

**Dude, where's my passport?: An exploration of masculine identity of
college men who study abroad**

by

Julie Blaser Yankey

A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Major: Education (Educational Leadership)

Program of Study Committee:
Nancy J. Evans, Major Professor
Dawn Bratsch-Prince
Ann Coppernoll
Daniel Liou
Tyson Marsh

Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

2014

DEDICATION

To my partner, Joe, who taught me that no dream is too big. For our son, Will,
you *really* can do anything. That simple belief got us here.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
ABSTRACT	ix
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION	1
Rationale	2
Problem	5
Purpose	6
Research Questions	6
Significance of the Study	7
Theoretical Framework	7
Socially Constructed Identity	7
College Men Gender Identity Development Theory	8
Summary of Research Approach and Design	10
Overview of the Dissertation	11
Definitions	11
CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW	13
Student Participation in Study Abroad: Attitudes and Beliefs	14
Social Construction of Gender Identity	24
Masculine Ideology	26
Traditional Hegemonic Definition of Masculinity	26
Gender Role Strain	28
Gender Role Conflict	30
Men and Masculinity in College	32
Restricting Emotion	33
Power, Risk, and Violence	34
Homophobic Behavior and Fear of Femininity	36
Peer Influence	38
Alcohol Abuse	39
Identity Development	40
Summary	45
CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY	47
Methodology	47
Philosophical Assumptions	48
Research Approach	49
Role as a Researcher	51
Participants	54
Data Collection	56
Data Analysis	58

Trustworthiness	59
Credibility	60
Transferability	61
Dependability	61
Confirmability	62
Delimitations	63
Summary	63
 CHAPTER 4. PROFILES	 64
University Profile	64
Individual Profiles	64
David	65
Jason	70
Rob	81
Kyle	93
Chris	102
Evan	109
Rick	119
Will	129
Summary of Profiles	136
 CHAPTER 5. ANALYSIS	 137
Expressing Masculinity	137
Competiveness	138
Academic Achievement	138
Athletics	140
Being Strong	141
Defining Success Personally	144
Men's Unfamiliarity With Themselves as Men	147
Limited Awareness of One's Gender Identity	147
Blurring of Societal and Personal Beliefs About Gender	151
Gender as a Female Characteristic	156
Men as Relational Beings	163
Seeking Connection and Finding One's Place	163
Influential Family Life	167
Supportive	168
High Academic Expectations	170
Fear of Being Alone	174
Study Abroad as a Pathway to Change	180
Masculinity Redefined	180
Confidence Redefined	184
Relationship Transformations	184
Self-Assured	185
Future Redefined	188

Worldview Redefined	191
Conclusion	195
CHAPTER 6. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS	199
Summary	199
Research Questions and Findings	200
Research Question #1: How Do College Men Who Study Abroad Describe Themselves as Men?	200
Research Question #2: How Do the Views College Men Have of Themselves as Men Influence Their Decisions to Study Abroad?	206
Research Question #3: How Do the Ways in Which Men Describe Themselves as Men Influence Their Experiences While Studying Abroad?	209
Research Question #4: As a Result of Study Abroad, Do Male Students Perceive That They Have Altered Their View of Masculinity? If so, how?	210
Limitations	215
How This Study Contributes to Research Literature	217
Recommendations for Future Research	221
Recommendations for Practice	223
Study Abroad Professionals	223
Student Affairs Practice	225
Students	227
Personal Reflections	227
APPENDIX A. E-MAIL INVITING PARTICIPANTS TO PARTICIPATE	230
APPENDIX B. CONFIRMATION E-MAIL	231
APPENDIX C. INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT	232
APPENDIX D. INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL	235
APPENDIX E. INTERVIEW PROTOCOL	237
REFERENCES	243

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“It truly takes a village.” While I hear that phrase often, it has taken on a new meaning during graduate school and throughout this dissertation process. While my acknowledgements could never reflect the thoughts of appreciation that swirl in my mind for so many of you, this is a start to the significant sense of gratitude I feel.

To my major professor, Dr. Nancy Evans: for never wavering in your belief in me and for teaching me about capabilities and expanding the confidence I had in mine. For opening my eyes to a more inclusive view of the world and your gentle prompts suggesting I can do more. Speaking of suggestion, I will never forget the power of yours. Six years ago fate would have it that I would pass you in the hall and your simple question, “Why haven’t you started the doctoral program yet,” would turn in to this moment. Thank you for being a true mentor in my life.

To my graduate committee, Dr. Bratsch-Prince, Dr. Coppernoll, Dr. Liou, and Dr. Marsh: no matter the obligations on your calendar, the location in which you reside, or whether you were making a career move or entering retirement, I always felt supported and challenged by each of you. Thank you for your guidance and dedication to my work.

To the university study abroad office where this study was conducted: I appreciate the unwavering support and for lending a hand while I took time off to write. To the leaders and colleagues who believed in this research, I am forever grateful. In particular, Dr. Trevor Nelson: for always finding ways to support me and provide me with the space to handle the challenges that come with navigating a profession, parenthood, and graduate school. My passion for study abroad and this topic flourished while working

with you. To Sue: for bringing yoga into my life and for entertaining the dissertating voices in my mind. There are no words to express the gratitude I feel for all of your work editing this dissertation and countless other papers. And transcribing...lets just say that without you, I would still be on the first tape.

To my participants: I am truly indebted and privileged by the opportunity to learn more about your lives. I am in awe of your ability to think outside of yourselves and the sincerity you provided during the interviews. Thank you to Chris, David, Evan, Jason, Kyle, Rick, Rob, and Will. By sharing your stories you played an important role in expanding the body of research on men who study abroad.

To my parents, Jean and Paul: not only for being my greatest cheerleaders in so many aspects of my life, but for teaching me that everyone deserves a voice and if they are being silenced, use mine. For all those years doing homework by your side and your conviction never to tell me how to spell a word, the definition of a term, or let alone the answers. For pushing me to explore the answers on my own and to think for myself, the skills were definitely used writing this dissertation.

To my sisters, Cindy and Cheryl: It's hard for me to wrap my head around the amount of love and support I received from you both. Whether it was the late night calls, emails, flowers, or scheduling visits in a location that was convenient for me, you were my rocks through this process. You celebrated each milestone and I will never forget the perfectly timed mantra you both repeated to me over and over again for years, "You've got this."

To my mother and father-in law, Barb and Jon: For all your encouraging words and the support you have offered to us through so many years of education, I have lost count. For raising such a sensitive and ‘status quo questioning’ son, Joe, who I couldn’t have survived without.

To all of my family, friends, classmates, and colleagues: who might have not truly understood what I was actually working on, but always, consistently asked about the research: without all of your support, I might have gotten hung up on the ‘why’ rather than the ‘because.’ A special thanks to Sarah S.: for sticking by me after all these years, for being a true friend. To Sarah W.: for making me laugh and celebrating all of my small victories as we walked to lunch. To Marcie: I will never forget the red boa you wore during my first interview as a graduate student; you were right, we can accomplish more than we realize and have fun doing it.

And last, but certainly not least, my partner, Joe and my son, Will. To Joe: for knowing when to push me, when to comfort me, when to force me to take a break. For your genuine care and interest in my cause and listening to my rants about theory, masculinity, and social causes. For being one of the most intelligent people I know and always making me feel like my ideas were profound (Maybe it was the wine). I love you and the way you live your life--always pushing the limits and challenging external expectations and replacing them with what truly moves you. To Will: for your laughter that eased my busy mind, for your patience with my absence, and for learning how to say ‘dissertation’ at a much too early age. For teaching me that while there were (a lot) of

times that I really couldn't juggle everything in our lives well, you reminded me to let go, forgive, start again, and have fun like three year olds do.

ABSTRACT

In this phenomenological study, I examined the experiences of college men who participated in a study abroad program lasting a minimum of one semester. I explored how college men who study abroad described themselves as men, how the views the college men had of themselves influenced their decision to study abroad, how the ways in which the men described themselves as men influenced their experiences while studying abroad, and whether the male students perceived that they had altered their view of masculinity as a result of study abroad. Using the social construction of masculinity and college men gender identity theory as theoretical frameworks to guide this study, I sought to attain a clearer understanding of the experiences of men who study abroad as these experiences related to their masculinity identity. Eight men participated in three in-depth interviews through which data for this study were collected. The data were coded, analyzed, and organized into four emerging themes: a) *Expressing Masculinity*, (b) *Men's Unfamiliarity with Themselves as Men*, (c) *Men as Relational Beings*, and (d) *Study Abroad as a Pathway to Change*. The findings revealed that the males in this study expressed their masculinity through competitiveness, in particular through academics and sports; being strong; and defining success personally. The men's unfamiliarity with themselves as men was apparent from their limited awareness of their gender identity, the blurring of societal and personal beliefs about gender, and the notion of gender as a female occurrence. Men as relational beings was evident from the participants' desire for connection and to find one's place, the vital role of family, and the men's fear of being alone. Finally, the participants described having a new understanding of masculinity, an

enhanced level of confidence, a less restricted plan for their future, and a more inclusive worldview, illustrating that study abroad was a pathway to change. I discussed ways in which my findings add to existing literature and shared recommendations for current practice and future research to better serve male study abroad students.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

As the number of U.S. college students who study abroad continues to increase (Open Doors, 2012), significant questions remain surrounding the gender disparity in the participation rates. The literature exploring gender differences in study abroad is minimal, while qualitative research solely exploring the experiences of college men who study abroad is non-existent.

In addition, the student development literature informing study affairs practice is just beginning to offer a gendered perspective on college men's identity development (Edwards, 2007). While researchers of student development have historically focused only on men as subjects, few have considered men as "gendered beings" (Kellom, 2004). Early researchers did not study "men." Rather, they studied "students" who were men. Because there was no gender lens in the research, the resulting theory did not capture the gendered nature of identity development, for men or for women (Laker, 2003). In an effort to expand on the current body of literature, in this study I intended to provide a voice to men who study abroad and explore the "socially constructed identities" (Davis & Laker, 2004) of male college students.

Recent work by Fischer (2012), Lucas (2009), and Redden (2008) has alluded to the impact of gender role stereotypes and the perceived feminization of study abroad as possible explanations for the lack of male participants. In order to have a clearer understanding of the possible impact of gender role stereotypes on the study abroad experience, it is imperative to conduct further research exploring how men define themselves as men in the study abroad context. Through this research, higher education professionals may gain a more complete understanding of men who study abroad.

In this chapter, I provide the background of the dissertation through the following sections: rationale, problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, theoretical framework, summary of research approach and design, overview of the dissertation, and definitions of common terms.

Rationale

Study abroad is a significant learning and growth-provoking opportunity for university students (Carlson, Burns, Useem, & Yachimowicz, 1990; Dolby, 2004; Dwyer, 2004; Gemignani, 2009, Ingraham & Peterson, 2004). In recent years, female students have been studying abroad at much higher rates than male students (Open Doors, 2012). More research needs to be done to explore the gender disparity and to better understand the experiences of men who study abroad.

The outcomes of study abroad, as suggested by the existing research, provide a clear foundation for why more work needs to be done to understand the experiences of men who study abroad. Participants gain self-awareness, cultural sensitivity, a critical perspective on the U.S., language acquisition, and increased social competence in unfamiliar settings (Carlson, Burns, Useem, & Yachimowicz, 1990; Dolby, 2004; Dwyer, 2004; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004). An overwhelming number of study abroad participants agree that study abroad enhanced their interest in academic work, helped them acquire important career skills sets, and continued for decades to influence their perspective on world events (Commission, 2005). In addition, study abroad has a profound impact on how students view their home culture in relation to other cultures, on the students' personal development, and on their cultural learning (Gemignani, 2009).

Study abroad is also a beneficial learning activity: As suggested by Hopkins (1999), “Immersing oneself in another culture provides new opportunities for learning-by-doing, virtually twenty-four hours per day” (p. 36). Experiential learning allows students to have opportunities to make meaning out of their experiences. Students “inevitably find themselves looking inward as well as outward, reconciling their views of themselves and their cultural assumptions with the new cultural context” (Hopkins, 1999, p. 37). Experiential learning is relevant to this dissertation because as students reconcile their views of themselves in the study abroad context, the shift in self-awareness may provide more insight on men’s masculinity identity.

As the research continues to reveal the positive outcomes of study abroad, federal legislators are taking note. Former Senator Paul Simon was instrumental in advocating for study abroad policy through the Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act. Simon was inspired by the Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program, which proposed sending one million students abroad annually by 2016-17. In response, the goal of Simon’s act was to make high-quality study abroad programs in diverse locations around the world routine, rather than the exception, for American college students. The House of Representatives approved the act in 2009, and in 2010 the Senate approved \$2 million to expand access to study abroad (NAFSA, 2012).

The positive outcomes of study abroad provide a motivation for the added interest in increasing study abroad at many comprehensive colleges and universities. In 2011-12, 283,332 U.S. students studied abroad for academic credit, an increase of 3.5% over the previous year. U.S. student participation in study abroad has more than tripled over the past two decades (Open Doors, 2012), and there have been notable increases in the

number of U.S. students going to study in less traditional destinations. Students studying in English-speaking countries comprise 21% of the total study abroad population, suggesting that U.S. students are seeking destinations that offer linguistic and cultural diversity (Open Doors, 2012).

Students have chosen to participate in study abroad programs of different types and lengths: 39.4% of U.S. students studying abroad do so through mid-length programs (one semester, one quarter, or two quarters), while 57% of U.S. students choose short-term programs (including summer, January term, and any program of two to eight weeks during the academic year). A little less than 4% of study abroad students spend a full academic or calendar year abroad (Open Doors, 2012). Of the students who go abroad, the top fields of study are social science, business, the STEM fields, and humanities.

The underrepresentation of college men in study abroad and the lack of research exploring gender in study abroad provided the motivation for this research. Despite the positive outcomes of study abroad and the increase in the number of participants, males are studying abroad in significantly smaller numbers than their female counterparts. Between 1998 and 2011, the participation rates between genders have not changed: 65% of study abroad participants were females and 35% were males (Open Doors, 2012). Overall enrollment numbers aside, women are more drawn to study abroad than men. Even in Engineering, a field in which men substantially outnumber women, female participants predominate. The National Science Foundation reports that men earn 80% of bachelor's degrees in engineering, but women's participation in a study abroad consortium for engineers typically ranges from 30 to 40%, far outstripping their 20% representation in the field (National Science Foundation, 2012).

Problem

The benefits of study abroad are multifaceted and, despite the increase in the number of students participating, male students continue to be underrepresented. Study abroad participation is not the only area of campus engagement in which significant gender differences occur. Compared to female college students, men are less engaged in college activities such as volunteer service, pre-college programs, and use of career services; they also vote less (Kellom, 2004). Men are achieving less academically and are more likely to miss class, not come prepared, and not complete homework or turn it in late (Kimmel, 2008; Sax, 2008).

In regards to college men's academic achievement, the number of bachelor degrees earned by men has decreased from 54% in 1976-77 to 43% in 2009-10 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012). Within each racial/ethnic group, women earned the majority of degrees at all levels in 2010-11. Since 1988, the number of females in postbaccalaureate programs has exceeded the number of males. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of male full-time postbaccalaureate students increased by 38 percent, compared with a 62 percent increase in the number of females.

Despite a history of privilege and success in higher education, troubling trends for student affairs and academic leaders have emerged with regard to college men (Kellom, 2004). College men are cited more often for nonacademic violations of campus judicial policies (Harper, Harris, & Mmeje, 2005), academic underachievement (Kellom, 2004; Sax, 2008), alcohol and substance abuse (Capraro, 2000; Courtenay, 1998), depression (Good & Mintz, 1990), and disengagement in campus programs and activities (Davis & Laker, 2004).

Despite the clear need to understand male college students, higher education professionals have not generally been trained to view issues affecting men through a gendered lens, or they assume they already understand men (Davis & Laker, 2004). College educators still know little about the gender identity development process for college men (Harris, 2010, p. 297), further supporting this study, which was designed to explore the experiences of male study abroad students and masculinity.

Purpose

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to better understand the experiences of male college students who study abroad. The research focused on masculine identity by addressing the gaps in literature regarding the experiences of male college students; in particular, the study provided information on how the men define and express masculinity in the study abroad context. An intended consequence of this study was to enhance the understanding of masculinity and gender roles so that study abroad programs can better serve male students.

Research Questions

The research questions that guided this study were:

1. How do college men who study abroad describe themselves as men?
2. How do the views college men have of themselves as men influence their decisions to study abroad?
3. How do the ways in which men describe themselves as men influence their experiences while studying abroad?
4. As a result of study abroad, do male students perceive that they have altered their view of masculinity? If so, how?

Significance of the Study

The proposed study was conducted in response to information that was missing in the literature. There is very little to no research addressing the male study abroad experience and masculinity. The knowledge gained from this study will provide insight into masculinity identity development from the perspectives of men who study abroad. I hypothesized that if the findings indicated male students experienced growth and developed new perspectives through their participation in study abroad, such understanding might inspire institutions to seek out new ways to involve more male students in study abroad.

Study abroad professionals in particular may find this study's findings beneficial when working with male study abroad students. The findings may also be helpful to student affairs professionals who work with male students since they have the potential of relating to male engagement on college campuses. The participants may benefit from the critical reflection on their study abroad experience and exploration of masculinity.

Theoretical Framework

This study was grounded theoretically by the work of scholars who view gender as a socially constructed identity (Kimmel & Messner, 2007; Weber, 2001) as well as Keith Edwards's (2007) college men's gender identity development theory.

Socially Constructed Identity

The social construction of masculinity perspective focuses on the ways in which male gender identity develops through socializing practices that take place within social structures, such as school settings, families, and sports. It is within social structures such as these that boys learn to perform masculinity according to socially constructed

expectations (Harris, 2008).

There are a number of assumptions associated with the social construction of masculinity perspective (Kimmel & Messner, 2007). First, masculinity is a performed social identity, not a biological trait. Second, all groups of men do not experience masculinity in the same way. Finally, since gender is a performed social identity, the ways in which individuals conceptualize and express masculinity will change as they grow and mature throughout their lives (Kimmel & Messner, 2007).

If we are to understand college men, we must understand the social construction of masculinity and the pressure for men to conform to these standards. When providing a voice to men, it is imperative to view men in the context of the “restraints, constraints, and expectations of the male gender role [because] men are inextricably entwined with the demands of our culture” (Scher, 1990, p. 325).

The theoretical perspective of the social construction of masculinity provided an avenue to explore the meanings the participants ascribed to masculinity and how contextual factors of study abroad influenced these meanings. The theoretical perspective is consistent with the constructionist epistemology informing this research. Both frameworks prioritize the influences of social interactions in the construction of meanings and realities (Harris, 2008).

College Men Gender Identity Development Theory

Edwards’s (2007) dissertation sought to provide an understanding of the process of college men’s gender identity development. The theory that emerged from his research centered on the individual men’s process of interacting with society’s expectations of them as men. This process includes learning external expectations of

themselves as men, society's general expectations as well as specific cultural group expectations (Edwards, 2007). Once men learn these external expectations, according to Edwards (2007), men perform masculinity in three phases: putting on a mask, wearing a mask as way of performing to meet these external expectations, and experiencing the consequences they saw as a result of wearing the mask. Men struggle to move beyond these external expectations and be their own man. Edwards (2007) defined the three phases of college men's gender identity development theory:

In the first phase, men put on a mask. During this phase, men feel like they do not measure up to society's expectations and attempt to portray an image of a man according to society's expectations. Men in this phase cover up aspects of self that do not fit society's expectations (Edwards, 2007).

The second phase, wearing a mask, describes how men wear a mask as a way of covering up aspects of their true selves that do not meet society's expectations. In response to experiencing oppression from society, college men in this phase seek ways to "act" more acceptable, such as partying (Edwards, 2007). Also representative of this phase is men's struggle to live up to their personal versions of what it means to be a man because of the constant pressure to conform to society's expectations (Edwards, 2007).

The final phase, experiencing and recognizing the consequences of wearing a mask, reveals the cost associated with the disguise. Because of the pressure to act in certain ways to demonstrate their manhood, men may express attitudes and engage in behaviors with women that do not reflect their true feelings and are demeaning and degrading (Edwards, 2007). In this phase, men begin to struggle to move beyond these external expectations and be their own man. The masks worn, as well as the perceived

masks other men wear, also limit men's ability to develop meaningful and close relationships with their fathers and with friends who are men, despite their deep need and desire for these relationships (Edwards, 2007). Wearing the mask also has costs for the men themselves at this stage. For instance, a man is more likely to sacrifice authenticity by pretending to be something that he is not and by covering up or denying aspects of his true self that did not fit society's expectations of men (Edwards, 2007).

Edwards's (2007) gender identity development theory helps to explain the process men experience while interacting with society's expectations of them as men. The theory was important to this study because I felt that it might provide a framework to better understand the participants' experiences in the study abroad context. Edwards's (2007) phases of development provided a mode for comparison when exploring the meaning making of the participants.

Summary of Research Approach and Design

A phenomenological methodology provided the framework for the design of this qualitative study because of my intent to examine the lived experiences of humans and how people understand this experience (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). The intent of phenomenology is to uncover "plausible insights that bring us in more direct contact with the world" (van Manen, 1990, p. 9) rather than factual representations of experiences or theoretical explanations (Arminio & Hultgren, 2002). Phenomenology was used for this research to provide first-hand accounts of the social construction of masculinity (Weber, 2001) and to provide insight into the societal context influencing men's identity.

The lived experiences of the participants in the study were explored through in-depth phenomenological interviews using Seidman's (2012) three-interview method,

which is discussed further in Chapter 3. At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience (Seidman, 2012). In addition to the students being a data source for this study, I maintained a self-reflective journal as a data source and documented my observations, feelings, and impressions of the interviews. The self-reflective journal was beneficial to the research process as it exposed my presuppositions, choices, experiences, and positions of privilege that influenced the research process (Ortlipp, 2008).

Overview of the Dissertation

The dissertation is comprised of six chapters. In Chapter 2 I have included a discussion of the research exploring the differences demonstrated by study abroad participants based on gender, specifically with regard to attitudes, beliefs, and participation. The literature review also included information on college men and masculinity identity development. Chapter 3 is comprised of the methodology (phenomenology) and methods used for this study. Chapter 4 encompasses the participant profiles in the students' own words. My analysis of the data is presented in Chapter 5. Finally, in Chapter 6 I have offered a discussion of the findings and implications of the study.

Definitions

This section includes some of the most commonly used terms that I have used in this dissertation:

Gender: A socially constructed concept that is independent of one's biological sex (male/female). A performed social identity (Kimmel & Messner, 2007).

Gender performance: Cultural representations of masculinity or femininity (Elliot, 2001).

Gender role conflict: Gender-related conflicts and anxieties are the outcomes of the discrepancies between men's authentic selves and culturally defined notions of masculinity. When men are unable to perform masculinity according to stereotypical expectations, they are likely to view themselves as less masculine than other men and assume others will do the same (O'Neil, 1981).

Masculinity: Possessing qualities or characteristics that are considered typical or appropriate for men; these qualities vary across historical and cultural contexts.

Social construction: Emphasizes the influence of social interactions, social structures, and social contexts in producing and reinforcing so-called normative expectations of behavior (Harris, 2010).

Study abroad: Education abroad, or off-campus education that occurs outside the participant's home country, which results in progress towards an academic degree at the student's home institution (Peterson, Engle, Kenney, Kreutzer, Nolting, & Ogden, 2007).

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter was to review the available literature on the issues that pertain to study abroad and masculinity identity. In Chapter 1 I provided an overview of study abroad, while in this chapter I focused instead on the elements of study abroad that are relevant to this study. I begin the literature review with a discussion of the research exploring the differences demonstrated by study abroad participants based on gender, specifically with regard to attitudes, beliefs, and participation. I then discuss factors specifically influencing college men, including the social construction of masculinity, masculine ideology, traditional hegemonic definition of masculinity, theoretical studies about gender, and masculinity in college.

Study abroad is a growing initiative on many U.S. college campuses today. Conducting research on study abroad and implementing the findings is critical to the development and enhancement of study abroad programming. Research provides guidance to educators involved in study abroad initiatives and a clearer understanding of the participants. Lucas (2009) noted that “currently much of the research in study abroad is theoretical or small-scale in nature, and even when larger, more inferential studies are conducted, they generally lack consistency in design, definition, measurement, and focus between institutions” (p. 16). The purpose of this study was to expand upon the current research by exploring the male experience, with a specific focus on how the men define and express masculinity in the study abroad context. As a result of this research, I expected to gain insight about masculinity and gender roles within the study abroad context and use the findings to enhance study abroad programming to meet the needs of male students.

Student Participation: Attitudes and Beliefs

Students' attitudes and beliefs are central to the study abroad decision-making process as demonstrated in Goldstein and Kim's (2006) study that was designed to identify variables that predict participation in study abroad programs. The authors followed 179 undergraduates through their 4-year college career and measured variables such as study abroad expectations, ethnocentrism, and academics. The findings of the research indicated a number of gender differences, with ethnocentrism being an obvious one.

Students who indicated high levels of ethnocentrism or prejudice were less likely to participate in study abroad. Ethnocentrism is viewing one's own group as the center of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it (Goldstein & Kim, 2006). Women scored significantly lower than men on ethnocentrism, had more positive expectations of study abroad, and had greater foreign language interest (Goldstein & Kim, 2006). Male nonparticipants scored the highest in ethnocentrism and lowest in language interest. The findings were relevant to this dissertation because of the support for exploring notions of masculinity in study abroad. The men's higher levels of ethnocentrism may relate to males ascribing to traditional notions of masculinity, such as demonstrating power (Brannon, 1976), which is at the root of ethnocentrism, and viewing one's own culture as the center of everything.

Student attitudes and participation were also explored in Schroth and McCormack's (2000) work on sensation seeking and achievement. The researchers compared the quantitative responses of study abroad participants to those of college students who did not study abroad. The results revealed that men who studied abroad had

significantly higher scores on Experience Seeking and Intrinsic Achievement Motivation but lower scores on Thrill and Adventure, Disinhibition, and Boredom Susceptibility than the norm (Schroth & McCormack, 2000).

The experience seeking scale measures the desire for unusual sensations or experiences associated with a nonconformist lifestyle (Schroth & McCormack, 2000). Rather than desiring sports, dangerous activities, or parties, men who study abroad prefer experience-seeking activities that challenge the mind and senses, such as study abroad (Schroth & McCormack, 2000). In terms of male gender socialization, traditional college males have higher alcohol use (Capraro, 2004) and are overrepresented as college judicial offenders (Harper, Harris, & Mmeje, 2005). As mentioned previously, men who study abroad desire more than parties and dangerous activities, which may provide evidence that men who study abroad do not subscribe to traditional notions of masculinity as much as male students who do not study abroad.

The lack of awareness about study abroad and the complexity of the application process were two deterrents to study abroad for male students. Students indicated the primary factor for not moving forward with study abroad was that there were too many barriers or complexities involved in the process (Spiering & Erickson, 2006). Even when students understood the benefits and felt ably assisted, they felt the opportunity was not compatible with other academic and personal goals, particularly among male participants (Spiering & Erickson, 2006). Because barriers and conflicts with personal goals are concerns for male students, it is critical to hear from men who have studied abroad and learn how they navigated these challenges. Those who chose to take advantage of study abroad opportunities made their decisions based primarily on recognizing the benefits or

relative advantage that such opportunities provide (Spiering & Erickson, 2006).

Focusing on the benefits is important in choosing to participate, but male students tend to focus on the obstacles (Lucas, 2009), further demonstrating the need for additional research on men to determine why this tendency may be the case.

The perceived obstacles to study abroad based on gender were also explored by Salisbury, Paulsen, and Pascarella (2010) who applied a student choice model to explore differences between male and female students' intent to study abroad. The researchers found that various forms of social and cultural capital predicted student decisions about curricular opportunities during college, including study abroad, and that gender played a substantial role in shaping these decisions (Salisbury et al., 2010). Social capital includes the access to networks, support systems, and information resources that might inform or constrain (Coleman, 1988; Massey, Charles, Lundy & Fischer, 2003). Cultural capital refers to class-based cultural knowledge, norms, activities, skills, and values--typically derived from one's parents, such as those related to the acquisition of educational credentials and occupational status (Massey et al. 2003; McDonough, 1997; Perna & Titus, 2005).

In regards to social and cultural capital, females' intent to study abroad significantly increased from co-curricular involvement and course-related diversity experiences. The roles of parents were important to females but not to males. For example, for each unit increase in parents' educational attainment, women's probability of studying abroad increased significantly (Salisbury et al., 2010).

The role of social and cultural capital in shaping decisions for men was different. Unlike for females, males' intent to study abroad was not affected by their parents'

education (Salisbury et al., 2010). In addition to the parents' education not being significant, finances were not a factor for male students. The researchers found that the socioeconomic status of male students, measured by their eligibility for and receipt of federal grant aid, was not significantly related to intent to study abroad (Salisbury et al., 2010).

When men did not have a selected major when entering college, they were more likely to intend to study abroad. Undecided majors were 24% more likely to intend to study abroad if male; this factor had no effect for undecided majors who were females (Salisbury et al., 2010). The tendency to push students to decide on a major earlier in their academic career may hinder men from studying abroad. Although there is no further research exploring why male undecided majors are more likely to study abroad, it may relate to the uncertainty of their career path and feeling more able to pursue study abroad. By not being locked into curricular requirements, undecided students may have the perception that study abroad is a possibility. Alternatively, research shows that males with traditional concepts about masculine roles make career success central to their lives (Covin & Brush, 1991; Deutschendorf, 1996; Lucas, 2009), so potentially males with an undecided major do not possess as strong a central career focus and as a result gravitate toward study abroad. The findings clearly demonstrated a need for further examination from the voices of men themselves. My qualitative study explored men who studied abroad through a masculinity identity lens, which provided insight on the views college men have of themselves as men and how those views influenced their decisions to study abroad.

While parental influence did not matter to men, influential peer interaction negatively affected males' intent to study abroad. Male students were less likely to study abroad than female students if they had a close-knit peer group (Lucas, 2009). This finding is relevant to this dissertation because if a man's peer group, or men in general, are not studying abroad, it may shed light on the pressure men feel to fit the "norm" and as a result engage in other peer-supported activities rather than pursuing study abroad. The researchers also found that males were motivated to study abroad for the integration of knowledge, information, and ideas, while these motivators did not influence females' intent to study abroad (Salisbury et al., 2010). The intent to study abroad among men is shaped primarily by emerging personal values, experiences, and peer influence, while women seem to be affected by influential authority figures and educational contexts (Salisbury et al., 2010).

Influential authority figures and educational contexts, as found by Salisbury et al., (2010), are not the only factors that appear to be influencing women. Redden (2008) discussed three reasons female students decide to study abroad: pending motherhood, age, and safety. The findings present a clear connection to gender roles and potentially a rationale for the feminization of study abroad, which provided further support for this dissertation. The organized structure of university study abroad programs appealed to both females and their parents because of the sense of safety. Pending motherhood and age appeared to play a role because females felt the pressure to do things such as study abroad before they started a family (Redden, 2008).

The underrepresentation of males in study abroad was explored in a recent article by Fischer (2012), who reiterated that the perception exists that study abroad is a female experience:

From its inception, more than a century ago, study abroad has had a reputation as a female pursuit, the lasting image one of Seven Sisters students steaming overseas for a grand European tour of art and culture, a refining gloss for a marriageable young woman. (Fischer, 2012, para. 9)

Fischer (2012) indicated that women were inclined to check it off their proverbial to-do list while men were more inclined to question the value of study abroad. In an effort to appeal to men, Fischer (2012) noted that universities are responding by expanding internship opportunities abroad because there is evidence that internships are more attractive to men. In addition, institutions are offering focused programs in locations that have job relevance. Fisher (2012) noted that the perception exists that men can backpack through Europe later or travel for business. The findings related to this dissertation because the response by universities to add more internship options abroad to appeal to males further supports gender role socialization.

While much of the research discussed thus far indicated gender differences, Van Hoof and Verbeeten's (2005) work suggested some gender similarities. Their research indicated that the impressions of study abroad, such as how one learns about it and subsequently how one decides to participate, are different for men and women. However, regardless of gender, once a student participates in study abroad, the outcomes were similar and students shared a similar perception of academic difficulty, housing arrangements, and personal development (Van Hoof & Verbeeten, 2005). They found

that males and females also agreed on their reasons for going abroad: It was a good opportunity to live in another culture and to travel, and they liked the country in which a program was located. In addition, the benefits of study abroad were described in a similar fashion: greater understanding of other cultures, appreciation of their home culture, and learning more about themselves (Van Hoof & Verbeeten, 2005).

Although there is minimal research exploring the male study abroad experience specifically, a dissertation written by James Lucas (2009) provides valuable information about this topic. Lucas's (2009) dissertation, *Where are All the Males?: A Mixed Methods Inquiry into Male Study Abroad Participation*, provided critical insight on the motivations and the obstacles men experience. He employed a mixed methods inquiry, analyzing an institutional survey and conducting interviews with male graduating seniors. Based on the themes from the interviews, Lucas (2009) found that male students had four motivations related to study abroad: fun, cultural learning, résumé-building, and major and/or career benefits. His research also suggested that male disposition--specifically the adherence to traditional notions of masculinity--played a vital role in their decision-making process and how they weighed the motivations. Lucas (2009) expressed a need for future research on the male disposition, further supporting the need for this study.

Lucas's (2009) research explored additional factors that influenced participation and determined some gender differences that are relevant to this study and masculinity identity. Obstacles that were significant to females but not males were cost, health, and safety. The obstacle that mattered the most to males but not to females was delaying graduation (Lucas, 2009). He found that males study abroad later than females because

of males' development, interest, and tendency to seek out opportunities later, which put further strain on men in regard to pending graduation (Lucas, 2009).

He also found the role of family to be viewed differently by male and female participants. Males were less concerned about missing family and friends, less influenced by parental support, and perceived lack of family support as less of an obstacle than did females. A familial concern that did affect men, however, was the sense of obligation men felt to their family relative to time and financial resources, which affected their decision to study abroad (Lucas, 2009). Lucas (2009) stated, "The sense of obligation stemmed from the belief that time away would negatively affect their parents and siblings in terms of loss of financial, human, and time resources" (p. 153). The individuals who chose not to study abroad mentioned that just the thought of asking their parents about study abroad stopped them from pursuing the option (Lucas, 2009).

In regards to structure of a study abroad program, Lucas (2009) found that males were influenced less by program location than duration, with a preference for longer programs. He stated, "Although males were less influenced by program location, they do desire to travel, and while traveling, they sought to have exotic adventures" (p. 182). The exotic destination appealed to males because they desired an experience they could not do on their own. In summary, Lucas (2009) stated, "Males desire value-added excitement, highly independent programs, and to see a connection between study abroad and their academic program or career" (p. 199).

Lucas's (2009) research also revealed the impact gender identity and masculinity have on study abroad participation. The differences were explained in broader sociological trends and gender stereotypes, as researched by Dessoiff (2006), Kimmel

(2008), Sax (2008), Gore (2005), and others. One suggestion was that more females might have gravitated towards study abroad because of gender role stereotypes. Lucas (2009) discussed previous literature on broader sociological trends that suggested that gender role stereotypes allow females more flexibility in their pursuits because females are not in “serious” fields of study relative to males. Females’ educational attainment historically has not been as important in terms of high-paying careers, so females have been encouraged to participate in worldly and cultured activities (Lucas, 2009).

The research Lucas (2009) referred to on gender roles indicates males are more career-focused and tend to define success differently than do females (Dyke & Murphy, 2006). Males with traditional concepts about masculine roles make career success central to their lives (Covin & Brush, 1991; Deutschendorf, 1996). In addition to seeking money and success in lieu of personal development, evidence suggests that males are more pragmatic and desire risk (Lucas, 2009, p. 66). Men in Lucas’s (2009) study described themselves as not “typical men” and explained that some of the traditional male roles did not match up with their interest in study abroad.

Lucas’s (2009) research also indicated that men desire to hear about study abroad from their peers, as Salisbury et al. (2010) alluded to in their work. Males perceive peer messages to be important in the decision-making process, and males believe they are receiving significantly less communication about study abroad; and when males do hear about study abroad from other men, they are not hearing the complete story (Lucas, 2009). According to Lucas, “Men tell other males what they think they want to hear based on their perception of social norms and perpetuating [*sic*] a stereotypical ‘male voice’” (p. 180). For example, men would tell other men about the nightlife and partying

they did while abroad, assuming that was the message other males would want to hear. In addition to not hearing a sufficient number of peer messages, Lucas's research indicated that males view study abroad promotional materials to be highly feminized. For example, men believed that the materials focused on fun and lacked concrete facts about program options or the benefits of study abroad.

Males also appear to lack details about study abroad more than do females, specifically regarding the variety of options and program models: Even when men were aware of the information and the benefits of study abroad, the complexity affected their participation because the process of searching through and interpreting the material was too difficult and time-consuming (Lucas, 2009). The planning and ambition required to apply and to manage one's life while abroad were not appealing to men. Findings suggested that males described themselves as independent, adventuresome, lazy, less receptive to change, or complacent. So if males consider themselves to be lazy and the application process to be daunting, in combination with their tendency to focus on the obstacles to study abroad instead of the benefits, it is no wonder that there has been gender imbalance.

This portion of the literature review indicated some differences that exist between genders in the attitudes, beliefs, and participation decisions regarding study abroad. Men are motivated by career and academic integration, résumé building opportunities, desire for experiencing something different, and their peers. Males tend to be dissuaded from study abroad because of the complexity of the application process and the overwhelming number of program options. Men are apprehensive about delaying graduation, while finances and safety do not seem to be of concern. The role of masculinity identity

development and the feminization of study abroad also appeared to play a role, further supporting the need for this dissertation and consideration of the remaining section of this literature review.

The next section of the literature review focuses on the aspects of masculinity and gender that are pertinent to this study. First, it is important to mention that prior to the recent scholarship focusing on college men, research on gender focused almost exclusively on the experiences of college women (Harper et al., 2005). Seeing men as gendered beings has not been present in most classic student development theories; rather the theories prioritized the experiences of White men (McEwen, 2003).

The research that has focused on men has concentrated on destructive behaviors and a select subgroup of men, notably fraternities and men's sports teams (Harris & Edwards, 2010). Scholars who have studied college men's issues (Capraro, 2000; Harris & Edwards, 2010; O'Neil & Nadeau, 2004) have called for empirical qualitative studies of college men because the previous research has primarily been conceptual and lacking the voices of college men. Through this phenomenological study, I intended to explore the social construction of masculinity and the pressure for men to conform to these standards (Davis & Laker, 2004; Pollack, 1999) in an effort to better understand men's study abroad experiences.

Social Construction of Gender Identity

Understanding the social construction of gender was essential to this study because study abroad has been perceived as a feminine activity (Fischer, 2012; Lucas, 2009), and the framework of this study prioritized the influence of social interactions in the construction of this belief (Edwards, 2007; Kimmel, 2008). The social construction

of masculinities is a perspective that emphasizes the influence social interactions, social contexts, and social structures, such as school settings, sports culture, popular culture, families, and in this case, study abroad experiences, have in producing and reinforcing so-called normative expectations of masculine behavior (Harris, 2010).

The social construction perspective was proposed by pro-feminist men's studies scholars (Connell, 2005; Kimmel & Messner, 2007; Levant, 1996; Pleck, 1995) and challenged earlier research on men, which attributed the differences between genders to biology (Harris, 2010). For decades, feminists have been critical of the way dominant society has constructed masculinity and femininity and the way those gender roles have fostered patriarchal systems and structures, which have served to oppress women and privilege men (Edwards, 2007). Examining men and masculinity is critical to deconstructing power inequities in a patriarchal society stemming from the social construction of gender (Edwards, 2007).

There are several assumptions underlying the belief that masculinity is socially constructed (Kimmel & Messner, 2007). First, masculinity is not a biological trait, but rather a performed social identity. Second, masculinity is not experienced the same way by all groups of men, and no one dominant masculine form persists across all social settings; rather, multiple *masculinities* are situated in sociocultural contexts (Kimmel & Messner, 2007). By focusing on gender in the study abroad context, my hope was to improve our understanding of masculinity and its role in the lives of men who study abroad, and consequently student affairs practitioners' ability to help men succeed in college.

Masculine Ideology

Similar to the social construction of masculinity, masculinity ideology refers to the traditional and socially constructed definition of masculinity at a given time in history and culture (Thompson & Pleck, 1995) and that definition is the standard by which many males measure personal masculinity (Chu, Porche, & Tolman, 2005; Mahalik et al., 2003). Masculine ideology includes the cultural norms that define masculinity, expected male behaviors, and the individual's internalization of such norms and expectations.

