

AN ANALYSIS OF GAY/LESBIAN INSTRUCTOR IDENTITY IN THE CLASSROOM

Heather Giovanini, B. A.

Thesis Prepared for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

May 2008

APPROVED:

Karen Anderson, Major Professor

John M. Allison, Jr, Committee Member and Chair
of the Department of Communication
Studies

John S. Gossett, Committee Member

Sandra L. Terrell, Dean of the Robert B. Toulouse
School of Graduate Studies

Giovanini, Heather. An Analysis of Gay/Lesbian Instructor Identity in the Classroom, Masters of Arts (Communication Studies), May 2008, 54 pp., references, 64 titles.

In this project I explore the connection between cultural and personal identity in the college classroom. Respondent interviews were conducted using open-ended questions, which began with a broad picture of the role the instructor played in the classroom and then focused more specifically on the issue of sexual orientation and the choices to disclose or not disclose orientation in the classroom. Thematic analysis was used to examine the interviews, upon the completion of the interviews being transcribed.

RQ1: Do gay and lesbian instructors disclose their sexual orientation in the classroom? From this question, four themes emerged. These themes were disclosure not relevant, out of the classroom disclosure, students just know, and disclosure in the classroom.

RQ2: What reasons do gay and lesbian instructors give for disclosing their sexual orientation in the classroom? Two themes, fears of disclosure and holding back, transpired from this question.

RQ3: How do gay and lesbian instructors foster diversity in the classroom related to sexual orientation? Four themes were exposed from the question, and these themes were paradox of diversity, passing, mentoring, and identity not sexuality.

Copyright 2008

by

Heather Giovanini

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Chapters	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of Problem	
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	5
Co-Cultural Theory	
Standpoint Theory	
Critical Communication Pedagogy	
Instructor Identity	
Rationale	
Research Questions	
3. METHOD	20
Participants	
Procedures	
Data Analysis	
4. RESULTS	22
Disclosure Not Relevant	
Out of the Classroom Disclosure	
Students Just Know	
Fears of Disclosure	
Holding Back	
Paradox of Diversity	
Passing	
Mentoring	
Identity Not Sexuality	
5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	34
Performance of Sexual Orientation	
Paradox of Diversity	
Topic Relevance	

Limitations and Future Research

APPENDIX.....47

REFERENCES50

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the last few years, researchers have been exploring instructors' multiple identities in the classroom in relation to identity negotiation, co-identities, and diversity in the last few years (Hendrix, Jackson, & Warren, 2003). Building on a foundation of critical communication pedagogy, I seek to understand the role of identity construction in the classroom. In particular, my goal is to look at theories related to marginalized groups and instructor identity to understand the reasons gay/lesbian instructors do or do not disclose their sexual orientation in the class, and if they do, how do they go about disclosing in the classroom.

Critical communication pedagogy stresses the struggle between dominant academic practices and nondominant practices (Hendrix et al., 2003). Discipline-specific pedagogy helps enhance pedagogical knowledge and curricular knowledge, which in turn, amplifies critical pedagogy (Sprague, 1993). Sprague (1993) proposes six guidelines, which shape critical pedagogy. The guidelines include the recognition of communication: as a social phenomena; a complex ongoing process, performed, embodied, mostly verbal; and as an unconscious or automatic process. Additionally, communication is intertwined with cultural and personal identity and provides direct connection between communication and power (Sprague, 1993).

Individuals whose communication is restricted by cultural norms often find themselves marginalized and without power. In the classroom, instructors are automatically placed in a position of power. So how does the gay/lesbian instructor, who is often marginalized in the dominant culture but is empowered in their communication with their students in and out of the classroom?

Statement of Problem

In this project I explore the connection between cultural and personal identity in the college classroom. Dominant culture influences development of an instructor's identity both in and out of the classroom. Co-cultural theory addresses the effects dominant culture on marginalized groups (Allison & Hibbler, 2004; Orbe, 1998); in this study, I utilize co-cultural theory and explore gay and lesbian instructors as a marginalized group. Muted group theory and standpoint theory form the foundation of co-cultural theory; both theories acknowledge the silencing of marginalized voices by dominant culture (Hartsock, 1987; Kramarae, 1981; Orbe, 1998). Muted group and standpoint theories help explain how dominant culture functions by examining the experiences of individuals in marginalized groups, which gives these individuals a voice in society (Atkinson, 2005; Harding, 1997, 2004; Lenz, 2004). Instructor identity entails instructors identifying themselves to their students as the person who is teaching a specific subject, whereas personal identity incorporates other dynamics of an individual. Co-cultural theory provides a theoretical framework by which scholars can explore the creation and maintenance of the multiple identities of lesbian and gay male instructors in the classroom. Instructors have more identities beyond being the individual teaching students. Instructors have an identity of race, sex, and sexual orientation, but could also have other identities based on roles they play in their lives such as parent or daughter. All of these multiple identities come with the instructor when he or she enter the classroom, the identity that often becomes a struggle for gay/lesbian instructors is his or her sexual identity, and thus will be the focus of this project.

Harding (1997) argued that we should privilege marginalized voices because individuals at the margins understand how to function within the dominant culture as well as within their marginalized groups. Thus, by giving voice to individuals who are marginalized, researches

provide insight into how the dominant culture restricts the marginalized group. Harding privileges localized knowledge, claiming that knowledge is best understood within context (Heckman, 1997). Thus, I seek to give voice to gay/lesbian instructors to further our knowledge within the context of higher education. I will provide an understanding of how the disclosure of an instructor's sexual orientation in the classroom influences the instructor's identity through personal interviews.

In the classroom heterosexual instructors disclose their sexual orientation without realizing they are announcing their status (Allen, 1995). When a straight teacher discusses his or her husband, wife, children, or wears a wedding ring, he or she announces sexual orientation to students. According to Wright (1993), gay/lesbian instructors who disclose their sexual orientation in the classroom are not announcing their sexuality; rather they are presenting their identity. Moving a step further, Wright (1993) claimed that disclosing sexual orientation in the classroom is a way to get students to not make an assumption that all instructors are heterosexual. When gay/lesbian instructors choose not to disclose their sexual orientation, they allow students to believe that all teachers are heterosexuals. Allen (1995) argued that because of heterosexual privilege only homosexuals seem have sexual orientation because only homosexuals disclose their sexual orientation in class. In reality, heterosexuals disclose their sexuality in the classrooms as well. Heterosexual instructors announce their sexual orientation implicitly in the classroom by talking about their children, husbands, and wives. Therefore, sexual orientation is a means of describing ones identity in the classroom; a way of demonstrating how heterosexual privilege enhances the dominant culture, even within the classroom.

Chapter 2 is a literature review, in which I explore co-cultural, muted group, and standpoint theory. After an exploration of the theories, I shift the discussion to the specific context of higher education and discuss how instructor identity functions in the classroom. I conclude chapter 2 with a rationale and the research questions. Chapter 3 consists of the methods section where I describe participants and the procedures used to collect and analyze the interview data. Chapter 4 contains the results of my project. Specifically, I discuss the seven themes that emerged from the personal interviews I analyzed them using a grounded theory approach. In Chapter 5 I include a discussion section and address the limitations of the project as well as discussions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to frame this project, I review the literature related to co-cultural theory, standpoint theory, critical communication pedagogy, and instructor identity. The history and the use of co-cultural theory and standpoint theory, which are broken down in the first two sections is followed by an explanation of how critical communication pedagogy enhances critical thinking in the classroom. Finally, I discuss instructor identity in terms of the lack of information on sexual orientation in the classroom and information that has been put forth in relation to instructor identity and sexual orientation.

Co-Cultural Theory

Co-cultural theory is the principle theory used both to explain how the dominant culture silences marginalized groups and to provide scholars insight into how marginalized groups can gain voice in the dominant culture. White men represent the dominant individuals in our culture, while women, non-whites, and non-westerners represent the marginalized other (Cameron, 2005; Dougherty, 2001). Through co-cultural theory scholars understand the ways in which communication and power function in our culture (Allison & Hibbler, 2004; Orbe, 1998). Co-cultural theory's framework draws from muted group theory and standpoint theory (Allison & Hibbler, 2004; Orbe, 1998). According to Allison and Hibbler (2004), co-cultural theory utilizes the perspective of marginalized groups to understand the intersections between the dominant and the non-dominant and to explain how these two groups function in social structures. According to muted group theory, the other bias's of co-cultural theory, marginalized groups' voices are silenced in culture because of language; and often do not use the same style of language as those of the dominant culture (Kramarae, 1981; Orbe, 1998). Understanding how language choices are

crucial to identifying and giving voice to marginalized groups is an important part of co-cultural theory. Kramarae (1981) argued that marginalized groups do not share the same speaking privileges as men. The dominant group in culture controls how communication functions throughout culture, which forces marginalized groups to obey the dominant culture's communication system (Orbe, 1998). Stanback and Pearce (1981) claimed that marginalized groups are socialized to agree with the dominant group either by birth, by achieving agreement, or by being forced to agree with the ways of the dominant culture. Standpoint theory emphasizes communication in the formation of co-cultural theory. Researchers who have used standpoint theory attempt to listen to the voices of individuals marginalized in culture and to understand these voices in order to change the way culture functions (Cameron, 2005; Obres, 1998). In order to clarify co-cultural theory I highlight the five assumptions of the theory and discuss how muted group and standpoint theories are combined to create co-cultural theory.

