurrences) forms the highest peak in this cluster. Immediately following is the word pair “honest/completely” (24 occurrences/14 occurrences). These two word pairs are closely related and are important concepts for homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other (“I feel very comfortable with her at all times and I know that we can be completely honest with other”). One of the reasons why this friendship is so important to them is because they feel extremely comfortable with each other and can be completely honest with each other. They feel this way with each other because of the trust they have (“I trust him completely, I feel really comfortable around him”), because they can be themselves (“I feel really comfortable around her, I don’t

have put my guard up” “I always feel comfortable with him, I can be myself, I can say what’s on my mind”), and because, as suggested earlier, they can tell each other anything (“we feel comfortable with each other, I really can tell her anything” “we just feel really comfortable around each other. It’s no holds bar, if we want to say something, we’ll say it”).

Given that homosexual men and heterosexual women feel comfortable with each other, they are able to be completely honest with one another (“we really trust each other, we have an honest relationship” “I’m completely honest with him” “be completely honest, completely trustworthy, you’ll tell them anything and still, you know, be accepted”). Honesty is something that attracts homosexual men and heterosexual women to each other, and it is also an important part of their relationship.

Cluster #4: Definitely close. This is rather striking cluster, and two important concepts emerged from this cluster: “time/good” (49 occurrences/39 occurrences) and “close/definitely” (29 occurrences/18 occurrences). The word pair “time/good” forms the apex of this cluster and is only somewhat related to the single word “lot” (33 occurrences). The single word “great” (14 occurrences) does not occur frequently, but it does connect the previously mentioned words to the word pair “close/definitely” and the word “felt” (13 occurrences).

The first important concept that emerged from this cluster is represented by the word pair “time/good”, which is not surprising. This relationship is special, valuable, and important to homosexual men and heterosexual women because they have a good time together. Some participants had trouble describing their relationship, but all of them expressed that they simply have a good time with their friend (“we just have a really good

time together” “I just have a really good time with him. I mean, not that I don’t have a good time with my other friends, but we can make a good time out of anything. We can just be sitting there doing absolutely nothing, but still have a good time”).

The words “lot” and “great” connect the word pair “time/good” with the word pair “close/definitely”. The word “lot” is used in the phrase “a lot” throughout the text of the interviews, simply to distinguish frequency or quantity. The word “great” is used to describe the friendship (“even when we go to the bars now it’s a great time” “everything is just great, we have a good time”).

The word pair “close/definitely” is the second important concept that emerged from this cluster. All of the dyads interviewed expressed how close they are to each other and by using the term “definitely”, there is no doubt that homosexual men and heterosexual women truly are close to each other, and that this aspect of their relationship is important to them. They use the word pair “close/definitely” and the word “felt” to describe how close they are to each other (“we’re very close, he’s one of my closest friends, he knows a lot about me and I would trust him with anything. We’re obviously, you know, really good friends, so yeah, we’re definitely close” “I think trust definitely makes us close” “He’s definitely that person that I feel closest to in the whole world” “I definitely felt close to you that night”). Several of those interviewed suggested that trust and honesty were reason why they felt so close to each other.

Cluster #5: *Like living together, best friends, married.* The word pair “live/together” (22 occurrences/19 occurrences) emerged because of the two couples that live together. They discussed the importance of the friendship in terms of living together and also suggested that their friendship was different because of their living

arrangements. Coupled with this word pair is the word pair “best/married” (24 occurrences/13 occurrences). The word pair “best/married” forms the highest point in this cluster. The word pair “best/married” indicates that homosexual men and heterosexual women used these words to compare their relationship with other relationships. Several of those interviewed said that they were like a married couple (“I think we’re basically like a married couple without sex because, I mean, that’s just how I feel” “we’re kind of like a married couple, I mean we live together, we split the housework, we cook for each other, well, except we have separate rooms...and beds”). One of the reasons they compared themselves to a married couple is because of the believe that married couples are often also best friends, and as one man said, “You know how married couples say they married their best friend? Well, I wish there was something like that that I could say to really show people that he’s more than just my best friend.” Another reason was that both married couples and best friends tell each other everything, which is something that homosexual men and heterosexual women do. By comparing their friendship to familial relations, homosexual men and heterosexual women depict their friendships as something very important to them and different from any other kind of relationship they have.

The word pair “long/they’re” (15 occurrences/13 occurrences) forms the next cluster but does not occur frequently and has no relationship with any other cluster so it is therefore not significant.

Cluster #6: A different relationship. This cluster is the most striking. Several important concepts for homosexual men and heterosexual women in close friendships with each other emerged from this cluster. The first word pair “friends/different” (73

occurrences/52 occurrences) is closely related to the word “talk” (63 occurrences). This word pair not only forms the apex of this cluster but is also the highest point on the entire dendogram. The word “talk” is closely related to this word pair. One of the phrases that was stated over and over in the interviews was that the friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women are just different. Most of the pairs interviewed stated that there was a difference and those that did not alluded to it (“It’s also just a different type of relationship... it’s different” “I have a lot of different friends or whatever, but I don’t think any of them are like him, like our relationship”). The most common reason for this friendship being different from other relationships was because of the things homosexual men and heterosexual women talk about. Most of those interviewed stated that they felt completely comfortable discussing any topic with their friend (“I think we share a lot of things that other friends might not share. We’re very comfortable with each other, we can talk about anything really” “I can talk to him like I do with my female friends, but his responses are very, different from my girls’ responses – I get the male perspective from him. It’s different from my relationships with other guys”)

Somewhat related to the word pair “friends/different” is the word pair “relationship/ important” (35 occurrences/32 occurrences). The single word “life” (23 occurrences) is somewhat related to the word pair “relationship/important”. The remaining words in this cluster are related to the previously mentioned words, but do not have a strong relationship with them. The single word “day” (15 occurrences) and word pair “first/years” (19 occurrences/12 occurrences) form the end of this cluster.