The cultural norms that make up the masculine ideology describe men as being breadwinners and responsible heads of household (Abreu, Goodyear, Campos, & Newcomb, 2000; Pleck, 1987); anti-feminine (Pollack, 1998); heterosexual, with heterosexuality as the normative sexual orientation (Connell, 2005); homophobic (Kimmel, 1995); a person with high status and confidence (Thompson & Pleck, 1986); violently tough and physically strong (Thompson & Pleck, 1986). These traits support an acceptance of a hegemonic society and are critical components of the belief about what it is to be a man in the United States (Thompson & Pleck, 1995).

In particular, college men subscribe to the masculine ideology primarily through the adherence to peer influence, homophobic tendencies, a fear of femininity, being emotionally restricted, seeking power, risk and violence, and alcohol abuse. These topics will be explored further in a later section as they relate to college men.

Traditional Hegemonic Definition of Masculinity

The conventional definition of masculinity was important to understand for this study because it provided a background as to what messages the participants were receiving regarding “normal” masculine behavior. The social construction of

masculinity, as defined by the dominant culture's image of what it means to be a man, is influenced by the traditional definition of masculinity or masculine ideology (Kimmel, 2004). This traditional definition of masculinity is hegemonic because the embraced system of beliefs and practices about masculinity essentially harm us (Kimmel & Davis, 2011) due to the misogyny and homophobic tendencies that are included (Connell, 2005).

Misogyny, the hatred, dislike, or mistrust of women, is expressed through violent acts against women, such as domestic violence, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and rape. Homophobia, a central organizing principle of manhood, is more than the irrational fear of gay men, but really the fear of being perceived as gay (Harper & Harris, 2010). In order to address the fear of femininity, which is central to the conventional definition, men are socialized to learn that misogyny and homophobia are two primary means of proving their manhood (Kimmel, 1994).

The four fundamental rules of masculinity, according to Brannon (1976), illustrate how misogyny and homophobia are reinforced:

- No Sissy Stuff - males should be strong and avoid behavior that equates with being feminine or gay, such as showing fear, sadness, weakness, or emotion;
- Be the Big Wheel - males should prioritize success, status, power, and wealth;
- Be a Sturdy Oak - males should be reliable and steadfast;
- Give 'em Hell - males should live independently, seek risk and adventure, and disregard others' opinions. (p. 12)

The traditional definition of masculinity encourages males to be emotionally restrictive; seek power, control, and competition; avoid affectionate and sexual interaction with other men; and defines personal success through work status and

financial gain (O'Neil & Roberts Carroll, 1988). In addition, the central organizing principle is placing men above women and some men (e.g., White, able-bodied, educated, heterosexual, middle and upper class) above other men (e.g., men of color, [dis]abled, gay, bisexual, low-income) (Harris & Edwards, 2010).

As men subscribe to this traditional definition, they are viewed as normal, and anything that deviates from that norm is defined as deviant (Brannon, 1976). Because study abroad participation is not the norm for male students, I thought it was important to understand the traditional definition of masculinity to see whether men who study abroad ascribe to or deviate from gender norms.

Gender Role Strain

As a result of the pressure and expectation to subscribe to the traditional definition of masculinity, men experience significant gender role strain. Understanding gender role strain is important to this study because the concepts provided background regarding the pressure men may experience when choosing to participate in an activity, such as study abroad, that has historically been populated by females.

Gender role strain theory suggested that male norms are constructed through social modeling integral to any society's gender and power system and as a result, men experience cultural pulls that influence their behavior and cause strain (Pleck, 1995). As men's thoughts, feelings, and impulses are in opposition to what is called for by social standards, men experience strain (Barron, 2009). Gender role theory helps to illustrate the cultural and social significance of norms on the development of male identity and addresses the ongoing process of reconciling discrepancies arising from gender role strain (Pleck, 1995).

The core positions associated with gender role strain theory are: (a) gender roles are operationally defined by stereotypes and norms, (b) masculine roles are contradictory and unpredictable, (c) the number of people who violate these norms is high, (d) violation of norms has damaging social and psychological outcomes, (e) men sustain more severe consequences than women, (f) certain characteristics prescribed by gender role norms are psychologically dysfunctional, (g) each gender experiences gender role strain in paid work and family roles, and (h) historical change causes gender role strain (Pleck, 1995).

In addition to these core positions, Pleck (1981, 1995) specified three subtypes of male gender role strain. *Discrepancy strain* implies that stereotypic gender role standards exist and that individuals attempt to adhere to them in varying degrees. The discrepancy can result from the rapidly changing gender norms that Levant (1996) described as leaving men feeling confused and wondering what a real man is. By not conforming, men experience negative consequences from negative social feedback and internalized negative self-judgments (O'Neil & Crapser, 2011). An example of discrepancy strain is evident in the expectation recently placed on men to take on more domestic obligations, which historically have been done by women. The new expectation does not fit with previous gender norms, and as a result men feel strain from the discrepancy.

Gender role trauma emerges from painful experiences that demonstrate one does not mesh with reference group expectations of what it is to be a man (Pleck, 1995). Boys' separation from mothers and having absent fathers can be examples of traumatizing experiences (Levant, 1995; Pollack, 1999). As a man lets his guard down and shows emotion, the action may be perceived as too feminine, therefore igniting feelings of not being "man enough."

Finally, *gender role dysfunction* describes how the proliferation of masculinity ideology is thought to result in negative outcomes (Pleck, 1995). This kind of strain exists when men believe that they have to live up to sexist stereotypes in order to be a man (O'Neil & Crapser, 2011). As men attempt to uphold the sexist stereotypes, they usually respond with exaggerated masculine attitudes and a hypermasculine presentation of self, which produces stress because many of the stereotypes cannot be fully realized (O'Neil & Crapser, 2011). Not only do men experience the negative consequences while attempting to live up to unrealistic standards, but so do the people in their lives (Pleck, 1995).

Gender Role Conflict

As men experience gender role strain, the strain tends to manifest into gender role conflict (O'Neil, 1981). College men sacrifice authenticity when they subscribe to notions of the traditional definition of masculinity that are not a part of their true selves (Edwards, 2007). Gender role conflict was important to this study because it provided insight into the demands of adhering to the traditional definition of masculinity and the stress that results from obedience to this definition. An understanding of gender role conflict of men who study abroad will ultimately aid in student affairs professionals' ability to design programs that encourage healthy character development.

The research focusing on the effects of socially defined expectations of masculinity on boys and men frequently has centered on male gender role conflict (MGRC; Ludeman, 2004). Male gender role conflict describes the negative consequences associated with men's tendencies to conform to narrow socially constructed masculine roles (Good & Wood, 1995; O'Neil & Nadeu, 2004). Examples of

the negative consequences experienced by men are loss of self and more frequent depression (Real, 1997), disinterest in seeking counseling (Good & Wood, 1995), and increases in substance abuse and addiction (Capraro, 2000).

Men experience hardship whether they deviate from or conform to the traditional gender norms and provoke what Good and Wood (1995) referred to as “double jeopardy” (p. 70). Double jeopardy, or compounded risk, is the idea that men’s conflicts and stresses related to male gender roles have been associated with increased depression and psychological distress (Good & Wood, 1995). Good and Wood conducted a qualitative study on college men’s depression and help-seeking behavior and found gender role conflict as central to men’s double jeopardy. As men begin to deviate from traditional gender norms, they feel restricted in how they are allowed to communicate, fear femininity, feel overly challenged, and are confused about masculinity (Davis, 2002), which further provokes double jeopardy (Good & Wood, 1995). Rather than feeling empowered from deviating from the traditional definition of masculinity, college men feel further ostracized, which further perpetuates men subscribing to the traditional definition of masculinity (Edwards, 2007).

Gender role conflict is often explored through the Gender Role Conflict Scale (GRCS) designed by O’Neil et al., (1986). The GRCS is the most commonly used survey that assesses the level of stress and anxiety experienced by men as a result of trying to adhere to masculine gender roles. The four gender role conflict patterns (O’Neil, 2008) are:

- Success, Power, and Competition - measures the emphasis placed on achievement, on authority or control over others, and on the struggle against

others for personal gain.

- Restrictive Emotionality - relates to difficulty with the emotional expressiveness of self and others.
- Restrictive Affectionate Behavior Between Men - a measure of discomfort with expressions of caring between men.
- Conflict Between Work and Family - the level of distress men experience related to conflicts work or school create in personal and family life.

As illustrated from the four conflict patterns (O'Neil, 2008), the ultimate outcome of gender role conflict is the restriction of a person's human potential or the restriction of another person's potential (O'Neil & Crapser, 2011). With the majority of college men experiencing gender role conflict, it was imperative to learn more about men's study abroad experiences and the challenges they endure.

Men and Masculinity in College

Gender role conflict, and the behavior, development, and outcomes of college men have recently been of increasing concern for college educators (Davies et al., 2000). Thus far the research has indicated troubling trends in men's attendance, success, engagement, well-being, and behavior in college (Harris & Edwards, 2010), with men skipping class more often, spending more time partying, drinking, and watching television (Sax, 2008). College men are most likely experiencing stress as the result of the pressure to live up to the traditional definition of masculinity (Capraro, 2004).

In the following sections, I review the literature on the behaviors and beliefs that are most central to college men's traditional definition of masculinity: restricting

emotion, seeking power, risk, and competition, being homophobic and fearing femininity, prioritizing the opinions of one's peers, and abusing alcohol.

Restricting Emotion

Boys are taught at very young ages to repress feelings, and to be independent and strong; they are reinforced socially for denying intimate connections. Messages such as “boys don’t cry,” “don’t be a fag,” and “take it like a man” reinforce social rules that define behavioral and interpersonal expectations for young men (Pollack, 2006). In an attempt to avoid losing social acceptance, it is expected that men will hide feelings they are experiencing to circumvent being perceived as too feminine (Korobov, 2004).

The act of hiding one's feelings is often a facade though, and developed to self-protect against ridicule or ostracism from important reference groups (Pollack, 2006). This facade of being viewed as unemotional and in control of one's feelings is central to the “strong-and-silent” masculine script (Brannon, 1976). As a result of masculine socialization and restricted emotionality, men have been experiencing higher levels of alexithymia –“without words for emotions” (Levant, 1992). Not only do men struggle to express themselves, they also suppress emotions to avoid feeling vulnerable (Mahalik, Good, & Englar-Carlson, 2003). It is then no surprise that male college students avoid seeking emotional help because they are not socialized to ask for help or show their weaknesses (Davies, et al., 2000).

Not all men subscribe to this traditional norm of restricted emotionality however; and as a result, the men who express feelings experience more stability. College men who showed comfort and emotional expression also showed lower levels of anxiety and depression and higher levels of self-esteem and intimacy (Paciej, 2010).

Power, Risk, and Violence

Closely related to college men's restricted emotions is the desire for power and taking risks. Depending on whom you ask, study abroad can either be viewed as a risk or an academic vacation (Lucas, 2009), which further supported the need for this research to explore the perception of risk directly with the participants themselves. The desire for risk or an adventure is what Lucas (2009) found to be central to what men want in a study abroad experience. Study abroad is often marketed as an opportunity to learn about other cultures and travel; rarely as an opportunity to take risks.

The reason college men are motivated to take risks is because the rewards of being perceived as masculine are high (Byrnes, Miller, & Schafer, 1999). College men put on a front to show they can break the rules and seek excitement because risk taking is a characteristic of masculinity (Capraro, 2000; Edwards, 2007; Kimmel, 2008). In a meta-analysis of 150 studies on risk and gender, Byrnes et al. (1999) found that males tend to exhibit more risk-oriented behavior with measures scoring the highest on physical skill, risky experiments, and intellectual risk-taking. A "naturally lower level of arousal" (Byrnes et al., 1999) and the socialization of connecting risky behaviors with masculine identity (Zuckerman, 1991) have been cited as the reasons why males are more likely to engage in risky behavior on a regular basis.

The socialization of college men to gravitate towards power is evident in Wielkiewicz's (2002) research exploring college men's beliefs about leadership styles. In a survey of 4,292 freshmen about their leadership preference, he found that men value a hierarchical orientation toward leadership over a systemic approach. The systemic method emphasizes cooperation, consensus building, and careful consideration of the

alternatives, while the hierarchical method accentuates the belief that organizational leadership should be allocated by position, and positional leaders are responsible for the success or failure of the organization (Wielkiewicz, Fischer, Stelzner, Overland, & Sinner, 2012). Men's hierarchical preference and avoidance of styles that stress the thoughts and feelings of others validated the importance men place on power. The hierarchical default approach is also the leadership style that is reinforced in American society (Wielkiewicz & Stelzner, 2005).

College men's desire for risk and power can have negative consequences and manifest in the form of violence. Many researchers have written about the disproportionate overrepresentation of college men as perpetrators and victims of violence (Hong, 2000; Pollack, 1998), and the traditional norms of hegemonic masculinity (Pollack, 1998) are often to blame. Violence becomes part of the socialization of men early in life when they are encouraged to fight in order to "build character" and keep from being harassed (Levant & Pollack, 2008). The craving for power is also part of male socialization and is evident in Foubert, Newberry, and Tatum's (2007) findings that an estimated one in four college women survive a sexual assault or attempted sexual assault and that men perpetrate 98% of these acts.

Violence and aggression may be the choice outlet as men experience uncomfortable feelings, such as shame and hurt (Bergman, 1995). Because of this preferred outlet, college men are overrepresented among students who are sanctioned for campus judicial policy violations (Harper et al., 2005). The theoretical model explained by Harper et al. (2005) linked masculinity and male misbehavior through six interrelated variables: male gender role conflict, precollege gender socialization, social construction

of masculinity, competence and self-efficacy, environmental ethos, and context-bound gendered social norms. Understanding the influences and pressures men are contending with was important to this research because these findings provided a more complete picture of the experiences of men. This information may help student affairs professionals as they develop study abroad programs and prepare men to study abroad.

Homophobic Behavior and Fear of Femininity

Another avenue for college men to gain perceived power is through homophobia and the denial of anything feminine. As college men strive to avoid anything perceived as feminine, such as study abroad (Fischer, 2012), this research provided a critical look at the perceptions of men who do study abroad.

Numerous researchers, such as Capraro (2004), have proposed that college men perceive programs and services offered by student affairs professionals as a return to “domesticity,” in other words as reconstituting their own feminization, because such programs are inherently nurturing. Not only do men view student affairs programs as nurturing, but men also perceive academic engagement as “un-cool,” and thus they purposefully disengage to fit their perception of the male gender stereotype (Kimmel, 2008). Rather than participate in a program that may instill a sense of shame (Krugman, 1995), college men reject such programs as anathema to their masculinity (Capraro, 2004). By contrast, stereotypically masculine programs such as athletics or social functions featuring alcohol have few problems attracting men on most campuses (Capraro, 2004). Again, these findings were important to this research and reinforced the importance of understanding the experiences of men who do study abroad, particularly if and how they are able to resist masculinity socialization in deciding to study abroad.

The socialization to fear femininity and display homophobic tendencies begins early in a boy's life. Shame theorists have suggested that to avoid shame boys feel compelled to distance themselves from their mothers (or anything feminine) because of the "considerable discomfort with dependency needs at the level of the peer group" (Krugman, 1995, p. 107). In addition to distancing themselves from their mothers (Pollack, 2008), men must also avoid all characteristics potentially associated with homosexuality, such as intimate connections with other men (Mahalik, Good, & Englar-Carlson, 2003). Pollack (1998) suggested that boys who engage in affectionate behaviors with same-sex peers may be perceived as weak, or feminine, and suffer the consequences of ostracism or abuse.

Men are socialized to fear, deny, and even attack "feminine attributes" in themselves and others (Kimmel & Messner, 2004; Pollack, 1998). College men's homophobic tendencies and fear of femininity were present in two separate grounded theory studies (Edwards, 2007; Harris, 2006) of college men's gender identity development. In Edwards's (2007) qualitative study exploring the impact of socially prescribed gender roles on ten White college men's identity development, participants discussed how activities that are not perceived as male gendered, such as openness to talking, wearing cologne, and clothing choices raised questions about how others interpret their sexual orientation. The men did not want their sexual orientation questioned by their peers, so performing heterosexual masculinity was essential to proving their manhood. In an effort to avoid certain labels, men learn to restrict behavior, especially anything viewed as too feminine for fear of being seen as gay (Edwards, 2007; Harris, 2006). Is participating in a study abroad program perceived as too feminine? A

socialized man would look to his peers for the answer.

Peer Influence

Research on peer influence was important to this study because college men are socialized to follow their peers--who happen to not be studying abroad. As discussed previously, male students are less likely to study abroad than female students if they have a close-knit peer group (Lucas, 2009), which demonstrates the power of following the group. College men do anything to avoid being accused of acting too feminine and maintain this status quo by policing each other (Kimmel, 2008). When young men enter college, many of them have spent little time on inner thought and instead have focused only on outside motivators and feedback (Kimmel, 2008). Rather than teaching men to analyze their feelings and self-perceptions, the culture's masculine standards and peer group influence are taking precedence (Kimmel, 2008).

Male students depend on male peers to help form their gender role concept and identity (Edwards, 2007), and members of that same peer group are the administrators and judges of the constant test of masculinity (Kimmel, 2008). When men are with their influential peers, they tend to follow the rules. To avoid being ostracized by their peers many men describe wearing a mask or faking characteristics such as not being gay, not showing any traditionally feminine characteristics, and not showing feelings (Edwards, 2007). One of the most acceptable ways of affirming masculinity in men's peer groups is to express demeaning and degrading attitudes toward women (Harris & Edwards, 2010).

College men may be predictable in how they act with their peers, but the act may be different depending on whom they are with (Kimmel, 2008). Although males' performance of masculinity can be fluid, men often fear their different acts will be

discovered. As a result of this pressure to hide, Kimmel (2008) found that college men often feel alone, with no one to discuss their feelings with for fear of being labeled as weak.

Alcohol Abuse

A final aspect relevant to college men and central to the traditional notion of masculinity is alcohol abuse. Alcohol abuse among college men was relevant to this study not only because of the evidence that college men drink more (Capraro, 2000), but also because of the research suggesting that students who study abroad engage in unhealthy drinking habits (Pedersen, LaBrie, & Hummer, 2009; Pedersen, LaBrie, Hummer, Larimer, & Lee, 2010). As alluded to earlier (Lucas, 2009), men tell other males what they think they want to hear, which often entails study abroad stories centered on attending lively parties, clubs, and alcohol. More research needs to be done to understand the experiences of men and to understand what messages men who study abroad are hearing and what their coping behaviors are while they are abroad.

The research indicates that college men drink greater quantities of alcohol and drink more frequently than their female counterparts and have internalized that drinking is what manly men do (Capraro, 2000). The traditional definition of masculinity led men to alcohol use as a means of proving their manhood and encouraged them to use alcohol as a means to anesthetize their pain at not measuring up to the traditional definition of masculinity (Capraro, 2004). Rather than feeling weak while navigating emotions they were unprepared to feel, express, or manage in a healthy way, men have turned to alcohol and drugs as a way to cope (Pollack, 1999). When men do not feel powerful they seek out ways to obtain power and see alcohol as a means to feel empowered (Capraro, 2000).

College men's drinking has become problematic through two routes. One route begins with traditional male-role attitudes, which encourage alcohol use, and ends in alcohol problems. The second route starts with the stress of obeying the masculine gender-roles and ends directly in alcohol problems (Capraro, 2004). The traditional definition of masculinity appears to be at the origin of two very different kinds of alcohol use among college men, which has significant consequences for college men (Capraro, 2004).

Identity Development

In addition to reviewing literature on masculinity, this study was also informed by identity development research. The literature that evaluates the impact of study abroad on U.S. college students in study abroad programs indicates that participants experience positive developmental changes, such as a shift in global-mindedness, intellectual growth, and personal development (Carlson, Burns, Useem, & Yachimowicz, 1990; Dolby, 2004; Dwyer, 2004; Gemignani, 2009, Ingraham & Peterson, 2004); however, there is no literature that pertains to the impact that study abroad has on gender identity development.

While researchers have begun to investigate how gender affects women's identity development (Gilligan, 1982; Jones, 1997; Josselson, 1987), there has been relatively little written about the impact of gender on the psychosocial development of college men (Davis, 2002). Until recently, much of the empirical work on gender identity has focused on gender role stereotypes, with a recent shift towards a more socio-cognitive view (Barron, 2009). Because study abroad literature does not address gender development or the influence of study abroad on one's gender identity, identity models that have

examined how men develop over time are discussed below, since they may have relevance to this study.

Harris (1995) is one of the few researchers who explored men's identity development using a socio-cognitive view. He used a factor analysis from survey responses to explore how the influence of messages from traditional masculinity changed over men's lifetimes. This analysis yielded six stages over the lifetime assigned to specific age groups. During early childhood (ages 0–6), boys were learning how to identify by sex and answering the question of whether or not they were male. In primary school and adolescence (ages 6–18), boys were forming a male gender identity, which included defining what a man is. During early adulthood (ages 18–30), men were trying out their identity and asking themselves if they were a man among men. Later in life (ages 30–40), men were affirming their identity and struggling with what was important to them. In the next phase of adulthood (ages 40–50), men were evaluating identity and asking if their current identity was the way they wanted to live for the rest of their life. Men 51 years of age and older were in the process of accepting their identity and asking if they liked themselves (Harris, 1995). Although the scope of my study included males in early adulthood, Harris's (1995) study demonstrates the role of societal messages on masculinity and the importance of exploring the individual responses to these messages over time. In the case of my research, investigating the role of the host culture's societal messages during the study abroad experience and the individual's responses were beneficial to learning whether study abroad inspires a shift in how men view themselves as men.

In addition to Harris's (1995) work, other recent studies on gender identity development of college men (Edwards & Jones, 2009; Harris, 2008) have concluded that "masculinities have noticeable influences on the ways in which men experience college--namely, in the decisions they make about friendships, how they choose to spend their time outside of class, and the choices they make about careers and majors" (Harper & Harris, 2010, p. 18). Study abroad may be similar in that masculinities may have noticeable influences on the ways in which men experience study abroad. According to Kimmel (1997), males' definition of masculinity is likely to shift based on their physical environment. Kimmel's hypothesis is supported by Connell's (2005) notion that social contexts, the environments in which they live, influence their masculine identity. The notion that men's view of masculinity may change in a new environment reiterated the importance of this research in which I explored the experiences of men in new cultural settings and assessed whether the experiences served as a catalyst for change.

Gender has been a salient topic in identity literature, and identity models attempt to reflect some of the patterns and processes that individuals experience as they define who they are (Tatum, 2003). Erik Erikson (1950, 1959, 1968) has been credited as the father of identity research for his well-known theory of psychosocial identity development. He developed an eight-stage model of identity development that is distinguished by a psychosocial crisis, or turning point, that must be resolved by balancing the internal self with the external self and the external environment (Erikson, 1968). Erikson's (1959) fifth stage, Identity vs. Identity Diffusion stage, was his particular focus and represents a transition from childhood to early adulthood that signals a call to define oneself. This crisis stage centered on individuals seeking congruence

between external recognition and internal integration of meanings derived from previous stages (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010). A critical aspect of Erikson's theory was the proposition that the environment influences an individual's sense of self. Pertinent to this study was exploring how men experience masculinity abroad and whether and in what ways their experiences assimilate with their current meanings of masculinity.

Erikson's work inspired subsequent research by James Marcia (1966), who operationalized Erikson's theory through an empirically testable model. As a result of interviews and empirical measures, Marcia (1966) introduced identity statuses as a way to explain how young adults experience and resolve crises (Evans et al., 2010). Relevant to this study and closely tied to Erikson's Identity vs. Identity Diffusion stage is Marcia's (1966) Identity Achievement identity status. Individuals in this status are likely to be sorting through crisis and investigating multiple alternatives, and relying on internal motivations rather than external process to construct identity (Marcia, 1994). Depending on the host country's culture, men may experience multiple alternatives to masculinities and as a result have to navigate their own meaning-making.

Because studies of men as "gendered beings" are largely missing from the literature, the research on women's development through a gender lens offers relevant inquiry to guide this study on men's gender identity development. Josselson (1996) built upon Erikson's (1959) and Marcia's (1966) work by exploring the experiences of women through a longitudinal study that examined women as college seniors and returned to them 25 years later. Josselson's (1996) qualitative exploration of gender identity identified what is fundamental to women's experience in relation to producing a uniquely

feminine identity and how this process varied within identity statuses (Evans et al., 2010). The four types of identities Josselson (1996) found were: guardians, pathmakers, searchers, and drifters. *Guardians* were women who experience no identity crisis and make choices often based on religion and parental beliefs. *Pathmakers* break psychological ties to their childhood and form separate, distinct identities. *Searchers* were still in the process of experimentation and had yet to make identity commitments. *Drifters* were without commitment and were not taking steps to make commitments (Evans et al., 2010). Parallel to Josselson's study of women's identity development, the intent of my research was to explore what factors are fundamental to men in hopes of learning more about their masculinity identity development; in this case, within the study abroad context.

While the focus of my research was on one aspect of an individual's identity, it is important to recognize the greater complexity involved in individual's multiple and intersecting identities (Reynolds & Pope, 1991). Understanding Jones and McEwen's (2000) conceptual model of multiple dimensions was valuable to this research because of the tendency for men not to think about themselves as men (Davis, 2002). Male privilege inhibits men from understanding themselves as men, which can affect identity development and having a more mature understanding of self in relation to the multicultural world (Davis & Wagner, 2005).

Jones and McEwen's (2000) model includes a core sense of self, which represents how individuals view themselves, and is comprised of personal attributes and characteristics. Intersecting around the core are significant identity dimensions, such as race, culture, gender, family, education, sexual orientation, social class, and religion. The

core is also surrounded by the context within which the identity occurs, such as family background, sociocultural conditions, current experiences, etc. The model illustrates that students have multiple overlapping identities and these identities mean different things to different people depending on the time and context (Abes, Jones, & McEwen, 2007). Because study abroad encompasses a vast change in context, this model served as a resource as the men described their experiences.

Summary

The literature review provided significant contributions to this research; however, there are limited inquiries specifically about men who study abroad. I have shared research on the gender differences of study abroad participants, specifically on their attitudes, beliefs, and participation. I also discussed literature on college men that is pertinent to this study, specifically the social construction of masculinity, masculine ideology, traditional hegemonic definition of masculinity, theoretical studies about gender, masculinity in college, and identity literature. Much of the research has been designed with quantitative methods, which underscored the value of conducting this qualitative study to not only fill the gap in research, but also to provide a voice to the men who study abroad.

While reviewing the relevant literature, it became even more apparent to me that further inquiry was needed to learn more about men, traditional gender roles, and the study abroad experience. The traditional masculine role prioritizes refraining from anything feminine, and study abroad has been described as being just that. The traditional masculine role prioritizes peer influence, and men are studying abroad significantly less than females, which may relate to the importance of maintaining the

status quo for fear of being ostracized. The traditional masculine role prioritizes power, and men with ethnocentric beliefs are the least likely to study abroad. The traditional masculine role prioritizes risk, and study abroad promotion often focuses on cultural learning and development rather than adventure and risk-taking. The literature review left me questioning whether males' adherence to, or rejection of, the traditional definition of masculinity played a role in their decision to study abroad and their study abroad experience. In addition, the literature suggested that further inquiry was needed to determine whether men's attitude about masculinity changed and if men's view of themselves as men transformed as a result of living in another culture. The intent of this research was to shed light on this topic through the participants' own words, a perspective which was afforded through the phenomenological research approach discussed in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to better understand the experiences of male study abroad students as they related to their masculinity identity development. In this chapter I explain the study's methodology in the following nine sections: (1) methodological approach; (2) philosophical assumptions; (3) research approach; (4) my role as a researcher; (5) participants; (6) data collection; (7) data analysis; (8) trustworthiness; and (9) delimitations of the study.

Methodology

In this study, I explored the students' lived experiences using a qualitative research approach. The male participants provided a personal account of their experiences prior to studying abroad, while abroad, and upon return. Qualitative research was a valuable methodological approach for this study because of the opportunity it provided for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribed to their experiences (Creswell, 2009), the focus on specific situations or people, and the emphasis on words rather than numbers (Maxwell, 1998).

I decided to conduct a qualitative study because of my belief in the philosophical tenets of qualitative research and my intent to provide a voice to the students using their own words. Four qualitative research characteristics, as defined by Merriam (2002), resonated with this study. First, researchers strive to understand the meaning people have constructed about their world and their experience (Merriam, 2002), which was accomplished through listening to and analyzing participants' stories. Second, the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis (Merriam, 2002). Third, an open-ended and exploratory approach fosters an inductive research

process (Merriam, 2002). Finally, the product of qualitative inquiry is richly descriptive, which was afforded by exploring the students' constructed realities through in-depth interviewing.

In addition, I selected qualitative research because of the nature of my research questions, which began with *how* or *what* and focused on describing what is going on (Creswell, 1998). Creswell (1998) also recommended using qualitative research if the topic needs to be explored in a detailed fashion. As I mentioned previously, there is limited research on masculinity identity development and nothing related specifically to men who study abroad, further supporting my rationale for a qualitative design.

Finally, a qualitative research approach supported my intent to be an active learner and to tell the story from the participants' view rather than as an expert (Creswell, 1998). How male college students who study abroad make meaning of their masculinity is a topic that has not been explored directly from the students themselves. Because masculinity is a socially constructed concept (Kimmel & Messner, 2007), qualitative methods provided a useful and powerful way to discover how the respondent saw the world (McCracken, 1988) and shed light on how the individuals think and act in their everyday lives (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

Philosophical Assumptions

The basic set of beliefs that guide action (Creswell, 2009) is one's worldview or epistemology. Epistemology addresses what is truth and how is knowledge acquired; it is a mode of "understanding and explaining how we know what we know" (Crotty, 1998, p. 3). The epistemology guiding this study is constructivism. Crotty (1998) identified a number of assumptions when referring to constructivism:

- Meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting.
- Humans engage with their world and make sense of it based on their historical and social perspectives.
- The basic generation of meaning is always social, arising in and out of interaction with a human community.

Constructivism was a suitable philosophical framework for this study because of the significance of the males' voices, the meaning males ascribed to their experiences, and the influence study abroad had on the males' masculinity identity development. The notion that masculinity is a socially constructed phenomenon (Kimmel & Messner, 2007) further supported the study being guided by a constructivist philosophy because the knowledge is being formed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world (Crotty, 1998). The broad interview questions in this study provided an atmosphere in which the participants could construct their own meaning and the data provided thick description in the search for synthesis (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

Research Approach

To better understand how male college students make meaning of their study abroad experience with regard to masculinity identity, a phenomenological methodology provided the framework for the design of this qualitative study. As a phenomenologist, I sought to examine the lived experiences of men who study abroad and to learn how the men understood this experience (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Phenomenology is congruent with a constructivist approach because both frameworks prioritize the influence of social interactions in the construction of meanings (Harris, 2008) as well as

view knowledge and truth as being created, not discovered by the mind (Schwandt, 2003). Most of what is known and most of the knowing that is done is concerned with trying to make sense of what it is to be human, as opposed to scientific knowledge (Steedman, 2000). Individuals or groups of individuals define this reality (Prasad, 2005).

The intent of phenomenology is to uncover plausible insights that bring us in more direct contact with the world (van Manen, 1990) rather than factual representations of experiences or theoretical explanations (Arminio & Hultgren, 2002). A tenet of phenomenology is exploring what an experience means for a person who has lived a certain phenomenon and is therefore able to provide a comprehensive description of it. The individual descriptions then allow general or universal meanings to be derived (Creswell, 1998).

My role as the researcher, using this theoretical perspective, was to capture the meanings that my participants attached to experiences and the ways that they constructed their realities (King, 2008). As a female researcher exploring men, a phenomenological research approach provided access to the experiences of participants who have lived the reality being investigated (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). Patton (2002) also suggested that the only way for one to really know what another person experiences is to experience the phenomenon as directly as possible.

I intended to gain direct insight into the experiences, as Patton (2002) suggested, through open-ended interview questions, which are essential to phenomenological research. The open-ended questions provided a direct way to connect the perceptions of individual participants with the systemic context in which they lived and worked (Seidman, 1998). In-depth interviewing provided a mode for understanding the

experiences of others as Seidman (1998) described:

Every research method has its limits and its strengths. In-depth interviewing's strength is that through it we can come to understand the details of people's experience from their point of view. We can see how their individual experience interacts with powerful social and organizational forces that pervade the context in which they live and work, and we can discover the interconnections among people who live and work in a shared context. (p. 112)

As Seidman (1998) indicated, phenomenological interviews provide an avenue into the lives of the participants. The participants' words, stories, and meanings develop the theory of the phenomenon of the study (van Manen, 1990). I chose phenomenology as a methodology because I wanted to capture the voice of men who have studied abroad. The approach allows for the transformation of the lived experiences into a textual expression and identifies the participants' essence (Creswell, 2003; van Manen, 1990). The participants' essence, or the lived experience of the male participants, was analyzed and interpreted into themes. The themes taken together allowed meaning of the experience to emerge as a whole (van Manen, 1990).

Role as a Researcher

My interest in studying college men who studied abroad and masculinity identity development was multi-faceted and was cultivated from a number of experiences in my academic, professional, and personal life. As the primary investigator for this research, I understand the importance of being aware of my research biases as well as disclosing who I am and what assumptions I bring to this dissertation.

In 2009, I was involved in a qualitative study led by Dr. Nancy J. Evans on the

experiences of 16 undergraduate students who had studied abroad. Through my work on the project, my curiosity regarding gender roles and the study abroad experience surfaced. I subsequently completed a research project that explored the underrepresentation of men in study abroad that included a brief literature review, a qualitative analysis of four male study abroad participants from Dr. Evans's previous study, and an institutional review of the initiatives other universities use to increase male participation in study abroad. The project presented a number of thought-provoking findings, in particular the apparent obstacles to study abroad for men, the perceived feminization of study abroad, and notions of gender role and masculinity identity concepts, such as the importance the male participants placed on careers. Upon completion of this project, I wanted to take the research further and explore the masculinity identity of male study abroad students.

In addition to my academic pursuits, my professional role as a study abroad coordinator contributes to my interest in this dissertation topic. Employees of college study abroad offices across the country are predominantly females, and nationally 65% of study abroad participants are females (Institute for International Education, 2012). If we currently are sending more female students abroad who are assisted primarily by female staff, it is imperative to better understand college men to increase male participation and to be knowledgeable about how men experience study abroad.

In addition to the professional relevance, I also have a personal investment in this topic. While taking qualitative research courses for my doctoral program, I was exposed to numerous research approaches, one being feminist methodology. I was intrigued by the feminist method and the tenacity of providing a voice to women and to exposing

structures of power and privilege. But something seemed to be missing for me. I kept pondering how we might be silencing the voice of men in our quest to liberate others. There is a sufficient amount of research on feminism, racial identity, sexual identity, and so on, but very little exploring the experiences of men.

Finally, my relationship with my partner and the birth of our son has contributed to the focus of this dissertation. My partner and I have many conversations about masculinity and the way people subscribe to “typical” male behaviors, such as showing physical toughness, hiding emotions, etc. When our son was born in 2011, we had a vested interest in learning more about raising boys. A classmate suggested an instrumental book titled, *Real Boys: Rescuing our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood*, 1999 by William Pollack. The book provided a critical lens regarding the demands that are placed on boys at a very young age and a critique of the conventional definition of masculinity. This book served as an influential introduction to theories on gender roles and masculinity identity development and further inspired the direction of this dissertation.

When considering my researcher bias, I possessed both insider and outsider status. My insider status stems from my previous study abroad experiences as a college student as well as my professional position as a study abroad adviser for the past seven years. A few benefits of being an insider are minimal cost and easy access to interviewees (Creswell, 1998) as well as sharing a common background (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). My involvement with study abroad might have encouraged the participants to be more willing to talk because as an insider I may have been perceived as less of a stranger (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

As a female, I possessed an outsider status as I explored the experiences of men. A potential advantage to my outside status was that the participants might not have felt the need to withhold information or to slant information toward what they wanted me to hear (Creswell, 1998), although as an outside researcher I may have been perceived as having an external view of the reality rather than an “inside” view (Yin, 2003). I think the distance to the subject of inquiry (Seidman, 1998) was valuable while exploring the male participants.

Participants

The participants in this study were identified through purposeful sampling (Merriam, 2002) with the intent of deliberately examining cases that were critical for the concepts included in this study (Maxwell, 2005). Maxwell (2005) stated four possible goals of purposeful selection: (1) achieving representativeness, (2) adequately capturing heterogeneity, (3) deliberately examining cases that are critical for the theories included in the study, and (4) establishing particular comparisons that might illuminate differences between participants or settings.

I defined the sampling criteria for this study to include male undergraduate college students who studied abroad while attending a large, public, land-grant and Carnegie research extensive university in the Midwest. I selected traditional-age college students, 18 to 22 years of age. Participants were sophomores, juniors, and seniors identified by the university’s Study Abroad Center as students who had studied abroad independently for at least a semester within the 12 months prior to the beginning of the study. The selection criteria were used because of my interest in understanding participants who had been immersed in a culture for an extended period of time and for

whom the experience was recent to ensure that their reported perceptions were not altered by the passing of time. After not receiving a sufficient response to my first call for participants, I altered my criteria to include students who had studied abroad independently for at least a semester within the 18 months (rather than 12 months) prior to the beginning of the study.

After conducting a search for potential participants in the database, I found a total of 95 students who met the identified selection criteria. The number of potential students continued to get smaller due to schedule conflicts and lack of response to participate in the study. Eight participants were included in this study, which was a sufficient number to reflect the range of participants making up the population (Seidman, 2006). I continually assessed whether saturation had occurred. When I began to hear or observe or read the same or similar kinds of information related to the categories or analysis, I knew I had sufficient data to stop seeking additional participants (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2006).

The participants were juniors and seniors at the time of this study. While most of participants were from the Midwest, one was from the west coast and one was from the southwest; five were from cities and three were from smaller towns. Seven of the participants are White, one is Korean American. In the selection criteria for my call for participants, I did not specify certain identities; such as, first generation college student, sexual orientation, and ethnicity. If I had had a more diverse sample with regard to these social identities, the findings of this study might have been quite different, which will be discussed in Chapter 6.

My relationship to the participants is important to mention because I knew some

of them personally. The established rapport with the participants I knew may have positively contributed to the research because of our shared background experiences in study abroad (Rubin & Rubin, 2005), but as discussed previously the “outsider” status of not being a male might have impacted the research. Although I knew some of the participants, I ensured confidentiality by using pseudonyms and altering identifying details.

Data Collection

In-depth interviewing served as the primary mode of data collection for this study because of my interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they made of that experience (Seidman, 2006). The in-depth phenomenological interviews were structured using Seidman’s (2006) three-interview method. The first interview focused on the students’ background prior to studying abroad, the second focused on the students’ experiences while studying abroad, and the third focused on the students’ reflections on those experiences. Each interview included questions related to masculinity. At the end of the first interview, the participants were asked to bring 5-10 photos of their study abroad experience that were meaningful to them to the second interview. The intended goal of the photos was to initiate conversation and to provide further insight into the participants’ study abroad experience.

In the first interview, the interviewer’s task is to put the participant’s experience in context by asking him or her to tell as much as possible about him or herself in light of the topic up to the present time (Seidman, 2006). The first interview provided a sense of each participant’s experiences prior to studying abroad in terms of interacting with people from diverse backgrounds and his lifestyle prior to his study abroad experience. I

inquired about the participants' hometown, family situation, schooling, previous travel experience, and motivations for attending the university. In addition, I asked questions that focused on masculinity, such as how the men describe what it is to be a man, the participants' view of themselves as men prior to study abroad, the significant people in their life, and how they would describe society's definition of what it means to be man and whether it fits or does not fit them.

In the second interview, the intent was to concentrate on the concrete details of the participants' present lived experience (Seidman, 2006) while studying abroad. I began the interview by reviewing the photos the participants brought and asked the student to elaborate on the photos' meaning. I focused on the program, site, housing situation, additional travel, and in- and out-of-class experiences of the students while they were studying abroad. In addition, I asked participants how the host culture viewed masculinity, what was the most difficult part of being a man, whether they expressed masculinity any differently in their host culture compared to in the U.S., and what was the best part of being a man abroad.

Finally, the focus of the third interview was for participants to reflect on the meaning of their experience (Seidman, 2006) while studying abroad. The questions that guided the third interview focused on what the participants learned, experiences since returning to the United States, and other reflections about their time outside of the United States. In addition, I asked questions about whether the participants' view of masculinity changed, how they now describe themselves as men, and what significant experiences and people were critical in changing how they understood what it means to be a man.