Five underlying assumptions inform co-cultural theory. The first assumption of co-cultural theory is that experiences available to the members the dominant culture are not accessible to members of marginalized groups (Orbe, 1998). Swigonski (1996) and Nakayama and Krizek (1995) argued the dominant culture in the United States consists of Christian and European customs; European American men get the best jobs and white people are able to forget they are white. Kramarae (1981) claimed that the marginalized groups in American culture include women, children, and non whites. The first assumption is drawn from both standpoint theory and muted group theory (Allison & Hibbler, 2004; Orbe, 1998).

The second premise of co-culture theory originated from muted group theory. Orbe (1998) stated that the dominant group controls the communication system of culture as a whole by a means of privileges and power. According to Kramarae (1981), "... society and its

communication system are defined by men” (p. 4). From this perspective, men shape the dominant culture and thus the communication practices used by society.

In the third assumption, Orbe (1998), which utilized standpoint theory, recognized that the dominant culture’s control of the communication system keeps marginalized groups from having their experiences incorporated into the mainstream communication system. Kramarae (1981) argued that dominant culture develop the communication system of a culture and filters out the lived experiences of groups that are not dominant. Since the dominant culture developed the communication system, it also controls the communication within the culture, which enables the dominant culture to ignore the experiences of marginalized groups.

The fourth assumption derived of co-culture theory, which was by standpoint theorists demonstrates that a variety of groups are marginalized; these groups are all socially positioned to be underrepresented, suppressed, or ignored by the dominant society (Orbe, 1998). According to Dougherty (1999), Harding (1991), and Hartsock (1987), men do not try to understand their own perspectives or those of anyone else. Standpoint theorists maintain that men, especially white men, are the dominant gender in the United States and thus play the central role in how our society functions. They do not need to understand the perspective of others because their perspective constitutes the norm (Allison & Hibbler, 2004; Swigonski, 1996).

In the final assumption, co-cultural theorists have argued that marginalized groups find ways to communicate within the dominant society to cope with oppression by applying standpoint theory (Orbe, 1998). Stanback and Pearce (1981) discussed different behaviors members of marginalized groups use to function within dominant culture; these behaviors tomming, passing, shucking, and dissembling. In tomming, when in the presence of a member of the dominant culture, a marginalized person acts out the stereotypes ascribed to them by

individuals in the dominant culture, which reinforces the oppression of marginalized groups (Orbe, 1998; Stanback & Pearce, 1981). When passing, the marginalized individual tries to pose as a person in the dominant group, so they behave in the same manner as members of the dominant group (Orbe, 1998; Stanback & Pearce, 1981). When shucking, an oppressed person performs the way expected of them by the dominant culture, unlike tommying, those who shuck resent behaving in the manner found acceptable by the dominant culture (Orbe, 1998; Stanback & Pearce, 1981). Finally, in dissembling, a marginalized person deliberately performs the way expected of them by the dominant culture, except the dissemblers omits the negative stereotypes placed on them by the dominant culture (Orbe, 1998; Stanback & Pearce, 1981). In other words, when a member of a marginalized group takes on the expectations expected of them by the dominant culture and the marginalized individual ignores how they are viewed by the dominant culture. Although members of marginalized groups use communication behaviors in a plethora of ways, Stanback and Pearce (1981) provided the primary examples of the ways marginalized groups confront oppression (Orbe, 1998). Unpacking muted group theory and the assumptions created by co-cultural theorists, leads to the other foundation of co-cultural theory, standpoint theory.

Standpoint Theory

Standpoint theorists have focused on oppressed groups, their viewpoints on society, and the powers of the dominant group. In order to clarify standpoint theory, I will examine the history of standpoint theory, how standpoint theory explains the way society works, and the criticisms of standpoint theory.

Hartsock (1997) explained "... standpoint theories are technical theoretical devices that can allow for the creation of accounts of society that can be used to work for more satisfactory

social relations” (p. 374). In other words, standpoints are tools used to decipher how individuals in society function based on the social groups with whom they interact. Harding (1997) argued “... standpoint theorists use the ‘naturally occurring’ relations of class, gender, race, or imperialism in the world around us to observe how different ‘locations’ in such relations tend to generate distinctive accounts of nature and social relations” (p. 384). According to Lenz (2004), standpoint theory is similar to taking snap shots of an experience in a marginalized individual’s everyday life, holding it up against the big picture of society, and analyzing the marginalized person’s point of view. Initially, standpoint theorists placed all women in a group indicating a shared standpoint based on gender, however, over time they realized women do not all share the same experiences and, therefore, can not all be grouped together (Stoetzler & Yuval-Davis, 2002).

Another important component of standpoint theory is language because the oppressed need to be able to use the power of language to explain their experiences (McClish & Bacon, 2002). Standpoint theory originally was based on two assumptions: (1) all knowledge is localized and situated within our experiences with groups; and (2) privileging localized knowledge unveils social reality (Hekman, 1997). Hekman (1997) stated that knowledge was situated and perspectival. In other words, an individual’s knowledge is created from a certain position and this is viewed through differing perspectives. Now with an understanding to what standpoint theory is, it is important to discuss the origin of this theory.

Standpoint theory originated from Smith (1987), who utilized Marx’s theory of knowledge, in which Marx explained how the division of labor allowed for a negative impact on knowledge. Marx’s theory was modeled after Hegel’s master-slave dialectic. Hegel stated the oppressed have an advantage over the oppressor (Allison & Hibbler; 2004; Cameron, 2005;

Harding, 1991; Hartsock, 1987; Smith, 1987). Hegel claimed that the master does not see the servant's perspective; instead the master only views his own desire and the object (Smith, 1987). The servant, on the other hand, understands the master's perspective, the servant's own perspective on the labor of the object, and the relationship formed between the master and the object (Smith, 1987). Smith (1987) discussed Marx's standpoint of labor and how society can only be viewed outside the ruling class; instead it must be viewed by the division of labor, the working class. Knowledge of the basic ideas and background of standpoint theory directs scholars to examine some comments and criticisms on standpoint theory.

Martin, Reynolds, and Keith (2002) argued that individuals who are marginalized should have a better grasp of social reality than those individuals who are part of the dominant culture. While these individuals acquire a broader understanding of cultural constructs, one cannot understand society as a whole based on an individual perspective (Hartsock, 1997). Thus, multiple voices should be incorporated to create a shared understanding of a particular culture. Marginalized individuals or groups understand how individuals with power view reality; in contrast, individuals with power have no need to understand the view of marginalized individuals or groups (McClish & Bacon, 2002; Pohlhaus, 2002). Standpoint theory assumes that those with power have no interest in knowing the experience of those without power. As Atkinson (2005) clarified, "Only through reflections on their own status and power structures which exist can marginalized groups understand the dominant order and their role in that order--a standpoint" (p. 152). Martin et al. (2002) explained how researchers can understand standpoints and power, "... we can use the accounts of the less powerful to gain insights into how power operates and to reveal differences between what is 'claimed' to be true and what people actually experience" (p. 669). In essence, those who are oppressed are able to understand society because they are

affected by those who dominant society. Standpoint theory tries to illuminate the practices of power, the way dominant society functions, and the way dominant society keeps others oppressed (Harding, 2004).

While standpoint theory has generally been applied to women, researchers (King, 1999; Tierney, 1999) have conducted limited research related to sexual orientation. Hammers and Brown (2004) highlighted the important connections between feminist theories and queer theories. Thus, standpoint theory is particularly relevant to understanding identity of marginalized groups including gay/lesbian instructors, who are the focus in this project.

Co-cultural theory and standpoint theory in particular, can be utilized through the use of personal narrative. Scholars can gain an understanding of the dominant cultural ideology as well as the standpoints of marginalized groups by providing a rhetorical space in the public sphere for the personal narratives of the oppressed. Connecting co-cultural theory and standpoint theory to the concepts related to critical communication pedagogy and instructor identity allows scholars give voice to marginalized groups.

Critical Communication Pedagogy

According to Fassett and Warren (2007) critical communication pedagogy "... is about engaging the classroom as a site of social influence, as a space where people shape each other for better or for worse; it is about respecting teachers and students and the possible actions they can take ..." (p. 8). Communication pedagogy is divided into critical pedagogy and restrictive pedagogy (Hendrix et al, 2003). Restrictive pedagogy is limited with boundaries where teachers keep their discussion with students in certain boundaries, which in turn is a restriction (Hendrix et al., 2003). Critical pedagogy, which lies on the opposite end of the spectrum from restrictive pedagogy, is liberal and progressive (Hendrix et al., 2003). Another key difference between the

two is that practitioners, critical pedagogy discuss dominant versus non dominant practices of teaching (Hendrix et al, 2003). Fassett and Warren (2007) discussed the potential effectiveness of critical pedagogy when they stated:

Critical pedagogical perspective invites instructional communication scholars to situate their inquiry in relation to larger, macro socio-cultural, socioeconomic structures, to explore the ways in which racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, and other forms of oppression permeate classrooms and research on classrooms, teachers, and students. (p. 27)

Understanding the distinctions between the two types of communication pedagogy provides more depth on the subject of critical communication pedagogy.

Communication scholars are concerned with critical pedagogy in relation to curriculum, agency, and identity negotiation (Hendrix et al., 2003). Communication scholars tend to forget that there perspectives exist that do not fit Western logic; therefore, marginalized groups are not able to connect with individuals who subscribe to Western ideology (Hendrix et al, 2003).

According to Sprague (2002) "... the communication of both dominant and marginalized groups is culturally based" (p. 340). Furthermore, power plays a role in curriculum and agency, which leads to oppressive pedagogy (Hendrix et al., 2003). Giroux (2004) stated the importance agency in critical pedagogy as it relates to cultural studies:

connecting the most critical insights of cultural studies with an understanding of the importance of critical pedagogy, particularly as part of a larger project for expanding the possibilities of a democratic politics, the dynamics of resistance, and the capacities for social agency. (p. 60)

Utilizing cultural studies with the comprehension of critical pedagogy increases the likelihood for the increase of social agency in the classroom by examining culture from a critical

standpoint. Furthermore, Giroux (2004) explained how pedagogy is not being seen at a broader level and pedagogy needs to be viewed beyond the classroom by instructors. Instructors need to understand how culture outside the classroom influences students in the classroom.

