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Is it Just Me? Queer Men's Negotiations of Queer Identities During Interactions With Heterosexual Cisgender Men

Carley, Timothy Cameron

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Is it Just Me? Queer Men's Negotiations of Queer Identities During Interactions With
Heterosexual Cisgender Men

by

Timothy Cameron Carley

A THESIS

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Abstract

Queer men's conceptualizations of their queer identities are multidimensional and cannot be captured by a singular definition. Similarly, queer men's expressions of masculinities are equally as complex, as they depend on how they compete and interact with other masculinities. In this qualitative study, I examined how queer men negotiate their identities during interactions with heterosexual, cisgender men while considering the impacts that the sociocultural context of so-called Alberta¹ has on these negotiations. I conducted semi-structured interviews with six queer men living in so-called Alberta to understand the behavioural implications of their interactions with het/cis men. Using thematic analysis, the findings suggested that queer men negotiate their behaviours in multiple ways by expressing queer masculinities to receive cultural and social benefits and safety from het/cis men. This is in response to het/cis men disproportionately creating uncomfortable interactional environments through their behaviours and the lack of representation within the so-called Alberta institutional and sociocultural context. However, queer men also employ queer masculinities by refuting negotiations of behaviour in response to het/cis men's actions. This study emphasizes the impacts that behaviours, interactions, and culture have on queer men's masculinities and identities that constantly shift, transform, and compete with other masculinities and identities.

¹ As a guest on this land, I must continuously acknowledge and respect the land through all parts of my life, including this thesis. Treaties Four, Six, Seven, Eight, and 10 comprise so-called Alberta.

Preface

I strive to include a part of myself in all the research I conduct. This research was especially reflexive, as it was the topic I needed when I was younger. Yet, my own queer identity and queer masculinity continues to shift and change meaning, which I encourage and accept. I continue to learn from myself every day, and I wish for this thesis to provide some necessary clarity, or complexity, to queer men who are experiencing similar tensions with their queer identities as I was when I was younger.

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My family, thank you for your unquestioning support and your check-ins when I was not sure if I would be able to complete this thesis. You are all the most important people in my life and I cannot wait to continue my academic journey with each one of you.

To my friends, you continue to support me with the utmost love throughout anything and everything. I continue to learn from you and cannot wait for the rest of our lives together.

To the participants, I truly could not have done this without you: I consider you all co-authors in this research. I learn from you. I admire you. I respect you. I am proud of you. This research is nothing without you and I hope this has been an enlightening opportunity for all of you.

I also want to acknowledge that I am a queer non-binary Japanese European settler who is presently a guest Moh'kins'tsis, which is a Blackfoot word that describes the Moh'kins'tsis landscape. Specifically, Moh'kins'tsis is the traditional land of the Blackfoot Confederacy including the Siksika, Kainai and Piikani First Nations; the Tsuut'ina First Nation; and the Îyâxe Nakoda nations including the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney First Nations. Moh/kins'tsis is also the home of Métis Region Number 3. I do not only want to acknowledge the land, but I also want to acknowledge that academia as an institution was and continues to be an inherently colonial institution. It is imperative for me to locate my participation within colonial institutions as a step towards reconciliation, which is a lifelong commitment and responsibility of settlers. I gratefully thank and am humbled by the Indigenous leaders within and outside of my life who continue to teach and guide my personal and research practices.

Dedication

To every queer person who believes they are not deserving of love or appreciation. I see you. I

hear you. I love you. And I promise you, you are.

To my younger self, this thesis, and everything, is for you.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Background

Upon reflecting on my close friends and support system, most of these people, both in high school and university, were heterosexual cisgender (het/cis) women, queer women, and queer men. I have few het/cis male peers: I gravitate towards women and queer men. This appears to be a pattern in my friendships because I feel listened to, understood, and safe around this particular group of people. I actively avoided het/cis men when I was younger due to fear of disapproval. Although this fear has comparatively lessened over time, high school was especially tumultuous because I believed that my sexuality would be scrutinized by het/cis men, even though, thankfully, I was rarely the subject of queerphobia. Presently, I am still hesitant to befriend het/cis men because I have a preconceived idea that, in some way, they are going to oppress me because of my identity as a queer, non-binary person. Yet, interactions with het/cis men have always been a fruitful topic of discussion amongst my queer peers who are men. While many of these peers shared similar sentiments of fear, they also expressed feelings of pride, attention, power, attraction, and happiness towards het/cis men during these interactions. Thus, my fear towards het/cis men was not unique, nor were they wholly shared by other queer men.

Context and Purpose

Queer men experience oppression in the forms of verbal, emotional, and physical violence (Rivers, 2017); reduced access to institutions such as health (Wagner & Kitzie, 2021), school (MacGillivray, 2000), and law (Pomeranz, 2018); hostility from family (McDermott et al., 2021); and rejection from religion (Page et al., 2013). Further, het/cis men have been the predominant perpetrators of oppression against queer men (B. Bailey et al., 2022; Condorelli, 2015; Denison et al., 2021; Falomir-Pichastor & Mugny, 2009; Worthen, 2016). Broadly, “this

exclusion and ostracism could vary from the simplest personal relations to the most general social ignorance, exclusion, ostracism, working simultaneously together, and can even violate the rights of life” (Subhrajit, 2014, p. 326). Therefore, queer men’s behaviours in response to queer oppression are multidimensional because of the subjectivity of these experiences. Further, queer oppression can impact queer men’s identities in numerous ways: Oppression impacts all people differently and deserves to be analyzed as such to avoid the essentialization of queer oppression.

One way that queer oppression manifests itself is through hegemonic masculinities. Raewyn Connell (2005) explained that masculinities are routinely predicated on inequitable gendered dynamics often defined differently in diverse sociocultural contexts. Contextually, within Eurocentrism, men who are heterosexual and cisgender are uplifted, and queer men are marginalized. This is embedded at a systemic and individual level. To respond to this oppression, queer men may modify their behaviours to avoid scrutiny (Berila, 2011; Fields et al., 2015; Hughes, 2002; Sánchez et al., 2010). These modifications of behaviours are inextricably tied to identity because identity is continuously shaped by a person’s participation in their sociocultural climate (Bartlett, 2005; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Holland et al., 1998; Moje & Luke, 2009; Penuel & Wertsch, 1995). When queer men behave in response to het/cis men’s masculinities, they express queer masculinities. Additionally, queer people’s identities are impacted by het/cis men who occupy space in the “centre” as queer people remain on the periphery, often referred to as the margins (Rubin, 1984; Winter et al., 2016). Researching queer men’s subjective positions of marginality in society is vital to better understand the fluid movements of queer men within and between the margins and the centre (Elliot, 2020).

Research Questions and Objectives

In the field of critical masculinities studies (CMS), queer people's experiences are relatively underrepresented (Landreau & Rodriguez, 2012). To create a novel and intersectional view of masculinities in Eurocentric nations, queer masculinities must be included. My primary research questions are designed to more deeply understand the nuanced and heterogeneous interactions between queer men and het/cis men framed within the context of masculinities studies. The primary research questions are:

1. How do queer men behave during their interactions with het/cis men?
2. How do het/cis men's behaviours influence the interactions that queer men share with het/cis men?
3. How does the dominant sociocultural context within so-called Alberta impact the interactions that queer men have with het/cis men?

My research aims to illuminate queer men's diverse negotiations of their identities during interactions with het/cis men within so-called Alberta while examining the impacts that Eurocentric hegemonic masculinities have on these negotiations. I conducted semi-structured interviews with six queer men from so-called Alberta to answer these questions and coded the data into distinct themes through thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The theoretical perspective guiding this thesis is qualitative social constructionism. In line with social constructionism, this research focuses on how people's identities and behaviours are produced and reproduced collaboratively while influenced by social processes (Hammersley, 2012). The primary objective of this thesis is to collect information regarding the behavioural aspects of interactions between queer men and het/cis men, analyzing how queer men negotiate their behaviours through queer masculinities. From the participants' responses, a secondary objective

is to examine how the sociocultural context of so-called Alberta informs queer men's behaviours through queer masculinities. These objectives are intended to examine how queer men negotiate their queer identities arising from their negotiations of behaviours and queer masculinities. It is especially pertinent to achieve this objective because all queer men have different experiences interacting with het/cis men, which produces diverse knowledge to inform my research aim.

Research Significance

Within the field of education, literature has examined how queer men explore their queer identities in compulsory education (Kjaran & Jóhannesson, 2013; Renold, 2004) and higher education (Berila, 2011; Denton, 2016; Dilley, 2002). Specifically, navigating academia is a vital time when queer men are constantly expressing queer masculinities during interactions with their het/cis male peers, acquaintances, and bullies. Berila (2011) emphasized that higher education is a site of socialization for queer men of all backgrounds entering new spaces where queerness is accepted and stigmatized. As queerness intersects with gender, age, race, socioeconomic status, and ability, Berila called for higher education stakeholders to acknowledge vast queer experiences:

Higher education professionals need to better understand [expansive queer experiences] in order to effectively support and mentor queer students. While student services professionals often understand student development issues, they may not be well-versed in the unique experiences of LGBT students. Faculty, on the other hand, may not consider identity development issues at all nor see it as their purview. This false divide between academics and student development needs to be bridged if we are to successfully support queer students. (p. 107)

Furthermore, academia does not wholly regard queer representation, reflected in the structural heteronormativity and cisnormativity embedded within higher education (B. Robinson, 2022; Calafell, 2020; A. Davies & Neustifter, 2021) and compulsory education (Cohen et al., 2023; Mangin, 2022). Even though this thesis does not take place in the context of education, it addresses the importance of diverse queer experiences to be recognized individually and institutionally. Academia is a site for interactions between queer men and het/cis men, whether in the classroom, research spaces, or residence. Govender and Andrews (2021) highlighted the impact of including queer topics in academia at a structural level. The authors emphasized that structural inclusion can help queer people position themselves based on their experiences, void of oppressive structural influences. This thesis addresses the impacts of queer representation at an individual and institutional level that can be considered by academia.

To foster a safer space within academia, all stakeholders must examine how they are located to ensure queer safety and betterment. Vossoughi and Gutiérrez (2016) discussed that facilitating social change begins with critical education and pedagogy to disrupt oppression. I highlight Perry's (2012) article that discussed literacy in schooling: "It is also true that in order to truly understand literacy and learners, educators must see literacy and learners in all contexts, not just in the contexts of schooling" (p. 66). Through highlighting the lived experiences of six queer men who live in so-called Alberta, I hope to clarify queer considerations and insights that can be implemented into literacy practices.

Further, this thesis provides opportunities for the voices of queer men to be elevated and recognized within education. By positioning queer men at the centre of their narrative, I build on past studies (Barbir et al., 2017; Fulcher, 2017; Kearns et al., 2017; L. Allen, 2020) in which queer experiences through a het/cis perspective have overlooked diverse queer voices and

positioned them at the margins. Therefore, this thesis may contribute to how het/cis men recognize queerness as multidimensional instead of rooted within stereotypes that pervade het/cis men's understandings of queerness. This thesis is also a pivotal opportunity to shift queer masculinities to the centre of discourse, presently dominated by dominant and hegemonic masculinities. Fundamentally, promoting a queer conceptualization of masculinities creates the opportunity to re-envision a form of Eurocentric hegemonic masculinity that is more inclusive and intersectional (Yang, 2020).

Assumptions

All researchers have assumptions and biases (J. Smith & Noble, 2014; Noble & Smith, 2015). In proceeding, I outline my assumptions and biases for complete transparency in my approach to this thesis. Through my positionality as a queer, non-binary person who used to identify as a queer man, I have experienced multiple interactions with het/cis men. Thus, my relationship to this topic is reflexive. Specifically, I assumed that the participants' interactions with het/cis men would be positive, negative, and neutral because this mirrors my interactional experiences. However, I also assumed that negative interactions with het/cis men would deeply resonate with queer men due to the oppressive and potentially traumatic nature of these interactions. Finally, I assumed the dominant sociocultural context would impact the participants' interactions with het/cis men for two reasons. Firstly, I have witnessed and experienced structural oppression and erasure contributing to the subordination of queer men and the superiority of het/cis men's behaviours. Secondly, I held pessimistic attitudes toward so-called Alberta based on accounts from my peers who have experienced oppression in this province.

To mitigate my assumptions, I employed a qualitative social constructionist theoretical perspective. This is predicated on how social processes impact personal identities and behaviours

(Andrews, 2012; Galbin, 2014; Hammersley, 2012; R. Young & Collin, 2004). Thus, I began by promoting subjectivity in my research questions by beginning each question with the word “how.” Specifically, I encourage the diversity of queer men’s experiences by asking open-ended questions. My theoretical perspective also guided how I conducted semi-structured interviews and created my interview guide with open-ended questions allowing participants to elaborate on their lived experiences.

Terminology

As I proceed through this thesis, I acknowledge that het/cis men do not exist as an unfractured or coherent identity. Not all het/cis men exemplify hegemonic masculinity, as gender and sexual orientation are just two dimensions of identity influenced by hegemonic masculinities. Nonetheless, it is essential to uncover how het/cis men’s position within Eurocentricity inherently upholds heteronormativity and cisnormativity (Connell, 2005). Therefore, the term “het/cis men” does not refer to all het/cis men, but instead refers to het/cis men as a collective identity whose location within Eurocentricity upholds inequitable power dynamics.

I use the term “queer” to refer to those who are not heterosexual and/or cisgender. Additionally, I use the term “queerphobia” instead of “homophobia” because it encompasses more identities outside of a singular gay identity. I acknowledge that the terms “queer” and “queerphobia” can function to essentialize queer people and erase the rich diversity that exists within the queer community (Bey, 2021). However, queerness can also be used as a collective term reclaimed by the queer community and adopted to signify multiple diverse identities and expressions (Kolker et al., 2019; Peters, 2005). Butler’s (1993) perspective of queerness resonates with this tension, as it emphasizes queerness’s complexity and ambiguity: “This is not

an argument *against* using identity categories, but it is a reminder of the risk that attends every such use” (pp. 227-228).

During Muehlenhard and Peterson’s (2011) discussion of the differences between sex and gender, one perspective was that sex was predicated on biology, whereas gender concerned social meanings and constructions. The authors also indicated that sex refers to the terminology “male” and “female,” whereas gender refers to the terminology “man” and “woman.” Accordingly, my use of sex and gender reflects these definitions and terminology.

When mentioning “Alberta” in this thesis, it is preceded by the adjective “so-called.” The definition of “so-called” is “used to show that you think a word that is used to describe someone or something is not suitable or not correct” (Cambridge, n.d.). The names of Canadian cities and provinces are commonly used by most people locally and internationally. Broadly, land acknowledgements are intended to recognize Indigenous peoples and land by describing the land a person currently lives on. Although acknowledging the land is a step towards reconciliation, the performativity of land acknowledgements can erase other acknowledgements of Indigeneity and colonization itself (D. Robinson, 2019; Lambert et al., 2021; Wark, 2021). As George (2022) eloquently stated, “this is an acknowledgement of the work that needs to be done” (p. 3). The following bullet points describe the Indigenous peoples and land of the cities and provinces that are referred to in this thesis:

- Treaties Four, Six, Seven, Eight, and 10 comprise so-called Alberta.
- Moh’kins’tsis is a Blackfoot word that describes the landscape of so-called Calgary. This is the traditional land of the Blackfoot Confederacy, including the Siksika, Kainai, and Piikani First Nations; the Tsuut’ina First Nation; and the Îyâxe Nakoda nations, including

the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney First Nations. It is also the home of Métis Region Number 3.

- Amiskwacîwâskahikan is a Cree word that describes the landscape of so-called Edmonton. This is the traditional land of Treaty Six, including the nêhiyaw/Cree, amiskwacîwâskahikan Denesuline/Dene, Anishinaabe/Saulteaux, Nakota Isga/Nakota Sioux, and Niitsitapi/Blackfoot peoples. It is also the Métis' homeland of Region 4, alongside, historically, the home of Inuit peoples.
- The traditional and unceded territories of the lək'wəŋən peoples, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples are also known as so-called Victoria.

I recognize the contradiction of conducting land acknowledgements while continuing to use colonial names for the land outside these acknowledgements (D. Robinson, 2019; Lambert et al., 2021; Wark, 2021). In proceeding, I must uphold my acknowledgement of land as a constant recognition that extends outside of introductions to presentations, speaking events, and lectures. Therefore, when referring to cities, I use the respective names that describe the landscape or the names of the Indigenous communities who live on the land. However, I use the term “so-called Alberta” to discuss the province as its broad sociocultural context exclusive to specific forces not wholly representative of Indigeneity. As such, so-called Alberta describes the local cultural and social institutions instead of the land. Throughout this thesis, Turtle Island will be referred to as “so-called Canada” because similarly to so-called Alberta, I employ this term to refer to the sociocultural context that is not representative of Indigeneity. Therefore, so-called Canada describes the national cultural and social institutions instead of the land. For context, Turtle Island is the name used in multiple Indigenous creation stories that describes the landscape of so-called North America: From Chippewa culture, Sky Woman created and nurtured landscapes on

a female turtle's back (Champagne, 2010). Thus, the land was given the name Turtle Island. This terminology's only exception is the participants' direct quotes, as I must honour their words verbatim.

Chapter Summary

In Chapter One, I established the background and scope of this thesis by constructing research questions, aims, and objectives. Throughout this thesis, I analyze how queer men negotiate their identities during interactions with het/cis men informed by social forces. I draw on the lived experiences of six participants from so-called Alberta who discuss their behaviours and the behaviours of het/cis men during their interactions while also attending to the influences of the sociocultural context of so-called Alberta. Furthermore, I outlined the significance of this thesis by emphasizing its impacts on the inclusion of queer men's experiences and masculinities within academia. I explained the assumptions I held entering this thesis and discussed my approaches to mitigating them. Finally, I concluded with a justification of my terminology throughout this thesis.

Chapter Two is a literature review that expands upon literature regarding CMS and sociocultural theory. Chapter Three outlines my methodology, including my theoretical framework, methods, and research positionality. Chapter Four discusses the results of the semi-structured interviews. This comprises the participants' key quotes and insights pertaining to the behavioural aspects of interactions they share with het/cis men. Chapter Five addresses the three research questions by connecting the results of the semi-structured interviews to academic literature. Finally, I conclude this thesis in Chapter Six by specifying key deductions emerging from my three research questions; presenting implications for academia, queer men, and het/cis men; and postulating avenues for future research.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The field of Critical Masculinities Studies (CMS) is expansive, multidimensional, and complex. Broadly, masculinities are socially constructed gendered practices that can be performed by any gender (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). In academia, masculinities continue to change meaning and significance from its conception in psychoanalysis (Freud, 1927) to its expansion into sex roles (Hartley, 1959) and gender roles (Pleck, 1981, 1995). Subsequently, research on hegemonic masculinities began to dominate the field, predominantly established by Carrigan et al. (1985) and Connell (1995). Presently, queer masculinities are an especially relevant topic, as queer people have been historically underrepresented in masculinities literature (Landreau & Rodriguez, 2012). Masculinities are fluid, as each person's relationship to masculinities is different and constantly evolving as they interact with other people and masculinities.

Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory provides an appropriate framework to expand upon the social and cultural influences that people experience when navigating their society. Specifically, sociocultural theory is predicated on using cultural tools (Gauvain, 2001) and mediated action (Wertsch, 1994), which determine how people conceptualize and enact their behaviours, respectively. Sociocultural theory has implications that examine behaviour (Leontiev, 1978), identity (Moje & Lewis, 2007), and learning (Roth, 2004; Roth & Lee, 2007). Additionally, "appropriated oppression," coined by Tappan (2006b), illuminates how the behaviours of historically and presently underrepresented populations, such as queer men, are impacted due to their subordinate status within their sociocultural context.

I discuss two topics in-depth in the literature review: masculinities and sociocultural theory. As this thesis broadly concerns identity negotiation and the behavioural implications of

interactions between queer men and het/cis men, the central focus areas necessitated to concern literature that emphasizes how cultural forces influence people's behaviours and navigations of their societies. Given that masculinities are grounded on gendered practices influenced by social and cultural forces (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005), it is appropriate to examine how queer men's behaviours through queer masculinities fit into these cultural expectations of what it means to be a man. Furthermore, my second research question pertains to the behaviours of het/cis men, including their masculinities practices. Thus, recognizing the multidimensional properties of hegemonic masculinities provides vital insight into how het/cis men behave and are both upheld and subordinated by hegemonic masculinities. As a secondary topic, my literature review regards sociocultural theory and clarifies the social forces that govern people's behaviours, identities, and how they learn and demonstrate information. This is useful for examining how queer men negotiate their identities due to the Eurocentric context in which they are located. It also addresses my third research question examining how the sociocultural context of Alberta contributes to the interactions that queer men share with het/cis men.

Masculinities

Masculinities in Natural Sciences

Historically, the application of masculinities research was included within social sciences, the study of masculinities as human behaviours, and natural sciences, the associations between biology and masculinities. Initially, Sigmund Freud's (1927) connection between psychoanalysis and masculinity was groundbreaking in academia for its connection between neuroscience and gender, even though Freud never explicitly discussed masculinities (Connell, 2005). In his examination of psychoanalysis, Freud (1927) emphasized that masculinity was ambiguous and continually changing meaning based on men's experiences of performing

masculinity. In other words, Freud considered masculinity as fluid, mainly because he believed that men also expressed femininity. In fact, Harvey's (2005) historical review outlining the history of masculinities throughout 1650-1800 indicated four notable conceptualizations of men during this timeline, highlighting the fluidity of masculinities: the household patriarch, the libertines and fops, the polite gentleman, and the domestic man. These diverse phases shifted regarding the men's subjective experiences of power, sexual drives, queerness, effeminacy, and dominance.

Freud's (1927) contributions to CMS continued to be cited in the literature as one of the initial conceptualizations of masculinities in research (Benjamin, 2015; Blechner, 1998; Connell, 2005; D. Phillips, 2006; Lawson, 2020; Wedgwood, 2009). Eventually, scientific research regarding masculinities progressed by studying effeminacy in boys, men, and transgender women (Connell, 2005), a specific catalyst for shifting masculinities research into the social sciences.

Masculinities in Social Sciences

In their article, Carrigan et al. (1995) expanded upon the origin of CMS within social sciences research, which the authors attributed as arising from men's and boys' behaviour being perceived as inappropriate and socially problematic in the contexts of juvenile misbehaviour and poor achievement in education. The authors explained that these formations expanded into research regarding the absence of men's and boys' fathers (Biller & Bahm, 1971; Mitchell & Wilson, 1967; White, 1994), masculinities' relation to women and femininities (Hacker, 1957, Jenkin & Vroegh, 1969; Spence & Helmreich, 1979), and finally, masculinities' connection to the male sex role created by Parsons (1942, 1943).

Sex Roles.

Social roles are defined by a person's behaviours predominantly governed by their socialized location within their society (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Wood, 2011; Hartley, 1959; Parsons, 1942, 1943). However, Hartley (1959) analyzed social roles through a perspective of sex, which created sex roles. Hartley stated:

All sex-connected social roles share in one source of difficulty, that they are defined by forces outside the individual (i.e., the culture into which he is born) without any necessarily appropriate reference to his particular native endowments, presenting a pattern into which he must fit himself. (p. 458)

From a young boy's perspective, Hartley elaborated that the pressures of the male sex role resulted in boys distancing themselves from feminine behaviours such as publicly expressing sad emotions and being polite and quiet. Harry (1982) uncovered that other male children would regulate each other's behaviours and demean effeminate children who were male. The result of this bullying would make these male children shift their behaviours to reflect masculinities. Furthermore, behavioural regulations were also present in Weitzman et al.'s (1972) study on the representations of sex in picture books. The authors outlined how these books powerfully reproduced and reinforced sex roles in children: males are active and troublesome, and females are passive and diligent. Even in a follow-up study to Weitzman et al. (1972), Williams Jr. et al. (1987) uncovered that although females were more visible in picture books, their roles were still rooted within stereotypical sex roles. Although contemporary picture books can deconstruct sex roles (Haghanikar et al., 2022), research still concludes that picture books still have stereotypical sex roles and the omission of women (Berry & Wilkins, 2017; Koss, 2015). Weitzman et al. (1972) concluded by asserting that these stereotypical

representations of sex in these books were not only limiting, but they were also harmful to children, as they grow up with limiting representations of how they should behave and act. In other words, through behaviour, children demonstrate that they recognize the social capital that sex roles have, which is also a result of children's exposure to sex roles in media (Busby, 1975; Drabman et al., 1981).

To expand upon sex roles in adults, Carrigan et al. (1985) specified that male roles were dedicated to providing resources to the family through monetary means. In contrast, female roles were focused on providing emotional care and well-being to the family. The impacts of these roles is expanded upon in Horwitz's (1982) qualitative survey study revealing that adherence to males' and females' respective sex roles would give them more power and lower rates of psychological distress. Therefore, Horwitz highlighted the cultural benefits and consequences of abiding by sex roles, which influence people's behaviours. Similarly, Carrigan et al. (1985) and Risman and David (2013) reinforced Horwitz's (1982) conclusions by discussing that the cultural capital that sex roles hold creates inequitable power differentials between men and women that disproportionately give men more power than women. From these studies, it is determined that there are power inequities within men and women and between men and women.

However, Carrigan et al. (1985) added that the male sex does not exist due to its constraints:

It is impossible to isolate a 'role' that constructs masculinity (or another that constructs femininity). Because there is no area of social life that is not the arena of sexual differentiation and gender relations, the notion of a sex role necessarily simplifies and abstracts to an impossible degree. (p. 581)

In other words, Carrigan et al. underscored the limitations of the male sex role, corroborated by Messner (1998). Notably, Messner emphasized that the rigid terminology describing male sex roles led some men to reject these definitions, which catalyzed the men's liberation movement (Baker & Bakker, 1980; Lewis & Pleck, 1979). This inherently anti-feminist movement sought to distance men from the male sex role, yet continued to uphold men's institutional dominance that was a part of the male sex role. Therefore, these men engaged in selecting the expectations of the male sex role that they resonated with and refuting the expectations they disregarded. Contextually, the men's liberation movement was a precursor to the present-day men's rights movements, which Messner (2016) described as a response to the social capital women began receiving in the 2000s. This shift in capital threatened the dominant location of men within institutions. Contemporarily, the men's rights movement has predominantly been researched in online settings (C. Jones et al., 2020; Gotell & Dutton, 2016; Schmitz & Kazyak, 2016).

Interestingly, Hartley's (1959) definition of sex roles was predicated on socialization rather than biological determinism, even though sex is based on biology and gender is based on social constructions (Muehlenhard & Peterson, 2011). Thus, the definitions of sex and gender contrasted with the meaning of sex and gender roles. For clarity, Bailey et al. (1987) distinguished that sex roles are predicated on one's sex, male or female, and gender roles are predicated on one's masculinity or femininity.

Gender Roles.

Gender roles are defined by gender ideologies, which refer to the cultural capital that men and women achieve when they practice the expected gender roles of a specific society (Carrigan et al., 1985; Connell, 2005; Levant & Powell, 2017; Pleck, 1995). Specifically, masculinity and

femininity are two gender roles: masculinity is demarcated by dominance and power and femininity is demarcated by submission and passivity (Levant & Powell, 2017). Specifically, women receive social benefits when practicing culturally dominant femininity, whereas men receive social benefits when practicing culturally dominant masculinity. There are still consequences to refusing gender norms (Pleck, 1981, 1995), such as social ostracization and misrepresentation of one's identity, as outlined by Kite and Deaux's (1987) hypothesis of the gender belief system. It was concluded that the gender belief system described stereotypes that gay men were conflated with femininity and similar to heterosexual women, and gay women were conflated with masculinity and similar to heterosexual men. However, to push against these stereotypes, Nielson et al. (2022) conducted interviews with gay and het/cis men regarding their resistance to gender norms. The authors concluded that both the gay and het/cis men participants expressed that as they grew older, they felt that they did not need to adhere to gender norms as firmly as they did when they were younger. Consequently, they created their own norms.

However, men who did not embody the dominant gender roles were often left with less support and greater ambiguity regarding their social location in society. Pleck's (1981, 1995) gender role strain paradigm promoted the idea that gender role strains are "the strains placed on men, women, children, and society as a result of socializing men for positions of dominance over women" (Levant & Powell, 2017, p. 17). Levant and Powell emphasized that these strains arise from the social consequences of being unable to uphold gender roles. The inability for men to adhere to gender roles was examined by Berke and Zeichner (2016). The authors underscored that the configuration of men's gender roles was ambiguous and contradictory, making it difficult to achieve. In essence, gender roles did not recognize men as a heterogeneous group, which made it challenging for many men to achieve these roles.