Data Analysis

In my study, data analysis was a simultaneous activity (Merriam, 2002) with data collection. It began at the start of the first interview and underwent continuous refinement throughout the data collection and analysis process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The data analysis process, according to Seidman (2006), includes the following steps:

1. Begin working with the data once an interview has been completed. This process includes mentally reviewing each interview and preparing for the next, which may include developing additional research questions.
2. Transcribe the interviews. Transcribing provides a detailed, written account of the verbal interview that is recorded so that analysis can take place.
3. Begin the coding process. The first step in this process is to reduce the text by choosing passages that are of particular interest.
4. Two ways to present and analyze data include crafting profiles and organizing the data around emergent themes. The profile is in the words of the participant and “allows [the researcher] to present the participant in context, to clarify his or her intentions, and to convey a sense of process and time” (Seidman, 2006, p. 119).

Researchers may also take a thematic approach where, when coding the data, topics are categorized. Passages can then be chosen that connect with and illustrate the identified themes.

5. Interpreting the data is an ongoing process. Researchers must continually ask themselves what they have learned, what connections can be made, and what meaning can be made from the data. Interpretation may lead to suggestions for

future research directions.

For my dissertation, I began by conducting the interviews and transcribing the data. I read the transcriptions and marked with brackets the passages that were interesting and potential emergent themes (Seidman, 2006). I compared all of the transcripts by highlighting similarities and created an initial list of codes. The codes were created by referring to the research questions and breaking down the data into manageable segments, and then identifying or naming those segments (Schwandt, 2001).

Following the initial set of codes, I continuously reviewed the interview transcripts and altered the codes when necessary. I compiled themes and created profiles of each participant. Creating a profile of a participant is an effective way to “open up one’s interview material to analysis” (Seidman, 1998, p. 102). In addition, a profile in the participant’s own words reflects the person’s consciousness (Seidman, 1998). The profiles provided others the opportunity to gain access to the participants’ background and experiences.

Throughout the analysis process, I kept a journal and bracketed my own assumptions in an effort to reduce bias. The final chapters of this dissertation provide a profile of each participant and an analysis and discussion of the findings.

Trustworthiness

Several strategies were used to assure the trustworthiness of the findings. The trustworthiness of the study was addressed by focusing on credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Credibility

Accurately identifying, describing, and portraying the participants was initiated by engaging in prolonged engagement in the field, member checks, and peer debriefing, which enhanced the credibility of the research (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

Prolonged engagement in the field was previously in progress as I have worked with study abroad students for 8 years and recently completed a pilot study exploring the experiences of male study abroad students. I conducted three interviews with each research participant, each lasting approximately 60-90 minutes. The prolonged engagement encouraged a trustworthy environment between the participants and me.

In addition to prolonged engagement in the field, credibility was enhanced through member checks. Member checks provided the participants the opportunity to be actively involved in the research process and to comment on the interpretation of the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The participants were able to assess intentionality, correct errors of fact, summarize, and assess the overall adequacy through member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, I sent a copy of the profiles to the participants and requested feedback on the accuracy of the interpretations.

Finally, I conducted peer debriefing throughout the research process by consulting with other colleagues. Peer debriefing included discussing with colleagues the process of the study, the congruency of merging findings with the raw data, and tentative interpretation (Merriam, 2002). I involved a reviewer who has expertise in study abroad and who provided consultation on the data analysis and interpretation, the method of data collection, and the existing literature on study abroad. In addition to involving someone who is familiar with my work in study abroad, I used an additional peer reviewer who

was not familiar with the subject but was knowledgeable on qualitative research and the methodological framework. The peer reviewers helped to enhance credibility by providing support, playing devil's advocate, challenging my assumptions, pushing me to the next step methodologically, and asking hard questions about methods and interpretations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Finally, I worked with an editor whose technical input contributed to the readability of my research.

Transferability

The intent of qualitative research is not to generalize but rather to transfer information. The detailed and substantial data that were collected enhanced the likelihood of transferability of findings to other settings (Creswell, 2003). By providing sufficient information, a person contemplating application in another receiving setting will be able to make the needed comparisons of similarity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I intended to increase the transferability of the findings by providing thick description. For example, the participant profiles provided a rich narrative encouraging the reader to gain a transparent understanding of the phenomenon. At this point, readers can then determine to what degree the findings from the study can be applied to their situation (Merriam, 2002).

Dependability

The dependability of qualitative research is maximized when “the researcher attempts to account for changing conditions in the phenomenon chosen for study as well as any in the design” (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 145). I intended to heighten the dependability of this study by employing a triangulation of data methods and maintaining an audit trail.

Triangulation is achieved by employing different sources or different methods to establish validity using outside sources to validate (Merriam, 2002). In-depth interviews served as the primary method of data collection and were also my source for triangulation. For example, when a question or topic for clarification arose during an interview, I talked with subsequent interviewees about the issue in order to ensure trustworthiness. In addition, Seidman's (1998) three interview approach and protocols helped to situate the participants' experiences and provided an avenue for reflection and meaning-making.

The audit trail provided a mode for examining the data, findings, interpretations, and recommendations and assured that the "bottom line," or interpretations and findings, could be accepted (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). By providing a transparent audit trail, the trustworthiness and value of the study were enhanced (Merriam, 2002) because one can then determine if the results support the data collected. I kept an audit trail by maintaining a journal including my reflections, assumptions, problems, concerns, and ideas. I also documented my feelings as a researcher, data collector, and analyzer in a reflexivity journal.

Confirmability

In an effort to maintain neutrality, Merriam (2002) noted, "Researchers should explain their position, the basis for selecting participants, the context of the study, and what values or assumptions might affect data collection and analysis" (p. 26). In an effort to address confirmability, I maintained transcripts, recorded interviews, compiled interviewer reflections, and maintained notes on the data analysis to further enhance the trustworthiness of the analysis.

Delimitations

The study included an examination of college men who studied abroad and their masculinity identity development. Several delimitations existed for this study, such as participant characteristics, age, and multiple identities.

A fundamental delimitation in this study was that only male students who studied abroad for a minimum of one semester were included. In addition, the participants were only from one university, as the scope of this study did not extend to additional colleges. The information may not be generalizable to college students who are from other colleges, cities, or states. The age of the participants was limited to those between the ages of 18 and 22 years.

Another delimitation of this study was the primary focus on masculinity and gender roles. Other identities that are essential to one's development, such as race, sexual orientation, ability, socioeconomic status, and religion were not included as the primary goal was to explore gender.

Despite the delimitations, my hope was that the study would have implications for study abroad professionals, student affairs practitioners, and others who work directly with male college students.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to better understand the study abroad experiences of male college students related to their masculinity identity development. This chapter included details of the methodological approach, philosophical assumptions, research approach, my role as a researcher, participants, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness, and delimitations of the study.

CHAPTER 4. PROFILES

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a profile of each of the participants in the study and the university where the study took place. The individual profiles were constructed using the data from the three interviews I conducted with each participant. I have indented or used quotation marks to identify the students' own words, and each participant has read (member checked) the profile and approved its content.

University Profile

The study took place at a land-grant, 4-year, public research extensive institution located in the Midwestern United States. The university enrolls approximately 26,000 undergraduate students, with over 60% being from within the state. The ethnic background of the student population is 81.1% White, 7.8% international students, 3.9% Latino, 2.8% Asian, 2.6% African American, 1.6% two or more races, 0.2% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 0.1% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander. The university is organized into eight colleges and offers Bachelor's degree programs, Professional degrees, Master's programs, and Ph.D. programs.

Individual Profiles

The profiles of the eight participants are included below. Seven of the eight participants are White, and David is Korean American. While racial and ethnic differences would influence this study, given the site of this research, White students comprise the majority of the student population. Rather than studying a racially homogeneous population, David was interviewed for this study to determine if his experiences as a Korean American student were similar or different from those of the White students in the study. There were some differences between David's perceptions

and those of the other students that are discussed in Chapter 5 in relation to the themes that were unveiled through the data analysis. While most of participants were from the Midwest, one was from the west coast and one was from the southwest; five were from cities and three were from smaller towns.

David

David, born and raised in a large western metropolitan city, identifies himself as a Korean American and was a 22-year-old senior at the time of the study. He is the oldest child of his first-generation immigrant parents; his younger brother was 20 at the time of the study. David is laid-back and mellow, even regarding controversial topics. He was raised in a close-knit Korean community. He reflected,

My childhood was fairly--from coming to university comparatively, it was fairly non-diverse, because of the fact that the city I lived in was fairly Korean, heavily Korean or Asian, for that matter. So we were all alike, when high school started, and this was the same scenario for middle school as well, it was fairly first-gen from Asia, so we were about 85-90% Asian, and so we all spoke another language and... so when I came [to university] it was more of an opposite situation for me than what it typically would have been for most people, I think, so it was really weird just speaking English every day here, and it was fairly difficult.

David talked about his early academics as being rigorous: "It was fairly strict in the beginning, a lot of tutoring and academies after school, and music and sports; it was fairly competitive." David clarified that his schooling was competitive academically, not athletically. David recollected first becoming aware of gender differences in elementary school, "when the boys played basketball and the girls did their own thing." Beyond that,

he doesn't see gender differences being an issue. "I've heard women have harder times getting up to wherever they need to be, but, but I think that maybe just builds character as you go." He does not think gender makes a difference. "No, I don't see--if you need to get the job done, and the girl can do it better than the guy can, I don't see the difference, it doesn't really mean much."

When describing what it means to be a man, David commented, "military." He described many of his family members joining the military and recollected his mom's passion for public service and telling David, "If you don't join the military, you're not really a man." David reflected on his mom's thoughts,

I think there's a certain role guys play, and there's certain shoes that need to be filled, so guys need to fill those shoes and girls need, you know, their shoes, but I think overall, like, you know, um, or at least that's what my mom told me is that guys should join.

David was part of the U.S. Navy and his brother was in the Marines. David chose to attend the university rather than enlist. His transition from the west coast to the Midwest to attend the university was challenging. He stated,

It was interesting. The very first year, it was kind of tough. Climate-wise, culturally, environmentally, it was all fairly challenging. Culturally or climate-wise, I had never seen snow, and I didn't bring a jacket, and so I had a hard time adjusting to the weather quite a bit. I think I had a sweater on when it was about 50, 55, and then I was freezing, and it was terrible, and other people were in shorts celebrating, so it was kind of difficult...Culturally, it was rough here. There were, I don't think many people--I feel a lot of people assumed

that I was Chinese and that I didn't speak English. At the same time, a lot of people thought because I'm from the west coast that I grew up pretty easy, and like with a silver spoon in my mouth, and so it was kind of hard to adjust to that because the minute I spoke English they thought, "Wow, you must've learned really well in China," and then at the same time they must've assumed that I had a lot of money, so it was kind of difficult to tell people that if I had a lot of money I wouldn't be here, I would be in a UC school where I got accepted, but I think they didn't really understand that transition on why I came here to begin with.

Despite the adjustment, David was actively involved on campus and described how his ethnicity played a role:

I thought the benefits were great--getting positions because they needed to increase diversity, I thought it was awesome because I never had to strive to do and get these positions, I just had to write my last name, and people, "Oh, we need diversity on our committee, so we're going to get this guy," and it was great for me 'cause I didn't have to work as hard.

David sought out his study abroad program at a Korean university during the fall 2012 semester for a number of reasons: He desired a vacation for four and half months, wanted a location others were not going to, wanted to fulfill degree requirements for his international studies major and to seek employment opportunities, and his parents were supportive of having him studying at his father's alma mater. Because he spoke both Korean and English, he commented that he was able to navigate the culture and classes more easily than other study abroad students. Although he experienced challenges with

the university bureaucracy, he commented on the importance of the diverse friends he met:

Interesting combinations of people I'd never expected to meet. One of my roommates, he was Indian but grew up in France, so he speaks French and Hindi, but he has a French accent... so it was, it was a really cool experience.

When asked about similarities and differences among men and women in Korea compared to the U.S., David mentioned the styles being a little bit different. He recounted an example:

The typical American, Texans-style of people, and one guy was from Texas, and he was that guy, very arrogant, no one liked him... When he drinks, you typically drink out of a glass, you pour the bottle, but he'd drink right out of the bottle, and he'd carry bottles in his pants, and you could see it bulging out, and half of the time we're, like, "Why is he here?" and so, there were guys like that.

Despite differences, he went on to explain the similarities in men: "If you're a nice guy here, you're a nice guy anywhere kind of deal, and people notice, and if you're an asshole here, you know...." In regards to women, David described women in the U.S. as having more of a voice than in other cultures:

Because of the social issues we're having today, women--there's always those social constructs that women are the underclass and they need more equality and that whole mentality has brought women here to be more vocal and more opinionated.

David compared the women in the U.S. to what he noticed in his interactions in other cultures. He described U.S. women as having more liberties and as being more vocal than women from other countries. “Women in America are very ‘up here’ about it, and then Europe is like a close second, or certain parts of Europe are a close second, and then Asia is third.” David commented on the American mentality:

[In the U.S.] there’s women everywhere that say, “Screw it, I don’t want to get married, I don’t want kids, I want to do the whole corporate lifestyle,” and they do it and they make it, and so it’s like the underdog story but, I, I don’t know, I think it’s the culture difference.

David went on to explain that he only knew two women in his study abroad location who have influence: the president, and the CEO of the largest department store.

Yeah, the [CEO of department store]--she got lucky, ‘cause her brother is the CEO of LG, so it’s all big family running, so she just got the department store part of it, I think...And it’s when they were splitting it up between the siblings--but she’s bad-ass; same with the president.

In addition to being exposed to different gender roles while in Korea, David explained his perceptions of social class. He mentioned that in the U.S. he’s not as aware of social class distinctions as he was in his host culture:

You don’t know who’s who. For all you know the guy sitting next to you could own Microsoft or own some big oil company you never heard of, so you don’t know that because here people don’t care. Just because he’s wearing a Rolex doesn’t mean he owns this big company. You have no idea. For all I know, that’s his life.

However, in the host culture, social class distinctions were much more evident:

You can definitely tell who's who, and if they are that person or not. It really shows because if you have the money you're definitely going to spend it on things that you need to show for status, and it's really prevalent...you really want to show people your status, and you can definitely tell who's middle class and who's upper-middle and who's way up on the top and who's lower. You can, even with the students you can tell.

After returning from his study abroad program, David reflected on how Korea had become westernized, and he did not like that:

My impressions of certain parts of Korea, like the culture parts that are changing, it's frustrating, and I don't really like it too much--a lot of the girls, the Korean women, they're more rowdy, so they date other, I mean, I'm not against the interracial, that's cool by me, but they're just doing it because they (pause) like to piss off their parents...becoming westernized, it's terrible. I don't really like it, and the whole, the women smoking more freely. I don't like that, either.

Jason

Jason was 22 at the time of the interview, and was just beginning his fifth year in college. Jason grew up in a small Midwestern town of approximately 3,000 residents. "Everyone knows everyone, real small--don't do anything wrong 'cause everyone else in the town will know immediately." He grew up in a close-knit family and described his upbringing:

Yeah, yeah, let's see, I have no siblings. It's just me and my mom and my dad, dog and a cat, which are basically children. There's an order of favorite

children, and I'm hoping I'm in the middle somewhere. My mom's family is pretty big. We don't see a ton of 'em, they kind of are spaced out a little bit. But then my dad's family is really small. He only has one sister, and she doesn't have any kids, so... And on my mom's side, there are no kids within 8 or 9 year[s] of me...so I was the grandbaby for my entire childhood, which was great.

When reflecting on the expectations Jason's parents had for him, he said, Scholastically, they always expected me to get good grades. I come home with a B+, they would always be, "What happened?" It's like, "I missed three of them! It was a 10-question test. I don't know." But, you know, I did, I lived up to that pretty well, they always expected a lot out of school. And then they wanted me to do a lot of sports, which I did, which was probably good for me, and, and they were pretty cool about that. They weren't going to force me into anything, but I committed to something I kind of had to stick with it. For example, I did competitive swimming for a long time, then after a while I started to hate it...but they're, like, "You signed up for the season, you're going to finish it." (gasp) "The season's nine months long! Please, dad, please don't make me do that!" But, yeah, he made me finish it, and they were supportive but made me commit a little bit.

He noticed a difference in parental expectations with some of his friends growing up. He commented,

Yeah, my tiny little town isn't the biggest size in the world but there were some other guys in my class where their parents were--"You got a C! Great job!" And kids would walk off baseball teams and stuff, and they'd say, "Yeah, that's

fine; your coach is a jerk.” It’s like, no, the coach is never wrong, but--I would want to quit, too. Why does he get to quit?

As Jason navigated his parent’s expectations and those of his friends, he talked more about the dynamics of sports in his high school. When referring to his childhood best friend, he commented, “I’d play a sport in the fall, and he started playing football, we kind of fell into that. So football, that stereotypical jock role, and I was just, like, okay (laughs).” When asked if it was a source of conflict, Jason stated,

We kind of just split apart in high school, didn’t really bother either of us that much... and the same kind of happened with a lot of our old friends, ’cause, you know, even though [another sports] team [and] the football team were just awful, absolutely awful, it was still, like, ah, “You’re such a nerd, not playing football, you’re a wuss.” So it was, like, all right, I’m better at this than you’ll ever be at football, so, it was--that culture, just kinda sucked a little bit, but it didn’t bother me that much...and a lot of my friends kinda shifted off because that was where the popular kids were going [football], and I considered doing it, but I had to play [another sport].

Jason described being referred to as a wuss because he did not play football.

When asked what his definition of being a man is, he replied,

I don’t know, uh, emotionally tough, you know what I mean? Not easily affected by things, being able to confront challenges instead of letting them overwhelm you. I always thought maybe girls could figure it out eventually, but they’re going to sit down and have themselves a nice little cry first (laughs) and

then they'll figure it out rather than just, like, "This is gonna suck, let's get it done."

When asked who his male role model is, Jason reminisced,

Um, honestly, my dad probably, just kind of respect the fact that he doesn't let anything bug him, and I'm almost exactly the same way. I'm his son through-and-through. He was kind of the inspiration for me growing up, and there was also a little--looking at all the rural people, and I don't want to be like that.

Jason further described the men in his small hometown: "The dude that goes out on the weekends in camo and kills something with a gun... drinking beer, smoking cigarettes, camo, I can't say that enough, a lot of camo." When asked whether society's definition of being a man is described in a similar fashion as in Jason's town, he said,

Yeah, probably. The only thing that I'd think that differs with my home town's definition is--it's not necessarily rural, it's generalized. Actually, I took a class where we were talking about masculinity and sport and stuff and about how people can get hurt really bad and still play through it even though it's bad for 'em, and it's just, "Why? Stop!" But they do it to maintain that manly image of being tough and just not letting anything bother 'em, so yeah, I think that idea of emotional-mental toughness sticks.

Jason did not think these definitions necessarily fit him and said, "I don't know, maybe I'm too selfish to care what other people think, but if my ankle's broken, we're done doing whatever we're doing, I mean, that's it (laughs)."

After high school, Jason received an athletic scholarship and spent two years at a small liberal arts college in the Midwest. He recounted,

[The liberal arts college] was fine because it was free and I was playing a sport, but other than that it wasn't really me. I like bigger, not necessarily huge cities, but bigger than my hometown, and [the town] was barely bigger than my hometown.

After Jason's athletic team lost funding, he transferred to the university where this study took place. He described having a positive experience at the university and close connections with his roommates. A pivotal experience for Jason during his first semester was being one of two students selected to participate in a competitive study abroad program in Asia that was offered by an international sporting committee. He reflected,

Yeah, so I applied for it--the interviews and everything--and I ended up getting picked to go. I'd never been anywhere except Mexico before--so this'll be interesting. It was free. It was a week long...I can probably survive even if I get there and absolutely hate being in a foreign country, it's another six days and then I'm coming home. So I went on it, and it was awesome... And I thought, I need to do this more.

His experience in Asia was so influential that he altered his academic path and made the decision to pursue another, semester-long, study abroad program. He reflected,

Because of my experience in Asia, I decided I wanted to do International Studies, because my dream job would be to work for the Olympic committee in the U.S., which is, again, a product of that trip, which was awesome. So I added

[International Studies] as a major, and then, in order to get the major, you have to study abroad for three weeks or more.

Jason studied abroad in New Zealand during his Spring 2013 semester. He described his expectations prior to going:

I just thought it would be fun--I don't know, I like to do things that scare me a little bit. On one hand I try to not show it. That goes back to that masculine thing, but I was a little concerned about making friends. I felt like I'd gotten so lucky here when I transferred, I figured it would be a lot like when I transferred schools, completely new school, didn't know anybody, basically.

He shared his excitement with his family and friends, although he felt like he had to share different messages with his parents:

I had to be a lot more careful with them. With my friends it'd be, "Gee, I'm going to go sky-diving, go bungee-jumping, I'm going to jump off everything." And with my parents, it was, "I'm going to study, and I'm going to study some more (laughs), and oh, my gosh, I'm going to get a room in the library just for me (laughs)."

When I asked whether he had friends who had studied abroad before, Jason said, "I didn't know any guys that had ever done it before." When asked why that might be, he recounted,

Maybe guys are just not expected to be as, like, worldly as girls? You know what I mean? It sounds stupid, but a lot of the girls I know that studied abroad went in herds. Ten of them at a time would go off to Italy or something. Guys, it's either they don't have that support system, all of these friends, to take 'em with, or they

just don't really care about other cultures. I got bummed out because, "Oh my God, I'm going to miss the football, I'm going to miss the beginning of baseball season, I'm going to miss all these other sports and stuff." If this was the fall, I can't say I would've have gone, 'cause I like football too much.

Jason talked about his desire to study abroad and doing things that scare him, saying,

The adrenaline sports capital of the world is supposed to be Queenstown. You can jump off whatever you want, so I did that all the time. And things that scare me, I think it's just kind of natural to--I was going alone, I literally didn't know anybody. On some level, that's scary... can I survive? Can I live through not knowing anybody and going to the other side of the planet and be okay?

Jason met great friends in New Zealand and said at times it was challenging to "do that social butterfly kind of thing...I kind of just had to slap on a smile and go talk to people when I first got there." When reflecting on other challenges of study abroad, he mentioned:

Obviously just the whole--I went because I wanted to learn how to travel alone, basically. When I would travel, the challenge of organizing everything so that something doesn't fall through and you're completely out of luck. If I didn't make a hotel reservation right and now I'm sleeping in a park tonight kind of thing, so that was tough and a little scary at times but it all worked out fine. I never had any issues with any of the trips I went on. And I guess living with people--here I live with my best friends and I live with them because we're friends, because we're similar. I can basically predict what's going to happen, if a

situation would arise I can handle it. But these people--it's not that we weren't friends, it's just that they were different--and so dealing with their living choices was interesting.

When asked about gender roles in the society, Jason commented, Obviously it's a First World country kind of thing, so they're more progressive than some places would be. It's not like women are going to get buckets of water and making food and cleaning the house and stuff.

Jason noticed the media portrayed New Zealand men in an unrealistic fashion. The beer ads featured tough farm mountain men throwing sheep over their shoulders when in reality most men live in the city. Jason commented that the tough mindset was also apparent in the rugby culture:

Rugby's so big, rugby's that rough and tough sport...be a man. You broke your arm, well, okay, snap it back in and let's go--so there was all that going on, that kind of mentality, but at the same time, I thought a lot of the guys there dressed and acted like what we would call "metro"--not particularly manly and tough. They'd wear clothes that you kind of consider hipster or metro. It's a big deal...style their hair and stuff--"just comb it and go out!"

Jason found the tough guy messages mixed with the male emphasis on appearance to be an interesting contrast. He stated,

It was kind of a weird contrast, 'cause some of the media was portraying these rough and tough guys... the sporting guys, especially, like we talked about in class. And even the beer ads and stuff tried to portray men as a lot more tough and at the same time there [were] always ads for--"Guys, come on and get this

new styling product or this new gel.” And I would say, “What?” I just watched a beer ad where a guy was crawling around in the mud, and that was supposed to be...the ideal, you know?

Although he noticed differences in the culture, when asked if he had a different perspective of himself, he stated,

I mean, not overly. I kind of feel bad about that. I feel like these study abroad experiences, you’re supposed to change yourself at least a little bit...I feel like I just kind of set goals for myself and then met them and now I’m just kind of the same person again. But I feel like I should’ve changed, but I didn’t really.

Although Jason did not feel he changed, he mentioned wanting to go abroad to test his limits, and he did feel like he accomplished that, saying, “I like to do things on my own. It doesn’t bother me to be alone...really, and that was one of the things I really wanted to test with going [to New Zealand].” Jason had a positive experience testing his limits and reflected,

I learned that I can be self-sufficient on my own in somewhere that I’m not comfortable.... That was one of the things that I keep thinking back on, you know? Now I can definitely go on and do other stuff ’cause I know I’m not going to freak out the second I get there.

Jason wishes for the same experience for other university students and, when talking to friends who are considering study abroad, emphasized the importance of traveling alone at least once:

I don’t know where you should go, but wherever you go, at least once while you’re there, go somewhere alone. Like, take a weekend, travel someplace alone.

Like, you're in Europe, go to another country for a day or two or three and just go by yourself just 'cause it's interesting and it's a challenge.

When describing his experiences with the New Zealand culture, Jason was surprised by how much his peers cared about their appearance. He stated, "A lot of people take their looks a little more seriously...that was one of the differences I didn't really expect." Jason experienced both sides of the culture, those who cared about their appearance and the rough and tough rugby mentality. He thought the culture was more saturated with the 'metro' mindset. As a result of his experience, Jason mentioned that now when he sees the typical preppy frat boy, he's not as judgmental because he was exposed to it and thinks, "Do what you want to do."

Jason believed his future plans have changed as a result of study abroad:

Now that I understand that I can live somewhere else that's not here [USA]...it opens the doors. That's why I'm an International Studies major too; 'cause I want that extra degree, just so I can tell an employer, if you need me to go somewhere else, I can do it.

At the time of the interview, Jason was anticipating what his reunion with his friends would be like. He predicted the difficulty he might have in trying to express the magnitude of his time in New Zealand:

I want to be able to tell them about the cool stuff I did, but I don't expect them to care. And so that's going to suck. 'Cause it's hard to describe to somebody-- show 'em a picture and tell 'em about the day that I took the picture and they can't really relate. They weren't there. It's so hard to describe it to 'em. I found myself thinking that a lot over there. I was sitting on a beach in Fiji and was like

“How am I going to tell my friends about this without--I went to a beach.” And they’ll say, “Oh, that’s cool.” And I’ll say, “Yeah, it was.” How do I tell them it was the coolest place I’ve ever been in my life? I can’t figure out how to do it--they’ve just got to know that traveling is awesome.

When I asked Jason how he makes meaning of the effect of study abroad on his identity, he commented on being more outgoing and confident in social situations. He previously appreciated his close knit group of friends and described not really caring about meeting people outside that group. However, while studying abroad he met a lot of new people and thought, “I’ll probably do better at [meeting people] now ’cause I’ve had more practice at just going up to a stranger and saying, ‘Hey, you know, what’s your name, where’re you from?’”

Although Jason talked about becoming more comfortable in social settings, what he really hoped to get out of study abroad was being able to see new places. When reflecting on how study abroad was promoted before he left, he recollected being more excited by photographs on the study abroad office’s website that included landscapes and less by photos with people in them.

I didn’t really care about the social aspect as much; I wanted to see these places that she was going, things she was seeing because I want to go there and see those things; I don’t care about other people I meet that much. The friends were great; I’ll stay in contact with people I met for years and years. But the places that I went to, I’ll never forget those even if the people that I was there with drift away.

Jason believed his feelings about being a man did not really change as a result of studying abroad:

Not particularly, just I don't care (laughs)...I've learned to just do whatever I think is right and what I want to do. I don't care all that much about what other people think and say--it's too much stress to deal with--you should do this, and you should do this, and you should be this. I don't think I've changed a lot. I'm not sure if that's a good or a bad thing? I think it's a good thing on some level. I exposed myself to this other culture, and it didn't change me in a way I wouldn't have been comfortable with changing before I left. So I don't hate the fact that it hasn't changed me in that way, so, I don't know.

Rob

Rob was a 22-year-old, second semester junior, studying engineering at the time of the study. When he was in third grade, he moved to a large city in the Midwest and spent the remainder of his childhood there. Rob lived with his mom, dad, and one younger brother. When asked if his family was close, he commented,

[My brother] went to a community college and transferred here. We're not super close, and we were kind of different in high school. We played hockey together all of my school years, so we [were] always on other teams alternating years.... We're a little different. I have my father and my mother...they both were in the Navy, but they're out now.

Rob described his dad as very responsible and as a result he attributed some of his personality traits to his dad. When Rob was asked how he was similar to his dad, he said,

Like definitely responsible--sticking with something. I can be really defensive on things, too, I've noticed, which is not, not always the best. I like talking through things, I love sitting down and talking, my buddies and I--actually we watch TED Talks and we argue with each other (laughs) for fun.

Describing his parents' expectations of him he said,

They really left everything up to me....They never asked about grades (laughs). They expected me to figure it out on my own, which really helped, I think, in college 'cause I've never felt like I've had someone on me. They were really strict with me at first. They used to do homework with me, but as soon as I got in middle school at least, they kind of stopped [to] see what I would do on my own, 'cause that's the time to fail. It's safe, that's what my dad said. He told me he believed that's the time to fail, 'cause there's really no effect, the grades, they don't affect your GPA.

Rob talked about being an average student in high school and mentioned that he spent most of his time traveling the country playing hockey. He commented, "Hockey consumed me. I practiced five days a week and then played three games every weekend for every year of high school, and in the summer I moved with a family, and I lived there and played there."

While describing his personality prior to attending college, Rob emphasized his interest in hockey and rock climbing and said, "I definitely wasn't motivated thinking about the future at all. I never thought a week ahead. Still, I'm not big into it, I really don't plan every day. It's not fun to me." He also described himself as having a caring heart and hating when everyone is not included. In addition, he was aware of his

competitive side, which was evident in hockey growing up and now with his academic progress in college.

When reflecting on when he became aware of gender differences, he said,
That is a tough...I'm assuming probably starting early in middle school, late elementary, I'm guessing? Probably around fifth or fourth grade, I would say? That's probably when you start noticing that....Honestly, I don't know for sure, but that sounds about right to me....I think I can remember in at least fifth grade starting to-oh, I kind of like this person.

When reflecting on what it means to be a man, Rob described men as "taking control of things," but because he viewed himself as laid back, the definition did not necessarily fit him:

It always feels like--you want to kind of take control of things or sometimes, I don't know, you always feel like people look up to you. But I don't know, I don't really think it's too different anymore. It's kind of hard for me to say that, because I don't really, I'm not that person. I've had a girlfriend for three years, and I've never thought I was--actually she's the one who has to choose a lot of things. I'm kind of laid back. I just don't care, honestly, I just don't care (laughs)...That's how I am sometimes, I'm really relaxed with myself. I can get along with most anybody, it seems like.

Rob mentioned a few times that he does not usually think about gender or what it means to be a man. When asked what society's definition might be, he said,

Through media, actually through studying abroad, it still feels like more emphasis is on guys across the world, taking care of the family--you have to be

the one that gets that job, and it feels like you do have to be super responsible.

That's the biggest thing I could say, but once again I never really thought, think of that, that's weird to me to think about that, I don't know.

Rob talked about his transition away from high school to beginning college and mentioned that he only stayed close with one high school friend. Rob said,

Yeah, definitely most of the kids I hung out with in high school don't hang out with anymore. I honestly don't hang out with any of them except that one....

They're just kind of, I don't know, kind of screw-offs. I still get along with them-- we don't have anything in common anymore just to talk about. I only played hockey with them; I didn't really know anything outside of that.

Rob focused on his academics, especially during his first year in college:

I think I studied a lot that first semester, more than I had to. I almost trained myself, 'cause each semester in design, I could study less and pick stuff up quicker, just kind of learn that way and I did study pretty hard. My first year was actually my best, and then I wasn't in honors right away because I didn't qualify right away. I applied my first semester, and I got in it then, and since then, I didn't do much with it.

In addition to excelling in school, Rob became involved in campus clubs and, with his friend, reinstituted a fraternity that had been inactive. Through his fraternity, he partnered with the entrepreneur learning community and became close with the faculty adviser. After three semesters at the university, he attended a career fair and was offered a semester internship at an oil refinery in a larger city. Although the internship had its challenges, Rob commented, "It helped me grow up a lot." He returned to the university

after his internship, and a good friend mentioned he was planning to study abroad.

Although Rob had wanted to study abroad since his freshman year, he did not think he would be able to after his internship. He explained,

I knew since my freshman year, I always thought in my mind that I wanted to do it, and then I just kind of pushed it out the window. I got to co-op, and I didn't think I was going to, and then at the last minute my buddy Jeff said, "I'm going to study abroad," and I said, "Then I will, too," so I actually applied two weeks before the application was due, and then I got accepted. Actually it's really a good experience for me.

Rob and Jeff decided to study in the same country but elected to attend different universities. Rob explained, "We decided to go to different colleges.... We just thought, we didn't want to live together and always be together. We wanted to meet new people so we decided to go to separate colleges."

Rob studied abroad during the fall 2013 semester in Singapore. He really liked the Singaporean university and talked about the prestige of the university and the significant number of international students studying abroad there:

Yeah, they said there [were] around 2,000 [study abroad students] there.... For engineering they're number nine in the world and number three in civil, which is really cool, so it looks good on my résumé. And they're the top research school in the world, too. The government gives them a bunch of money, and the campus was beautiful.

Rob was one of the only White students in his class. When asked what that experience was like for him, he replied,

It was weird. I walked in the first day, and it was kind of weird, because I've never been the whole total minority, and right away they all knew who I was. Every time I walked in for the first week, I remember, because it was, "Oh, you're Rob." All the professors knew me by name and they were so interested in me that they would always ask me questions about school, my life, and if college was a big party.

Rob talked about experiencing some difficulties with the language and mentioned professors would mix Chinese and English together, which was confusing. He commented,

Even some of the students did it. I would literally have no clue what they just said, 'cause their slang's a lot different than ours and honestly we'd have conversations and I'd say, "I don't know what you're saying." It was so weird, because it's weird how they mix Mandarin and English, 'cause they're such different languages.

Although he had a lot of interactions with the locals in the community, Rob's closest friends were exchange students:

I always met students that weren't from Singapore. Jim, I met this guy from Japan, and he was a grad student, and we hung out with him a lot. I'm trying to think, it was mostly with exchange students. That Moses, I mentioned him a lot, or my buddy Eric, who was from Los Angeles. We kind of went out to dinner a lot, just went around the city. But not really with Singaporeans--the only Singaporeans I hung out with were people with Red Bull.

When asked if Rob had to modify his lifestyle to fit in, he mentioned he did not and attributed the ease of his cultural acclimation to the country's similarities to the U.S. However, while traveling to other Asian countries, he mentioned experiencing more challenges and recounted a story of arriving in another Asian country:

It took forever to find somebody who could speak English and what we wanted was hard--when we transferred money over, a lot of times the bills we got were too large like, they wouldn't accept it. And it wasn't even that much...and that bill is too big for most people there, so we didn't know what to do. "Oh, shoot," it took us forever to find someone to help us out.

When Rob was asked to describe the men in the host country and whether they were similar or different from Americans he replied,

Different, they're more passive, I'd say. No one was big into sports and they're all really, they're kind of the same (laughs), they're all just into their schooling. It's really weird in their school to live on campus. You have to be involved in clubs, so people join clubs to earn points. It's kind of different and they're really involved with school right now and they live at home. So they go home and they come back to campus, go home. So their life is the school.

Rob described the exchange students as having a different mindset. They focused on socializing, going out drinking, and traveling.

One difference Rob noticed about the Singaporean culture was the efforts to encourage more couples to have children. He commented,

I think it's very, pretty similar, to the States. People were having issues with--they want people to have more babies because people wait until they're 35, the

women and men, 'cause the women are getting more professional and more jobs. People are being conservative, and they don't want to have kids. They're not getting married, or just waiting until 35--I think is the average marriage rate and kid rate right now.

When asked what he thought of that, he replied, "I thought it was hilarious. They had the funniest ad, oh my gosh, it was hilarious, they're encouraging babies. It was so funny. It's just a YouTube [video]; it's literally encouraging people to have babies."

When Rob was asked if he experienced other versions of masculinity besides the American views of masculinity, such as being tough and having power, he commented, "There weren't that many Americans studying abroad. I really only met three others besides the other two that I already knew going there, and I think most people are still a lot different than Americans. The German I met, he was just, they're more laid back people. I feel like a little bit, and they're not as stressed all the time. The Finnish guys, there were a lot of Finnish people there, and they were very similar to us--but in ways they're all so, everyone was so different. It's hard to describe, but I could just feel it. Their attitudes towards life and everything but...it was interesting. I think a lot of people do think Americans are, think they're better right away. They would say--I was weird, my buddy and I, because we broke the stereotype. But they usually think Americans are loud and obnoxious. That's how they described it, but some of the other exchange students definitely were. They would get drunk and be really obnoxious, annoying people."

As Rob traveled to different countries in Asia, he noticed some differences in men's behavior:

In another culture, in other places I went, like Philippines and Indonesia, the guys were definitely, I think, supposed to be looked up to more as taking care of families. You could tell that just by seeing all these fathers driving their kids around. We literally saw people on motorbikes--the whole family on these tiny motorbikes carrying all this stuff, and they were the ones usually working. In Singapore--they're both treated, the women and men are so independent, women have the same rights and they're stepping up now and taking on the roles.

As Rob reflected on his study abroad program, one experience really stuck with him. He and a friend from his home university teamed up with students from India and Finland and competed in a contest hosted by Red Bull, an energy drink company. They competed against 34 other teams. Rob stated,

So that [Red Bull] was the best experience. And then we got to work closely with the school. They gave us access to the computer labs, to the design college, to the whole facility to build it, so it was really fun. We got to meet some professors that way, and that was the coolest.

When asked what he learned from the Red Bull experience he replied,

I learned that I'm a pretty open person. I was able to get along with almost anybody, and I'm not offended easily. When people ask me questions about how I live or they made fun of the States in some way, I didn't really care. It was just fun to, like, talk to 'em and work with 'em. I think that's what I learned the most, I'm able to interact with a lot of people. I enjoyed getting along with them, and

listening to their views. Understanding, I guess, I don't know how to describe it exactly, but that's kind of how I felt when I was there.

Rob had the opportunity to interact with students from various countries. He reflected on many of the similarities, while noticing some differences:

Germans, they're basically the same. They don't speak English as well, though, 'cause they don't ever really do it. Like, Finnish people, it's more common like, my roommate, he got paid more in his job because he could speak English. Swedish people are a little more conservative and kind of stuck to themselves. They weren't as social, I noticed. But the Finnish people were really, they're the nicest people I met; they're really social. The Japanese, they were really social, too. But their English, they're kind of hard to understand. The Chinese are the least social, probably; they're there for school. Most of them moved to Singapore to go to school there. The British people, they're really nice, and I mean, England, Scottish guys were really cool.

Describing his Finish friends as different and more laid back, he stated,

I don't know, they seemed more relaxed about everything. They weren't so fast-paced. The Finnish were a little different, but some of the cultures, they're not so stressed all the time... They don't think about work all the time, they enjoy their freedom, their free space. They all had a bunch of hobbies, but, I don't know, there are a lot of people you meet who are so stressed out in college, and they think they have to get this job and get graduated real fast.

Rob's friendships and the exposure to different lifestyles encouraged him to see the value in focusing not only on a career but also on being laid back and enjoying

hobbies. In addition, when asked whether his interactions with others has been different since studying abroad, he commented,

I think a little bit, yes. I think I'm a little more concerned now and I don't like when I hear people judging other people anymore from other cultures. It kind of bothers me, and like I said, I like looking for a more mature person now, because I was hanging out with people four or five years older than me, and I liked it a lot better. So I think it changed who I stuck with, friends with--since I was gone for the full year, even with the co-op, I can tell who I'm good friends with, 'cause I stayed in touch with them.

In addition to Rob's interactions with others changing as a result of studying abroad, he commented on how study abroad influenced his identity:

I think it definitely challenged your beliefs and your views on the world. It forces you to realize you're not--the United States is not the only country. You're not always right, or your views are not shared with everyone else. It definitely makes you follow politics more and the world--you're concerned, 'cause I hear all the interviews, and I'm more curious now how everyone interacts now and I think that's the biggest thing. It definitely challenged a lot of things I believe in and how I view the world, and it makes me, I'm more considerate of everything now.

Rob also talked about the challenges he now experiences when interacting with Americans. When asked whether he views American men any differently as a result of meeting people from other countries, he replied,

Hmm, I mean, everyone here, I could say a lot of people here, are just interested in themselves more and that's the biggest thing. In general, a lot of people in the

States are probably like that. I think our ideas on the world are different--you have to help yourself to get better, and over there it's you help everyone. They don't understand having some people not getting money or people being poor and not being helped. They think about making money to help provide for their family, and we think about money for providing for ourselves and getting our own house and car and whatnot.