The things that make this relationship different are the things that make it important. The second word pair in this cluster is “relationship/important”, which

obviously suggests that the friendships that homosexual men and heterosexual women have are very important to them (“I always just knew that we would be friends, and to me that signified that it’s an important relationship” “this relationship is very important to me, but all of mine are. This one is just different” “I realized I was important to him, he was important to me, our relationship was important”).

The cluster tapers off with the words “life” and “day” and the word pair “first/years”. The word life, in reference to the rest of the cluster, also signifies the importance of the friendship for homosexual men and heterosexual women. In discussing aspects of and people in their life, those interviewed express the importance of the friendship (“It’s important to me because she has always accepted me with out question. In every aspect of my life” “I have a lot of important people in my life. And he’s not, you know, more important or less important than anyone else. I guess he’s just a different level of importance” “But he is the one person in this world who makes my life easier. With whom I can talk about anything and he knows who I am for who I am, and he loves me for who I am”). There is no doubt that the friendships that homosexual men and heterosexual women have are important to them.

The word “day” is more closely related to the word pair “first/years” than with the rest of the cluster. The word pair “first/year” in this cluster is in reference to homosexual men and heterosexual women discussing things that happened during or after the first year of their relationship (“right after the first year that we met” “after that first year I graduated”). This implies that each of the partners in the dyad has been friends for at least a year. The word “day” simply refers to stories the participants told about the first years of their friendship (“remember that one day”).

Cluster #7: *Agreeing doesn't matter, love does.* The word pair “matter/love” (17 occurrences/12 occurrences) forms the highest peak of this cluster and is somewhat related to the word pair “agree/saying” (19 occurrences/12 occurrences). However, the word “agree” in the word pair “agree/saying” actually refers to phrases such as “we don’t always agree” or “we don’t have to agree”. Paired with the word “saying” and word pair “matter/love”, it suggests that to homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other, it does not matter if they disagree about some issues (“we love each other no matter what. Like he was saying before, we don’t always agree, but that’s ok, it’s unconditional. It doesn’t matter” “it doesn’t matter that we don’t always agree” “she does things that I would never do, she makes choices that I don’t agree with, but it doesn’t matter. I love her no matter what” “But it’s also unconditional. We have different lives and, we understand that, but it doesn’t matter. We don’t always agree on things, but we don’t let that get in the way”). This friendship is so important to homosexual men and heterosexual women that they can look beyond their differences and accept each other for who they are and what they do. They agree to disagree and continue to have a friendship no matter what.

Cluster #8: *Knowing like a brother.* This cluster is somewhat striking. It contains the word pair “knows/night” (25 occurrences/20 occurrences) which is somewhat related to the single word “call” (14 occurrences). These words are related to, but distinct from the remaining words in the cluster. The single word “brother” (21 occurrences) and the word pair “am/world” (12 occurrences/12 occurrences) are related and form the end of this cluster.

The relationship of the words in the word pair “knows/night” is not obvious, but in reviewing the text of the interviews, the word “knows” is used as an expression of comfort and suggests what can be expected in the relationship. This word pair is related to the word “call”. In times of need, which in the cases of those interviewed occurred at night, homosexual men and heterosexual women know that they will be there for each other (“She knows that I’m there for her and I know that she’s there for me, so if I have some crisis in the middle of the night, I just knock on her door and we’ll talk all night if we have to” “I can call him in the middle of the night, if I just had a bad day or can’t get to sleep at night, I’ll call him, at any hour, and it’s ok. And he knows he can do the same for me”). They know that at any time, their friend will be there to offer support. They are aware that they can call each other at any time, day or night (“I know that he will always be there for me, and likewise for him. I mean, we live in different time zones and we sometimes forget, so I’ll call him really early in the morning on accident or he’ll call me really late at night, but we don’t get mad, we just talk, and it’s ok”). Knowing that they are always there for each other is very important to homosexual men and heterosexual women.

This word pair is somewhat related to the word “brother”. Although the relationship is not clear, it is clear that the use of the term “brother” is significant for homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other. As stated earlier, more than half of the dyads that participated in the interview suggested that their friendship with each other had a familial element to it. This grouping of words furthers that notion. The word “brother” appears in the text of the interviews as a comparison (“He’s like a brother. Well, I’m not even close with my brother, I’m closer

to him than” “We’re like really close brother and sister” “I’d say we’re more brother and sister. It’s definitely that kind of bond, I think”). The heterosexual women describe their homosexual male friends as brothers, or closer than brothers. Both the homosexual men and heterosexual women say that they can tell things to each other that they would not share with a brother (“There’s no person in the world, even my brother, even my mother, I don’t talk about everything as I talk with him”).

Cluster #9: Friendship. This cluster includes the word pair “friendship/year” (22 occurrences/13 occurrences) which is somewhat related to the following word pair “friend/gay” (27 occurrences/24 occurrences). The word pair “friend/gay” forms the apex of this cluster. The single words “weird” (12 occurrences) and “met” (11 occurrences) are only somewhat related to the word pair “friend/gay”. The word pair “friendship/year” indicates that homosexual men and heterosexual women evaluate their friendships with each other in terms of what happens from year to year (“probably not even a year after I met you that I was like, this is a good friendship” “We didn’t really see each other for a year...I wouldn’t say I took our friendship for granted, but you don’t know what you got till it’s gone, right?”). For several of the participants it took at least a year or an event during the course of a year for them to realize the importance of their relationship with each other.