There are three gender role strains that Pleck (1995) outlined: discrepancy strain, dysfunction strain, and trauma strain. Discrepancy strain describes the impacts of men's inability to fulfill their perception of men's roles: All men's understandings of men's gender roles are subjective to their experiences. Berke and Zeichner (2016) reviewed masculine discrepancy stress, which they described as the correlation between aggression and discrepancy strain. The authors concluded that men who experienced more discrepancy strain exhibited more aggression, providing insight that discrepancy strain impacts behaviours. However, not all forms of discrepancy strain impact behaviours and self-conceptualizations. Rummell and Levant's (2014) qualitative study tested if men experienced lower self-esteem when experiencing discrepancy strain. Interestingly, the authors concluded that self-esteem was not impacted.

Additionally, Pleck (1995) defined dysfunction strain as experiencing the negative consequences resulting from fulfilling dominant masculine norms. Contextually, these consequences impact both the men experiencing dysfunction strain and those around them. As an example, Liang et al.'s (2017) research regarded the impacts of dysfunction strain on men's violence, substance use, and help-seeking behaviours. The authors determined that men are less likely to ask for personal and professional help because men's gender roles do not align with this behaviour. Additionally, this also negatively impacts the people around these men. These impacts are exacerbated by the fact that these men are already positioned as dominant within men's gender roles: There is a significant risk of social status if these men practice behaviours that do not align with men's gender roles. In this context, dysfunction strain undeniably impacts men's behaviours, as it is predicated on the tension of upholding gender roles while experiencing consequences.

Finally, Pleck's (1995) definition of trauma strain described the experiences of historically and presently underrepresented populations engaging with gender role strain. For queer men, these strains are often intensified due to their subordinated positions. For example, Fields et al. (2015) examined Black gay men's relationship to dominant gender roles in the United States. The authors uncovered that these men felt socially obstructed due to the embedded homophobia within the dominant expectations of men's gender roles. Subsequently, these men acted masculine to compensate for their inherent inability to adhere to men's gender roles. Masculinity as a form of compensation was also evidenced within a survey of 622 self-identified gay men conducted by Sánchez et al. (2010). The authors stated that queer men strived to be more masculine because they perceived their queerness as negative due to the dominant gender roles in their sociocultural context. Thus, both of these studies highlighted that trauma strain provides a vital framework to witness how dominant gender roles govern queer men's behaviours.

Sex and gender roles are notable contributions to masculinities within the social sciences, especially concerning their influences on men's behaviours. As CMS continued, Lawson (2020) emphasized that masculinities were predominantly viewed under other disciplines such as psychology, sociology, anthropology, and gender studies. CMS only became its own field because of Carrigan et al.'s (1985) foundational article that envisioned an exciting future of CMS, specifically regarding hegemonic masculinities.

Hegemonic Masculinities

Raewyn Connell (2005) defined hegemonic masculinity as "the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the

subordination of women” (p. 77). Although there is a prevailing hegemonic masculinity in each sociocultural context, this does not mean there is just one hegemonic masculinity. In reality, there are different hegemonic masculinities predicated on local, regional, and global levels (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Messerschmidt, 2012, 2019; Messerschmidt & Messner, 2018). Moreover, Messerschmidt (2019) added that hegemonic masculinity in relation to other masculinities is not specifically dominant. Instead, it is established on a hegemony that upholds inequitable gendered dynamics. It is pertinent to describe the difference between hegemonic masculinities and dominant masculinities, examined by Beasley (2008). Beasley explained that dominant masculinities do not consistently enforce the subordination of women, nor do they justify men’s dominance. Therefore, dominance does not necessarily define hegemonic masculinities, even though gendered dominance is characteristic of these masculinities.

To sustain dominance, Yang (2020) added that hegemonic masculinities require both force and consent from those who are engaging with hegemonic masculinities. Yang postulated that hegemonic masculinities can only sustain power if they receive the consent of those impacted by them. Consent arises from Gramsci’s (1971/1999) definition of hegemony, in that hegemony describes the domination of a particular group predicated on consent (Glassman, 2009; Hearn, 2004; Mahnkopf, 1986; Watkins, 1992). Glassman (2009) emphasized that consent is a way to sustain power because those who are dominated by hegemony engage in the same power dynamics that legitimize hegemony. Therefore, the force used by hegemonic masculinities must be given consent by society, achieved by establishing a balance between force and consent (Yang, 2020).

Critiques of Hegemonic Masculinities.

Yang (2020) also challenged the perception that hegemonic masculinities are solely pessimistic and limiting by asserting their progressive potential. As hegemonic masculinities are defined by their relation to other masculinities regarding consent and force, they could shift their reliance on gendered dominance to gender inclusion. Raewyn Connell's interview with Mary Lou Rasmussen and Christina Gowlett (Rasmussen et al., 2014) reaffirmed Yang's (2020) ideas when Connell stated,

But if hegemony is about normativity, then we can contest it either by rejecting normativity or by saying we need a different normativity, for instance, that we need a hegemony of gender-equal ways of living for men. Equality is a norm! Social justice is inherently a normative concept. (pp. 340-341)

In other words, Connell accentuated the argument that although normativity and dominance cannot be avoided, normative masculinities can be progressive. However, Duncanson (2015) warned that progressive forms of hegemonic masculinities can still relinquish power to men under the guise of being progressive if they are only changed at an individual level. Therefore, Duncanson asserted that hegemonic masculinities must change at a structural level to ensure that forms of hegemonic masculinity that are inclusive of women are not still predicated on men's gendered dominance.

Although the concept of hegemonic masculinities has been present in academic discourse since the early 1980s, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) outlined that there have been many critiques of the concept ranging from its ambiguity to its static reproduction of gender roles. However, Connell & Messerschmidt stated that ambiguity provides insight as to how hegemony operates. In effect, hegemonic masculinities are ambiguous because there is no singular way to describe them beyond their dominance: They are constantly being constructed, reconstructed,

and practiced by different groups of people while operating locally, regionally, and globally. Therefore, reinscribing new meaning, especially progressive meaning, to hegemonic masculinities is challenging because they are firmly established and embedded in cultural contexts and receive the consent of those they subordinate. Another critique regarded how traits of hegemonic masculinities can be descriptive of the concept, yet limiting.

Traits.

Connell (2005) inferred that those who are not heterosexual, cisgender, male, White, wealthy, and able-bodied are subordinated under Eurocentric hegemonic masculinity: “Marginalization is always relative to the authorization of the hegemonic masculinity of the dominant group” (pp. 80-81). In addition to these traits, Messerschmidt’s (2012) literature review revealed that masculine character traits in hegemonic masculinities literature include ambition, aggression, independence, competitiveness, and sexual dominance. However, the traits outlined by Connell (2005) and Messerschmidt (2012) is limiting because it does not address the inherent fluidity of hegemonic masculinities, a person’s identity that holds none or many of these traits, the reality that a small population holds all of these traits, and that traits are not wholly indicative of dominance (Beasley, 2008; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; McMahon, 1993; Messerschmidt, 2012; Messerschmidt, 2019; Yang, 2020). Furthermore, Yang (2020) addressed these limitations by defining hegemonic masculinities as relative to other masculinities instead of solely focusing on the traits that they legitimize. However, specific traits are rewarded with power and capital through hegemonic masculinities, similar to how power is distributed with regard to sex (Horwitz, 1982; Risman & David, 2013) and gender roles (Levant & Powell, 2017), upholding the patriarchal dividend (Connell, 2005).

Patriarchal Dividend.

People who uphold and practice hegemonic masculinities often receive cultural benefits, which Connell (2005) called a patriarchal dividend. However, the distribution of this power is complicated: People who embody hegemonic masculinities do not always benefit from the patriarchal dividend, especially if they occupy positions of identity that are not supported by hegemonic masculinities, such as transgender men. Aboim's (2016) study that relied on interviews with transgender men uncovered that transgender men benefit from the patriarchal dividend as they begin to be perceived as men by other men. However, the participants noted a specific tension with these benefits because they recognized how it felt to be subordinated under the patriarchal dividend. This made it conflicting for them to accept the masculine privileges they received. For clarity, Paechter (2006) added that the patriarchal dividend exacerbated the gap between men and women and between men. Consequently, a power discrepancy arises between men who hold cultural power and men subordinated under hegemonic masculinities. Therefore, the patriarchal dividend reifies the cultural dominance of hegemonic masculinities within Eurocentric nations relative to other masculinities, making visible the idea of subordinated and dominant masculinities.

Subordinated and Dominant Masculinities.

Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) stated that multiple subordinated masculinities compete with dominant masculinities. In effect, subordinated masculinities inform the construction of dominant masculinities because they rely on each other to sustain their differing extents of dominance. In fact, some het/cis men occupy subordinated masculinities. However, some may exaggerate dominant masculine behaviours to achieve dominant masculinities, often

resulting in violence and oppression (DiMuccio & Knowles, 2020; Harrison & Michelson, 2019; Stanaland et al., 2023).

Accordingly, a hierarchy of masculinities emerges, which Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) stated is organized by hegemony, not dominance. Person (2009) emphasized that CMS was predominantly concentrated on the differences between men and women, whereas viewing masculinities as plural prompts researchers to consider the boundless differences between men's multiple expressions of masculinities (Aboim, 2012; Berila, 2011; Brod & Kaufman, 1994; Coles, 2008, 2009; Connell, 1995, 2000; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Frank et al., 2003; Harper et al., 2011; Hearn, 1996; Imms, 2000; Kehler, 2004, 2011; Kehler & Martino, 2007; Martino & Berrill, 2003; Martino & Kehler, 2007; Mac an Ghaill, 1994; McCook, 2022; Messner, 1991; Pascoe, 2003; Watson, 2015).

Multiple Masculinities.

Specifically, research on multiple subordinated and dominant masculinities is especially regarded within education (Berila, 2011; Brod & Kaufman, 1994; Connell, 1995, 2000; Frank et al., 2003; Harper et al., 2011; Imms, 2000; Kehler, 2004, 2011; Kehler & Martino, 2007; Martino & Berrill, 2003; Martino & Kehler, 2007; Mac an Ghaill, 1994; Pascoe, 2003). In the setting of compulsory education, Connell (2000) emphasized the influence of the gender order within peer groups created by students. Specifically, a hierarchy of masculinities arose through boys' and girls' behaviours that were constantly negotiated and reworked within a school setting. These hierarchy was also present in Kehler's (2004) study that interviewed four young high school men. In is qualitative study, Kehler examined how these men negotiated normative gendered behaviours in response to hegemonic masculinities. It was concluded that these young men practiced multiple forms of masculinities that both resisted and upheld hegemonic practices,

creating and deconstructing hierarchies. Finally, gendered hierarchies were also present within Pascoe's (2003) research discussing how subordinated masculinities might also model locally-specific dominant masculinities. Within a high school setting, jocks embodied the dominant masculinity. In response, men who were not jocks often adopted the behaviours of the jocks in their masculine practices. However, some men also refuted this dominant masculinity by identifying that not all jocks embody this dominant masculinity. All of these studies highlight how masculinities are continually positioned and repositioned within a school setting based on gendered practices and behaviours.

Additionally, McCook (2022) warned about the static compartmentalization of masculine behaviours within new and preexisting masculinities. In other words, it is crucial to recognize the fluid gendered practices embedded within each form of masculinity to ensure that they are not essentialized (Aboim, 2012; Brod & Kaufman, 1994; Coles, 2008, 2009; Connell, 1995, 2000; Frank et al., 2003; Imms, 2000; Kehler, 2004, 2011; Kehler & Martino, 2007; Martino & Berrill, 2003; Martino & Kehler, 2007; Mac an Ghail, 1994; McCook, 2022; Pascoe, 2003). These studies demonstrate that men's masculine practices are fluid and greatly influenced by the shifting gender and power structures that continue to be produced and reproduced in a specific sociocultural context. McCook (2022) stated that perceiving men's practices as solely masculine is limiting because it erases the nuances and differences that exist between men, thus sustaining the harmful impacts of hegemonic masculinities:

By continuing to 'name' new models of masculinity, however, current CSMM and prevention discourse contribute to the assumption that any practices men engage in remain fundamentally masculine, albeit of a specific kind... Such a perspective

ultimately does little to challenge and move beyond the binary understandings of gender that underpin men's violence and gender inequality. (p. 5)

McCook's quote highlighted that hegemonic masculinity's fluidity helps it conform with present-day gender and power structures to uphold its dominant status. Aboim (2012) described this idea as plural masculinities, describing how masculinities are positioned and repositioned by dominant social forces, constantly reconfiguring. Furthermore, plural masculinities are appropriate because they resist masculinities being categorized into sex and gender role binaries. To emphasize the deconstruction of binaries, Lohokare's (2019) research examined the geographical significance of plural masculinities regarding power and identity. Within diverse geographical locations, Lohokare highlighted that different power dynamics are inherently embedded in political, economic, and social forces, which govern men's positionality in their society. As such, Lohokare added that men's intersectional identities surrounding race, class, and sexuality impact the multiple different spaces men occupy, from their profession to home life. In other words, just as masculinities are subjective to a person's subjective experiences, they are also subjective to place and space. As plural masculinities are constantly fluid due to the shifting interactions with people and cultural forces, all masculinities are plural. This includes hegemonic masculinities (Connell, 2005), dominant and subordinated masculinities (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005), mosaic masculinities (Coles, 2008), and hybrid masculinities (Demetriou, 2001).

Mosaic Masculinities.

Fundamentally, Coles (2008, 2009) posited that all masculinities are constructed, contributing to their complexity and ambiguity. Therefore, on an individual level, men who embody one or more traits of hegemonic masculinities do not always adopt the values of

hegemonic masculinities. Instead, these men perceive their masculinity as dominant within a set of subordinated masculinities, which Coles (2008) labelled as mosaic masculinities. For context, Coles provided the example of a man who engages in a boisterous conversation about sports while drinking excessively at a bar. However, the same man can be more engaged in a vulnerable one-on-one conversation with a close friend in a private setting. Thus, through his behaviours, this man negotiates specific aspects of hegemonic masculinities and subordinated masculinities to create his mosaic masculinity. For example, Joseph and Faclous (2019) studied Pākehā men's engagement with mosaic masculinities using capoeira, an Afro/Brazilian martial art. Through practicing capoeira, Pākehā men created dominant forms of masculinities. Additionally, they benefitted from mosaic masculinities despite continuing to be subordinated under hegemonic masculinity because they did not fit the "kiwi bloke" archetype characterized by diligence, courage, and endurance.

Therefore, mosaic masculinities are described by their relationship between dominant and subordinated masculinities: They are subjective yet are still informed by the cultural dynamics characteristic of masculinities. It is pertinent to note that these masculinities are not hegemonic. However, they are still dominant, and men receive some social benefits from adhering to these masculinities. Griffith (2022) created connections between mosaic masculinities and healthy masculinities. Contextually healthy masculinities are defined as masculinities void of connections to patriarchy (Di Bianca & Mahalik, 2022). Griffith (2022) emphasized that healthy masculinities and mosaic masculinities are intersectional because they recognize men's diverse positionalities within hegemonic masculinities and subordinated masculinities.

Hybrid Masculinities.

Demetriou (2001) hypothesized the concept of hybrid masculinities whereby hegemonic masculinities usurp aspects of subordinated masculinities while remaining dominant to them. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) offered that hybrid masculinities only operate locally, not regionally and globally, because the subordinated masculinities it exploits exist only at the local level. All hegemonic masculinities are hybrid because hegemonic masculinities sustain their power through their fluidity and adaptation to the masculinities they compete with. For example, Bridges's (2014) ethnographic study conducted interviews and took field notes of three groups of men: fathers' rights activists, pro-feminist men, and men who do not engage in gender politics. From their results, Bridges established that these three groups of men engaged in queerness to distance themselves from hegemonic masculinity. Nevertheless, they engaged in actions at an individual level: They were not actively challenging structural gender and sexual inequities. Therefore, these actions were motivated by their own goals and incentives typical of hybrid masculinities. Other than queerness, the adoption of aspects of subordinated masculinities was uncovered in hybrid masculinities research concerning the exploitation of femininities (Eisen & Yamashita, 2019; Pfaffendorf, 2017; Spector-Mersel & Gilbar, 2021), veganism (Greenebaum & Dexter, 2018), beauty and grooming products (Scheibling & Lafrance, 2019), and fashion (Barry, 2018).

As Demetriou (2001) stated, "It is its constant hybridization, its constant appropriation of diverse elements from various masculinities that makes the hegemonic bloc capable of reconfiguring itself and adapting to the specificities of new historical conjunctures" (p. 348). The appropriation described by Demetriou was not addressed in early research on hybrid masculinities (Bridges & Pascoe, 2014). Bridges and Pascoe emphasized that this research only

focused on the shifts of hegemonic masculinities instead of addressing the structural inequities that result from hybrid masculinities. Furthermore, the authors clarify that hybrid masculinities provide insight into how privilege is fluid and changing, producing and reproducing hybrid masculinities.

Additionally, I offer the idea of goldilocks masculinities, which Winer (2022) posited as a subtype of hybrid masculinities. The queer men interviewed during this study described their experiences as fitting into an idea of hybrid masculinity that is not too feminine nor masculine. In this case, goldilocks masculinities hybridize queer men in the centre by distancing them from extreme femininity and the periphery by distancing them from extreme masculinity. Instead, goldilocks masculinities achieve a balance of masculinity and femininity characteristic of hybrid masculinities.

Masculinities and Femininities.

Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) inferred that masculinities would not exist without femininities because masculinities have to exist in relation to other forces, such as femininities. In other words, they are interdependent concepts that rely on each other for their existence. Therefore, masculinities and femininities must also be seen as multidimensional concepts (Choi & Fuqua, 2003; Helgeson, 1994; Paechter, 2006), demonstrated by Hoskin (2020). The author explained how masculinities and femininities are perceived regarding queer men: “While femininity was described as a target, masculinity was described as protective. While femininity is seen as deceptive, inauthentic, and artificial, masculinity is authentic, natural, and stands as gender neutral” (p. 2327). Representing masculinities and femininities in this way helps hegemonic masculinity to sustain dominance by purposefully distancing itself from femininities, primarily through homonegativity (B. Miller & Lewallen, 2015; Jewell & Morrison, 2012; Smits

et al., 2021). Homonegativity describes the negative feelings held by people who are opposed to sexual orientations other than heterosexual.

Homonegativity is detailed in B. Miller and Lewallen's (2015) research that exposed het/cis people to an edited television clip with three conditions: exposure to a masculine gay man, a feminine gay man, and a clip with no gay man. The authors concluded that even during the exposure to the clip with the masculine gay man, the participants still described gay men as feminine, which was indicative of homonegativity. Furthermore, homonegativity also arises within microaggressions that subordinate gay men in sports, as Smits et al. (2021) researched. Specifically, the authors concluded that sports teams are comparatively more accepting of gay men's participation. However, there is still homophobic language predicated on femmephobia, the subordination of queer men through associations with femininity, that inherently demoralizes gay men.

Watson (2015) underscored that many CMS researchers strive to highlight the ongoing changes in the field of hegemonic masculinities by examining concepts like mosaic, hybrid, and plural masculinities. However, other studies solely examine masculinities in relation to one another without operationalizing these terms as categories (Kehler, 2004, 2011; Kehler & Martino, 2007; Martino & Berrill, 2003; Martino & Kehler, 2007; Pascoe, 2003). Watson (2015) questioned if these concepts could enforce structural and institutional change rather than change at an individual level. To provide insight into this question, queer masculinities have the potential to uphold and challenge the dominance of hegemonic masculinities.

Queer Masculinities

Landreau and Rodriguez (2012) inferred that a subsection of subordinated masculinities are queer masculinities, which exist on a spectrum as there are more than one. The authors

offered that queer masculinities can be demonstrated in different ways: performing transmasculinity, queering heteronormative masculinities, and engaging in female masculinities. To add to Landreau and Rodriguez's expressions of queer masculinities, Wright (2005) stated, "queer masculinities begin as, and are still often interpreted as, (the performativity of) gay male butchness or hypermasculinity – of the leather man, the 1970s clone, and, most recently, the bear phenomenon" (p. 246). Queer masculinities in transgender men was analyzed by Jeanes and Janes (2021). The authors studied the diverse ways that transgender men engage in queer masculinities by practicing and resisting hegemonic masculinities. Connell (2005) observantly stated that queer men can negotiate their behaviours and queer identities to appear more masculine due to the influences of hegemonic masculinities. However, some men keep traditionally feminine qualities such as politeness and etiquette. Broadly, all these studies on queer masculinities detailed queer people's behaviours in relation to other masculinities in diverse interactions and institutions.

Queer masculinities can also be performed by queer men who interact with institutions that are inherently heterosexist and cissexist, such as academia (Amoedo et al., 2020; Asquith et al., 2019; Berila, 2011; Chan, 2017; O'Connell, 2004). For example, Berila (2011) analyzed the diverse ways that queer men navigate higher education institutions by recognizing the dominant masculinity present at these institutions and negotiating their behaviours and queer identities accordingly to fit in with their new community. These queer men may experience acceptance or backlash based on the campus climate and the supports in place. Specifically, these experiences are governed by the institutional and individual masculinities queer men interact with, as corroborated in Chan's (2017) qualitative study researching masculinities within queer Filipino college men. The authors uncovered that general campus environments were perceived to be safe

for these men. The participants also noted that specific spaces such as residence halls, classrooms, and fraternities felt unsafe because they witnessed heteronormativity through het/cis students' social, romantic, and sexual behaviours. However, queer masculinities are not solely performed by queer men.

Straight-Queer Men.

Interestingly, queer masculinities are not exclusive to queer men. Heasley (2005) proposed that het/cis men also perform queer masculinities, which Heasley labelled as straight-queer men. Straight-queer men's engagement in queer masculinities partially disrupts hegemonic masculinities because these men actively engage in queer behaviours incongruent with the expectations of hegemonic masculinities. The author additionally posited that perceiving straight-queer men as solely queer functions to reinforce sexual and gender binaries. Furthermore, when practicing queer masculinities, straight-queer men may experience discrimination based on their behaviours. The purposeful ambiguity of straight-queer men allows them to explore their own experiences of gender and sexual fluidity without entirely negotiating their het/cis identity. However, Bridges (2014) emphasized that some straight-queer men can exploit queerness to further their own dominance. Therefore, to genuinely challenge the tenets of hegemonic masculinities, straight-queer men's performances of queer masculinities must be paired with the disruption of institutional and structural queerphobia.

As a detailed example of straight-queer men, C. Smith (2000) explained their experiences of self-identifying as a queer heterosexual in their autoethnographic study. In their research, C. Smith discussed how they entered dance and theatre arts in higher education and was predominantly surrounded by queer men. Through regularly interacting with queer men, C. Smith was prompted to consider their behaviours of gender and sexuality. Through their multiple

interactions with queer folk and immersion into scholarship regarding identity politics, C. Smith self-identified as a queer heterosexual because they stressed that they did not conform to the boundaries and binaries of sex and gender. Although they faced backlash and discrimination from het/cis people, C. Smith was never oppressed by these people. Queer masculinities are applicable to multiple people, cannot be collapsed into a singular definition, and have the potential to challenge hegemonic masculinities.

There are also instances where queer masculinities can be practiced by het/cis men through the mockery and refusal of queerness. Mac an Ghaill and Haywood's (2012) study of adolescent students in England focused on young men's perceptions and practices of queer masculinities. Specifically, some male students publicly engaged with queerness in front of the class by using queerness as humour. This is an example of hybrid masculinities (Demetriou, 2001) whereby hegemonic masculinities co-opt queer masculinities for their own benefit. Furthermore, when discussing the students' queer sexual acts, they immediately rejected queerness to distance themselves from it. Effectively, Mac an Ghaill and Haywood (2012) stated that the students' expressions of queer masculinities complicated the expectations between young men's homosexuality and heterosexuality. In effect, these expressions work to challenge hegemonic masculinities because they do not wholly adhere to hegemonic practices due to the inclusion of queerness.

Challenging Hegemonic Masculinities.

To expand upon queerness, Donaldson (1993) stated, "heterosexuality and homophobia are the bedrock of hegemonic masculinity" (p. 645). To elaborate, Falomir-Pichastor & Mugny (2009) posited that queerness can challenge hegemonic masculinities because it disrupts the structure of heteronormativity. In effect, legitimizing sexual orientations beyond heterosexual

redistributes cultural power to queer people, which was initially allotted to het/cis men. Specifically, Falomir-Pichastor and Mugny asserted that het/cis men will also purposefully distance themselves from queer men to resist being associated with them. Therefore, hegemonic masculinities can be challenged by transgender, as outlined by Jones Jr. (2015) The authors stated that transgender men can refuse hegemonic masculinities and queer masculinities to fit their own expressions best. However, these men are still pressured to uphold hegemonic masculinity as men. Furthermore, Jones Jr. argued that transgender men can adopt hegemonic masculinities while still critiquing them, thus practicing hybrid masculinities (Demetriou, 2001). Jones Jr.'s (2015) conclusions are also reflected in Kjaran & Jóhannesson's (2016) article, in which Icelandic queer men achieved queer masculinities by being openly queer while simultaneously performing aspects of hegemonic masculinities: The authors described this as an accommodating strategy. Both of these article highlight how being autonomous is supported and compromised through expressions of queer masculinities.

Although the publicity and normalization of queerness will not fully dismantle hegemonic masculinities, queer masculinities can challenge them, thus, minimizing their impacts. For instance, Anderson (2002) interviewed openly gay male athletes to analyze their experiences of being publicly gay within sports teams. The author indicated that being publicly gay minimized the overt homophobia often characteristic within sports teams. Therefore, the athletes' queerness functioned to challenge hegemonic masculinities. However, Anderson also noticed that queerness was never mentioned or acknowledged by the het/cis male athletes, which made the gay male athletes' queerness invisible. Friend (2015) described this phenomenon as systematic exclusion, the recognition of queerness while simultaneously denying its existence through behaviours. Dismantling hegemonic masculinities is also evident in Kjaran and

Jóhannesson's (2013) research that examined the impacts and prevalence of heterosexism on queer students in Icelandic secondary schools. The authors recognized that dominant masculinities influenced compulsory heterosexuality embedded within the school system. To refuse these masculinities and heterosexism, the queer students exhibited diverse forms of resistance, such as addressing the heterosexism exhibited by staff and students:

Dani, 19 years old and identifying sometimes in the interview as lesbian, told us that in a Spanish class she turned in some assignments where she was supposed to describe in Spanish what she did during the weekend. She wrote that she had gone on a date with a girl. When she got the assignment back, the teacher had corrected it, changing female to male pronouns, assuming Dani had made grammatical mistakes. After class, Dani went to the teacher and told her that this had not been a mistake; she had actually been with a girl during that weekend. The teacher realized her heterosexist prejudices and apologized to Dani. (p. 363)

Further, the queer students defied heterosexism through more implicit means: They refused to ignore their queer identity and publicly expressed their queerness during interactions with het/cis students. Queer masculinities can challenge hegemonic masculinities explicitly and implicitly. However, some queer men also choose to negotiate their masculinities to cater to the expectations of hegemonic masculinities.

Negotiation.

Queer identities do not always disrupt hegemonic masculinities because queer identities exist on a spectrum. The studies above (Anderson, 2002; Donaldson, 1993; Falomir-Pichastor & Mugny, 2009; Jones Jr., 2015; Kjaran & Jóhannesson, 2013, 2016) discussed how queerness challenges hegemonic masculinities. However, queer men can also practice hegemonic

masculinities to receive social benefits. Chen (1999) coined the term “hegemonic bargain,” describing how Chinese American men received social benefits upon practicing and embodying hegemonic masculinities. This concept extends to diverse marginalized populations. Specifically, Chen posited four strategies for men who do not fulfill hegemonic masculinities. Compensation describes how men recognize that they do not currently achieve hegemonic masculinities due to specific behaviours. These men must suppress these behaviours to benefit from hegemonic masculinities. Deflection characterizes a man who recognizes his subordinate status and practices behaviours to distract from his subordinate status. Denial is defined by men’s behaviours refuting the stereotypes used against them. These men assert that they are beyond these stereotypes. Finally, repudiation is defined as recognizing the structural limitations of their identities and renouncing them in response to the pressures of hegemonic masculinities.

