The Gender Role Conflict of Male College Students and Implications for Campus Engagement

Thesis

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By

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Abstract

The gender gap is a growing concern in higher education. Female students are performing higher than male students in regard to academic success, involvement in leadership and service-learning opportunities, and matriculation. In order to lessen this gap, it is necessary to first gain an understanding of why this gap exists through a conceptual lens examining topics such as student engagement, service-learning, hegemonic masculinity, and gender role conflict. This study explored the perspectives and experiences of the male students who choose to become involved in campus activities, the question of why male students choose to become involved in a campus activity pertaining to leadership and service, as well as the broader implications for professionals in the field of higher education looking at student engagement.

The SERV Team, SERV standing for Students Engaged in Responsible Volunteerism, is a student organization focused on promoting leadership and service-learning at a large, Midwestern Research 1 university. Six male college students who were members of the SERV Team participated in semi-structured interviews in which they were asked to describe their perceptions and experiences of student involvement, priorities for male college students, and the gender gap in higher education. The
interview participants were also asked to describe their concepts of masculinity, societal expectations for men and, in particular, the expectations for college men, as well as the consequences faced by men when contradicting those norms.

The interviewees shared their perceptions and provided rich examples that reinforced current literature on college men and masculinities. Findings from this study illustrated the pressure college men experience from peers, family, and society to exhibit the behaviors and character traits of the hegemonic male. This study recognized that the male students contradicting the norms of society by participating in campus activities did not fit the profile of the typical college male. Nevertheless, the interviewees provided recommendations for practitioners that not only reinforced current literature but also demonstrated how men’s issues can be addressed specifically at large, Midwestern Research 1 University.
Acknowledgements

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I thank Dr. Len Baird for serving on my thesis committee and instilling in me a passion for studying the college student experience.

I am grateful to Bernie Savarese and Rosie Holmes, advisors of the SERV Team for allowing SERV Team students to participate in this study and for assisting me with the recruitment of interview participants.

This thesis was motivated by my undergraduate experiences as well as observations made more recently as a graduate administrative associate working in the student union and leadership development and student events. I am grateful to the Ohio Union at The Ohio State University for allowing me to devote a considerable amount of my time to this research project with the hopes that I will implement recommendations from this study’s findings.
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# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vita</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapters:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1: Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem statement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2: Literature Review</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student involvement</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service-learning</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The absence of college men</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hegemonic masculinity and gender role conflict</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current men’s initiatives</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3: Design and Methodology</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terms operationally defined</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale for qualitative approach</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data sample</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4: Data Collection</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentation</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of the researcher</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data management strategies</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data analysis strategies</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness features and ethical considerations</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5: Findings</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background of the participants</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of the SERV Team</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement in the SERV Team</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Concept of community service ................................................................. 36
Concept of male identity ................................................................. 36
Perceptions of societal views ................................................................. 37
  Expectations of appearance and behavior ......................................... 38
  Expectations of the man’s role ......................................................... 39
  Expectations of what men should not do ......................................... 39
  Expectations of college men .......................................................... 39
Perceptions of self ................................................................. 41
  Contradicting the norm ................................................................. 41
Priorities of male college students ........................................................ 42
  Perceptions of societal views ................................................................. 42
  Comparison between men and women ............................................... 43
  Perceptions of self ................................................................. 44
Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusions ................................................................. 46
  Comparison of study results to current literature ......................................... 46
  Incongruence of perceptions ................................................................. 49
  Implications for practice ................................................................. 50
    Men-only discussion ................................................................. 51
    Recognition of positive behavior ......................................................... 52
    Academic performance ................................................................. 53
    Developmental approach for judicial offenders ......................................... 53
    Student involvement ................................................................. 54
  Limitations of the study ................................................................. 55
  Recommendations for further research ............................................... 57
  Conclusion ................................................................. 58
References ........................................................................................................... 59
Appendix A: Letter of Permission from the SERV Team Advisor .......... 63
Appendix B: Letter to the Participant ................................................................. 65
Appendix C: Invitation to Participate in Interviews ............................................... 67
Appendix D: Interview Protocol ................................................................. 69
Appendix E: Request to Verify Transcript with Participant .......... 72
Appendix F: Transcription of SERV Team Interviews ............................................... 74
  Interview with Chris ................................................................. 75
  Interview with Victor ................................................................. 87
  Interview with John ................................................................. 98
  Interview with Tom ................................................................. 106
Chapter 1: Introduction

Problem Statement

Practice and current research in the field of higher education indicates male college students are struggling in the campus environment (Kellom, 2004). Female students are outperforming their male counterparts in areas of college enrollment, academic achievement, persistence, and extra curricular involvement (Sax, 2008). More specifically, male students are less likely than female college students to be involved in extra-curricular activities related to leadership and service.

This trend has been directly observed at a large, Midwestern Research 1 university when examining several facets of campus life. At this institution, the majority of the students in applicant pools for summer orientation student staff, resident advisors, campus tour guides are female students. Males are also outnumbered in certain student organizations with a focus on leadership and service, including the groups who participate in alternative break community service trips. Although there is a lack of male college students present in campus activities, there is an overrepresentation of male students among campus judicial offenders and substance abuse (Harper, Harris, & Mmeje, 2004). This gender gap is a growing issue in higher education with researchers as well as practitioners examining multiple perspectives on why this gap is occurring and how male college students can be better supported for success.
According to Astin (1993), student involvement can be divided into five categories: academic involvement, engagement with faculty, peer interaction, and other forms of involvement. Academic involvement can be viewed as the number of hours per week students spend studying or doing homework. The numbers of hours per week spent studying is correlated to positive outcomes for students including retention, graduating with honors and enrollment in graduate school (Astin, 1993). Furthermore, involved students also reported increases in cognitive and emotional skills (Astin, 1993). Therefore, it can be concluded that male college students who are more engaged in the campus community are more successful than those that are not.