The major concept in this cluster emerges from the word pair “friend/gay”, but given the theme of this research, this concept is not surprising. The words “gay” and “friend” co-occur frequently throughout the text of the interviews. This cluster tapers off with the words “weird” and “met”. The word “weird” only occurred in four of the interviews and has no significant meaning. The word “met” simply refers to points in the

interview where the homosexual men and heterosexual women talk about when they first met each other and other people (“right after the first year that we met” “I knew it was a cool friendship probably really soon after we met”).

CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSION

This chapter provides a discussion of the results of the analysis of variance and the cluster analysis. It examines the significance of the results and the relationship between the quantitative and qualitative results. The chapter also discusses the limitations and significance of the present study and identifies areas of future research.

Analysis of Variance

The present results indicate that homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women are different in their personal-social characteristics from homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women and that heterosexual women in close relationships with homosexual men are also different in their personal-social characteristics from heterosexual women in casual relationships with homosexual men. Homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual woman see themselves as more forceful and aggressive than homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women. Similarly, heterosexual women in close relationships with homosexual men also report being more forceful and aggressive than heterosexual women in casual relationships with homosexual men. These results suggest that homosexual men form close relationships with heterosexual women who are forceful and aggressive and that heterosexual women form close relationships with homosexual men who are more forceful and aggressive as well.

Additionally, heterosexual women in close relationships with homosexual men have more homosexual male friends than do heterosexual women in casual relationships with homosexual men. If a woman becomes close to a homosexual man, she is more likely than a women without that close relationship to meet his other homosexual friends.

A woman in a close relationship with a homosexual man will have more social access to meet other homosexual men than a woman in a casual relationship with a homosexual man.

Homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women also report different expectations of their relationship than homosexual men in relationships with heterosexual women. Homosexual men who have close heterosexual female friends self describe as more open, trusting, and “truly themselves” when they are with their friend than homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women. Homosexual men are more likely to expect to be able to self-disclose to a close friend than to a casual friend. Homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women also report discussing topics such as personal strengths and weakness to a greater extent than do homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women. Homosexual men also expect to be able to talk about deep and personal issues with their close friends.

Resolving conflicts with their heterosexual female friends is very important to homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women. They have invested more in the relationship than homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women, so it is important to them that conflicts get resolved in order to preserve the friendship.

Homosexual men’s close relationships with heterosexual women have more to offer those involved compared to other relationships. Homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women report more conversational involvement, more enjoyable time spent together, and more social activities with their heterosexual female friends compared to their other relationships. Conversational involvement allows for

self-disclosure and the resolution of conflict. Close friends should have enjoyable time together, and it is not surprising that homosexual men in close relationships describe having more enjoyable time with their heterosexual female friend and engage in more social activities than do homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women. Heterosexual women in close relationships with homosexual men also report having more enjoyable time with them than heterosexual women in casual relationships with homosexual men.

Heterosexual women who have close homosexual male friends expect to be able to discuss topics such as personal strengths and weaknesses, as do homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women. It is expected that high levels of self-disclosure take place in close relationships.

Homosexual men who have close relationships with heterosexual woman report different social-personal characteristics than homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women. Heterosexual women in close relationships with homosexual men also have different social-personal characteristics than heterosexual women in casual relationships with homosexual men. The results suggest that homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other must be forceful and aggressive for their relationship to be successful. This makes them different from homosexual men and heterosexual women who are not in close relationships with each other.

Homosexual men who have close relationships with heterosexual woman have different expectations of the relationship than homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women. Heterosexual women in close relationships with homosexual

men also have different expectations of the relationship than heterosexual women in casual relationships with homosexual men. Because of their closeness, homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other can and do expect more from their relationship with each other than homosexual men and heterosexual women who do not have close relationships with each other. It is reasonable to expect close friends to be there for each other in times of need, to spend time together, and to share personal experiences.

It is also important to note that homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women had more expectations of the relationship than heterosexual women in close relationships with homosexual men. This suggests that homosexual men need more from this friendship than the heterosexual women. Most of the expectations of the relationship that the homosexual men in close relationships reported dealt with self-disclosure. Because of their sexuality homosexual men may not feel comfortable disclosing personal information to everyone with whom they have a relationship, so it is important to them that they can expect to be able to self-disclose with their heterosexual female friend. Heterosexual women may not be as concerned with their sexuality when self-disclosing to other people, so it is not as prevalent an expectation for them as it is for the homosexual men.

Cluster Analysis

Examination of comments made by homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationship throughout the interviews reveals a more in depth understanding of this type of friendship. Although reasons for forming and maintaining the friendship and aspects of the relationship varied across those interviewed, common themes did emerge

through the cluster analysis. A closer study of the concepts that emerge in the dendogram will help us understand the common themes found in close friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women (See Table 7).

<p>Friendship Formation Things in common: funny and different Comfortable, genuine: feel and tell a lot Talk at night Compare relationships: friend time and feelings First time, good time</p> <p>Maintenance Hang out together on weekends Talk together Call, email everyday Share a lot of time and friends Gay bars, dinner: activities together</p> <p>Relationship Tell anything and trust Hanging out like family Feel comfort and complete honesty Definitely close Like living together, best friends, married A different relationship Agreeing doesn't matter, love does Knowing like a brother Friendship</p>
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Table 7: Common Concepts About Friendship Among Homosexual Men and Heterosexual Women in Close Relationships With Each Other

The purpose of the interviews was to gain a better understanding of why and how friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women are formed and maintained. The interviews were conducted to also allow for a better understanding of the results from the questionnaire. In analyzing the results from both the questionnaire

and the interviews, we are presented with a clearer picture of friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women.