Another way that queer men can engage in negotiations is through passing and codeswitching. Shippee (2011) defined passing as the means of concealing one’s identities to be recognized as part of a group they are not a part of. This particularly applies to historically and presently underrepresented populations whose identities are stigmatized. Shippee emphasized that queer men negotiate their identities by emulating heterosexuality to gain status and recognition when surrounded by heterosexual people. As heterosexuality is upheld by hegemonic masculinities, Cheng (1999) stated, “performing hegemonic masculinity by a marginalized person is seen as a passing behavior that distracts from her/his stigma” (p. 299). Therefore, queer men use hegemonic masculinities to pass as het/cis men.

Similarly, codeswitching is a linguistic strategy for negotiating between multiple identities (Friedman & Gwynne, 2008; Kroskrity, 2000; Winn, 2021; Young, 2009). In this context, people switch between different vocal tones, languages, and conversation topics based

on the people they are interacting with. Young (2009) posited the concept of code meshing instead of codeswitching. Code meshing highlights a linguistic balance that combines the different ways people talk into a singular vernacular. Young offered that this mitigates the tension that people feel when forced to adopt a different way of talking, deconstructing the negotiations people make when codeswitching during conversations with different groups of people. For queer men, Winn's (2021) thesis focused on how queer people use codeswitching to pass during interactions with het/cis people. The author concludes that although this is a common strategy that queer people use, queer people should not have to cater to the normative structures of linguistics to ensure comfort and safety. Therefore, passing and codeswitching are two strategies to negotiate one's identities and behaviours.

Negotiations of queer masculinities are also expressed during queer men's interactions with other queer men. Hunt et al.'s (2016) qualitative research studied how masculinity threat, the threat to gay men's masculinities due to their gay identity, impacted gay men's navigations of masculinities. The researchers revealed that masculinity threats to gay men's masculinities resulted in significant expressions of hegemonic masculinities. Simultaneously, these men consciously distanced themselves from feminine gay men, as they were perceived to threaten gay men's masculinities. Some queer men try to avoid queerphobia by modifying their behaviours by distancing themselves from femininities and fitting the expectation of het/cis men (Collivier, 2021; Mason, 2001; Stanko & Curry, 1997). Eslen-Ziya & Koç's (2016) study on gay men's relationship to masculinity also reaffirmed Hunt et al.'s (2016) conclusions. Eslen-Ziya & Koç (2016) determined that their gay male participants reinforced the dominant masculinity in their culture by avoiding people who could not embody this masculinity, such as feminine gay men. These two studies conclude that gay men can engage in queer masculinities to achieve masculine

capital that is often only relegated to het/cis men. However, Ravenhill and de Visser (2017) highlighted that even if gay men and het/cis men achieve capital by doing the same thing, the capital that gay men achieve is lesser than het/cis men's capital due to the subordinated position gay men hold within their society.

Throughout this review of the literature regarding masculinities, I covered natural sciences (Freud, 1927), social sciences (Hartley, 1959), and masculinities studies (Carrigan et al., 1985). Connell's (2005) work on hegemonic masculinities was groundbreaking and prompted research on other forms of masculinities, such as mosaic masculinities (Coles, 2008), hybrid masculinities (Demetriou, 2001), and plural masculinities (Aboim, 2012). Finally, queer masculinities (Landreau & Rodriguez, 2012) were defined as queer men's behaviours of engaging and resisting diverse ideologies of masculinities. In conclusion, masculinities are expansive, fluid, and multifaceted. More specifically, they provide essential insight into how people engage with each other in society. Thus, sociocultural theory is an appropriate next direction in my literature review due to its nuanced descriptions of how dominant sociocultural contexts impact people's behaviours, identities, and learning.

Sociocultural Theory

Cultural Tools

Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory explains that people learn from their culture and the social interactions that they participate in within a particular society. To engage in these interactions, Vygotsky theorized that people utilize cultural tools that inform their behaviours (Gauvain, 2001; R. Jones & Norris, 2005; Robbins, 2005; Wertsch & Rupert, 1993).

Specifically, cultural tools describe a person's mental processes, beliefs, and ideologies that are

consistently produced and reproduced during social interactions. Gauvain (2001) expanded upon this definition:

These include material tools, like labor-saving devices and forms of technology. Sign and symbol systems, like language, numeracy, and other representational systems, have also been developed to represent, manipulate, and communicate ideas. These tools, signs, and symbols provide people with means to organize and accomplish everyday, practical actions, and their use is passed on to succeeding generations. (p. 128)

Therefore, cultural tools are not behaviours people perform. Instead, they are the means people rely on to perform their behaviours. Arieviditch and Stetsenko (2000) stated that Vygotsky's perspective of cultural tools pertained to children's cognitive development solely through educational instruction. Conversely, the authors offered a secondary perspective by Piotr Gal'perin, one of Vygotsky's colleagues, who expanded upon Vygotsky's value of educational instruction. Gal'perin believed that students have an active role in their cognitive development that can complement educational instruction. Consequently, children and adults recognize the knowledge presented to them and expand upon it by utilizing their cultural tools. Although cultural tools are subjective to each person, there are distinct similarities between people's cultural tools because of the dominant forces that govern a particular sociocultural context, such as sex (Hartley, 1959) and gender roles (Pleck, 1995) and hegemonic masculinities (Connell, 2005). Furthermore, Arieviditch and Stetsenko (2000) emphasized that the influence of a person's cultural tools was reinforced if they engaged with these tools multiple times.

Mediated Action

Wertsch's (1994) review described that mediated action arises from mediation and mediational means. Hilppö et al. (2017) defined mediation as how cultural tools are linked to

human behaviours. Once mediation has been established, mediational means describe humans' dominant cultural tools that help them recognize and understand knowledge from a personal level (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1994; Wertsch & Rupert, 1993). In other words, mediational means describe how external dominant forces impact one's behaviours and cultural tools.

Mediated action is defined by human activity, distinguishing itself from mediation and mediational means that precede mediated action (Tappan, 2006a; Wertsch, 1994). Therefore, Tappan (2006a) highlighted that mediated action requires an agent, the person who completes an action, and mediational means, the tools that allow the agent to complete said action. For instance, Penuel and Wertsch (1995) studied how mediated action helps people form their identities. The authors stated that identities are created through behaviours, the mediated action, which requires cultural tools to inform these behaviours. From the employment of cultural tools and mediated action, people convince other people about their own identities through behaviours. Therefore, creating one's identity is an individualistic process influenced by one's cultural tools, and is simultaneously constructed through interactions with others. One particular theory arises from sociocultural theory and provides deeper insight into how behaviour is influenced by cultural tools and mediated action: activity theory.

Activity Theory

Activity theory was created by Vygotsky's colleague, Aleksei Leontiev (1978). This theory describes that human behaviours are influenced by sociocultural forces and interactions with other people. Specifically, activities are referred to as human behaviours. Roth (2004) emphasized that activity theory was not demarcated by static cultural tools and mediated action that produced the same behaviours in all people. Instead, Roth discussed activity theory as autonomous and unique to each person. People recognize their environments and change their

cultural tools and mediated action to best fit their needs. Contextually, Lantolf (2000) elaborated that these needs describe human biological needs and man culturally constructed needs (Daniels, 2007; Holland et al., 1998; Leontiev, 1978; Mironenko, 2013; Roth & Lee, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978). Human biological behaviours are driven by a need to fulfill one's biological survival. In contrast, people's behaviours in response to their environments determine human culturally constructed needs. It is pertinent to note that Leontiev (1978) stated that people do not understand their needs until they experience their needs multiple times, reinforcing them and creating a motive behind their behaviour.

Additionally, Mironenko's (2013) literature review prompted another activity theory perspective, influenced by Boris G. Ananiev (1961): human sensory perceptive organization. Ananiev's framework specified that all activities performed by people are consistently reconstructed as they grow up based on how often they use these activities. Therefore, human sensory perceptive organization underscores the importance of viewing activity as fluid yet mutually reinforcing based on activity use. However, Mironenko (2013) stressed that there is a dearth of research on human sensory perceptive organization because Ananiev's research is only beginning to be recognized by dominant scholars within the field.

Sociocultural Theory and Identity

Holland et al. (1998) offered that people's identities are informed by their participation in the dominant social organization of a particular sociocultural context. The authors stressed that participation must be continuous because one's identity is reinforced through repetitive behaviours. To elaborate, Bucholtz and Hall (2005) proposed a framework that positions identity arising from linguistic interactions with other people. Therefore, identity does not precede interactions; it is constructed by interactions. Consequently, the sociocultural contexts of specific

places have ramifications for identity construction because people's behaviours are influenced by their social interactions in their sociocultural context.

Conversely, Bartlett (2005) argued that identity arises from interacting with cultural artefacts instead of specific people. Cultural artefacts are commonly recognized narratives, concepts, and objects with collective significance and meaning. Through interacting with cultural artefacts, identities are influenced by the sociocultural context because these cultural artefacts are created and reinforced through their significance within a particular society. Many of these cultural artefacts are present within media and literature, which Moje and Luke (2009) indicated are formative to identity construction. Furthermore, Penuel and Wertsch (1995) highlighted tensions concerning identity formation. Although people want their identities to be authentic, sociocultural processes impact authenticity because they influence identity development. Therefore, Penuel and Wertsch offered that coherence is necessary to become comfortable with the idea that identities are multifaceted and constantly shifting.

Simons (2021) posited that behaviour depends on one's identity, which Simons coined "identity behaviour theory." One's identity produces a subjective self-concept of mind, body, past experiences, and positionality: These all contribute to people's behaviours. Furthermore, Moje and Lewis (2007) emphasized that history can significantly influence one's identity. The authors illuminated the concept of the idealized past, which dominant social groups longingly reflect on because they held historically dominant power. From the idealized past, these dominant social groups project their idealized future, which is a future predicated on their dominance and power. However, achieving this future requires the dominant group to sustain their dominance in the present. These processes influence their identities and behaviours, as they see these to be threatened by shifting power dynamics.

Sociocultural Theory and Learning

Tudge and Scrimsher (2003) analyzed Vygotsky's perceptions of education and how interactions are formative for learning. These interactions are based on the knowledge held by the person who is learning, the knowledge of the people with whom the person interacts, and the knowledge of the sociocultural context that influences these interactions. More specifically, in their literature review, Roth and Lee (2007) identified these ideas as cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT), arising from Leontiev's (1978) activity theory. Foot (2014) defined CHAT as,

- (1) Humans act collectively, learn by doing, and communicate in and via their actions; (2) humans make, employ, and adapt tools of all kinds to learn and communicate; and (3) community is central to the process of making and interpreting meaning—and thus to all forms of learning, communicating, and acting. (p. 330)

Thus, CHAT applies to learning, and much of CHAT literature occurs within academia (D. Russell, 1997; Nussbaumer, 2012; Roth et al., 2009; Wilson, 2014). Nussbaumer's (2012) review concluded that CHAT was especially effective for educational settings because of its focus on humans learning about specific activities independently and within a collaborative environment.

Burkitt (2021) analyzed people's emotional development through CHAT. The author concluded that emotional learning and regulation are predicated on historical and cultural forces. This recalls how men learn to be unemotive due to the influence that sex (Hartley, 1959) and gender roles (Levant & Powell, 2017) have on men. Emotional learning also considers one's experiences of specific emotions, creating a notable tension regarding how people authentically emote and how they are expected to emote.

Roth and Lee (2007) explained the connection between individual and collective learning by describing that when an individual is learning, they offer knowledge to those whom they are learning with. This facilitates new learning opportunities for all people. However, Roth (2004) also considered that when a person contributes knowledge, they simultaneously reproduce themselves and the community they are a part of. Consequently, Roth viewed this through a Marxian perspective: People who do not conform to the dominant sociocultural context reproduce their subordinate positions within society because their knowledge does not align with the dominant narrative. This knowledge is void of cultural capital due to their marginalized positions, so it does not contribute to impactful social change. In contrast, those with dominant knowledge reproduce their dominant societal positions because their knowledge aligns with the present sociocultural context and holds cultural capital. This broad perspective does not fully consider the knowledge that resists hegemony, as this knowledge, over time, creates social change and shifts positionalities. However, this analysis gives insight into the societal forces that sustain hegemony.

Vossoughi and Gutiérrez (2016) connected sociocultural theory and critical pedagogy regarding their impacts on social change. The authors defined critical pedagogy as examining “the relationship between education and oppression in order to help bring about social transformation” (p. 140). They inferred that theory, in general, is a crucial strategy for understanding a world that is constantly changing. Further, sociocultural theory and critical pedagogy assume that people utilize cultural tools to change their environments, especially if these tools benefit them. However, people can simultaneously demonize specific tools and the use of these tools by others if these tools do not align with their values. Vossoughi and Gutiérrez concluded that humans negotiate their identities by learning and responding to the cultural tools

that they use and the tools that others use. Therefore, the use of cultural tools can result in multiple outcomes: some tools can be used to advocate for inclusion and equity, whereas others can be used to support stereotypes and shame.

So-Called Canada Context

Within so-called Canada, the social and cultural institutions that inform Canadians' behaviours have a history of queerphobia: government and law (M. Smith, 2020), media (Faulkner, 2006), education (Callaghan & van Leent, 2019; Kearns et al., 2017) and military (Belkin & McNichol, 2001). Additionally, various news articles outline the extensive history and present-day context of queerphobia across so-called Canada (Alberta Health Services, n.d.; Bellemare et al., 2021; Boynton, 2023; Warner, 2002). Thus, queer people within so-called Canada have learned that the cultural and social context that they exist in is not representative of their needs and is arguably harmful to their rights. This recognition contributes to appropriated oppression.

Appropriated Oppression

To understand appropriated oppression, internalized oppression must be prefaced. Pheterson (1990) defined internalized oppression as a marginalized person accepting oppression of their marginalized identity, prompted by people and cultural forces oppressing a specific population. Internalized oppression is perceived to be a purely psychological phenomenon: "The idea of internalized psychological consequences [e.g., a sense of inferiority, low self-esteem, and aggression] due to social systems of prejudice, discrimination, and oppression" (Foster, 1993, p. 128). Thus, the onus of oppression is located on the person being oppressed. Just as internalized oppression is a strictly psychological phenomenon, internalized homophobia (Frost & Meyer, 2009) and internalized transphobia (Scandurra et al., 2017) are also psychological phenomena.

Frost and Meyer (2009) posited that internalized homophobia describes how a gay person refuses and subordinates aspects of their sexual orientation, resulting in oppression. Internalized homophobia is dependent on how people and cultural forces oppress queer people. Bockting (2015) described internalized transphobia as the shame a transgender person feels towards themselves or other transgender people. This shame arises from the cultural transphobia and cissexism that society reinforces. Internalized homophobia and transphobia are inappropriate frameworks (G. Russell & Bohan, 2006) to theorize oppression because it burdens queer men with their responsibility for the oppression they experience.

To challenge these limitations, Tappan (2006b) examined internalized oppression through the lens of sociocultural theory: A person experiences oppression when navigating and internalizing oppressive cultural ideologies reified by cultural forces and dominant members of society. This conceptualization removes some of the onus from marginalized populations. Through this perspective, internalized oppression is theorized as appropriated oppression.

Tappan (2006b) stated that this approach requires mediated action (Wertsch, 1994). As mentioned, mediated action defines a person's behaviours influenced by the cultural tools they possess. Further, the impacts of appropriated oppression on marginalized populations are powerful and can occur immediately. Additionally, these impacts become more oppressive over time due to the additive influences of dominant sociocultural forces. However, an implication posited by Tappan indicates that the recognition of appropriated oppression works towards a "gradual emergence of a liberated and committed sense of identity from an original position of subordination or oppression" (p. 2134). Although the literature has adopted appropriated oppression as a preferred term for internalized oppression (Banks & Stephens, 2018; Hall, 2023;

Versey et al., 2019), this literature pertains to appropriated oppression within racialized populations, and there is a dearth of literature about its application within queer populations.

My literature review focused on sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) and its aspects of cultural tools (Gauvain, 2001), mediated action (Wertsch, 1994), and activity theory (Leontiev, 1978). Furthermore, the applications of sociocultural theory regarding identity (Holland et al., 1998) and learning (Roth & Lee, 2007) are notable for the scope of this thesis as these studies address how people's identities and learning are impacted through the co-construction of knowledge. Finally, I outlined how appropriated oppression (Tappan, 2006) manifests as an alternative to internalized oppression. Although sociocultural theory is broad and complex, just like masculinities, it provides a pertinent frame towards how sociocultural contexts of specific places can influence peoples' behaviours and knowledges that they promote and reify daily.

Chapter Summary

Throughout this literature review, I have emphasized that masculinities are extensive and ambiguous. Often, they do not have a cohesive definition. Its presence has encompassed natural sciences (Freud, 1927) and social sciences (Hartley, 1959; Pleck, 1995) to the expansion of its own field (Carrigan et al., 1985; Connell, 1995). In particular, Hartley's (1959) sex roles provided insight into the dominant historical context of how men were socialized to act. This is a practical lens to examine how historical processes of dominant sex and gender ideologies presently function in the participants' lives. Furthermore, Pleck's (1995) research on trauma strain and the two experiments conducted by Fields et al. (2015) and Sánchez et al. (2010) illuminated how queer men negotiate their queer identities when they do not fit the dominant gender roles. This research is relevant to this thesis, as I aim to examine how queer men negotiate their identities during interactions with het/cis men. Overwhelmingly, the force of

hegemonic masculinities (Carrigan et al., 1985; Connell, 2005) impacts queer men's behaviours as they are relegated to subordinated masculinities and exist under dominance. In some cases, queer men uphold that dominance through catering (Eslen-Ziya & Koç, 2016; Hunt et al., 2016; Ravenhill & de Visser, 2017) or refuting (Anderson, 2002; Kjaran & Jóhannesson, 2013) these structural forces. This literature appropriately frames the participants' experiences because this thesis unpacks the multiplicity of queer men's behaviours.

Sociocultural theory requires cultural tools (Gauvain, 2001) and mediated action (Wertsch, 1994) to communicate behaviours and knowledge. As everybody uses these tools to navigate their particular sociocultural contexts, this topic is vital because I examine how queer men navigate their interactions with het/cis men through queer masculinities. Specifically, interactional aspects of sociocultural theory are expanded through Leontiev's (1978) activity theory, describing that people use cultural tools and mediated action to fulfill human biological and culturally constructed needs. Sociocultural theory impacts identity (Holland et al., 1998) and learning (Roth & Lee, 2007). People's identities are predicated on their needs, and they achieve these needs by identifying ways to acquire them. Therefore, through interaction, individual and collective knowledge is continually reconstructed and reproduced in competition with culturally dominant positions (Roth, 2004). Sociocultural theory also interprets how the participants in this study construct their own identity through the knowledge shared during interactions with het/cis men. When existing within a dominant sociocultural climate that is inherently queerphobic, the participants' lived experiences provide a valuable perspective for understanding how queer men perceive their own queer identities from interactions with het/cis men.

I have included each topic within masculinities studies and sociocultural theory because they encompass how men's behaviours and identities are influenced through interactions. This

background is beneficial for discussing my results, as this thesis focuses on the behaviours of queer men and how they are impacted by het/cis men's behaviours. Specifically, these behaviours illuminate how queer men's identities are constructed. Furthermore, my third research question centres on the sociocultural climate of so-called Alberta. This literature review also informs how queer men construct knowledge about themselves within their sociocultural climate dominated by hegemonic masculinities.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Queer men's identities and behaviours are entirely subjective to each queer man. Specifically, I am examining how they negotiate their behaviours through queer masculinities, influenced by het/cis men and sociocultural forces. Therefore, this chapter outlines the theoretical perspective, methods, and positionalities I employ to conduct this research. I approach this topic with a qualitative perspective (Hammersley, 2012) supported by a social constructionist theoretical lens (Koro-Ljungberg, 2008). To collect my data, I conducted semi-structured interviews (Hesse-Biber, 2013) with queer men living in so-called Alberta between the ages of 20-30. Finally, I explain my positionality, the study's ethics, and the limitations and delimitations used in this thesis.

Theoretical Perspective

Qualitative Research

I approached the interactions between queer and het/cis men through a qualitative perspective. Hammersley (2012) describes qualitative research as

A form of social inquiry that tends to adopt a flexible and data-driven research design, to use relatively unstructured data, to emphasize the essential role of subjectivity in the research process, to study a small number of naturally occurring cases in detail, and to use verbal rather than statistical forms of analysis. (p. 12)

Hammersley elaborated that qualitative research does not have a singular definition because it encompasses diverse fields, approaches, and perspectives. However, it is regarded as a practical approach to analyzing social forces' impacts on people (Fossey, 2002; Strauss, 2015), which I hope for this thesis to accomplish. Baum (1995) explains that studying interactions between people and social forces to create conclusions is characteristic of qualitative research.

Furthermore, this approach encourages the subjective experiences of research participants to be amplified while also being able to create collective themes that link the participants' experiences together.

Semi-structured interviews are an effective method that is often paired with qualitative research (Busetto et al., 2020; Cadena, 2019; Jamshed, 2014). Jamshed (2014) underscored the importance of semi-structured interviews in collecting qualitative data from people's detailed experiences with particular topics. Moreover, Qu and Dumay (2011) outlined that semi-structured interviews require detailed preparation and presentation to ensure that the qualitative data that arises from the interview is not broad or essentialized into a specific narrative. Ineffective data can be avoided from the careful preparation of an interview guide.

Social Constructionism

Hammersley (2012) defined social constructionism as

The very existence of individuals with particular identities is itself only constituted in and through socio-cultural processes, whether those associated with particular, occasioned patterns of social interaction or those generated by relatively large-scale socio-historical formations that produce distinctive forms of discourse. (p. 36)

Thus, an individual's traits are not the focus of this inquiry. Instead, a social constructionist lens allows the researcher to unpack how social processes inform people's behavioural traits. Therefore, social constructionism is a collective lens because it examines how social forces are produced and reproduced through the experiences and knowledge shared between individuals (Andrews, 2012; Galbin, 2014; Hammersley, 2012; R. Young & Collin, 2004). It is worth remembering that, as Andrews (2012) pointed out, social constructionism does not examine ontology, a theoretical perspective that examines the parameters and characteristics

of identities and existences. Instead, my research is designed to uncover the negotiations of queer identities and the social forces that influence the reproduction and shifts of these identities. This aligns with social constructionism and its greater focus on epistemology (Andrews, 2012; R. Young & Collin, 2004). Furthermore, collecting data about these interactions will offer insight into queer men's conceptualizations of their existences as queer men, which is at the core of this thesis.

Social constructionism aligns with my method of semi-structured interviews (Koro-Ljungberg, 2008). Semi-structured interviews are contextualized to uncover people's detailed experiences and interactions with specific phenomena (Jamshed, 2014). Therefore, social constructionism and semi-structured interviews promote the collection of knowledge regarding unique experiences constructed in social settings.

I chose to use social constructionism instead of constructionism because, as Hammersley (2012) noted, some forms of constructionism do not account for how social processes are created through social interactions with other people and forces. Instead, some forms of constructionism only focus on how social processes are created independently. In other words, creating meanings of knowledge through interactions is exclusive to social constructionism, which aligns with this thesis. Furthermore, I use social constructionism instead of constructivism. Dickerson and Zimmerman (1996) emphasized that social constructionism regards how the meanings of knowledge are developed through social processes over a specific period. In contrast, constructivism is more static: Meaning-making is not considered fluid and is relative to a person rather than constructed through active social processes with other people. Social constructionism is a crucial perspective for this thesis because I use it to analyze the social processes that influence queer men's negotiations of their behaviours and queer identities during their

interactions with het/cis men. This requires knowledge creation through interaction than the creation of knowledge independently.

Methods

Participant Sampling and Demographics

Six participants voluntarily participated in hour-and-a-half-long semi-structured interviews. All participants identified as queer men, lived in so-called Alberta, were between the ages of 20-30, and could comprehend and speak English. The participants were recruited through purposeful sampling. This method isolates participants of certain populations with specific characteristics due to their comprehensive knowledge regarding a particular topic (Campbell et al., 2020; Etikan et al., 2016). Thus, I chose queer men to participate in my study because they could discuss their experiences interacting with het/cis men. Additionally, the six participants who voluntarily participated were given a choice to use pseudonyms or their names: Ali, Burl, Dan, EM GH, Colby Lindeburg, and Malakai.

Data Collection

Semi-Structured Interviews.

Semi-structured interviews with six queer men aged 20-30 who live in so-called Alberta were conducted to collect data. Semi-structured interviews require an interview guide created around specific themes (Hesse-Biber, 2013). Specifically, I created the interview guide to reflect questions about the participants' interactions with het/cis men and the influences of so-called Alberta's sociocultural context, specifically regarding queer men's behaviours and perceptions. The theme that described the first eight questions of the interview guide was "general interactions with het/cis men," containing three subthemes: 1) feelings, 2) queer identity, and 3) negotiations of behaviour. This theme served to answer my first two research questions regarding

queer men's and het/cis men's behaviours during their interactions. Subsequently, the second theme was "setting and sociocultural context in interactions with heterosexual, cisgender men." These final six questions of my interview guide did not have any subthemes. The participants' responses from the second theme were critical in answering my third research question concerning the effects that the sociocultural context of so-called Alberta had on queer men's interactions with het/cis men. For the full interview guide, please see Appendix A.

Semi-structured interviews are an effective data collection method because they exemplify a crucial balance between controlling the direction of the interview and encouraging the participants to explain their experiences thoroughly. I created open-ended questions and often followed up by asking the participants to elaborate on their previous answers. In effect, the participants and I co-created knowledge through a constant back-and-forth resembling a conversation. To achieve this, I employed active listening. Hesse-Biber (2013) described active listening as listening with one's entire body: nodding, verbal affirmation, noticing changes in participants' body movements and vocals, and observing other markers of their behaviours during the interview. Additionally, due to the conversational nature of semi-structured interviews, Koro-Ljungberg (2008) highlighted that through interviews, the researcher and the participants engage in social constructionism because they create knowledge through their conversations based on their subjective experiences. Knowing this, I must be transparent with the participants about how I analyze their experiences through social constructionism. This positions them and their experiences within a specific sociocultural context instead of their experiences void of analysis (Gubrium & Koro-Ljungberg, 2005).

Participant Characteristics.

One criterion for inclusion in this study was that they had to live in so-called Alberta. Contextually, Massie and Jackson (2020) stated that so-called Alberta's oil and gas industry holds power in its construction of gender roles and, tangentially, sexual roles as well. The authors posited "frontier masculinity," dominant within so-called Alberta. Landry and Willey (2022) expand upon frontier masculinity by stating that it pertains to attitudes of queerphobia, sexism, and racism, which have historically existed in the so-called Alberta oil and gas industry (House, 1980). Contextually, this form of hegemonic masculinity upholds traditional gender roles within the oil and gas industry and is predicated on money, a conjugal family, and the inclusion of men and exclusion of women in the industry. Further, as G. Miller (2004) specified, "the dominant, or hegemonic, masculinity in the oil industry is expressed through... gendered interactions and occupations are embedded in a consciousness derived from the powerful symbols of the frontier myth and romanticized cowboy hero" (p. 48). There is minimal space in the so-called Albertan sociocultural context that encourages the visibility of those who do not uphold heteronormativity and cisnormativity. Thus, so-called Alberta was a culturally significant location to conduct this research, as there are multiple cities and towns that comprise it. It prompts a closer consideration of queer men's behaviours and subsequent negotiations of identities in a geo-social climate that has historically restricted and limited the expression of diverse gender and/or sexual identities.

Hegemonic masculinity changes over time and is informed by the sociocultural context of a particular society (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). However, hegemonic masculinities within so-called Alberta are embedded at an institutional level (Chamberlin, 2019). A 20-30-year-old age range was chosen because the participants' formations and understandings of their gender

and sexual identities would have been in the last thirty years. Therefore, this research reflects the relatively recent interactional dynamics experienced by the participants in this study.

Lastly, English comprehension, including listening and speaking, was required of the participants because they had to comprehend the questions asked during the interviews. Furthermore, the participants must have been presently identified or have previously identified as queer men. Thus, transgender, bisexual, pansexual, gay, and/or queer men; heterosexual men who used to identify as queer; and non-binary, genderqueer, genderfluid, agender, bigender, omnigender, pangender, and transgender women who previously identified as queer men were considered in the pool of participants. Two-Spirit people who either identify or identified as queer men were also considered as participants. As outlined by the Two-Spirit Dry Lab (Pruden & Salway, 2020), Two-Spirit refers to an organizing strategy or tool. In other words, Two-Spirit people are described by the culturally significant roles held within their communities, which existed pre-colonization. Specifically, these roles pertain to a gender analysis, emphasizing that Two-Spirit is not specifically a gender or sexual orientation, especially because queerness pertains to Western concepts of gender and sexual orientation. However, Two-Spirit people can identify as queer, but not all Two-Spirit people identify as queer.