Given that involvement in co-curricular activities related to leadership and service leads to positive outcomes for college students (Astin, 1999), the broader issue is the disparity of campus engagement between male and female students. In order to address the lack of male engagement, it is important to first examine why male students choose to become involved in co-curricular activities. The purpose of this study is to determine the common motivations for male students in campus activities related to leadership and service. Men face unique issues in regard to gender identity and social roles in comparison to the issues of women (Edwards & Jones, 2009). Therefore, they most likely have unique motivations behind becoming involved in the campus community. Note that in this thesis, the terms “male” and “man” will be used interchangeably, although it is recognized that, according to Harris and Struve (2009), the concept of “male applies specifically to a biological sex role whereas man is a socially constructed concept that encompasses the meanings that are culturally defined as masculine” (p.4).
By interviewing male students currently involved in leadership and service activities, this thesis will address the following primary research questions:

1. How do male students who choose to participate in campus activities define what it means to be a man in society and at Ohio State?
2. Why do male students choose to participate in a campus activity involving leadership and service?
3. Given the patterns in motivations, what are the broader implications for professionals in the field of higher education looking at student engagement?
Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this study is to explore the perspectives and experiences of the male students who choose to become involved in campus activities, the question of why male students choose to become involved in a campus activity pertaining to leadership and service, as well as the broader implications for professionals in the field of higher education looking at student engagement. This chapter provides a review of the current literature pertinent to the theoretical framework of this study. Areas outlined in this chapter include student involvement, service-learning, the gender gap in higher education, hegemonic masculinity, and gender role conflict theory. The current literature guided the development of interview questions for this study and was essential in the formulation of implications and recommendations based on the study’s findings.

**Student Involvement**

To begin analyzing trends in student involvement on college campuses, it is necessary to first examine the theoretical framework behind the concept of student involvement. Astin’s theory of involvement is based on the notion that students learn from becoming involved. According to Astin (1999), “student involvement refers to the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to academic experience” (p.518). Astin (1999) developed the following fundamental postulates for his involvement theory:
1. Involvement refers to the investment of physical and psychological energy in various objects. The objects may be highly generalized (the student experience) or highly specific (preparing for a chemistry examination).

2. Regardless of its object, involvement occurs along a continuum; that is, different students manifest different degrees of involvement in a given object, and the same student manifests different degrees of involvement in different objects at different times.

3. Involvement has both quantitative and qualitative features. The extent of a student’s involvement in academic work, for instance, can be measured quantitatively (how many hours the student spends studying) and qualitatively (whether the student reviews and comprehends reading assignments or simply stares at the textbook and daydreams).

4. The amount of student learning and personal development associated with any educational program is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of student involvement in that program.

5. The effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement (p. 519).

After conducting a longitudinal study of students dropping out of college, Astin (1999) reached the general conclusion that almost all forms of student involvement are associated with above average changes in incoming first-year student characteristics. These levels included place of residence, enrollment in an honors program, academic involvement, extent of student-faculty interaction, athletic involvement, and participation in student government (Astin, 1999). For example, Astin found that students living on
campus were more likely than those living off campus to continue at the institution and to aspire to obtain a graduate or professional degree.

While Astin (1999) closely examined student involvement across race, gender, ability, and family background, research examining the motivations on why students get involved is limited. A study of 424 students at Syracuse University in 1999 indicated seven primary reasons for students choosing to get involved in leadership opportunities (in order of highest to lowest percentage for responses): To meet new people; to make a difference; to learn/enhance skills; to enjoy activities; to participate in campus traditions; to have fun; and to become a better person (St. Onge, Brown & McIntosh, 2000). These reasons are often presented by practitioners working in areas of Student Activities or Student Life to students considering joining a student organization or becoming involved, especially incoming first-year students.

According to Pascarella and Terenzini (2005), involvement in social and extracurricular involvement has a distinct impact on learning. This impact is based on the growing amount of literature showing the strong influence of peers on learning outcomes. In comparison to academically-focused activities, “non-classroom interactions with peers and faculty that extend and reinforce what happens in one’s academic experience appear to have the most consistent positive impact” (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005, p. 149).

Service-Learning

One specific form of student involvement is co-curricular service-learning (Keen & Hall, 2009). The concept of service-learning was defined by The National Service-Learning Clearinghouse as a “teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach
civic responsibility, and strengthen communities” (Keen & Hall, 2009, p. 59). Multiple studies conducted at various colleges and universities have consistently demonstrated that co-curricular service-learning contributes to civic, academic, and personal outcomes (Keen & Hall, 2009). According to Keen & Hall (2009), current literature shows that students who participated in one or more community service experiences and service-learning classes that included a component of reflected dialogue, in comparison to students who only anticipated in service-learning classes, “were more likely to evidence personal and academic growth that lasted through the end of the senior year” (p.60).

The National Society for Experiential Education defined service-learning as “any carefully monitored service experience in which a student has intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what he or she is learning throughout the experience (Parker et al., p.3, 2007). Sigmon explored these definitions more deeply by developing levels of service-learning according to whether the program focused on learning goals or service outcomes. The typology is as follows (Parker et al., 2007, p.3):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service - LEARNING</th>
<th>Learning goals primary; service outcomes secondary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SERVICE - learning</td>
<td>Service outcomes primary; learning goals secondary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service - learning</td>
<td>Service and learning goals completely separate</td>
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<tr>
<td>SERVICE - LEARNING</td>
<td>Service and Learning goals of equal weight and each enhances the other for all participants</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Buchanan, Sharpe, and Stevenson (2006) examined the concept of service-learning from in the context of the post-civil rights era. During the civil rights movement in the 1970s, many activists established forums to exercise their freedom of speech on
college campuses, advocating for civil rights in a way that could now be considered as a form of civic engagement and service for the good of the community (Buchanan et al., 2006). According to Buchanan et al. (2006), “Yesterday’s civil rights are today’s civic engagement for the betterment of humanity and the improvement of the human condition” (p.2).