In addition to Rob noticing that Americans tend to focus on themselves, his study abroad experience reinforced the importance of religion to many Americans:

Um, I'm personally not religious, so I liked it over there better, and over here I have a lot of people that try to pressure me to do it or I just don't get. I have friends that are religious, but I realize that I get along better with people that aren't because it's hard for me to have conversations with them 'cause I offend them too easy. I'm not trying to be mean 'cause I honestly don't care, I'm open to anything, and I'm not saying that I'm right and they're wrong. Over there, it's just easier for me to get along, and we had so much in common with some people. Yeah, and we didn't offend each other, we just had conversations. Here, I think a lot of people in America get offended way too easy, which really bugged me, which is hard coming back 'cause, like, everyone gets offended so easy.

Rob reflected on what he appreciated about meeting people from other cultures and said, "They're interested in other people's opinions honestly, and here everyone's just interested in their own opinion. That's definitely something I noticed for sure 'cause people are more caring towards other people and they're interested."

Kyle

Kyle was a 21-year-old senior studying history at the time of the study. He spent his spring 2013 semester studying abroad in Germany. His childhood was spent in a large Midwestern city with his mom, dad, an older sister, and a younger sister. Kyle described the expectations growing up in his household as follows:

We definitely had to go to a four-year college and graduate. That's one. When I was younger, I had the whole thing where I really wanted to be in the military and I think there were a few times where I just tried to be, straight out of high school, go right in, but our parents were, "You're not doing that." You had to go to college, you had to graduate and I think that just leading up to that there was the, definitely the expectation that you were going to get--work hard, get good grades. You didn't necessarily have to have a job while you were in high school as long as you worked hard in school.

Kyle described some of his interests and personality characteristics. He enjoyed history and reading and described his personality as reserved. Kyle reflected,

I think I was definitely pretty...pretty reserved in, like, most social situations. I didn't tend to talk a whole lot....As I got older I was kind of more outgoing and stuff like that. Pretty laid back and really, I wasn't, I didn't, stress too much about anything. It was whatever happened is going to happen. It's probably going to work out okay. Let's do this and everything will kind of fall into place kind of thing?

Kyle described a shift in his childhood group of friends that was prompted partly by a breakup with a girlfriend. He withdrew from his group of friends and commented,

Between my sophomore and junior year, and it's kind of, I didn't really hang out with anyone, I didn't do, like, a whole lot. It was kind of like mostly focused on me, and then kind of coming out of that I talked to my friend who was, like, on the cross-country team and I guess kind of pulled me out of that.

Kyle's participation on the cross-country team became a significant experience during the remainder of his time in high school:

You're just so focused on what's going on in the moment, you're not worrying about extra stuff, so it definitely became a really... a way to cope with everything that was going on and definitely big stress relief. And then all the guys I hung out with didn't have any connection. They knew who they were, but there was no real association there, so that's really good--a much different group or a different attitude, I would say.

In addition to the importance of cross-country, he talked about a significant trip to Italy he took during his junior year of high school:

It was as life changing as a one-week school trip could be. I remember we, we got off the plane, and we were--we landed in Rome, and we were takin' a bus to Sorrento, and, let's see, by the time we got out into the middle of nowhere in Italy, and it was just completely dark, and I think this whole time I'm just off the plane and trying to work things out in my head. So I'm actually in Italy. This is, it's a real place, and people don't come here just to visit. There are people who have lived here all their lives, and it's kind of like a really...it's a pretty big thing to go through and you realize that there's a whole world outside of this little west county suburb where I grew up, and I think that was kind of the...big influence. It

started beforehand, I was pretty--America is the greatest country in the world, and we're number one in everything, and then I go over there and I come back and I'm--maybe it's not the greatest place?

Joining the military was still a personal goal when Kyle came to college. When asked what instigated the interest, he commented,

That was, that is as far back as I can remember. I think my parents said, my dad's cousin graduated from the Marine Corps training when I was three years old or something like that and he came, he came to visit a lot when we were pretty young in the really cool uniform and I think for whatever reason I'd always look up to him even though he was usually 15 or something years older than I was but he was always really cool to me...and so that was a pretty big part of what I wanted to do, and I was always really interested in history and all these great things and the stuff the military did, like World War I, World War II, and all that was really cool. I was ready to go do something like that.

After high school, Kyle joined the Army Reserve Officers' Training Corp, but he recollected a turning point in his decision to no longer participate:

I think that whole thing was that, I think that was right about this time of year, spring, and Libya was really kicking up and I remember, I think it was we were hanging out...President Obama was on the TV screen saying that we're going to go defend American interests in Libya, and I was "Wait a minute. I don't have any interest in Libya, so why do I have to go?" And this was, if Libyans want to fight for their independence, that's great for them, but I don't see how that needs to involve me. And then it kind of dwelled in me that maybe I'm not getting into

this for the right reasons. It's not the best fit for me and I think that classes I was taking here is, you have all these Western powers imposing their will on all these places where the cultures really don't connect at all.

When asked what it means to be a man, Kyle commented, "I think it's probably that they're just hanging out with other guys and just kind of...lounging around, not really doing anything? Which I think is the majority of what me and my friends tend to do." He described society's definition of being a man as:

Relying heavily on success and branching off success in athletic success and business and success in whatever field, choose whatever you want to do, but you have to do the best at it and it's kind of, in some ways it's the competition, I'd say, to be definitely pretty competitive and...so I'd say to kind of be the big, the successful guy.

He described his dad and his paternal grandfather as important male role models: The family's always been their number one priority... I think he's definitely kind of sensitive. If you're a guy you have to take care of your family, the number one thing 'cause then he'd be the provider and protector and...he's--I've noticed it's kind of like whatever, time to be tough, you know, he's not going to really give up or quit anything, he's got, he definitely has responsibilities and duties to take care of, which is a big thing that rubbed off.

Kyle also discussed his dad's support for focusing on academics more than sports, saying,

I think it somewhat helped that I didn't really have to be... the most athletic kid out there. It was more focused on--so it doesn't matter if you're good at football,

baseball, soccer, whatever as long as you're the smarter or you're going to end up better anyways so I think probably my dad was--I think he played football in high school and eventually left that and was into the glee club and ended up being the salutatorian of his class so he knows more about--there's more of an academic rather than athletic focus, I think?

Prior to studying abroad, Kyle had a positive experience while attending the university. He joined a fraternity during his first year, lived in the fraternity house, and developed a close-knit group of friends. He described his fraternity experience:

I would say it's pretty typical of college fraternities. I think everyone just kind of has their community sense but individually you kind of do whatever you want.

There's no--the whole stereotype of being the business major who wears the boat shoes and the shorts and the bow ties and everything that is pretty...I'd say there's only a handful of guys who really try to follow that model. I think most of it's do whatever you want to do and do what makes you comfortable, you know? If you're one of us, we don't really care who you are.

Kyle became interested in pursuing study abroad shortly after he left the ROTC. He decided to enroll in German language classes; he had always had a strong interest in German history as well as having ancestors from Germany. His grandparents lived near the university, and Kyle described their support of study abroad:

I was on a college visit with my grandparents, and I vividly remember my grandparents asking about study abroad and that was one of their big things that they wanted their grandchildren to do since they've been all across the world a variety of times and they go overseas I don't know how many times a year, so

they're big on world travelling and all kinds of stuff like that, and I think they wanted to get their grandchildren into that, too.

When asked what his expectations were prior to studying abroad, he mentioned, I know my--one of my cousins, she'd gone to France and England a whole bunch of times, so I'm thinking like there's the whole--you're overseas and the whole partying aspect to it, but I think, for me, just kind of a big mystery that I had to go and see for myself so I think it just definitely [was a] kind of a big open slate.

Kyle participated on a program that operated like an American institution in Germany; his classes were in English with the exception of his language classes. Although many of his classmates were American, he interacted with the locals at restaurants, on trains, at museums, and at local sites, and enjoyed the flexibility of the German culture and being able to drink alcohol more liberally. When asked what he and his friends did for fun, Kyle replied, "Lots of drinking, that's probably the most we did... we would go see stuff during the day and you'd go out at night."

Kyle's interest in history was evident when asked what he hoped to gain from his study abroad experience:

I think the big things I wanted to gain was...I wanted to see what it was like there, I wanted to explore the history that I'd heard about and never had seen anything, and there were pockets and generations of history that were missing so I had to go learn to find out more and everything. I think the language is a big part, too, and I'd say it's really to go over there to meet people, too, was a big thing.

When Kyle was asked to describe the local men at his study abroad destination he stated,

I think it definitely depends on--I think there's a pretty big generation gap, I would say? It's like the younger are more focused on the clubs, the drinking, they're very trendy, they were very high awareness of fashion...I think the strict seriousness is probably more in the older generations. Those who have been through the division and all kinds of stuff like that so for them it's probably maybe just a little bit darker, I guess?

Gender roles in German society were not very apparent to Kyle. He commented,

I wouldn't say there are very distinct gender roles? 'Cause I would say they're a fairly modern industrialized society like the U.S. is and you know it's like if the woman wants to focus on her career, she's free to pretty much do whatever she wants and...I think the only big issue I saw was that the birth rate was declining because more women wanted to focus on their careers. They didn't want to rush into motherhood.

Kyle mentioned different experiences when issues of race and social class were apparent. He thought issues related to race were more evident than social class:

Social class, I think it was fairly harder to distinguish between, 'cause over here it's fairly well or a pretty good blend of it? I think probably the biggest difference in social class is kind of whether you're German or you're not German. I would say race is a pretty big factor, but I think it's similar to the United States, kind of the whole slavery issue whereas their big thing was [it was] only 70 years ago as opposed to 170.

While reflecting on his time abroad, Kyle mentioned two pivotal learning experiences:

Going off on your own--a completely different continent, different country, some place you've never been before, and that you can't--don't have a lot of language, it's probably a big step, and independence...with independence you kind of have to force yourself to be more outgoing, otherwise you're not going to get anything out of it, and you had to force yourself to practice the language and use it.

In addition to gaining independence and becoming more outgoing, he mentioned having a new perspective on the world:

I realize that there is...kind of a broader opportunity than I'd thought there was 'cause there's the whole, all these other continents and...opportunities that are available...and...I think I also became a lot more critical of how the U.S. works and the differences between the two. And...I still-- the whole NSA scandal came out. It was "They're spying on people," and everything like that and it was kind of like before I went, I would've said, "It's just texting and phone conversations. They're not leaking any secrets like that."

Upon returning, Kyle noticed a difference in the people he wanted to hang out with: "I'm much more inclined to, I think, gravitate toward people that had the same experiences I have, because there's like double difference between people who have studied abroad and people who haven't...they don't... there's no just understanding there." Kyle also reflected on how his new sense of independence after studying abroad influenced his relationship with his parents:

Um... I'd say that the relationship with my parents, it's kind of more of... it's not so much... kind of following their guidance and what they want me to do... it's more with where I want to go and what I want to do type thing or it's, I have a

much more concrete plan set in my mind, whereas beforehand I was just kind of “Maybe I’ll do this, maybe I’ll do that.” I had these options, but now it’s much more on the track of what I want to do and it’s kind of not... similar to asking them [parents] if I should do this or kind of running back and forth, asking what do I do here, what do I do for this? It’s more centered on telling them, “This is what I’m going to do and this is going, this is how I’m going to do it,” type deal. I think it’s... much more set in the independence, I guess.

When asked how his career plans have changed as a result of study abroad, Kyle commented,

Before I went on study abroad, it was... it was teaching at a high school somewhere in the United States. I wasn’t really sure where I wanted to go, just... the one subject area, that’s what I wanted to do. Whereas going over there, it...opened me up to a whole different new place where there’s, I think you realize kind of there’s a lot more possibility in that...it was like I wanted to go do the same kind of career but in the different place, so I wanted to teach, uh, history in the international school somewhere in Europe.

In addition to changing his career plans, he attributed his study abroad experience with increasing his motivation to do more with his life and described his shift in motivations as:

A drive to do the best I can would be definitely much more prevalent and it’s also kind of why I added on a language minor as well as the Political Science minor. So I think... you’re not...I don’t want to settle just for this when I can... [take] two more steps, and I can get this done.

When asked whether the study abroad experience influenced his understanding of what it means to be a man, Kyle commented,

I think there's.... The added responsibility is ...more prevalent, going back to what I said, you're responsible for... being able to function in society and not... falter along the way and I think that's... that's definitely continued. You have to be more self-motivated to get things done. So I'd say the responsibility is a whole lot, is much more prevalent and along with it the maturity?

Chris

Chris was a 20-year-old junior studying civil engineering at the time of the study. He grew up in large Midwestern city, was an only child, and described having a close relationship with his parents. When asked what the expectations of him were growing up in his household, Chris commented,

They always had pretty high expectations of me, but not too high. They always, I mean, they always expected me to do my job. I never had any outside job, like a paying job until I was out of high school, because their idea was...my job was to focus on grades, which I did. They had a very high expectation of me through school and me getting good grades and me taking responsibility for those. But also with Boy Scouts, they made sure I was doing that right and so I guess they had high expectations for me but it wasn't like they were smothering.

Chris focused on doing well academically in high school and described himself as,

Very motivated...I took the harder classes throughout my high school period, taken all of my senior year like a lot of kids do. I wanted to try to do what my

parents wanted, that's what they expected of me. I was very motivated to be the best that I could be and that helped out a lot.

In addition to describing himself as very motivated, Chris elaborated on other personality traits:

Other characteristics, I'd say I'm--this might not be the best characteristic for some, but different experiences I had growing up...I can be pretty nonchalant. I let things roll off pretty easy. My girlfriend and I were talking about this the other night. If someone says something bad about me, it doesn't really, as long as there's not any repercussions from it that are detrimental, it doesn't bother me. And I'm not one to change myself for people, and I never have been. I really don't let outside things affect me. I have a pretty typical attitude that thing--I'm fairly optimistic. If something really doesn't concern me, I'll help, but I'm not going to spend time worrying about it. I'm good at talking to people and getting to know 'em, but I'm not very good with people's feelings, and sympathy, not like sympathize but--know how people are feeling, you know? I'm not very good at consoling people unless I'm really close with them.

When asked to describe what he thinks it means to be a man, he commented, Um, I'd say protective and nurturing. In a relationship, uh (pause), I think that kind of goes back--I don't know if that's a societal, um (pause), uh, trait that kind of carries through or that's something--that's instinctive. I feel like men typically, like especially in a relationship--having an instinctive trait or something that they--growing up they didn't realize they were learning to be kind of like a provider or protector. And especially if people you perceive to be not, I

mean, not weaker, not saying women are weaker, but (pause) just kind of being able to protect and provide for those who you care about. I'd say also men would typically be more needing to be argumentative or--I'm much more wanting to be right and prove the point.

Chris belonged to a fraternity and described having close friendships with his fraternity brothers. He described his friends as having similar interests:

They're all very motivated, very intelligent, they're all very keen on wanting to succeed in school and everyone takes grades very seriously, but everyone's also very social and wants to have a good time. I think we get a good mix there. I'd say--not to be like a broken record (laughs) but I'd say all my friends are very motivated and kind of similar to me, in that aspect. We like to argue a lot and we like to state our point, especially my pledge brothers and I.

Chris described attending the university as a positive experience. He always knew he wanted to study abroad. When asked when he first realized he wanted to study abroad, he commented,

I always had the--I went into college knowing that I would, that I wanted to. I always really wanted to travel. And then from talking to people that said study abroad really impacted their life, I just thought it sounded like a good idea. It did kind of help me that I was out of state, so like the sticker shock wasn't too bad.

Chris participated in a spring 2013 semester program in Scotland. He selected the study abroad location because: it was an English-speaking destination, the university was a competitive engineering school, and it had convenient access to travel to other countries.

When asked what he hoped to gain from his study abroad experience, he commented,

Definitely I think the big one was a world perspective, I definitely gained that. Meeting--and maybe that's why my favorite part was meeting new people, I realize kind of going over there that when you're across the world, essentially across an ocean, you can, you'd be still able to find people that are very similar to your friends at home. Like Jake--Jake and Thomas and I all really like taking pictures and we're also engineers. We all just had a bunch of common interests. A significant aspect of the program for Chris was the group of friends he met. We all just kind of hung out. We all had very typical mannerisms, very typical characteristics, so I think that one of the biggest things--realizing that you can go four thousand miles away or however far it is, and how similar people still are.

When asked to describe some of the similar characteristics or mannerisms he and his friends had, he responded,

We're all engineers and we're all very technical-minded. We often had conversations about different engineering challenges or stuff that we'd like to work on in the future, very similar to how I would my colleagues or my peers at [home university]. We all enjoyed going out and playing Frisbee and we all just had a lot in common. They're just easy to talk to, easy to hang out with. They're always--they weren't super up tight, they were laid back, kind of like I am, and--kind of like, I'm like them.

Chris mentioned he did not notice many gender differences in the Scottish society and felt like the culture was similar to that in the United States. He described the drinking culture as more liberal and referenced one example he noticed:

We all--granted most people can drink over there, so that's a lot less under-the-table. So girls will still go out, and it's not really as taboo. Uh, not really taboo, that's not the right word, but, we'll go out...yeah, it's more socially acceptable at our age and like I feel like for guys in the States it's more socially acceptable to under-age drink, if you will, than women. I don't know why that is. It's just kind of a thing I always figured but it's not really the case over there 'cause everyone can pretty much drink.

When asked about whether he noticed issues of race, social class, or sexual orientation in Scotland, he mentioned the country was mostly White and there were not many people of color there. In regards to social class, he recounted a situation with his roommate that made him think about race and social class:

He was generous in that he would give money to pretty much any homeless person or needy person on the street. But if he could tell that they were from a different country, he wouldn't, at all. [My roommate would say], "I hate it when people from, and he said Serbia and kind of poking at Gypsies--I'll give money to Scottish people who need some help, 'cause again, they're liberal."

When reflecting on his study abroad experience, Chris described one of the biggest things he took away from the experience: "It was how even in different countries, people can be pretty similar" and as a result, Chris said he appreciated "dealing with different world issues that different countries perceive in different ways."

Chris attributed his nonchalant attitude as potentially influencing his decision to not travel. When asked why he did not travel as much as he would have liked, he replied,

I didn't really want to pay--you can go cheap but it still costs a lot, so I didn't want to pay all that much. I was having a good time in Scotland, and I didn't want to travel by myself just because... I don't like being in unfamiliar places, especially if I don't speak their language, without someone I know.

When asked whether he changed as a result of study abroad, he replied, Not a whole lot. I kind of mentioned that a little bit ago, but [I] think I have that extra experience under my belt that I think will help and maybe come into more of a realization later in life. This sounds really weird, but everything is less "foreign" if you will. It's not as hard for me to understand when people have--I can understand why people would have differing, like, different countries that have different opinions, not about "yeah, we're right and that's the way it is," so I'd say that's probably the biggest one.

When asked whether his study abroad experience might have been different if he was a female, Chris responded,

I think it would've been different. This is going off my perceptions of the friends I know that went there that were female um (pause). They probably would've gotten sought after more... hit on, I guess for lack of a better word, or just being, you know, women in general. The men in Western society, men usually aren't the ones who, I mean, they do, but in general they're not the ones being hit on. So I feel like, especially if you're a woman in general you're going to have that precaution feeling more often than a guy would. I feel like you'd be expected to

act different. And this is just going from female stereotypes, if you will, 'cause men are typically--they say what's on their mind and they argue. Whereas women in culture usually are supposed to be more submissive and it's not necessarily true, I'm not saying it is true, but you can still see it more than you would. Men have no--usually, unless it's their character--have no problems in stating their point...whereas a woman might feel less comfortable, especially in a different country, to do so.

Chris mentioned he did not think his study abroad experience changed his career goals, and when he returned from study abroad he still desired to work in the U.S. after college: "I mean, not to be too patriotic, but I still think the U.S. is the best country to live in." When asked why, Chris said,

You get so much diversity. Obviously we're a nation of... we're one of the largest countries per amount of people over a huge amount of land. So I think when I was over there, I really missed, I really like living in suburbs. I really like having a lawn.

Although studying abroad did not necessarily change Chris's career plans, he mentioned the relevance of study abroad on career building, saying, "It's that one extra thing that you have that most people don't,--probably nine, I don't know the statistics, probably at least 80, 90% of people don't have." When asked if he pursued study abroad with the career advantage in mind, he stated,

That was a big, that was a big component. Me and my parents thought it came into our factoring of cost analysis, if you will, when we were talking, and my parents obviously wanted me to go there and have a good time and learning about

the world was obviously part of it. But it was, I'm not going to say it wasn't making it easier to get a career, I'm not going to say it wasn't in the conversation.

When asked why he thinks he made the choice to study abroad and other male students do not, Chris replied,

Studying abroad can seem like a deviation from the task, the task being getting...what most people see as getting a degree. I've always seen as the task of getting a job, and getting a job you can't have without getting a degree, so that's one of the tasks, that's one of the steps to getting it, to finishing the task, if you will. And I'd say having a study abroad experience was kind of--wasn't a step necessary, completely necessary, but it's--well for lack of a politically correct analogy, I'll say it's--putting your résumé on steroids.

Evan

Evan was a 22-year-old student at the time of the study, had a triple major studying engineering, math, and German. He spent his childhood in a Midwestern town of approximately 2,000 people and was the youngest of five boys, who were approximately two years apart in age. When asked what it was like to be the youngest of five, Evan commented,

Uh, I don't know. I guess I could say I got picked on a lot. I wore hand-me-down clothes most of my life. I think when I was really little my brothers liked playing with me when I was still a baby and then I got older and they liked picking on me (both laugh). We all grew up liking computers and playing video games and that kind of stuff. We all did, well almost all of us, did marching band or band growing up.

While in third grade, Evan tested high in math and was moved up to fifth-grade math:

They bumped me up straight to fifth-grade math, which was the class that one of my older brothers was in, so I had math class with him, um, and then after third grade I skipped fourth grade and jumped up to fifth, and then, uh, changed schools because I was at the elementary school in [my hometown] and the middle school was in [a neighboring town] because I was doing sixth grade math, so one period of the day I'd just walk across the street and go to the middle school for my math class.

When asked what this experience was like for him, Evan replied,

It was a bit rough, I think. It wasn't an easy year for me 'cause I kind of lost communication with friends from my elementary school and went to a different elementary school where I didn't know anybody... I think my background, the most important experience for me was when I skipped a grade as a kid. It's kind of like moving from town to town, but not completely because I'm still close, I mean, near my friends but I didn't talk to them as much. It was interesting for me because before I skipped a grade, I was one of the youngest students in my class and then after I skipped a grade, I was the youngest student in my class. The next oldest person was eight months older than me and so I was pretty small for my age and kind of a little kid in the class, I guess.

When asked what his parents' expectations were of Evan and his brothers, Evan commented,

They were pretty high. I'm trying to remember, I think it was in sixth or seventh grade, and I failed an exam on purpose just to see what it was like 'cause school for me got really easy. I didn't study. I didn't do anything. Just easy. And then I failed an exam, just to see what it was like, and my parents weren't happy. Any time we got less than a B they were pretty upset. So I'd say the expectations were pretty high of all of us. My older brother that I had class with kind of got the worse end of the stick in that case. He didn't apply himself really well.

When asked if his friends or other classmates had the same expectations, Evan commented,

I think a bit different. I think just because my parents went to university and knew how important schooling was, and so they put a lot of pressure on us for that. There was a lot of stuff at home that was aimed at schooling. We had rules for using computers and video games and everything. We had a rule that, for sharing purposes, if someone else wanted to use whatever you were using, they would say, "okay, I get it in half an hour," so you had half an hour to use it, and then it was the next person's turn.

Prior to coming to the university, Evan described himself as interested in graphic design and computers. When describing his personality, he commented,

I would say kind of a loner. I didn't have a lot of friends in school, and now I'm not friends with many of them. I would say I was kind of a "band geek," band and marching band, and did that at [university], too. Yeah, kind of a nerd, loner.

When he was asked what the first thing was that came to mind when asked what he thought it meant to be a man, Evan replied, “Uh, I guess sports or weight-lifting or something like that.” When asked whether that definition fit him, he stated,

Not really. I played soccer in high school 'cause it was the only sport I enjoyed 'cause I grew up on it. My dad was a soccer ref my whole life. I never really did weight lifting or anything like that. Actually I didn't until I got into it when I was [studying abroad].

Asked whether he had any role models of what it means to be a man, he mentioned,

Uh, I don't know that I have any specifically for what it means to be a guy but I usually use my dad as a role model for what it means to be a good person, 'cause I think of him as a good person and I guess that also means that he's a good “guy.”

Evan described having a positive experience at the university prior to studying abroad. He mentioned close relationships with his roommate, fellow marching band members, and students in his classes. Prior to spending the year abroad in Germany, Evan had participated in two international experiences, an eleven-day trip to various European countries in high school and a university-sponsored spring break German language program. He then participated in an academic year study abroad program in Germany during the fall 2012-spring 2013. He took classes during the fall and interned with a German engineering firm in the spring.

When asked what his parents' reaction was to his decision to study abroad for a year, he replied,

They were all for it... And my dad, he worked in HR, and so he's always telling us to spend these years kind of investing in yourself and what companies will be looking for later. So he's all for studying abroad. I told him I wanted to work abroad, and he knew how valuable that would be for me later.

When asked what his expectations of study abroad were, Evan remarked,

I guess I was kind of expecting to be kind of all on my own, a little bit lonely, away from family and friends, although I have an aunt that lives in Germany, so I was able to visit her while I was there. I was looking forward to drinking some German beer--I didn't know if it would be, partying or what, but some difficult courses.

Evan described the classes he took:

[I took] a couple programming classes on artificial intelligence and a math class and then a German language class and all of those [classes] were taught in German... so those were all Germans, all German everything. I was the only foreigner in any of those classes. As a couple professors pointed out, "Oh, there's Evan, our student from the U.S.," or something like that.

Evan's girlfriend, Gina, from his home university, was working in Germany on and off during his year abroad. When asked what they did for fun while abroad, Evan stated,

A lot of travel... but otherwise, there were a lot of just lazy weekends--[Gina] worked during the week, and I had classes and I was also working part-time for a company in the U.S., so then on weekends we were just too lazy to do much but just lay around and watch TV.

Evan elaborated on some of the challenges he experienced when he was abroad: There were a number of times--just obviously the language and challenges during my internship there was, it was kind of rough. There was one other intern, and he was a European student, and so trying to communicate. It'd get to the point that we both got frustrated 'cause we couldn't communicate to each other sometimes. But that was more at the beginning of the internship, and then it got better as it went along, probably more because he got used to me not being able to speak to him (both laugh). But then there were other times. I think it was about four or five months that I was away and Gina was here, and it was pretty rough. We would Skype almost every day and it was nice that my bosses kind of recognized that and let me take a half-hour-to-hour break in the middle of the day so I could Skype with Gina because of the time change.

The challenges Evan experienced regarding language improved over time. Evan commented,

Yeah, it got better. I know towards the beginning I just felt mentally exhausted at the end of the day. What was nice in the beginning is that language class--I think is the best thing I did on my trip, because it was a month of language immersion all day, every day. I learned to think in German, which was something I hadn't mastered yet, 'cause before in all my classes I was basically thinking in English and then translating into German, but then I got to the point where I was actually thinking in German, and so it flowed much better. So now I still have the issue where I'm just walking around town and thinking in German and I'm trying to think of how to say something, and it's wait, I don't know how to say that in

German. But it definitely got better over time--I had that language course and everyone was really helpful. You could ask other students if they knew how to say something, and if they didn't know you'd ask the instructor, and then on my internship--at first I was really uncomfortable. I didn't want to kind of show people I didn't know how to speak German, but then as it went along and I got more comfortable with each person, I could ask them how to say stuff and it was really nice.

In regards to the German culture, Evan commented that the gender roles were quite similar to the U.S., saying,

I think they were pretty similar to the U.S. I mean, it's kind of a Western country; pretty similar. Guys drink a lot of beer and are loud and I can't really think of too many differences. When we had the grilling, the guys would do the cooking, the grilling, and then the girls would sit there and talk and that kind of thing.

Although gender roles were quite similar, he noticed a few instances related to gender and sexuality that were different than in the U.S. When asked about sexuality and its influence on German society, he remarked,

I don't think it's as much of an issue, but I think maybe it is a bit--they have a female chancellor right now, which in the German language, every noun for a person has a male term and a female term, so they actually had to create a new word in the German language when she became chancellor, 'cause they'd never had a female chancellor before. So yeah, there is kind of a distinction, even in the language, between male and female and everything, but I don't feel it's as much of an issue [in Germany]... I don't think [Germany] had the feminism movement

that the U.S. has and that Russia has been in the news a lot for lately, so I really don't think it's much of an issue...I'm not sure when women got the vote or anything like that, but I haven't heard much about that in the German history. No, there weren't movements, although you would see gay pride parades, like here, but it wasn't as much of an issue as [in the U.S.]. Here [U.S.] so many people were just against it for religious reasons or anything, but in Germany they kind of allowed it and everyone was for it.

When asked what struggles he experienced being an American male in a different country, Evan described an experience of not fitting another person's expectations:

In my first month there in that language course I took, one of the guys, the guy from Macedonia, was really social and really liked talking to people and could do anything, and I don't usually do that. I think I said in high school, [I was] kind of shy and a loner kind of thing. And he said, "Come on, all American guys just won't stop talking and talk to anybody" and that kind of thing, but I said "No, I'm not like that" so I think he was a bit surprised by that. But he did also say he had studied in the U.S. maybe, and say I was the first American he had met who was trying to learn a second language.

When asked what Evan learned about himself as a result of study abroad, he replied,

I think... the biggest thing was I got more confidence in myself. Because now I'm more willing to kind of do stuff that I wouldn't before that I'd feel--oh, I can't do that. Now, I was like, well, I did all this other stuff, maybe I can do that. I would

talk to people and I'd never do that before, 'cause I was kind of shy and introverted. I think that's the biggest difference I've noticed.

Evan elaborated on something he did not expect going into his year abroad in Germany, saying,

I was a bit surprised at how similar everyone is in Germany and the U.S., not that big of a difference in a lot of ways. Studying abroad, going to Europe, it wasn't that...too different. Once you get used to it, being more on your own and away from family and stuff like that. Get to know the people, and then you realize they're pretty similar.

Although Americans and Germans were similar, Evan described how the cultures were a bit different regarding the male gender role:

The [U.S.] is all the TV and media and commercials and everything about being fit and strong and I don't know, providing for a family. I don't know what else. But in Europe it's not. I mean, in Germany and Europe in general, it's really not that big of a deal. It's more...even between the genders that you were exposed to.

In addition, Evan described how his impressions of men in the U.S. changed as a result of studying abroad in Germany:

I guess before I kind of thought that it was expected of me to fulfill that stereotypical manliness trait, and then going to Europe and seeing that it's not that important, that you can do other stuff and be yourself. And not have to worry about that as much is pretty nice.

When asked whether the exposure to the German culture changed the way he views himself as a man, Evan replied, "Yeah, I think so. I don't worry about it as much.

I'd like to be in good shape but I don't have to worry about being really fit or really muscular or anything." Evan noticed a difference in the way he viewed himself, as well as in his view of other men. Evan said, "I mean, before... I think, I might see a guy and kind of judge them on their appearance or whether they fit their typical role of a man, and now I just don't worry about it as much. That it's kind of, I think, do whatever you want."

In addition to not worrying as much about being fit, Evan commented on how his interactions with others are different since he studied abroad. Evan said,

I'm more confident now and more comfortable in my own skin so I can talk more easily. The career fair is next week, so I'll see what happens there in talking to companies. I kind of feel like it'll be easier for me. I mean, I'll still be stressed about it and everything, but it'll be easier considering I went to a career fair in Germany.

When asked why he thought fewer men studied abroad than women, Evan commented,

More of the men are focused just on getting through Iowa State and graduating or some of them partying and not caring about studies--I guess, 'cause also liberal arts and sciences [at the university], they have more women, it's kind of the arts and sciences, and that includes languages so there'd be more women interested in international studies and other cultures and stuff like that.

Rick

Rick was a 21-year-old, studying education at the time of the study. He spent his childhood in a medium-sized Midwest town with his mom, dad, and one younger sister.

When asked to describe his relationship with his family, Rick commented,

I'd say close. I mean, close enough where I moved back home the last two summers when I have leases in Ames, and I lived with them and worked out of home. Obviously, we quarrel sometimes, but I know that they always have my best interests in mind. They're very... how do I want to say this? They're very critical of me. They like to criticize me. As I've grown up, I've realized it's 'cause they want what's best for me.

When asked about his parents' expectations of him, Rick said, "Expectations were... get involved with sports and in the community and graduate from high school and attend college. Both my parents were college graduates, so that was kind of the bar, to go to college."

Rick described some of his interests and hobbies prior to college, stating, "Pre-college basketball was more important to me than almost anything in life. Yep, I lived and breathed basketball--it was four days, lift at 6:30 in the morning, go get a ball in my hand after; after school go for a run." Rick mentioned that sports were a big part of his community:

Sports are pretty important in [my hometown], I'd say, especially. I went to a Catholic private high school, and sports are very important to it. Not so much my senior year, but leading up to there, there were a lot of cliques. The sports, and then, you know, the cheerleaders, so there was that at my school.

When Rick was asked to describe his personality, he remarked, “Uh, I’m definitely extroverted, outgoing. I’m good with empathizing with other people, and I like helping other people.”

When asked what it means to be a man, Rick said,

I’ve always kind of held more of a view that guys and girls were similar. I’m not very traditionalist in the idea, so I think a lot more times that guys maybe are--are--less, less emotional, maybe in the way they speak. Maybe not necessarily on the inside but in the way that they act, they’re less emotional. They almost like to be the--trying to think; I’ve never thought about that as much.

As Rick mentioned his thoughts on what it meant to be a man, he also elaborated on society’s definition:

I think that when marriage comes into play, that maybe the male is... almost supposed to be the head figure. I mean not necessarily they’re more important or they should make all the decisions, but they... they should always have a voice in things, and...they should be able to look at things more objectively, too. They should have more of an objective viewpoint as a male figure of the family, so... yeah, and now that I say that, I think that males may sometimes be more objective than females in their viewpoints.

And Rick described the representation of men in the media: “[Media] definitely skews things. They’re more traditional.” He continued,

Media in the past, but that’s kind of a role they’ve taken, that males are the big, strong... people. They... you know, they’re who society should almost look up to

and...whereas females are, you know, they're portrayed as models and thin and this and that.

When asked what his experiences in college were like prior to studying abroad, he mentioned,

It was good. It has, it had its ups and downs. Freshman year was adjusting to college, choosing a major, very stressful. It was a lot more stressful, more stressful my freshman year than any other year, and too much partying my freshman year. I just didn't really have much of a sense of purpose yet. I was really busy with basketball, too. I mean, there'd be 30, 35 hours a week. It was all volunteer, too, so... That was tough, took a toll on me.

When asked what prompted his decision to study abroad, Rick said,

I've always been asked that, and that's one thing...I think it was just, with time, it was--even the students, or I think it's students, that would present in some big lecture halls, "This is study abroad," and I'd see the pictures and I'd think, "yeah, that'd be really cool," you know? It'd be a good experience, and reading world literature, like American and British literature--"Man, I don't know enough about this, Europe or about the world." I'm kind of secluded and then I just started looking into it. One thing I told my parents, it'd be good for my résumé when in all reality I thought it would just be good for me personally on a personal level. I think that, which it did, it did diversify me, opened my eyes up to the world.

In addition to wanting an experience that diversified him, Rick described his expectations:

I'd come out a totally different person. I'd almost be from there. I'd have a lot more culture in me. I knew I'd walk away with just the time of my life, you know? Just... a lifetime of vacations piled into one trip. So I saw myself changing that way, 'cause vacation's obviously important and a great way to get away and see the rest of the world and relax and come to terms with yourself.

Although Rick was eager to take advantage of the opportunity to study abroad, he mentioned the concern he had about not knowing anyone. Rick commented,

That was the one thing I was nervous about. I didn't know anyone going into it and I figured, worst case scenario, I'm independent enough, I can travel by myself, I can... still meet people here and there and I was--it was a huge shock. I met some, some really good friends.

Rick participated on a fall 2012 semester study abroad program in Italy. The Italian university he attended was comprised primarily of American students. When asked how much interaction he had with the locals, Rick commented,

That's one thing I kinda wish I would've had more of. We were...our location was awesome, I couldn't have asked for a better one, but it was in a historic part of town, which is where all the tourists would be so--on my way to class almost every day I'd walk by hundreds of tourists which is okay. At night we'd sometimes go, where a lot of the Italians our age would hang out on nights and weekends, and...talk to them. I'd say there was a few nights where we hung out with them, you know, three, four hours, but a lot of--it was just a little bit of English, a little bit of Italian there, so that language barrier. I wish I

would've had more interaction, but I don't think there's too much more I could've done.

Traveling to different locations was a significant part of Rick's study abroad program. Regarding Rick's travels, he commented, "I'd say, if you include weekends where I'd do like a day-trip or two and then just hang out in Florence, you include those, probably 13 out of the 16 weeks [I traveled], so probably, like, nine or probably seven or eight of the weeks were two different countries."

When asked what challenges Rick experienced while abroad, he commented again on being concerned about making friends, saying, "The biggest thing I was nervous about was... I didn't know anyone going over there. I had my friend in Milan, but how much can we really do together?" Despite feeling anxious about not knowing anyone, he added, "So I was a little nervous about making friends but it ended up being the highlight of the trip was the friends I made, so that obviously worked out." Trip planning and finances were other challenges while studying abroad:

Being responsible for all the trip planning, you didn't want to book a trip the day before 'cause it'd be so expensive. Obviously, finances were a little bit of a challenge. I'd saved up--as soon as I'd had the thoughts of studying abroad, I created a bank account. I set money aside, and I went over there with, with what I thought would be... enough money as long as my parents supported me, which I knew they would. And I'd end up, between us two, needing... one bank loan, which is fine, I've already paid it off--so it was a little bit of a challenge.

Obviously it all worked out. It's not like I come from a really wealthy family, that's what I tell everyone is you--it's not like you need a ton of money to do it.

When asked about whether he noticed distinct gender roles in Italian culture, Rick commented on Italian women:

Hmm, trying to get a word for it, not aggressive, but women seemed a little more... independent? I'd say the women seemed a little more independent. Guys a little more laid back...I'd say overall for guys and girls--how I'd put it was Americans, they kind of live to work, we're really blue-collar; we really work hard. And then Europe and Italy especially, they work to live, they just work to get by so they can make a living, and then they have siestas and they have a lot more time to relax and enjoy life, it seems like, so laid back, too, for women.

Rick commented that Italian women seemed more independent and when asked what made him think that, he commented, "They seemed very, uh...outgoing when I'd see 'em, they'd be laughing really loud, speaking really loud--it's a romantic language, so they had that romantic tone in their voice, so just very outgoing and loud, they really made their presence felt." As for the men,

They seemed very confident...very confident. A lot of them that I met would live in the outer parts of Florence and work in the historic part--restaurants and wine bars--very confident, and they're either really personable or they let their ego get to them and they'd just talk down to you. The ones that were confident but yet could relate to you and everything were really nice and really easy to get along with. I'd say a lot of them were really humorous and they really like to laugh, so humorous. A lot of times, it would be really tough to get a... a view on them because of the language barrier but just looking at their actions and

whatnot.... They all dressed up a lot more, something more superficial that you could notice. They dressed a lot more flamboyantly.

When asked if he had any experiences that made him feel uncomfortable, Rick referenced some challenges with the language barriers:

You see, I never really...was uncomfortable.... maybe sometimes when... you didn't understand something, like a menu or you had questions at dinner or... there was one café right by my place where going there was the norm. You stand up to have your cappuccino in the morning, right? But there was one place where they had kind of a smaller counter, and you were supposed to sit down. My first week there, I... I'd been there a few times and stood up, and then it got crowded one morning and they said something to me, and I was, like, uh, uh... and there was a few other people sitting down, so it was--real uncomfortable. What are they trying to tell me? Am I doing this right or wrong, and so I had to sit down. It's all right. I just went, ended up sitting down myself, and I think it ended up being the right move, so that was a little uncomfortable. After that uncomfortable experience, I decided to find a new place to get my cappuccinos in the morning and so I went to this--it looked like this high-end--I can't afford to go every day. But it was...I think it might have been even the same price...and it was, it was a little bit uncomfortable some days, I felt like, but it was always...only Italians in there.

Although Rick experienced a few uncomfortable situations, he mentioned the language barrier being manageable:

It was less complicated and less uncomfortable than I thought, but it was still there, which is obvious there are going to be experiences, especially 'cause I really wanted to, I kind of wanted to put myself in uncomfortable positions 'cause I thought that's where I'd learn about them, and...I did kind of like that, when I look back. I'm still kind of happy I did those things.