Queer identities cannot be essentialized into a singular narrative: “The task is to subvert the unified notion of gay and lesbian identity and to paint a picture of multiple and conflicting sexual/gendered experiences” (Kong et al., 2003, p. 101). Therefore, I created space for diverse queer identities to participate in this research. Similarly, Plummer (2017) stated that “there is a whole underbelly of [queer] life that is raised but then dropped, leaving a massive story untold” (p. 194). This is a poignant example of the complexity of queer life, especially because these stories have been silenced and marginalized for years.

Recruitment.

I recruited participants on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, Snapchat, and Reddit, as these were efficient platforms for connecting with multiple people simultaneously. Further, as this research is located within so-called Alberta, I had to reach populations outside of where I was situated on Moh'kins'tsis. Specifically, social media was a strategy to connect with queer men outside Moh'kins'tsis. I also shared my recruitment poster with my family and peers and asked them to share it with their social circles. To see my recruitment poster, please see Appendix B. Three days after I had shared my recruitment poster on social media and with my family and peers, the six participants who participated in the study responded with interest. Thus, I did not fulfill the other recruitment strategies, as I was not expecting to receive interest from six participants so quickly. For context, I also intended to put up print posters within Moh'kins'tsis to recruit residents who met my participant requirements. To reach my specific audience of queer men, I planned to reach out to queer organizations within Moh'kins'tsis, such as the Calgary Queer Arts Society, Calgary Outlink, Skipping Stone Foundation, Calgary Pride, University of Calgary Q Centre and Queers on Campus, and the Centre for Sexuality. I also aimed to contact other queer- and trans-specific organizations across Alberta to ensure I was reaching queer men outside of Moh'kins'tsis, aligning with my strategy to extend my recruitment beyond where I was situated in Moh'kins'tsis.

Sample Size.

This study involved six participants. Within the confines of qualitative research, data collection aims to achieve saturation. This is the ideal amount of data because new data would not elucidate new perspectives (Morse, 1995). However, Francis et al. (2010) noted limitations to the standardization of saturation because each research experiment is different, which trivializes

standardized saturation. Miles et al. (2018) stated that qualitative research aims to work with small populations. This contrasts quantitative research, which often requires a larger sample size to draw conclusions. Furthermore, a small sample size is characteristic of qualitative research due to the depth and intricacies of the topic that I strive to procure and unpack (Campbell et al., 2020; Hammersley, 2012; Miles et al., 2018). For the scope of this research, six participants achieved saturation. Moreover, this sample number is a sufficient number of people to work with because I rely only on what is necessary to achieve my objectives (D. Young & Casey, 2019; Faber & Fonseca, 2014). Specifically, D. Young and Casey (2019) concluded that a sample size that is too large requires undue work that is not feasible within the research process. Six queer men represented diverse queer experiences regarding the behavioural negotiations employed by queer men during interactions with het/cis men.

Interview Details.

The participants could interview in person, via the video conferencing platform Zoom; or over the telephone. Two participants were interviewed in person in a private space at the University of Calgary's Taylor Family Digital Library. The other four participants were interviewed virtually over Zoom, and I was at the same location as the in-person interviews to maintain the participants' confidentiality. Otter Pro was used as a transcription technology during the interviews, supplemented by recordings of interview audio on my personal iPhone.

Reflexivity.

Although the experiences of the participants and myself are similar due to our shared queerness, I did not equate them because our behaviours and identities are not identical. As mentioned, the interactions that queer men have with het/cis men are diverse and multifaceted. This translates to the subjectivity of how queer men behave and negotiate their queer identities.

To further the rapport I aimed to establish between myself and the participants, I relied on reflexivity, which is the acknowledgement of similar lived experiences between the researcher, the participants, and the research topic (Hesse-Biber, 2013). I am a queer, non-binary person who used to identify as a gay man. To establish rapport, I acknowledged my own identities before the interviews began. I needed to demonstrate to the participants that I am a member of the queer community alongside them because I wanted them to recognize that their experiences are shared in some ways. Moreover, to strengthen rapport, I reiterated the intention and circulation of this thesis alongside the collection, use, privacy, and destruction of the data collected to practice transparency with the participants.

History of Interviews With Queer People.

It is essential to acknowledge that interview methods with queer men have a history of queerphobia. Queer men used to be interviewed by medical professionals to diagnose them with a mental illness regarding their gender and/or sexual identity (Kong et al., 2003). This diagnosis gave medical professionals unjustifiable reasoning to imprison, isolate, and forcibly hospitalize queer men. Due to this queerphobic history, I ensured that my semi-structured interview approach promoted safety and compassion by practicing continuous consent both over email and through verbal communication. I emphasized that the participants could skip any question they chose or end the interview at any time. Finally, I reassured them to take breaks during the interview if they felt overwhelmed. Fundamentally, I conducted semi-structured interviews that encouraged the participants to explain their experiences in their own words without fear of judgement or scrutiny.

Further, Kong et al. (2003) argued that queer people speaking on queer experiences could be perceived as another instance where they must disclose their sexual and/or gender identity.

This can be a stressful and vulnerable experience for queer men. Rapport is a vital strategy to achieve comfort for the participants. In effect, establishing rapport with the participants allowed me and them to communicate mutually, respectfully, and honestly (Hesse-Biber, 2013). Another strategy to sustain rapport included making the participants' transcripts available to ensure they agreed that the transcript reflected their experiences appropriately.

Limitations to Semi-Structured Interviews.

Although semi-structured interviews are an effective means of achieving my objectives, there are limitations to the structure and impacts of these interviews. Kong et al. (2003) emphasized that interviews, in general, can result in inequitable power dynamics due to the roles of researcher and participant. The authors added that this could impact the validity of the data collected because the participants do not feel as comfortable during the interview process. In effect, the participants' relation to the researcher and broader societal norms can prevent them from expressing their authentic opinions because they are positioning themselves within the context of an interview rather than a familiar environment. Hammersley (2012) also indicated that the environment of interviews is not solely observational, which influences the legitimacy of the participants' behaviours and responses to the interview questions. Further, the structure of interviews can be influenced by the researcher's perspectives and biases, which is characteristic of all interviews. Although I acknowledge these boundaries, Hammersley also underscored that despite these limitations, semi-structured interviews promote important meaning-making and genuine disclosure, mitigating the impact of bias often present in qualitative research. This is further achieved when the researcher fosters an interview environment whereby the participants feel safe.

Positionality of the Researcher

As a queer non-binary scholar in the fields of education and masculinities studies, I hold specific biases regarding this thesis's topic based on my lived experiences while also witnessing and listening to the lived experiences of my peers who are queer men. I must be transparent about my positionality and the biases I hold because these perspectives impact how I design my research and the overall validity of the research (Chenail, 2011; Cypress, 2017; Gordon et al. 1990; Holmes, 2020). With regard to bias in social sciences research, Gordon et al. (1990) stated, "the questions and problems of interest to the investigator generally reflect the theoretical bias of the investigator" (p. 16). Entering into this study, I identified two biases.

Firstly, I actively avoided het/cis men when I was younger because my interactions with them were uncomfortable due to my insecurity in my queer identity. This led me to view het/cis men and my queer identity overwhelmingly negatively. Although my discomfort has decreased over time, and I have quite a few close het/cis peers who are men, I still experience negotiations of my behaviours as if I were a queer man, even though I am a queer, non-binary person. This is a bias in this research because my research examines how queer men negotiate their identities and behaviours during interactions with het/cis men. Secondly, although I had never lived in so-called Alberta before moving here in August 2021, I held the assumption that so-called Alberta was a conservative province that was not safe for queer people. Yet, after living in so-called Alberta over the last year and a half, my perspectives have changed, and I see this province as more inclusive than I had imagined. However, these biases still linger. As Sensoy and DiAngelo (2017) emphasized, all people live with biases: I must prioritize research integrity through transparency around my research design instead of ignoring them.

Furthermore, my position as a social constructionist scholar biases my theoretical perspective and the design of my study. Through social constructionism, I solely focus on the subjectivity of the participants' lived experiences and perceptions of phenomena, which are cocreated during their interactions with other people and forces. As I consistently position myself within a broader sociocultural setting to recognize my own behaviours, I resonate with this theoretical perspective in my academic and personal life. In conclusion, Berger (2015) stressed that my positionality as a researcher is fluid, prompting me to position myself continuously throughout the research process.

Rigor

Cypress (2017) defined rigor as the actions that uphold reliability and validity in research. Specifically, Chenail (2011) suggested that researchers should conduct an interview where they act as both the interviewer and the participant. This helps the researchers practice all the interview procedures to replicate the process and identify biases, especially because qualitative interviewing is an inherent threat to trustworthiness. Interviewing myself helped me establish a recognition of the biases I brought into the study. Furthermore, I carefully created the interview guide around the three primary research questions to ensure that the questions I asked were concise and wholly regarded the thesis (D. Davies, 2002). Finally, I created specific delimitations to the participants that ensured that the data I was receiving was representative of my target population.

Ethics

Under my outlined research design, the University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board approved this study (REB22-1371). The participants were sampled through purposive sampling (Campbell et al., 2020; Etikan et al., 2016) and had to fill out a

screening form to ensure that they met the delimitations I created for this study. To see the screening form, please see Appendix C. If the delimitations were met, I sent each participant a consent form outlining the study's scope, interview details, collection and destruction of personal information, risks and benefits, and the dissemination of results. The consent form also contained choices for the participants to complete regarding their consent to being audiotaped, transcribed by Otter Pro, and directed quoted in the study. Additionally, the participants chose between their names or pseudonyms that would be used in the study. To see the consent form, please see Appendix D. After completing the interview transcriptions, the participants were sent the written transcript. They were encouraged to indicate any part of the transcript they did not feel comfortable with so I could delete it. This had to be completed within two weeks of the participant receiving the transcript. Furthermore, the participants were reassured throughout their participation that they could withdraw from the study at any time.

Limitations

To further my research integrity, it is my responsibility to examine the limitations of this thesis study. Although this research was designed to include queer men from different cities and towns of so-called Alberta, the participants were all from urban city settings because I accepted participants on a first-response basis. Therefore, queer men from rural so-called Albertan towns and places were not represented within my data set, which can function to skew my data towards a particular experience. A secondary limitation pertained to my purposeful sampling, as all of my participants were recruited from social media instead of emailing queer-specific organizations and recruiting. I did not have the opportunity to complete these emails because the six participants in this study indicated an interest in the first three days of recruitment. Finally, a tertiary limitation concerned the gender and/or sexual identities of the six participants in my

study. Of the six who identified as queer men, only one was a transgender man. One transgender man cannot speak for his entire community's experiences. Consequently, the results disproportionately regard sexual orientation rather than gender.

Delimitations

Through purposive sampling (Campbell et al., 2020; Etikan et al., 2016), the delimitations were that to participate in the semi-structured interviews, the participants must have been between the ages of 20-30 who lived in so-called Alberta and could speak and comprehend English. This delimitation was necessary to ensure that the scope and data collected during this thesis were specific and concise.

Chapter Summary

Throughout this chapter, I discussed my theoretical perspective of conducting a qualitative study (Aspers & Corte, 2019; Fossey, 2002; Hammersley, 2012; Strauss, 2015) rooted in social constructionism (Andrews, 2012; Galbin, 2014; Hammersley, 2012; Koro-Ljungberg, 2008; R. Young & Collin, 2004). This focus concerns analyzing people's subjective meanings and knowledge constructed through interactions with other people and forces. Thus, this theoretical perspective is appropriate for this thesis because I aim to collect information regarding queer men's diverse masculinities based on their interactions with het/cis men and the sociocultural climate in so-called Alberta. Furthermore, qualitative social constructionism aligns with my research methods of semi-structured interviews (Koro-Ljungberg, 2008), as these interviews encouraged the six participants to share their experiences of interactions with het/cis men in their own words and engage in knowledge construction with me. The research setting and the details of the semi-structured interviews (Hesse-Biber, 2013) including recruitment, were also comprehensively described. Throughout this, I also emphasized the limitations of semi-

structured interviews (Hammersley, 2012; Kong et al., 2003) alongside the queerphobic history that surrounds this research method (Kong et al., 2003). Finally, I outlined my own positionality, ethics protocol, and the limitations and delimitations evident within this thesis.

Chapter Four: Results

This chapter is organized according to five themes that emerged from listening to six queer men living in so-called Alberta: 1) values, 2) behavioural negotiations, 3) het/cis men's behaviours, 4) masculinities, and 5) institutions. I used thematic analysis to organize these results (Alhojailan & Ibrahim, 2012; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Joffe, 2011; Terry et al., 2017). Thematic analysis is described by identifying and organizing specific codes that arise from the data. This thesis explores the interactions that six queer men have with het/cis men. It examines how these interactions contribute to queer men navigating their identities in largely heterosexist and cissexist day-to-day communications. The results of this chapter are informed by my 14-question interview guide designed to examine the multiple facets of queer men's interactions with het/cis men.

Data Analysis

Braun and Clarke (2006) defined thematic analysis as “a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (p. 79). Thematic analysis also requires isolating codes, which are key features of distinguishable themes that arise multiple times within data (Alhojailan & Ibrahim, 2012; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Joffe, 2011; Terry et al., 2017). To mitigate bias during coding, I coded the data inductively (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In other words, my codes were not predetermined before data analysis. This approach ensures that the themes were solely based on the participants' experiences rather than my predisposed interests in the topic before collecting data (Alhojailan & Ibrahim, 2012). Genuinely focusing on the multiplicity of queer men's behaviours is more representative of the participants' experiences than entering with a biased understanding of what these behaviours look like. Therefore, the codes must represent the “most salient constellations of meanings present in the dataset” (Joffe, 2011, p.

209).

Terry et al. (2017) emphasized that thematic analysis requires a robust theoretical perspective to inform the data analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) highlighted that thematic analysis is conducive to a social constructionist approach because it describes how themes are socially created. This makes it suitable to code data representing participants' subjective experiences. Furthermore, data collected through interviews are advantageous for thematic analysis due to the depth of the topic that arises from the data (Terry et al., 2017). Joffe (2011) also asserted that thematic analysis is vital for research questions that examine how a specific population experiences phenomena. This is congruent with my focus on how queer men behave and perceive het/cis men's behaviours during shared interactions. Additionally, thematic analysis is purely relegated to qualitative data (Vaismoradi et al., 2013), making it an appropriate data analysis.

Thematic analysis is sometimes conflated with content analysis (Terry et al., 2017). Vaismoradi et al. (2013) explained that the main differences between thematic analysis and content analysis pertain to its description aims, the research's philosophical background, and the analysis process. Contextually, thematic analysis focuses on analyzing people's lived experiences, whereas content analysis focuses on analyzing phenomena. Regarding the philosophical background, thematic analysis employs a constructionist theoretical perspective. In contrast, content analysis employs communication theory. Finally, thematic analysis is purely qualitative and examines how people describe phenomena. Conversely, content analysis can be both qualitative and quantitative, emphasizing the interpretation of specific concepts rather than the description of these concepts. Therefore, thematic analysis is suitable for the aims of this thesis instead of content analysis.

Findings

Before I begin, it is crucial to recognize that multiple masculinities exist (Brod & Kaufman, 1994; Coles, 2008, 2009; Connell, 1995, 2000; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Hearn, 1996; Imms, 2000; Kehler, 2004, 2011; Kehler & Martino, 2007; Martino & Berrill, 2003; Martino & Kehler, 2007; Mac an Ghail, 1994; McCook, 2022; Pascoe, 2003; Watson, 2015). Therefore, masculinities are plural throughout the findings.

Values

Every person, regardless of gender and sexual identity, has core values. Contextually, the participants' values describe the morals and principles they hold as they navigate their lives. These values inform their behaviours during interactions with all people and are shaped by the participants' lived experiences (Aride & Pamies-Pallise, 2019). Specifically, the participants' values were upheld and negotiated during interactions with het/cis men: respect, safety, confidence, authenticity, education, leadership, and advocacy. This section is designed to introduce the participants. I open each introduction by providing context-specific details about their values and how they locate themselves within the larger society and community.

Ali.

Ali is a 26-year-old cisgender, gay man living on Moh'kins'tsis. As he is Muslim, Ali said that his racialized identity refuses him the privileges Whiteness provides White queer people: "I'm not a privileged person, a White person, who would be very okay with being gay and having my parents know... it is not gifted to everyone." When he was growing up, Ali's adolescence in South Asia was demarcated by queerphobia: "I come from a background or a country where being queer is illegal. It is punishable by death. So, throughout my life, I have not been open." However, he identified that the intersection of being Muslim and queer is now

“a whole movement going on around the world,” providing greater clarity to this intersection. Presently, Ali continues to understand that he does not need to choose between these two identities.

His values focus on respect, education, and safety. Although Ali is often willing to talk about his queerness with het/cis men, he also recognizes his own discomfort when discussing these topics with them. Specifically, he expects het/cis men to respect his boundaries if he refuses to discuss his queerness because “it is not [his] responsibility to spoon feed someone with the knowledge. It’s just so draining for queer people.” When he felt comfortable talking about his queer identity with het/cis men, he would only educate them “as far as they’re receptive.” Therefore, Ali upholds his values of respect and education by refusing to negotiate his behaviours during these interactions with het/cis men, even when facing pressure from them.

Witnessing and confronting queerphobia compromises Ali’s value of safety: “It’s not just physical safety. It’s also about feelings of isolation.” Ali’s safety was compromised during some interactions with het/cis men because he was unsure how they would respond to his queerness. To determine his safety, Ali relied on “vibes,” which he described as “sensing the atmosphere” or “sensing how someone would take [his queerness] through [his own] instincts.” Ali’s safety is upheld and disregarded by het/cis men because he still feels unsafe in certain situations, contributing to negotiating his behaviours. However, he also recognizes that his safety deserves to be respected by himself and others, and he reflects that through his behaviours.

Burl.

Burl, a 24-year-old cisgender, gay man, lives on Amiskwacîwâskahikan. Within academia, Burl focuses on how leadership within public health contributes to the advocacy of historically and presently underrepresented populations. Burl grew up on the so-called Alberta border, and due to his gay identity, he felt “invisible to het/cis men.” Subsequently, he moved to the land of the *ləkʷəŋən* peoples; including the Songhees, Esquimalt, and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples; when he was older and felt “more comfortable” there with his queer identity, explaining he did not “pretend to be another person.” He described Amiskwacîwâskahikan as “accepting” and “comfortable” regarding his openness to express his queerness.

Burl identified that he values authenticity, confidence, leadership, and advocacy. Authenticity was essential to Burl because he wants to “take up presence in [spaces] more genuinely” when he notices he negotiates his behaviours during interactions with het/cis men. However, in some interactions, Burl stated that he felt confident with his queer identity and refused to negotiate it when he was around het/cis men he knew personally or particular het/cis male strangers: “I’m here. I’m queer. Get over it.” In other words, Burl’s expressions of queerness are context-specific: Each interaction is different, and Burl negotiates his behaviours or refuses these negotiations based on the interaction. Thus, his values of authenticity and confidence depended on the het/cis men he was interacting with and how confident he felt, impacting how he negotiated and refused these negotiations.

Furthermore, Burl shared the values of leadership and advocacy. In his academic and professional work, Burl specified that he predominantly works with women and is “not interacting with cisgender heterosexual men very often.” Consequently, his values of leadership and advocacy are rarely ever disregarded because he finds that the women he works with affirm

his values, as do some of the het/cis men. In this case, Burl's values of leadership and advocacy are almost always upheld. He attributed this to his public health field as "way more accepting." In this setting, he rarely negotiates his behaviours.

Dan.

Dan is a 27-year-old cisgender, gay man living on Moh'kins'tsis. He grew up in the East Coast of so-called Canada and moved to Moh'kins'tsis to "feel safe and build confidence," as he explained he was unable to do that living in the East Coast of so-called Canada due to his queer identity. Currently, he stated that he is more comfortable addressing his queer identity with other het/cis men than he was when he was younger: "I'll just kinda address it, make light of it, and then move on to something else." Regarding his expressions of masculinities, he says, "I think I present more masculine."

He emphasized that his core values are respect, safety, and authenticity. Regarding respect, Dan explained that he "thinks that everyone is important" and appreciates the "widespread spectrum of humans that exist in Alberta." Within this value, Dan also includes het/cis men. Nonetheless, Dan stated that his safety is sometimes disregarded in interactions with het/cis men. He believed that het/cis men could become aggressive and threatening if they knew Dan was queer, prompting him to modify his behaviours to prevent this: "Nobody wants to get punched. Nobody wants to get beat up." Dan's respect for het/cis men and his recognition that they compromise his safety exist simultaneously. This highlights Dan's complex relationship with het/cis men, how they receive his values, and how he negotiates his behaviours in response.

Dan also values authenticity, which is interrelated values that complement each other. As such, Dan is no longer pretending to be someone he is not when interacting with het/cis

men: “I'm still very authentic, you know? Like, I just do me, and like, I can be myself.” Dan’s value of authenticity is predominantly upheld as he refuses to negotiate his behaviours.

EM GH.

EM GH is a 28-year-old cisgender, gay man living on Moh’kins’tsis. He moved to Moh’kins’tsis from Iran, and perceives Moh’kins’tsis to be more accepting . In regard to how his queer identity is represented, EM GH asserted that “at the end of the day, [he’s] sitting somewhere and closing [his] eyes, and [he] should be in peace with [him]self.” Presently, EM GH’s value of peace resonates with his intrinsic self and does not require external validation.

He discussed his values concerning respect, education, and safety. Regarding respect, EM GH always notices when het/cis men treat him and other queer men equitably: “I would say the most important part for me is if I can see how they treat other people as equals... As long as you know that you cannot disrespect me and you cannot put anyone above me.” EM GH has previously experienced oppression because of his queer identity. Presently, he tries to ensure that he is respected by het/cis men by refusing to modify his behaviours as much as he did before. However, he still negotiates his behaviours to an extent. EM GH’s also specified that he loves to educate het/cis men about queerness so they can educate their peers about queerness as well: “If I teach five people around me, they teach five people around them.” Therefore, this creates a cascade effect where multiple people are learning about queerness, and if this knowledge reaches “someone in the closet, they can have a better life.” Although EM GH strives to uphold his values, his respect is still sometimes disregarded by het/cis men, resulting in behavioural negotiations.

EM GH indicated that he evaluates trust when discussing how he approaches safety towards het/cis men: “When I befriend [a het/cis man], the first thing I check is that sense of

trust. If I can trust them, if I have an environment that I feel safe in, then I befriend them.” EM GH negotiates his behaviours when determining whether to trust a het/cis man.

Colby Lindeburg.

Colby Lindeburg, a 24-year-old cisgender, gay/queer man, lives on Moh’kins’tsis. He explains his queerness as,

I went from going, ‘I have to be really really flamboyant and over the top and hyperfeminine,’ to ‘masculine and clean cut’ and fit that mould to being like, ‘Well I can be either of those things. I can be both of those things.’ I can have all of these different sides to me and not every side is going to be for everyone.

Colby Lindeburg’s experiences exemplify that queerness cannot be contained in a singular definition. Instead, his expressions of queerness illuminate the expansiveness and ambiguity that queerness represents. Colby Lindeburg further elaborated how he feels “fluid” within his queerness because his understanding and relationship to it continue to change.

His values include respect and authenticity. When discussing respect, Colby Lindeburg stated that he likes to “meet [people] where they’re at and treat them like a human and having a dialogue, and start from a place of mutual respect.” Similarly to Dan, Colby Lindeburg alluded that he appreciates everyone and treats them with respect regardless of their identities. This includes the respect of het/cis men, even when het/cis men disregard his values. When he was younger, Colby Lindeburg explained that he and his queer peers felt “ostracized” because they had “niche” interests not wholly shared by het/cis men. Colby Lindeburg now embraces these unique interests and finds belonging in them, even if het/cis men do not respect the same interests. In this context, Colby Lindeburg previously experienced behavioural negotiation due to his distinctive interests. However, he no longer negotiates them because of his value of

authenticity. Therefore, Colby Lindeburg experiences negotiations with his behaviours. However, these negotiations can sometimes align with the inherent fluidity that he experiences, especially as he said that “the environment that [he is] in decides a lot of the time.”

Malakai.

Malakai, a 23-year-old transgender, bisexual man, grew up on Moh’kin’tsis. He stated: “I do identify as bisexual, but I didn’t even use that label for myself until after I’d come out as trans.” He describes himself as “very squarely on the very far end of the masculine spectrum” and passing is “affirming” to him. He continues to navigate the social expectations of being a man through navigating the “different mannerisms and interactions between men” that he did not experience growing up.

He discussed his safety, authenticity, respect, and advocacy values. When elaborating on his feelings towards safety, Malakai indicated queer people have to keep themselves safe while also trying to stay authentic towards themselves, based on his own experiences with transphobia: “It’s just not worth putting yourself at risk, or in danger, to get through to one person. And don’t change things about yourself to make other people more comfortable.” Although Malakai sometimes negotiates his behaviours to keep himself safe, he strives to maintain authenticity. Furthermore, Malakai’s value of respect arises from learning diverse perspectives: “The more that you’re exposed to different viewpoints and different groups of folks growing up, the more empathy that you’ll have for people that are different than you.” From this value, Malakai inferred that being educated on diverse experiences leads to greater respect and empathy for queer people, so he does not “have to do all that heavy lifting by [him]self.” Het/cis men often disregard his value of safety, but Malakai continues to uphold his authenticity.

Additionally, advocacy was a critical value that Malakai practiced. For instance, Malakai changes in the men's changeroom because he is a man and refuses to conform to the cisnormative parameters embedded within masculinized spaces such as men's changerooms: "I have exactly the same right to be there as everybody else. I'm not going to face the wall when I take my shirt off." Furthermore, when addressing transphobia directed towards him, Malakai indicated the obviousness of these transphobic remarks: "As I walked by, he was like, 'Oh, there's that little trans boy.' And I turned around, and I was not having it. And I was like, 'Yeah? And?'" Malakai advocates for himself through these acts of resistance, upholding his values and refusing to negotiate his behaviours. In Malakai's experiences, his advocacy is actively challenged by het/cis men, but he continues to resist their disregard for his values and identity.

Occasionally, the participants' values are upheld and respected by het/cis men, but they can also be overlooked and ignored in certain situations. Furthermore, the participants sometimes resisted het/cis men's actions that threatened them by maintaining and abiding by their values. Interestingly, the participants also chose to uphold and disregard their values, stemming from the pressures they experience to act a particular way around het/cis men. The participants' values are essential to navigating and locating themselves within their sociocultural context and are often evident in their interactions with het/cis men.

Behavioural Negotiations

This theme encompasses the specific ways and motivations the participants identified when describing how they modified their behaviours during interactions with het/cis men. Safety was identified as a motivation to negotiate behaviours. The participants negotiated their behaviours by purposefully concealing their queer identities through passing (Cheng, 1999;

Shippee, 2011) and codeswitching (Friedman & Gwynne, 2008; Kroskrity, 2000; Winn, 2021; Young, 2009). Finally, the participants also negotiated their behaviours through verbal and non-verbal communication.

Safety.

The participants expressed that their safety could be compromised during interactions with het/cis men they had never met. Due to EM GH's previous negative experiences with het/cis men, he organizes aspects of het/cis men's personalities in his head, similar to OneNote:

You open these tabs on OneNote. When I see someone, I open a tab and I put their name, and then I start writing things and correlate them together to figure out what type of personality they have. ... The way you look, the way you move, your clothes, your conversations, like one sentence after the other.

EM GH's analysis of men's personalities describes how he negotiates his behaviours to ensure his safety. Furthermore, there are particular men that EM GH feels unsafe around:

“redneck [men] with boots and cowboy hats... coming out of one of those GMC trucks.”

Around these groups of men, EM GH “will probably act straight,” which is another way that EM GH negotiates his behaviours. In contrast, Colby Lindeburg determines his safety based on his peers' perceptions of het/cis men paired with his own perceptions:

Well, one way is them being judged as safe by other people in my life, like people whose judgment I trust about people in their lives can kind of indicate of whether or not this person is deserving of my trust... And then, for my own determination, a lot of the times I would just say it's a gut feeling.