Jones and Hill (2003) conducted a study of 24 students from 6 colleges and universities in Ohio (3 urban, 3 rural, 3 public, 3 private, 2 liberal arts, 2 research, 1 state university, and 1 Catholic institution) to examine the motivations of students to become involved in community service-related activities. The study looked specifically at students’ patterns of commitment for community service in high school in comparison to their patterns in college. Through conducting in-depth interviews with each of the 24 students, Jones and Hill (2003) discovered several themes in motivations as well as involvement of the students.

When looking at students’ involvement in community service in high school, primary reasons for participation in community service included the family members’ encouragement and religious foundations (Jones & Hill, 2003). Family acted as role models to students by participating in community service themselves and leading by example. Religious beliefs and church commitments such as youth ministry and teaching religious education courses were all considered as community service for students. Jones and Hill (2003) found that community service had a strong presence at Catholic high schools. Friends were also a major influence in students’ participation (Jones & Hill, 2003). Students were more likely to become involved in community service if they had
friends who either participated in service directly or were involved in student organizations requiring community service.

High schools commonly require commitment to community service to some extent, which often increases participation numbers but has a negative long-term impact. Participants in the study commented that doing required service felt like completing a homework assignment or a “sentence” (Jones & Hill, 2003, p. 524). Viewing it as a forced activity, the students reported rarely taking the time to reflect on the service they were doing, and they were often not motivated to continue with service activities once their requirement was made (Jones & Hill, 2003).

When transitioning from high school to college, students face the challenge of familiarizing themselves with a new community. Twelve of the twenty-four students participating in the survey were not involved in community service, and all twelve of these students indicated this transitional concern, among several others, as reasons for why they “put community service on hold” (Jones & Hill, 2003, p. 526). While family was no longer a primary influence for most students to participate in community service, peers remained having a strong role in addition to the institution. According to Jones and Hill (2003), the students not involved in community service speculated that they would have been more likely to participate had their friends also participated. Students attending smaller institutions were more aware of service opportunities than those at larger institutions (Jones & Hill, 2003). Thus, the visibility and accessibility of programs for community service is important.

Beyond looking at motivations for participation, this study also explored the types of activities from which students most benefited. In addition to required service
appearing as chores or homework assignments, many students also looked down upon service rewarded with scholarships. A student who was a recipient of a scholarship for service agreed with the negative stigma for these scholarships, explaining, “It is hard to see the focus of the service when they tack a number to it, rather than lining it to quality for the server or the served” (Jones & Hill, 2003, p. 528).

Students who had the continued commitment and the most passion for community service experienced personal moments while doing service that cultivated empathy and care for others. For example, students who participated in the alternative break programs described their experiences as “the most incredible week of my life” or “life-changing” (Jones & Hill, 2003, p. 529). The study also found trends in race and gender. African American students identified as not being involved in community service, but indicated several ways they reach out to and interact with the community. As Jones and Hill (2003) explained, because service to the community is so ingrained in the cultural heritage of African Americans, it was most likely difficult for the African American students to identify service not as a part of their identity but as a separate activity. Several of the male students participated in community service in competitive ways, rather than relational ways such as blood drives and canned food competitions.

Jones and Hill (2003) concluded that in most cases, patterns of commitment for community service in high school continued for students in college. While some important patterns were discovered in this study, the literature looking at motivations for involvement in community service, and any other types of activity or involvement is still limited, especially in how motivations compare based on the student’s gender. There is a significant need to examine the motivations for service involvement of male college
students due to their lack of campus engagement in comparison to female students and other current issues facing college men.

According to Diambra et al. (2009), benefits of service-learning include “an understanding of course concepts, improved cognitive skills, satisfaction of helping others, personal and professional growth, heightened civic engagement, enhanced appreciation of social problems, and career exploration” (p.114). Santos (2007) added to these benefits in explaining that service-learning opportunities allow students to learn important lessons that cannot be learned in the average classroom, gaining “an understanding of more abstract concepts and not just through interpretation, but also through action” (p. 7).

Astin and Sax (1998) utilized data taken from several national surveys, aptitude tests, and enrollment reports to conduct a study on the effects of service participation for college students. Astin and Sax (1998) compared the results of these instruments for students participating in service in the 1994-95 academic year to students who did not participate in service. The study revealed that all 35 dependent variables (within the three broader categories of civic responsibility, educational attainment, and life skills) of student outcomes were influenced favorably by service participation. In regard to how students’ sense of civic responsibility was affected by engaging in service, all 12 civic responsibility outcomes were positively influenced by participation. The results of the longitudinal analyses of this study found positive effects on all 10 academic outcomes. On the category of life skills, all 13 measures were significantly enhanced by service participation.
With the analyses of this study revealing significantly positive effects across all categories and outcomes, Astin and Sax (1998) proved the benefits of students’ participation in service during their undergraduate careers. More specifically, the more time devoted to service, the stronger the positive impact for students. This study proves service-learning and community service-related programs as having a valuable role in enhancing the student experience and development on any college campus.

The Absence of College Men

Significant evidence supports that male students are not as engaged in the campus environment as their female counterparts. Female students currently make up approximately 58 percent of undergraduates or more in colleges and universities across the country (Wilson, 2007). For example, at Elon University in 2007, 61 percent of the 4,800 undergraduates were female, and women in their honors program outnumbered men about five to one (Wilson, 2007). As of 2003, in every state, racial and ethnic group, and income bracket female students were earning an average of 57 percent of all bachelor’s of arts degrees and about 58 percent all master’s degrees earned in the United States (Kellom, 2004). When looking at degree aspirations, drawing from a sample of over 17,000 male and female students from 200 institutions, Sax (2008) demonstrated that 32.3 percent of women and 29 percent of men planned to obtain doctoral degrees.

Beyond the disparity in male enrollment, male college students are far less engaged academically in comparison to female students. A study conducted between 1987 and 2002 on gender differences reported that of the amount of students who spent six or more hours per week studying, 26.9 percent were male while 38.7 percent were females (Kellom, 2004). Furthermore, throughout the study’s 15-year duration, the time
commitment devoted to studying by men declined at a greater rate than the time devoted by women (Kellom, 2004). Sax (2008) also found that men spent less time per week than women studying, but 22 percent of college men devoted “six or more hours per week to video and computer games, compared to only 3.8 percent of women” (p. 31). During the 2000-2001 academic year, the Institute of International Education reported the number of male American students who studied abroad and earned academic credit from their home institutions was only approximately 35 percent (Kellom, 2004).