Friendship Formation

The analysis of the interviews suggests that homosexual men and heterosexual women form relationships because they share things in common, they feel comfortable and genuine with each other, they are able to talk freely with each other, they recognize what this friendship has to offer, and they have a good time being with each other.

Homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women report more conversational involvement, a more enjoyable time, and engage in more social activities with their heterosexual female friend than with people in other relationships compared to homosexual men who do not have close relationships with heterosexual women.

Heterosexual women in close relationships with homosexual men discuss having a more enjoyable time with their homosexual male friend than with people in other relationships compared to heterosexual women who do not have close relationships with homosexual men. This could be because one of the reasons that homosexual men and heterosexual women form their relationships is because of things they have in common. Not only do they enjoy doing the same types of activities, but they also feel the same way about many issues and think about things in a similar manner.

Homosexual men and heterosexual women report feeling comfortable and genuine with each other and are able to tell each other anything. They self-describe as able to be themselves and not worry what their friend will think. They talk about many different topics and feel close to each other. These are attractive qualities for homosexual men and heterosexual women, so they are apt to form a relationship because of them.

They may feel this level of comfort because homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women describe themselves as more open, trusting, and truly themselves than homosexual men who only have casual relationships with heterosexual women. Both homosexual men and heterosexual women who have a close relationship with each other discuss topics such as personal strengths and weaknesses more freely than homosexual men and heterosexual women who do not have close relationships with each other. This allows homosexual men and heterosexual women to be more open and comfortable with each other and feel that their friendship is genuine.

Getting together “just to talk” is important for homosexual men and heterosexual women. It is through talk that they are able to self-disclose information about themselves and build a comfort level between them. As stated earlier, they are able to talk about a wide variety of topics which helps them form their relationship with each other. One of the reasons that talking is important to them and the formation of their friendship is because it creates an enjoyable time together for both the homosexual men and heterosexual women, and it also provides conversational involvement for the homosexual man. Talking is also important because both the homosexual men and heterosexual women are able to discuss topics such as personal strengths and weakness with each other. Homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women appear open, trusting, and truly themselves, so they have an easy time talking with their heterosexual female friends. Both the homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women and the heterosexual women in close relationships with homosexual men described themselves as more forceful and aggressive than homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women and heterosexual women in casual relationships

with homosexual men. Because homosexual men and heterosexual women report being able to talk about anything, it makes sense that they see themselves as more forceful and aggressive. Homosexual men and heterosexual women feel comfortable sharing their opinions with each other and being completely honest with each other. To be able to express themselves so freely in a relationship, they must be forceful in what they say and not be intimidated to say what is on their minds.

When forming their friendship with each other, homosexual men and heterosexual women often compare their friendship with other relationships that they have had. They talk about what makes their friendship with each other desirable compared to those other relationships. Homosexual men and heterosexual women who have close relationships with each other have a good time together compared to other relationships so it is not surprising that they may compare relationships. Also, heterosexual women who have close relationships with homosexual men have more homosexual male friends than heterosexual women who only have casual relationships with homosexual men. Heterosexual women therefore have similar relationships to compare.

Homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other talk about the good time they have together which makes their friendship attractive. They feel inclined to form a relationship because of the good times they have with each other. This good time appears based on their great conversational involvement, and as previously suggested, homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships spend enjoyable time together compared to their time in other relationships. Homosexual men also often engage in social activities with their heterosexual female friends. Having a good time appears important to them and the formation of their friendship.

Maintenance

Homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other discuss several strategies they use to maintain their friendship with each other. They maintain their relationships with each other by spending time together, talking, having frequent correspondence, spending time with other friends, and participating in activities together. The analysis of the interviews suggests that homosexual men and heterosexual women spend a lot of time together. Given that some of the pairs interviewed do not live near each other, seeing each other on a regular basis may be difficult. Therefore, both the homosexual men and heterosexual women need to be forceful and aggressive in order to see each other often. They have to balance their time together with their personal time, and to be able to set aside time for each other takes some amount of force and aggressiveness. Homosexual men and heterosexual women have to turn down other activities in order to be with each other during the week and on the weekends.

They may also spend more time together because heterosexual women in close relationships with homosexual men have more homosexual male friends than do heterosexual women in casual relationships with homosexual men. It is likely that because the heterosexual women who have close homosexual male friends have more homosexual male friends they are more connected to the homosexual community which may make it easier for her to spend time with her homosexual friend.

Homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other have more enjoyable time together in their relationship with each other than in their relationships with others, compared to homosexual men and heterosexual women in casual relationships with each other. Homosexual men also frequently engage in social

activities with their heterosexual female friends, which simply reinforces the notion that homosexual men and heterosexual women maintain their friendship because of the time they spend together.

In order to maintain their friendships with each other, homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other must be able to balance their other relationships. To do this, many of the pairs interviewed stated that they have mutual friends so they can spend time with each other and with other friends. This again requires that homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other be forceful and aggressive. Balancing relationships can be difficult and these characteristics may help in ensuring all of the relationships important to the homosexual men and heterosexual women are maintained. The fact that heterosexual women in close relationships with homosexual men have more homosexual male friends than heterosexual women who do not have close relationships with homosexual men may also contribute to their ability to balance their relationships due to them having mutual friends.