Identities are not simple and easy to unravel, instead they are complex and complicated. According to Hendrix et al. (2003) identities are contractual. They identified three types of cultural contracts involving identity negotiation: ready-to-sign, quasi-complete, and a co-created cultural contract. Ready-to-sign contracts refer to individuals who refuse to see view points other than their own, which is similar to ethnocentrism (Hendrix et al., 2003). Quasi-complete cultural contracts entail a teetering between view points; co-created cultural contracts are negotiable and open to differences (Hendrix et al., 2003).

Issues related to critical communication pedagogy such as power and identity, are understudied by scholars. Failure to address these issues has consequences. According to Hendrix et al. (2003), "If we fail to acknowledge the influence of our own identities and comfort levels as we teach, it is not surprising that these unreflective processes can be seen in our communication education and instructional communication research" (p. 180). These researchers further demonstrated how the identity of the teacher and his or her comfort teaching with his or her own identity is rarely explored in communication education and instructional communication. Researchers (Bell & Golombisky, 2004; Johnson & Bhatt, 2003; Vargas, 1999) have explored the role of identity and marginalization of voice in terms of gender and race only to a limited extent. While, instructors use power as one of many tools to manage classrooms, explorations of the oppressive nature of power in communication education are lacking in instructional communication research (Johnson & Bhatt, 2003). Understanding critical communication pedagogy leads to the exploration of instructor identity.

Instructor Identity

Few scholars (Elliott, 1996; Hendrix et al., 2003) address disclosing sexual orientation in the classroom. These scholars have advocated that identities related to sexual orientation should not be displayed in the classroom. Furthermore, Russ, Simonds, and Hunt (2002) explained why gay instructors do not come out of the closet, however these scholars failed to address what happens once an instructor reveals this portion of their identity. The limited number of researchers who have discussed self-disclosure in the classroom have discussed a narrow range of topics: verbally and nonverbally communicating to students that one is a gay man or a lesbian (Elliott, 1996; Khayatt, 1999), gay/lesbian instructors as role models (Khayatt, 1997; Pobo, 1999), teacher credibility (Ewing, Stukas, & Sheehan, 2003) and challenging the dominant society along with effects of tolerance (Allen, 1995; Elliott, 1996; Meyers, 2005; Russ, Simonds, & Hunt, 2002; Silin, 1999; Skelton, 2000; Sullivan, 1993; Washburne Rensenbrink, 1996).

College instructors have a choice to disclose or not disclose their sexual orientation in the classroom. According to Elliot (1996), coming out should not be a speech act, instead allow the body to give clues regarding sexual orientation. Coming out can be seen as a performance act where saying I am gay is accomplished nonverbally. The clothes a person wears, as well as gestures, posture, and other nonverbal behaviors can out a person without words. According to Khayatt (1999) individuals should use their bodies to declare their sexual orientation rather than verbally addressing the topic. Khayatt (1999) advised instructors to come out to students in a conversation instead of in the classroom. Based on interviews with gay male instructors, Skeleton (2000) argued that teachers need to come out in conversations that occur in the classroom. The point at which an instructor discloses his or her sexual orientation may influence whether students bias based on the instructor's sexual orientation (Liddle, 1997).

An instructor's decision to disclose his or her sexual orientation may affect his or her standings as a role model to students. Instructors function as role models to many students at all educational levels. Instructors who come out to students may serve as role models for gay or lesbian students (Elliott, 1996; Khayatt, 1997; Pobo, 1999). College is a time when some students realize they are gay/lesbian and by having an instructor with whom these students can identify may help gay and lesbian students deal with their own sexuality. Gay/lesbian instructors can breach the steady diet of heterosexism that consumes contemporary society (Nixon & Givens, 2004). According to Khayatt (1997) not all students are looking for a role model based on sexual orientation. However, instructors who disclose their sexual orientation may encourage students to be more open and disclosive in the classroom environment. Students who see their instructors disclose sexual orientation may feel like they can tell personal narratives and be more open about their identities (Meyers, 2005; Pobo, 1999; Silin, 1999). According to Lewis and Taylor (2001), gay/lesbian instructors could serve as role models for gay and lesbian students as well as being a positive adverse example for heterosexual students who have only known gay/lesbians from negative stereotypes. A major factor that emerges from instructors coming out to students is instructor credibility.

Teacher credibility is a key factor in student listening and learning. Students need to feel that their instructors are credible. Ewing, Stukas, and Sheehan (2003) studied whether students based instructor credibility on the instructor's sexual orientation by conducting an experiment in which instructors' who delivered lectures were not labeled or identified as homosexual. The study manipulated the lectures to determine whether students were prejudiced towards gay/lesbians by making one lecture weak and the other strong. The researchers found that the perceived quality of the lecture was not influenced by the gay/lesbian sexual orientation of the

lecturers. On the other hand, the quality of the lecture impacted the ratings of lecturers whose sexual orientation was not identified. The authors concluded that the students might have been subtle when evaluating the known gay/lesbian lecturer to avoid discriminating against a lecturer with a specified sexual orientation. Khayatt (1997) argued that coming out in the classroom might negatively impact an instructor's credibility. Homophobic students may find gay/lesbian instructors less credible than heterosexual instructors. Russ et al. (2002) concluded that students perceived gay instructors to be less credible in terms of competence and character. This information suggests that students perceive gay/lesbian instructors as less credible than their straight counterparts.

The dominant culture consists of heterosexual individuals. Nixon and Givens (2004) claimed information provided on different educational establishments demonstrated how heterosexism, in particular masculinity keeps gender and sexuality in check. Simply stated, masculinity is the cloud that looms over educational institutions and our culture as a whole. For example, children use the word "gay" in school as an insult toward other children. Instructors do not know how to handle the issue since heterosexuality is the sexual norm expected of children (Nixon & Givens, 2004). Instructors who come out to their students in the classroom are taking a step that challenges the heterosexual norm (Elliott, 1996; Khayatt, 1997; Washburne Rensenbrink, 1996). Sullivan (1993) claimed that denying the existence of homosexuality in schools keeps students from understanding diverse aspects of society. The act of coming out allows instructors to demonstrate how the dominant culture functions even within the classroom (Allen, 1995). Wood (2005) found that dominant culture controls gay/lesbian instructors, regardless of whether the instructor discloses his or her sexual orientation. Disclosure of sexual orientation appears to be a double-edged sword. Students may be hostile towards instructors

who come out in the classroom (Khayatt, 1997). Students may revolt against instructors who tell students they are gay or lesbian. In contrast, Skelton (2000) argued that being silent and invisible about sexual orientation in the classroom does not challenge prejudices about sexuality. Furthermore, scholars have claimed that coming out in the classroom decreases bias, negative attitudes, prejudices, and stereotypes of gay men and lesbians (Russ et al., 2002; Silin, 1999; Waldo & Kemp, 1997; Wood, 2002).

Instructor identity consists of an instructor identifying himself or herself to students in ways other than as an authority figure sharing knowledge. Instructors reveal their identity to their students through personal narratives (Desoto, 2005). A personal narrative is a narrowly defined as a story about an individual (Mason-Schrock, 1996; Rappaport, 1993). Instructors perform their identities in the classroom to both enhance the subject matter and to display authority (Desoto, 2005). Nixon and Givens (2004) suggested that the heterosexual dominant culture limits gay men and lesbians to an identity that is difficult to tolerate. In interviews with Nixon and Givens (2004) respondents described the stress of negotiating two identities, one in the classroom as the instructor, and the other as lesbian. The interviewees expressed their frustration and feelings of dishonesty towards their students and themselves.

Previous researchers (Allen, 1995; Elliott, 1996; Ewing, Stukas, & Sheehan, 2003; Khayatt, 1997,1999; Pobo, 1999; Meyer, 2005; Washburne Rensenbrink, 1996; Russ, Simonds, & Hunt, 2002; Silin, 1999; Skelton, 2000; Sullivan, 1993; Waldo & Kemp, 1997; Wood, 2002) have demonstrated the advantages and disadvantages of coming out in the classroom. While instructors experience consequences when they come out in the classroom, instructors who choose not to disclose their sexual orientation also experience consequences. Understanding the

ways in which culture works and how individuals are positioned in it could shed new light on how coming out in the classroom informs gay/lesbian instructor identities.

Rationale

Scholars rarely explore the multiple identities of instructors (Hendrix et al., 2003). Critical pedagogy allows for scholars to examine oppression occurring in educational institutions, which reveals politics in the academic community (Hendrix et al., 2003). Adopting a critical pedagogy framework for this project provides an opportunity to understand the dominant culture reflected in the academic community, while also highlighting the way in which personal identity is negotiated in the classroom. According to Sprague (1993), communication is an avenue to explore personal identities. Hendrix et al. (2003) stated that instructors tend to teach in their “comfort zone”, which might keep instructors from bringing their identities into the classroom and this “comfort zone” may restricts students from interacting with diversity in our society. Thus, in this project I will highlight instructors’ willingness to engage in dialogue about their personal identities as a gay/lesbian individual.