While the lack of male engagement is evident in multiple areas of campus life, one of the most significant areas is community service. Research over the past 20 years examining women’s development “depicts women as having a stronger sense of community and ‘other orientation’ than men” (Sax, 2008, p. 42). In 2003, only 35 percent of all college students participating in service were men. For first-year male college students, the median hours of volunteering per week in 2002 was .6, and for female students it was 1.3. Furthermore, although volunteerism has increased for male and female college students in recent years, between 1987 and 2002 the number of men doing more than one hour of service per week increased by 12.2 percent while the number of women increased by 24.4 percent (Kellom, 2004). According to Sax (2008), female students are more likely than male students to participate in community action programs, promote racial understanding, and “commit to influencing social values” (p.43).

College men’s health is also a growing concern. According to Courtenay (2004), “the greatest gender gap in mortality occurs among 15-24-year olds (p.59). Three out of four injury deaths in this age range are males (Courtenay, 2004). Furthermore, suicide is the third-leading cause of death of men in this age group (Courtenay, 2004, p.48).
Regarding sexual health, men between fifteen and twenty-four are at a far greater risk than women of contracting sexually transmitted disease or infections (Courtenay, 2004). While these alarming health statistics for male college students are well published, there is a limited amount of literature on why these trends are occurring or how to combat them.

Currently existing literature shows the lack of male engagement in student life and academic programs and service (Wilson, 2007; Kellom, 2004). Nevertheless, currently existing literature also shows an overrepresentation of male college students in situations of alcohol abuse and of violent and disruptive behavior (Harper, Harris, & Mmeje, 2004). Both patterns of behavior have become growing issues in colleges and universities across the country. Men outnumber women in all of the following categories: prevalence, consumption, and frequency of use and intoxication; incidence of alcohol abuse and dependence; and alcoholism (Kellom, 2004). At the large, Midwestern, Research 1 university at which the interviews for this study were conducted, according to the Director of Judicial Affairs, between Fall 2008 and Spring 2010, the number of students committing judicial offenses of the Student Code of Conduct were 270 female students and 850 male students (A. Goldblum, personal communication, April 26, 2010). Relating the trends of students to gender role conflict theory, male college students most likely act out due to the pressure they often experience to engage in risky behaviors (i.e. physical assault and underage consumption of alcohol) in order to win the approval of their same-sex peers (Harper, Harris, & Mmeje, 2004).
Hegemonic Masculinity and Gender Role Conflict

In order to adequately understand the perspective of men on college campuses, a conceptual lens is necessary for understanding the broader challenges and implications for males in society. With white males dominating the classrooms in higher education for centuries, much of the theoretical framework informing student affairs practice in the area of student development was formulated by using white, male college students as the research subjects (Davis & Laker, 2004). Student affairs educators often incorrectly assume that student affairs professionals understand all male students. Nevertheless, extensive literature on the development of male college students exists on several overarching concepts including hegemonic masculinity and gender role conflict.

The notion of masculinity holds various meanings depending on the social context. According to Coles (2008), a wide variety of subfields exist within the field of masculinity, including “the field of gay masculinity, the field of aged masculinity, [and] the field of black masculinity” (p.235). Hegemonic masculinity refers to “the dominant culture’s normative definition of masculinity” (Edwards & Jones, 2009, p. 211). Hegemonic masculinity is expressed through misogyny, homophobia, violence, episodic binge drinking, limiting relationships with other men, a loss of true self, and the overrepresentation of men as judicial offenders on college campuses.

The traditional definition of hegemonic masculinity has the central purpose of the subordination of women in part through marginalizing some men, and, consequently, limiting all men (Edwards & Jones, 2009). This concept is not necessarily considered “normal,” and a minority number of men may express it (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). However, as Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) explained, the traditional
definition of hegemonic masculinity was normative and embodied “the currently most honored way of being a man, it required all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimated the global subordination of women to men (p. 832).” Subfields within the overall field of masculinity also exist when looking more specifically at international research (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). For example, Gutman formulated the Mexican masculine identity, “machismo” which has developed over time and “was interwoven with the development of Mexican nationalism, masking enormous complexity in the actual lives of Mexican men” (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 835). In a qualitative study of 68 men at a large private institution conducted by Frank Harris III, participants who identified as African American revealed that, as men of color, the norms of their race require that they express a “very strong or dominant masculine presence” (Harris & Edwards, 2010, p. 51).

Gender role conflict (GRC) is “a condition in which socialized gender roles have negative consequences on the individuals and others” (Wester, 2007, p. 297). Not all men fit the role of hegemonic masculinity, and individuals deciding whether to fit into this identity are considered to be suffering from male gender role conflict. Common patterns of GRC include success, power, competition, and restricted emotionality. Males encountering gender role conflict also experience restricted affectionate behavior between men such as the avoidance of verbally expressing love between fathers and sons. The commonly recognized tendency for men to “put their career ahead of their family” is also considered as a pattern of male gender role conflict, described as men’s conflict between work and family relationships (Wester, 2007, p. 297).
In a study examining gender role conflict from the perspective of male college students, Edwards and Jones (2009) interviewed ten college men at a large, East Coast research university. Several common themes were found in the participating students’ gender identity development. First, participants of the study described the expectations of society for men to be rigid, limiting, and gradually more complex over time. Consistent with current literature, the expectations included “…being aggressive, responsible, the breadwinner, in a position of authority, rational, strong, successful, tough, and breaking the rules” (Edwards & Jones, 2009, p.215). Many of these characteristics, such as rational and “breaking the rules” could be considered as contradictory of one another, which supports the notion that males often feel conflicted about their social identity.