Therefore, Colby Lindeburg's and his peers' evaluations of het/cis men is a negotiation he employs to determine if these men are safe to be around. When Burl was not openly queer,

he emphasized that an openly queer man was a “threat” to his queer status in a group with het/cis men. Specifically, Burl was worried that his het/cis peers would correlate his behaviours with the other openly queer man: “They're going to look at the qualities similar enough, and I'm going to be outed. ... I feel like a gay person is a threat to that; a closeted gay person.”

Specifically, Burl stated that when he was “in the closet, [he] was also avoiding [het/cis men].” Burl’s avoidance of het/cis men was his way of negotiating his behaviours to maintain his safety. Through their multiple interactions with het/cis men, the participants were alert that their physical and mental safety could be threatened by het/cis men. This prompted them to employ negotiations of the behaviours through queer masculinities to sustain their safety.

Passing.

Passing is the ability to act as part of a community that one is not already a part of by obscuring identifiable behaviours and qualities (Shippee, 2011). Shippee also emphasized that passing is determined by dominant sociocultural frames and perceptions of particular topics: Queer men would have to pass as heterosexual and cisgender. Contextually, passing for queer men also regards performing hegemonic masculinities, as Cheng (1999) stated. During their interactions, the participants concealed their queerness and passed through being perceived by het/cis men as masculine.

Dan discussed how he has “a bit of a privilege in that way that [he] can pass as a heterosexual male in a lot of different interactions.” It is his “tone,” “demeanor,” “the way [he] approaches situations,” and “confidence” that define Dan’s behaviours of passing. However, these behaviours also come naturally to him, so it is “easy” for him to pass. However, he consciously passes in unsafe situations to avoid being “punched” or “beat up.” Although he often receives safety and capital in different interactions with het/cis men through behaving

naturally, Dan still encounters times when he must pass through actively negotiating his behaviours through queer masculinities.

Malakai feels “affirmed” in his transgender identity through passing: “Passing is something that I really want for my life.” Specifically, he mainly attributed his passing to hormones and top surgery. Like Dan, Malakai does not always negotiate his behaviours because he can pass naturally: “The longer that I've been on hormones, and the more that I pass in society, the easier it has been with discussions and random interactions with cis/het men.” However, Malakai distinguishes between masculine behaviours contributing to his experiences of passing and behaviours that inherently subordinate other people. Specifically, he does not want to be perceived as a man who practices “patriarchal... superiority... and all that dumb stuff,” which he described as characteristics of an “alpha male.” Thus, Malakai uses passing as an expression of queer masculinities to feel authentic instead of using it to negotiate his behaviours to appease het/cis men.

Non-Verbal Communication.

During the interviews, the participants identified using specific non-verbal communication to pass during interactions with het/cis men. For example, Ali, EM GH, and Colby Lindeburg naturally emphasize key phrases during their conversations with hand movements. This includes the “limp wrist,” a hand movement associated with femininity. Colby Lindeburg stated that hand movements, in general, are more “flamboyant” and not used by het/cis men. When Ali was younger, one of his peers criticized Ali’s hand movements: “I used to do [hand movements] naturally until someone pointed that out.” Therefore, the participants adopted the perception that het/cis men would not be supportive or accepting of their hand

movements. This influenced them to negotiate their natural hand movements to pass around het/cis men, a form of expressing queer masculinities.

Other than hand movements, Burl, Ali, and EM GH talked about how they change their body communication during exchanges with het/cis men. Burl takes “wider, more dominant stances,” whereas Ali adopts an “uptight posture” and “change[s] [his] walk.” The participants identified that these behaviours are more masculine. In professional environments, EM GH stated, “I would smile less because I want them to understand that I am not in connection with my feelings because that is something I would associate with het/cis men.” Additionally, Burl and EM GH indicated that they dress masculine when they attend events predominantly populated by het/cis men. Burl defined this as “a basic shirt and a basic pair of pants” whereas GH defined this as “a dress shirt and a suit.” EM GH and Ali said they like wearing “big” and “dangly” earrings. However, they do not wear them around het/cis men, opting for “simpler studs.” EM GH also does not “show [his painted] nails or just put[s] them in [his] pockets” when he knows he will be interacting with het/cis men he is not comfortable around. All these behaviours are forms of non-verbal communication that the participants actively negotiated during their interactions with het/cis men to pass. This enlightens the significant diversity of these negotiations expressed through queer masculinities.

Codeswitching.

The concept of codeswitching is a linguistic strategy used by people to change between two or more verbal and non-verbal communication styles, constructing diverse identities (Friedman & Gwynne, 2008; Kroskrity, 2000; Young, 2009). Codeswitching can also be used with passing to secure queer people’s safety (Winn, 2021). The participants who codeswitched during their interactions with het/cis men indicated that they practiced codeswitching by

shifting between masculine and natural vernacular. The participants' motivations for codeswitching included safety and respect.

Burl and Colby Lindeburg stated that they experience a mix of both conscious and unconscious codeswitching. Colby Lindeburg said that he unconsciously codeswitches into a masculine persona when he is interacting with het/cis men: "Not only are the topics very different, but the slang that I use changes, and the inflection and emphasis on how I speak, and my voice also definitely changes, talking with cis/het men versus other groups of people." However, when his safety becomes threatened by het/cis men, "it's more unconscious, with the exception of times where [he] feel[s] a little bit more unsafe. Then it becomes more of a conscious decision because it's like, 'Oh, I can't accidentally slip up and say something wrong.'"

Burl described his experiences of codeswitching during conversations with het/cis men: "it's easy for me to codeswitch and present that, and for it to be bought and respected. I guess I can do it and I can get away with it." Therefore, when Burl consciously switches to a masculine persona around het/cis men, he receives more respect from them. However, Burl experiences unconscious codeswitching around his family: "I do unconsciously codeswitch with my own family... I've had many interactions with them." For Burl and Colby Lindeburg, codeswitching described that their expressions of queer masculinities included acting masculine around het/cis men to sustain safety.

Conversely, Dan elaborated that everyone codeswitch based on their specific situations: "When I'm at school, I'm in school mode. When I'm at work, I'm in work mode. With my family, it's kind of a family mode. So, like, I really think it's just that we're always doing it, no matter what." Through this perspective, Dan perceived codeswitching as "a good thing"

because he indicated that it had improved his confidence. When he was younger and beginning to understand his queer identity, Dan avoided interactions with het/cis men. In high school, Dan was “the kid who didn’t talk,” impacting his confidence during interactions with everyone. However, Dan used codeswitching to nurture his confidence and make him feel more comfortable during interactions with het/cis men:

Then I got into a job where my job was to talk to people... And so, you know, that really built my conversation skills where I can have conversations with anyone... Then I could have all these interactions with these heterosexual men without just shutting them down and just cutting them off without interacting. And I benefit off those interactions. That is where the different codeswitching really helps me to be able to do that, to build my confidence.

Although Dan was still negotiating his behaviours during these interactions with het/cis men, his negotiations were “an effective way to just get through those interactions to build that confidence.” Codeswitching was a significant example describing how the participants negotiated their behaviours through queer masculinities to achieve safety and respect from het/cis men during their interactions.

Verbal Communication.

The participants also identified specific ways of codeswitching pertaining to their verbal communication. Ali said that when he interacts with het/cis men, he uses a “bold voice” to ensure that “no one interrupts [him].” Burl and Colby Lindeburg talk in a “lower” voice around het/cis men to “fit in.” EM GH would “definitely not laugh” during interactions with het/cis men in interview environments, especially if he wanted to secure the job he was applying for. He explained this by stating, “I want them to understand that I am not in connection with my

feelings because that is something I would associate with het/cis men.” Through these strategies outlined by the participants, they negotiated their behaviours to appear more masculine during their interactions with het/cis men.

The participants emphasized that they omitted specific words during conversations with het/cis men. Burl, EM GH, and Colby Lindeburg avoided using popular gay slang terms such as “slay” and “girl” because they were uncertain of how het/cis men would respond to these words. Colby Lindeburg labels his two different vocabularies as his “gay vernacular” and “straight vernacular.” During conversations with het/cis men in a work setting or with a het/cis male stranger, Colby Lindeburg relies on his “straight vernacular.” In contrast, Colby Lindeburg uses his “gay vernacular” with his peers who are not het/cis men. However, Colby sometimes notices that words from his “gay vernacular” are used when talking with het/cis men. The participants negotiate their behaviours by mimicking the way that het/cis men talk.

The participants emphasized that there are specific topics they do not feel safe nor comfortable discussing with het/cis men in fear of alienation, harm, or their boundaries being disrespected. For example, Dan feels comfortable disclosing his queer identity to people. However, if het/cis men have questions about his “sexuality or anything related to sex,” Dan does not respond because he has explicit boundaries regarding these topics. Although he did not give a specific answer as to why these topics were off limits, he expanded upon instances of interacting with religious men who believed they could convert Dan to a heterosexual man:

You can make any assumption that you want and it’s none of my business, but I’m not going to sit here and feed your ego that you’re going to somehow ‘turn me’ because it’s just not gonna happen. It’s impossible; I’ve tried... They just look at you like, ‘Oh no! A lost soul! Like, how do we pull him out of the sludge?’

During these interactions, Dan's sexual orientation is questioned by people who do not acknowledge nor understand queerness. Consequently, Dan does not allow them, or anyone else, to assume his sexual orientation or sexual behaviours: "I'm over it." From these previous experiences, Dan's negotiations are complex because his refusal to talk about this topic is now a part of the boundaries he expresses naturally. However, it is still a way that he expresses queer masculinities.

In contrast, there are few conversations that EM GH avoids discussing with het/cis men due to his value of education. However, EM GH still negotiates his behaviours during unsafe interactions with het/cis men by employing his "mechanism [of] agreeing:" "With anything they say, I say, 'Yes, that's true.'" To preserve his safety, EM GH "know[s] how to be against women... To be Muslim, Christian, Judaism... A little bit of everything." EM GH elaborated on this mechanism by saying, "It's like someone has a gun to your head, and how do you feel? You lie." Contextually, EM GH believes his safety is at risk during these particular interactions, pressuring him to employ this mechanism by mimicking het/cis men's behaviours. This is another negotiation of EM GH's behaviours that he practices to feel safe around het/cis men. The participants' use of codeswitching was a way for them to sustain their safety and benefit from het/cis men during their interactions by negotiating their behaviours through verbal communication.

The participants expressed that the negotiations of their behaviours were something they had to achieve during interactions with het/cis men. Receiving acceptance and sustaining safety were two motivations indicated by the participants. The participants achieved these negotiations by passing, defined for queer people as acting masculine and tangentially, like a het/cis man. Additionally, codeswitching was used as a linguistic strategy helping the participants to shift

between identities to interact with het/cis men. The participants negotiated their behaviours to appear “palatable” or acceptable” to het/cis men. Contextually, Burl described being palatable as, “in the sense of like, when interacting with heterosexual men, they would really prefer for me to act more masculine than I generally am.” Colby Lindeburg described being “acceptable” as “So, there’s that want to fit into the acceptability mold and that box of what cis/het patriarchy says, ‘Queer people who behave are okay. But queer people who don’t? You gotta get rid of them.’ Being queer, in some cases, can be palatable and acceptable to het/cis men. However, some queer men’s behaviours are not perceived as palatable, prompting the participants to negotiate their behaviours to achieve acceptance and safety. Malakai defined this as “catering to that fragility,” as dominant gendered expectations can be challenged by queer men’s behaviours (Falomir-Pichastor & Mugny, 2009; Jones Jr., 2015).

Het/Cis Men’s Behaviours

The participants stated that het/cis men’s behaviours impacted the interactions they shared. Specifically, het/cis men’s acknowledgements of queerness, or lack thereof, made interactions uncomfortable because the participants’ queerness was not respected. Additionally, het/cis men also held assumptions about the participants’ queerness, often rooted in stereotypes and prejudice. The participants felt uncomfortable during these interactions as well. However, some interactions between the participants and het/cis men were positive because het/cis men respected queerness even when the participants did not negotiate their behaviours.

Het/Cis Men’s Acknowledgements of Queerness.

Ali discussed the difference between acknowledgement and understanding: “If they don’t want to understand [queerness], it’s okay. But, the fact that you acknowledge [queer people’s] existence, that is very important.” Additionally, Ali provided an example from Alok

Vaid-Menon regarding the contradiction of het/cis men who do not understand queerness but will understand other complex topics:

A lot of people would avoid talking about gender or sexuality because it's too complex.

But, on the other hand, you are understanding the complexity of, they give this example of vacuum cleaners. So, they are interested in knowing about different brands and complexities that exist in vacuum cleaners. So, you, kind of, really choose what you want to understand. ... Just acknowledge us, you know? It is very sad.

Het/cis men learn about complex concepts that benefit them but do not understand or acknowledge queerness from Ali's perspective. Knowing this, Ali felt "suffocated" and "uncomfortable" during interactions with het/cis men who did not understand or recognize queerness. Additionally, Ali also indicated that he did not feel comfortable revealing his queer identity to some of these men, including his close peers and family. He stated that he wanted to "save the relationship." Specifically, Ali stated that if he were to disclose his queer identity to his peers, he "might feel isolated or they just may feel that next time we don't need to invite [him] because [he] do[es] not belong here... I have this in the back of my mind." In response, Ali practiced masculine behaviours around his peers and family to guarantee the safety of his relationships: "I know this sounds wrong, but I have to be myself, but sometimes you have to act in a way that your audience wants or that the person right in front of you wants." Ali feels this way because he believes his peers and family will not "understand" his queerness. Ali did not let his het/cis peers and family acknowledge his queerness for fear of isolation and ruining relationships. This reveals the pressures he experiences to negotiate his behaviours and queer masculinities that compete with het/cis men's behaviours.

Dan considered that het/cis men acknowledge his queerness when these men are afraid that Dan is sexually attracted to them: “I think it comes from a fear of ‘Is this man sexually attracted to me? Is he thinking about having sex with me? Is he sexualizing me? I don’t like that.’” Through acknowledging Dan’s queerness, these het/cis men project their insecurities onto Dan even though he only flirts with men “when [he] feels like doing that to a man... It’s not in every interaction [he] has.” Dan added that het/cis men’s “uncomfortableness can really become aggressive” if they think Dan is sexually attracted to them, prompting Dan to “avoid [these men] like the plague.” Similarly to Ali, het/cis men’s behaviours of acknowledging queerness fostered an uncomfortable environment for Dan. Consequently, Dan negotiated his behaviours by avoiding these men.

EM GH encountered het/cis men acknowledging his queerness through queerphobic jokes: “They would make the most homophobic jokes every five seconds.” Specifically, his het/cis male friends would show him “GIF porns” and ask, “Can you take this too?” Although EM GH did not find this funny, he would “laugh at it with them” because he did not realize these jokes were queerphobic. This created an uncomfortable environment for EM GH. Now that EM GH has that recognition, he still laughs but will also “give them a teaching moment.” Initially, EM GH negotiated his behaviours by not addressing his peers’ queerphobia. However, EM GH is now more comfortable being around these men because he can use their acknowledgements of queerness to further their knowledge, aligning with his value of education. Thus, EM GH chooses to express his queerness through queer masculinities instead of negotiating. The participants described how het/cis men’s acknowledgements of queerness stigmatized or essentialized their queer identities. In response, the participants both negotiated

their behaviours or resisted het/cis men's behaviours, which are examples of expressing queer masculinities.

Het/Cis Men's Assumptions Regarding Queer Men.

Dan illustrated that het/cis men's assumptions about him predominantly concerned his sexual orientation. Contextually, het/cis men would "call [him] out" on his queerness even though he "never really disclosed [his] sexuality to them." However, Dan did not know how these het/cis men created these conclusions, demonstrating their differing ideas of what queerness represented. Dan stated, "I always find those interactions very uncomfortable" because he used to "deny it or ignore it" even though he knew he was queer. In these interactions, denying het/cis men's assumptions about his sexual orientation was how Dan negotiated his behaviours. However, he "just kind of own[s] it now." In other words, he refuses to continue negotiating his behaviours based on het/cis men's assumptions.

Furthermore, het/cis men's assumptions essentialize Malakai's transgender identity. Specifically, Malakai is often asked about transgender women by het/cis men who assume all transgender people share the same experiences. In one of his discussions with het/cis men about transgender women's inclusion in sports, Malakai's het/cis male peers said, "Well, you were growing up a female athlete." Malakai responded, "It's not the same thing at all." During these times, Malakai reminds his het/cis male peers that he is a transgender man: "I can't tell you about it from the perspective of a trans woman because I'm not a trans woman." Interactions with these men trivialize Malakai's identity as a transgender man and add to his discomfort with het/cis men. However, in response, he does not negotiate his behaviours: He refutes their claims and expresses queer masculinities to educate them. Similarly to het/cis men's acknowledgements of queerness, het/cis men's assumptions about the participants' queerness

resulted in uncomfortable interactions. These assumptions stereotyped and essentialized the participants' queerness, resulting in behavioural negotiations through diverse forms of queer masculinities.

Positive Interactions With Het/Cis Men.

Colby Lindeburg and Ali stated they sometimes have positive and affirming interactions with het/cis men. Ali talked about his experiences interacting with het/cis men in a classroom setting: "When I talk to my heterosexual peers, mostly men in my class, they were pretty okay because I have this habit of bringing that queer lens everywhere... So yeah, they were pretty receptive, I would say." Ali's het/cis male classmates value his insight as a queer man and encourage him to be authentic to his queerness instead of negotiating it, fostering an inclusive environment. Similarly, Colby Lindeburg talked about his het/cis male friend, stating, "He is also different in the way that it doesn't feel like he is wrapped up in a lot of the same toxic masculinity that other cis/het men tend to be." Colby Lindeburg feels more comfortable around his friend because he knows his friend does not expect him to act in a particular way. These het/cis men respect Ali and Colby Lindeburg based on their queerness. In other words, these men respond to queerness in ways that do not prompt the participants to negotiate their behaviours. Additionally, these insights demonstrate that not all het/cis men are the same. It is vital to provide the space for het/cis men to explore their connections with queerness that uplift queer men. This also necessitates the participants to be open with het/cis men, even though the participants previously identified barriers in genuinely interacting with het/cis men due to het/cis men's behaviours.

This section highlighted the participants' experiences of engaging with het/cis men's behaviours and the resulting interactions they shared. Specifically, het/cis men's stereotypical

acknowledgements and assumptions of the participants essentialized queerness into a monolithic identity, creating negative interactions. During these interactions, the participants negotiated their behaviours and expressed queer masculinities through education, purposefully concealing their queer identities, and making their queerness public. These experiences further underscore that queer men and het/cis men are expansive groups of people with multiple different qualities, one of which is masculinities.

Masculinities

Diverse understandings of masculinities influenced the interactions between the participants and het/cis men. The power dynamics present within the competition between masculinities (Aboim, 2012; Connell, 2000; Jones Jr., 2015; Kehler, 2004; Kjaran & Jóhannesson, 2016; Pascoe, 2003) impacted interactions. Specifically, the participants sometimes benefitted from this power based on their behaviours. Furthermore, the participants experienced pressure from their families when raised in family structures predicated on a masculinity and femininity binary. Many of these interactions influenced the ways the participants negotiated their behaviours.

Masculinities and Power.

The gendered and sexual hierarchy embedded in Eurocentric hegemonic masculinity disproportionately legitimates het/cis men's power and status (Connell, 2005; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Messerschmidt, 2019; Yang, 2020). Contextually, men benefit from upholding hegemonic masculinities (Aboim, 2016; Chen, 1999; Connell, 2005; Paechter, 2006). Therefore, as a form of negotiating queer masculinities, the participants engaged in this power dynamic.

For example, Burl said he acts masculine to “get more power in a situation where [he is] surrounded by a lot of heterosexual men.” He described this experience as a “positive feedback loop” in that “masculinity equals power” which he admitted, “shouldn’t be true.” Burl is negotiating his behaviours and queer masculinities to engage in normative masculine practices to benefit from hegemonic masculinity. This power is incredibly influential to Burl, as he stated, “It is hard to give up that power within that group.” Burl also recognized that these actions come at the cost of his values of authenticity and leadership: “I can’t believe I’m doing this. I’m letting people down.” He is often disappointed with himself for engaging in this power because he feels he is being “disingenuous.” However, Burl does not negotiate his behaviours and queer masculinities when interacting with het/cis men he feels comfortable around because they give him “acceptance, not power.” In these interactions, he does not “feel a need for power” because he behaves authentically. Therefore, Burl adopts multiple identities and expressions of queer masculinities in relation to the masculinities expressed by the het/cis men he surrounded himself with.

Malakai identified that being on hormones and getting top surgery provided him with social and cultural capital amongst het/cis men: “It definitely is getting easier for other people, the more that I've been on hormones... When I got top surgery, it's easier for other people. ... It's really affirming.” However, sustaining this social and cultural capital is a “very steep learning curve.” For example, Malakai identified that he is learning the “bro nod,” a way that men sometimes communicate when passing each other. This behaviour gives Malakai power and status when around het/cis men. However, Malakai also engages in actions contradictory to the “bro nod:”

I'm a person who, I smile at everybody on the street and ask people how they're doing and stuff like that. And that's, in general, something that most men don't do... And there are some things like that that I'm not willing to change about myself and my personality.

Thus, Malakai's expressions of behaviours through his queer masculinity are constantly produced and reproduced, exclusive to his intrinsic sense of self. However, Malakai's expression of queer masculinities is still impacted by other masculinities. Therefore, he both adheres to and refutes the conventionally masculine practices concerned with power.

Conversely, EM GH emphasized that he does not "have enough power in front of [het/cis men]... No matter what your social status is, no matter how much money you have, if you're not cisgender and heterosexual, you'll be counted as an outlier by them and only them." In other words, EM GH stated that his queer identity automatically positions him as less powerful than het/cis men due to his subordinated queer masculinity. Therefore, even when EM GH engages with other masculinities through his queer masculinities to achieve power, he recognizes that this power will always have limitations. The impacts of gendered and sexual power are relevant within the confines of masculinities, as are the impacts of masculinities on the participants' family dynamics.

Masculinities and Family.

All participants were raised in environments predicated on the masculinity and femininity binary. Therefore, there was minimal consideration of queerness within these confines. EM GH, Malakai, and Burl discussed the impacts of their family structures, specifically concerning het/cis male family members. These environments were especially contentious because the participants could not remove themselves from these interactions as children. EM GH considered his relationship with his brother and father during childhood:

I would say, growing up, I was this sissy feminine child, and I was chubby too, so, not a popular combination. So, I would go to school and be teased by other people, and I would come back, but I never felt safe with my brother or my dad because they were constantly telling me that is because you eat a lot or because you're a sissy.

EM GH's experiences of feeling unsafe around his brother and father damaged their relationship due to their forceful masculine attitudes: "I will never forgive them." Additionally, these experiences forced EM GH to express himself differently: "I had to change myself." EM GH's behaviours of queer masculinities were perceived as feminine by his brother and father, creating an uncomfortable environment for EM GH. This environment was impacted by EM GH's father's and brother's masculinities in competition with EM GH's queer masculinities. As a result, EM GH negotiated his behaviours and queer masculinities to feel safe in an environment with them until he moved away to explore his queer identity.

Malakai discussed the heteronormativity and cisnormativity arising from the binary of masculinity and femininity. These forces pervaded his family's dynamics. Specifically, Malakai emphasized the double standard of tolerating queer people within families:

A lot of queer people talk about the same experience of like, 'yeah, maybe my family is somewhat understanding of queer folks, and they can have a little bit of empathy. But it's still as long as it's not someone in their family. Then it's okay.'

Malakai's family initially held these beliefs. When Malakai first came out as bisexual to his parents, he described it as "something to navigate." However, when he came out as a transgender man, it was a "much bigger deal to them that [he] was trans than that [he] was not straight." This exposes the heteronormativity and cisnormativity embedded within Malakai's family dynamics. Simultaneously, Malakai's gender was more impactful to his parents than his

sexual orientation. This was also corroborated by his parents' reaction to him initially identifying as non-binary and then as a transgender man:

The way that my parents reacted when I came out as non-binary versus when I came out as trans, which is truly who I am, was much different... They kind of had this hope that they could change me back, until I came out as trans, and then they were like 'well, all hope's lost I guess.'

Malakai's family continued to uphold cisnormativity by thinking that Malakai's gender identity could be reversed, which was a "bad attitude" to have. However, Malakai refused to negotiate his queer identity and masculinities despite the heteronormativity and cisnormativity he experienced from his family's adherence to traditional representations of masculinities and femininities. He did not concede to their expectations of his gender and sexual identity. His parents and two brothers eventually understood Malakai's transgender, bisexual identity through "putting in effort," and his family's understanding of heteronormativity and cisnormativity has shifted into something more inclusive.

Similarly to Malakai, Burl's environment was unsafe for his queer identity. When Burl was growing up in so-called Alberta, he witnessed his family's and his family's peers' queerphobic behaviours, many of whom were het/cis men. When Burl returns to visit, he negotiates his behaviours because he "knows how they act and how their friends act, so [he is] more careful around them." Burl feels more "unsure" about expressing his queer identity around them because of his previous experiences. Therefore, he negotiates his queer behaviours and masculinities in response to their understanding of masculinities. This arises through his conscious effort to hide his queer identity. Masculinities and family intersect and compete uniquely due to the diverse binary dynamics embedded within family structures. Although

Malakai was eventually supported by his family, Burl and EM GH had to negotiate their behaviours and queer masculinities in relation to the masculinities of their families.

Masculinities and their prevalence in the participants' lives dictated how they behaved and engaged in masculinities during situations where hegemonic masculinities governed power dynamics. Further, the family dynamics that revolved around the masculinity and femininity binary also gave rise to expressions of hegemonic masculinities, influencing the participants' behavioural negotiations. In response, the participants both adhered to these structures or resisted them through their multiple expressions of queer masculinities. Nonetheless, many queer men felt the need to modify their behaviours in specific ways to receive benefits and stay safe from the impacts of masculinities.

Institutions

During the interviews, the participants discussed their experiences navigating institutions within so-called Alberta, influencing their interactions with het/cis men. The participants interacted with health and media institutions the most. Although the participants did not specifically interact with het/cis men when navigating these institutions, they discussed their tentativeness in institutions, alongside identifying the lack of queer representation in them. However, there were also positive experiences and implications in accessing these institutions challenging the participants' conceptions of them. So-called Alberta was also discussed regarding the influences of its sociocultural climate on the participants' interactions with het/cis men. The participants indicated that navigating their sociocultural environment and its institutions was complex. They negotiated their behaviours and refused to do so because they did not see themselves entirely reflected in the institutional and sociocultural context of so-called Alberta, leading to diverse expressions of queer masculinities.

Health Institutions.

Within so-called Alberta, the participants indicated they experienced a mix of positive and negative experiences when accessing mental and physical health resources. From a young age, Malakai accessed health institutions for his physical and mental health. However, during this time, he interacted with practitioners who refused to “entertain the idea that [he] might actually be struggling with anything related to gender, even though [he] was explicitly saying it over and over and over again.” Even when Malakai accessed therapy and tried to express his identity as a transgender man, he was told, “well, that's not something we discuss here.” Ali was provided with few opportunities for queer-specific therapists because “in the whole population of the university, there [were] just two [queer-specific therapists].” Even then, one of the therapists “passed [him] to another because she was not able to understand [his] complexity.” Although Malakai’s and Ali’s interactions with health services were not explicitly with het/cis men, these interactions were still uncomfortable because the healthcare they accessed did not represent them or their identities.

Other than therapy, the participants also talked about experiences navigating gender and sexual health services. When Burl moved back to so-called Alberta as an adult, he was nervous about accessing sexual health services due to his perception of so-called Alberta as a queerphobic province: “I was really expecting a very homophobic response.” However, Burl’s subsequent experiences navigating Alberta Health Services were more inclusive than he expected: “But here, like, I was able to get my HPV vaccine for free, which I wasn't expecting as a gay man.” As Malakai began accessing hormones in so-called Alberta after he had moved away, he was not expecting such a positive experience navigating these services: “It was no problem. ... Really easy.” However, Malakai also asserted that he “talked to other folks and

they didn't have as near as easy as a time.” Therefore, Malakai recognized that his experiences were not fully shared by other transgender folks living in so-called Alberta. EM GH’s experiences navigating health institutions were both negative and positive. He identified that male nurses reiterated a script without respecting his identity as a queer man: “I had this guy, and he was like, ‘*Did you do this?*’ [emphasis added] What is that tone? The question is still right, but the way that you’re asking me is wrong.” Conversely, EM GH shared a positive experience with a female nurse because she was “so nice” and tried to get to know him better to identify the services he requested. The participants’ experiences navigating gender and sexual health services were positive, except for EM GH’s negative experiences interacting with men in these institutions. However, Malakai and Burl entered tentatively due to preconceptions about so-called Alberta from previous lived experiences. This inclusion and representation in these institutions challenged Malakai’s and Burl’s preconceptions about the queerphobia they had experienced previously in so-called Alberta.