After returning from his study abroad program, Rick commented on the numerous ways he changed as a result of his experiences. When asked if his goals for the future changed as a result of studying abroad, Rick commented,

Yeah, it opened up my options a lot more. Before it was... I'm going to graduate college...find an English, a high school English job somewhere, coach, and that's that, you know? I have aspirations of maybe going to grad school for guidance counseling and now, after studying abroad, I'm strongly considering teaching English as a second language and then also maybe doing half my student teaching abroad.

In addition to study abroad changing Rick's future plans, he commented on how study abroad changed him in general:

I mean, just seeing other cultures made me learn a lot more about myself and obviously other cultures. I was almost sheltered from the world, only living in America, only traveling in America, and...Italy was the second country I've ever been to, and the next thing you know I traveled to nine more, so that was a really cool, fun, experience. It's really broadened my horizons and diversified myself.

In addition to learning about other cultures and broadening his horizons, Rick described other ways he changed. Rick said,

I think I grew, I grew significantly--responsibility, I mean, my parents are three hours away from here, and when I was in Italy they were a seven-hour time difference away and they were an expensive phone call away. Skype was how I communicated with them. So I mean just the... the independent factor I learned to... be more sociable. A lot of the times when I meet new people, it's through my friends or I'm with my friends and we bump into people. It's just easier. Whereas I went there knowing no one, so I think I became more of a sociable human being.

As Rick reflected on his time abroad, he described an interaction with an Italian that was significant to him:

This is like one of the most interesting things... was, I want to say it was our second or third day there, me and my roommates, we've still got maps in our hand, and we were trying to figure out the financial situation. I was sitting next to someone, and I had a map out. She asked, 'Where are you from?' And we started talking. I can't remember, I know she's lived in Italy for at least 20, 25 years...they might have been from America originally. Three or four hours, she just walks around town and showed us around town and introduced us to her favorite café, her favorite place to get fruits and vegetables, just circled an abundance of places on our maps 'cause we had maps out and stuff, and she was just awesome. She set us up with a tour guide in Rome. Yeah, she was just the sweetest thing ever, just super nice. She was actually a tour guide herself in Italy and also she was an artist, too. She was...just a super interesting person, and

it was a really cool experience with an Italian there...just made us feel so welcome in Florence.

Prior to going abroad, Rick described being a man as being objective and practical. When asked whether his view of being a man changed or stayed the same as a result of study abroad, he said,

I think it's more comfortable with what I just maybe said there. I'd say that's a good description of Americans, maybe... for some Europeans it might be a little bit different. I'd say that they're maybe a little bit more subjective, open to emotions. They don't hold back as much emotion. They just express themselves more--would be a good way of looking at it. I think it probably has kind of changed my... definition of a man. Maybe more open, too--not just a closed definition of what it is to be a man. It's a little bit more open to me now and I think it just goes by the individual now.

When asked how Rick made meaning of the role study abroad had on his identity, he said,

It's part of my identity now. I know it is because... things like helping with this study, I love talking about it--it's not like I necessarily [like] talking about myself. It's talking about Europe and Italy, which is awesome. It's become a huge part of my identity 'cause of how much I like to talk about it. How much it's changed me. How much it's diversified me, changed me. Before Italy and Europe, my eyes were almost closed to the rest of the world and you go over there, they just open up and they're not going to close again 'cause I've already had those

experiences, you know? So to answer the question, yes, it's become my, part of my identity.

Rick was surprised to learn that males comprise 35% of the students who study abroad. When asked why that might be, he said,

I mean, maybe that... do you think maybe that's something, part of the reason males are apprehensive about studying abroad is leaving their friends behind?

But... then again... females, where does that leave females? Why aren't females afraid to leave their friends behind?

Although Rick was apprehensive about leaving his friends, he understands how that might deter other men from participating:

I was, I'm excited to travel and get out there and...see cool things. Uh, I would feel more comfortable to have somebody to be there with me, so maybe a little more pressure because of that. I think maybe that would be a kind of a good marketing tool would be...stories like mine that...guy friends and girl friends that I made-- how awesome that is, how they're life-long friends. My parents say time and time again when I talked to them a few days before I left, it was, "Gosh, I'm going to miss 'em so much." It was really tough for me to think about. They were my life-long friends.

Will

Will was a 21-year-old senior studying engineering at the time of the study. He grew up in a large, southern city prior to attending the Midwestern university. Will spent his childhood with his parents and one younger sister. When asked to describe his relationship with his family, he commented on his connection with his sister, "Honestly,

we're not really all that close. I don't know, I just, it almost feels like she kind of distances herself from me and my parents." His relationship with his parents, on the other hand:

It's good. Obviously I don't agree with a lot of the things that they do now, in particular my mom. She just, she just kind of--her parents grew up in the Depression and they were kind of--she wasn't in poverty or anything like that but she was on the lower end of the income side, I guess. So some of the things that she tells me to do, it's...I don't know, it kind of reflects that, and I feel like I have the ability to help more people whereas she's--I guess she doesn't see it like that.

When describing his dad, Will said,

He's a...I guess he's a lot like me in that regard. He's very...he's very laid back and recently I'm finding that he's very, he's very talkative (laughs). He just kind of...I don't know, he's, he's a nice guy. He works a lot and he's always been there in the evenings or whatever, so I do, I always got to see him every day.

In addition to the personality traits he shared with his dad, Will described himself as follows:

Oh, I'm, I'd say I'm very, very passive. I find it...I didn't really care about a lot of things like everybody I guess. I don't have as much school spirit as most other people do. Even in high school, it kind of started then, and then it got worse so to speak. I don't know, it's not that I am indifferent about everything, it's just that I feel like I don't really care strongly enough to stand up for a lot of other things--it's hard for me to think of an example, but...well I guess football would be an example. You know everybody gets all excited and I'm, like, it's a game. I'll

stand up and cheer for my team, I guess, but I'm not--I don't know. I just don't feel the energy, you know?

Will said he has always taken his academics seriously:

Grades were important to me, in high school, yeah, because, uh, I felt like that was my best shot at getting money for scholarship, money for college and getting accepted anywhere um, but I found out there were a lot more than that. I mean, I did other things, too. I was part of the National Honor Society, and I even was in theatre my senior year of high school. I mainly did it to go to college, and once I got into college, it was kind of more of a habit than anything so, I mean, I still get good grades today and, I don't know, it's, with my employers and whatnot, it's--they look at different things other than grades, as well so they, I don't know, I'm caring more about grades than maybe I should, as opposed to other things.

When asked what it means to be a man, Will commented,

Honestly, probably just biological differences is the first thing. I'm now seeing a lot of different, met a lot of different people, and everybody has different personalities. I would say that mentally, or emotionally even, guys and girls have a lot more similarities than they have differences.

When asked to describe the similarities between genders, Will said, "I don't know, to me it just seems like there are a lot of people who would, if they saw somebody in trouble, they would set stuff down to go help them--that's common in both guys and girls."

Although Will did not see a lot of differences between genders, he mentioned the media portrayed men in a different light:

Um, well I see a lot of trucks, and I see a lot of massive stereo systems and you get the mentality that bigger is better in society's eyes. I don't necessarily agree with any of it. Kind of everything about guys is--you have to be interested in sports, any kind of sport, really...I feel, I feel like guys are more pressured to be a lot more athletic than girls are 'cause, I don't know, I think I feel that pressure, too, personally. I'm trying to get on an exercise program just to be more fit.

When asked whether Will had male role models or individuals with attributes he admired, he said,

I don't know. I paid more attention--I guess I'd really like to be really strong physically but at the same time I'd like to be kind and stuff. I don't know, it's kind of cheesy, but Superman... But it's once again, he kind of has that effect on the masculine things, too. I mean, it's kind of what--it's almost what we're expected to be, not necessarily what we should aspire to be. And even if it is what we aspire to be, it's still kind of--well, not everybody's going to be able to do that. Nobody can do that, really when you're talking about Superman in particular...I don't know. I guess in real life, I guess Chuck Norris has always been one of my favorites... I really want to be a kind of funny, goofy guy that can get along with anybody but nobody...that everybody knows not to mess with, I guess.

Will described a number of factors that contributed to his decision to study abroad. He mentioned the timing as being critical, saying, "I realized that this was the best time to do it just because this is the only time you're going to have a disposable

amount of income, I should say...flexibility.” In addition to the flexibility, Will mentioned his relationship with his girlfriend as being another contributing factor:

The other thing that kind of motivated me was I, I actually have a girlfriend who is a, she's a bit of a homebody herself, like she lives [3 hours away from the university], and she gets homesick while at college. I knew that if I went, she would go. Yeah, but I also know that if I didn't go, none of her--her best friend, she's kind of the same way. She's probably more shy than she is. I kind of, I wanted to go somewhere just because I knew she wouldn't go anywhere if I didn't.

Will participated on a spring 2013 semester program in Australia and his girlfriend, Beth, participated on the same study program. Will and Beth lived separately and had mostly Australian roommates. Will described having a lot of interaction with the locals and when asked what he did for fun, he said, “Yeah, well, honestly, we kind of did what the Australians did. They literally just partied all the time. It was almost every night of the week, there was, you could find a party to go to.” He mentioned being surprised by how Americanized the culture was and in regards to the partying, saying, “It just got really old.” When asked if he was looking for something more, he said, “Yeah, like, something deeper and more meaningful than just partying all the time.”

Will described his expectations going in to study abroad:

I was hoping to maybe see some sort of new perspective on life, not just the world. I did gain a new perspective on the world in general, mostly because I realized, “wow, there are a lot of people that care about the United States, and there are a lot of things in North America that I haven't seen yet that I should

maybe.” But, I don’t know, I was expecting to get...I don’t know, honestly, I was mildly disappointed a little bit with the culture, that it was Americanized. But I was mainly hoping to get a new perspective on life in general, and I don’t feel like I got that.

When asked if he ever felt like he had to modify his lifestyle to fit in in Australia, Will commented, “Uh, not really, I don’t know, I don’t really ever try to ‘fit in’ anymore, either, though. I just try to be myself. It was, it was easy for me. I kind of feel like a nomad sometimes. I feel like I could live anywhere.”

Will described the gender roles in Australia as closely resembling those in the U.S. and defined Australian men as, “Very manly, very, it’s good to be strong and tough and whatnot. It’s all about rugby and all about soccer and all about sports.” He described the female role as having more flexibility, saying,

The females--I don’t really know. I feel like they’re kind of all over the place. They can do--it’s almost like they can like whatever they want to. Obviously, some of them liked watching sports--one of Beth’s roommates loved to play those sports, too. She was a huge tomboy. I don’t know, I feel like they had...a little bit more freedom in what they were allowed to like.

Asked whether it was easier to be a man in the U.S. or in Australia, Will commented, Just because of the amount they drink in Australia probably I’d say it’s easier to be a guy in the U.S. ’cause—even in America, to be a man you’ve got to have a big truck or whatever but even that’s kind of fading away now, ’cause now, everybody makes the joke, “Well, he must just be overcompensating for

something else” type of deal. I would definitely say it’s better to be a man in the U.S. than it is in Australia.

Reflecting on his study abroad experience, Will commented, “The biggest thing I’m probably going to remember is the United States is a lot more influential than you realize.” In addition, Will looks back fondly on the people he met. Will described an aspect of the experience he remembered most: “Well, I’d tell them...a lot of the people there, and I definitely talked to a lot of people there, ’cause they’re very entertaining to talk to and they’re very friendly and they love Americans, too, so definitely the people aspect of it all was the best.”

When asked what he learned about himself as a result of study abroad, Will mentioned:

Well, I think I realized that I act and feel a lot older than I actually am (laughs). Somebody once told me that I have an old soul, I guess, but--to the point where I didn’t even realize it, you know? I just don’t like drama that everybody likes to bring up and I just don’t care about all that stuff.

He mentioned not feeling challenged by the Australian school system and, as a result, he learned how much he valued rigorous academics. Will stated, “I don’t know, I just...it wasn’t, it wasn’t very challenging at all, and I realize that I needed to get challenged, too.”

Although study abroad afforded a number of learning opportunities for Will, he described a number of places where he did not change. For example, studying abroad did not change his future career plans. Will did not necessarily view other cultures any

differently, and he did not have a different understanding of what it means to be a man, though he did describe himself as a bit more outgoing:

I might try to talk a little bit more...just in general 'cause I no, I noticed in Australia--I used to be kind of outgoing but I think I noticed in Australia I was a little, a little bit less outgoing than I used to be. But I feel like it wasn't because I was in Australia. I feel it was because I'd been in the same place for so long that I kind of got in the comfort zone and didn't really need to be outgoing, and I was put someplace outside my comfort zone.

Summary of Profiles

In this chapter I have provided an overview of each of the eight participants' experiences before, during, and after their participation in a study abroad program. The student profiles revealed similarities in the participants' upbringing, with high academic expectations and close familial relationships being the norm. The majority of the participants described concerns with traveling alone and the importance of peer connection. The men's unfamiliarity with themselves as men as it relates to each participant was evident in the profiles. The profiles also indicated that all of the participants found study abroad to be beneficial and a positive learning experience. While most of the participants described study abroad as a significant transformative experience, some alluded to minimal changes to their sense of self.

In Chapter 5, I provide the results of an in-depth analysis of the data by discussing the essential themes of the study.

CHAPTER 5. ANALYSIS

I present the findings of this study in this chapter. Each of the 8 male participants was interviewed three times. The first interview focused on the participants' experiences prior to studying abroad, the second on the study abroad experience, and the third on the meaning of the study abroad experience. My data analysis process included writing a summary of key and interesting points following each interview, listening to the audio-recorded interviews, reading the transcriptions, and writing profiles of each participant, while simultaneously coding the data. Four themes emerged through continuous refinement during the data collection and analysis process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985): expressing masculinity, men's unfamiliarity with themselves as men, men as relational beings, and study abroad as a pathway to change. I discuss the themes in the following sections.

Expressing Masculinity

Throughout the interviews, the participants described their sense of self and their view of masculinity, or the qualities appropriate to or usually associated with being a man. A theme that emerged from the findings, and is supported by masculine ideology literature, was embedded in how the participants expressed their masculinity--primarily through competition, being strong, and defining success personally. As indicated in Chapter 2, masculine ideology includes the cultural norms that define masculinity and that definition is the standard by which many males measure personal masculinity (Chu et al., 2005; Mahalik et al., 2003). The cultural norms embedded in masculine ideology describe men as persons with high status and confidence (Thompson & Pleck, 1986), prioritizing success, power, and wealth (Brannon, 1976), and being tough and physically

strong (Thompson & Pleck, 1986), which is similar to how the participants expressed their masculinity in this study.

Competitiveness

The men in this study expressed their masculinity through their competitiveness, which was evident in their prioritization of academic achievement and athletics. The participants' competitive nature was supported by the masculine ideology literature as they demonstrated men's desire to excel (O'Neil, 2008). Alternatively, Schroth and McCormack (2000) found that rather than desiring sports, dangerous activities, or parties, (which coincide with the masculine script), men who study abroad prefer experience-seeking activities that challenge the mind and senses, such as study abroad. While the men in this study did gravitate towards challenging their mind, they also expressed an interest in sports, demonstrating that men who study abroad may ascribe to some traditional male norms while deviating from the standards in other areas.

Academic achievement. The students' interest in achieving academically was evident throughout the data analysis. Most of the students described taking their studies very seriously, even in elementary and middle school. Once the participants went to college, their studies remained a central focus and were often paired with extracurricular involvements related to their academics.

David alluded to both his interest as well as the cultural pressure in his Korean community to achieve academically when he commented, "It was fairly competitive. It was academically, not athletic, but academically we were fairly competitive, and that was the same for elementary school and middle school, it was the same." As the oldest child

in his family, he knew what was expected of him, and he strived to uphold his cultural obligations of achieving as his family did. He explained,

I'm cool with that, you know, I have nothing against that, but that's a lot of pressure on my part, and the same with my other friends, they've had the same problem where they're the oldest and their dad's brother's kids are going to med school and Harvard or something and he needs to be the same or it won't be consistent, and so... We're all in the same boat, but it, I don't know, I felt like it was normal for us when we were growing up, 'cause we all had the same problems and so the same crap was on our shoulders.

While David's academic interest was both personal and cultural, Will described his academic focus as a means to receiving a college scholarship:

I felt like that was my best shot at getting scholarship money for college.... I mainly did it [focused on academics] to go to college, and once I got into college, it was kind of more of a habit than anything so I still get good grades today.

When asked to describe himself, Will exclaimed, "I'd also like to think I'm smart, but I don't know."

Rob also described taking his academics very seriously when he got to college and attributed his academic abilities to his competitive disposition. He stated, "And I'm competitive. I got competitiveness from my dad. I think that's why I do well in school, too, because I hate doing worse than somebody. So I'm super competitive that way."

The energy Rob put into his studies during his first semester in college was also evident:

I think I studied a lot that first semester, more than I had to. I almost trained myself, 'cause each semester in design, I could study less and pick stuff up

quicker, just kind of learn that way...and I did study pretty hard. My first year was actually my best, and then I wasn't in honors right away because I didn't qualify right away. I applied my first semester, and I got in it then, and since then, I didn't do much with it, but...now I do that.

Similar to Rob, Rick described always taking his academics very seriously, even more so in college than in high school:

Um, I was still, I'd say my knowledge or intelligence that I had in high school finally came out in college when I finally buckled down the last couple years. But in high school, I was still a 3.5 student, so school was obviously important to me.

Athletics. In addition to the participants' identification with academics, an interest in sports was also prevalent in the data. The participants all discussed actively participating in high school athletics, and some continued to play in college. Rick mentioned how important sports were to his identity growing up:

Pre-college, basketball was more important to me than almost anything in life.

Yep, I lived and breathed basketball. It was four days, lift at 6:30 in the morning, go get a ball in my hand, after [basketball]--eat, go to sleep, you know, do my homework, and go to sleep.

The importance of sports in Rick's community was also evident when he said, "Sports are pretty important in [my hometown], I'd say, especially. I went to a Catholic private high school, and sports are very important to it."

Similar to Rick, Kyle described his involvement in sports as a significant part of his experience:

I think for mostly the second half of high school was all about, uh, cross-country and track and running and I think that was...I'd say pretty much, like, my whole life, kind of like, revolved around that.

Rob also strongly identified with sports while growing up. He played hockey his entire childhood and traveled most of the year for tournaments. He continued playing sports in college and described the competitiveness of hockey as being influential to his experiences in college:

Derek, he was my friend, he's really competitive like me, and we played on the same hockey team since fourth grade...so I think we were really competitive with each other...which helps a lot, and I think that's helped us both in college.

Jason was also active in sports during high school and played collegiate golf for two years. The importance placed on sports is evident as Jason described his dilemma with pursuing studying abroad. He described his decision to pursue study abroad in the spring, rather than the fall, to avoid missing his favorite sports:

I got bummed out because, "Oh my God, I'm going to miss the NBA, I'm going to miss the beginning of baseball season, I'm going to miss all these other sports and stuff." If this was the fall, I can't say I would have gone, 'cause I like football too much.

Being Strong

As the participants described themselves prior to studying abroad, a common theme was the portrayal of being strong, whether that entailed physical or emotional strength. The depiction of strength was often apparent in the participants' descriptions of what it means to be a man and is a fundamental rule of masculinity (Brannon, 1976).

Men are validated by being strong and avoiding behavior that equates with being feminine or gay, such as showing fear, sadness, weakness, or emotion (Brannon, 1976). The act of hiding one's feelings is often a facade though, and developed to self-protect against ridicule or ostracism from important reference groups (Pollack, 2006). The participants desire to be strong and not to show weakness resemble the traits that are reinforced in society and expected of men.

David described the cultural and familial messages to which he was exposed that influenced his view of himself as a man. When defining what it means to be a man, David commented, "military." Many of his family members had joined the military and David recollected his mom's passion for public service and her telling him, "If you don't join the military, you're not really a man." David reflected on his mom's thoughts,

I think there's a certain role guys play, and there's certain shoes that need to be filled, so guys need to fill those shoes and girls need their shoes. But I think overall-- or at least that's what my mom told me is that guys should join.

Similar to David, Kyle also gravitated towards the military. He described as a young child meeting his cousin who was in the army and being in awe of his uniform and the prestige. Upon entering college, Kyle joined the Army Reserves for a period of time.

While David and Kyle described the military as a way to demonstrate strength, Will's desire to be strong was apparent in his desire to be like Superman:

I guess I'd really like to be really strong, physically, but at the same time I'd like to be kind and stuff. I don't know, it's kind of cheesy, but Superman you know. But--once again he kind of has that effect on the masculine things, too. It's kind of what, it's almost what we're expected to be not necessarily what we should

aspire to be and even if it is what we aspire to be, it's still kind of--well, not everybody's going to be able to do that. Nobody can do that, really when you're talking about Superman in particular.

In addition to the physical strength that is often associated with Superman and the military, many of the participants referenced emotional fortitude. When asked what it means to be a man, the notion of exhibiting emotional strength was apparent in Jason's comment:

I don't know, uh, emotionally tough, you know what I mean? Not easily affected by things, being able to confront challenges instead of letting them overwhelm you--I always thought maybe girls could figure it out eventually, but they're going to sit down and have themselves a nice little cry first (laughs) and then they'll figure it out rather than just, like, "This is gonna suck, let's get it done."

Rob shared a similar view of men embodying strength: "It always feels like--you want to kind of take control of things or sometimes--you always feel like people look up to you."

Being emotionally tough was also evident in Jason's comments about hiding his fears about going abroad. "I just thought it would be fun...I like to do things that scare me a little bit, so--on one hand I try to not show it. That goes back to that masculine thing." Jason also described having to be cognizant of the messages he shared about studying abroad with his parents and peers:

I had to be a lot more careful with [my parents]. With my friends it'd be, "Gee, I'm going to go sky-diving, go bungee-jumping, I'm going to jump off everything." And with my parents, it was, "I'm going to study, and I'm going to

study some more (laughs), and oh, my gosh, I'm going to get a room in the library just for me."

The theme of being strong was also evident in the participants' descriptions of their role models. Kyle described his father as someone who took care of his family, and the notion of strength was clear when he said,

If you're a guy, you have to take care of your family, the number one thing...

[My dad was] the provider and protector and he's--I've noticed--when it's time to be tough, he's not going to really give up or quit anything, he definitely has responsibilities and duties to take care of, which is a big thing that rubbed off.

Jason described his father as his role model, and mentioned that his father exhibited qualities of strength similar to what Kyle suggested:

Um, honestly, my dad probably [was my role model]. [I] just kind of respect the fact that he doesn't let anything bug him, and I'm almost exactly the same way.

I'm his son through-and-through. He was kind of the inspiration for me growing up, and there was also a little--looking at all the rural people, and I don't want to be like that.

Defining Success Personally

In addition to the participants expressing their masculinity through their competitive drive in academics and athletics, and being portrayed as strong, the final subtheme that emerged was the participants' tendency to define success personally.

Many of the participants described their decision to study abroad as being a personal choice that corresponded with their definition of success. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the traditional masculine role emphasizes career success as being central to men's lives

(Covin & Brush, 1991; Deutschendorf, 1996) and by defining personal success through work status and financial gain (O'Neil & Roberts Carroll, 1988). Throughout the interviews, the participants made comments about how they viewed study abroad as a way to set themselves apart and as a future career advantage.

David expressed how other students might not see the value in study abroad and may define success differently than he did:

I don't think they see a need to go abroad for their major, and I think a part of that is their whole ego of being an engineer, or titled as that. Um, and so I think they feel above going to study abroad or, I don't know, I think that could be one thing.

Similar to David, Jason labeled male students as having diverse interests that might not include an interest in studying abroad. When asked why Jason thought men were underrepresented in study abroad, he commented, "I guess I shouldn't be surprised. More of the men are focused just on getting through college and graduating or some of them partying and not caring about studies." Jason looked at study abroad differently than his peers. He focused on how study abroad connected with his International Studies major and with his pursuit of attaining his dream job for the Olympic committee.

Rob also suggested that a student's laziness could be a potential hindrance to pursuing study abroad. He acknowledged his own laziness while navigating the study abroad process but described how that approach did not match his personality:

I just don't know what's the reason, 'cause my reason was I almost didn't 'cause I was just being lazy about it, honestly. I don't know if guys are more lazy [than women] or not. That could be a big part. I think maybe they're more lazy, a

tendency I think that's normal and not as ambitious about it. Yeah, but I think in general, I'm not a lazy person, but I think most guys are--I think that's in studies they've proven I'm pretty sure. I don't know how true it is, but I think girls usually are better at actually getting the application in.

Chris defined success as working towards securing a good job, and for him, studying abroad was part of that equation. He explained how his peers might define success differently than he did:

Studying abroad can seem like a deviation from the task, with the task being getting ... what most people see as getting a degree. I've always seen as the task of getting a job, and getting a job you can't have without getting a degree, so that's one of the tasks, that's one of the steps to getting it, to finishing the task, if you will. And I'd say having a study abroad experience was kind of ... wasn't a step necessary, completely necessary, but it's kind of ... well, for lack of a politically correct analogy, I'll say it's like ... putting your résumé on steroids.

Chris believed that securing a job after college is about more than attaining a degree. For him, studying abroad was embedded in his personal definition of success.

Similar to Chris, Evan's personal definition of success included working abroad. He mentioned influential advice he heard from his dad who worked in Human Resources:

He's always telling us to spend these years kind of investing in yourself and what companies will be looking for later. So he's all for it, studying abroad, and I told him I wanted to work abroad, and he knew how valuable that would be for me later.

Throughout the data analysis the participants expressed their masculinity through competition, primarily through their academic drive and athletic involvements. In addition, the participants conveyed their masculinity through their desire to be strong and by defining success personally. My findings support the literature on traditional masculine norms, with a prioritization of status, power, and success (Brannon, 1976). The second theme that surfaced throughout the data analysis was the participants' unfamiliarity with themselves as men.

Men's Unfamiliarity with Themselves as Men

In this section, I discuss the second theme--men's unfamiliarity with themselves as men. First, I examine the men's limited awareness of their gender identity. Second, I discuss the blurring of societal and personal beliefs about gender. Finally, I explore the notion of gender as a female occurrence. Jones and McEwen's (2000) multiple dimensions of identity model helps to inform the theme of men's unfamiliarity with themselves as men by providing a possible explanation for the lack of gender awareness. Privilege and inequality are least visible and least understood by those who are most privileged by cultural systems. Like White people who do not see themselves as having a race (Helms, 1992), "these men may not have been conscious of their sex" (Harper & Harris, 2010, p. 60).

Limited Awareness of One's Gender Identity

The interview questions pertaining to gender solicited a similar response from most of the participants, one of unfamiliarity. During the data analysis, the participants' limited awareness of their gender identity became obvious from their short and often confused reaction to questions pertaining to their beliefs about being a man and about

gender differences. The reactions to questions about what it means to be a man and whether they noticed gender differences ranged from, “I don’t think about that” to “I don’t see any differences.”

When I asked David when he became aware of gender differences, his response was brief: “I’m not sure, I guess I never really thought about that, but...um, I don’t know.... [In elementary school] when the boys played basketball and the girls did their own thing.” Similar to David, Kyle’s description of being a man was also vague:

I think it’s probably--that they’re just hanging out with other guys and just kind of...lounging around, not really doing anything? Which I think is the majority of what me and my friends tend to do. Or tended to do and still do.

Most of the participants described women and men as being similar and did not articulate many differences. For example, Will described women and men as possessing similar personality characteristics and interests. When asked if he noticed any differences among genders, he replied,

Honestly, probably just biological differences is the first thing. I’m now seeing a lot of different, met a lot of different people, and everybody has different personalities. I would say that mentally, or emotionally even, guys and girls have a lot more similarities than they have differences. I mean, obviously there is a difference, but...Uh, I don’t know, to me it just seems like there are a lot of people who would, if they saw somebody in trouble, they would set stuff down to go help them and...that’s common in both guys and girls.

Will commented further on the similar interests of men and women in college: “Among college students in particular, both guys and girls seem to really like to party.... I mean everything, be it drinking, be it hooking up--girls are just as interested as the guys.”

Jason echoed Will’s notion of men and women being similar when he described academic achievement:

Um, honestly, I don’t really know just because, even all the way through high school--we had that same little group of 20 of us that were in every class together, and it was almost an even split--10 girls, 10 boys. I never really thought, “Oh, this science class is 18 guys and 2 girls”--I never fell into those stereotypes that you might expect...I don’t know if I ever noticed those stereotypical things that you think about men and women, but that could just be small town again.

Although Jason conveyed a sense of gender equality in high school, he later discussed women as being more emotional. Jason’s limited awareness of himself as a man seemed apparent because he mentioned not being aware of any gender differences, yet later described women as being more emotional when he commented, “Maybe girls could figure it out eventually, but they’re going to sit down and have themselves a nice little cry first (laughs) and then they’ll figure it out rather than saying, ‘This is gonna suck, let’s just get it done.’”

Rick had a similar response when articulating what it means to him to be a man. He described not putting much thought into his manhood:

I’ve always kind of held more of a view that guys and girls were similar. I’m not very traditionalist in the idea, so I think a lot more times that guys maybe are...less emotional, maybe in the way they speak. Maybe not necessarily on the

inside but in the way that they act, they're less emotional. They almost like to be the... trying to think; I've never thought about that as much.

Rick described himself as not being very traditional in his beliefs, yet in the same comment he illustrated the notion that men have to hide their emotions.

Similar to Rick, Rob illustrated the discrepancy that existed between his personal description of what it means to him to be a man and then whether that description actually fits him. When asked what it means to be a man, Rob's uncertainty of himself was evident:

Uh, it always feels like you want to kind of take control of things or sometimes--I don't know, you always feel like people look up to you, but I don't know, I don't really think it's too different anymore. It's kind of hard for me to say that, because--I'm not that person--I've had a girlfriend for three years, and I've never thought I was--actually, she's the one who has to choose a lot of things. I'm kind of laid back. I just don't care, honestly, I just don't care (laughs). That's how I am sometimes; I'm really relaxed with myself. I can get along with most anybody, it seems like. I just, I don't really care, I'll do anything.

When asked whether Rob's description of taking control of things and people looking up to him described him, his uncertainty seemed to surface again:

I don't think it describes me, but I know some people like that. I hear--especially in college, you hear guys talk like that. I don't know if it's just guys talking with guys exactly... I don't know. It's a hard question for me. I never think about that, honestly.

Again, the limited awareness of one's gender identity was evident in Rob's description of the interactions he was exposed to in Singapore:

Through meeting, actually through studying abroad, it feels like it still is--more emphasis on guys across the world, taking care of the family--you have to be the one that gets that job, and you have--it feels like you do have to be super responsible. That's the biggest thing I could say, but once again I never really thought, think of that, that's weird to me to think about that, I don't know...I still don't, still something I don't really see anymore. Anyways, I don't see a difference much...Just the only thing I know is from future, from past history of what it used to be like, but I don't think it's a big deal anymore honestly.

Blurring of Societal and Personal Beliefs about Gender

In addition to the participants' limited awareness of their gender identity, the intersection of societal norms and personal beliefs about gender was evident. Throughout the data analysis, it became apparent that the participants' beliefs regarding gender were intertwined with the gender roles reinforced by societal norms. As the students explained their depiction of what it means to be a man, the descriptions were often similar to the societal representation of a man--power, success, and physical strength (O'Neil, 2008). Despite the overlap in the participants' personal and societal definitions of being a man, most of the students expressed a disapproval of society's depiction. This theme reinforces the importance of helping men to recognize the range of options for expressing masculinities, an outcome for men who have never felt comfortable embracing socially prescribed male gender roles (Harper & Harris, 2010).

While discussing his view of what it means to be a man, Chris commented on the obligation to provide a sense of security and protection for those he cared about:

I'd say protective and nurturing--in a relationship. I think that kind of goes back to--I don't know if that's a societal trait that carries through or that's something that's instinctive. But I feel like men typically, especially in a relationship, have an instinctive trait or something that growing up they didn't realize they were learning to be a provider or protector. And especially if people you perceive to be not, I mean, not weaker, not saying women are weaker, but just kind of being able to protect and provide for those who you care about. I'd say also men would typically--can kind of be more needing to be argumentative--I'm much more wanting to be right and prove the point.

When asked what society's definition of being a man was, the similarities with Chris's personal definition were obvious. Chris felt his role as a man entailed being a provider and a nurturer, while he used those same attributes to describe society and pop culture's representation of a man:

It's definitely changing, 'cause I'd say society definitely has--especially in older society and whatnot, and pop culture media is definitely--the men are the protectors, the providers--and a traditional family, quote-unquote traditional family--they go to work, mom gets the kids to school, something like that. I think that's the traditional.

As discussed in the previous section, Rick commented on not really thinking much about what it means to him to be a man but described men as being more emotionally restrictive. When asked how society defined being a man, he stated:

I think that when marriage comes into play, that maybe the male is... almost supposed to be the head figure. Not necessarily they're more important or they should make all the decisions, but they ... they should always have a voice in things, and ... they should be able to look at things more objectively, too. They should have more of an objective viewpoint as a male figure of the family, so... Yeah, and now that I say that, I think that males may sometimes be more objective than females in their viewpoints.

When asked how Rick would describe being objective, he responded,

I think of objectivity as less emotions involved and more practical (pause). When you think about doing something objectively, you're thinking about...an objective person would maybe in a, in a crisis would stop and, you know, kind of turn their back to the crisis and think [about] things more clearly, whereas a subjective person would just act on intuition.

As Rick described the societal messages regarding gender, his own idea about men subscribing to a less emotional role was intertwined in his response. Rick's personal beliefs about being a man, as well as the societal messages, both depicted men as being less emotional.

In addition to the participants describing men as providers and less emotional, the portrayal of strength was illustrated in the students' personal and societal definitions of being a man. Evan described his belief of what it means to be a man through his comments about sports and being fit. When asked to describe the first thought that came to his mind about being a man, he said, "Uh, I guess sports or weight-lifting or something like that." Subsequently, when asked if that description fit him, Evan commented,

Not really. I played soccer in high school 'cause it was the only sport I enjoyed 'cause I grew up on it. My dad was a soccer ref my whole life. I never really did weight-lifting or anything like that. Actually I didn't until I got into it when I was in Germany but I really haven't been too big into exercising.

Evan commented that he saw the messages about men being fit and interested in sports through the media, "which is kind of annoying." He described German society in a different fashion:

[In the U.S.], all the TV and media and commercials--everything is about being fit and strong and providing for a family. I don't know what else. But in Europe it's not, in Germany and Europe in general, it's really not that big of a deal.

Similar to Evan, Will described society's portrayal of men as being strong and depicted by power when he commented on what he sees in the media: "A lot of trucks, and I see a lot of massive stereo systems. You get the mentality that bigger is better in society's eyes. I don't necessarily agree with any of it." In addition to the societal messages of bigger being better, Will commented on the societal pressure for men to be interested in sports and to be fit. When asked if this description fit him, the blurring of his personal and societal beliefs was evident:

No, not exactly...I mean, I watch football. I pay attention to professional football more so than I do college football and, I mean, it's, I don't know. I feel like guys are more pressured to be a lot more athletic than girls are 'cause, I don't know, I think I feel that pressure, too, personally. I'm trying to get on an exercise program just to be more fit.

Rick reiterated Will's comments by describing media's portrayal of men in a similar fashion:

Media definitely skews things. They're more traditional--media in the past, but that's kind of a role they've taken that males are the big, strong ... people. They're who society should almost look up to and ... whereas females--they're portrayed as models and thin and this and that.

When asked whether these societal messages matched how Rick felt, he replied, "No, no, I disagree with the media... Yeah, it is-- it can be entertaining at times, but as long as you don't let it change your belief system." Similar to Rick, David expressed defining gender roles for himself:

I feel like the media really has a lot to do with what you have to think of when you have to think of gender-based roles, but--I guess it really just depends on how you want to define it and what shoes you want to fill.

While Kyle's description of being a man was rather vague and entailed hanging out with his friends, his societal definition depicted the pressure to be successful:

Uh, it's pretty heavily on--I would say success, success in whatever field you choose, whatever you want to do. But you have to do the best at it and in some ways it's--the competition. I'd say, to be definitely pretty competitive and--and to be the big, successful guy.

Although Kyle's personal description of what it meant to him to be a man was brief, the blurring of his beliefs and societal messages was represented in his drive to be successful:

I would say in some ways it fits and some ways it doesn't. If you have no aspirations in business or whatever--I've learned I'm not the most athletic guy

since high school--I was never the big top football player or whatever so I could never really be that--I'm average sized and smaller than the majority of the people, so I can't really get away with that as much as I would like to. But that's like wanting to be the best kind of thing, it would definitely fit I think--it's not really the business or athletics--'cause I'm going to do what I want to do, kind of thing.

Gender as a Female Characteristic

The participants' unfamiliarity with themselves as men was also apparent in their descriptions of gender, which often was referred to as a female characteristic. Consistently, the participants described gender differences as being a non-issue and gender roles in reference to women becoming more independent. The participants' articulation of gender in this study was similar to Davis's (2010) and Levine and Cureton's (1998) findings that "males were neither as eloquent nor as thoughtful in describing gender differences. It was simply not on the male radar screen" (p. 111). Similarly, in *The Other Half of Gender* (2006), Bannon and Correia noted that gender has long remained synonymous with women. The one-sided description of gender occurs not only through the voices of men themselves, but gender is also mishandled in most social spaces, including college and university campuses. Any emphasis on men as gendered beings is thought to be in opposition to important efforts to achieve equity for women (Harper & Harris, 2010).

The participants' view of gender as a female characteristic appears to be reinforced within social structures and practices, further supporting the belief that gender is a socially constructed concept (Kimmel & Messner, 2007). Because gender is viewed

as a one-sided concept within social structures, it is not surprising that the men in this study described gender this way. My findings are important because they further replicate the work of Brannon and Correia (2006) and Connell (2005) advocating for a more two-sided treatment of gender. They suggested that it needs to be more widely understood that men have gender too; and because gender is relational, the status of women cannot be improved without a corresponding emphasis on tending to the social forces that misshape men's attitudes and behaviors and helping them develop productive masculinities (Brannon & Correia, 2006; Connell, 2005).

The theme gender as a female characteristic was evident in Jason descriptions of gender roles in New Zealand society, with his comments focusing on women:

Obviously it's a First World country kind of thing, so they're more progressive than some places would be. It's not like women are going to get buckets of water and making food and cleaning the house and stuff. The school is pretty, not predominantly, but definitely over 50/50 for women...than men. So a lot of the education there was centered towards women...so they were coming up. I didn't really see too many specific gender roles for anybody. It was pretty fairly balanced, I mean--as equal as you would hope that a First World country could be.

Many of the participants described the gender roles in a host country to be similar to those in the U.S. They often supported their claim with examples pertaining to the roles of women. Kyle mentioned not noticing gender differences in Germany but discussed the culture as being similar to the U.S. because women are independent. Kyle explained,

I wouldn't say there are very distinct gender roles. 'Cause I would say they're [a] fairly modern industrialized society like the U.S. is and if the woman wants to focus on her career, she's free to pretty much do whatever she wants and...I think the only big issue I saw was that the birth rate was declining because more women wanted to focus on their careers. They didn't want to rush into motherhood.

Rob also implied that women are treated equally when referring to gender roles: "For the women in Singapore, like I said, they're both treated--the women and men are so independent. Women have the same rights; they're like stepping up now and taking on the roles."

While discussing gender, another common example shared by the participants was the notion of women focusing on their careers. David described Korean women as making a "statement" when the women made decisions to prioritize their careers. He said,

Marriage-wise, it's different. For guys--now it's a little bit changing because women are into the workforce and quite honestly are doing better than we are, so I think, for a small percentage, it's transitioned to where it is in the U.S., where girls if they do want to go out and make a statement, "This is what I can do," instead of just settling down and having kids and being at home. I think the mentality is, if the guy, the husband, can provide for everyone--it's the women don't do anything except go shop and spend their husband's money on everything they want, which is fine if you want that lifestyle.

Like David, Rob commented on women's independence and their decision to have children later:

I think it's very similar to the States. And people were having issues with--they want people to have more babies because people wait until they're 35, the women and men, 'cause the women are getting more professional and more jobs.

Chris also discussed gender through a female lens:

I think how it's changing now, and--some changes within the media and within the culture, is that more women are becoming more active. They're wanting to do more, which is cool. If you're looking in the past--no women are wanting to be engineers; it's a man's job. But you're seeing more and more women going into that field and getting interested in science and not necessarily just the other fields they might typically go to college for--so I think that's cool. Uh, because I was never one to think that women couldn't do some of the things men could.