Additional themes from the study conducted by Edwards and Jones (2009) supported previous literature, and one significant theory emerged from the interview findings. When asked to describe how he performed to meet the expectations of society for men, one participant explained it as if it were the process of wearing a mask or “putting my man face on” (p.214). According to Edwards and Jones (2009), “putting on a mask covered aspects of [the students’] true selves that did not meet society’s expectations and presented to society an image that did not fit the expectations” (p.216).

Edwards conducted an additional study with Harris, utilizing open-ended interviews as well as focus groups with college men from large public and private institutions, exploring the participants’ concepts of “what it meant for them to be a man, how their understandings of what being a man meant changed over time, and the influences that prompted these changes” (Harris & Edwards, 2010, p.46). The findings from this piece further supported Edwards’ notion of male students feeling pressure to
mask aspects of themselves in order to perform to external expectations of them as men, particularly cultural norms of what it means to be a man (Harris & Edwards, 2010). For the male participants, performing to these expectations often meant proving “their manhood by partying and not preparing for class” (Harris & Edwards, 2010, p.47).

Related to expectations, as previously mentioned, a major expectation for males, especially as college students, is to party and drink alcohol excessively. However, in addition to the pressure to party, participants of the study also admitted to feeling the need to prepare for their lives after graduating (Edwards & Jones, 2009). They felt they needed to make their academics a priority through frequent studying, attending class regularly, focusing on their grade point average (GPA), as well as taking on internships and creating a resume. According to Edwards and Jones (2009), “Negotiating the external pressure to party and feeling an internal need to prepare was central to the participant’s experience as college men” (p.217).

Harris and Edwards (2010) revealed several definitions the male participants used for what it means to be a man or masculine including “being respected,” “being confident and self-assured,” “assuming responsibility,” “embodying physical prowess,” and fulfilling “the traditional breadwinner role” (p.48). Men’s concepts of masculinity are shaped by pre-college gender socialization, including messages from peers, parents, and involvement in youth sports as well as perceptions of campus culture. Activities men regularly engaged in with other men, which perpetuated their concepts of masculinity include binge drinking, playing video games, watching and discussing sports, and sharing the details of sexual relationships (Harris & Edwards, 2010).
The interviews conducted by Harris and Edwards (2010) demonstrated several consequences of hegemonic masculinity. First, because one of the highly-accepted ways to affirm masculinity in men’s peer groups was to demean and degrade women, male college students would often objectify women in conversations with male peers, although they admitted “their attitudes and behaviors did not always reflect their authentic beliefs and feelings about women” (Harris & Edwards, 2010, p.52). These interactions made it difficult for men to have open conversations with male peers about desiring to have genuine relationships with women. These men, consequently, found their romantic relationships with women to be fulfilling, authentic and free from the pressure they experienced in other male interactions.

Similarly, a second consequence of hegemonic masculinity revealed by Harris and Edwards (2010) was limited connectedness with other males, including fathers and closer friends. Fathers and closer male friends were frequently the individuals who set the expectations that perpetuated hegemonic masculinity. Male participants interviewed by Harris and Edwards (2010) described the great anxiety they experienced when they failed to meet those expectations and therefore disappointed the male individuals closest to them.

Harris and Struve (2009) further explored findings from the Edwards and Harris (2010) interviews, identifying several factors affecting male behaviors and norms in college. A campus diverse in race, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation led to college men gaining “richer and more complex ideas about gender and masculinity” (Harris & Struve, 2009, p.5). In an environment with peers of varying backgrounds, the male students were able to see and experiences their differences, thus
seeing who they really are. A second factor identified by Harris and Struve (2009) was the strong presence of organizations perceived by students as more patriarchal including student athletic teams and fraternities. According to Harris and Struve (2009), “The high visibility and success of [the institution]’s fraternity system and men’s sports teams fostered a perception within the larger male campus community that these men were more popular and respected than other men on campus” (p. 5). The behaviors and attitudes expressed by these men, therefore, determined the norms for male students on campus. Finally, an extremely competitive campus culture was found to lead to the pressure for male students to constantly outperform their male peers in academic as well asocial endeavors, which often led to unhealthy consequences including binge drinking, high anxiety, and behavioral incidents.

Current Men’s Initiatives

The benefits of campus engagement and the unique issues facing male college students demonstrate a clear need for university-run programs and services nourishing male engagement. There are a limited number of men’s initiatives that currently exist at colleges and universities across the country. The following are notable examples of such initiatives.

The Center for Men’s Leadership and Service at Saint John’s University in Minnesota aims to provide a safe and respectful space for students to explore concepts of masculinity, share their personal stories, conduct research, and participate in various programs. The research component is a unique element to this initiative. In 2004, students began research projects on stories of international men, altering perceptions of masculinity, and men’s spirituality (Davis & Laker, 2004).
Saint Petersburg College, a Pinellas county community college with locations throughout Florida, established the Male Outreach Center with multiple-tier program focusing on responsibility, leadership, and respect (Male Outreach, n.d.). In addition to having strong male recruitment efforts in the middle schools and high schools, the Male Outreach Center also offers services such as scholarships, tutoring and job opportunities. In addressing the greater financial needs of certain students, the center offers book lending and laptop lending programs.

The Men’s Program at Pierce College in Washington includes a collaborative of faculty and staff focusing on educational opportunities (Davis & Laker, 2004). The Men’s Forum is a leaderless, male-student support group established in 1995. Beyond providing programs for current Pierce College students, the Men’s Program holds discussions on the topic of men’s issues at regional high schools and other postsecondary institutions.

Men’s initiatives are found on college campuses in several forms. In addition to the programs offered for all men, initiatives also exist addressing the topic of gender in its entirety. For example, Stony Brook University in New York has established the Wo/Men and Gender Resource Center providing educational opportunities, counseling services, and Outreach to the community (Center for Prevention, n.d.). The Men’s Project at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire is hosted by the Center for Women and Gender (Davis & Laker, 2004). The project focused on programs with the goals of promoting affirming growth and development of men's identity and preventing sexual violence. The Men's Project offers events on the transition into adulthood for middle school students, hosting two companion programs, "Boys Speak Out" and “Sister to Sister," which
explore issues of dating, self-esteem, communicating with peers, and several other relevant topics (Davis & Laker, 2004, p. 55).