Researchers discuss instructors disclosing sexual orientation in the classroom in only 20 published articles. Scholarly research on lesbian instructors, in particular, is limited to how to disclose sexual orientation (Elliott, 1996). The limited amount of research on lesbians disclosing their sexual orientation in the classroom is linked to lesbians being as a marginalized group in society whose voices are silenced by members of dominant society (Cameron, 2005; Dougherty, 2001; Swigonski, 1996). Do gay/lesbian instructors disclose their sexuality in the classroom? Thus, I applied standpoint theory to marginalized groups not limited by gender, but rather sexual orientation. According to Hendrix et al. (2003) instructors belonging to marginalized groups

give up their identities to follow the guidelines created by academia due to the power relations that exist between the marginalized individual and those in power.

My goal in this project was to give voice to gay and lesbian instructors and to suggest ways balance multiple identities in the classroom. Thus, I sought to both describe the ways in which gay and lesbian instructors disclose or choose not to disclose their sexual orientation in the classroom, while providing some helpful suggestions of how marginalized instructors can better negotiate these conflicting identities within the dominant culture. Thus, I explored the following research questions.

Research Questions

RQ1. Do gay and lesbian instructors disclose their sexual orientation in the classroom?

RQ2. What reasons do gay and lesbian instructors give for disclosing or not disclosing their sexual orientation in the classroom?

RQ3. How do gay and lesbian instructors foster diversity in the classroom related to sexual orientation?

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Participants

Ten female instructors and ten gay instructors from universities in the southwest were recruited to complete interviews. In order to help identify participants, I asked gay and lesbian instructors that I had met over past few years and engaged in snowball sampling. Thus, I used my social and professional networks to help identify lesbian and gay instructors. In order to allow for a broad pool of participants I conducted interviews with graduate teaching assistants (TA), adjunct instructors, as well as full time faculty members. Participants taught in a variety of academic areas including: divinity school, interdepartmental, Department of Kinesiology, music education, philosophy, Department of Political Science, art and design, College of Music, professional education, Department of Psychology, Department of Radio Television and Film, Department of Economics, and Department of Sociology.

Procedures

I conducted respondent interviews using open-ended questions allowing respondents to elaborate in answering questions (Lindlof, 1995). Each participant was aware of the broad purpose of my project to better understand how instructors constructed their identity in the classroom prior to scheduling the interview. Participants were provided with the appropriate human subjects documentation. The questions began with a broad picture of the role the instructor played in the classroom (e.g., name, where

they teach, what classes they teach, how long they have taught) and then focused more specifically on the issue of sexual orientation and choices to disclose or not disclose orientation in the classroom. Each interview was recorded and transcribed.

Data Analysis

I used thematic analysis to examine the transcribed interviews. Thematic analysis is the process of examining transcribed interviews through multiple readings allowing for the emergence from themes (Boyatzis, 1998). Reading the data multiple times allowed themes to emerge in the data by pattern recognition (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2000). Once the data was divided into themes, these themes were then analyzed (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2000). In the next step I coded the themes for each question and then classified the answers by themes to identify patterns of behavior (Boyatzis, 1998). Coding consists of closely examining the data, then grouping information that is similar together creating a theme (Gibbs & Taylor, 2005). Then I analyzed the results of the thematic analysis. If I found consensus, I was able to draw specific conclusions. If the all participants had answers that varied, I was not able to conclude anything specific from their answers. Using the qualitative method of respondent interviews allowed me to use thematic analysis to draw conclusion and to isolate patterns within regard to coming out or not coming out in the classroom. While this process of data analysis did not rely on predetermined categories the analysis was likely to be informed by the bodies of research addressed in the literature review of this project.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Thematic analysis of interviews of gay/lesbian instructors who taught at the university level was organized by the three research questions posed earlier in this project. The interview questions dealt with disclosing sexual orientation, reasons for disclosing or not disclosing, and if they disclosed, what strategies they used to disclose their sexual orientation. Other questions were asked related to dominant culture and how being a gay/lesbian instructor influenced cultural norms.

Four themes emerged from RQ 1: Do gay and lesbian instructors disclose their sexual orientation in the classroom? The four themes for RQ1 were 1) disclosure not relevant; 2) out of the classroom disclosure; 3) students just know; and 4) discloses in class.

Disclosure Not Relevant

In RQ1 I sought to understand whether or not instructors' disclosed their sexual orientation in the classroom. Thus, I asked respondents whether or not they disclosed sexual orientation in the classroom. Gay/lesbian instructors gave five reasons for not disclosing their sexual orientation in the classroom. The first reason for not disclosing sexual orientation, gay/lesbian instructor felt disclosure was not relevant to course content. The second reason for not disclosing sexual orientation, gay/lesbian instructors avoided the subject. Thirdly, sexual orientation was not considered in regards to teaching. Fourthly, some gay/lesbian instructors did not want students to know about his or her personal life, and the fifth reason for not disclosing dealt with instructors having bad past experiences with disclosing their sexual orientation. The first reason gay/lesbian instructors chose not to disclose their sexual orientation was a belief that sexual orientation was not relevant to the course concepts in the classes they teach. Interviewee

9 (lesbian, Professor) explained how sexual orientation is not relevant in the classes she teaches in the following example:

I've taught classroom management and curriculum development and have teaching styles and I don't know of a situation that would come up that I would talk about a romantic situation I don't know how that would come up if I would avoid it or not because I don't know how it would come up. Respondents who taught in the Department of Kinesiology, the Department of Radio Television and Film, and Music Education, indicated that they felt that their sexual orientation and personal relationships were not relevant to the content of their courses either.

The second reason for gay/lesbian instructors did not disclose their sexual orientation was because they simply avoided the subject. Interviewee 12 (gay, Assistant Professor) explored how he avoids discussing his sexual orientation in the classroom:

I make an effort to avoid the subject, I wouldn't if it were for some reason relevant I couldn't shy away from it. I am very open with the faculty and the Dean and that sort of thing it's just something that since it doesn't come up in my field it there's just I couldn't even imagine a place where that would be relevant it's something I wouldn't naturally bring up.

While some gay/lesbian instructors such as Interviewee 12, avoid the topic of sexual orientation, others had not even considered it.

The third reason gay/lesbian instructors did not disclose their sexual orientation was that they had not considered sexual orientation in regards to teaching. Interviewee 13 (lesbian, TA) claimed that disclosing her sexual orientation had not crossed her mind. The interviewee actually laughed when asked if she disclosed her sexual orientation when she taught. A few

gay/lesbian instructors do not think about disclosing their sexual orientation because most of them do not disclose their personal lives in the classroom.

Some gay/lesbian instructors do not want their students to know about their personal life and, for that reason, do not disclose their sexual orientation. Interviewee 15 (gay, TA) clearly stated he did not disclose his personal life in the classroom:

Ah no not from my personal life, not usually, just because those don't usually come up you know I try to think of examples that are relevant to the students and again that is sometimes a challenge. Um well most of the time again the subject matter that I'm dealing with doesn't really it deals with interpersonal relationships on a different level I guess typically romantic relationships don't usually come up as a matter of discussion.

However, one interviewee shared that he does not disclose his sexual orientation because he had a bad experience in the past. Interviewee 11 (gay, Lecturer and Academic Advisor) discussed his reason for not disclosing his sexual orientation in the classroom:

It was a very bad I got outed it was outed in family and public and all sorts of stuff and I kind of had to leave and that wasn't very good and here it doesn't matter I like that it's Heald State University and I but I guess you know when you get discriminated against or you have these sorts of things happen to you I can't help but try to put it in context but I very at least on my being gay I don't put it in that context of well let me tell you what the gay people think since I am one.

Recognizing why gay/lesbian instructors do not disclose their sexual orientation, leads to the reasons of why gay/lesbian instructors disclose their sexual orientation.

Out of the Classroom Disclosure

Some gay/lesbian instructors on occasion disclosed their sexual orientation in the classroom. Most respondents who came out to students, however, indicated they came out in one on one discussion with students during office hours or to graduate students. Interviewee 10 (lesbian, Associate Professor) explained who she came out to and how she determined if she was going to disclose to her student: “Uh I have talked about my relationship to selective students, usually graduate students, um and undergraduates as I decided they are going to be comfortable”. Interviewee 3 (lesbian, TA) discussed how she did not come out in the classroom but she come out during office hours: “Not in lectures, more so when students come to the office during office hours” [Interviewee 3]. While a few gay/lesbian instructors disclose their sexual orientation in office hours or to graduate students, some gay/lesbian instructors feel that students already know about their sexual orientation and they do not need to disclose.

Students Just Know

Some gay/lesbian instructors do not choose to say anything about their sexual orientation, because they believe their appearance discloses their sexual identity. Interviewee 7 (lesbian, Professor) discussed how her students probably knew she was a lesbian without her saying anything.

It wasn't, you know, that people didn't already know it's not something . . . I don't wear an L on my forehead but I don't really try to hide it. I think most people are very well aware of my orientation in most setting.

Interviewee 14 (gay, Assistant Professor) discussed how he did not verbally disclose his sexual orientation but he thought it was obvious that he was gay.

I think quite frankly if people couldn't figure out . . . I mean you really had to be clueless if you couldn't figure out that there's this 30 something guy with no wedding ring on is you know got some characteristics that some would identify with a distinct homosexual male.

While most of the interviewees did not disclose their sexual orientation overtly, two interviewees deliberately disclose their sexual orientation in the classroom.

Discloses in Class

Only two gay/lesbian instructors reported that they disclosed their sexual orientation in the classroom. Interviewee 19 (gay, Associate Professor) explains his openness with his sexual orientation in the following example.

Um. You know would assume that people here at the ... school don't know and ah I have not hidden myself in this ... school so all you have to do is look at my door you know I have a display on it and that is quite on purpose because I want students to have to deal with the fact that there is an open and out tenured gay professor here at this ... school. That may be a cause of some dissidence for students and it has been in the past . . . some of them are quite bold actually in challenging that but they need to see it and they need to face it so in the classroom I mean that would assume that somehow that is a big secret that needs to be revealed and that's not the case everybody knows it and if they don't know it they're going to get a shock.