Media Institutions.

Media and Learning.

Dan talked about the educational potential of media, as media functions to teach people about specific topics through presenting diverse perspectives. However, Dan also emphasized that when people learn, they consume media that solely aligns with their values and morals. He defined people like this as “echo chambers” and that “it’s really hard to reach them and help them understand how complex life actually is.” Furthermore, when engaging with social media, Dan stated,

Social media can be very toxic, very hate-fueled and lead people to extremism... I could spend time looking at things that really victimize me and really put me down and make

me feel bad about myself, or I'm going to go in a totally different direction and just have totally affirming experiences. And it's good to affirm who you are, but also, we all have a responsibility within society.

This perspective allows Dan to achieve a balance between recognizing that queer oppression is still present and ensuring that he is not overwhelmed by that oppression. Dan's relationship with media is conflicting because "[he] can learn so much. But then, also, [he] can get really trapped." Therefore, visibility is seen as both positive and negative because social media can be affirming, but it can also illuminate the queerphobia present within and outside of so-called Alberta. When Malakai grew up on Moh'kins'tsis, he was not exposed to many people from diverse backgrounds. Malakai stated,

I did not know that queer people existed until I was in my early teens, and that I didn't know that, specifically, trans men existed until I was 16. And I didn't know that gay women, or any sort of folks who are attracted to non-men and identify as non-men themselves, existed at all.

Malakai stated that the internet was becoming more prominent in his life when he was growing up. Having access to the internet "would've been very helpful to know there was anybody else feeling the same things as me. I thought that I was completely alone, that there was no one else like me and that I was some sort of freak." Malkai emphasized how crucial the internet would have been for his queer identity and mental health through learning about other queer people: Media would have been a tool to help him cope with the isolation he was experiencing.

Media and Representation.

Representation within media was isolated as a rich discussion point amongst the participants. When he was younger, Burl saw queer male characters negotiate their behaviours in the television shows he watched: “Even in TV shows you see those things. I’ve noticed that some gay men also drop their voices in interactions with straight men. Gay men act more straight passing when interacting with straight men.” Witnessing these characters’ behaviours impacted Burl’s queer behaviours and identity: “Seeing how gay men in those situations interact with that, I think has influenced how I interact in the real world too.” When Colby Lindeburg was growing up, he identified various representations of queer male characters rooted in stereotypes: “Those characters and caricatures and stereotypes were so strong that I felt there was a way that I was meant to be as a queer man.” Colby Lindeburg elaborated on the impacts that stereotypes could also have on het/cis men: “It stands to reason that it would also inform cis/het men’s ideas of being a queer man, which is not great because it, again, proposes that there is one right way to be a queer man.” From Ali’s perspective, “a lot of heterosexual men, their perception of LGBTQ or queer people come from media. So, if they are seeing those things, they would think, ‘Okay, it should be like this.’ But that’s not usually the case.” Ali indicated that representation in media could potentially harm how queer men are perceived and treated by het/cis men because these characters are not representative of queerness. These limitations discussed by Burl, Colby Lindeburg, and Ali demonstrate media’s influence on how queer men and het/cis men learn about queer people, often not representative of the complexities of queerness.

Ali added that media, specifically queer advertising, had limited representations of queer men, impacting the conceptualization of his queer identity. He gave the example of a specific

advertisement for PreP, a medicine that significantly lowers the risk of HIV transmission marketed to queer men: “There was only one kind of LGBTQ person, White... A masculine guy and a feminine guy... It is good that you are representing LGBTQ people, but do not reinforce those stereotypes. We have them already. We need something different.” Ali called this “irritating” and “reinforce[d] stereotypes” because it highlighted binary representations of gender performed by White men. Even within organizations marketed towards queer people, Ali identified a lack of representation skewed towards a specific group of people already represented within and outside the queer community.

EM GH approaches media with a critical perspective on the performativity of media. In his interview, he discussed how some television shows and movies only include queer characters or topics without recognizing the responsibilities that come with this inclusion. For example, EM GH discussed a Netflix show, *The Ranch*:

Most homophobic, women-phobic, everything-phobic, against Russia, against everything for the first six seasons. In the seventh season, his wife turns lesbian. She goes and finds a girlfriend after six seasons. I'm still open to the idea of being fluid in sexual matters, but this was not correct.

EM GH attributed the shift in the show to how media follows “guidelines” that have strict parameters of how queerness is included but never consider queer people as a diverse community.

The Sociocultural Context of So-Called Alberta.

The sociocultural context of a specific place can dictate the attitudes and actions of those who live in these places (Lantolf, 2000; Leontiev, 1978; Roth, 2004). Contextually, there are multiple towns and cities in so-called Alberta with diverse attitudes and peoples. However, an

overarching prevalence of frontier masculinity is established within so-called Alberta (G. Miller, 2004; Landry & Willey, 2022; Massie & Jackson, 2020). Frontier masculinity describes how the culture of Alberta is predicated on oil and gas industries, predominantly controlled by men. Furthermore, sexism, queerphobia, and racism permeate this industry and culture (House, 1980; Landry & Willey, 2022). Therefore, the sociocultural context of so-called Alberta does not entirely include queer people, impacting how the participants navigated their society.

Presumptions of So-Called Alberta.

Burl grew up on the border of so-called Alberta and stated that it was “pretty homophobic, pretty sexist, pretty, very racist.” He said, “Again, grew up in a very rural area where that was like, I was invisible to [het/cis men], or just like, just tried to be invisible to [het/cis men] and stuff.” However, when Burl moved to the land of the *ləkʷəŋən* peoples; including the Songhees, Esquimalt, and *WSÁNEĆ* peoples; he “felt comfortable. There wasn't any of that pretending to be another person.” Therefore, when Burl moved back to so-called Alberta, he was worried because of his childhood experiences. However, it was better than he anticipated:

I thought, ‘I'm going to have to truly mask my identity and stuff.’ I would say some of that is true, and it is a bit true in the areas that I operate, a bit more socially conservative where I may be not as out, loud, and proud as I was in Victoria. But, I would say that I'm doing well. I expected them to really impact me. I would say, they don't super impact me. Maybe a little bit.

Burl specified that he still “approaches straight men within Alberta with a lot more trepidation and fearfulness that [he] does with het/cis men from Coastal BC.” Nonetheless, his presumptions about the sociocultural climate of so-called Alberta had changed from when he

was younger to reflect a more inclusive sociocultural climate where he is situated on Amiskwacîwâskahikan. Thus, presumptions about so-called Alberta can change based on one's experiences, impacting how they navigate their society expressing behaviours and queer masculinities.

Burl also based his presumptions on geographical locations. He associated urban places in so-called Alberta, such as Amiskwacîwâskahikan and Moh'kins'tsis, with being predominantly populated by younger people: "I feel a lot more comfortable in the city centers. They're places that skew more younger." However, rural areas within so-called Alberta were populated by Generation X and millennials: "It's those Gen X'ers and those millennials I'm unsure about." He explained that moving back to so-called Alberta, but to a bigger city instead of a rural town, has made a difference in his interactions with het/cis men: "I expected to revert back to how I was treated when I was younger. ...I was humbly surprised." When comparing Amiskwacîwâskahikan to rural areas in so-called Alberta, Burl said, "It is super accepting... A lot of pride flags everywhere. I feel a lot more comfortable in the city centers... Edmonton feels almost like a whole other world." Burl felt more connected to his community in Amiskwacîwâskahikan because of its younger population and his ability to express his queerness authentically.

Dan shared a similar experience, even though he was raised on the East Coast of so-called Canada. He did not feel safe in his hometown because "there's a lot of drugs, there's a lot of crime." Additionally, Dan talked about a violent homophobic attack against a queer man when he was in high school: "There's a lot of violence towards queer people One of the kids at our high school got stabbed in the back, and he's paralyzed by a guy, and just other homophobic stuff." From Dan's perspective, Alberta was safer due to its resources and

opportunities: “East Coast services that are offered by the government have a lot fewer opportunities. ... When it comes to Alberta, I remember being shocked at how much money is out here.” Knowing this, Dan moved to Moh’kins’tsis: “I needed to move to a city to feel safe and build confidence.” Dan’s positive presumptions about so-called Alberta prompted him to relocate to a place where his experiences would be respected. Burl’s and Dan’s responses underscored that the geographical location and the values of those who live in these locations greatly influenced their behaviours in choosing where to live based on the opportunities available.

The Sociocultural Interactions of So-Called Alberta.

The participants considered how they positioned themselves within the sociocultural context of so-called Alberta regarding their interactions with Albertans, those who live in Alberta. I asked the participants to describe their perception of the dominant masculinity in so-called Alberta. Ali stated, “Definitely straight people. And when it comes to queer people, there is a specific race that is very dominant, which is White.” EM GH elaborated, “Het/cis. Heterosexual cisgender male. ... Mostly conservative.” EM GH expanded upon how this perception impacted him and those around him, “I remember my first date with a guy here, and the first thing he said was, ‘In Alberta, we don't hold hands when we walk.’ That was something I was just figuring out like, ‘Can I be ‘out?’” Here, EM GH navigates so-called Alberta influenced by how other people perceive so-called Alberta. Ali and EM GH did not see themselves reflected in the dominant masculinity of so-called Alberta.

Burl positioned his definition within the “60’s family” context: “60’s white picket house. So, you have your own semi-detached house. You can do all the handy work... Also, having nice big cars or trucks or those things. ‘I’m the man. I have my own little kingdom’ kind

of vibe.” Burl was met with questions from het/cis men who asked him how he “fits” within these conventions, as Burl wants a family. Burl responded, “So, it’s always like a question of ‘How do you belong to this society? Where do you fit?’ And I’m like, ‘I just do.’” By refusing the expectation that he needs to fit the “60’s family” context, Burl instead queers the family structure to position his expressions and behaviours.

Malakai responded with a political perspective: “I like to say that it’s about 10 to 15 years behind BC in terms of anything remotely left-leaning.” He also elaborated on the dominant masculinity in rural so-called Albertan communities: “You go to these tiny communities, and you might as well be stepping back sixty years.” Colby Lindeburg’s approach to this question also focused on politics:

I think it’s the toxic masculinity and the idea of dominance that is the primary kind of masculinity we see here in Alberta. Very ‘macho men’ who drive big trucks and wear Wrangler jeans and work with their hands; I feel like I’m throwing in a lot of Conservative jargon.

Colby Lindeburg discussed how he navigated his society based on this understanding: “And I think, knowing that that is, or at least perceiving that that is the primary form of masculinity in Alberta, informs the ways that I act and perform when I’m in public.” By monitoring his behaviour in response to the sociocultural context of so-called Alberta, Colby Lindeburg negotiates his behaviours because he feels uncomfortable expressing his authenticity. Neither Colby Lindeburg, nor Malakai saw themselves reflected in the sociocultural context of so-called Alberta.

Conversely to the rest of the participants, Dan described the dominant masculinity of so-called Alberta as “a tough province, and it has a tough culture. But honestly, that is a really

good thing. ... It keeps us all safe and it keeps us all secure. It keeps Alberta a very vibrant place.” However, Dan also stated that “there are some [het/cis men] that [he] just won’t interact with. And there’s many men, there’s probably a million men in this province who I will just not interact with. And that’s fine.” Therefore, even though Dan can appreciate his safety within so-called Alberta, he still recognizes that he does not want to interact with everyone.

Commonalities are isolated throughout the participants’ definitions, such as a culture dominated by het/cis men, conservative values, and industry. This masculinity also impacted the participants, shaping their opinions of het/cis men and how they negotiated their behaviours or refused to negotiate in response. Furthermore, no one mentioned the inclusion of queer people within this dominant masculinity. This epitomized how they felt underrepresented in the sociocultural context of so-called Alberta.

The participants’ diverse experiences navigating the institutions and society of so-called Alberta highlighted their behaviours and those of het/cis men. Although the participants shared positive and negative interactions interacting with health institutions, it was agreed upon that they were partially conducive to the representation the participants sought and deserved, especially within mental and physical health services. However, sexual and gender health services challenged some participants’ preconceptions, as they believed it would be difficult to navigate. Media was determined to be an avenue of both holistic and stereotypical representation. This was both additive and reductive to the representation and learning of the participants and het/cis men who also learned from media. Finally, the sociocultural context of so-called Alberta was not considered inclusive or representative of the participants. However, for some participants, it was not considered significantly limiting to their queer identities, as each person had different relationships with it.

In conclusion, Colby Lindeburg described navigating institutions and the culture eloquently: “Make space for ourselves in that institution, but not push so hard that that boot comes back down, you know? Like, trying to set boundaries without asking for ‘too much.’ It’s tough.” Colby Lindeburg’s quote emphasizes that there is a specific way for queer men to be included within society. It is a gradual process that slowly achieves representation. Through this perspective, changing the structure of institutions and society requires queer men’s behaviours to be acceptable to those in power.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I outlined the complexities and specific examples of the participants’ values, their behavioural negotiations, het/cis men’s behaviours, masculinities, and institutions. All of these interactions were located within the so-called Alberta sociocultural context. Many of the participants’ interactions with het/cis men resulted in the negotiations of their behaviours through queer masculinities. The participants expanded upon how they negotiate their behaviours to appear palatable and acceptable to het/cis men expressing queer masculinities in relation to het/cis men’s masculinities. Their motives for performing these negotiations were meant to keep themselves safe and receive status and benefits from het/cis men. However, there were notable instances whereby the participants would also resist these negotiations, expressing queer masculinities that actively competed with het/cis men’s masculinities. This was often a result of het/cis men’s behaviours that would function to subordinate or essentialize the participants into misrepresentative ideas of queerness. Furthermore, the so-called Albertan institutions and sociocultural context proved to be a site of underrepresentation, as many participants did not see themselves reflected holistically. In the next chapter, I discuss the

implications of these findings in conjunction with academic research to answer my three research questions.

Chapter Five: Discussion

As established in Chapter Four, queer men and het/cis men express diverse behaviours daily. In short, the participants changed their behaviours around het/cis men, providing helpful insight into how they negotiated their queer identities and expressed queer masculinities. Of particular interest was the participants' resistance against behavioural negotiations during their interactions with het/cis men. The participants discussed the position of their queer masculinities in relation to the masculinities held by het/cis men. Furthermore, they expanded upon how these positions and their queer identities continued to shift throughout these interactions. The participants identified what appears to be a movement or shifting of identities in relation to het/cis men. Furthermore, the participants also illuminated how the so-called Alberta institutions informed their self-conceptualization of queer identities. The performances of het/cis men's behaviours were also situationally framed by this geosocial location.

This research aims to examine the influence of Eurocentric hegemonic masculinity on queer men's negotiations of their queer identities during interactions with het/cis men. To answer my research questions, this chapter outlines the participants' responses bolstered by academic literature, organized into three distinct themes corresponding to each research question. Within each theme, I present subthemes illuminating the participants' shared experiences. The five subthemes outlined in this chapter are a) behaving palatably, behaving acceptably; b) queer men's masculinities; c) safety; d) essentialization; and e) queer representation.

How Do Queer Men Behave During Their Interactions With Het/Cis Men?

To answer my first research question, I analyze the diverse behaviours of the participants during their interactions with het/cis men, as these behaviours are characteristic of their respective queer masculinities. All participants indicated multiple instances of modifying and

adjusting behaviours around het/cis men. From Simons's (2021) identity behaviour theory, identity predicts behaviours because people's identities are predicated on the behaviours they use when navigating social norms and forces. Therefore, it is indicative that when the participants negotiated their behaviours, they also negotiated their queer identities. Specifically, the participants identified that they changed their behaviours to gain acceptance, respect, and safety from het/cis men at the cost of ignoring their queer identities. In their interviews, the participants labelled these behaviours as acting palatably or acceptably to the expectations of het/cis men. They achieved this by negotiating specific aspects of their queer behaviours while passing and codeswitching.

Furthermore, a secondary behavioural negotiation arose: the participants' expressions and negotiations of queer masculinities through engaging with masculine power dynamics and family dynamics. Specifically, the participants negotiated their behaviours through queer masculinities to achieve safety and respect. Chen's (1999) conceptualization of the hegemonic bargain aligns with these experiences. Specifically, Chen posited that those who do not embody hegemonic masculinities could modify their behaviours to receive cultural and social capital that they would not have been able to achieve before. Conversely, some participants refused hegemonic masculinities in certain situations, resulting in the fluid shifting of their queer identities.

When discussing the benefits the participants received due to changing their behaviours, it is imperative to emphasize that these benefits are only sometimes relinquished by het/cis men. Just as some het/cis men cannot achieve these benefits due to their marginalized statuses, some queer men can also not achieve these benefits due to their queer statuses. Further, even if the participants received these benefits, they still experienced systemic and individual oppression, creating a notable tension towards receiving these benefits (Aboim, 2016).

Behaving Palatably, Behaving Acceptably

Palatable and Acceptable Behaviours.

The participants demonstrated palatability and acceptability around het/cis men by hiding their queerness: They changed their behaviours, refused to talk about specific topics regarding queerness, and did not disclose their queer identities to select people. Eslen-Ziya & Koç (2016) indicated that some gay men are afraid of expressing their genuine behaviours around het/cis men for fear of being perceived as gay, resulting in conscious behavioural regulation to appear palatable and acceptable. Similarly, Fields et al. (2015) discussed how gay men would avoid other gay men to achieve capital and refuse to be associated with queerness. As the queer men in these studies negotiated their behaviours and identities to appear palatable, the participants also negotiated them. This created uncomfortable interactional environments with het/cis men because the participants feared the consequences of expressing their queerness.

Furthermore, the participants also moderated aspects of their queerness to avoid being perceived as feminine. These experiences align with Hoskin's (2020) study, concluding that masculine behaviours held more capital than feminine behaviours. Therefore, to act palatably and acceptably, the participants negotiated their behaviours and queer masculinities to engage with traditionally masculine practices. Additionally, Aboim's (2016) study on transgender men concluded that "the dividends that came with the fact of being perceived by others as men are acknowledged, even if they are unwanted or viewed with criticism" (p. 231). Therefore, being palatable and acceptable can also be uncomfortable for queer men who navigate the benefits they receive from passing. The participants shared these additional tensions because the ones who negotiated their behaviours to achieve passing benefitted by behaving inauthentically.

There were specific motivations the participants considered when behaving palatably and acceptably. Safety was a considerable motivation because the participants recognized that they could avoid queerphobia by behaving palatably and acceptably (Colliver, 2021; Mason, 2001; Stanko & Curry, 1997). Furthermore, the participants also recognized that queerphobic violence is historically and presently prevalent throughout so-called Canada (Abramovich et al., 2022; Alberta Health Services, n.d.; Bellemare et al., 2021; Boynton, 2023; Janoff, 2015; Rajani, 2022; Walton, 2004; Warner, 2002). This was an additional reason they negotiated their behaviours. Other than safety, the participants behaved palatably and acceptably to receive respect and acceptance from het/cis men (Berila, 2011; Speice, 2020). Specifically, the participants noticed that het/cis men's behaviours changed when their behaviours changed. It was precisely how the participants changed their behaviours that dictated the nature of their interactions with het/cis men. However, Dan and Malakai are men who behave masculine in all settings. As such, they do not always find that they need to act palatably and acceptably because their behaviours are often already acceptable through het/cis men's perspectives.

Learning To Be Palatable Through Witnessing.

During the interviews, the participants specified that they modified their behaviours by witnessing and mimicking het/cis men's behaviours to receive benefits and safety. They achieved this by changing their verbal and non-verbal communication, including facial expressions, vocal tone, conversational topics, and fashion. Witnessing het/cis men's behaviours and replicating them was a strategy the participants used to achieve benefits and safety during interactions with het/cis men. Specifically, these benefits and safety were motives driven by human culturally constructed needs outlined by Leontiev's (1978) activity theory.

The participants also identified that they unconsciously negotiated behaviours they learned from het/cis men. These behaviours can be explained through cultural-historical activity theory. Roth and Lee (2007) explained that knowledge is continuously constructed and reconstructed through social interactions (Foot, 2014; Roth, 2004). In other words, Roth and Lee (2007) stated that learning “constitutes a new possibility for others (as resource, a form of action to be emulated) leading to an increase in generalized action possibilities and therefore to collective (organizational, societal, cultural) learning” (p. 205). Therefore, over time, the behavioural negotiations performed by the participants became normalized for many of their interactions with het/cis men because they mimicked it so often.

Broadly, Roth (2004) emphasized that collaborative knowledge production repositions people within society. Through mimicking the behaviours of het/cis men, the participants were repositioned due to the influences that het/cis men had on their behaviours. However, they also repositioned themselves while engaging in these behaviours. Through Roth’s Marxist perspective, the participants reproduced their marginalized position within society by not challenging the structures that sustained their marginalization. This results in a double bind because if the participants resist witnessing and mimicking het/cis men’s behaviour, they receive fewer benefits and safety from these men. However, if the participants continue to witness and mimic het/cis men’s behaviours, they do not challenge dominant power structures. Through this perspective, queer men’s behaviours reify their subordinate position (Roth, 2004) compared to het/cis men. However, Yang (2020) challenges this perspective by emphasizing how queer men’s masculinities can shift and reconfigure hegemonic masculinities. As hegemonic masculinities are predicated on gendered dominance in relation to other masculinities, the shift of queer

masculinities to optimistic, but still possible. Through this lens, the participants' expressions of queer masculinities can reposition themselves without reifying their subordinate position.

During their interactions with het/cis men, the participants strived to behave palatably and acceptably as queer men around het/cis men. Specifically, the participants concealed (Eslen-Ziya & Koç's, 2016; Fields et al., 2016) and moderated (Aboim, 2016; Hoskin, 2020) their queerness as strategies to appear palatable and acceptable. Additionally, the participants identified achieving safety (Colliver, 2021; Mason, 2001; Stanko & Curry, 1997) and cultural and social benefits (Berila, 2011; Speice, 2020) as motivations to appear palatable and acceptable. Furthermore, the participants learned to be palatable and acceptable through witnessing and mimicking (Foot, 2014; Leontiev, 1978; Roth, 2004; Roth & Lee, 2007) het/cis men's behaviours. In all of these instances, the participants negotiated their behaviours through queer masculinities around het/cis men, fostering an environment for het/cis men to be comfortable in.

Queer Men's Masculinities

The Benefits of Hegemonic Masculinities.

All participants said they would receive benefits from het/cis men if they behaved masculinely. The participants achieved these benefits by passing, codeswitching, and engaging in power dynamics. This idea is reinforced by Connell's (2005) conceptualization of the patriarchal dividend, which describes the social and cultural benefits men receive from participating in a patriarchal society. Even though the participants are queer men, they still fundamentally benefit from the patriarchal dividend due to their status as men: "A great many men who draw the patriarchal dividend also respect their wives and mothers, are never violent towards women, do their accustomed share of the housework, bring home the family wage" (pp. 79-80). However, to

benefit, they had to negotiate their behaviours. Paechter (2006) added that the patriarchal dividend also broadens the gap between men who uphold hegemonic masculinity and men subordinated under hegemonic masculinities. Therefore, although the participants indirectly benefitted from the patriarchal dividend, they were simultaneously marginalized because of their queerness. This creates another double bind of marginalization that results from the participants' behaviours. They are still subordinated under hegemonic masculinities if they negotiate their behaviours to engage in the patriarchal dividend. However, they do not benefit from the patriarchal dividend if they do not negotiate their behaviours.

Masculinities Versus Femininities.

When distancing themselves from femininity, the participants received significant benefits from het/cis men because they indicated that femininity prevented social benefits (Fields et al., 2015; Hoskin, 2020). Hoskin (2020) emphasized that femininity was subordinate to queer men, whereas masculinity had cultural capital within the queer community. Therefore, the participants' feminine actions acted as a barrier. To overcome this barrier, they negotiated their behaviours and engaged in queer masculinities to benefit. The participants also noted that femininity would be perceived as queer if performed by men (Eslen-Ziya & Koç, 2016; Hunt et al., 2016), compromising their safety. The subordination of femininity is prevalent within the literature regarding homonegativity (B. Miller & Lewallen, 2015; Jewell & Morrison, 2012; Smits et al., 2021). Specifically, homonegativity describes the queerphobic negative feelings directed towards those who are not heterosexual. In these studies, homonegativity was more significant when directed towards a feminine, queer man than a masculine, queer man. Even from a young age, the participants recognized that they had to adhere to the binaries of masculinity and femininity to avoid scrutiny from their peers and family (Harry, 1982; Hartley,

1959). Thus, the participants engaged in behavioural negotiations by behaving masculinely, a form of queer masculinities.

Malakai is a man who can achieve benefits while minimally negotiating his behaviours. As a transgender man, he stated that being perceived as a man by others is affirming (Goodfriend et al., 2022). Therefore, his masculine behaviours reflect who he is and whom he wants to continue to be. This also means he distances himself from femininity. As he continued hormones, Malakai experienced more respect from het/cis men because he was becoming more masculine, just like Aboim's (2016) participants. Malakai noted that this affirmed his identity and interactions with other het/cis men. Anzani et al.'s (2022) research concluded that some transgender men's motivations to embody masculinity are because perceived femininity negatively impacts their interactions with het/cis men, especially in traditionally gendered spaces. Therefore, Malakai's behaviours and queer masculinities are still influenced by other men and forces, but not always in negative ways.

Resisting Hegemonic Masculinities.

Although the participants discussed multiple instances of accepting and conforming to hegemonic masculinities through their behaviours, it is also crucial to emphasize their behaviours that resisted hegemonic masculinities. Specifically, when Malakai experienced blatant transphobia from het/cis men, he refused to negotiate his behaviours. Instead, he openly addressed and challenged these men's transphobic remarks, a strategy outlined by L. Jones (2020). EM GH addressed queerphobic jokes to his het/cis male friends and explained why these jokes were queerphobic. Leontiev's (1978) activity theory provides a perspective to examine EM GH's behaviours as resistance. In this theory, people use cultural tools and mediated action to produce a behaviour that fulfills a culturally constructed need (Daniels, 2007; Holland et al.,

1998; Mironenko, 2013; Roth & Lee, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978). Firstly, EM GH recognized the frustration he had experienced in previous queerphobic interactions, which is a cultural tool. Secondly, EM GH resisted conceding to his peers' queerphobia by addressing their behaviours, which is his mediated action. Finally, EM GH received the respect he deserves as a queer man, fulfilling his culturally constructed need.

Furthermore, Ali and Colby Lindeburg discussed specific interactions with het/cis men they felt safe and comfortable around. Specifically, these het/cis men never expected Ali and Colby Lindeburg to negotiate their behaviours. This emphasized their refusal to employ hegemonic masculinities as they might have in other environments. Therefore, in these situations, the participants are authentically themselves without ascribing particular labels to their behaviours. Nielson et al. (2022) concluded that queer men resist gender norms and instead, expressed genuine behaviours even though these behaviours were not inherently labelled as queer. As this thesis outlines, all behaviours are different and not necessarily labelled as queer.

There are also limitations to specific behaviours being claimed as queer. Nielson et al. (2022) recognized that placing categorical parameters around queer behaviours can stigmatize and essentialize queerness. Jeanes and Janes (2021) examined transgender men's relationships to upholding and resisting masculinities. The authors established that transgender men would both practice masculinities and resist masculinities to create their personal relationship to masculinities. Similarly to the conclusions of Nielson et al. (2022), there is not one way to demonstrate transgender masculinities. Further, labelling behaviours as transgender can minimize other transgender people's uniqueness.

Using masculine behaviours to gain safety and benefits was a shared experience the participants engaged in. Benefitting from masculinities meant that the participants engaged in the

acceptance of the patriarchal dividend (Connell, 2005). The participants consciously subordinated feminine behaviours to ensure these benefits. Nonetheless, there was also exceptional resistance against hegemonic masculinities that the participants engaged by expressing queer masculinities. There is not one way to act masculine or queer. The participants' behaviours arose out of necessity to navigate their interactions with het/cis men as comfortably as possible.