Additionally, men’s initiatives are found at colleges and universities not in the form of specific offices or center, but, instead in the form of support groups hosted by campus departments such as multicultural centers or offices for student advocacy. One such example is The Aurora Center for Advocacy and Education (TAC) at the University of Minnesota which provides crisis intervention to victims of relationship violence, sexual assault, and stalking and harassment (Aurora Center, n.d.). The Aurora Center also hosts a men’s leadership group to host dialogue on men’s issues and to empowering male college students to address sexism and sexual violence.

Current literature on student involvement, co-curricular service-learning, and issues facing male college students provides a conceptual framework for this thesis study. It has been established that campus involvement, including co-curricular service-learning, has proven benefits to a student’s success while in college and beyond (Astin, 1999). The overall problem addressed by this thesis is that male college students are struggling in the campus environment as they cope with their gender identity development. As described by Harris and Edwards (2010), “external pressures and expectations to perform hegemonic masculinity, which were learned and internalized during periods of pre-college gender socialization and reinforced in college” prevents even the male college students who readily admit to engaging in destructive behaviors from being their true selves (p. 56). Quantitative literature concerning the gender gap has emerged more recently (Sax, 2008). Nevertheless, in order to adequately address issues facing male college students, Capraro and O’Neil, well-known scholars writing literature on college
men’s issues, have called for further “qualitative explorations of college men’s gender identity development” (Harris & Edwards, 2010, p.44). By exploring motivations for campus engagement for male college students, this thesis will identify potential reasons why there is a disparity for campus engagement for male college students.
Chapter 3: Design and Methodology

This chapter outlines the design and methodology for this study. The principal question of why male college students choose to get involved in co-curricular activities focused on leadership and service was explored through semi-structured interviews. The rationale for selecting male members of the SERV (Students Engaged in Responsible Volunteerism) Team is also provided.

Terms Operationally Defined

As mentioned in the review of pertinent literature, involvement is defined as the amount of energy both psychologically and physically that a student devotes to the academic experience (Astin, 1999). Service-learning is defined as a teaching and learning strategy that integrates instruction and reflection with meaningful community service (Keen & Hall, 2009). The concept of hegemonic masculinity refers to the principle that men expressing certain attitudes and behaviors are placed above women and some men (Harris & Edwards, 2010). Male college students are pressured to meet expectations and norms of society in order to prove themselves as men.

Rationale for Qualitative Approach

Qualitative methods are necessary in order to best address the research questions for this study. According to Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2009), qualitative researchers assert that “all meaning is situated in a particular perspective or context, and because
different people and groups often have different perspectives and contexts, the world has many different meanings, none of which is necessarily more valid or true than another” (p.7). This study aimed to gain an understanding of the experiences of a group of six male college students on the SERV Team and to explore how they made meaning from those experiences. This study aimed to gain an understanding of how these students, and these students alone, defined the concepts of community service, what it means to be a man, and what it means to be a man at Ohio State. This study focused on the perspectives and contexts of only these students; not all students on the SERV Team or all students at this institution. Additionally, qualitative methods are most appropriate in order to view those perspectives and contexts from the two lenses of how the men perceived that society saw them and of how the men perceived themselves. Time-intensive, in-depth interviews were important to adequately gain an understanding of the SERV Team students’ experiences.

Data Sample

In order to investigate the motivations behind student involvement in leadership and service, one student organization with the primary mission of leadership and service was chosen as the focus of this study. The SERV Team, standing for Students Engaged in Responsible Volunteering, is a cohort program of 21 undergraduate and graduate students. The SERV Team is advised and funded by the student union and student activities office at a large, Midwestern, Research 1 institution. SERV Team-sponsored programs include single-day volunteer projects alternative break service trips, issue awareness-raising programs, and ongoing volunteer referrals for students.
Students on the SERV Team most often not only have a passion for community service but strong leadership skills along with event development and production, delegation, and time management skills. There is a wide range of class rank with students on the SERV Team from first years to graduate/professional students. The SERV Team’s applicant pool is a prime example of the disparity between male and female college student participation, with females being the overwhelming majority in applicant numbers. In Spring Quarter 2010, of the sixty-seven total applicants for the SERV Team, only about twenty-four percent of the applicants were male students (B. Savarese, May 17, 2010, personal communication). Out of the eleven total male students on the SERV Team, six were interviewed for this study.

Methodology

The methodology for this study involved in-depth, semistructured interviews with six male students. In the Harris (2008) study, in-depth semistructured interviews were conducted with 12 undergraduate men in order to explore their socially-constructed concepts of masculinity and gender performance. With similar research questions to this study, the interview protocol for Harris (2008) was used as a model for this thesis. Please refer to the Appendix for the interview protocols used by Harris (2008) and the adapted protocol used for this thesis.
Chapter 4: Data Collection

Data collection for this study was conducted with careful consideration of the role of the researcher and appropriate data management strategies. This chapter outlines the data collection process and considerations for this study. Trustworthiness and ethics were maintained through methods also outlined in this chapter.

*Instrumentation*

The interview design collected qualitative data on male students on the SERV Team. Once recorded, transcripts from the interviews were analyzed to look for common themes, expressions, and viewpoints in each of the responses. As common with data collection strategies for most qualitative studies, data was analyzed immediately after the first interview was completed, rather than waiting for all interviews to be completed. As a result of analyzing data throughout the process, the researcher was able to collect data what is most relevant to the research questions by re-framing questions when needed after each interview.

*Role of the Researcher*

Seeking approval from certain parties was necessary in order to conduct interviews with students on the SERV Team. First, the staff advisors of the SERV Team were contacted by email with a letter attached and signed by the three co-investigators of this study: Katie Krajny and Dr. Don Stenta (co-investigators) and Dr. Ada Demb, the
Principal Investigator. The SERV Team advisors granted documented permission to contact the students and request their participation.