After dissecting the interviews for themes to answer RQ1, the interviews were analyzed again to discover themes to answer RQ2: What reasons do gay and lesbian instructors give for disclosing or not disclosing their sexual orientation in the classroom?

Fears of Disclosure

Interviewees were asked their reasons for disclosing or not disclosing their sexual orientation. Two themes emerged analyzing the interviews. The first theme consisted of the fears of disclose and the second theme dealt with holding back.

In the first theme gay/lesbian instructors discussed fears of disclosing their sexual orientation in the classroom. Four types of fears were related to disclosing sexual orientation in the classroom. The first was fear of being perceived as pushing a political agenda on students. The second was fear of student backlash, and the third fear of community backlash. The fourth reason consisted of the fear of university backlash. Gay/lesbian instructors' fear of pushing a political agenda dealt with not wanting to be perceived as trying to force an idea or a stance on students, which was demonstrated by Interviewee 4 (lesbian, Adjunct):

If I were to admit to that I was a lesbian I think that um I think that there is a least here ... I think there I think there is a bit of conservatism at the university level and especially among some students ... I try to be objective and not be subjective in making my points don't want them to think that I am trying to change their mind or put my ideas upon them so do my very best to try to be objective as possible so that they can see both sides and it's not my trying to change them.

In addition to the fear of being perceived as supporting a political agenda, gay/lesbian instructors fear student backlash.

The gay/lesbian instructors interviewed mentioned the fear of student backlash if they were to disclose their sexual orientation in the classroom. Interviewee 2 (gay, Associate Professor) got frustrated with a class when he came out to the class earlier in the semester.

Towards the end of the semester, a student shouted out in class that homosexuality was disgusting and he responded to the student:

I said you know here is 8 pages, obviously we need a little bit, some learning some sensitivity about this. So I handed out 8 pages of basic terminology, things like this that is what really resented is that they had to do extra reading things and you know some of them were like he brings his personal life into the classroom some really nasty comments etc. etc.

Beyond student backlash, instructors fear a community backlash against gay/lesbian instructors who disclose their sexual orientation in the classroom.

Some gay/lesbian instructors fear what will happen within the community if they disclose their sexual orientation in class. Interviewee 10 (lesbian, Associate Professor) discussed how she was apprehensive to disclose to students, not so much because of the students, but from the individuals who recruit students to enroll in her program:

The thing I'm pretty concerned about is their ... directors from various small towns in Texas. For instance, may not be so accepting and I ... since I rely on those people for recruiting purposes sometimes or various professional things um I have to be a little bit careful about that.

The last fear found in the interviews was the fear of university backlash. Interviewee 10 (lesbian, Associate Professor) told a story how she was careful not to disclose her sexual orientation because she was not tenured.

I was very careful before I had tenure and after I had tenure I was more open there I were to suffer discrimination and lose my job I would have difficulty replacing it because there are only a couple openings in my field a year so before tenure I was pretty careful.

The four fears related to gay/lesbian instructor's disclosure of sexual orientation: pushing a political agenda, student backlash, community backlash, and university backlash completed.

Holding back was the second theme that emerged from RQ2.

Holding Back

In interviews with gay/lesbian instructors, another theme emerged, the question of why do gay/lesbian instructors hold back in disclosing their sexual orientation in the classroom?

Holding back in the context of this paper refers to being hesitant to disclose certain information due to the uncertainty as to how another person would react to the information if it were to be disclosed. Interviewee 9 (lesbian, Professor) did not realize that she was holding back until this interview she participated in.

I'm always talking in general ways if I want to really confront social norms or whatever, why am I hesitant to not take it head on as opposed but I think probably that I'd have to say that in general ways I have said why do we always think inside the box about that, why aren't we the ones being the front runner to make change.

Interviewee 11 (gay, Lecturer, Academic Adviser) holds back from disclosing his sexual orientation in the classroom.

I am not going to come out and say I was in New Orleans at a gay pride event this past weekend. I will not do that, I will not do that, I will not deny that it happened or anything like that. I might talk about it in the general context but I am not going to put it in the personal context like that, I know I am coward about that.

Fears of disclosure along with holding back were the two themes that emerged from RQ2.

Derived from a further analysis of the interviews, four themes transpired in answering RQ 3:

How do gay and lesbian instructors foster diversity in the classroom related to sexual orientation?

Paradox of Diversity

Interviewees were asked about fostering diversity in the classroom in terms of sexual orientation as asked in RQ3: How do gay and lesbian instructors foster diversity in the classroom related to sexual orientation? The four themes for RQ3 were 1) paradox of diversity, 2) passing, 3) mentoring and, 4) identity not sexuality

After coding the interviews the first theme detected was paradox of diversity. The paradox of diversity in this case is that gay/lesbian instructors state that they think diversity in the classroom is important but they do not foster diversity in relation to sexual orientation. Gay/lesbian instructors do not disclose their sexual orientation to students to demonstrate diversity within the classroom, though gay/lesbian instructors discuss the importance of diversity with their students. Interviewee 1 (lesbian, Adjunct) discussed the importance of students needing to see that not everyone fits into a certain box or category but she does not disclose her sexual orientation in the classroom: “And I think that sometimes I think I do more in the classroom to in terms of challenge gender than sexuality. Because I’ve never really shared that in the classroom because it’s an assumed thing” [Interviewee 1]. Interviewee 11 (gay, Lecturer, Academic Advisor) discussed how gay issues are important to him and he allows students to discuss them in class but he will not disclose his sexual orientation in the classroom:

Uh not not generally, not when it comes to being gay or anything like that.

Now I do . . . what I do try and do is um ah if I am talking about oh like same sex marriage or something I will address the issue I like to address that issue I kind of have a personal stake in all of that sort of stuff I kind of watch it with various things going on. I

do like to raise it but then I'm not going to say my partner does this or my partner and I or whatever now that is the classroom ... I don't you know I am not up there waving a rainbow flag or anything like that ah I don't come in the very first day and say hi I am your instructor and I am gay um if you don't like it you can leave now I don't bring it up I don't bring it up.

The theme of paradox of diversity highlights how complex the issue of identity as it relates to fostering diversity in the classroom can be. The second theme for RQ3 is passing, which also hinders fostering diversity in the classroom.

Passing

Two gay/lesbian instructors discussed the idea of passing, in which they blend in with the dominant culture. Interviewee 10 (lesbian, Associate Professor) explained that her students do not even guess about her sexual orientation because she feels she passes as a straight person.

So my experience has been that students that are at the far end and the far right religiously or politically are so out of the know, they don't guess they don't that thought doesn't occur to them because I blend in just right with the middle of the population.

Interviewee 5 (gay, TA) discussed how his students assumed he was heterosexual before he ever disclosed his sexual orientation: "I generally pass pretty well, I guess no one knows my sexual orientation they just assume I am straight most of the time so ah lots of times I think it used to be a conscious thing".

Mentoring

The theme of mentoring weaved through some of the interviews. A few gay/lesbian instructors mentioned how they have seen positive reactions from some students when they

disclose and these students see them as a mentor. Interviewee 4 (lesbian, Associate Professor) discussed how gay parents or parents of gay children will ask her mentoring questions in the classroom.

No, if anything I have can't even tell you how many students approach me after class to say I'm a parent, I'm a gay parent or you know my son is gay, you know, they just kind of like I've become an expert to students.

Interviewee 8 (gay, TA) explained how professors in his past influenced him to have a positive influence on his students.

I had professors that influenced me during my early years of college to allow me to think differently about the world and so being open and honest about my identity is I think would have a particular impact for I would hope some students so that's my approach.

Upon the completion of examining gay/lesbian instructors as mentors, the last theme coded for RQ3 was identified. The fourth theme for RQ3 deals with more than the issue of sexual orientation, rather an issue of identity not sexuality.

Identity Not Sexuality

Many of the questions in the interview protocol dealt with sexual orientation and a few of the interviewees that was an issue of identity. Interviewee 5 (gay, TA) made a statement about not letting sexual orientation define you; instead it becomes part of whom you are.

To gay students who recognize that they they're gay coming out of the closet and their needing to howl out their sexuality for a little while but they also need to see at some point and move to ... the next stage in life where that's been acclimated into who you are, it's part of who you are but it doesn't need to be everything who you are at the moment

because you because you finally hopefully begin to deal with it to a point to where you have integrated to who you are.

Another excellent example of identity and not sexuality comes from Interviewee 4 (lesbian, Associate Professor), when argued that she is more than her sexual orientation.

Oh really, I don't even think we think of ourselves like that because we are so busy being parents that don't oh my god we're gay and I don't think I ever thought about oh my god I'm gay because I think that's how everyone else defined me, you know, we live in Denton, you know, we just don't have parades here with rainbow flags. We live different lives here, we're not closed people, we are parents, we are old mommies, we had a baby at an old age, we had 700 baby showers.