David shared a similar sentiment when he described his belief that women and men can achieve the same things:

If they're driven, I don't think there's an issue. I don't know. I've heard women have harder times getting up to wherever they need to be, but I think that maybe just builds character as you go. I don't know. I don't really see [the difference]. If you need to get the job done, and the girl can do it better than the guy can, I don't see the difference; it doesn't really mean much.

Although many of the participants described gender roles as being equal, some provided examples of women having to adhere to different standards while studying

abroad than men did. When asked if Will's study abroad experience would have been similar if he were a female, he commented,

I want to say yes, but I don't know, there are a lot of different facets into being female, too. I mean...I don't--just based on my experience--in order for you to be treated differently, not only do you have to be female, but you also have to be attractive, the social standard of attractive, too.

While Will suggested women may be subjected to a different standard based on appearance, Chris implied that women may be expected to be more submissive. Despite Chris's earlier comment about not seeing a difference in gender roles, his example portrayed a different picture:

I think it would've been different. This is going off my perceptions of the friends I know that went there that were female, um (pause). They probably would've gotten sought after more... hit on, I guess for lack of a better word, for just being, women in general. The men in Western society, men usually aren't the ones who, I mean, they do, but in general they're not the ones being hit on. So I feel like, especially if you're a woman in general, you're going to have that precaution feeling more often than a guy would. I feel like you'd be expected to act different. And this is just going from female stereotypes, if you will, 'cause men are typically--they say what's on their mind and they argue. Whereas women in culture usually are supposed to be more submissive. It's not necessarily true, I'm not saying it is true, but you can still see it more than you would. Men have no--usually, unless it's their character--have no problems in

stating their point...whereas a woman might feel less comfortable, especially in a different country, to do so.

While David's experience was somewhat different as a Korean American studying abroad, he described his disappointment with the various ways the Korean culture was changing and becoming westernized. The theme of gender as a female characteristic was evident as he described how the female role was changing, while providing no reference on how westernization was impacting men in Korea. He commented,

My impressions of certain parts of Korea, like the culture parts that are changing, it's frustrating, and I don't really like it too much--a lot of the girls, the Korean women, they're more rowdy, so they date other--I'm not against the interracial, that's cool by me, but they're just doing it because they like to piss off their parents...becoming westernized, it's terrible. I don't really like it, and the whole, the women smoking more freely. I don't like that, either...that's not good for you, especially for women--I don't really smoke--I don't know if that's sexist. A lot of [women] didn't smoke, 'cause it wasn't culturally accepted. And then a lot of the girls don't like the smell, they don't like the taste, so it was more only that guy thing.

David went on to say that in the U.S. women have been more verbal in their fight for equality: "Because of the social issues we're having today, women--there's always those social constructs that--women are the underclass and they need more equality and that whole mentality has brought women here to be more vocal and more opinionated."

Similar to David's description of women having more liberties, Chris explained a comparable way he witnessed women engaged in the same drinking behaviors as men in Scotland:

We all, granted most people can drink over there, so that's a lot less under-the-table. So girls will still go out, and it's not really as taboo. Uh, not really taboo, that's not the right word, but we'll go out. It's more socially acceptable at our age and like I feel like for guys in the States it's more socially acceptable to under-age drink, if you will, than women. I don't know why that is, it's just kind of a thing I always figured but it's not really the case over there 'cause everyone can pretty much drink.

The idea conveyed by David and Chris that men are subjected to different standards than women supported the theme of men being unfamiliar with themselves as men and gender being a female characteristic.

Alternatively, Will illustrated a different situation that appeared to exemplify women having more flexibility in their role than men do. He described Australian women as possessing diverse interests and being able to express themselves freely. When asked if women were similar in the U.S., Will reiterated that women could be whom they wanted, while there was a different script for men:

It's kind of like that thing you hear, it's more of a joke than anything, "So girls can wear pants, why can't I wear a dress?"... As an engineer, I've definitely noticed it too, 'cause there's probably--400 people, there's probably four or five girls in there. When you see a girl in there, when *I* see a girl in there, anyway, I'm not surprised. I'm more surprised at the lack of girls in there, 'cause they

really can do anything. But at the same time, I don't feel like...say, if a guy was to take courses to become a social planner or wedding planner or whatever, that is almost unheard of.

Men as Relational Beings

In this section, I explore the theme of men as relational beings. First, I examine the participants' desire for connection and to find their place. Second, I discuss the vital role of family. Finally, I explain the men's fear of being alone. Throughout the interviews, the men referenced not only the importance of their existing relationships but also their concern of being without those connections while studying abroad. While the traditional masculine role encourages men to deny intimate connections and to avoid being perceived as feminine (Pollack, 2006), the men in this study portrayed a different image as relational beings.

Seeking Connection and Finding One's Place

During the first interview, the participants described their background prior to studying abroad. A common sentiment shared by the participants was the importance of feeling connected to their peers and finding one's place which often included making changes to one's social circle.

During high school, Jason experienced a shift in friends when he elected not to participate in the more "popular" sport, football. He said,

In high school, I'd been playing golf my whole life and golf and football happen at the same time, so I'd play golf in the fall, and [my best friend] started playing football; we kind of fell into that. So football, that stereotypical jock role. We kind of just split apart in high school, didn't really bother either of us that much...

and the same thing happened with a lot of our old friends, 'cause, even though the golf team [and] the football team were just awful, absolutely awful, it was still, "You're such a nerd, not playing football, you're a wuss." So it was--I'm better at this than you'll ever be at football, so, it was--that culture just kinda sucked a little bit, but it didn't bother me that much...and a lot of my friends kinda shifted off because that was where the popular kids were going [football], and I considered doing it, but I had to play golf.

While Jason navigated changes to his friendships due to sports, Kyle described seeking new connections after a break-up with a girlfriend in high school:

Midway through high school, before then I had a really big group of friends and had a bunch of falling outs with them.... I think it finally got to the point where I'm just done with you guys, you know? I'll talk to you individually, on a case-by-case basis, but as a group, no more. I think that big thing was kind of the summer between my sophomore and junior year, and I didn't really hang out with anyone; I didn't do a whole lot. It was kind of mostly focused on me, and then kind of coming out of that I talked to my friend who was on the cross-country team--and he said, "Hey, I run cross-country. You should definitely come out." And then I met a whole new group of friends that we pretty much hung out exclusively for the next two years.

Some participants described seeking more mature connections that entailed surrounding themselves with more positive people. Rob explained his desire not to associate with his irresponsible friends:

I think a lot of friends I tried not to be like in high school. Some of the friends I had--now they're not even at college. I had some friends who were pretty stupid, I think. So I wouldn't hang out with them, just kind of learned how irresponsible they've been, and they kind of pushed school aside.... Yeah, definitely most of the kids I hung out with in high school I don't hang out with anymore--they're just kind of, I don't know, kind of screw-offs. I still get along with them--we don't have anything in common anymore just to talk about.

Will had an experience similar to Rob's and described learning that some of his relationships were not what they seemed:

Well, I guess in middle school I had a few friends. The ones that stand out the most, I should say, they were, when I saw them, I thought "Wow, those guys are really cool. I'm going to be just like them." Then it turns out that that particular group of friends ended up--I think the last time I heard that one guy was in prison, I'm pretty sure. But I didn't want to do that because I was starting to realize that the people were not the people I wanted to hang out with, but they were the only people who were available to hang out with, I suppose. I could tell they were--that wasn't what I wanted to be, I guess. So I went to public high school, try to make better friends, make kind of more meaningful relationships.

While many of the participants described their role in seeking out more positive connections, Evan's experience was a bit different. In third grade, Evan tested high in math and was moved up to the fifth-grade math class. Evan described how challenging this experience was because of the toll it took on his relationships. He said, "It was a bit rough, I think. It wasn't an easy year for me 'cause I kind of lost communication with

friends from my elementary school and went to a different elementary school where I didn't know anybody.”

Whether the participants sought out different friendships or life experiences prompted change, a common sentiment was the desire to feel connected and to find one's place. The theme was also present throughout the participants' study abroad experiences. Jason described how simply seeing study abroad promoted as an opportunity to bond with other students was pivotal in his decision to participate. He explained,

I didn't really know anybody that had done it themselves, but listening to [a study abroad] panel, the two guys on that panel, there's two of them that ended up either living with each other or close by each other down there. And they were talking about how they did everything--they bought a car and drove somewhere every weekend, and then they said, “Yeah, we only spent \$11,000.” I was, “I don't have that much money. What?” But just that camaraderie kind of things that they did together, and they showed a bunch of pictures, it was just kind of them together in all these different pictures, so it was, like, “This is kind of cool.” They made good friends.

The desire for connection was also evident in the participants' description of the friendships they formed, and most described these friendships as one of the most memorable aspects of study abroad. Kyle commented, “I'd say the biggest things are the people I met over there. And, I'd say obviously, all of us hanging out with my friends and everything.” Chris shared the same memory:

I remember a lot with the people I met, but I'd say something as simple as... talking with my friends... And maybe that's why my favorite part was meeting

new people. I realize kind of going over there that when you're across the world, essentially across an ocean, you can, you'd be still able to find people that are very similar to your friends at home.

The participants were in agreement that the friendships they made while studying abroad were one of the most influential aspects of their experience. The importance of feeling connected was also present in a few of the participants' responses regarding what is important to know about the experiences of men who study abroad. Rick discussed how focusing on friendships may encourage more men to study abroad: "I think that would be kind of a good marketing tool--stories like mine--guy friends and girl friends that I made, like, how awesome that is, how they're life-long friends." Similar to Rick, Will was drawn toward opportunities to connect with others, while his girlfriend, Beth, had different objectives:

Beth wanted to take a lot of pictures, she likes to remember everything whereas I, on the other hand, I'm much more concerned about having fun with the people I'm around, rather than what's around us. So I feel like that is a reason that guys may not feel as inclined to study abroad as girls do.

Influential Family Life

A consistent theme that developed throughout the data analysis was the participants' positive familial relationships. Most of the students described having a close connection with their parents. All of the participants' parents were still married, and six of the eight students had siblings. In addition to the close bond, most of the participants described their parents' high academic expectations of them. The theoretical framework of masculinity as a socially constructed concept helped to inform this theme.

Harper and Harris (2010) pointed out that no one is born knowing how to express masculinities according to socially prescribed expectations but rather learn to do so through social messages and interactions that are reinforced beginning in childhood and persisting through adulthood. The positive familial support and the parental messages to focus on academics were reinforced in the participants' lives, which contributed to how the students expressed their masculinities.

Supportive. All of the participants described a close, supportive family connection, while a few mentioned they felt closer to their fathers than their mothers. When asked to describe the relationship with their family, a similar response surfaced: feeling connected and supported by one's parents. Chris commented, "My whole life I've lived with my mom and my dad; I don't have any siblings. We're all pretty close...they're always very supportive in whatever I did. I was always fairly open with them; I talked to them about anything." Rick echoed Chris as he described his familial relationship: "I'd say we're close. Close enough where I moved back home the last two summers when I have a lease [at university], and I lived with them and worked out of home." Kyle also described a similar positive relationship when he said, "I have my mom, my dad, an older sister, and a younger sister. It's a pretty close family."

The relevance of the close family connection theme was also apparent in Jason's description of the scope of his parents' encouragement, "Yeah, they support me mentally and financially, which is nice." Rob also described a close bond with his family; in particular, his father. He said,

We're pretty close. I talk to my father more. I think I, I don't know why, but I usually text him first, and he tells my mom because she's never on her phone,

but I keep in touch with them probably at least once a week. I just let them know I did good on this test or...ask how they're doing, 'cause we still go on family trips together.

Will also mentioned a closer connection with his father than his mother when he described his relationship with his parents:

It's good. I obviously don't agree with a lot of the things that they do now, in particular my mom. Her parents grew up in the Depression and they were kind of--she wasn't in poverty or anything like that but she was on the lower end of the income side, I guess.

Despite not always agreeing with his mom, Will still described the connection as close and mentioned fulfilling his parents' expectations:

The biggest one was do everything that I was asked to do. I was expected to do everything that my parents could do. I was expected to know how to do laundry, sometimes cook, just clean up after myself. I was expected to go to church every Sunday, too. I guess I felt I met their expectations pretty well, so they never had to tell me to do a whole lot.

The supportive nature of the participants' families was also evident in the parents' reaction to the participants' decision to study abroad. Chris mentioned that despite his mom feeling somewhat worried about his going abroad, his parents were encouraging:

They were definitely all for it. They really helped encourage me to go. They were obviously worried, especially my mom, and my dad was too. They let me choose where I wanted to go and gave me some suggestions and they just kind of

let me--I did a lot of it myself, but they helped me for some of it especially with traveling and passports and all that fun stuff. We all discussed financials and whatnot and what that was going to be like and what it could mean, finishing up at Iowa State, so they were nothing but supportive.

Evan described his parental support for study abroad in a similar fashion: “They were all for it. They helped me out quite a bit financially so that I could afford to travel while I was in Germany.”

High academic expectations. In addition to most of the students describing a positive familial connection, the participants discussed the high academic expectations their parents had of them. This finding may suggest that the participants in this study were reinforced in their social interactions with their family and social settings to prioritize academics; further supporting the notion that gender is a socially constructed concept (Harper & Harris, 2010). Chris described the expectation to achieve good grades:

They always had pretty high expectations of me, but not too high. They always expected me to do my job. I never had any outside job, like a paying job until I was out of high school because their idea was my job was to focus on grades, which I did. So they had a very high expectation of me through school and me getting good grades and me taking responsibility for those.

Jason shared a similar description of his upbringing, explaining:

Scholastically they always expected me to get good grades. I come home with a B+, they would say, “What happened?” It’s, like, I missed three of them! It was a 10-question test. I don’t know. But, you know, I did, I lived up to that pretty well,

they always expected a lot out of school. And then, um, they wanted me to do a lot of sports, which I did, which was probably good for me, and, and they were pretty cool about that. They weren't going to force me into anything, but [if] I committed to something I kind of had to stick with it, you know, like for example, I did competitive swimming for a long time, then after a while I started to hate it... but they're like, "You signed up for the season; you're going to finish it." (gasp) "The season's nine months long! Please, dad, please don't make me do that!" But, yeah, he made me finish it, and then, you know, they were supportive but made me commit a little bit, which was...kind of a good thing, yeah.

Evan's high academic expectations echoed those of Chris and Jason. He commented, [The expectations] were pretty high. I think it was in sixth or seventh grade, and I failed an exam on purpose just to see what it was like 'cause school for me got really easy. I didn't study. I didn't do anything, just easy. And then I failed an exam, just to see what it was like, and my parents weren't happy. Any time we got less than a B they were pretty upset. So I'd say the expectations were pretty high of all of us.

When asked whether he noticed different expectations for his friends or peers Evan mentioned his parents' background as a potential explanation for their high standards. He explained,

I think a bit different. I think just because my parents went to university and knew how important schooling was, and so they put a lot of pressure on us for that and there was a lot of stuff at home that was aimed at schooling. We had rules for using computers and video games and everything.

The high academic expectations Evan's parents had for him, and the anticipation of attending college, were also evident in Kyle's description:

We definitely had to go to a four-year college and graduate. When I was younger, I had the whole thing where I really wanted to be in the military. And a few times I just tried to go straight out of high school. But our parents said, "You're not doing that." I had to go to college, had to graduate. I think leading up to that there was definitely the expectation that I was going to work hard, get good grades. I didn't necessarily have to have a job while I was in high school, as long as I worked hard in school.

Rick's parents shared a similar sentiment regarding college participation: "Expectations were to get involved with sports and in the community and graduate from high school and attend college. Both my parents were college graduates, so that was kind of the bar, to go to college."

Similarly, David also felt pressured to achieve academically. He discussed the high expectations he felt from both his parents as well as from the cultural influence of his Korean community that focused on success and carrying out family legacies. David described his parents involving him in activities that focused on academics:

It was fairly strict in the beginning; a lot of tutoring and academies after school, and music and sports and it was fairly competitive... It was academically not athletic, but academically we were fairly competitive--but my parents knew that we had to do that, and all the other parents knew they had to do it, so we all kind of blended in really well, because it wasn't just me, it was a lot of my other classmates and peers.

David's parents wanted the best for him and they felt the competition from other parents to do what they could to help him achieve academically. David talked about the cultural pressure he felt to achieve because of the obligation to uphold the family name. He described the added responsibility he felt as the oldest child in his family:

They kept pushing me to do well and keep up with studies and getting grades was--my parents' history and stuff, the lineage, because a lot of my other family members, cousins and uncles, they've all done really well, and so I feel like it would be really embarrassing if I didn't do really well, considering my mom's the oldest on her side of the family, and that'd be really embarrassing if I--me being the oldest--if I just dropped out or if I didn't do the expectations that my family did.

When asked if David felt a lot of pressure as a result, he reacted with,

Yeah, it's terrible. I wish my parents or none of my family members went to college so I'd be like the first one to go. That'd be kind of cool, but nope, it was a pain, and so that's kind of what kept pushing me even now.

While most of the participants discussed the high expectations of their parents and the pressure to succeed academically, Rob's family portrayed an alternative approach.

He described his parents as being flexible:

They really left everything up to me. They mainly, you get confirmed, and then they never made me go to church. It was my choice. They never asked about grades. They expected me to figure it out on my own, which really helped in college 'cause I've never felt like I've had someone on me. They were really strict with me at first. They used to do homework with me, but as soon as I got in

middle school at least, they kind of stopped [to] see what I would do on my own.

“That’s the time to fail, it’s safe”--that’s what my dad said. He told me he believed that’s the time to fail, ’cause there’s really no...there’s no effect, the grades [in middle school] don’t affect your GPA [to get into high school].

The sense of familial support and encouragement the participants described may signify more than a positive parental relationship; it may also provide insight into the participants’ masculine identity. Research indicates that as males are more rigid in enacting masculine ideologies and more stressed from failing to live up to masculine ideals (i.e., had greater gender role stress), they reported less attachment to, and more psychological separation from, parental relationships (Blazina & Watkins, 2000; DeFranc & Mahalik, 2002; Fischer & Good, 1998). While at times the men in this study did exhibit behaviors resembling the traditional masculine norms (competitive, being strong, hiding fears), they remained closely connected with their parents, which could indicate that the participants were flexible in their enactment of masculine ideologies. The participants did not describe experiencing significant gender role conflict and stress, potentially suggesting that the participants feel comfortable deviating from socially prescribed male gender norms.

Fear of Being Alone

The theme of men as relational beings was also evident through the participants’ fear of being alone, a finding that emerged frequently during the data analysis. The fear was apparent in the students’ discussions of their lives prior to studying abroad and while abroad. It was also frequently mentioned as a possible explanation for the gender disparity in study abroad participation rates. Two of the participants, Evan and Will,

went abroad with their girlfriends, and two, Rob and Rick, had friends nearby. Although four participants did not travel with an acquaintance, the unease of being alone was evident in most of the participants' experiences, furthering supporting the theme of men as relational beings.

While Evan reflected on the influential aspects of his study abroad experience, the importance of traveling with others was apparent. He commented,

Well, I'd say the important people would be Gina that was there for so much of it, and then when she was gone she still took so much of my time. And Alex is a good friend of mine now, he was there. He was actually on the previous Berlin trip with us, too. He was my roommate in Berlin when I went on my trip so I convinced him to sign up for the year-long exchange with me so I wouldn't be the only one--so I had someone I knew.

Despite spending a significant portion of his year-long study abroad program with his girlfriend and another friend from his home university, Evan's concern about being alone was still apparent. When asked what his expectations of study abroad were, Evan remarked, "I guess I was kind of expecting to be all on my own, a little bit lonely, away from family and friends."

Similar to Evan, Rick had a friend in a nearby city, but he was worried about not having a support system when he arrived. He commented,

The biggest thing I was nervous about was... I didn't know anyone going over there. I had my friend in Milan, but how much can we really do together? It's a two, a two-hour train ride north of Florence so I can't just rely on hanging out with him every weekend... I figured, worst-case scenario--I'm independent

enough, I can travel by myself. I can still meet people here and there. It was a huge shock; I met some, some really good friends.

Jason shared similar feelings when asked what his expectations of study abroad were:

I was a little concerned about making friends. I felt like I'd gotten so lucky here when I transferred, I figured it would be a lot like when I transferred schools, completely new school, didn't know anybody. I knew that there were three or four other kids from Iowa State going [to New Zealand]...so it was the same situation. I have a little bit in common with a very few, very small number of people, but I was concerned that I wouldn't have the same kind of luck making friends or the people I live with, maybe they'll all be jerks as opposed to how nice it was here, and so that was probably the one concern I had with it. Otherwise, I just thought to myself, it's New Zealand. I can find something to go do outdoors. I don't have to sit inside all day.

Despite the fear of not knowing anyone, one of the most pivotal aspects of the study abroad experience was the friendships the participants formed. The focus for most of the participants was on leaving a close-knit group of friends and not having a support system when they arrived. Rick described the countless opportunities to make new friends while abroad; however, prior to going he was concerned with being alone. Despite his fear, Rick was able to overcome his anxiety. He remarked,

Everything just started off so very well. It just kind of laid the foundation--that was my biggest worry--I didn't feel like I was going to be personable enough to make friends. I just needed those opportunities to make friends, and wow, these opportunities are all over. It's, like, okay, good.

Rick questioned whether he would be personable enough to make friends, and Jason exhibited similar self-doubt. He described his anxious thoughts while on his departing flight to his study abroad site:

Doing things that scare me--I think it's just kind of natural. I was going alone, I literally didn't know anybody. On some level, that's scary and so that's kind of why I wanted to do it, just to see--can I survive? Can I live through not knowing anybody and going to the other side of the planet and be okay? And so it turned out it wasn't scary in the way like jumping out of a plane is scary. But I was concerned on the plane 'cause you get there, and what if I don't like it immediately; now I'm stuck here for five months, oh, my God.

The fear of being alone was evident not only in the students' expectations and apprehensions about studying abroad but also in their explanations of what's important for people to know about the experiences of men. Rick commented,

Makes me think maybe it had something to do with--not concern of mine but something I had to think about, was here's my friends at [home university], my friends in [home state], my high school friends, college friends, and I'd be gone for four months. What's that going to do when I come back? So maybe that... Do you think maybe that's something, part of the reason males are apprehensive about studying abroad? Leaving their friends behind? But then again females--where does that leave females? Why aren't females afraid to leave their friends behind?

Although Rick mentioned it was not a concern of his to leave his friends behind, his other comments suggested otherwise. For example, Rick said,

I'd say the friends thing was a big fear, how I didn't know anyone. I was going to a place where I didn't know anyone, a little bit scared of that. I'm excited to travel and get out there and see cool things. I would feel more comfortable to have somebody to be there with me, so maybe a little more pressure because of that. I think that would be a kind of a good marketing tool would be...stories like mine--guy friends and girl friends that I made--how awesome that is, how they're life-long friends. My parents say time and time again when I talked to them a few days before I left--gosh, I'm going to miss 'em so much. It was really tough for me to think about; they were my life-long friends.

Kyle echoed Rick's comment when he articulated why men might study abroad less frequently than women. Kyle said, "It's the one really, really dumb thing I thought of is that you're going to miss hanging out with your friends at home and there's college football, basketball, and whatever going on."

The fear of not knowing anyone, combined with the concern of missing friends and home events, were common apprehensions shared by the participants. Jason noticed that women often study abroad in groups, which could be an explanation for why women study abroad more frequently than men:

I'm not sure, maybe guys are just not expected to be as worldly as girls? You know what I mean? It sounds stupid, but a lot of the girls I know that studied abroad went in herds, like 10 of them at a time would go off to Italy or something. Guys, it's either they don't have that support system, all of these friends, to take 'em with, or they just don't really care about other cultures.

Similarly, Rob also mentioned that women seemed to approach study abroad differently, and it was important for him to study abroad with a friend:

I think it helped that I knew someone going, definitely helped. I think guys usually like having a friend more around. I think it's different. Guys are going with someone, experiencing, and I think girls are more open to just meeting a bunch of new people. I could see that maybe being a difference.

Chris also suggested that men and women approach study abroad differently, particularly if they are in a relationship. Chris had a long-term girlfriend and discussed how the fear of losing a significant other may deter men from participating:

Going abroad is possible in a relationship. It could be easy or it could be harder depending on your relationship, but it's very well possible and so I highly recommend it. I feel like that's the big concern for people that are in relationships which, at this point in life is fairly--I wouldn't say is the majority necessarily, but I'd say it's probably more than should be left out. It's a plurality, if you will. Plus I think men tend to be typically--coming back to that nurturing thing--I think they're afraid about going, especially within a relationship. If they are in a relationship--because they feel like they're going to lose it--and then, I don't know, it could be the same for women, too. I feel like--this might sound bad--I feel like women would be--men would be much more supportive of women going--a boyfriend would be much more supportive of the girlfriend going abroad than a girlfriend of their boyfriend. That's going from past experience.

Study Abroad as a Pathway to Change

In this section, I describe the theme of study abroad as a pathway to change and discuss the influence of study abroad on the participants' identity. First, I share the participants' responses that conveyed a new understanding of masculinity. Second, I discuss the role of study abroad on the participants' sense of confidence. Third, I examine the various ways study abroad influenced the participants' future plans. Finally, I describe the participants' shift towards a more inclusive worldview. The theme supports existing literature on the positive developmental outcomes of study abroad: enhanced self-awareness, cultural sensitivity, a critical perspective on the U.S., language acquisition, and increased social competence in unfamiliar settings (Carlson et al., 1990; Dolby, 2004; Dwyer, 2004; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004). In addition, similar to previous research, the participants described study abroad as enhancing their interest in academic work, helping them acquire important career skill sets, and influencing their perspective on world events (Commission, 2005). New to study abroad literature outlined in this theme is the notion that study abroad influenced how the participants viewed and performed masculinity.

Masculinity Redefined

Most of the students described a new perspective on masculinity, including a more open definition of what it means to be a man, as a result of studying abroad. Many of the students described the shift as the result of witnessing different behaviors in diverse cultures. When asked whether Evan's impressions of men in the U.S. had changed as a result of study abroad, he commented,

I guess before I kind of thought that it was expected of me to fulfill that stereotypical manliness trait, and then going to Europe and seeing that it's not that important, you know, that you can do other stuff and be yourself and not have to worry about that as much is pretty nice.

Evan went on to explain that it changed his view of himself because, "I don't worry about it as much. I'd like to be in good shape but I don't have to worry about being really fit or really muscular or anything."

In addition to placing less emphasis on fulfilling a specific male role, the students described being less judgmental of other men for the choices they made. Jason described meeting men who were more laid back, and as a result he felt less critical:

They're more laid back, especially about themselves. I used to just see the preppy typical frat boy and think, "Wow, what a jerk" kind of thing. But now, I think, "forget it." Do what you want to do 'cause it's worse other places, well, not worse, but different other places.

Evan shared a similar sentiment of feeling less judgmental of men: "Before [studying abroad]... I think I might see a man and kind of judge them on their appearance or whether they fit their typical role of a man, and now I just don't worry about it as much."

In addition to feeling less pressure to subscribe to certain male roles and being less critical of others, the participants described placing less importance on what others thought. This change was evident when Jason stated,

I've learned to just do whatever I think is right and what I want to do, and I don't care all that much about what other people think and say and it's too much stress to deal with--you should do this, and you should do this, and you should be this.

The variety of lifestyles the students were exposed to may have contributed to the sense of confidence they felt about living a life for themselves. Kyle expressed a similar belief as Jason, which included not worrying about what others thought. He commented,

There's definitely kind of a different variety of lifestyles. And I guess to them it doesn't really matter which one you pick since each person is on their own track. So what one person wants to do isn't necessarily going to affect me, so...it's kind of make your own plans and do what you want rather than...what everyone else thinks you should do or says you should do.

Rick also shared the same philosophy--that individuals should be allowed to dictate the choices they make. During the first interview, Rick described men as being less emotional and objective. When asked whether his understanding of what it means to be a man changed after studying abroad in Italy, he stated,

With some Europeans it might be a little bit different. I'd say that they're maybe a little bit more subjective, open to emotions. They don't hold back as much emotion. They just express themselves more so...would be a good way of looking at it. I think it probably has kind of changed my definition of a man. Maybe more open--not just a closed definition of what it is to be a man; it's a little bit more open to me now and I think it just goes by the individual now.

While Rick commented on having a different view on men expressing emotion, Rob discussed gaining a new outlook on how one defines success. Rob described how men in the U.S. often focus on success and securing a job. While in Singapore, he met men from various countries who had a more balanced perspective on life choices. He described:

Especially the Finnish--all the guys, the study abroad guys--they didn't care about class--they seemed more relaxed about everything. They weren't so fast-paced. The Finnish were a little different, but some of the cultures--they're not so stressed all the time. They don't think about work all the time; they enjoy their freedom, their free space. They all had a bunch of hobbies. There's a lot of people you meet who are so stressed out in college, and they think they have to get this job and get graduated real fast.

When asked whether being exposed to these different lifestyle choices changed the way he viewed himself, Rob mentioned the desire to focus on more than a career:

I just got to enjoy more things, a lot of these students were talking about once they graduate they take a year off and just travel. They don't go to work right away, so it kind of opened that idea in my mind; maybe I don't have to be so serious into that--build a hobby right now and enjoy it, too.

While the majority of the participants seemed to have a new understanding of masculinity after studying abroad, Will provided a different perspective. He described the Australian culture as similar to the U.S. culture and when asked whether his understanding of being a man changed after study abroad, Will replied, "I would say no, my opinions haven't changed. Mostly because I didn't see anything that was different." Will's comments potentially indicate the relevance of being exposed to diverse lifestyles in order to transform one's thinking about being a man. Because Will viewed the Australian culture as similar to the culture of the U.S., it may have reinforced his idea of masculinity rather than providing opportunities to challenge those beliefs.

Confidence Redefined

While most of the participants gained an expanded view of themselves as men, all of the students described an enhanced sense of confidence. The refined level of confidence was evident in how the students described how they had changed. The students mentioned transformations in their relationships and feeling more self-assured.

Relationship transformations. Rick described subtle shifts in his friendships after returning from study abroad: “I actually kind of have changed up friends a little bit. I really have, for the better. I think there are a lot more positive people that I’m hanging around now--I definitely think there are more positive people now.” Rob also gravitated towards different people after studying abroad and commented,

I’m a little more concerned now and I don’t like when I hear people judging other people anymore from other cultures as much, kind of bothers me, and I like looking for a more mature person now. Because [in Singapore] I was hanging out with people four or five years older than me, and I liked it a lot better. I think it changed who I stuck with, friends with, and you could tell since I was gone for the full year, even with the co-op, I can tell who I’m good friends with, ’cause I stayed in touch with them.

Rob discussed how he enjoyed spending time with people he could have open conversations with and, as a result, described being more selective about his group of friends when he returned:

My friend group kind of tightened up a little bit and lessened but I mean, that’s fine. I could tell who I really got along with and who I could have a conversation with, and I’m not just hanging out at school with them. That changed a lot.

In addition to gravitating towards different, more mature friends, Kyle commented on the connection he felt towards other students who had studied abroad: “I’m much more inclined to--I gravitate toward people that had the same experiences I have, because there’s like double difference between people who have studied abroad and people who haven’t--they don’t--there’s just no just understanding there.” Rick also described a similar mentality: “Since I’ve been back--I do like seeking out new people a lot more now. I feel a lot more adapted to doing that.”

Self-assured. While some of the students talked about being more confident and selective in their relationships, others described feeling more self-assured in social situations. Prior to studying abroad, Evan described himself as shy and introverted. After his study abroad experience in Germany, he mentioned feeling more self-assured:

The biggest thing was I got more confidence in myself because now I’m more willing to do stuff that I wouldn’t before--I’d feel, like, “Oh, I can’t do that.”

Now, I say, “Well, I did all this other stuff, maybe I can do that.” I would talk to people and I’d never do that before, ’cause I was kind of shy and introverted.

I think that’s the biggest [difference] I’ve noticed.

Evan’s confidence after studying abroad was evident in his description of an upcoming career fair he planned to attend. Evan stated,

I’m more confident now and more comfortable in my own skin. So I can talk more easily. The career fair is next week, so I’ll see what happens there in talking to companies. I feel like it’ll be easier for me. I’ll still be stressed about it and everything, but it’ll be easier considering I went to a career fair in German.

Jason shared a similar sentiment after his experiences in New Zealand. When asked how he made meaning of the role of study abroad on his identity, his sense of being more self-assured was apparent when he said,

I think I'm better at just putting myself out there now. 'Cause you meet so many people down there, it's just like every--for the first month of school, every other day it's, "Hey, this is so-and-so, hey, how's it going," you know? And you meet somebody, so I don't think I have as big of a problem doing that. I used to be-- I'm not antisocial but I like my friends, and we have a small group of friends, and I don't really care outside of that group, so that's nice but I think that I'll probably do better at that now.

While Rick identified himself as an extrovert during the first interview, he commented on how study abroad helped him to be even more open to meeting people. He described branching out beyond his close-knit group of friends:

I learned to be more sociable. A lot of the times when I meet new people, it's through my friends or I'm with my friends and we bump into people. It's just easier, whereas I went there knowing no one, so I think I became more of a sociable person.

Similarly, Rob felt that study abroad encouraged him to be more open to others, and he felt confident in his social interactions. He described how his interactions abroad made him feel more understanding of others:

I learned that I'm a pretty open person. I was able to get along with almost anybody, and I'm not offended easily. When people ask me questions about how I live, or they made fun of the States some way, I didn't really care. It was just

fun to talk to them. I think that's what I learned the most--I'm able to interact with a lot of people. I enjoyed getting along with them, and listening to their views. Understanding, I guess, I don't know how to describe it exactly, but that's kind of how I felt when I was there.

The students provided numerous accounts detailing their enhanced sense of confidence. In addition, the participants described feeling more self-assured with their newfound independence. Rick alluded to how important the distance from his family was for his self-growth:

I grew significantly, in responsibility--my parents are three hours away from [home university], and when I was in Italy, they were a seven-hour time difference away--an expensive phone call away. Skype was how I communicated with them, so just the independent factor.

Kyle also reflected on how his new sense of independence influenced his relationship with his parents. Kyle stated,

Um... I'd say that the relationship with my parents, it's kind of more of... it's not so much... kind of following their guidance and what they want me to do.... It's more with where I want to go and what I want to do type thing. I have a much more concrete plan set in my mind, whereas beforehand I was just kind of "maybe I'll do this, maybe I'll do that." I had these options, but now it's much more on the track of what I want to do and it's not--asking them [parents] if I should do this or running back and forth, asking what do I do here, what do I do for this? It's more centered on telling them, "This is what I'm going to do and this is going,

this is how I'm going to do it," type deal. I think it's... much more set in the independence, I guess.

Rick and Kyle shared examples of feeling more confident because of the independence from their parents, while Jason also described feeling more self-sufficient after studying abroad. He described the confidence he gained as the result of living in another culture:

I learned that I can be self-sufficient on my own in somewhere that I'm not comfortable. That was one of the things that I keep thinking back on. Now I can definitely go on and do other stuff 'cause I know I'm not going to freak out the second I get there."

Future Redefined

In most cases, the students described a significant modification to their future plans as a consequence of study abroad. Many of the participants had an expanded definition of the direction they saw their futures headed. A common sentiment among the students was the notion that studying abroad enhanced the opportunities available to them. Kyle noted that, prior to studying abroad, his future seemed restricted, but that changed as a result of going abroad:

Before I went on study abroad, it was teaching at a high school somewhere in the United States. I wasn't really sure where I wanted to go, just... the one subject area, that's what I wanted to do. Whereas going over there, it opened me up to a whole different new place where there's--I think you realize there's a lot more possibility. I wanted to go do the same kind of career but in the different

place, so I wanted to teach history in the international school somewhere in Europe.

Rick also articulated a wider scope of possibilities for his future after studying abroad. Prior to his semester in Italy, he planned to teach high school English in the U.S. After his exposure to other cultures, Rick discussed how his intentions changed to living and working abroad. Rick commented,

It opened up my options a lot more. Before it was... I'm going to graduate college... find a high school English job somewhere, coach, and that's that, you know? I have aspirations of maybe going to grad school for guidance counseling. And now, after studying abroad, I'm strongly considering teaching English as a second language and then also maybe doing half my student teaching abroad.

Similar to Rick, Jason's confidence in being able to navigate another culture also prompted him to see a broader future for himself:

Now that I understand that I can live somewhere else that's not here, it opens the doors. That's why I'm an International Studies major, too, is 'cause I want that extra degree just so I can tell an employer, "If you need me to go somewhere else, I can do it." It's not that big of a deal, so yeah, I definitely think now I've confirmed what I thought before I went was that I can live somewhere else and work somewhere else.

The belief of being able to confidently travel anywhere after studying abroad was a common sentiment shared by the participants. After spending a year in Germany, Evan described feeling more flexible with where he would live in the future. He commented,

“Oh, yeah, we can go anywhere now. We’ve been to the UK and we liked it there, and we’ve been in Germany, and we’d love to live there for a little while.”

In addition to the students describing a change in career plans and future places of residence, study abroad appeared to motivate students regarding their personal endeavors. Rob discussed how his interest in engineering shifted. He reflected,

Actually the research I’m doing is with a professor who’s the liaison for Singapore; he’s the one who asked me. So I’ve been in touch with him a lot. This summer he’s been in Australia, Japan, Thailand, and Malaysia teaching classes. So he’s a really good contact, and I think he kind of changed what I want to do with engineering a little bit.

Kyle’s experiences abroad appeared to rejuvenate his academic goals, and as a result he added additional minors to his degree. He described his shift in motivations:

A drive to do the best I can would be definitely much more prevalent and it’s also why I added on a language minor as well as the Political Science minor. So I think... you’re not... I don’t want to settle just for this when I can... [take] two more steps, and I can get this done.

Similar to Rob and Kyle, David described the influence of studying abroad on his personal endeavors as an entrepreneur. David managed his own clothing business, and while studying abroad he made pivotal connections that helped to initiate the international scope for his business:

When I was in Korea, I met other entrepreneurs out there, and so we’ve been talking about expanding out to those businesses, out to those markets, using my

friends' help. So they kind of benefitted me, I think, 'cause I knew I wanted to go expand abroad.

While most of the students discussed a refined future, Chris provided a different perspective. As a result of studying abroad, he mentioned that his plans for the future did not change much. Chris said, "Not to be too patriotic, but I still think the U.S. is the best country to live in."

Worldview Redefined

Although Chris did not necessarily believe his future plans had changed, Chris and all of the other participants described how their worldview took on a new meaning as a result of studying abroad. The pathway to change was prompted by the students acquiring new perspectives of other cultures and the American culture.

Rob described becoming more concerned about others and, as a result, he challenged some of his pre-existing ideas. He commented,

I think it definitely challenged your beliefs and your views on the world. It forces you to realize you're not--the United States is not the only country. You're not always right, or your views are not shared with everyone else. It definitely makes you follow politics more and the world--you're concerned, 'cause I hear all the interviews, and I'm more curious now how everyone interacts now and I think that's the biggest thing. It definitely challenged a lot of things I believe in and how I view the world, and it makes me--I'm more considerate of everything now.

Many of the participants described returning to the U.S. and seeking out ways to obtain international news. The students described having a vested interest in world affairs. Rob commented,

I definitely pay attention to news more often. I actually get a magazine, it's called World Affairs magazine. And it's 60% for students, which is really cool. I read some of that; I stay in touch with some people from abroad still who keep me updated. That's the biggest thing--it's being more aware of the world around and how it affects me. I know I'll be working with people somewhere else in the world eventually, anyways.

Rob discussed at length during the third interview how experiencing new cultural practices opened his eyes to a different way of living. Expressing how study abroad exposed him to ideas that he had not thought about before, he recalled,

Not everyone thinks the same around the world. Everything from sustainability to the way you live, the family--they think it's weird that we don't stay with our families and there's just a lot of small differences that I've heard about but I never really thought about until then, which is weird, thinking how I'm comfortable with not staying with my parents anymore, and over there they--it's hard for them to do that.

Despite the unique attributes of individual cultures, Chris commented on the abundance of similarities. Chris recalled one of the most critical things he took away from his study abroad experience: "It was how even in different countries, people can be pretty similar." And as a result, Chris said he appreciated "dealing with different world issues that different countries perceive in different ways."

David also appreciated the opportunity to learn about other cultures while simultaneously breaking down some of the negative connotations about Americans. David commented,

I definitely have to start traveling again--meeting all these people and they have a negative connotation about the U.S., some people did. Some people had a big, bad connotation about the U.S., but there were only about two people like that, so it was fine. Yeah, just the whole experience--I had to learn about what other cultures were like and how much it was different than the U.S. culture.

Rob was also exposed to some of the negative perceptions that others have of Americans.