Once permission was obtained from the SERV Team advisors, approval was then sought from Behavioral and Social Sciences Institutional Research Board (IRB) at the university. Due to the nature of the interviews, in December 2009 the IRB granted exemption from review for this research protocol.

Data Management Strategies

All information was collected anonymously by the researcher. The researcher worked in the same office with the SERV Team advisors. Thus, it was important to ensure that any information or opinions provided in the interviews were not shared nor made available to the SERV Team advisors. First, audiotapes and transcripts from interviews were kept in a locked drawer in the researcher’s office. Pseudonyms were used to identify participants in the study, and no one else had access to the code. SERV Team advisors were not permitted to view raw data to prevent violations of confidentiality and anonymity. Once the study was completed, audiotapes were destroyed and only the transcripts with pseudonyms were retained.

Data Analysis Strategies

Notes, transcripts, and recordings from the interviews were analyzed using narrative research strategies described in Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2009), identifying common themes in the participants’ behavior, observations and viewpoints, and potentially coding for qualitative data. The researcher considered the following questions when examining the data during the data collection: 1) Is the research question still answerable or worth answering? and 2) Are the data collection techniques catching the
kind of data desired and filtering out the undesired data? (p. 448). Once data collection
was complete, the analysis was based on the process of induction, starting with a large
data set and progressively narrowing findings down to what is most important and key to
answering the research questions.

Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2009) outlined the following three-step process, which
was used to analyze the qualitative research data. First, the researcher read and wrote
memos about all the field notes, transcripts, and comments made by the researcher, which
constituted a research journal. Second, the researcher developed “thorough and
comprehensive descriptions of the participants, the setting, and the phenomenon studies
to convey the rich complexity of the research” (p.450). Third, the qualitative researcher
classified the data in order to compare and make connections between concepts, asking
key questions, and creating a concept map (Gay, Mills, and Airasian, 2009).

Trustworthiness Features and Ethical Considerations

This project involved the use of interview procedures that ensured participant
confidentiality. The research did not place the participants at risk of civil/criminal
liability or of being damaged in terms of the subjects’ financial standing, employability,
or reputation. According to Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2009), “qualitative researchers can
establish trustworthiness of their research by addressing the credibility, transferability,
dependability, and confirmability of their studies and findings” (p. 375). In order to
establish credibility, the researcher had a prolonged engagement with the students
through interacting with them in the office of the student union and serving as an advisor
to the SERV Team. As the SERV Team advisor, the researcher established an advisor-
student relationship with all but two of the students interviewed for this study. By
including context-relevant descriptions, another researcher is able to better understand the study, which thereby established transferability. For example, when explaining the research design and methodology in Chapter 3, it was therefore necessary to include as much detail as possible. Dependability, or the stability of the data, was ensured through a written description of each process of the research, including typed transcriptions of all of the interviews, using the same process for each interview. Dependability was also ensured by making the advising faculty aware of the research processes utilized in this study.

Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2009) identified several other strategies to ensure validity and trustworthiness in qualitative research including using peer debriefing, establishing structural corroboration or coherence, practicing reflexivity, and practicing triangulation, which also ensures confirmability. Triangulation involves using multiple methods of data collection and analysis to view the data from a larger view and check information. Reflexivity involves intentionally revealing assumptions or biases that may cause the researcher to present data in a certain way. For example, it was important for the researcher to acknowledge any biases she might have as a woman since she is studying the experiences of men.
Chapter 5: Findings

Interviews with the student participants provided insight to the perspective of the typical male college student as well as unique considerations for this particular subgroup of the student population at this institution. This chapter outlines the background of the participants, the history of the SERV Team, the participants’ involvement in the SERV Team, and their concept of community service. Additionally, this chapter shares the perceptions of the study participants regarding their concepts of male identity, expectations for men in society and male college students, as well as priorities for male college students.

Background on the Participants

For this study, six male college students who were members of the SERV (Students Engaged in Responsible Volunteerism) Team were interviewed. In order to ensure their information was held in confidence, the students were asked to select a pseudonym to use for their transcripts. While most students chose names typical to males, one student chose a more discrete name: Participant A. The chosen names of the participants were as follows: Participant A, Victor, Chris, John, Tom, and Herb. One of the participants majored in Operations and Logistics Management, one participant majored in Sport and Leisure Studies, one majored in Chemical Engineering, and three majored in science fields including Molecular Genetics and Microbiology. Two of the
participants were Indian American and four were Caucasian. Among the participants were four seniors, one junior, and one sophomore.

In addition to the SERV Team, these students are also involved in several other student organizations and extra-curricular commitments. Every student interviewed had at least one other commitment outside of academics, and these commitments ranged from serving as the president or founder of a student group to working part-time as a campus tour guide, or resident advisor or managers in the residence halls on campus. Participants were members of student organizations such as ethnic/cultural groups, major-focused organizations, honor societies, or other service clubs. Several participants also conducted research.

*History of the SERV Team*

The SERV Team was established in 2006 by student union staff working primarily in the areas of community service and outreach. The student union at this university has a long tradition of organizing community service programs for the student body. SERV Team works closely with their professional staff advisors to develop and implement a series of service-related events and programs. The SERV Team also creates new programs that work to meet the needs of both students of the institution and the surrounding community.

SERV Team members are responsible for tasks such as creating relationships with community agencies and providing monthly service opportunities to campus members in specific topical service areas (including, but not limited to, housing issues, hunger and homelessness, education, and environmental awareness). Staff selecting members of the SERV Team seek current students who possess the following:
- A commitment to service and social justice
- A willingness to learn, an open mind, and critical thinking skills
- Ability to work well in both a team environment and independently
- A sense of humor, flexibility, and dependability

Professional staff advising the SERV Team shared that SERV Team members have the opportunities to learn how to create, plan, and implement large scale community service projects, to define their personal preferences for meaningful civic engagement, to lead other students in activities that appreciate the importance of diverse cultures and communities, and to define their own passions, motivations, and beliefs (R. Holmes, personal communication May 7, 2010).