The three research questions posed in this project enabled for different themes to emerge from the interviews with gay and lesbian instructors. The analysis of interviews and subsequent themes which emerged from these interviews

CHAPTER 5

DICUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The results from the analysis of the transcribed interviews dealt with the three research questions posed in the rationale. RQ1 asked: Do gay and lesbian instructors disclose their sexual orientation? Four themes emerged from the interviews to answer this research question. The first theme, disclosure not relevant, included five reasons for not disclosing. The five reasons for not disclosing were not relevant to course content, avoided the subject, sexual orientation not considered in regards to teaching, and did not want students to know about personal life. The other three themes for RQ1 were out of the classroom disclosure, students just know, and disclosure in the class. RQ2 asked: What reasons do gay and lesbian instructors give for disclosing or not disclosing their sexual orientation in the classroom? Two themes were coded in the interviews to answer this question, and they were fears of disclosure and holding back. Fears of disclosure were broken down in four types of fear were pushing political agenda on students, student backlash, community backlash, and university backlash. RQ3 asked: How do gay and lesbian instructors foster diversity in the classroom related to sexual orientation? The four themes found in response to this question were paradox of diversity, mentoring, passing, and identity not sexuality. Completion of the results allows for a discussion that proceeds to flesh out these results and find an understanding as to how gay/lesbian instructors deal with their sexual orientation in the classroom and how they handle diversity in the classroom as well.

Instructors, no matter if they are gay or straight, come into the classroom with multiple identities. There is the identity of being an instructor, teaching students' material that is required for the course being taught. Secondly, instructors have the identity of being male or female. Thirdly, instructors have a racial or ethnic identity. Instructors also have a sexual identity. The

identity as an instructor and the identity of being male or female are parts of an instructor's identity that are easily displayed in the classroom with little or not conflict involved. Over the year's race and ethnicity identity conflict has decreased and is not threatening to students in general. Sexual identity is part of an instructor when they are in the classroom, and for a gay/lesbian instructor this identity may be a struggle to manage in the classroom. As stated earlier, straight instructors implicitly demonstrate their sexual identity by discussing their husbands, wives, children, and by wearing a wedding ring. Many gay/lesbian instructors may feel awkward managing their sexual identity in the classroom because being gay/lesbian is not part of the cultural norm that functions inside and outside of the classroom. From this explanation of sexual identity allows for the discussion of how gay/lesbian instructors may perform their sexual identity in the classroom. First, I discuss the performative aspect of sexual orientation, then the paradox of diversity, and topic relevance. I conclude with the limitation of the project as well as ideas for future research.

Performance of Sexual Orientation

Gay/lesbian instructors offered multiple reasons for disclosing or not disclosing sexual orientation. Also, gay/lesbian instructors found different ways to disclose their sexual orientation.

Two themes directly relate to the performative aspect of sexual orientation: students just know, and passing. One theme that was highlighted in these interviews was the gay/lesbian instructors performed their sexual orientation through their nonverbal behavior and, thus, students just know the instructor's sexual orientation. Some of the gay/lesbian instructors did not feel the need to state that they were gay or lesbian. Instead they claimed their outward appearance revealed their sexual orientation. According to Elliott (1996) and Khayatt (1999)

disclosing sexual orientation does not need to be a speech act, instead the body itself gives cues. Ward and Winstanley (2005) explained disclosing sexuality as a performance: “being gay or lesbian is not a truth that is discovered, it is a performance, which is enacted” (p. 452). Young (2002) described performance as body as lived, which includes the attire people wear. Elliott (1996) discussed how the clothing worn by gay/lesbian instructors is a way to dismantle gender stereotypes, which makes disclosing sexual orientation a performance instead of an utterance. Thus students will just know that their instructors are gay/lesbian by the performance these instructors act out with their bodies in the classroom. The second theme related to the performativity of sexual orientation was passing.

Some interviewees passed as straight in their classrooms. Passing is also a type of performance (Elliott, 1996). Ward and Winstanley (2005) explained passing as the act of lying about one’s sexual orientation, but according to Orbe (1998) and Stanback and Pearce (1981) passing is blending in with the dominant culture. The interviewees who passed did not state that they were purposefully performing the act of passing. Perhaps these gay/lesbian instructors were unknowingly passing, which then, could align with the idea of passing given by Orbe (1998) and Stanback and Pearce (1981).

My analysis of the interviews revealed that gay/lesbian instructors are enacting their identity without explicitly disclosing their sexual orientation. Gay/lesbian instructors are limiting their voice by not engaging in dialogue to reinforce the silent dialogue to reinforce silent disclosure in their performed sexual orientation identity. Though gay/lesbian instructors may feel more comfortable performing sexual orientation in the classroom, they allow the dominant culture to maintain control of the communication system, by not explicitly voicing their identity as a gay/lesbian instructor (Orbe, 1998). According to McClish and Bacon (2002), marginalized

groups, in this case, gay/lesbian instructors need to use language as a means of power to express explicitly their experiences. Gay/lesbian instructors should consider verbally disclosing their sexual orientation to demonstrate to their students that not everyone conforms to the dominant culture. Gay/lesbian instructors have the opportunity to use language instead of silently performing identity in the classroom. Hartsock (1997) argued that multiple voices need to be heard for there to be a collated perspective of a certain culture. hooks (1994) emphasized that dialogue is the key to developing students' ability to think critically and thus empowers them to voice perspectives in opposition to the dominant culture. Gay/lesbian instructors have the power to use language to demonstrate diversity to their students.

According to Martin et al. (2002), marginalized groups have a more complete understanding of social reality, which places for gay/lesbian instructors in an opportune situation to enlighten students about other perspectives. Instructors who create a dialogue incorporating "others" perspective engage in critical pedagogy. According to Giroux (2006) critical pedagogy is important for instructors and scholars alike because "pedagogy recognizes that education and teaching involves the crucial act of intervening in the world and the recognition that human life is conditioned not determined" (p. 31). Gay/lesbian instructors who decide to just pass as heterosexual instead of stating their identity allow the dominant culture to maintain the status quo for identity related to sexual orientation. Gay/lesbian instructors who simply pass as heterosexual instructors are not challenging the assumption that circulates in dominant culture instructors are heterosexual, as a consequence students are not invited to think critically about the world around them.

Paradox of Diversity

Diversity is one of the key ideas presented by the gay/lesbian instructors interviewed for in this project. The instructors realize that their students come from different backgrounds and hold a variety of beliefs. These instructors discussed the importance of the instructor's role in fostering diversity in the classroom. Some gay/lesbian instructors discussed how they aim to break down stereotypes in the classroom. The instructors in this study actively fostered the exploration of different ideas in their classrooms.

Gay/lesbian instructors' failure to engage fully and their unwillingness to be social actors in the classroom mire them in a restrictive pedagogy, which limits the possibilities for the classroom as a vehicle for social change. The gay/lesbian instructors in the interviews desire critical pedagogy but hesitate to engage in direct dialogue relating to sexual orientation. According to Hill, Fitzgerald, Haack, and Clayton (1998) and hooks (1994) instructors need to think of themselves as more than just a mind, they need to be actively involved in the classroom, which will heighten diversity in the classroom. Gay/lesbian instructors need to use productive dialogue in class if they want students to break away from the restrictive perspective of reality that has been set for them (Hendrix et al., 2003; hooks, 1994). In the interviews, gay/lesbian instructors were concerned with giving voice to different students and were interested in discussing issues related to sexual orientation, but the majority of the instructors refused to be social actors by including their personal experiences as part of the dialogue. When gay/lesbian instructors actively demonstrate diversity in the classroom by disclosing their sexual orientation in dialogue they are fostering an environment that is more likely to they are open students' minds and thus engage in critical pedagogy. As Giroux (2003) noted when instructors function as social actors "critical pedagogy transcends the classroom environment and permeates thinking"

(p. 182). When gay/lesbian instructors do not get involved in productive dialogues with their students and when they do not acknowledge their identity as gay/lesbian, they allow marginalized groups to remain silenced and invisible. Furthermore, they allow the dominant culture to maintain power in the classroom as well as outside of the classroom.

According to Russ et al. (2002), disclosure of sexual orientation reduces the bias or stereotypes held against gays and lesbians. Furthermore, Russ et al. (2002) related the decrease of bias to the expansion of diversity in the classroom. Frank discussions of diversity allow students to respect individuals who are different rather than merely tolerating the difference. Although Russ et al. (2002) demonstrated that gay/lesbian instructors who disclose their sexual orientation in the classroom help reduce bias, many gay/lesbian instructors do not disclose their sexual orientation.

Gay/lesbian instructors it is apparent that these instructors acknowledge the importance of fostering diversity in the classroom related to sexual orientation and reducing stereotypes, but few are willing to disclose their sexual orientation. A few interviewees discussed the importance of gender and how people should not be categorized negatively; however, many gay/lesbian instructors do not disclose their own sexual orientation, which could further highlight gender identity. Interviewee 1 (lesbian, Adjunct) argued that exposure to gay people reduces discrimination, yet she does not disclose her sexual orientation.

I think that exposure to someone that is gay, I think helps um studies show that people are exposed to gay people or they get to know someone then they don't have so much prejudice against them or discrimination against them so I think that I hope that I do justice to the gay community by being someone who is in that position ... in fact, I am more open about gender presentation than I am about sexuality.

The paradox of diversity is an issue in fostering diversity because it prevents open dialogue in the classroom, which limits the possibilities of critical pedagogy. Another important issue related to disclosing sexual orientation in the classroom is mentoring. Mentoring allows instructors to be role models to students, no matter the sexual orientation of the student or the instructor.

Some of the gay/lesbian instructors in this study discussed how being a mentor to students is important in the classroom, but most of them were not willing to disclose their sexual orientation. As argued by Nixon and Givens (2004), gay/lesbian instructors who disclose their sexual orientation have the ability to breach the heterosexism that exists in the dominant culture. One of the gay instructors identified one of his mentors as a gay professor, but indicated that he did not disclose his sexual orientation. Interviewee 10 (lesbian, Associate Professor) keeps her sexual orientation out of the classroom. While she feels diversity is important, and she is more than willing to speak on campus about gay issues, she does not identify as lesbian in the classroom. “No it doesn’t come up in the class hardly but I am active on campus attending diversity events and I am willing to speak out at those events as a lesbian”. Many gay/lesbian instructors are not willing to disclose their sexual identity even though they realize such disclosure could have a positive impact on students. Some gay/lesbian instructors, however, disclose their sexual orientation in class and disclosure creates benefits.