Prior to studying abroad, he did not realize the extent of media's influence. Rob said,

But everyone was so curious. They always asked me questions, and it was kind of weird, because they assumed that Americans were dumb. It kind of sucked they think that we're dumb. It's really weird. They kept saying I broke stereotypes, 'cause of the media. It's frustrating 'cause they didn't have enough knowledge, and you're not going to change their mind, which I didn't care, but just me being me, I was able to break some of the stereotypes 'cause they'd say, "Oh, you actually study," and I said, "Oh, my God"; it was really weird.

Evan had a similar experience in Germany. When asked what struggles he experienced being an American male in a different country, Evan described an experience of not fitting another person's expectations. Evan commented,

In my first month there in that language course I took, one of the guys, the guy from Macedonia, was really social and really liked talking to people and could do anything, and I don't usually do that. I think I said in high school, [I was] kind of shy and a loner kind of thing. And he said, "Come on, all American guys just won't stop talking and talk to anybody" and that kind of thing, but I said "No, I'm not like that" so I think he was a bit surprised by that. But he did also say he had

studied in the U.S. maybe, and say I was the first American he had met who was trying to learn a second language.

While handling the negative American stereotypes abroad, as illustrated by David, Rob, and Evan, the students were exposed to different mindsets that expanded their worldview. As the students navigated the assumptions people of other cultures had of them, they gained a broader perspective on the American culture. At times, the participants described appreciating certain aspects of the U.S. culture, but often students expressed some cynicism. While Kyle was in Germany, the National Security Agency (NSA) scandal surfaced. He mentioned that prior to studying in Germany he would have viewed the situation differently. Kyle remarked,

I think I also became a lot more critical of how the U.S. works and the differences between the two. The whole NSA scandal came out and it was—“They’re spying on people,” and everything like that. And before I went, I would’ve said, ‘It’s just texting and phone conversations. They’re not leaking any secrets like that.’”

Kyle commented that the NSA actions by the U.S. were a significant issue and he realized the importance of considering Germany’s side of the situation.

Similar to Kyle, Evan also questioned the actions of the U.S. after studying abroad. While talking about the differences between American and German culture, Evan discussed the notion of patriotism and recalled,

In the U.S. everyone’s really patriotic and you have to be patriotic. Whereas in any other country—“Why should I be proud just because I was born in this country’s borders? What did it matter; what did I do that has to do with the history of the country?” Whether that’s positive or negative, but that was one of

the culture shocks when I came back is that there are American flags everywhere--you go to the store, and any product that happened to be made in the U.S., they have to put the American flag on it and advertise that so loudly it's, it's weird to me.

The sense of superiority of the U.S. culture, as described by Kyle and Evan, was also exhibited in Rob's comments. Rob described seeing American men differently as a result of meeting people from other cultures. He stated,

Hmm, everyone here [U.S.], I could say a lot of people here, are just interested in themselves more and that's the biggest thing. In general, a lot of people in the States are probably like that. I think our ideas on the world are different--you have to help yourself to get better, and over there it's you help everyone. They don't understand having some people not getting money or people being poor and not being helped. They think about making money to help provide for their family, and we think about money for providing for ourselves and getting our own house and car and whatnot.

The students' critiques of the U.S. seem to be connected to the individualistic mentality that often encompasses American society. Kyle, Evan, and Rob's examples illustrate how study abroad served as a pathway to change by expanding their worldview. Rather than engaging in ethnocentric thinking, the students evaluated the culture through the host culture's lens, rather than through American cultural standards.

Conclusion

I presented the findings of this study in this chapter. The themes that emerged from the data collected from the interviews with the students were: expressing

masculinity, men's unfamiliarity with themselves as men, men as relational beings, and study abroad as a pathway to change.

In the first section, *Expressing Masculinity*, I described the participants' competitive nature that was evident from their emphasis on academic achievement and athletics. In addition, I discussed their desire to be strong and to define success personally. How the participants expressed their masculinity was similar to the current literature outlining masculine ideologies and traditional male norms, with an emphasis on competition, success, power, and hiding emotion (Brannon, 1976).

The second section, *Men's Unfamiliarity with Themselves as Men*, exposed the participants' difficulties in articulating concepts related to gender. First I presented numerous examples of the participants' limited awareness of their gender identity. Then I discussed the participants' blurring of societal and personal beliefs about gender. Finally, I described how gender was portrayed as a female characteristic. This theme was supported by Jones and McEwen's (2000) model of multiple dimensions of identity, which suggests the role of privilege in the lack of awareness of gender; the work of Bannon and Correia (2006), which focused on how gender has long remained synonymous with women; and gender as a socially constructed concept (Kimmel & Messner, 2007).

The third section, *Men as Relational Beings*, summarized different ways the participants prioritized relationships. First I discussed the participants' desire to seek connection and find one's place; then I described their close familial relationships; finally, I outlined the participants' fear of being alone. Much of the literature related to this theme discussed men's fear of intimacy and denial of intimate connections (Pollack,

2006), which was not supported by my findings. Rather, the literature that helped to inform this theme was related to men being more relational than we realize (Davis, 2010), parental connection signifying a less rigid view of masculinity (Blazina & Watkins, 2000; DeFranc & Mahalik, 2002; Fischer & Good, 1998), and gender as a socially constructed concept (Kimmel & Messner, 2007).

The final section, *Study Abroad as a Pathway to Change*, revealed the role of study abroad in modifying the participants' identities. First I described how study abroad influenced the participants' views of themselves as men. Second I discussed how study abroad influenced the future plans of the participants. Third, I explored the enriched sense of confidence the participants described gaining from studying abroad. Finally, I noted the participants' shift to a more inclusive worldview. Literature outlining the positive developmental outcomes of study abroad, such as enhanced self-awareness, cultural sensitivity, and new perspectives on the U.S., helped to inform this theme (Carlson, et al., 1990; Dolby, 2004; Dwyer, 2004; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004).

In summary, the findings outlined in the themes indicated that the participants adhered to some traditional male gender norms while deviating from others. Although the men described themselves as competitive and strong, they did not shy away from describing their need for close connections and their fear of being alone. Based on the themes, I would describe the men in this study as flexible in their enactments of masculinity and more aware of gender as a result of studying abroad. Prior to studying abroad and as outlined in the second theme, gender was not something the participants thought much about. The study abroad context and new experiences appeared to play a role in the participants' identity development and gender awareness.

In Chapter 6, I review the original theoretical frameworks guiding this study and their relationship to the findings, discuss the findings as they relate to each research question, note limitations, offer implications of this study for future research and practice, and share my personal reflections upon completing the study.

CHAPTER 6. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter, I provide a brief summary of the study, discuss the findings based on my research questions, examine the limitations, comment on how this study contributes to research literature, provide recommendations for future research, specify implications for practice, and share my personal reflection.

Summary

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to better understand the experiences of male college students who study abroad, with a particular focus on how the men defined and expressed masculinity. My topic was important to study because males are studying abroad significantly less than their female counterparts and there is minimal research exploring gender in relation to study abroad. In addition, the student development literature informing study affairs practice is just beginning to offer a gendered perspective on college men's identity development (Edwards, 2007), further supporting the need for this research. A qualitative methodological approach was the most suitable for this study because it provided an avenue to explore and understand the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to their experiences (Creswell, 2009). I wanted to learn more about the discernments of men who study abroad through their own words; a phenomenological research approach enabled me the opportunity to do so.

Eight students participated in this study. I conducted three semi-structured interviews with each participant. Prior to the second interview, each participant was instructed to bring 5-10 photos of his study abroad experience that were meaningful to him. All of the participants provided photos, ranging from 10-100 photos per student. I requested the photos to help establish rapport with the participants and to use them as a

conversational piece and prompt during the second interview. The interviews were audio-recorded and then transcribed. I took detailed field notes following each interview and during subsequent reviews of the transcribed recordings. I developed profiles of each participant by identifying the major points made throughout the interviews. I analyzed the interview transcripts, my field notes, and the analytic memos, which revealed the four themes discussed in Chapter 5: *(a) Expressing Masculinity, (b) Men's Unfamiliarity with Themselves as Men, (c) Men as Relational Beings, and (d) Study Abroad as a Pathway to Change.*

Research Questions and Findings

In this section, I discuss the findings of the study as they relate to the original set of four research questions. I also examine how the results relate to current literature and the theoretical framework. The research questions that guided this study were:

1. How do college men who study abroad describe themselves as men?
2. How do the views college men have of themselves as men influence their decisions to study abroad?
3. How do the ways in which men describe themselves as men influence their experiences while studying abroad?
4. As a result of study abroad, do male students perceive that they have altered their view of masculinity? If so, how?

Research Question #1: How Do College Men Who Study Abroad Describe Themselves as Men?

The first research question focused on gaining a better understanding of how men who participate in study abroad describe themselves. The first theme, *Expressing*

Masculinity, in Chapter 5 included much of the data to help answer this question. Research literature helped to frame the findings regarding how the men described themselves as men, in particular the social construction of masculinity theoretical perspective (Kimmel & Messner, 2007) as well as masculine ideology (Thompson & Pleck, 1995).

The students described taking their academics very seriously, which was also an expectation reinforced by their parents. The attachment to their knowledge base and academic performance was imbedded in how they labeled themselves. Many of the participants described themselves as being competitive. One way they exercised this part of their identity was striving for academic achievement. In addition to labeling themselves as academically motivated, the participants were drawn towards athletics. Most of them were highly involved in athletics prior to studying abroad and commented on their continued interest in sports. The interest in sports and academic achievement, combined with describing oneself as competitive, relates to the masculine ideology literature discussed previously. Masculine ideology includes the cultural norms that define masculinity, expected male behaviors, and the individual's internalization of such norms and expectations (Levant, 1995). The core belief central to the traditional definition of masculinity is seeking power, risk, and competition. In addition, one of the four fundamental rules of masculinity is to prioritize success, status, and power (Brannon, 1976). The men in this study described themselves in a similar fashion through their descriptions of being competitive and focusing on success and academic achievement.

The participants also described themselves as valuing connection, which was evident in their descriptions of their influential familial and peer relationships. While

research illustrated that college men often prioritize the opinions of their peers (Edwards, 2007), men's desire for connection is not overtly apparent in the literature outlined in Chapter 2. Rather, the research indicated that the behaviors central to the traditional definition of masculinity encompass restricting emotion and avoiding anything considered feminine. Boys are taught at very young ages to repress feelings and to be independent and strong; they are reinforced socially for denying intimate connections (Pollack, 2006).

Previous work on men and study abroad resulted in similar findings. The men in Lucas's (2009) study expressed feeling less concerned about missing family and friends and less influenced by parental support. While men are socialized to deny intimate connections (Pollack, 2006), as supported in Lucas's (2009) work, the findings of this study were different. The participants did not refute their desire for close relationships and simultaneously acknowledged their fear of being alone when studying abroad. The social construction of masculinity perspective provides a framework for this finding by emphasizing that all men do not experience masculinity in the same way (Kimmel & Messner, 2007), further indicating that the men's emphasis for connection apparent in this study may be different from the experiences of other men.

One study that did support my findings indicating college men's desire for connection was conducted by Davis (2002) who explored the conflicts related to socially constructed gender roles and the impact on men's identity development. Davis (2010) found that certain forms of men's communication were more relational than was initially recognized. Gender-related restrictions regarding verbal expression clearly influenced how men in Davis's (2010) study communicated and may have played a role in my study.

The men in Davis's study described feeling more comfortable expressing themselves with female researchers, which may inform the findings of this research question as the participants may have felt more comfortable with a female researcher when discussing their desire for connection and fear of being alone.

In addition to valuing connection, the men labeled themselves as strong. The description of strength encompassed being able to take control of a situation, handle things objectively rather than emotionally, and as Jason stated, "Doing things that scare me." In addition to being strong, the participants described themselves as laid back and not easily bothered. The men's portrayal of being strong is supported by masculinity identity research. Two of the fundamental rules of masculinity, according to Brannon (1976), are 'No Sissy Stuff,' (males should be strong and avoid behavior that equates with being feminine or gay, such as showing fear, sadness, weakness, or emotion); and 'Be a Sturdy Oak,' (males should be reliable and steadfast). Jason provided a fitting example of revealing strength when he said, "I just thought it would be fun...I like to do things that scare me a little bit, so--on one hand I try to not show it. That goes back to that masculine thing." This facade of being viewed as unemotional and in control of one's feelings is central to the "strong-and-silent" masculine script (Brannon, 1976). College men put on a front to show they can break the rules and seek excitement because risk-taking is a characteristic of masculinity (Capraro, 2000; Edwards, 2007; Kimmel, 2008).

Finally, the men described themselves as having a vague understanding of masculinity and expressed not seeing gender differences. The findings indicated that the men's understanding of being a man was often linked to societal messages. Jones and

McEwen's (2000) conceptual model of multiple dimensions of identity informed the findings of this research question by providing an explanation for why gender may not be viewed as an important identity dimension at this point in the men's lives. As was evident in my study, Davis (2002) found that men have the tendency not to think about themselves as men. This finding is supported by Jones and McEwen's (2000) model and the research upon which it was based. Jones and McEwen's model includes a core sense of self, comprised of personal attributes and characteristics, which is surrounded by the context, such as family background, sociocultural conditions, and current experiences. Significant identity dimensions (e.g., race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, social class, and religion) are depicted as intersecting circles surrounding the core identity. The more important an identity dimension is to an individual, the closer it is to the core sense of self (Evans et al., 2010). The identity dimensions that seemed important to most of the men in this study were family and education with very little reference to gender, sexual orientation, race, and social class. According to Jones and McEwen, when privilege is associated with a social identity dimension, individuals do not have to think about that dimension and it becomes less important to them. Gender, which is a dominant dimension for men, is therefore not an aspect of identity that the participants in this study thought much about. Male privilege, while beneficial in many ways, inhibits men from understanding themselves as men, which can affect overall identity development and limit development of a more mature understanding of self in relation to the multicultural world (Davis & Wagner, 2005). Finally, it is important to consider the participants' academic majors in reference to their gender awareness and understanding of masculinity. The majors represented were: four engineers, one business, one science, one

history, and one education. Potentially the participants' departmental curriculum did not expose them to issues related to gender. If more participants enrolled in the social sciences were represented, the findings might have been different.

The findings related to this research question support the tenets of the social construction of masculinity theoretical perspective. The perspective focuses on ways in which male gender identity develops through socializing practices that take place within social structures, such as school settings, families, and sports (Harris, 2008). The familial environment influenced the men in this study, and the socializing practices centered on support and encouragement. In particular, the men were socialized by their parents' high academic expectations and prioritization of being involved in sports.

While Edwards's (2007) college men's gender identity development theory served as a theoretical framework guiding this study, the theory's relevance to the findings was limited. Men perform masculinity in three phases, with one stage being defined by wearing a mask as a way to cover up aspects of their true selves that do not meet society's expectations (Edwards, 2007). This phase was most relevant through the participants' descriptions of being strong. At times the men alluded to their fears, but they often portrayed a different picture of themselves by hiding doubts and exemplifying strength and emotional fortitude.

The second phase, wearing a mask, describes how men wear a mask as a way of covering up aspects of their selves that do not meet society's expectations. Men in this phase seek ways to "act" more acceptable (Edwards, 2007). When answering this research question in particular, the participants only minimally suggested that they had to hide aspects of themselves. Will discussed his desire to be viewed like Superman or

Chuck Norris - strong and as someone who gets along with anybody. While Will described possessing these traits as the ideal, his comments alluded to the relevance of wearing a mask based on his unrealistic expectations:

It's almost what we're expected to be, not necessarily what we should aspire to be and even if it is what we aspire to be, it's still kind of like a, well, not everybody's going to be able to do that. Nobody can do that, really.

The final phase was not relevant to this research question as the men did not reveal the costs associated with wearing a mask or describe a struggle to move beyond the external expectations and be their own man (Edwards, 2007).

Research Question #2: How do the Views College Men Have of Themselves as Men Influence Their Decisions to Study Abroad?

The second research question was designed to explore how the views the men had of themselves influenced their decision to study abroad. The participants' views of themselves as being strong played a significant role in their decision to study abroad. The aspects of strength the participants referred to when discussing what influenced them to study abroad were their comfort in taking risks, being able to handle challenges presented to them, not being overwhelmed by trivial things, and feeling confident to take control of a situation. The view the participants had of themselves as men is similar to one of the four fundamental rules of masculinity: males should be strong and avoid behavior that equates with being feminine or gay, such as showing fear, sadness, weakness, or emotion (Brannon, 1976). While I went into this study expecting the men to describe the influence of their strength and ability to take risk on their decision to study abroad, I was surprised to hear that most of the participants were anxious about being

alone, which conflicts with literature regarding the traditional masculine role.

In addition to their descriptions of being strong, how the participants defined success played a role in their decision to study abroad. For example, Chris viewed study abroad as a career advantage for him because it differentiated him from other students. Jason commented that other men might not participate in study abroad because they focus solely on getting through college and graduating quickly or prefer to spend their college years drinking and partying. He desired to challenge himself in ways that were more meaningful to him and to integrate his interest in traveling with his career goals. These findings illustrate how the participants' personal definitions of success played a role in their decisions to study abroad and further supported Lucas's (2009) research that found that male students had four motivations related to pursuing study abroad: fun, cultural learning, résumé-building, and major and/or career benefits. The findings also mirror previous work done by Schroth and McCormack (2000), who found that men who study abroad desire experiences associated with a nonconformist lifestyle. Rather than desiring dangerous activities or parties, men who study abroad prefer experience-seeking activities that challenge the mind and senses.

In addition to being strong, the participants viewed themselves as competitive and highly motivated. Whether they were driven in academics, sports, or extracurricular engagements, their competitive nature and high motivation level played a role in their decision to pursue study abroad. The participants' competitive nature and focus on success is supported by previous literature that indicated the traditional male norm prioritizes success, status, power, and wealth (Brannon, 1976) while emphasizing achievement (O'Neil, 2008).

The social construction of gender theoretical framework (Kimmel & Messner, 2007) informed the findings related to this research question. The participants' descriptions of themselves that influenced their decision to study abroad were being strong, defining success personally, and their competitive nature. The social structures that were influential in teaching the participants these attributes were situated within their family, school settings, and sports. As the findings indicated, most of the participants' families had high academic expectations of them, which can be assumed to have played a role in how the participants' identity developed and gravitated towards competition. In addition, the socializing practices that take place in athletics comes with the expectation that men will perform masculinity by being competitive and strong.

While it was no surprise that the participants' strength, personal definition of success, and their competitive nature influenced their decision to study abroad, a few things that did not show up in the findings surprised me. Lucas's (2009) work indicated that when considering studying abroad, men want to see a connection to their degree and career and often have career advantages in mind. In addition, males with traditional concepts about masculine roles make career success central to their lives (Covin & Brush, 1991; Deutschendorf, 1996). While the men in this study did ascribe to certain male gender roles and did reference their career, it was not consistently described as a factor influencing their decisions to study abroad. The participants' comments regarding the career advantages of study abroad were expressed more frequently during the third interview, when the participants were reflecting on their time abroad, rather than as an influence in their decision to participate.

Research Question #3: How Do the Ways in Which Men Describe Themselves Influence Their Experiences While Studying Abroad?

The answer to this research question was not represented as an overall theme or a subtheme. It is difficult to determine the reasons for the lack of attention students gave to this question. Some potential limitations of the study are worth considering. Wording of the question or construction of interview questions may not have revealed students' perceptions regarding how their understanding of themselves as men contributed to their study abroad experiences or the lack of attention than the participants gave to themselves as gendered beings may have blocked their consideration of their gender identities in relation to their study abroad experiences. Despite the lack of overall attention to this topic, however, some individual comments did allude to how the participants' description of themselves influenced their experience while studying abroad. For example, many of the participants described themselves as laid back. Kyle commented on how this personality trait helped him to adapt to the unpredictability that is often associated with studying abroad and travel in particular:

I remember on our excursion we were traveling from Nuremberg to Prague, and we were probably halfway there when our train stopped someplace. And they said they were repairing tracks and everything, so they stopped the train, had to get everyone loaded onto busses, send them to Pilsen, where you'd get on the train there and then continue on. I remember so many people just being absolutely frustrated by that; they couldn't comprehend it. I think things weren't going how they expected them to, so, obviously they weren't planning for it, and then once we got to our second stop, the train there was behind schedule and I

think that kind of further irritated people. Eventually we made it with no problem and being laid back there helps and you're much more adaptable to situations and had more flexibility.

Similarly, Rob described himself as laid back and spontaneous, which influenced the travels he pursued while studying in Singapore. He talked about a trip to Indonesia that entailed some issues with transferring money and an inability to communicate because of the language differences. Rob did not seem bothered by the challenges, and his laid back personality and ability to be flexible were apparent.

In addition to the participants' tendency to be laid back and flexible, the propensity to be strong also influenced the participants' experience abroad. Jason described an affinity for challenging himself and taking risks. These personality characteristics were evident in the activities he sought out while abroad. He planned trips independently and traveled unaccompanied just to prove to himself that he could survive on his own.

Finally, many of the participants described themselves as valuing connection. This desire for close relationships influenced the participants' experiences abroad by prompting them to be more outgoing. The students recounted various situations in which they forced themselves to be more social by going out of their way to engage with their roommates and by joining extracurricular activities to meet other students.

Research Question #4: As a Result of Study Abroad, Do Male Students Perceive That They Have Altered Their View of Masculinity? If So, How?

This question focused on determining whether the participants' view of masculinity changed or stayed the same as a result of studying abroad. Most of the

students described a shift in their views after experiencing different cultural practices and through their interactions with the diverse group of friends they made abroad. The change in environment prompting an altered view of masculinity is supported by Kimmel's (1997) research that suggested males' definition of masculinity is likely to shift based on their physical environment. Kimmel's hypothesis is supported by Connell's (2005) notion that social contexts, the environments in which men live, influence their masculine identity. This research confirmed Kimmel's findings and Connell's findings as most of the men in this study described the new cultural context of study abroad serving as a catalyst for change.

The men described their altered view of masculinity in a number of ways. First, the participants portrayed having a more open definition of masculinity and what it means to be a man. They explained feeling less restricted in how they expressed themselves and commented on not feeling as pressured to fulfill expected "manly" traits. For example, Rob discussed learning from his male international friends that there was more to life than attaining a successful career. He appreciated his friends' sense of balance and engagement with their hobbies. Rick also described feeling more open about his understanding of masculinity after spending time in Italy with men who seemed more open to emotion than American men. Rick's expanded definition is evident in his statement:

They don't hold back as much emotion. They just express themselves more so...[more open to emotion] would be a good way of looking at it. I think it probably has kind of changed my definition of a man. Maybe more open,

too...not just a closed definition of what it is to be a man. It's a little bit more open to me now; it just goes by the individual now.

Both Rob's and Rick's examples demonstrate a move from the traditional definition of masculinity to a less restricted version. As indicated in the literature review, men are taught to avoid emotion and focus on career success (Brannon, 1976), while the men in this study described deviating from these narrowly defined norms after studying abroad.

In addition to describing a more open, less restricted definition of masculinity, the participants' transformation was evident in their explanations of being less concerned about what others thought of them. After studying abroad, many of the participants commented on worrying less about subscribing to the behaviors of others and feeling more confident doing what they wanted to do. This finding also signifies a move from ascribing to the traditional notions of masculinity, which tend to prioritize the opinions of one's peers (Edwards, 2007). Rather, the participants in this study felt more able to think for themselves. An example of this modification was evident as the participants' described making changes in their relationships after studying abroad. They confidently sought out more fulfilling friendships when they returned from study abroad.

Finally, the participants expressed an altered view of masculinity through their descriptions of being less judgmental of others. Evan's example of being less critical after study abroad was evident when he explained, "Before [study abroad]... I think, I might see a man and kind of judge them on their appearance or whether they fit their typical role of a man, and now I just don't worry about it as much." The feeling of not worrying as much about the actions and behaviors of other men after studying abroad was a recurrent finding in this study.

The theoretical framework of the social construction of masculinity (Kimmel & Messner, 2007) helps to inform the findings related to this research question. Because gender is a performed social identity, the ways in which individuals conceptualize and express masculinity will change as they grow and mature throughout their lives (Kimmel & Messner, 2007). As a result of a change to the participants' environmental context, they developed new socializing practices and altered how they performed masculinity. The participants' practice of masculinity changed by expanding in scope. They described being less judgmental of other men's behavior and having less concern about the opinions of others. In addition, they perceived a future that was more aligned with their interests rather than simply following societal expectations of the male role. As Kimmel (1997) suggested, males' definitions of masculinity are likely to shift based on their physical environment, which was evident from my findings.

Similar to the findings related to the other research questions, the gender identity development theory of college men (Edwards, 2007) that guided the development of this study was not applicable to the findings related to fourth research question. The theory focuses on individual men's process of interacting with society's expectations of them as men and once the men learn the expectations, they perform masculinity in three phases (Edwards, 2007). While study abroad did present the participants with different societal expectations of being a man, the men did not perform masculinity according to the three phases outlined by the theory. The theory was not applicable because rather than the men describing feeling pressure to conform or hide who they were, most of the participants described taking off their "mask" by having a more liberated view of masculinity as a result of studying abroad.

However, the identity development theories included in Chapter 2 did provide support for the findings. Erikson's (1968) eight-stage model of identity development is distinguished by a psychosocial crisis, or turning point, that must be resolved by balancing the internal self with the external self and the external environment (Erikson, 1968). As the participants navigated a new external environment abroad, they were exposed to new definitions of masculinity and different male behaviors. As a result, the men began to look at their previous thoughts and behaviors and developed an altered perspective. A key component of Erikson's theory was the notion that the environment influences an individual's sense of self (Erikson, 1968), further supporting the role of study abroad on the participants' identity transformation.

Closely tied to the Identity vs. Identity Diffusion stage in Erikson's model is Marcia's (1966) Identity Achievement identity status. Individuals in this status have sorted through crisis, investigated multiple alternatives, and made crucial choices that lead to strong commitments. Individuals rely on internal motivations rather than external process to construct identity (Marcia, 1994). Marcia's work is relevant to this study because the participants described how the study abroad context presented them with multiple alternatives, or crisis, regarding what it means to be a man. As a result, the men in this study reexamined their old beliefs, values, and choices. After a period of crisis, they processed the conflicting ideas and constructed a refined view of themselves by committing to roles or values that were more aligned with their identity. For example, prior to studying abroad Evan described the pressure he felt to be in shape and to portray a stereotypical image of being a man. However, while in Germany, he was exposed to a different way of life and diverse versions of masculinity. As a result, he questioned his

previous assumptions and beliefs about what it means to be a man and expanded his definition by being less judgmental of others and by not worrying about what other people thought, which resembles Marcia's (1966) Identity Achievement identity status.

Previously discussed in Chapter 5 was the participants' unawareness of gender. Davis (2010) asserted that men not seeing themselves as men is problematic. He stated, "If identity development is fostered by experiencing crises and choices, as Marcia (1966) suggested, gender and sex need to at least be a blip on the radar screen before reflective commitment can occur" (Davis, 2010, p. 59). His argument may suggest that the context of study abroad played an instrumental role in the participants' identity development by bringing gender to the participants' awareness and supporting a shift in their view of masculinity.

Limitations

In Chapter 3, I discussed the steps that were taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the data by focusing on credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability. While a number of efforts were made such as using member checks and peer debriefing, providing thick description through the participant profiles, and employing triangulation, there were still limitations to the study.

One limitation of the research was the size and the scope. The study took place at one institution rather than extending to other universities. The study included eight male students who studied abroad during a specific timeframe for a minimum of one semester. Another limitation may have been the study abroad locations represented. In my call for participants, I did not make specifications regarding where the students studied abroad. Focusing on English-speaking countries or a specific region of the world to assess

whether location played a role in the participants' experiences might have aided in determining if the location made a difference in the analysis.

While the focus of this study was to explore gender identity and masculinity of male students who study abroad, I gave very little attention to identities outside of gender. A consideration of participants' multiple identities, such as sexual orientation, race, socio-economic status, religion, disability, and a range of additional factors could have added depth to this study. I could have focused solely on Caucasian students; however, I deliberately chose not to omit David's experiences from this study. Although his experiences as a Korean American were at times unique, in most cases his descriptions mirrored those of the Caucasian students and provided depth to the study.

I discussed the role of privilege as it related to gender, but privilege is very much intertwined with social identities that were not explored in this study, such as race, sexual orientation, and first generation college students. The privileges associated with being White, heterosexual, and not a first generation college student are important to consider and most likely would have altered the findings of this study. It is important for future research to consider multiple identities and how they intertwine with privilege. For example, the participants in this study described feeling supported and academically challenged by their family. Most likely this finding would have been different if the student was a first generation college student. While the lack of diversity in the background of the participants may be viewed as a limitation, I believe student affairs professionals can still benefit from this research because prior to this study very little was known about the experiences of men who study abroad.

My researcher bias embodied an outsider status. Being a female researcher studying the experiences of college men could be a limitation because I may be perceived as having an external view of the reality of study abroad as a male rather than an “inside” view (Yin, 2003). While the participants may have felt comfortable discussing certain aspects of their study abroad experience, my role as a female researcher working in the study abroad office of the university where this study was conducted may have prevented the men from sharing particular information. For example, the participants did not provide much information when asked questions related to intimate relationships or dating. It is hard to know whether the participants were adhering to the typical masculine gender role of restricting emotion and avoiding intimacy (O’Neil, 2008) when avoiding conversations about relationships, but potentially the participants might have felt more comfortable discussing such a topic with a male researcher.

Finally, the construction of the third research question, *How Do the Ways in Which Men Describe Themselves Influence Their Experiences While Studying Abroad?*, was limited since it was based on my own interest rather than being based on my review of the literature. As a result, there was no related literature or theory to guide the development of the research question or the interview questions used to explore it. In addition, I had no related literature or theory with which to compare my findings.

How this Study Contributes to Research Literature

Despite the limitations of this study, there are a number of ways this research contributes to and extends the current literature. As mentioned in Chapter 2, very little research has been conducted on men who study abroad. While researchers have studied how gender affects women’s identity development (Gilligan, 1982; Jones, 1997;

Josselson, 1987), there has been comparatively little written about the influence of gender on the psychosocial development of college men (Davis, 2010). In addition, Lucas's (2009) research on men who study abroad suggested that male disposition--specifically their adherence to traditional notions of masculinity--played a vital role in the decision-making process and how men weighed the motivations to study abroad. Lucas (2009) expressed a need for future research on the male disposition, which was provided in this study by sharing the men's experiences through their own words.

The previous literature on gender differences in study abroad has alluded to men not being influenced by parental support (Lucas, 2009; Salisbury et al., 2010). Lucas (2009) found that males were less concerned about missing family and friends and perceived lack of family support as less of an obstacle to study abroad than did females. While the previous findings alluded to family support not being extremely important to college men, this study indicated otherwise. All of the participants described a close familial relationship that entailed feeling supported in their endeavors. In addition, the men in this study were worried about missing family and friends. This research is important because the findings may indicate that in previous research men may have been ascribing to the traditional male role--being strong and avoiding anything feminine--by not discussing the importance of feeling supported by family. While the location of my study, which tends to be a family-oriented region of the U.S., is important to consider, Lucas's (2009) study was also conducted in the Midwest. This finding may indicate that gender roles are loosening up from the time in which Lucas did his research, or as Davis (2010) suggested, gender-related restrictions regarding verbal expression may have influenced how men communicated in Lucas's study. Another consideration is the

participants might have felt more comfortable with a female researcher when discussing their desire for connection and fear of being alone; which was supported by Davis's (2010) findings discussed previously.

Another way this study contributes to the research literature is related to peer influence and peer connection. Previous work by Lucas (2009) discussed influential peer interaction as negatively affecting males' intent to study abroad: Male students were less likely to study abroad than female students if they had a close-knit peer group. My research expands this idea further by illustrating that simply having a close-knit peer group does not always deter male students from studying abroad. The participants in this study elected to leave behind their close-knit peer group but acknowledged the departure from friends was a source of anxiety. The participants openly described feeling concerned about traveling alone, making new friends, and missing the ones left behind. A consideration of this research as it relates to men being less likely to study abroad if they have a close peer group is the acknowledgement that most of the students in this study described a significant shift in their group of friends prior to coming to college. This finding may demonstrate that the men who do participate in study abroad have experienced a shift in friends previously and as a result may not feel dissuaded from pursuing study abroad. The participants' changes in their social circles pre-college and then again as they made new friends in college may have played a role in their level of confidence to pursue study abroad. The participants' ability to successfully make new friends and seek out individuals who they better relate to may have prompted them to feel able to survive on their own while studying abroad, knowing that they could make new friends in a new environment.

Previous research described a number of perceived obstacles to male students pursuing study abroad: lack of awareness about options, complexity of the application process, and incompatibility with other academic and personal goals (Lucas, 2009; Spiering & Erickson, 2006). My research contributes to the literature by adding to this list the possibility of peer connection as a perceived obstacle. The participants discussed in detail their fear of traveling alone, missing friends, and questioning their ability to make close connections abroad. This finding is an important contribution to consider when promoting and designing study abroad opportunities.

In addition, this study contributes to the study abroad research literature because there has been little to no previous work exploring how study abroad impacts one's view of masculinity. Many of the participants described viewing masculinity and gender roles differently as a result of being exposed to diverse lifestyles abroad. In addition to the participants developing an expanded view of masculinity, the other findings of this study, such as the participants' increased sense of confidence, their less restricted plans for the future, and their more inclusive worldview support existing research on the developmental outcomes of study abroad, while specifically addressing male students.

Finally, previous research (Lucas, 2009) on gender roles indicated that males are more career-focused and tend to define success differently than do females (Dyke & Murphy, 2006). Males with traditional concepts about masculine roles make career success central to their lives (Covin & Brush, 1991; Deutschendorf, 1996). While the men in this study were career-focused, this research expanded the findings by demonstrating the role study abroad had on changing the participants' definition of

success. As a result of studying abroad, the participants described feeling less restricted and perceiving that they had more personal and professional options in their future.

Recommendations for Future Research

While this study addressed some of what is missing in the study abroad literature, there is still more work to be done. As discussed in the limitations section, this study was situated at one university with a sample comprised of seven White students and one Korean American student. It would be helpful for future research to incorporate multiple identities: race, socio-economic status, ability, sexual orientation, religion, and an array of other factors to provide a more in-depth picture of the experiences of college men and the role of gender and masculinity in the study abroad context.

Future research should consider focusing on location, length of time abroad, and program design when exploring the experiences of men who study abroad. It would be helpful to investigate the role of different geographical locations on students' understanding of gender and masculinity in the study abroad context. While this research included student stories from various industrialized countries (Australia, Germany, Italy, New Zealand, Scotland, Singapore, and South Korea), future studies could benefit by expanding to other non-English speaking countries and developing nations.

The duration of a study abroad program is also important to future research, as more students elect to participate in shorter-term study abroad programs (Open Doors, 2012). This study included men who studied abroad for a minimum of one semester. It would also be important to understand the role of shorter-term programs on men's gender and masculinity identity.

The program design and structure is another topic to consider. In this study, some of the participants took classes in a different language with locals while others attended a university in which they took classes made up only of Americans. All of the participants lived in student housing; home-stays were not represented. Future research would benefit from accounting for differences in program design and deciphering whether the structure of a study abroad program influences the experiences of college men.

Finally, research would benefit from longitudinal studies, exploring how study abroad impacts males over time. In this study, I included students who had studied abroad for one semester within the 18 months prior to the beginning of the study. By expanding the research to include the experiences of men years after studying abroad, we could better understand the role of study abroad on men's development. In addition, it would be valuable to study men prior to, during, and after a study abroad program to better assess men's experiences at different phases.

Future research might also look at comparing the perceptions of male students who study abroad and those who do not. How does one's description of himself as a man differ between men who study abroad and men who do not study abroad? How might the views of masculinity be the same or different for men who study abroad and those who do not? The findings could help direct study abroad offices in designing and promoting programs more effectively.

Finally, this study revealed men's desire for connection and their concern of not knowing anyone while studying abroad. More attention needs to be given to this concern in future research. In addition, the findings illustrated men's unfamiliarity with their gender identity, further supporting a need for additional work on the role of gender and

identity development of college men. Lastly, while this study explored a number of ways men changed as a result of studying abroad, more contrasting studies of men and women are needed regarding how they are affected by study abroad.

Recommendations for Practice

In addition to informing future research, there are a number of implications of this study for study abroad professionals, student affairs practice, and students.

Study Abroad Professionals

Sharing the emerging themes collected in this study could benefit study abroad professionals in a number of ways. With college men only comprising 35% of the students who study abroad, study abroad professionals need to be cognizant of gender differences when working with college men. First, the findings illustrate how men who study abroad describe themselves as men, which is important to program promotion and design. Communication and recruitment strategies should highlight concepts that have been found to be relevant to male students: an interest in academic achievement, sports, being connected, and more. The findings could be incorporated in advising tactics as well as promotional efforts by updating advising protocols, websites, brochures, and presentation content to include attributes that are relevant to men. For example, both advisers and promotional materials could acknowledge men's competitive nature by promoting study abroad as an opportunity to challenge oneself and test one's limits.

In addition study abroad professionals should be aware of men's concern with travelling alone by focusing promotional efforts and advising sessions to address the fear and to highlight the new friendships that transpire when abroad. Study abroad offices should partner with host intuitions abroad and create an international buddy program.

Having a host national available to the study abroad students may ease the anticipation of not knowing anyone when they arrive.

Study abroad offices would benefit from incorporating the findings of this study as well as the research literature previously discussed into staff training sessions. At a minimum, study abroad directors, advisers, and student workers should be aware of the behaviors and beliefs that are most central to college men's traditional definition of masculinity and how this image might play out in the study abroad context.

Study abroad offices could incorporate more demographic information into pre-departure orientation sessions. The findings of this study illustrated the limited awareness men have of their gender identity and the blurring of societal and personal beliefs regarding gender. Students may benefit from discussions about gender roles and cultural practices prior to going abroad. When relevant, they should discuss issues related to race, socio-economic status, gender, sexual orientation, and other aspects of identity as they appear in the U.S. culture as well as the host country's culture.

Study abroad offices should be aware of the curriculum requirements of specific majors when advising and promoting study abroad. During this study, the engineering majors, Chris, Evan, Rob, and Will, talked about balancing their conflicting interests: fulfilling academic requirements that include completing an internship during an ideal time in their degree and the desire to pursue study abroad. By being aware of these conflicts, study abroad professionals can better develop targeted marketing by matching the needs of specific majors to corresponding study abroad programs. Understanding both the required and the perceived obligations of specific majors would help a study abroad adviser be able to find a better program fit for the student.

Finally, study abroad professionals should be aware that while the men in this study described a supportive familial relationship with high academic expectations, that background is not necessarily the norm. Study abroad professionals should be prepared to offer support and encouragement, as some students may not have the same privileges as the men in this study.

Student Affairs Practice

The findings of this study could also benefit student affairs practitioners. More opportunities for discussion of gender role stereotypes and the practices that may be contributing to gender socialization need to take place. College may be the first time men spend time on inner thought because previously they have focused only on outside motivators and feedback from others (Kimmel, 2008). Rather than teaching men to analyze their feelings and self-perceptions, the culture's masculine standards and peer group influence are taking precedence (Kimmel, 2008). As a result, student affairs professionals can assist male students by encouraging them to think for themselves by providing opportunities to discuss societal and peer influence as it relates to gender roles. Most of the participants in this study answered questions related to gender by saying, "I don't know; I never think about that." As supported by the literature review, college men often restrict emotion and avoid anything perceived as feminine (Pollack, 2006). It is essential for student affairs professionals to be cognizant of the masks college men may wear and to create opportunities for facilitated discussion.

Another way the information on male students could be shared is by providing more in-depth training about gender identity and diversity in faculty and staff trainings, residence hall staff training, academic adviser training, and training in many other

relevant departments. It is important for the professionals in these departments to remember that while a college male may present a particular image of himself, there are many societal pressures to consider when working with male students. For example, the limited gender norms that depict “normal” masculine behavior are imposed primarily through misogyny and homophobia (Connell, 2005). Men are expected to be strong, powerful, successful, reliable, independent, seek risk, disregard other’s opinions, and avoid behaviors that equate with being feminine (Brannon, 1976). By being aware of the societal expectations dictating college men’s behavior, professionals can be more proactive in finding ways to avoid perpetuating these limited gender norms in programming and while advising. Because men’s conflicts and stresses related to male gender roles have been associated with increased depression and psychological distress (Good & Wood, 1995), the need for professionals to be educated on these issues is great.