Queer Men's Interactional Implications

Throughout this section, I have highlighted that the participants engaged in complex behaviours that signified competing masculinities and identities during their interactions with het/cis men (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Frank et al., 2003; Kehler, 2004; Messner, 1991). These studies show that masculinities and identities cannot be described singularly. All men hold multiple masculinities and identities, many of which do not wholly align with hegemonic masculinities. These demonstrations of multiple masculinities and identities arise when there is tension and conflict when upholding and resisting hegemonic masculinity, characteristic of queer masculinities (Aboim, 2016; Fields et al., 2016; Hunt et al., 2016; Jeanes & Janes, 2021). However, queer men's identities are not erased during these interactions. Instead, their queer identities compete with their own identities and other men's identities. This is especially present when queer men refute negotiations of behaviours through queer masculinities, positioning themselves as holding multiple identities and masculinities (Falomir-Pichastor & Mugny, 2009; Jeanes and Janes, 2021).

The participants' behaviours also reflected a motivation to behave palatably and acceptably around het/cis men to achieve benefits. However, the participants recognized the specific guidelines to follow to achieve these benefits, and many conflicted with their authentic

expressions. Engaging in these conflicting behaviours is characteristic of Tappan's (2006b) theory of appropriated oppression. Appropriated oppression arises as queer men recognize their oppression by dominant cultural forces and accept that their authentic behaviours do not benefit them. In response, queer men adopt behaviours to achieve these benefits, oppressing themselves in the process. In other words, the participants accepted their oppression and subordinated status when negotiating their behaviours. However, the onus of the oppression is not entirely located on queer men. Appropriated oppression considers the influences of the sociocultural context in this oppression. Therefore, this oppression must be addressed at a systemic and personal level for it to be dismantled and examined.

How Do Het/Cis Men's Behaviours Influence the Interactions That Queer Men Share With Het/Cis Men?

In answering my second research question, all participants discussed how het/cis men's behaviours impacted their interactions, alongside their resulting expressions of queer masculinities. Contextually, het/cis men's behaviours are described as the behaviours the participants personally witnessed during interactions with het/cis men. The participants stated that het/cis men's behaviours compromised their feelings of emotional and physical safety. Specifically, het/cis men's behaviours that did not recognize the participants' queer identities or trivialized them threatened the participants' emotional safety. Furthermore, the participants indicated that het/cis men were a threat to their physical safety, forcing them to negotiate their behaviours to engage with these men.

Additionally, a secondary behaviour of het/cis men that impacted the participants' interactions was the experience that het/cis men would essentialize queer men into a singular narrative. As a result of these behaviours, the participants experienced their queer identities

being disregarded and misrepresented by het/cis men. Specifically, het/cis men's acknowledgments and assumptions of queerness functioned to essentialize queer men. Furthermore, specific qualities about het/cis men also contributed to the discomfort and feelings of essentialization experienced by the participants.

Safety

Emotional Safety.

Emotional safety is the feeling of love, respect, dignity, and belonging from oneself, others, and forces (Wang et al., 2017; Veale et al., 2023). Growing up, the participants witnessed het/cis men's strict regulation of gendered behaviours in their households. They responded to this regulation by negotiating their behaviours, as these regulations negatively impacted their emotional safety. These experiences were formative to how they perceived their queerness, often negatively. However, there were benefits to adhering to these gendered expectations and consequences for disregarding them (Horwitz, 1982; Levant & Powell, 2017). Harry (1982) addressed the impacts of children experiencing the enforcement of gendered parameters from adults and children. At school, it was observed that children would humiliate boys if they acted feminine, effectively masculinizing these boys' behaviours moving forward. Furthermore, Hartley (1959) stated that when regulating sex roles, children will react "to threat by trying to escape from it or by trying to destroy the threatening object" (p. 460). The explicit enforcement of gendered limits on children's behaviours demonstrates that there are consequences when disregarding these parameters and benefits when upholding them.

Some participants expanded upon verbal queerphobia being used against them by het/cis men, compromising their emotional safety. This queerphobia had short-term and long-term impacts on the participants, such as behavioural modifications and a tentativeness around other

het/cis men, similar to the results of Leets (2002). Due to the personal experiences of het/cis men's queerphobic behaviours toward the participants, they assumed that their queer identities would not be supported by the majority of het/cis men they interacted with, including their family and close peers. The participants also indicated that het/cis men's queerphobic behaviours prevented them from disclosing their queer identities to these men. In other words, het/cis men's queerphobia created an environment where the participants could not be honest with their family and close peers. This led to social isolation (Cain, 1991; Heinz, 2018), defined by queer men's loneliness due to their inability to be honest with those around them for fear of social consequences. Furthermore, these feelings of isolation are exacerbated due to the culturally dominant expectation that men do not ask for help (Liang et al., 2017). Malakai illuminated how het/cis men's transphobic behaviours impacted his emotional safety. He stated that their behaviours impacted his mental health weeks after the transphobic incident. This was significantly exacerbated because he has experienced transphobia from het/cis men previously (Jeanes & Janes, 2021; Scandurra et al., 2017).

Physical Safety.

Physical safety is the protection of a person in response to physical harm. All participants expressed that they had felt physically unsafe or uncomfortable around het/cis men during their interactions because of het/cis men's queerphobic behaviours in previous incidents they had witnessed or experienced. Specifically, their aversion to het/cis men and the belief that these men compromised their safety was heightened if they had witnessed or experienced het/cis men's behaviours harming queer men. To respond to these behaviours, the participants relied on mediated action (Tappan, 2006a; Wertsch, 1994) to behave accordingly. Mediated action is human activities or behaviours prompted by what or whom they are responding to. For example,

When witnessing and addressing queerphobia, Ali stated that he feels physically unsafe around het/cis men because he is unsure how they will behave if Ali challenges their perspectives.

Contextually, Ali's mediated action is to leave the conversation if the het/cis men he interacts with are not receptive to what he is saying. Effectively, this prevents further interactions with these men.

Furthermore, concerning Leontiev's (1978) action theory, Lantolf (2000) stated that activity theory requires "the level of motivation, the level of action, and the level of conditions" (p. 8). For example, if EM GH feels physically unsafe around het/cis men, he will agree with everything they say to appear palatable and acceptable. This is a response rooted within activity theory. EM GH's motivation requires him to direct his behaviours towards a specific person or force; het/cis men. Then, EM GH's action is defined by the diverse behaviours he uses when he feels unsafe; EM GH's agreeance mechanism. Finally, EM GH's level of completion describes the achievement and results of his actions; het/cis men's response to EM GH's behaviours. The participants kept themselves safe through this process because het/cis men's behaviours threatened their physical safety.

To expand upon the impacts that het/cis men's transphobia had on Malakai, he discussed his experiences of oppression against his masculinity and transgender identity. These lived experiences of transphobia made him fearful of his physical safety during his future interactions with het/cis men. Abelson's (2014) study of transgender masculinities in transgender men explained that there are specific spaces of men's dominance that transgender men feel especially unsafe in. The experiences of feeling unsafe within men's public washrooms, especially in rural areas, made transgender men uncomfortable because it was an inherently masculinized space. In his interview, Malakai's elaborated on his physical safety being compromised in the men's gym

locker rooms (Greey, 2022), an inherently masculinized space like men's public washrooms. Malakai also stated that his smaller stature made him feel unsafe around het/cis men larger than him. This experience is also reflected in the experiences of the transgender men in Abelson's (2014) study.

Throughout the participants' responses, it is evident that het/cis men's behaviours contributed to the participants' experiences of emotional and physical safety. Het/cis men's behaviours included queerphobia that scrutinized the participants' dignity and comfortability of expressing queerness. From these experiences and witnessing queerphobia, the participants began to fear het/cis men's behaviours that threatened their physical safety. This fostered uncomfortable environments and prompted the participants to negotiate their behaviours and queer masculinities in response to keep themselves safe.

Essentialization

Het/Cis Men's Behaviours of Essentialization.

Het/cis men's behaviours of essentialization impacted the interactions between the participants and het/cis men negatively. The participants found that when het/cis men's viewed their queerness in misrepresentative ways, it was difficult for them to engage in interactions. Aboim (2012) described that plural masculinities are defined by how men position themselves and are positioned by other people regarding their location within dominant masculinities. Therefore, when het/cis men positioned the participants as only having specific traits or made assumptions about their sexualities or genders, they were being positioned, as were their queer masculinities. In other words, queer men position themselves and are positioned by other het/cis men's behaviours.

The traits held by het/cis men and witnessed by the participants functioned to essentialize queer men solely based on their queer status. Firstly, the participants noticed that het/cis men were stubborn and would only listen to other het/cis men during conversations. Contextually, het/cis men's stubbornness can be explained through sex and gender roles. Hartley (1959) stated that social forces govern all social roles regarding one's sex. In this case, hegemonic masculinity is an influential force that influences het/cis men's behaviours. Due to the inherent hierarchy of hegemonic masculinity that upholds the dominant position of het/cis men (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005), het/cis men will continue to uphold other het/cis men to sustain this hierarchy. For example, Moje and Lewis (2007) highlighted that dominant men reflect on the past to recognize the power they held and modify their behaviours to ensure their power for the future.

These behaviours are intensified if this hierarchy is threatened, described through Pleck's (1981, 1995) gender role strain paradigm. This framework describes that people benefit from following culturally dominant gender roles. Conversely, those who do not follow these roles receive consequences (Horwitz, 1982; Levant & Powell, 2017) and their behaviours are monitored and regulated (Harry, 1982; Hartley, 1959). Contextually, Malakai highlighted het/cis men's fragility when these men experienced anything challenging their masculinities, often resulting in excessive aggression and violence (DiMuccio & Knowles, 2020; Harrison & Michelson, 2019; Stanaland et al., 2023). Consequently, if het/cis men could not accomplish dominant gender roles, they overcompensated behaviours associated with dominant gender roles. This is defined as fragile masculinities (DiMuccio & Knowles, 2020; Stanaland et al., 2023), inherently making the participants' interactions with these men uncomfortable.

Het/Cis Men's Perceptions of Queerness.

The participants disclosed that het/cis men would make particular assumptions about queer men rooted in stereotypes. These behaviours negatively impacted the interactions the participants shared with het/cis men because they were reduced queer men with qualities that do not wholly align with their queerness. Just as traits cannot determine hegemonic masculinity, as that minimizes the conceptualization of the term (Beasley, 2008; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; McMahon, 1993; Messerschmidt, 2012; Messerschmidt, 2019; Yang, 2020), queerness also cannot be reduced to stereotypical traits that demarcate queerness (Hines, 2006; Simon et al., 1991).

During conversations between the participants and het/cis men, the participants disclosed that het/cis men acknowledged their queerness in stereotypical ways. Within these behaviours, het/cis men suppress queerness into something that should be mocked and reduced to a singular idea. As mentioned, queerness is conflated with femininity (Miller & Lewallen, 2015; Jewell & Morrison, 2012; Smits et al., 2021). It was commonly identified that the participants strived to conceal their behaviours that were deemed feminine from het/cis men. These behaviours expressed by het/cis men indicate that they strongly avoid femininity by attributing it to queer men (Bosson & Michniewicz, 2013; Thompson Jr. & Pleck, 1986). Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) also stated that dominant and subordinated masculinities rely on each other to sustain their cultural statuses. Contextually, het/cis men's behaviours of acknowledging queerness in stereotypical and misinformed manners sustains queer men's subordination and reifies heteronormativity and cisnormativity. Het/cis men acknowledge that queerness exists but use it to sustain dominance. Queerness is subordinated in this context, negatively impacting how the participants identify their queer identities.

The participants had also witnessed times when het/cis men believed that queer people did not exist, which is another singular perspective about queerness. During his interview, Ali highlighted that he does not need het/cis men to understand queerness, as queerness is an expansive concept (Jagose, 2009; Whittington, 2012). However, he requested het/cis men to acknowledge queer men because they exist. Specifically, heteronormativity (B. Robinson, 2016; Marchia & Sommer, 2019) and cisnormativity (Baril & Trevenen, 2014; Bauer et al., 2009) function to support the denial of queer peoples' existences because both of these concepts are predicated on the perceived naturalness of heterosexuality and cisgender. Therefore, experiencing heteronormativity and cisnormativity is disheartening to queer people because they do not see themselves represented, and their identities are consistently trivialized.

Het/cis men's behaviours of essentialization rooted within masculinities were especially impactful to the participants, as they functioned to not only suppress queerness but uplift the status of other het/cis men. Their behaviours of acknowledging and denying queer people and creating misinformed presumptions about queer people were negatively impactful. It invalidated the participants' queer identities, causing them to negotiate their validity. However, the behavioural traits of het/cis men, specifically stubbornness, also functioned to suppress queerness, making queer identities even more marginalized. In contrast, some participants experienced validation of their queer identities from the behaviours of het/cis men. These interactions allowed the participants' queerness to be expressed without fear of stigma or scrutiny.

Het/Cis Men's Interactional Implications

Het/cis men's behaviours were perceived to negatively impact the interactions the participants shared with het/cis men, influencing their expressions of their queer identities.

Specifically, the participants felt physically and emotionally unsafe around het/cis men through witnessing their behaviours of queerphobia. Therefore, to sustain their safety, the participants engaged in diverse negotiations of their behaviours in competition with het/cis men's queerphobic behaviours. This was a similar conclusion to het/cis men's behaviours of suppressing the participants' queerness and relegating them to the margins. These behaviours also made the participants negotiate their behaviours through queer masculinities and question the validity of their queer identities. Therefore, the participants were shifting and transforming their identities and queer masculinities based on their relations to het/cis men's identities and queer masculinities. Interestingly, throughout all of het/cis men's behaviours, there was one common theme, the essentialization of queer men's identities.

How Does the Dominant Sociocultural Context Within So-Called Alberta Impact the Interactions That Queer Men Have With Het/Cis Men?

During the interviews, the participants discussed how their interactions with het/cis men were influenced by the dominant sociocultural climate they lived in. Specifically, all the participants live in so-called Alberta, the sociocultural context I analyze in this thesis. As mentioned, Alberta's dominant masculinity is predicated on the oil and gas industry predicated on the reverence of dominant gender and sexual roles (G. Miller, 2004; Massie & Jackson, 2020; Landry & Willey, 2022). When asked to describe the dominant masculinity within so-called Alberta, the participants responded with specific characteristics. Chan (2017) emphasized that perceiving hegemonic masculinities as traits instead of structural components is a way for hegemonic masculinity to sustain dominance, as it ignores the foundations of gendered power characteristic of hegemonic masculinities. However, the participants also stated that the dominant masculinity in so-called Alberta was not reflective of their diverse sexual and gender

identities. This lack of representation impacted the participants' interactions with het/cis men. They also recognized that so-called Alberta's sociocultural climate influenced het/cis men's behaviours and conceptualizations of queerness. The lack of queer representation provided insight into how the participants negotiated their behaviours and perceived het/cis men, as reproduced in so-called Alberta's sociocultural climate.

Queer Representation

Representation is important for all people to see themselves reflected in the sociocultural climate to which they belong (Govender & Andrews, 2021; Howarth, 2002; Raymond, 2003). Queer men's identities are also complicit in their sociocultural climate as well. Raymond (2003) emphasized that "marginalized identities are not just oppressed by power; they are also, as Foucault points out, constructed by those very same power relations" (p. 109). Additionally, Howarth (2002) contextualized that identity is created and recreated by how people and others see themselves. Within the context of education, Govender and Andrews (2021) offered that queer critical literacies, the structural inclusion of gender and sexual diversity in education, can help students unpack the positionalities of their identities. Throughout all of these examples, it is demonstrated that the comprehensive and holistic inclusion of queerness through representation is impactful to queer men and het/cis men. In other words, it is influential to view queerness through representations that are not predicated on stereotypes and misinformation.

Representation Through Institutions.

During the semi-structured interviews, the participants discussed navigating so-called Albertan institutions, particularly health and media. Regarding health, the participants shared negative experiences accessing physical and mental health services because their practitioners did not know how to address queerness. Malakai's practitioners did not believe him when he said

he was transgender. Practitioners' lack of transgender-inclusive knowledge is well documented (Eisenberg et al., 2020; McPhail et al., 2016; Newhook et al., 2019; Noonan et al., 2018; Pratt-Chapman et al., 2021). These studies also concluded that the lack of transgender-affirming care strained relationships between transgender youth and their parents and practitioners. Additionally, transgender people felt stigmatized, as they did not see themselves represented in medical institutions.

When accessing therapy, Malakai and Ali indicated that their queerness was not represented and sometimes even ignored. In Ali's experience, his therapist could not support him as they did not feel prepared to address the complexity of his queerness. Budge and Moradi (2018) and Goldblum et al. (2016) offered that therapy practices must be inclusive to all queer people, requiring therapists to recognize queer people's differences based on their identities and lived experiences. In contrast, Malakai's therapist refused to talk about his transgender identity. Israel et al. (2008) emphasized that critical aspects of queer inclusion in therapy include affirmation of gender and/or sexual identities, assurance of confidentiality, and use of people's actual names during sessions. Although the participants in Israel et al.'s study experienced these measures, others did not. Malakai's negative experiences in therapy are congruent with this study. Queer men must have validating experiences within therapy because men are already stigmatized for reaching out for help due to their identities as men (Liang et al., 2017).

Although the participants expressed positive experiences accessing sexual and gender health services, there was a tentativeness to accessing these services due to perceived stigma. Stigma is identified as a barrier for queer men to access sexual health services, as they do not feel represented within their communities and the medical system (Brookfield et al., 2020; Emler et al., 2017; Hart et al., 2021; Saxby et al., 2022). The participants had positive experiences

accessing so-called Alberta's health services once overcoming this stigma. However, Malakai identified that his transgender peers did not have positive experiences accessing these services due to their practitioners' lack of knowledge (Eisenberg et al., 2020; McPhail et al., 2016; Newhook et al., 2019; Noonan et al., 2018; Pratt-Chapman et al., 2021).

Media institutions were also discussed during the interviews. The participants determined that there was either no media representation of queer people or the existing representation was presented through stereotypes when they were growing up (Cartei & Reby, 2012; McInroy & Craig, 2015; Sink et al., 2018). From viewing this media, the participants did not see other people who were like them, which led to the isolation that they experienced. However, the influence of representation in media is extremely beneficial to queer men, as reflected through the participants' experiences. Szulc & Dhoest (2013) identified that internet use for queer men who were not publicly queer helped them understand their queer identities and feel less alone. Social media was also regarded as a helpful tool to help queer men express and explore their gender and sexual identities (Fox & Ralston, 2016). Heinz (2011) emphasized that transgender representation that is not rooted in stereotypes can lead to positive identity formation for transgender men and demonstrate that there is not one way to be transgender. As mentioned, representation is formative to identity development. As institutions, health and media must shift to represent queer men to ensure they feel visible and validated in their queer identities.

Representation in So-Called Alberta.

In diverse sociocultural contexts, one step to achieving representation is visibility. Historically, and arguably presently, Canadian institutions are not representative of queer visibilities (Alberta Health Services, n.d.; Belkin & McNichol, 2001; Bellemare et al., 2021; Boynton, 2023; Callaghan & van Leent, 2019; Faulkner, 2006; Kearns et al., 2017; M. Smith,

2020; Warner, 2002) because institutions inherently function through heteronormativity (B. Robinson, 2016) and cisnormativity (Bauer et al., 2009). The sociocultural context of so-called Alberta is also predicated on frontier masculinity (G. Miller, 2004; Landry & Willey, 2022; Massie & Jackson, 2020). Through the queerphobia embedded in this cultural force, het/cis men often adopt queerphobic behaviours, as it is the dominant masculinity expressed in so-called Alberta. This is detrimental to queer men who live in so-called Alberta because it pervades the sociocultural context and the people who reside there. During their interviews, the participants stated that they did not see themselves represented in the dominant sociocultural context of so-called Alberta. The participants recognized that their identities were neither supported, nor reflected in the people and the forces within so-called Alberta's and so-called Canada's sociocultural contexts. Knowing this, the participants negotiated their behaviours and queer masculinities to avoid queerphobia during interaction with het/cis men.

As Leontiev (1978) identified with activity theory, people reproduce the cultural tools they use to navigate their society. If these cultural tools are predicated on heteronormativity and cisnormativity, the people continuously using these tools begin to believe in these values (Ananiev, 1961). Recognizing that so-called Alberta is not representative of their experiences, queer men adopt strategies of appropriated oppression to respond (Tappan, 2006b). Contextually, continued recognition of queerphobia with so-called Alberta can result in queer men who negotiate their behaviours and suppress their queer identities when interacting with het/cis men, a form of queer masculinities.

However, not all participants' experiences within so-called Alberta were negative. When he returned to so-called Alberta, Burl moved back to a city in Amiskwacîwâskahikan rather than a rural area. He found Amiskwacîwâskahikan to be more positively impactful than his rural

hometown because there was more queer representation and visibility in Amiskwacîwâskahikan. Leontiev's activity theory also applies here. As the sociocultural climate is not as oppressive as other rural places, the people who reside there are not as oppressive. Furthermore, Lyons et al. (2015) indicated this rural and urban dichotomy, whereby queer men had more significant opportunities in urban settings than in rural settings. However, this finding is contested by Wienke and Hill (2013), who did not find a difference for queer men between rural and urban settings. This provides evidence that differences between rural and urban acceptances of queerness are different based on the particular sociocultural context.

The sociocultural context of so-called Alberta and its institutions were received poorly by the participants, as they did not see themselves represented in these structures. However, the benefits of queer representation in these structures, particularly media (Fox & Ralston, 2016; Heinz, 2011; Szulc & Dhoest, 2013), is evident. The sociocultural climate also influenced the actions and behaviours of het/cis men within so-called Alberta because they mutually reinforced each other (Leontiev, 1978). This limited the interactions the participants shared with het/cis men because they perceived so-called Alberta's society to be queerphobic, relating this to the behaviours of the het/cis men in so-called Alberta.

The Interactional Implications of the So-Called Alberta Sociocultural Context

When navigating so-called Alberta's institutions, the participants did not interact exclusively with het/cis men. However, the lack of representation impacted their interactions with het/cis men. Specifically, queer men finding belonging and cohesion within their queer identities is challenging when navigating institutions and sociocultural climates that are not representative of their identities because they feel they do not belong or are visible. This aligns with Aboim's (2012) conclusion that people's positions within their society are influenced by

how dominant masculinities position all masculinities. All these experiences contribute to the distrust that queer men hold towards het/cis men, limiting their interactions. In these interactions, queer masculinities compete with het/cis men's masculinities (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Roth, 2004). Furthermore, queer men's identities and expressions of masculinities also conflict with each other (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Frank et al., 2003; Kehler, 2004; Messner, 1991) because they express behaviours incongruent with their intrinsic sense of self.

Additionally, if het/cis men do not see queer people reflected within institutions and the sociocultural context, they are less likely to recognize queerness as the diverse identity that it is. This fosters dissonance during their interactions with queer men, thus also jeopardizing queer men's identities.

Chapter Summary

During this chapter, I have provided insight into my three research questions. I aimed to illuminate the complex interactions that the participants shared with het/cis men, specifically how the participants' and het/cis men's behaviours contributed to these interactions. From the participants' responses, their behavioural negotiations were predominantly motivated by being palatable and acceptable from the perspective of het/cis men to achieve safety and benefits. Negotiating their behaviours was indicated as an expression of queer masculinities. However, resisting het/cis men's masculinities also expressed queer masculinities. Additionally, het/cis men's behaviours impacted their interactions with the participants physically and emotionally. Subsequently, het/cis men were identified as a threat to the participants' queer identities through their behaviours of essentialization through their qualities, assumptions, and acknowledgements. Finally, the sociocultural context of so-called Alberta did not represent the participants' queer identities, making it difficult for them to navigate institutions and interactions with het/cis men

from so-called Alberta. In the next chapter, I conclude the three research questions; provide implications for academia, queer men, and het/cis men; and offer future research opportunities.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

Throughout this research, I aimed to examine how queer men negotiate their behaviours during interactions with het/cis men, influenced by Eurocentric hegemonic masculinity.

Therefore, queer men's behaviours and expressions of queer masculinities when interacting with het/cis men provided insight into these negotiations. To analyze this phenomenon, I posed three research questions:

1. How do queer men behave during their interactions with het/cis men?
2. How do het/cis men's behaviours influence the interactions that queer men share with het/cis men?
3. How does the dominant sociocultural context within so-called Alberta impact the interactions that queer men have with het/cis men?

I employed a qualitative social constructionist theoretical framework to approach these research questions. This was an appropriate perspective for this thesis because it analyzes specific phenomena created through social interactions. I conducted semi-structured interviews with six queer men living in so-called Alberta to collect data. The participants' experiences of interacting with het/cis men in so-called Alberta provided the context to achieve my objective of understanding how queer men behave and express their queer masculinities. I used thematic analysis to organize the participants' responses into five themes: 1) values, 2) behavioural negotiations, 3) het/cis men's behaviours, 4) masculinities, and 5) institutions. From the results of the semi-structured interviews, I arranged my results into five codes to answer three central research questions: 1) behaving palatably, behaving acceptably; 2) queer men's masculinities, 3) safety, 4) essentialization, and 5) queer representation. In this chapter, I discuss the key conclusions of this thesis, its implications for academia, and avenues for future research.

Conclusions

To answer my first question regarding how queer men behave during interactions with het/cis men, queer men consciously and unconsciously modify their behaviours through expressing queer masculinities. Specifically, they employ two strategies: passing and codeswitching. Passing is defined as concealing one's queer identity to gain membership with het/cis men through emulating their behaviours (Shippee, 2011) or engaging with hegemonic masculinities (Cheng, 1999). Specific forms of passing included dressing similarly to het/cis men, using fewer hand movements, taking more assertive stances to take up more space, and generally mimicking het/cis men's behaviours. Codeswitching entails linguistic changes between different identities around diverse groups of people (Friedman & Gwynne, 2008; Kroskrity, 2000; Winn, 2021; Young, 2009). Winn (2021) emphasized that queer men would codeswitch as a form of passing to conceal their queer identities. Queer men can codeswitch by lowering their voices, refusing to use queer slang and discuss particular topics regarding queerness, fostering confidence, and agreeing with everything that het/cis men say. However, not all queer men have to modify their behaviours: Some queer men naturally perform one or all these behaviours noted above. This is just as legitimate of a form of queer masculinities as the queer masculinities that negotiate behaviours.

Queer men behave differently around het/cis men to appear palatable and acceptable. By expressing these forms of queer masculinities, they can achieve safety and cultural and social benefits (Chen, 1999; Connell, 2005; Paechter, 2006). Specifically, queer men feel pressure to act masculinely, as masculine behaviours are respected by het/cis men (Fields et al., 2015; Goodfriend et al., 2022; Hoskin, 2020). Expressing normative masculine behaviours is a form of queer masculinities. However, conflict arises within and between people with diverse

masculinities (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Frank et al., 2003; Kehler, 2004; Messner, 1991). Contextually, queer men's masculinities conflict with their own and het/cis men's masculinities (Aboim, 2016; Fields et al., 2016; Hunt et al., 2016; Jeanes & Janes, 2021), which can cause dissonance in their queer identities. As they navigate their society, queer men often must either uphold their queer identity and authenticity or receive the safety they deserve by modifying their behaviours. Consequently, queer men become trapped in a double bind because they either sacrifice their safety or authenticity. However, through viewing behavioural negotiations as forms of queer masculinities, queer men still engage with queerness as they suppress their queer identities. Therefore, their queer identities are not erased, providing resonance for queer men who may feel guilty or shameful for negotiating their behaviours. Queer men also learn to negotiate their behaviours as a generalized action around het/cis men if they behave like this over time (Ananiev, 1961; Leontiev, 1978). As a result, queer men can experience appropriated oppression (Tappan, 2006b). Through this perspective, queer men accept their subordinated status due to their conceptualization of their queer identities and the dominant social forces that subordinate them at a structural level.

In certain circumstances, queer men also resist modifying their behaviours around het/cis men for two reasons. Firstly, queer men refuse to change their behaviours because they feel confident in their queer identities and recognize they should not be impacted by het/cis men's limited expectations of their behaviours. This depends on the het/cis men that queer men interact with. Secondly, queer men do not engage in behavioural negotiations when they feel safe and supported around particular het/cis men who provide them with space to practice authenticity. Knowing this, it is pertinent to identify that queer men and het/cis men are not coherent identities: They shift, compete, and express their masculinities in relation to other masculinities

and their sociocultural climate. Queer men's behaviours are expansive and multifaceted, like their identities. Their behaviours and identities constantly reconstruct each other (Simons, 2021). They are not static, but instead constantly fluid depending on their social interactions with other people and their sociocultural climate.