Three of the gay/lesbian instructors interviewed, stated that they disclosed their sexual orientation in their classes and discussed the benefits. Interviewee 4 (lesbian, Associate Professor) discussed the benefit of disclosing her sexual orientation in the classroom. “Well I have students approach me and tell me that um they felt inspired that they could be teachers

because of what I've said. Interviewee 5 (gay, TA) claimed how he gets more positive responses from being gay than negative.

Uh the people who normally I think would have been very narrow minded once they figured once they find out from me directly or for someone else that I am gay ah they it seems to effect the way they think about gay people. I think a majority of the time so if they have a more positive reaction towards gay people once they have a role model that doesn't I suppose that hits their negative stereotypes as much as some.

Interviewee 19 (gay, Associate Professor) discussed the way his students viewed him, in terms of credibility after he disclosed his sexual orientation.

It's heightened it actually um students who are conservative from religious backgrounds and count gay and lesbian people out are pretty much imperviable to anything anyways but persuadable people find that it does make a difference as a matter of fact I could cite examples of students who have actually changed their minds because they know I'm gay and because I seem rather normal.

According to Elliott (1996), Khayatt (1997), and Washburne Rensenbrink (1996) gay/lesbian instructors who disclosed their sexual orientation in the classroom would help challenge the dominant culture that exists even within the classroom. Pobo (1999) concluded:

Perhaps this is why many gay people are drawn to the teaching profession: to bring truth where there are lies, books where only blank pages are presented, and inclusion where only isolation is known. If those are the values a student can see in his or her teacher, then surely that teacher is a terrific role model. (p. 28)

Despite the potential benefits of disclosing sexual orientation in the classroom, only three gay/lesbian instructors in this study disclosed their sexual orientation in class. While gay/lesbian

instructors would benefit students if they were seen as role models and their ability to break down stereotypes, the fears conveyed by the interviewees in this project illustrate how challenging opening the dialogue can be.

The paradox of diversity functions on two levels, the participants highlighted the importance of embracing diversity in the courses they teach and acknowledged the importance of mentoring but were hesitant to disclose their orientation in the classroom. The paradox of diversity is particularly problematic in accomplishing the goal of empowering students. As hooks (1994) explained, “Professors cannot empower students to embrace diversities of experience, standpoint, behavior, or style if our training has disempowered us, socialized us to cope effectively only with a single mode of interaction based on middle-class values” (p. 187). As long as gay/lesbian instructors remain closeted in the classroom, the diversity they hope to foster and the students’ learning experiences may be hindered.

Topic Relevance

As highlighted by previous anecdotal evidence, the process of disclosure is not a simple “yes” I disclose my sexual orientation or “no” I do not disclose my sexual orientation. Gay/lesbian instructors who declared no they do not disclose their sexual orientation stated they did not for the following reasons: not relevant to course content, avoid the topic, had not considered the topic, and does not disclose personal life.

However, one interviewee highlighted the importance of disclosing even when the course content is not relevant. Interviewee 19 (gay, Associate Professor) discusses items related to gay and lesbian issues and discloses his sexual orientation, whether the topic is relevant or not.

I told them that every quack on Earth was showing up over at the DFW airport to talk about reparative therapy for gay and lesbian people and I was going to be there holding

up a sign they need to know that they need they need to face that reality they need to know that here in the metroplex they are at ground zero for every medieval barbaric kind of approach to gay and lesbian people ... I tell them for example that there are 6 unsolved murders of gay men in the last 23 months here in the metroplex they don't hear that if they don't hear it from me they won't hear it from anybody else.

Interviewee 19 finds the awareness of sexual orientation and gender identity important and make certain his students are aware that gay people are humans. Interviewee 4 (lesbian, Associate Professor) discloses to her students in the classroom when the topic is relevant as well as during her office hours. Out of the 20 interviews, only two gay instructors and one lesbian instructor actually disclosed their sexual orientation. The importance of engaging in dialogue and giving voice to other perspectives in the classroom is crucial to engaging students in examining the world around them critically. As hooks (1994) noted, "teachers need to practice freedom, to speak, just as much as students do" (p. 152).

Though in theory the gay/lesbian instructors interviewed wanted to engage in fostering diversity for the most part they engaged in a restrictive pedagogy. As noted earlier, heterosexual instructors are privileged in that the dominant culture sees through a heterosexual lens.

Gay/lesbian instructors' willingness to disclose their sexual orientation to illustrate a different perspective can provide a new lens for students (Allen, 1995; Washburne Rensenbrink, 1996). Heterosexual teachers are privileged in that they can discuss their families with their students because of heterosexual privilege. Gay/lesbian instructors who break the barriers and engage in a dialogue with their students provide a path beyond the dominant culture and thus engage in a critical pedagogy.

Limitations and Future Research

The limitations of this project are primarily related to the pool of participants and the method. The first limitation was the availability of gay/lesbian instructors. Two individuals were hesitant to grant interviews because they feared their names would be disclosed and feared their sexual orientation would create political issues with the university where they were employed. Thus, they declined to participate because they did not want to sign a consent form or be audio-taped. Future researchers could address this limitation by broadening the geographic scope of participants. The interviews administered in this project were conducted in the southwest region of the “Bible Belt” which may have hindered gay/lesbian instructors’ willingness to be interviewed. In the future, researchers should conduct interviews with individuals outside the southwest United States. Respondents from other regions may feel less oppressed by an overwhelming religious culture.

The geographic limitations of the population and the use of personal interviews limits the generalizability of these results. Instructors in other parts of the country may be more willing to participate in this type of research. Future researchers, who compare interviews from various regions of the United States, could highlight regional cultural differences that are crucial to understanding why some gay/lesbian instructors are fearful of disclosing or more open to disclosing their sexual orientation in the classroom.

Another limitation dealt with the limited responses to questions about culture. Many gay/lesbian instructors did not completely answer the questions related to credibility and culture. Some of the gay/lesbian instructors answered questions about their credibility by stating that they were not affected or they simply stated that their credibility was seen as positive. Many of the interviewees did not really address culture when they were asked about cultural norms, instead

they returned to an earlier unrelated question. In the future, researchers need to adopt a narrative focus, where narrative can be tied to power and cultural scripts. The focus of narrative as a structure along with cultural scripts may explain why “fears” persist, leading gay/lesbian instructors to refrain from disclosing their sexual orientation. In this project, I used personal narratives to discover the reasons gay/lesbian instructors disclosed or did not disclose their sexual and if so, how they chose to disclose. If future researchers used narrative as a structure, they could move past personal narratives to examine how these narratives coincide with scholars could examine cultural scripts to determine how they are formed and how they function. With an understanding of narrative as a structure and cultural scripts, scholars could better understand how the dominant culture continues to keep gay/lesbian instructors from disclosing their sexual orientation in the classroom.

Finally, another item future researchers should explore is student perceptions of gay/lesbian instructors. My critique of the implicit nature of the performance of sexual orientation, in which instructors do not explicitly break down cultural norms, relies on the assumption that explicit communication is necessary to give voice to marginalized groups. However, students who perceive instructors as gay or lesbian based on identity performance may perceive gay/lesbian instructors positively. In other words, if students are aware of the instructors’ orientation through their performance do they gain the benefits associated with explicit disclosure? Future researchers seeking to understand student perceptions could clarify the implicit performance of sexual orientation versus the explicit disclosure of sexual orientation.

Despite the limitations of this project, a great deal of insightful information emerged from the respondent interviews. Placing disclose of sexual orientation in the classroom in the context of co-cultural theory and standpoint theory, reveals the importance for gay/lesbian instructors to

be empowered to utilize the power of language to break the silence of marginalized groups. Though many gay/lesbian instructors claim that disclosure of their sexual orientation is not relevant to the courses they teach, other gay/lesbian instructors choose to share their sexual identity with students. Few gay/lesbian instructors are willing to disclose their sexual orientation and challenge the dominant culture in the classroom and be social actors who use open dialogue to enhance possible critical thinking among students. By instructors using the power of language and using dialogue in the classroom, may broaden students awareness of multiple identities in the classroom including sexual orientation.

APPENDIX
QUESTIONNAIRE

Interview Questions:

How would you describe your teaching style?

Do you use personal examples when you lecture?

Do you disclose information about your relationships in lecture or discussion?

Can you share with me an example of a personal story you have told a class that involved a romantic relationship? If not, why?

Do you ever specifically disclose your sexual orientation as part of your use of personal examples or stories? If so, could you give me an example of how this topic has come up in a particular class? If not, do you purposefully avoid disclosing this information?

Do you think your disclosure of your sexual orientation in the use of personal examples or stories has influenced your students' perception of your credibility as an instructor?

How do you think your willingness to disclose your sexual orientation influences students in your classes?

What role model should an instructor play in fostering diversity in the classroom?

How do you as an instructor foster students' acceptance of diversity?

Can you share with me an example or story of how this topic has come up in a particular class?

Do you ever focus on fostering diversity related to sexual orientation? If so, can you share with me an example or story of how this topic has come up in a particular class?

Do you use personal examples or stories about your sexual orientation to foster diversity in the classroom? If so, could you give me an example? If not, do you purposefully avoid this topic?

How do you think your use of personal examples or stories influences your students' perception of mainstream cultural norms?

Could you tell me about the first time you disclosed your sexual orientation in the classroom?

As time has passed and you have become a more experienced instructor have you changed how you come out in the classroom? Can you provide a few examples of different ways you have come out to students?