Homosexual men and heterosexual women also maintain their friendships with each other through talking. They feel extremely comfortable talking to each other about any topic and are often brutally honest with each other. Their forceful, aggressive characteristics may enable homosexual men and heterosexual women to be honest with each other because forceful and aggressive people may easily express how they truly feel, and also hear true feelings from someone else. Similarly, homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women describe themselves as more open, trusting, and truly themselves around their heterosexual female friends which allows them to talk freely to their heterosexual female friends. Both the homosexual men and heterosexual

women in close relationships describe themselves as more able to discuss topics such as personal strengths and weaknesses than homosexual men and heterosexual women not in close relationships with each other which supports the notion that those in close relationships do talk a lot and talk about very personal topics. Resolving conflict is important to the homosexual men in these relationships and talking freely with each other allows for better understandings of issues that may cause conflict among homosexual men and heterosexual women. Homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women also reported more conversational involvement with their heterosexual female friends than did homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women which reinforces the importance of talk in maintaining this type of friendship.

Engaging in frequent correspondence appears important to homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other. It is through these correspondences that they are able to talk, make plans, and for those who live far away from each other, be "together". Corresponding with each other on a daily basis is also one of the easiest ways they can maintain their friendship. Homosexual men in these relationships value their level of conversational involvement, so getting in touch with each other every day via email and phone calls is enjoyable for them. Also, because homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other truly enjoy their time together, maintaining frequent correspondence is not a hassle.

Homosexual men and heterosexual women maintain their friendships by planning and participating in activities together. They enjoy engaging in activities together which supports that fact that, compared to homosexual men and heterosexual women in casual relationships, they spend more enjoyable time together than in any other relationship, and

that homosexual men frequently engage in social activities with their heterosexual female friends.

The maintenance strategies used by participants in the current study suggest those identified in the literature. The review of the literature indicates that openness is necessary and it is apparent that the homosexual men and heterosexual women interviewed are very open with each other. They share a high level of self-disclosure and are able to express themselves easily with each other. The review of the literature also suggests that joint activities and phone calls are helpful in maintaining friendships. Homosexual men and heterosexual women interviewed for this study did many activities together and spent time talking on the phone and through other means of communication. The homosexual men and heterosexual women who participated in this study had common interests and would get together just to talk which are maintenance strategies suggested in the literature. The review of the literature also discusses comfort levels of which those participating in this study have high levels.

Relationship

Trust and family are important concepts discussed by homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other. Given that homosexual men describe themselves as open, trusting, and truly themselves with their close heterosexual female friends it is obvious this friendship is important to them because of the level of trust between the homosexual men and heterosexual women. This level of trust also allows a familial like bond between them. They think of each other as both friends and family because the trust they have is similar to the trust found within families. It is important for homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women to resolve

conflict. Resolving conflict is easier if both people involved trust each other. It is important for families to resolve conflict because families are relationships of circumstance. Although the friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women are relationships of choice, because they view themselves as a family great importance is placed on resolving conflict. Both the homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other are able to discuss topics such as personal strengths and weaknesses which indicates a high level of trust within their friendship.

Comfort and honesty appear important to homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other. They have the ability to be completely honest with each other which may be because of the forceful and aggressive characteristics they present. To be honest with each other they cannot be afraid to express how they feel and they have to be prepared to hear each other's feelings. Homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships are also very comfortable and honest with each other because they discuss personal topics such as their strengths and weaknesses. They would not share these types of personal issues if they did not feel comfortable with each other or could not be honest with each other. The importance of this level of comfort and being honest with each other can also be because of the homosexual men's ability to open, trusting, and truly himself in this type of relationship. The homosexual man is obviously comfortable with the heterosexual woman because he can be himself.

Homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other describe their relationship as close and consider themselves to be best friends. They are close because the homosexual men may be open, trusting, and truly themselves with their

heterosexual female friends, and because they feel comfortable discussing topics such as personal strengths and weaknesses with each other. They also enjoy being with other and spending time together.

Homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other express the importance of their friendship and recognize that the love they have for each other is unconditional. They consider it to be an important relationship because they trust each other, they are comfortable and honest with each other, they are close, and they love each other unconditionally. The relationship is important to them because of the many reasons discussed above. They love each other unconditionally because they can be themselves with each other. They are completely honest with each other which may lead to hurt feelings or disagreements, but regardless of these issues they face, they love each other no matter what. Their force and aggressiveness allows them to be honest with each other and to continue to love each other even when they are hurt or disagree with each other.

Knowing that their friend will be there for them is very important to homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other. They know that they can call on their friend at any hour and their friend will be there to talk to, listen to and support them. Homosexual men and heterosexual women are able to do this for each other because they trust each other and they are not afraid to go to each other for help or support. This again goes back to their forceful and aggressive nature.

Homosexual men and heterosexual women also seem to have an enduring friendship for many of the reasons already discussed. The ability for homosexual men to be open, trusting, and truly themselves, the fact that homosexual men and heterosexual

women are both able to share their personal feelings with each other, and that they simply enjoy being in each other's company create a friendship that is able to endure over time. Because of their high levels of self-disclosure and complete trust in each other, homosexual men and heterosexual women invest a lot into their relationships. They know so much about each other and are always there for each other, so it is easy to keep their relationship going.

The personal-social characteristics and the expectations of their friendships of homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other are significant in what homosexual men and heterosexual women feel is important in their friendships with each other. They are able to have the friendships that they have because of their personalities and how they view their relationship.