My second research question examined the impacts that het/cis men's behaviours had on their interactions with queer men. Two behaviours were isolated: behaviours that jeopardized queer men's safety and behaviours that jeopardized queer men's queerness. Het/cis men's queerphobic behaviours position queer men at risk emotionally (Cain, 1991; Heinz, 2018; Jeanes & Janes, 2021; Scandurra et al., 2017) and physically (Abelson, 2014). Consequently, queer men become more cautious of these interactions because they do not want to be the recipients of queerphobia. Thus, this is another pressure that queer men experience, pressuring them to negotiate their behaviours and express queer masculinities around het/cis men. Queer men's masculinities are also threatened by het/cis men's perceptions that all queer men are the same. Het/cis men acknowledge and deny queer men's queerness in misrepresentative manners. As a result, queer men consciously distance themselves from femininity (Bosson & Michniewicz, 2013; Thompson Jr. & Pleck, 1986) to avoid being essentialized. Het/cis men also make stereotypical assumptions about queer men (Hines, 2006; Simon et al., 1991) and exhibit behaviours of stubbornness and fragility that jeopardize queer men's safety (DiMuccio & Knowles, 2020; Stanaland et al., 2023). Through these constant behaviours, queer men's identities are effectively invalidated, changing their relationships with them, characteristic of appropriated oppression (Tappan, 2006b). Therefore, queer men's social interactions influence how their queer identities are constructed (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Holland et al., 1998). In other

words, het/cis men's behaviours functioned to act not only as a barrier to the interactions they shared but also as a barrier for queer men to shift from the margins to the centre.

Finally, my third research question examined how the sociocultural context of so-called Alberta and its institutions influenced the interactions between queer men and het/cis men. Heteronormativity and cisnormativity are embedded within many institutional structures, as these institutions are founded on het/cis people (B. Robinson, 2016; Bauer et al., 2009). Specifically, the institutions of health (Brookfield et al., 2020; Eisenberg et al., 2020; Emlet et al., 2017; Hart et al., 2021; Israel et al., 2008; McPhail et al., 2016; Newhook et al., 2019; Noonan et al., 2018; Pratt-Chapman et al., 2021; Saxby et al., 2022) and media (Cartei & Reby, 2012; McInroy & Craig, 2015; Sink et al., 2018) are not wholly representative of queer men's experiences. However, health (Budge & Moradi, 2018; Goldblum et al., 2016; Israel et al., 2008) and media (Fox & Ralston, 2016; Heinz, 2011; Szulc & Dhoest, 2013) have the potential to be beneficial to queer men's identities. Furthermore, queer men may not feel comfortable interacting with het/cis men at a local and regional level. In so-called Alberta, the local dominant sociocultural climate is queerphobic (G. Miller, 2004; Massie & Jackson, 2020; Landry & Willey, 2022), reflecting the behaviours of the het/cis male residents of so-called Alberta, as analyzed through Leontiev's (1978) activity theory. At a regional level, so-called Canada's historical and present queerphobia (Alberta Health Services, n.d.; Belkin & McNichol, 2001; Bellemare et al., 2021; Boynton, 2023; Callaghan & van Leent, 2019; Faulkner, 2006; Kearns et al., 2017; M. Smith, 2020; Warner, 2002) is impactful to how queer men feel represented. Therefore, queer men's identities and their expressions of queer masculinities are not explicitly disregarded or violently oppressed within so-called Alberta. However, the sociocultural climate of so-called Alberta and so-called Canada can function to influence queer men's identities

(Bartlett, 2005; Moje & Luke, 2009; Penuel & Wertsch, 1995). Overall, I conclude that queer men negotiate their identities based on their behaviours, interactions with het/cis men, and the sociocultural climate of so-called Alberta in unique and distinct ways.

Implications

Implications for Academia

Throughout this thesis, I have discussed how queer men express queer masculinities through their behaviours when interacting with het/cis men. Although my study did not explicitly take place within academia, my conclusions apply to how stakeholders in academia can support queer men as they navigate their expressions of their queer identities. At an individual level, Berila (2011) highlighted that academia is a notable time for queer men to explore their identities because they interact with new environments and people. As a result, queer men position themselves and are positioned by het/cis men and other forces (Aboim, 2016). Therefore, this research can act as an opportunity to develop supports and resources for queer men that reassure them that there are multiple ways to be queer. Within compulsory education, the results of this study may also illuminate the diverse ways that het/cis men consciously and unconsciously oppress queer men through their actions. In response, this thesis can help academic staff learn to address queerphobia at an individual level. Similarly, within higher education, het/cis men's queerphobic remarks in classrooms that essentialize queerness into a particular narrative can also be addressed, deconstructed, and framed within the experiences of queer men.

At an institutional level, it is pertinent for academia to include diverse representations of queerness within their institutional structure, including residence services, faculty training, and institutional policies. Although the participants did not discuss their interactions with academia as an institution, the inequities of institutions were identified as not wholly representative of the

diversity of queerness. Furthermore, there were limitations to queer men's identities when they did not see themselves reflected in institutional structures. Therefore, the structural components of academia can be shifted better to reflect queerness in its curricula across all disciplines. Further, as Landreau and Rodriguez (2012) emphasized, queer men are not wholly included in masculinities studies research. I recognize the authors stated this in 2012, and Critical Masculinities Studies (CMS) have grown. However, through Yang's (2020) recognition that hegemonic masculinities have the potential to shift and express dominance on more equitable gendered structures, the continuous inclusion of queer masculinities studies within CMS is an excellent place to continue this shift.

Implications for Queer Men

When conducting this study, one of my priorities was emphasizing and amplifying diverse queer experiences in everyday interactions. As queer men begin to recognize and foster their queer identities, they are influenced by diverse forces and people, just as this thesis concludes. This thesis can allow queer men to continue recognizing the multiplicity of queerness and that it cannot be essentialized into a singular definition. Furthermore, I hope this thesis provides a new perspective that clarifies direction and peace for queer men feeling alone in their experiences of negotiating tension and conflict with their queer identities and expressions of queer masculinities.

I emphasize that queerness is an expansive and broad concept that manifests in multiple ways and behaviours (Kolker et al., 2019; Peters, 2005). Some queer men express femininities; some express masculinities; and some express behaviours between, outside, or a combination of these expressions. For queer men who express femininities, this thesis can validate their genuine expressions of femininity that resist being impacted by het/cis men's behaviours during

interactions with them. For queer men who express masculinities, the results can affirm the behaviours they already practice or illuminate new behaviours to resist het/cis men's masculinities. Finally, for those who exist between, beyond, or combine masculinities and femininities, this thesis acts as a reminder that there is no one way to be queer and that all people are a mix of masculinities and femininities that we express through our behaviours.

Implications for Het/Cis Men

This study is not only an analysis of queer men's behaviours but also addresses het/cis men's behaviours. Accordingly, my findings have implications for het/cis men's behaviours and how they perceive queerness and treat queer people. Firstly, this thesis demonstrates that het/cis men as a social group impact how queer men engage with these men and their queer identities. Contextually, het/cis men consciously attribute to queer men's negotiations of queer identities through their purposeful queerphobic behaviours. However, they also unconsciously attribute to queer men's negotiations of their queer identities due to their status as het/cis men informed by Eurocentric hegemonic masculinity. Thus, this thesis can help het/cis men learn how to be better allies to queer men. This is especially pertinent for het/cis men who are not knowledgeable about queer people and tend to essentialize queer men into particular stereotypes: This is a chance to unlearn. Even for het/cis men who are allies to queer men, this thesis acts as an additional opportunity to engage in queer men's experiences and how they are implicated in queer men's negotiations of their identities, both positively and negatively.

Future Research

From the results of my study, I have concluded that queer men feel tension in negotiating their queer identities through practicing queer masculinities and shifting their behaviours. However, these conclusions arise from my subjective approach to this research that can be

expanded upon through future research. Regarding the theoretical perspective of this thesis, I employed a qualitative social constructionist perspective. A phenomenological perspective would be helpful to examine the intrinsic qualities of queer men's identities void of any interactions they have to understand how queer identities are expressed naturally. Additionally, conducting a quantitative study would also yield different results. This approach would provide context as to how often queer men negotiate their behaviours and how this amount subsequently impacts queer men's negotiations of their identities.

Regarding the sample size, future research could replicate this study with a larger sample size. Although six queer men participated in my study and specified critical insights to queer masculinities and identities, a larger sample size would expand upon the diversity of queerness expressed by queer men. This is especially pertinent because though the six participants expressed shared experiences of queer masculinities, there were also notable differences between how these queer masculinities were expressed. Knowing this, queer diversity can be amplified with a larger sample size. As DeFilippis and Anderson-Nathe (2017) outlined through hook's (1984) examination of the relationship between the margin and centre, queer men do not exist as a monolith. Some queer men are afforded privileges not accessible to other queer men, impacting their positions within and between the centre and margins. Therefore, an intersectional sample of queer men is an avenue for future research to examine how queer men's negotiations of their identities are influenced by their other identities, such as race, socioeconomic status, ability, and sexual orientation.

Likewise, my sample of participants was generalized as queer men for my study, as I did not want to exclude any queer men or people who used to identify as queer men from participating. However, out of the six participants, only one was a transgender man, and the other

five were cisgender. Therefore, future research could focus exclusively on the experiences of transgender men's interactions with het/cis men to examine how the negotiations of their transgender identities and expressions of transgender masculinities manifest. Research is also necessary regarding transgender men with diverse sexual orientations. Although Malakai identified as a bisexual, transgender man, his responses were predominantly rooted in his navigation of interactions with het/cis men due to his gender identity. A fruitful topic of future research addresses the experiences of queer men with a sexual and gender identity that is neither heterosexual nor cisgender when interacting with het/cis men.

Concluding Thoughts

As I have outlined in this thesis, queer men's identities, behaviours, and expressions of queer masculinities are multi-dimensional. This broadness is characteristic of queerness (Kolker et al., 2019; Peters, 2005), especially as it cannot be relegated to a singular definition: There is a purposeful ambiguity that demarcates our uniqueness. This thesis aimed to examine the diverse ways that queer men negotiated their identities during interactions with het/cis men. Through the findings, I uncovered that queer men's behaviours and expressions of queer masculinities were incredibly insightful to how queer men negotiate and perceive their queer identities. Their identities conflict, shift, reposition, and transform based on behaviour, interactions, and culture. I cannot locate a specific definition of queer identities, as essentializing them would be a disservice.

Queer men's positions in the margins align with het/cis men's position in the centre. However, I refute this static concept. All masculinities are continuously positioned and repositioned in relation to each other, whereby some queer men occupy the centre and some het/cis men occupy the margins. Deconstructing these boundaries requires unity whereby queer

men and het/cis men listen and learn from each other. Yang (2020) inferred that hegemonic masculinities have progressive potential to be predicated on inclusive, equitable, kind, and compassionate gendered dynamics. Although this requires a monumental shift in the structure of Eurocentricity, research like this and the scholarship produced by other academics encourage the gradual reality of this shift. If this were to be achieved, queer men would not have to choose between authentically expressing their queerness and receiving status and security, as queer men would be recognized as valid instead of trivialized. Optimistically, I envision this shift in my lifetime. Yet, it requires the effort of all people, het/cis men included, to make this prospective future a reality. Queer people have always existed and we must continue to not only exist but also thrive.

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Appendix A: Interview Guide



Interview Guide

YOU WILL BE ABLE TO SKIP AS MANY QUESTION(S) THAT YOU DO NOT FEEL COMFORTABLE ASKING WITH NO QUESTION

General Interactions with Heterosexual Cisgender Men

Feelings

1. What are your general feelings towards heterosexual cisgender men?
 - a. What are your general feelings towards heterosexual cisgender men who are your peers?
 - b. What are your general feelings towards heterosexual cisgender men who are strangers?
 - c. What are your general feelings towards heterosexual cisgender men who are your family members?
2. Describe the interactions that you have previously had with heterosexual cisgender men. Are they positive? Negative? Neutral? A mix of more than one of these feelings?
 - a. Can you explain example(s) of negative, positive, and/or neutral examples of previous interactions with heterosexual cisgender men?
3. Describe the interactions that you currently have with heterosexual cisgender men. Are they positive? Negative? Neutral? A mix of more than one of these feelings?
 - a. Can you explain example(s) of negative, positive, and/or neutral examples of current interactions with heterosexual cisgender men?
 - b. Have you always felt this way when are you interacting with heterosexual cisgender men?
 - i. If no, why?

Queer Identity

4. In retrospect, has your queer identity influenced any part of interactions with heterosexual cisgender men? If so,
 - a. Why do you think your queer identity impacts your interactions with heterosexual cisgender men?
 - b. Are there specific qualities about heterosexual cisgender men that you notice during interactions with them? Do you think that there are any qualities about you that they notice during your interactions with them?
5. Are there any specific discussions that you have with heterosexual cisgender men that you did not feel comfortable discussing? Are there any topics that you have not discussed with heterosexual cisgender men?
6. Do these interactions change based on the heterosexual cisgender men you are interacting with? If so,
 - a. How do they change?
 - b. What groups of heterosexual cisgender men impact you differently?



Interview Guide

Negotiations of Behaviour

7. Do you believe that your actions and behaviours change when you are interacting with heterosexual cisgender men? If so,
 - a. How do they change?
 - b. How do you feel about these changes?
 - c. Can you identify a specific reason as to why you consciously or unconsciously do these changes in the presence of het/cis men?
8. Can you offer any insights for change within interactions with heterosexual cisgender men to ensure that all queer men in the future feel more authentic when interacting with heterosexual cisgender men?

Setting and Sociocultural Context in Interactions with Heterosexual Cisgender Men

9. In your own words, describe the dominant masculinity currently present in Alberta.
 - a. Does this dominant masculinity impact your interactions with heterosexual cisgender men in any way?
10. Do these interactions change based on the setting that you are interacting with heterosexual cisgender men in? If so, how do they change?
11. If you have lived or travelled outside of Alberta, have these interactions between yourself and heterosexual cisgender men changed? If so, how do they change?
12. Has the culture of Alberta impacted your interactions with heterosexual cisgender men? If so, how do they change?
 - a. What about mass media?
 - b. What about Canadian and international institutions?
13. Do you think historical treatment of queer men has influenced your interactions with heterosexual cisgender men? If so, how are you influenced?
14. Can you offer any insights to queer men in the future to help them feel more at ease and authentic when interacting with heterosexual cisgender men?

Appendix B: Recruitment Poster

PARTICIPANTS
NEEDED

IS IT JUST ME? QUEER MEN'S NEGOTIATIONS OF QUEER IDENTITIES DURING INTERACTIONS WITH HETEROSEXUAL CISGENDER MEN

Join our 60 - 90 minutes interview study that examines the multiple ways that queer men can negotiate their queer identities when interacting with heterosexual cisgender men.

STUDENT RESEARCHER
T. Cameron Carley - Werklund School of Education -->
timothy.carley@ucalgary.ca

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR
Dr. Michael Kehler - Werklund School of Education -->
michael.kehler@ucalgary.ca

PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS:

1. 20- to 30-years old
2. Currently, or have previously, identified as a queer* man
3. Currently lives in Alberta, Canada.
4. Can speak, listen, and comprehend English

Interested?
Email timothy.carley@ucalgary.ca for more details

The University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board has approved this study (REB22-1371)

*those who are not heterosexual and/or who do not identify with the gender that they were assigned to at birth



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Appendix C: Screening Form



Participant Screening Form

Is it Just Me? Queer Men's Negotiations of Queer Identities During Interactions with Heterosexual Cisgender Men

T. Cameron Carley (they/them) is a second-year graduate student studying a Master of Arts in Educational Research with a specialization in Curriculum and Learning at the University of Calgary. T. Cameron Carley is the principal investigator for the project "Is it Just Me? Queer Men's Negotiations of Queer Identities During Interactions with Heterosexual Cisgender Men" (ethics certificate number: REB22-1371). They can be contacted by emailing timothy.carley@ucalgary.ca. Dr. Michael Kehler, an education faculty at the University of Calgary, is the supervisor of this research and can be contacted by emailing michael.kehler@ucalgary.ca.

Queer people's experiences with oppression are complex and subjective because oppression impacts all queer people differently. One way that queer oppression manifests is through hegemonic masculinity, which is the dominant masculinity in a specific societal context. Broadly, there are identities, often based on gender and sexual orientation, that hegemonic masculinity simultaneously uplifts and marginalizes. Within Eurocentrism, heterosexual and cisgender people are uplifted by hegemonic masculinity. In contrast, queer people are marginalized by hegemonic masculinity. To respond to this oppression, queer men modify their behaviour to avoid scrutiny. These modifications of behaviour can arise when queer men interact with heterosexual cisgender men, as queer men will modify their behaviour in diverse ways to evade oppression during these interactions.

The primary objective of this thesis is to examine the various manifestations of queer men's negotiations of their identities when interacting with heterosexual cisgender men. The secondary objectives are to isolate key characteristics of heterosexual cisgender men that influence queer men's behaviour, analyze how historical and present cultural knowledge modifies queer men's behaviour, and amplify research of queer masculinities void of heterosexual cisgender influences.

These five screening questions have been created to ensure that you are an appropriate fit for the principal investigator's research. The target demographic for this study are queer men, or those who previously identified as queer men, between the ages of 20 – 30 who can speak, listen to, and comprehend English, and currently live in the province of Alberta, Canada.

For participants who do not meet the screening criteria, the screening form that you will have sent the principal investigator will be permanently deleted from their personal MacBook Air. All

email communication with the principal investigator will also be permanently deleted from their email account. For participants who meet the screening criteria, they will be contacted with a consent form to read and fill out, if they choose to proceed with the study.

Screening Questions

1. What is your first name and surname? _____
2. How old are you? _____
3. What province do you currently live in? _____
4. Are you a queer man, or have you previously identified as a queer* man? _____
5. Can you speak, listen to, and comprehend English? _____

*In this context, “queer” is used as an encompassing term that describes those who do not identify as heterosexual and/or who do not identify with the gender that they were assigned to at birth

The University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board has approved this study (REB22-1371).

Appendix D: Consent Form



Participant Consent Form

Is it Just Me? Queer Men's Negotiations of Queer Identities During Interactions with Heterosexual Cisgender Men

Hello! You have indicated that you would like to voluntarily participate in a study entitled "Is it Just Me? Queer Men's Negotiations of Queer Identities During Interactions with Heterosexual Cisgender Men". This study is being conducted by T. Cameron Carley and is under the supervision of Dr. Michael Kehler.

Name of Student researcher, Faculty, and Email

T. Cameron Carley (they/them) is a second-year graduate student studying a Master of Arts in Educational Research with a specialization in Curriculum and Learning at the University of Calgary. T. Cameron Carley is the student researcher for the project "Is it Just Me? Queer Men's Negotiations of Queer Identities During Interactions with Heterosexual Cisgender Men". They can be contacted by emailing timothy.carley@ucalgary.ca. Dr. Michael Kehler, an education faculty at the University of Calgary, is the principal investigator and supervisor of this research and can be contacted by emailing michael.kehler@ucalgary.ca.

Completion of this research is obligatory as part of their requirements for their Master of Arts in Educational Research with a specialization in Curriculum and Learning at the University of Calgary under the supervision of Dr. Michael Kehler.

Purpose and Objectives:

Queer people's experiences with oppression are complex and subjective because oppression impacts all queer people differently. One way that queer oppression manifests is through hegemonic masculinity, which is the dominant masculinity in a specific societal context. Broadly, there are identities, often based on gender and sexual orientation, that hegemonic masculinity simultaneously uplifts and marginalizes. Within Eurocentrism, heterosexual and cisgender people are uplifted by hegemonic masculinity. In contrast, queer people are marginalized by hegemonic masculinity. To respond to this oppression, queer men might modify their behaviour to avoid scrutiny. These modifications of behaviour can arise when queer men interact with heterosexual cisgender men, as queer men might modify their behaviour in diverse ways to evade oppression during these interactions.

The primary objective of this thesis is to examine the various manifestations of queer men's negotiations of their identities when interacting with heterosexual cisgender men. The secondary objectives are to isolate key characteristics of heterosexual cisgender men that influence queer

men's behaviour, analyze how historical and present cultural knowledge modifies queer men's behaviour, and amplify research of queer masculinities void of heterosexual cisgender influences.

Research Significance

The significance of this research broadly lies in the promotion and awareness regarding the present impacts that Eurocentric hegemonic masculinity has for queer men's negotiations of their sexual and/or gender identity. Creating social change begins with critical education and pedagogy to disrupt oppression. Thus, this research can be an educational opportunity for all audiences to learn about underrepresented experiences to better understand queerness. Specifically, this research can be a great example for those who work in academic settings. Educators who work with children on a daily basis will have the opportunity to perceive interactions between queer men and heterosexual cisgender men through a new lens. This can translate to the way that they teach within and beyond the classroom and positively impact the interactions that they have with youth in academic and scholarly settings. Further, queer youth may not have a holistic conception of these interactions due to their potential lack of literacy on articulating their own queerness. This article has the potential to give much needed context on queer men's interactions with heterosexual cisgender men to ensure that queer men can be as genuine as possible when interacting with others in the future. In the PI's personal experiences, the nature of these interactions have been unspoken by queer people, especially queer youth. By bringing these interactions to the forefront, queer youth and educators can engage in mutually beneficial dialogue to improve each other's understanding of queerness.

Participant Demographic

You have indicated that you are a queer man, or have previously identified as a queer man, who is 20- to 30-years-old and is currently living in the province of Alberta. Queer is contextually defined as those who do not identify as heterosexual and/or who do not identify with the gender that they were assigned to at birth. You have also indicated that you can speak, listen, and comprehend English.

What is Involved?

If you consent to voluntarily participate in this research, you will engage in a 60 – 90 minute interview with the student researcher. This interview can take place in-person at a private room at the Taylor Family Digital Library at the University of Calgary, virtually over the video conferencing platform Zoom, or by telephone. As the COVID-19 pandemic is still ongoing, safety measures such as mask-wearing and/or social distancing will be taken during in-person interviews to your discretion. The questions of the interview will examine your previous experiences of interacting with heterosexual cisgender men, how your queer identity has been impacted by the sociocultural climate in which you reside, and your perception of how your queer identity is negotiated in relation to others. You will be able to skip any question in the

interview guide if you do not feel comfortable answering them. Further, you are able to take breaks at any time during the interview or end the interview at any time. If you consent to being audio-taped during the Zoom or in-person interview, the student researcher will do this from their personal iPhone, or if over telephone, their personal MacBook Air. If consent is given, the student researcher will enable Otter Pro, a transcription application, during the interview. Once the interview transcript has been completed, the student researcher will send you a copy of the interview transcript for approval and confirmation that your experiences have been represented correctly. If you do not believe that your experiences have been properly represented, the student researcher will schedule a Zoom, in-person, or telephone meeting with you to discuss and collaboratively change the transcript together to best reflect your experiences. If there are any sections of the transcript that you would like to remove, please email the student researcher those sections, and they will be removed immediately. You will have up to two weeks from when the student researcher sends the email containing the transcript to make any changes.

Collection of Identifying Information

If you consent to voluntarily participate in this research, your first name and surname, email address, age at time of interview, gender and sexual identity, and province of current residence will be collected. The student researcher will ensure confidentiality of your information through a) not discussing the details of any transcripts or interviewees outside of interactions between the student researcher and the principal investigator; b) immediately transferring all audio files recorded on the student researcher's personal iPhone to the student researcher's personal MacBook Air, and then permanently deleting the audio files from the student researcher's personal iPhone; c) labelling all digital files; including screening forms, consent forms, audio files, and written transcripts; with non-identifiable codenames only accessible to the student researcher; d) storing the consent forms, screening forms, audio files, and written transcripts on the student researcher's MacBook Air in encrypted folders only accessible to the student researcher; e) permanently deleting all audio files off of the student researcher's personal MacBook Air once they have been transcribed; and f) permanently destroying the screening forms, consent forms, written transcripts, and all email communications on the student researcher's personal MacBook Air at the time of submission of the thesis. Quotes may be used from your transcripts, but only if you give consent for your quotes to be used. Below, please indicate "Yes" or "No" for the following questions regarding your identifying information.

I consent to being audio taped: Yes: _____ No: _____

I consent to the student researcher to enable Otter Pro, a transcription application, during the interview Yes: _____ No: _____

I want to use a pseudonym in the study: Yes: _____ No: _____

The pseudonym I want to use is: _____

I consent to have my responses attributed to me by pseudonym in the study:

Yes: _____ No: _____

I want to use my name in the study:

Yes: _____ No: _____

The name I want to use is: _____

I consent to have my responses attributed to me by name in the study:

Yes: _____ No: _____

I consent to being quoted in the study:

Yes: _____ No: _____

Use and Destruction of Identifying Information

Only the student researcher and their supervisor will be allowed to listen and view the screening forms, consent forms, interview audio, written transcripts, and email communications. Your identifying information that will be provided in the study will be your name or pseudonym, your age, your gender and sexual identity, and your current province of residence. Anytime that the student researcher is accessing your identifying information, they will go through the file encryption and non-identifiable codenames only accessible to the student researcher to access your screening form, consent form, interview audio, and written transcript on their personal MacBook Air. Your identifying information disclosed during interviews will be in a private study room at the Taylor Family Digital Library to ensure confidentiality when conducting the interview. Once the interview audio has been transcribed, the student researcher will permanently delete the audio from their MacBook Air. After submission of the thesis, or in the event that you choose to withdraw from the study, your consent form, screening form, written transcripts, and all email communication will be permanently deleted from the student researcher's MacBook Air.

Risks

There are three potential risks involved in participating in this research. One risk is fatigue for participating in the interview, as it is 60 – 90 minutes long, and can be more or less time depending on your comfortability. The second risk is a potential psychological and/or emotional risk for participating in the research. You may feel uncomfortable discussing the interactions that you have had with heterosexual cisgender men if these interactions have been negative. To mitigate these risks, the student researcher will create an environment of empowerment, comfortability, and safety during the interview through active listening, fostering autonomy, and establishing rapport. Further, the student researcher will give you a queer-centric resource sheet at the end of the interview for you to rely on. The third potential risk is a health risk due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and all other potential viral transmissions if you choose to conduct an in-person interview. To mitigate this risk, you have the choice to wear a mask and ask the student researcher to also wear a mask and social distance during an in-person interview.

Further, you have the choice to conduct the interview virtually over Zoom or telephone. In the case that there is a drastic increase in infection rates for any virus which results in public health orders, all interviews will be conducted virtually.

Benefits

The potential benefits of your participation in this research includes a benefit to participants, scholarship, and academia. You will have the opportunity to talk through the interactions that you have had with heterosexual cisgender men. Being given a safe platform to amplify your voice can be empowering and healing. Scholastic benefits include the contribution to scholarship that centres and amplifies diverse queer voices and experiences. Thus, educators can also use this research to inform their interactions with their students. This research also has societal benefits, as this research positions queer masculinities at the forefront, which in effect, destabilizes the impact of hegemonic masculinity in society.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time up until two weeks after the student researcher has sent you your interview transcription. This withdrawal from the study will come without any consequence or explanation and will be respected by the student researcher. If you have a pre-existing relationship with the student researcher, please recognize that there is an inherent power dynamic between yourself and the interviewer. For the SR's family and peers, before signing below, please ensure that you have read the "Family and Peers Interest Disclaimer" that I have sent you. If you withdraw from the study, your screening form, consent form, interview audio, written transcript, and email communications will be permanently deleted from the student researcher's MacBook Air.

Dissemination of Results

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared in a few ways: the principal researcher's master's defense, the principal researcher's supervisory committee, storage of the master's thesis in the University of Calgary database, and to the principal researcher's peers and family.

Signatures

Your signature below indicates that you 1) understand the above conditions of participation of the study and 2) you consent to participate in this research project.

By signing below, this does not waive your legal rights, nor release the student researcher, supervisor, and involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities.

Please complete and send this consent form back to the student researcher within two weeks from the date it was sent to you only if you would like to participate in this study.

Participant's Full Name (Please Print): _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Student researcher's Full Name (Please Print): _____

Student researcher's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Questions/Concerns

If you have any further questions regarding this research project and/or your participation, please email the student researcher timothy.carley@ucalgary.ca.

A signed copy of this consent form will be emailed to you and a copy will be kept by the researcher.

The University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board has approved this study (REB22-1371).

If you have any concerns regarding how you are being treated as an interviewee, please contact the Research Ethics Analyst at the Research Services Office at the University of Calgary. They can be reached at 403-220-6289, 403-220-8640, or cfreb@ucalgary.ca.