If not, why do you refrain from disclosing this information to your students?

Demographic Questions:

Your sex: Male or Female

Your age (in years):

What is your ethnicity/cultural background?:

What is your highest level of education?:

How long have you been teaching (in years)?:

Describe your current position (e.g., Assistant Professor, TA, Adjunct Instructor):

What department are you affiliated with?:

What is your sexual orientation?:

What is your relationship status (e.g., long-term committed relationship, dating, single)?

REFERENCES

- Allen, K. R. (1995). Opening the classroom closet: Sexual orientation and self-disclosure. *Family Relations, 44*, 136-141.
- Allison, M. T., & Hibbler, D. K. (2004). Organizational barriers to inclusion: Perspectives from the recreation professional. *Leisure Sciences, 26*, 261-280.
- Atkinson, J. (2005). Conceptualizing global justice audiences of alternative media. The need for power and ideology in performances paradigms of audience research. *Communication Review, 8*, 137-157.
- Bell, E., & Golombisky, K. (2004). Voices and silences in our classrooms: Strategies for mapping trails among sex/gender, race, and class. *Women's Studies in Communication, 27*, 294-329.
- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cameron, W. S. (2005). The genesis and justification of feminist standpoint theory in Hegel and Lukacs. *Dialogue and Universalism, 15*, 19-41.
- Desoto, A. M. (2005). A canvas of desire: The racialized and sexualized professor in the classroom. *MELUS, 30*, 209-223.
- Dougherty, D. S. (1999). Dialogue through standpoint: Understanding women's and men's standpoints of sexual harassment. *Management Communication Quarterly, 12*, 436-468.
- Dougherty, D. S. (2001). Sexual harassment as [dys]functional process: A feminist standpoint analysis. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 25*, 372-402.
- Elliott, M. (1996). Coming out in the classroom: A return to the hard place. *College English, 58*, 693-708.
- Ewing, V. L., Stukas, A. A., & Sheehan, E. P. (2003). Student prejudice against Gay male and lesbian lecturers. *Journal of Social Psychology, 143*, 569-579.
- Fereday, J., & Muir-Cochrane, E. (2000). Demonstrating rigor using thematic analysis: A hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 5*, 1-13.
- Fassett, D. L., & Warren, J. T. (2007). *Critical communication pedagogy*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Saga Publications.
- Gibbs, G. R., & Taylor, C. (2005). *How and what to code*. Online QDA. Retrieved December 5, 2006, from http://onlineqda.hud.ac.uk/Intro_QDA/how_what_to_code.php

- Giroux, H. A. (2004). Cultural studies, public pedagogy, and the responsibility of intellectuals. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, 1, 59-79.
- Giroux, H. A. (2006). Academic freedom under fire: The case for critical pedagogy. *College Literature*, 33, 1-42.
- Hammers, C., & Brown III, A. D. (2004). Towards a feminist-queer alliance: A paradigmatic shift in the research process. *Social Epistemology*, 18, 85-101.
- Harding, S. (1991). *Whose science? Whose knowledge? Thinking from women's lives*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Harding, S. (1997). Comment on Hekman's "Truth and method: Feminist standpoint theory revisited": Whose standpoint needs the regimes of truth and reality? *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 22, 382-391.
- Harding, S. (2004). A socially relevant philosophy of science? Resources from standpoint theories controversiality. *Hypathia*, 19, 25-47.
- Hartsock, N. C. M. (1987). The feminist standpoint: Developing the ground for a specifically feminist historical materialism. In S. Harding (Ed.), *Feminism and methodology* (pp. 157-180). Indiana: Indiana University Press.
- Hartsock, N. C. M. (1997). Comment on Hekman's "Truth and method: Feminist standpoint theory revisited": Truth or justice? *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 22, 367-374.
- Hekman, S. (1997). Truth and method: Feminist standpoint theory revisited. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 22, 341-365.
- Hendrix, K. G., Jackson, R. L., & Warren, J. R. (2003). Shifting academic landscapes: Exploring co-identities, identity negotiation, and critical progressive pedagogy. *Communication Education*, 52, 177-190.
- Hill, S. E., Fitzgerald, L. M., Haack, J., & Clayton, S. (1998). Transgressions: Teaching according to 'bell hooks.' *NEA Higher Education: Thoughts and Action Journal*, 41-48.
- Hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. New York: Routledge.
- Johnson, J. R., & Bhatt, A. J. (2003). Gender and racialized identities and alliances in the classroom: Formations in/of resistive space. *Communication Education*, 52, 230-244.
- Khayatt, D. (1997). Sex and the teacher? Should we come out in class. *Harvard Educational Review*, 67, 126-144.
- Khayatt, D. (1999) Sex and pedagogy. Performing sexualities in the classroom. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 5, 107-113.

- King, J. R. (1999). Am not! Are too! Using queer standpoint in postmodern critical ethnography. *Qualitative Studies in Education, 12*, 473-490.
- Kramarae, C. (1981). *Women and men speaking*. Rowley, MA: Newsbury House Publishers.
- Lewis, G. & Taylor, H. (2001). Public opinion toward gay and lesbian teachers: Insights for all public employees. *Review of Public Personnel Administration, 21*, 133-151.
- Lenz, B. (2004). Postcolonial fiction and the outsider within: Toward a literary practice of feminist standpoint theory. *NWSA Journal, 16*, 98-120.
- Liddle, B. J. (1997). Coming out in class: Disclosure of sexual orientation and teaching evaluations. *Teaching of Psychology, 24*, 32-35.
- Lindlof, T. R. (1995). *Qualitative communication research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Martin, P. Y., Reynolds, J. R., & Keith, S. (2002). Gender bias and feminist consciousness among judges and attorneys: A standpoint theory analysis. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society, 27*, 665-701.
- Mason-Schrock, D. (1996). Transsexuals' narrative construction of the "true self." *Social Psychology Quarterly, 59*, 176-192.
- McClish, G., & Bacon, J. (2002). "Telling the story her own way": The role of feminist standpoint theory in rhetorical studies. *Rhetoric Society Quarterly, 32*, 27-55.
- Meyers, M. D. E. (2005). Drawing the sexuality card: Teaching, researching, and living bisexuality. *Sexuality & Culture, 9*, 3-13.
- Nakayama, T. K., & Krizek, R. L. (1995). Whiteness: A strategic rhetoric. *Quarterly Journal of Speech, 81*, 291-309.
- Nixon, D., & Givens, N. (2004). 'Miss, you're so gay.' Queer stories from trainee teachers. *Sex Education, 4*, 217-237.
- Orbe, M. P. (1998). *Constructing co-cultural theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Pobo, K. I. (1999). The gay/lesbian teacher as role model. *Humanist, 59*, 26-28.
- Pohlhaus, G. (2002). Knowing communities: An investigation of Harding's standpoint epistemology. *Social Epistemology, 16*, 283-293.
- Rappaport, J. (1993). Narrative studies, personal stories, and identity transformation in the mutual help context. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 29*, 239-256.
- Russ, T. L., Simonds, C. J., & Hunt, S. K. (2002). Coming out in the classroom...an occupational hazard? The influence of sexual orientation on teacher credibility and perceived student learning. *Communication Education, 51*, 311-324.

- Silin, J. G. (1999). Teaching as a gay man. Pedagogical resistance or public spectacle? *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 5, 95-106.
- Skelton, A. (2000). 'Camping it up to make them laugh?' Gay men teaching higher education. *Teacher Higher Education*, 5, 181-193.
- Smith, D. E. (1987). *The everyday world as problematic: A feminist sociology*. Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press.
- Sprague, J. (1993). Retrieving the research agenda for communication education: Asking the pedagogical questions that are "embarrassments to theory." *Communication Education*, 42, 106-122.
- Sprague, J. (2002). Communication education: The spiral continues. *Communication Education*, 51, 337-354.
- Stanback, M. H., & Pearce, W. B. (1981). Talking to "the man": Some communication strategies used by members of "subordinate" social groups. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 67, 21-30.
- Stoetzler, M., & Yuval-Davis, N. (2002). Standpoint theory, situated knowledge, and the situated imagination. *Feminist Theory*, 3, 315-333.
- Sullivan, C. (1993). Oppression: The experiences of a lesbian teacher in an inner city comprehensive school in the United Kingdom. *Gender & Education*, 5, 93-101.
- Swigonski, M. E. (1996). Challenging privilege through afri-centric social work practice. *Social Work*, 41, 153-161.
- Tierney, W. G. (1999). Introduction: Praxis at the millennium- epistemological authority, voice, and qualitative research. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 12, 451-456.
- Vargas, L. (1999). When the "other" is the teacher: Implications of teacher diversity in higher education. *Urban Review*, 31, 359-383.
- Waldo, C. R., & Kemp, J. L. (1997). Should I come out to my students? An empirical investigation. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 34, 79-94.
- Ward, J., & Winstanley, D. (2005). Coming out at work: Performativity and the Recognition and renegotiation of identity. *Sociological Review*, 53, 447-475.
- Washburne Rensenbrink, C. (1996). What difference does it make? The story of a lesbian teacher. *Harvard Educational Review*, 66, 257-270.
- Wood, G. (2002). Educationally queer: Teaching lesbian and gay studies in higher education. *Changing English*, 9, 239-255.
- Wood, L. (2005). Not a hetero. Confessions of a dangerous homo. *Cultural Studies*, 19, 430-438.

Wright, J. (1993). Lesbian instructor comes out: The personal is pedagogy. *Feminist Teacher*, 7, 26-33.

Young, I. M. (2002). Lived body vs gender: Reflections on social structure and subjectivity. *Ratio*, 15, 410-428.