Results from this portion of the study are concurrent with the review of the literature. The review of the literature suggests that homosexual men and heterosexual women have a family-like bond, and as presented above, those interviewed confirm this notion. The review of the literature also suggests that homosexual men and heterosexual women feel very comfortable with each other and get together just to talk. This is also apparent in the results of this study. The review of the literature did posit that there are topics that are not discussed between homosexual men and heterosexual women. All participants interviewed in this study seemed to discuss everything, however none of the dyads elaborated on what it is that they do actually talk about.

The results from the questionnaire and the interview support each other. The results from the questionnaire reinforce the concepts that emerged from the interviews. Both sets of results include a focus on self-disclosure between homosexual men and

heterosexual women, feeling comfortable with each other, and enjoying each other's company.

Limitations

The present study is exploratory in nature and constrained by various limitations. These limitations occur in three areas – the traditional social scientific conceptualization of friendship, a gap in research on friendships among homosexual people and a lack in generalizable results.

The traditional social scientific conceptualization of friendship ignores sexuality. Friendships among homosexual people do exist but, because sexuality is ignored, researching and discussing these friendships is difficult. Using research based on heterosexual friendships limits the understanding of relationships where at least person in the relationship is homosexual. Until a new conceptual understanding of friendship is accepted, studying homosexual friendships will remain difficult. The fact that research on friendship tends ignore sexuality may be because of the gap in the literature on friendships among homosexual people.

The second area of limitation is because of a lack in research on friendships involving homosexual people. Friendships have been studied for thousands of years, but friendships among homosexual people have only just begun to be researched. This research is limited in that the friendship patterns among homosexual men and heterosexual women are compared to the friendship patterns of heterosexual cross-sex relationships. Much of the research on heterosexual cross-sex friendships focuses on the challenges of sexual tension and the inability to communicate well because of different

speech communities for men and women. These two concerns do not necessarily apply to friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women.

The study is also limited by the nature of the questions asked. The instrument used was a one-item questionnaire complicating the constructs used.

The final area of limitation involves the sample used for this study. Finding openly gay male participants in a rural community was difficult. Because of this difficulty, results from this study may not be generalizable to a larger population. Most of the participants were either in college or recent graduates of college. The participants were also mostly white. Additionally, we must assume that the homosexual men in close relationships with heterosexual women may also have casual relationships with heterosexual women, that the heterosexual women in close relationships with homosexual men may also have casual relationships with homosexual men, that the homosexual men in casual relationships with heterosexual women may also have close relationships with heterosexual women, and that the heterosexual women in casual relationships with homosexual men may also have close relationships with homosexual men.

Significance of the Present Research

The present study contributes to the study of the friendship and to the study of relationships among homosexual people. This exploratory study raises the concern that the traditional conceptual understanding of friendship is no longer acceptable to study all types of friendships. Sexuality can influence friendships so it is important that research be done with sexuality in mind. This study also points out that while research on

heterosexual friendships can be useful in understanding cross-sexuality relationships, research specific to homosexual people is necessary.

This study also brings to light some reasons why close friendships between homosexual men and heterosexual women exist. The results indicate certain aspects about the relationship that homosexual men and heterosexual women find important and suggest why this type of friendship is worth maintaining. Reasons for forming and maintaining these friendships, however, are not that different from what we would expect in any type of relationship. Therefore, this research can be used in further understanding friendships in general. What was unexpected, though, was the results suggesting that homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other are more forceful and aggressive than homosexual men and heterosexual women in casual relationships with each other. This finding suggests that homosexual men and heterosexual women in close relationships with each other may indeed be different from homosexual men and heterosexual women in casual relationships with each other.

Implications for Further Research

The present study revealed some characteristics of homosexual men and heterosexual women in relationships with each other. Future research should examine a possible relationship between reports of forcefulness and aggressiveness and aim to understand why these may be characteristics of the individuals involved in these relationships.

It is obvious that there is a lack of research on relationships involving homosexual people. More research is needed in this area. The present research only focused on one type of relationship involving homosexual people, and although the gap in the literature is

beginning to close, the other various types of homosexual relationships need to be studied. Furthermore, this study only dealt with bi-polar and bi-modal oppositions in terms of sex and sexuality. Future research needs to focus on relationships among bisexual and transgendered people.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

I am Amanda Goodwin, a graduate student in the Department of Communication and Journalism at the University of Maine, and I would like to invite you to participate in a research project. The purpose of this project is to provide a better understanding of friendships between gay men and straight women. There are two parts to the study. The first part involves the completion of a questionnaire which can be completed anonymously. In the second part of the study I would like to interview 10 pairs of gay-male, straight-female friends who have developed a close relationship—following the definition of close friends stated below.

Instructions

If you are a gay man with a straight female friend, I would like both you and the straight female friend with whom you have the closest relationship to each fill out individual copies of this questionnaire. Likewise, if you are a straight woman with a gay male friend, I would like both you and the gay male friend with whom you have the closest relationship to each fill out individual copies of this questionnaire.

Please answer each question as honestly as possible keeping this person in mind.

Using the following definitions, please indicate whether your straight female or gay male friend is a casual, close, or best friend.

A *casual friend* is someone who is more than an acquaintance, but not a close friend; your commitment to the friendship would probably not extend beyond the circumstances that bring you together; for example, a work friend or neighbor.

A *close friend* is someone to whom you feel a sense of mutual commitment and continuing closeness; a person with whom you talk fairly openly and feel comfortable spending time.

A *best friend* is the friend to whom you feel the greatest commitment and closeness; the one who accepts you “as you are”, with whom you talk the most openly and feel the most comfortable spending time.

___ casual friend

___ close friend

___ best friend

If you are willing to complete the questionnaire but don't want to participate in the interview, complete the questionnaire anonymously and do not sign or submit the informed consent form.