Finally, while an ambitious goal, another area that would benefit from the findings of this study is expanding course offerings or including more gender identity concepts in existing classes. While many campuses offer a variety of classes and topics on women’s studies and feminism, students would benefit from class content that included issues pertinent to masculinity identity. During this study, Jason discussed a *Sport and Masculinity* class he took in New Zealand. He described the influence the class content had on his perception of gender, and as a result he felt more aware of the pressures associated with gender role stereotypes. A similar sport and masculinity class from a U.S. perspective would be a valuable curriculum addition as would courses discussing masculinity from a cultural or historical lens.

Students

This research has implications for students, specifically male students who have studied abroad. Throughout this study, the participants were surprised to learn that only 35% of study abroad participants are men. The returning students can play a pivotal role in promoting study abroad to fellow students, specifically their male peers. As previous research indicated, men desire to hear about study abroad from their peers, and males perceive peer messages to be important in their decision-making process (Lucas, 2009), further supporting the influence that returnees can have in promoting study abroad.

Other students can benefit from the gender findings of this study by stressing that college men are not alone in their desire for connection, which has historically been associated with the feminine role. In addition, the findings demonstrate the need for college students to think more critically about gender role stereotypes and support one another when deviating from the restrictive gender norms.

Personal Reflections

I learned a number of important things from this study. In my future research endeavors, I will work harder to limit the scope of my interview questions. In this study, I asked too many questions, and some did not pertain to my topic, which added to the complexity of the analysis process. While I may have asked too many questions, I did learn the value of asking them. All of the participants in this study appreciated the opportunity to reflect on their study abroad experiences and to have an avenue for sharing their stories.

As I look back on this research project, I reflect on the various stages that embodied this study as well as the various roles I played while conducting it. Prior to

beginning this dissertation, I was told numerous times to select a topic I was passionate about because of the intense amount of time I will spend with the subject. While my interest in providing a voice to male study abroad students did not waver, a number of other things did. As a study abroad coordinator, I began to question how we promote study abroad. I assumed male students wanted to hear about the adventures, the career advantage, and the ease of the application process. However, while conducting this research, I realized the depth of the male student who pursues study abroad. I began to speak to prospective male study abroad students differently. I critiqued my previous assumptions about gender, and I wavered in my views of masculinity. I have become more aware of the societal pressure dictating how one should or should not act based on gender.

I also wavered in my view of the research process. Prior to this study, I have read countless academic articles, books, and dissertations, but I did not understand the magnitude of self-discipline that research necessitates until embarking on this journey. When the dissertation process started, I felt insecure, unprepared, and crippled with anxiety. As the research continued, I felt insecure, unprepared, and crippled with anxiety while periodically experiencing a glimmer of confidence in my ability. My confidence built with progress, but not without insecurity. What I truly learned in this dance with self-doubt and self-belief was that both could serve a purpose. Not only was this research about expanding a body of knowledge, it was also about transforming the habitual, often unconscious, self-defeating thoughts I have had about myself.

Now where do I go from here? As a study abroad coordinator, my intent is to use the findings of this study as a guide when advising, designing, and promoting study

abroad programs for men. My long-term goal is to continue to conduct research on study abroad and to continue to explore the voices of men and learn more about the pressures that men face to uphold rigid societal expectations. I also plan to share the findings of this study not only with the study abroad office in which I work, but also by presenting at professional conferences and sharing the research via academic journals.

APPENDIX A. E-MAIL INVITING PARTICIPANTS TO PARTICIPATE

Dear _____,

My name is Julie Yankey and I am a doctoral student at Iowa State University (ISU) and a Study Abroad Coordinator in the ISU Study Abroad Center. For my dissertation, I am exploring the study abroad experiences of male students. I received your name through the [name source here]. For my dissertation research, I am looking for current college students who are male, 18-22 years old, and participated in a study abroad program within the past eighteen months for a minimum of one semester. The data collection methods will consist of three interviews, which could last approximately 90 minutes to 2 ½ hours. I hope you are interested in and willing to participate in this research.

The purpose of the study is to better understand the experiences of male study abroad students related primarily to their masculinity identity development while participating on a study abroad program. The intent of the study is to provide information on how men define and express masculinity in the study abroad context and the role of the cultural context on men's development and learning. If you choose to participate, I will ask you to participate in three interviews about your background before college, your study abroad experiences, and the meaning you have made of your experiences. All information you provide will be kept confidential and during the study, you will be asked to provide a pseudonym and identifiable information will be generalized to maintain anonymity.

If you meet these criteria and you are interested in participating in this study or you would like more information, please contact me at jyankey@iastate.edu.

Thank you,

Julie B. Yankey
Doctoral Student
Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
Iowa State University
jyankey@iastate.edu

APPENDIX B. CONFIRMATION E-MAIL

Dear _____ ,

Thank you for your interest in my doctoral dissertation study exploring the study abroad experiences of male students. The purpose of the study is to better understand men's study abroad experiences related to their personal development and identity, with a specific focus on masculinity while studying abroad for a minimum of one semester.

Please review the attached informed consent document. At our first interview, after you ask any questions, we will both sign the document.

I would like to set up our first interview. Will you please send me a few dates and times that you are available to meet?

If you would like more information or have any questions, please contact me at jyankey@iastate.edu.

Thank you,

Julie B. Yankey
Doctoral Student
Education
Iowa State University
jyankey@iastate.edu
515-473-4363

APPENDIX C. INFORMED CONSENT

Title of Study: Investigating masculinity: Exploring the study abroad experiences of college men.

Investigators:

Julie B. Yankey, Principal Investigator
 Doctoral candidate – Education – Iowa State University
 Study Abroad Coordinator, Iowa State University
 515-473-4363 (cell) jyankey@iastate.edu

Dr. Nancy J. Evans, Major Professor
nevans@iastate.edu

This is a research study. Please take your time in deciding if you would like to participate. Please feel free to ask questions at any time.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to better understand the experiences of male college students who study abroad related to their identity development and how men define and express masculinity in the study abroad context and the role of the cultural context on men's development and learning. You are being invited to participate in this study because you have indicated that you are a male college student between the ages of 18-22, have participated in a study abroad program for a minimum of one semester within the past 18 months while attending a large, public, land-grant and Carnegie research extensive university in the Midwest.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCEDURES

If you agree to participate in this study, your participation will last for approximately four months and will involve three interviews that could last up to 90 minutes to 2 ½ hours. The interviews will be held in a private conference room or electronically via Skype when applicable. You will be asked to bring photos of your study abroad experience. Please choose the photographs carefully and avoid bringing pictures that depict illegal or other problematic behaviors. These pictures will be used only as prompts for discussion and will remain in your possession at all times. During the study you may expect the following study procedures to be followed: the first interview will focus on your background, the second interview will focus on your study abroad experiences, and the third interview will focus on the meaning you have made of your experiences. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed. At any time, you may skip any questions or refuse to answer a question that makes you feel uncomfortable.

RISKS

The risks in participating in this study are minimal, but may include discomfort as the result of being asked about sensitive topics. You are free to refuse to answer any questions and to provide as little or as much information as you are comfortable providing to the researcher.

BENEFITS

If you decide to participate in this study there may be no direct benefit to you; however, you may consider it a benefit that you are contributing to an area of research that has not been directly studied. It is hoped that the information gained in this study will benefit society by providing valuable information about the experiences of college men who study abroad.

COSTS AND COMPENSATION

You will not have any costs from participating in this study. You will not be compensated for participating in this study.

PARTICIPANT RIGHTS

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or leave the study at any time. If you decide to not participate in the study or leave the study early, it will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Records identifying participants will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by applicable laws and regulations and will not be made publicly available. However, federal government regulatory agencies, auditing departments of Iowa State University, and the Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves human subject research studies) may inspect and/or copy your records for quality assurance and data analysis. These records may contain private information.

To ensure confidentiality to the extent permitted by law, the following measures will be taken: you will be asked to provide a pseudonym and audio files, transcripts, and journals I keep regarding the study will be labeled with your pseudonym. Any identifying information will be generalized to maintain confidentiality. However, you should be aware it is possible that someone familiar with the Study Abroad program or your experiences may be able to identify you based on the information reported in the study results.

All audio files, informed consent forms, transcripts, and journals will be kept on the researcher's password protected computer and password protected portable drive which will be secured at the researcher's home in a locked safe. Following the data collection, I will create a profile that describes you. I will provide you with your profile so you may have the opportunity to review the profile, suggest revisions and/or redactions prior to the

information being used in publications/presentations of the study results.

QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS

You are encouraged to ask questions at any time during the study.

- For further information about the study contact Julie B. Yankey, 515-473-4363 or Dr. Nancy J. Evans, major professor, 515-231-9612.
- If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515) 294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or Director, (515) 294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011.

PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE

Your signature indicates that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study, that the study has been explained to you, that you have been given the time to read the document and that your questions have been satisfactorily answered. You will receive a copy of the written informed consent prior to your participation in the study.

Participant's Name (printed) _____

(Participant's Signature)

(Date)

INVESTIGATOR STATEMENT

I certify that the participant has been given adequate time to read and learn about the study and all of his/her questions have been answered. It is my opinion that the participant understands the purpose, risks, benefits and the procedures that will be followed in this study and has voluntarily agreed to participate.

(Signature of Person Obtaining
Informed Consent)

(Date)

APPENDIX D. INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Institutional Review Board
Office for Responsible Research
Vice President for Research
1138 Pearson Hall
Ames, Iowa 50011-2207
515 294-4566
FAX 515 294-4267

Date: 6/24/2013

To: Julie Yankey
3224 Memorial Union

CC: Dr. Nancy J Evans
N247 Lagomarcino Hall
Dr. Tyson Marsh
N243 Lagomarcino

From: Office for Responsible Research

Title: Investigating masculinity: Exploring the study abroad experiences of college men.

IRB ID: 13-281

Approval Date: 6/24/2013

Date for Continuing Review: 6/17/2015

Submission Type: New

Review Type: Full Committee

The project referenced above has received approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Iowa State University according to the dates shown above. Please refer to the IRB ID number shown above in all correspondence regarding this study.

To ensure compliance with federal regulations (45 CFR 46 & 21 CFR 56), please be sure to:

- **Use only the approved study materials** in your research, including the recruitment materials and informed consent documents that have the IRB approval stamp.
- **Retain signed informed consent documents for 3 years after the close of the study**, when documented consent is required.
- **Obtain IRB approval prior to implementing any changes** to the study by submitting a Modification Form for Non-Exempt Research or Amendment for Personnel Changes form, as necessary.
- **Immediately inform the IRB of (1) all serious and/or unexpected adverse experiences** involving risks to subjects or others; and (2) **any other unanticipated problems involving risks** to subjects or others.
- **Stop all research activity if IRB approval lapses**, unless continuation is necessary to prevent harm to research participants. Research activity can resume once IRB approval is reestablished.
- **Complete a new continuing review form** at least three to four weeks prior to the **date for continuing review** as noted above to provide sufficient time for the IRB to review and approve continuation of the study. We will send a courtesy reminder as this date approaches.

Please be aware that IRB approval means that you have met the requirements of federal regulations and ISU policies governing human subjects research. **Approval from other entities may also be needed.** For example, access to data from private records (e.g. student, medical, or employment records, etc.) that are protected by FERPA, HIPAA, or other confidentiality policies requires permission from the holders of those records. Similarly, for research conducted in institutions other than ISU (e.g., schools, other colleges or universities, medical facilities, companies, etc.), investigators must obtain permission from the institution(s) as required by their policies. **IRB approval in no way implies or guarantees that permission from these other entities will be granted.**

Upon completion of the project, please submit a Project Closure Form to the Office for Responsible Research, 1138 Pearson Hall, to officially close the project.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Institutional Review Board
Office for Responsible Research
Vice President for Research
1138 Pearson Hall
Ames, Iowa 50011-2207
515 294-4566
FAX 515 294-4267

Date: 7/23/2013

To: Julie Yankey
3224 Memorial Union

CC: Dr. Nancy J Evans
N247 Lagomarcino Hall

From: Office for Responsible Research

Title: Investigating masculinity: Exploring the study abroad experiences of college men.

IRB ID: 13-281

Approval Date: 7/23/2013

Date for Continuing Review: 6/17/2015

Submission Type: Modification

Review Type: Expedited

The project referenced above has received approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Iowa State University according to the dates shown above. Please refer to the IRB ID number shown above in all correspondence regarding this study.

To ensure compliance with federal regulations (45 CFR 46 & 21 CFR 56), please be sure to:

- **Use only the approved study materials** in your research, including the recruitment materials and informed consent documents that have the IRB approval stamp.
- **Retain signed informed consent documents for 3 years after the close of the study**, when documented consent is required.
- **Obtain IRB approval prior to implementing any changes** to the study by submitting a Modification Form for Non-Exempt Research or Amendment for Personnel Changes form, as necessary.
- **Immediately inform the IRB of (1) all serious and/or unexpected adverse experiences** involving risks to subjects or others; and (2) **any other unanticipated problems involving risks** to subjects or others.
- **Stop all research activity if IRB approval lapses**, unless continuation is necessary to prevent harm to research participants. Research activity can resume once IRB approval is reestablished.
- **Complete a new continuing review form** at least three to four weeks prior to the **date for continuing review** as noted above to provide sufficient time for the IRB to review and approve continuation of the study. We will send a courtesy reminder as this date approaches.

Please be aware that IRB approval means that you have met the requirements of federal regulations and ISU policies governing human subjects research. **Approval from other entities may also be needed.** For example, access to data from private records (e.g. student, medical, or employment records, etc.) that are protected by FERPA, HIPAA, or other confidentiality policies requires permission from the holders of those records. Similarly, for research conducted in institutions other than ISU (e.g., schools, other colleges or universities, medical facilities, companies, etc.), investigators must obtain permission from the institution(s) as required by their policies. **IRB approval in no way implies or guarantees that permission from these other entities will be granted.**

Upon completion of the project, please submit a Project Closure Form to the Office for Responsible Research, 1138 Pearson Hall, to officially close the project.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have questions or concerns at 515-294-4566 or IRB@iastate.edu.

APPENDIX E. INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview #1: This set of interview questions aims to understand your life history and your identity development processes. The questions will focus on your life pre-study abroad.

BACKGROUND & DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Tell me a bit about yourself (age, ethnicity /race, major, year in college).
2. Where are you from? Have you always lived there? What was your hometown like?
3. What is your family like?
4. Do you have any siblings? Please describe them to me.
5. What is your relationship like with your parents and siblings?
6. What were the expectations of you growing up in your home?
7. Were these expectations different for boys versus girls? (Still ask as a hypothetical question if the participant does not have a sibling of the opposite sex.)
8. Describe yourself pre-college. What were your interests? Hobbies? How would you describe your personality?

GENDER

9. Do you remember a time when you noticed gender differences?
How old were you? What encouraged you to think about it?
10. When you think about what it means to be a man, what's the first thing that pops into your head?
11. How would you describe society's definition of what it means to be a man?
Media's definition? How does that fit or not fit for you?
12. How did your family contribute to your understanding of what it means to be a man?
13. How did the environment in which you grew up contribute to your understanding of what it means to be a man?
14. Growing up, what messages did you hear or see about what it means to be a man?
15. Are there any individuals who role model for you on what it means to be a man?

If so, what have they taught you and how?

If not, why not and would you like to have some role models? If so, what might those role models offer you?

16. Describe the types of friends that you have/had pre-college.

In what ways, if any, have they have contributed to or influenced your understanding of what it means to be a man?

IOWA STATE & STUDY ABROAD

17. What motivated you to attend Iowa State?

18. Prior to studying abroad, what was your experience at Iowa State like?

19. Have you traveled abroad previously?

20. When did you first realize you wanted to study abroad?

21. Tell me what motivated you to decide to study abroad?

22. Where did you study abroad?

23. What did you think it would be like to study abroad?

24. What did you think the people in that country would be like? The men? The women?

25. How do you talk about study abroad with other people? Friends? Family?

26. What did your family/friends think about your decision to study abroad?

27. Prior to going, what did other men say generally about study abroad?

28. A lot of people are talking about the lack of male participants in study abroad. What do you think about that? Why might that be?

29. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your background or experiences prior to going abroad that are important to you?

During our next interview, please bring some of your favorite photos of your study abroad experience. You will be asked what meaning each photograph has for you in relation to your time abroad. These pictures will be used only as prompts for discussion and will remain in your possession at all times.

Interview # 2

Ask the participant to show me his photographs and ask him why he chose to bring this/these photograph(s).

STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM

1. Why did you select the program that you chose?
2. Describe your study abroad program.
3. When did you go?
4. How was it structured?
5. Where was the program located (e.g., in a city, in a rural area)?
6. What was your housing situation? Who did you live with?
7. What was your school like?
8. What did you study? In what language were your classes taught?
9. How did your professors/classmates treat you?
10. How much interaction did you have with locals?
11. What learning experiences did you engage in besides classes?
12. Did you travel abroad alone or with others whom you knew previously?
13. What did you and your friends do for fun?
14. How familiar were you with the culture of the country you studied in?
How did you learn about the culture?
15. What were you hoping to gain from your study abroad experience?
16. Did you date while you were abroad? Tell me about the person or people you dated?
17. To what extent did you need to modify your lifestyle to fit in? What was this experience like for you?
18. What challenges did you face while studying abroad? How did you address them?
19. What sources of support did you make use of while you were abroad?

GENDER & CULTURE

20. Did the host culture have distinct gender roles in society between men and women?
21. Do these gender roles differentiate one's social status in society?
22. Did the host culture view men differently than the U.S.?

23. What similarities and differences did you notice about men's behavior in the host country?
24. How did men define what it means to be a man in your host culture?
25. Do these perceptions have any impact on the way you view your own gender now in the US context?
26. Does race have any influence in how you view your own gender in the US context?
27. Does social class have any influence in how you view your own gender in the US context?
28. Does sexuality have any influence in how you view your own gender in the US context?
29. Were there things that you do in the U.S. that you could not do in the country in which you studied? What effect did this have on you?
30. Were there things you did in your host country that you had not done at home? What motivated you to engage in this (these) activities? What was (were) your experience(s) like?
31. Besides the traditional American notions of masculinity, are there other versions of masculinity that you were exposed to in your host culture? Do those versions of masculinity fit any better or worse for you?
32. Did being a man influence any of the choices you made during your study abroad experience?
33. What were the most difficult parts of being a man for you while studying abroad?
34. What significant people, places, or events (good or bad) were critical in changing how you understood what it means to be a man?
35. Was there ever a situation you felt uncomfortable? If so, how did you handle it.
36. Do you believe it's easier to be a man in the U.S. or the country you studied in?
37. Tell me about an event while abroad that caused you to think about gender.
38. Being an American male in a different country, what struggles and challenges did you encounter? What did you do to manage these challenges?
39. Is there anything I didn't ask about your study abroad experiences that you'd like to tell me?

40. Is there any question you thought I would ask about your study abroad experiences overall that I didn't ask?

Interview # 3

1. What did you learn from studying abroad?
2. In what ways did your study abroad experience meet your expectations?
3. In what ways, if any, did it fail to meet your expectations?
4. What surprised you about your experience?
5. What do you remember most about your study abroad experience?
6. What did you learn about yourself as a result of studying abroad?
7. In what ways have you changed as a result of studying abroad?
8. How did your impressions of the country, its culture, and/or its people change as a result of your study abroad experience?
9. Do you view other cultures differently than you did prior to going abroad? In what ways?
10. In what ways did your impressions of men in the U.S. change as a result of your experience studying abroad? Women?
11. Do you think you would have had a similar study abroad experience if you were a woman studying abroad?
12. Since you have been back in the U.S., what experiences have you engaged in as a result of having studied abroad?
13. Have your plans for the future changed as a result of studying abroad (e.g., future travel plans, career plans)?
14. Are your interactions with others different since you studied abroad? If so, how?
15. Did your understanding of what it means to be a man change as a result of studying abroad? If so, how?
OR How have your thoughts and feelings about being a male changed after studying abroad?
16. Do you view men differently as a result of studying abroad? What about women?
17. Has your perception of gender changed since studying abroad?

If so, what contributed to this change?

How has this change impacted you? Your family?

18. After studying abroad, has your relationship with your family and friends changed or stayed the same? How?

If I were to ask your friends or family whether you changed or stayed the same after study abroad, what would they say?

19. How do you make meaning of the role of the study abroad experience on your identity development?

20. What would you like people who work in study abroad to know about the experiences of men who study abroad?

21. Is there anything that I didn't ask about that you'd like to tell me?

22. Is there any question you thought I would ask and I didn't ask?

REFERENCES

- Abes, E. S., Jones, S. R., & McEwen, M. K. (2007). Reconceptualizing the model of multiple dimensions of identity: The role of meaning-making capacity in the construction of multiple identities. *Journal of College Student Development*, 48, 1-22.
- Abreu, J. M., Goodyear, R. K., Campos, A., & Newcomb, M. D. (2000). Ethnic belonging and traditional masculinity ideology among African Americans, European Americans, and Latinos. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, 1(2), 75-86.
- Arminio, J. L., & Hultgren, F. H. (2002). Breaking out from the shadow: The questions of criteria in qualitative research. *Journal of College Student Development*, 43(4), 446-460.
- Bannon, I., & Correia, M. (Eds). (2006). *The other half of gender: Men's issues in development*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.
- Barron, J. (2009). *Masculinity ideology, gender role strain, and styles in male college students*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3382617).
- Bergman, S. J. (1995). Men's psychological development: A relational perspective. In R. Levant & W. Pollack (Eds.), *A new psychology of men* (pp. 68-90). New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Blazina, C., & Watkins, C. E. (2000). Separation/ individuation, parental attachment, and male gender role conflict: Attitudes toward the feminine and the fragile masculine self. *Psychology of Men and Masculinity*, 1, 126-132.
- Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (2003). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods* (4th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Group.
- Brannon, R. (1976). The male sex role: Our culture's blueprint of manhood, and what it's done for us lately. In D. David & R. Brannon (Eds.), *The forty-nine percent majority: The male sex role* (pp. 1-40). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Byrnes, J. P., Miller, D. C., & Schafer, W. D. (1999). Gender differences in risk taking: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 125(3), 367-383.
- Capraro, R. L. (2000). Why college men drink: Alcohol, adventure, and the paradox of masculinity. *Journal of American College of Health*, 48(6), 307-324.
- Capraro, R. L. (2004). Men's studies as a foundation for student development work with

- college men. In G. E. Kellom, (Ed.), *Special issue: Developing effective programs and services for college men*. New Directions for Student Services (107, pp. 23-34). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Carlson, J. S., Burns, B. B., Useem, J., & Yachimowicz, D. (1990). *Study abroad: The experience of American undergraduates*. New York, NY: Greenwood.
- Chu, J. Y., Porche, M. V., & Tolman, D. L. (2005). The adolescent masculinity ideology in relationship scale: Development and validation of a new measure for boys. *Men and Masculinities*, 8, 93-115.
- Coleman, J. S. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94, 95-120.
- Connell, R. W. (2005). *Masculinities* (2nd ed.) Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program. (2005, November). *Global competence and national needs: One million Americans studying abroad*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved May 1, 2013, from <http://www.nafsa.org/resourcelibrary/Default.aspx?id=16035>
- Courtenay, W.H. (1998). College men's health: An overview and a call to action. *Journal of American College Health*, 46(6), 279-290.
- Covin, T. J., & Brush, C. C. (1991). An examination of male and female attitudes toward career and family issues. *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research*, 25(7/8), 393-415.
- Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Davies, J., McCrae, B. P., Frank, J., Dochnahl, A., Pickering, T., Harrison, B., Wilson, K. (2000). Identifying male college students' perceived health needs, barriers to seeking help, and recommendations to help men adopt healthier lifestyles. *American Journal of College Health*, 48, 259-267.
- Davis, T. L. (2002). Voices of gender role conflict: The social construction of college

- men's identity. *Journal of College Student Development*, 43, 508-521.
- Davis, T. L. (2010). Voices of gender role conflict: The social construction of college men's identity. In S. R. Harper & F. Harris III (Eds.), *College men and masculinities: Theory, research, and implications for practice* (pp. 49-65). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Davis, T., & Laker, J. A. (2004). Connecting men to academic and student affairs programs and services. In G. E. Kellom (Ed.), *Developing effective programs and services for college men* (pp. 47-58). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Davis, T. L., & Wagner, R. (2005). Increasing men's development of social justice ally attitudes and actions. In R. D. Reason, E. M. Broido, T. L. Davis, & N. J. Evans (Eds.), *Developing social justice allies*. New Directions for Student Services, No. 110, pp. 29-41. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- DeFranc, W., & Mahalik, J. R. (2002). Masculine gender role conflict and stress in relation to parental attachment and separation. *Psychology of Men and Masculinity*, 3, 51-60.
- Dessoiff, A. (2006, March/April). Who's not going abroad? *International Educator*, 20-27.
- Deutschendorf, H. (1996). *Of work and men: Becoming what you are, not what you do*. Minneapolis, MN: Fairview Press.
- Dolby, N. (2004). Encountering an American self: Study abroad and national identity [Electronic version]. *Comparative Education Review*, 48(2), 150-173.
- Dwyer, M. M. (2004). More is better: The impact of study abroad program duration. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, IX, 151-164.
- Dyke, L. S., & Murphy, S. A. (2006). How we define success: A qualitative study of what matters most to women and men. *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research*, 55(5/6), 357-371.
- Edwards, K. E. (2007). *Putting my man face on: A grounded theory of college men's gender identity development*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3260431).
- Edwards, K. E., & Jones, S. R. (2009). Putting my man face on: A grounded theory of college men's gender identity development. *Journal of College Student Development*, 50(2), 210-228.
- Elliott, A. (2001). *Concepts of the self*. Malden, MA: Polity.

- Erikson, E. H. (1950). *Childhood and society*. New York, NY: Norton.
- Erikson, Erik H. (1959) *Identity and the life cycle*. New York, NY: International Universities Press.
- Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and crisis*. New York, NY: Norton.
- Evans, N. J., Forney, D. S., Guido, F., Patton, L., & Renn, K. A. (2010). *Student development in college: Theory, research, and practice* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Fischer, K. (2012). In study abroad, men are hard to find. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved June 18, 2013, from <http://chronicle.com/article/In-Study-Abroad-Men-Are-Hard/130853/>
- Fischer, A. R., & Good, G. E. (1998). Perceptions of parent–child relationships and masculine role conflicts of college men. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 45, 346-352.
- Foubert, J. D., Newberry, J. T., & Tatum, J. (2007). Behavior differences seven months later: Effects of a rape prevention program. *NASPA Journal*, 44(4), 728-749.
- Gemignani, C. (2009). *Understanding the study abroad experience of university students*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3355219).
- Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Goldstein, S. & Kim, R. (2006). Predictors of US college students' participation in study abroad programs: A longitudinal study. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 30, 507-521.
- Good, G. E., & Mintz, L. B. (1990). Gender role conflict and depression in college men: Evidence for compounded risk. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 69(1), 17-21.
- Good, E. G., & Wood, P. K. (1995). Male gender role conflict, depression, and help seeking: Do college men face double jeopardy? *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 74, 70-75.
- Gore, J. E. (2005). *Dominant beliefs and alternative voices: Discourse, belief, and gender in American study abroad*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Harper, S. R., Harris III, F., & Mmaje, K. (2005). A theoretical model to explain the overrepresentation of college men among campus judicial offenders: Implications

- for campus administrators. *NASPA Journal*, 42(4), 565–588.
- Harper, S. R., & Harris, III, F. (2010). *College men and masculinities*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Harris, I. M. (1995). *Messages men hear: Constructing masculinities*. Bristol, PA: Taylor & Francis.
- Harris III, F. H. (2006). *The meanings college men make of masculinities and contextual influences on behaviors, outcomes, and gendered environmental norms: A grounded theory study*. Retrieved from Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3237744).
- Harris III, F. (2008). Deconstructing masculinity: A qualitative study of college men's masculine conceptualizations and gender performance. *NASPA Journal*, 45(4), 453-474.
- Harris, III, F. (2010). College men's meanings of masculinities and contextual influences: Toward a conceptual model. *Journal of College Student Development*, 51(3), 297-318.
- Helms, J. E. (1992). *A race is a nice thing to have: A guide to being a White person or understanding the White persons in your life*. Topeka, KS: Content Communications.
- Harris, III, F., & Edwards, K. (2010). College men's experiences as men: Findings from two grounded theory studies. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 47(1), 43-62.
- Hong, L. (2000). Toward a transformed approach to prevention: Breaking the link between masculinity and violence. *Journal of American College Health*, 48, 269-279.
- Hopkins, J. R. (1999). Studying abroad as a form of experiential learning. *Liberal Education*, 3, 36-41.
- Ingraham, E. C., & Peterson, D. L. (2004). Assessing the impact of study abroad on student learning at Michigan State University. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 10, 83-100.
- Institute for International Education (2012). *Open doors*, 2012.
- Jones, S. R. (1997). Voices of identity and difference: A qualitative exploration of multiple dimensions of identity development in women college students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 38, 376–386.

- Jones, S. R., & McEwen, M. K. (2000). A conceptual model of multiple dimensions of identity. *Journal of College Student Development*, 41, 405-414.
- Jones, S. R., Torres, V., & Arminio, J. (2006). *Negotiating the complexities of qualitative research in higher education: Fundamental elements and issues*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Josselson, R. (1987). *Finding herself: Pathways to identity development in women*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Josselson, R. (1996). *Revising herself: The story of women's identity from college to midlife*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Kellom, G. E. (2004). Editor's notes. In G. E. Kellom (Ed), *Developing effective programs and services for college men: New Directions for Student Services*, (No. 107, pp. 1-7). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Kimmel, M. S. (1994). Masculinity as homophobia: Fear, shame, and silence in the construction of gender identity. In H. Brod & M. Kaufman (Eds.), *Theorizing masculinities* (pp. 119-141). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Kimmel, M. S. (1995). *The Politics of manhood: Profeminist men respond to the mythopoetic men's movement (and the mythopoetic leaders answer)*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Kimmel, M. S. (1997). Masculinity as homophobia: Fear, shame, and silence in the construction of gender identity. In M. M. Gergen & S. N. Davis (Eds.), *Toward a new psychology of gender: A reader* (pp. 223-242). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Kimmel, M. S. (2004). Clarence, William, Iron Mike, Tailhook, Senator Packwood, Spur Posse, Magic...and us: A second look. In M. S. Kimmel, & M. A. Messner (Eds.), *Men's lives* (6th ed., pp. 565-579). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Kimmel, M. S. (2008). *Guyland: The perilous world where boys become men*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.
- Kimmel, M. S., & Messner, M. A. (Eds.). (2007). *Men's lives* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Kimmel, M. S., & Davis, T. (2011). Mapping guyland in college. In J. A. Laker & T. Davis (Eds.), *Masculinities in higher education: Theoretical and practical considerations* (pp. 3-15). New York, NY: Routledge.
- King, A. R. (2008). *Uncertainty and evolution: Contributions to identity development for female college students who identify as multiracial/biracial-bisexual/pansexual* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI

- No. 3310805).
- Korobov, N. (2004). Inoculating against prejudice: A disclosure approach to homophobia and sexism in adolescent male talk. *Psychology of Men and Masculinity*, 5(2), 178-189.
- Krugman, S. (1995). The development and transformation of shame. In R. Levant & W. Pollack (Eds.), *A new psychology of men* (pp. 91-128). New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Laker, J. (2003, March). Bad dogs: Rethinking our engagement of male students. *ACPA's Standing Committee for Men Newsletter*. Washington, DC: American College Personnel Association.
- Levant, R. F. (1992). Toward the reconstruction of masculinity. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 5, 379-402.
- Levant, R. F. (1995). Toward the reconstruction of masculinity. In R. Levant & W. Pollack (Eds.), *A new psychology of men* (pp. 229-251). New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Levant, R. (1996). The new psychology of men. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 27(3), 259-265.
- Levant, R., & Pollack, W. S. (2008). *A new psychology of men*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Levine, A., & Cureton, J. (1998). *When hope and fear collide*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Lucas, J. M. (2009). *Where are all the males? A mixed methods inquiry into male study abroad participation* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3381358).
- Ludeman, R. B. (2004). Arrested emotional development: Connecting college men, emotions, and misconduct. In G.E. Kellom (Ed.), *Developing effective programs for college men. New Directions for Student Services* (No. 107, pp. 75-86). San Fransisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Mahalik, J. R., Good, G. E., & Englar-Carlson, M. (2003). Masculinity scripts, presenting concerns, and helping seeking: Implications for practice and training. *Professional Psychology: Research Practice*, 34(2), 123-131.
- Mahalik, J. R., Locke, B. D., Ludlow, L. H., Diemer, M. A., Scott, R. P. J., Gottfried, M.,

- et al. (2003). Development of the conformity to masculine norms inventory. *Psychology of Men and Masculinity*, 4, 3-25.
- Marcia, J. E. (1966). Development and validation of ego-identity status. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 3, 551-558.
- Marcia, J. E. (1994). The empirical study of ego-identity. In H. A. Bosma, T. L. G. Graafsma, H. D. Grotevant, & D. J. de Levita (Eds.), *Identity and development: An interdisciplinary approach* (pp. 67-80). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (1995). *Designing qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. (1999). *Designing qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Massey, D. S., Charles, C. Z., Lundy, G. F., & Fischer, M. J. (2003). *The source of the river: The social origins of freshmen at America's selective colleges and universities*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Maxwell, J. (1998). Designing a qualitative study. In L. Bickman & D. Rogs (Eds.), *Handbook of applied social research methods* (pp. 69-100). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Maxwell, J. A. (2005). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- McCracken, D. G. (1988). *The long interview: Qualitative research methods* (Vol. 13). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- McDonough, P. (1997). *Choosing colleges: How social class and schools structure opportunity*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- McEwen, M. (2003). New perspectives on identity development. In S. R. Komives, & D. Woodard (Eds.), *Student services: A handbook for the profession* (4th ed., pp. 188-217). San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
- Merriam, S. B. (Ed.). (2002). *Qualitative research in practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- National Science Foundation. (2012). *Science and engineering indicators 2012*. Retrieved May 1, 2013, from <http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/seind12/>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2012). *Graduation rates*. Retrieved November 10, 2013, from <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=40>

- O'Neil, J. M. (1981). Patterns of gender role conflict and strain: Sexism and fear of femininity in men's lives. *The Personnel and Guidance Journal*, 60, 203–210.
- O'Neil, J. M. (2008). Summarizing twenty-five years of research on men's gender role conflict using the Gender Role Conflict Scale: New research paradigms and clinical implications. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 36, 358-445.
- O'Neil, J. M., Helms, B. J., Gable, R. K., David, L., & Wrightsman, L. (1986). Gender-Role Conflict Scale: College men's fear of femininity. *Sex Roles*, 14(5-6), 335-350.
- O'Neil, J. M., & Roberts Carroll, M. (1988). A gender role workshop focused on sexism, gender role conflict, and the gender role journey. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 67, 193-197.
- O'Neil, J. M., & Nadeau, R. A., (2004). Men's gender-role conflict, defense mechanisms, and self-protective defensive strategies. In M. Harway & J. M. O'Neil (Eds.), *What causes men's violence against women?* (pp. 89-116). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- O'Neil, J.M., & Crapser, B. (2011). Using the psychology of men and gender role conflict theory to promote comprehensive service delivery for college men. In J. Laker & T. Davis (Eds.), *Masculinities in higher education* (pp. 16-49). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Ortlipp, M. (2008). Keeping and using reflective journals in the qualitative research process. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4), 695-705. Retrieved May 1, 2013, from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR13-4/ortlipp.pdf>
- Paciej, A. (2010). *The relationship between the level of engagement and the development of masculinity identity among male college students*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3452821).
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Pedersen, E. R., LaBrie, J. W., & Hummer, J. F. (2009). Perceived behavioral alcohol norms predict drinking for college students while studying abroad. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, 70, 924–928. Retrieved from <http://www.jsad.com>.
- Pedersen E. R., LaBrie, J. W., Hummer, J. F., Larimer, M. E, & Lee, C. M. (2010). Heavier drinking American college students may self-select into study abroad programs: An examination of sex and ethnic differences within high-risk group. *Addictive Behaviors*, 35, 844-847.
- Perna, L. W., & Titus, M. A. (2005). The relationship between parental involvement as

- social capital and college enrollment: An examination of racial/ethnic group differences. *Journal of Higher Education*, 76, 485-518.
- Peterson, C, Engle, L., Kenney, L., Kreutzer, K., Nolting, W., & Ogden, A. (2007). Defining terms for use in designing outcomes assessment projects. In M. C. Bolen (Ed.), *A guide to outcomes assessment in education abroad* (pp. 163-203). Carlisle, PA: The Forum on Education Abroad.
- Pleck, J. H. (1981). *The myth of masculinity*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Pleck, J. H. (1987). The theory of male sex-role identity: Its rise and fall, 1936 to the present. In H. Brod (Ed.), *The making of masculinities: The new men's studies* (pp. 11-32). New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Pleck, J. H. (1995). The gender role strain paradigm: An update. In R. F. Levant & W. S. Pollack (Eds.), *A new psychology of men* (pp. 11-32). New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Pollack, W. S. (1998). Mourning, melancholia, and masculinity: Recognizing and treating depression in men. In W. S. Pollack & R. F. Levant (Eds.), *New psychotherapy for men* (pp. 147-166). New York, NY: Wiley.
- Pollack, W. S. (1999). *Real boys: Rescuing our sons from the myths of boyhood*. New York, NY: Henry Holt & Company.
- Pollack, W. S. (2006). The "war" for boys: Hearing "real boy's" voices, healing their pain. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 37(2), 190-195.
- Prasad, P. (2005). *Crafting qualitative research: Working in the postpositivist traditions*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.
- Real, T. (1997). *I do not want to talk about it: Overcoming the secret legacy of male depression*. New York, NY: Scribner.
- Redden, E. (2008). Women abroad and men at home. *Inside Higher Ed*. Retrieved November 10, 2013, from <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2008/12/04/genderabroad>
- Reynolds, A. L., & Pope, R. L. (1991). The complexities of diversity: Exploring multiple oppressions. *Journal of Counseling Development*, 70, 174-180.
- Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2005). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Salisbury, M., Paulsen, M. B., & Pascarella, E. T. (2010). To see the world or stay at home: Applying an integrated student choice model to explore the gender gap in

- the intent to study abroad. *Research in Higher Education*, 51(7), 615-640.
- Sax, L. J. (2008). *The gender gap in college: Maximizing the developmental potential of men and women*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Scher, M. (1990). Effect of gender role incongruence on men's experience as clients in psychotherapy. *Psychotherapy*, 27, 322-326.
- Schroth, M., & McCormack, W. (2000). Sensation seeking and need for achievement among study-abroad students. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 140(4), 533-535.
- Schwandt, T. A. (2001). *Dictionary of qualitative inquiry* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Schwandt, T. A. (2003). Three epistemological stances for qualitative inquiry: Interpretativism, hermeneutics and social constructionism. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues* (pp. 292-331). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Seidman, I. (1998). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Seidman, I. (2012). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Spiering, K., & Erickson, S. (2006). Study abroad as innovation: Applying the diffusion model to international education. *International Education Journal*, 7, 314-322.
- Steedman, P. (2000). On the relations between seeing, interpreting and knowing. In Steier, F. (Ed.), *Research and reflexivity* (pp. 53-62). London, England: Sage.
- Tatum, B. D. (2003). *Why are all the Black kids sitting together in the cafeteria? and other conversations about race*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Taylor, S. J., & Bogdan, R. (1998). *Introduction to qualitative research methods: A guidebook and resource* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Wiley.
- Thompson, E. H., & Pleck, J. H. (1986). The structure of male role norms. *The American Behavioral Scientist* 29(5), 531-543.
- Thompson, E. H., Jr., & Pleck, J. H. (1995). Masculinity ideologies: A review of

- research instrumentation on men and masculinities. In R. Levant, & W. S. Pollack (Eds.), *A new psychology of men* (129-163). New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Van Hoof, H., & Verbeeten, M. (2005). Wine is for drinking, water is for washing: Student opinions about international exchange programs. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 9, 42-61.
- van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- Weber, L. (2001). *Understanding race, class, gender, and sexuality: A conceptual framework*. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.
- Wielkiezicz, R. M. (2002). Validity of the leadership attitudes and beliefs scale: Relationships with personality, communal orientation, and social desirability. *Journal of College Student Development*, 43(1), 108-119.
- Wielkiewicz, R. M., & Stelzner, S. P. (2005). An ecological perspective on leadership theory, research, and practice. *Review of General Psychology*, 9, 326-341.
- Wielkiewicz, R. M., Fischer, D. V., Stelzner, S. P., Overland, M., & Sinner, A. M. (2012). Leadership attitudes and beliefs of incoming first-year college students: A multi-institutional study of gender differences. *Journal of Leadership Education* 11(2), 1-25.
- Yin, R. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Zuckerman, M. (1991). *Psychobiology of personality*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.