If you would like to volunteer to be interviewed as well, please fill in the contact information. If you agree to be interviewed you will need to sign the informed consent form and turn it in with the questionnaire.

**COMPLETE THIS SECTION ONLY IF YOU WISH TO BE
CONTACTED FOR THE INTERVIEW**

This informed consent form will be separated from the questionnaire and kept in a safe, confidential location. At the completion of the study this information will be destroyed.

Name: _____ phone number: _____ email: _____

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the information on this form. You will receive a copy of this form.

Signature

Date

8. How would you realistically describe yourself?

	Not at all								Extremely
a) Accomplished in my chosen field	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
b) Compassionate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
c) Outgoing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
d) Aggressive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
e) Express tender feelings easily	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
f) Forceful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
g) Affectionate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
h) Competitive with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
i) Shy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
j) Self-sufficient	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
k) Ambitious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
l) Romantic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
m) Athletic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
n) Understanding of others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

9. How often do you go to gay bars or clubs? (e.g., once a month, twice a month, 30 times a month):

10. Excluding bars, how often do you go to public places where gay men and/or lesbians socialize, such as a coffeehouse, gay or lesbian center, dance, etc.? (e.g., once a month, twice a month, 30 times a month):

11. During the last year how involved have you been in any organized gay activities?

Not at all involved						Extremely involved		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

ONLY MALES ANSWER QUESTION NUMBERS 12, 13, AND 14 ON THIS PAGE.

12. How much do you care whether heterosexuals know you are gay?

Not at all					A great deal				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

13. Do the following people know that you are gay? (CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER ON EACH LINE)

	Definitely knows & we have talked about it	Definitely knows but we have never talked about it	Probably knows or suspects	Does not know or suspect	No such person
a) Your mother	1	2	3	4	X
b) Your father	1	2	3	4	X
c) Your closest sibling	1	2	3	4	X
d) Your closest heterosexual female friend	1	2	3	4	X
e) Your closest heterosexual male friend	1	2	3	4	X

14. How has each of the following persons reacted (or how do you think they would react) to the fact that you are gay? (CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER ON EACH LINE)

	Accepting (or it would not matter)	Tolerant (but not accepting)	Intolerant (but not rejecting)	Rejecting	No such person
a) Your mother	1	2	3	4	X
b) Your father	1	2	3	4	X
c) Your closest sibling	1	2	3	4	X
d) Your closest heterosexual female friend	1	2	3	4	X
e) Your closest heterosexual male friend	1	2	3	4	X

EVERYONE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

15. How important are the following to your sense of self-worth?

	Not Extremely Important					Extremely Important				
a) Your career (present/future)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
b) Being in a lover relationship	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
c) Having children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
d) An active social life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
e) Close female friends	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
f) Academic success	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
g) Close male friends	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
h) Relationship with your parents	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
i) Your religion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

16. How many relatives do you have who are:

- a) Gay men _____
- b) Lesbians _____
- c) Bisexual men _____
- d) Bisexual women _____

17. Excluding relatives, how many close friends do you have? _____

How many of your close friends are:

- a) Gay men _____
- b) Lesbians _____
- c) Bisexual men _____
- d) Bisexual women _____
- e) Heterosexual men _____
- f) Heterosexual women _____

18. How important is it to you to have friends?

Not important					Very important				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

19. In a typical week, approximately how much time do you spend with this friend?

None of my time					Most of my time				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

20. To what extent do you feel you are open, trusting and "truly yourself" when with this friend?

Not open, trusting and "truly myself"					Extremely open, trusting and "truly myself"				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

21. How satisfied are you with the quality of this friendship?

Not satisfied					Extremely satisfied				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

22. To what extent do you discuss topics such as hobbies, sports, and interests with this friend?

Discussed all important details					Discussed not at all				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

23. To what extent do you and this friend discuss topics such as religion, politics, and personal wants and desires?

Discussed all important details					Discussed not at all				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

24. To what extent do you and this friend discuss topics such as personal strengths and weaknesses?

Discussed all important details					Discussed not at all				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

25. How often do you experience major conflicts or disagreements with this friend?

Not at all					Very often				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

26. How bothered, disappointed or hurt do you feel when you experience major conflicts with this friend?

Not at all					Very much so			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

27. How important is it to resolve the major conflicts with this friend?

Not important					Very important			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

28. When handling conflict with this friend, do you *most often*:

- ignore the conflict
 talk about the conflict
 express your emotions about the conflict

29. Compared to most of my relationships this relationship provides:

	Very Little					A Great Amount			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
a) Intellectual Stimulation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
b) Emotional Support	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
c) Physical Activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
d) Conversational Involvement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
e) Enjoyable Time Spent Together	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
f) Social Activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
g) Spiritual Meditations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Appendix B

INFORMED CONSENT—QUESTIONNAIRE

You are invited to participate in a research project being conducted by Amanda Goodwin, a graduate student in the Department of Communication and Journalism at the University of Maine. The purpose of the research is to provide a better understanding of friendships between gay men and straight women.

What Will You Be Asked to Do?

In this part of the study you will be asked to complete a questionnaire that takes approximately 25 minutes.

Risks

Except for your time and inconvenience, there are no foreseeable risks to you in participating in this part of the study.

Benefits

Your participation in this study has the potential to help us learn more about friendships between gay men and straight women.

Confidentiality

If you would like to participate in the questionnaire portion of this study only, your participation will be anonymous. Do not write your name on the questionnaire, do not complete the contact information at the end of this form, and do not sign or submit this form with your completed questionnaire. Submitting the questionnaire implies consent to participate.

If you would also like to volunteer to participate in the follow-up interview portion (conducted in pairs) of this study, some identification and contact information is necessary. That information will be kept confidential. A code number linking that information to the data will be used to keep your identity confidential, but will allow me to compare your questionnaire data with your interview data. The informed consent form and the data will be kept in separate locked office locations. John Sherblom, my faculty advisor, and I will be the only people with access to the identities of the respondents and to the questionnaires. The contact information and key linking your name to the data will be destroyed after data analysis is complete, and all data will be destroyed at the end of the study.

Voluntary

Participation is voluntary. If you choose to take part in this study, you may stop at any time during the study. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about this study, please contact me at: Amanda Goodwin, 10 University Place, Orono, Me 04473. Home: (207) 866-0212 Office: (207) 581-3065 E-mail: amanda.goodwin@umit.maine.edu. You may also reach John Sherblom, my faculty advisor on this study, at: the Department of Communication and Journalism, University of Maine, 420 Dunn Hall, Orono, ME 04469. Office: (207) 581-1940 E-mail: John@maine.edu

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact Gayle Anderson, Assistant to the University of Maine's Protection of Human Subjects Review Board at (207) 581-1498 (or email gayle@maine.edu).

Appendix C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

I. Introduction

(Introduce myself and reasons for this research.)

II. Friendship Formation

1. Tell me about how you first met.

Probe: How did you meet? What was going through your mind when you met for the first time?
What was your first impression of each other?

2. What motivated you to form this relationship?

Probe: How did you know you wanted a relationship with each other?

3. What attracted you to each other?

4. In the first few weeks after you met, how much time did you spend together?

5. What activities did you engage in during the first few weeks of your relationship?

III. Maintenance

1. How much time do you spend together now?

2. What activities do you participate in when you spend time together now?

Probe: Do you go out on the weekends? Where do you go? What do you talk about? Tell me what a typical night out is like.

3. What plans do you make to have time together?

Probe: How do you balance this relationship with others that you have?

4. How do you get in touch with each other?

IV. The Relationship

(Transition: This relationship is important to you. I would like to ask you about the importance of this friendship and how it compares to other relationships you have.)

1. How would you describe your relationship?

Probe: Do you think your relationship is close?

2. Describe what aspects make it close.

3. When did you realize this friendship was important to you?

4. Tell me how this relationship is important to you?

5. What does this relationship provide that others do not?

Probe: How is this relationship different from other relationships you have?

6. How does this relationship compare to your relationships with other people?

V. Conclusion

Those were my questions. Are there any other aspects of your relationship that you'd like to share? Thank you again for your help. Is there anything you would like to ask me?

Appendix D

INFORMED CONSENT—INTERVIEW

You are invited to participate in a research project being conducted by Amanda Goodwin, a graduate student in the Department of Communication and Journalism at the University of Maine. The purpose of the research is to provide a better understanding of friendships between gay men and straight women.

What Will You Be Asked to Do?

In this part of the study you will be asked to participate in an interview (conducted in pairs) that takes approximately one hour. Sample questions include: “What attracted you to each other?”, “What activities do you participate in when you spend time together?”, “When did you realize this relationship was important to you?”, and “How does this relationship compare to your other relationships?”

Risks

Except for your time and inconvenience, there is also a small risk that your identity may be linked to participation in this study. Precautions are in place to protect confidentiality to reduce the risk that your participation could be linked to this study. Participants should respect the confidentiality of other participants in the study as well.

Benefits

Your participation in this study has the potential to help us learn more about friendships between gay men and straight women.

Confidentiality

Your identification and contact information is recorded on a separate sheet and will be kept in a locked, confidential location. A code number linking that information to the data will be used to keep your identity confidential and the information sheet and the data will be kept in separate locked office locations. John Sherblom, my faculty advisor, and I will be the only people with access to the identities of the respondents and to the interview responses. The contact information and code number linking your name to the data will be destroyed after data analysis is complete, and all data will be destroyed at the end of the study. Interviews will be tape recorded and transcribed by the primary researcher (Amanda Goodwin). The tapes will be kept locked in a locked research room--442 Dunn Hall, and transcriptions of the tape will be coded only by number and not contain personal identification. Tapes will be erased once the transcripts are prepared and the text analysis is complete.

Voluntary

Participation is voluntary. If you choose to take part in this part of the study, you may stop at any time during the interview.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about this study, please contact me at: Amanda Goodwin, 10 University Place, Orono, Me 04473. Home: (207) 866-0212 Office: (207) 581-3065 E-mail: amanda.goodwin@umit.maine.edu. You may also reach John Sherblom, my faculty advisor on this study, at: the Department of Communication and Journalism, University of Maine, 420 Dunn Hall, Orono, ME 04469. Office: (207) 581-1940 E-mail: John@maine.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact Gayle Anderson, Assistant to the University of Maine's Protection of Human Subjects Review Board at (207) 581-1498 (or email gayle@maine.edu).

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the information on this form. You will receive a copy of this form.

Signature

Date

BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

Amanda Goodwin was born in Windham, Connecticut on January 1, 1979. She was raised in Coventry, Connecticut and graduated from Coventry High School in 1997. She attended the University of Connecticut and graduated in 2001 with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication.

Amanda enrolled for graduate study in the University of Maine's Communication program in the fall of 2001. Throughout the course of her graduate education, Amanda served as a graduate teaching assistant for the Department of Communication and Journalism, where she was a primary course instructor for the Fundamentals of Interpersonal Communication. In April of 2003 Amanda presented a paper at the Eastern Communication Association annual conference held in Washington, D.C. She is a candidate for the Master of Arts degree in Communication from The University of Maine in May, 2003.