*Involvement in the SERV Team*

When asked how the participants defined the mission of SERV Team, they viewed the SERV Team as an organization that creates and facilitates service opportunities for others, therefore developing its members as leaders while serving others. Tom described the mission of the SERV team as the following: “SERV Team’s mission is to promote service opportunities on campus for all students in hopes to show people how to have a life-long service aspect of their life, making as many great opportunities on campus as we can” (See Appendix F for full interview). In terms of the structure of the group, they mentioned there was no hierarchy, and several of the participants pointed that out in the interviews as a positive aspect of the organization. They liked that all of the members were at the level and found that structure to be more conducive to working together more smoothly.

Every member of the SERV Team was paired up with another member and assigned a project to develop and plan. These projects include on-going service activities such as tutoring programs for kindergarten students in the local community, and Buck-I-
SERV: The alternative breaks program. Buck-I-SERV provides opportunities for students to participate in service trips during breaks in the academic year including Winter Break, Spring Break, and in the summer. Projects for SERV Team members also include one-time events such as Community Commitment and Martin Luther, Jr. King Day of Service, which are two single day programs sending students out into the community for one-time service projects.

The interview participants shared a variety of reasons for why they chose to join the SERV Team. Many students had attempted to commit to community service work through other extra-curricular activities including student government and other student organizations but found them unsatisfying and unsubstantial. From their perspective, unlike other student groups, SERV Team took community service seriously and created meaningful opportunities for others to serve as well. One student, Participant A, commented on how he believed the SERV Team to take community service more seriously because a student needed to apply in order to be a part of the group. A student had to prove they were dedicated to service in order to be accepted into the group. When considering applying, Participant A was impressed by the work and drive of current members of the SERV Team, who were also male college students, and friends he made through other extra-curricular involvements.

Other participants were not especially passionate about service or looking for a new opportunity for community outreach when entering college. However, they saw the SERV Team as way of being a leader and helping others. According to Victor, SERV Team was “an interesting opportunity to do really good things as a leader.” Participants
also chose to join the SERV Team after acquiring an interest in participating in community service while at college. Participant Herb explained:

“I never really liked [service] prior to high school but something about it now just sticks out to me, and I wanted to follow along with it. I think when I was in high school I was more selfish and maybe that has to do with socialization or just being young. And once I got to Ohio State and started taking classes and learning different things about the world and getting a better perspective of how life is for other people and realizing it’s definitely not bad for me and that I should do what I can.”

All of the interview participants found out about the opportunity to apply to be a member of SERV Team through other students currently involved in SERV or through those who were aware of the organization. One participant found out about SERV Team while participating on a Buck-I-SERV trip, and he found out about Buck-I-SERV through a friend.

When asked about the participants’ favorite experiences with SERV Team, the majority of the students mentioned retreats taken as a group. When describing his experience on a recent SERV Team retreat, Chris remarked:

“I found it to be a very fulfilling and worthwhile experience, because you sort of laid out foundations for the group, what we wanted to accomplish, what we wanted our vision to be over the next year, even though we sort of had some trouble implementing it. But that’s not really the point I focus on. I focus on the point that we all got together and talked about what we wanted for the SERV Team.”

Participants in the interviews also mentioned the service projects as some of their favorite experiences. Participant A mentioned the tutoring program as a valued experience because while he also served as the coordinator of the program, having the opportunity to tutor allowed him to “see everything come together every week and sort of see how much of an impact [they] are having.”
Concept of Community Service

The interview participants shared several definitions for their concept of community service. Some participants provided straight-forward, brief explanations, defining community service as “devoting your time to the community” or “providing for others in need.” Other participants offered in-depth, more abstract definitions. Participants viewed the concept of community service as having short-term as well as long-term consequences, but participants varied in whether they described service as people-driven or issues-driven. For example, participant Tom explained, “Community service starts with realizing how blessed we are and doing our part to return the favor to everybody else.” Tom showed an interest in how service affects people. Victor had a broader approach to defining community service, explaining it means “doing an act in a global sense that is helpful and beneficial to everybody else.”

The remainder of this chapter outlines the findings’ essences and core categories exploring male identity development: the Concept of Male Identity and the Priorities of Male College Students according to both the participants’ perceptions of societal views and the participants’ perceptions of how they personally fit into the views of society.

Concept of Male Identity

The concept of male identity was the first essence, or overall topic, discussed by the interview participants when asked about their experiences as a college male. The concept of male identity refers to the characteristics, thoughts, and behaviors the male participants illustrated when asked to describe what it means to be a man. Through the participants’ disclosure of perceived societal expectations, personal stories, and career aspirations, two core categories emerged from the interviews: 1) The interview
participants’ perceptions of societal views and 2) The interview participants’ perceptions of self. The participants in the study revealed that they were influenced to look, act, dress, think, and behave in a specific way, based on society’s view of what it means to be a man. Therefore, the participants’ perceptions of societal views are the first core category emerging from the participants’ concept of male identity.

**Perceptions of societal views**

After the male students were asked questions regarding their involvement on the SERV Team, their concept of community service, and other extra-curricular activities, the next portion of the interview focused on a series of questions regarding their concept as a male college student. First, the participants were asked to share defining characteristics they would use to describe what it means to be a man.

When asked the blunt question, “what are defining characteristics for what it means to be a man?” all six of the participants paused for an extensive amount of time before providing an answer, and their hesitation to respond to the question had several potential reasons. It is possible that the students were not prepared to answer the question because they might not have been asked that question recently or ever before. Perhaps they had never had a conversation informally with peers, members of their family, or in a classroom setting.

A second potential reason for the participants’ hesitation to this question could be attributed to the researcher. The researcher, both as a staff member in the student union and as a female, may have unintentionally caused pressure on the participants to feel as though they should answer in a particular manner. Although at the beginning of each interview the researcher assured the participants that the interview room was a safe space
for expressing true feelings and perceptions without consequence, it is possible that the participants thought they were expected to answer in a manner that was favorable towards women or towards the university due to the gender and professional roles of the researcher. For example, perhaps the participants felt they should say that they did not exhibit behaviors typical for the hegemonic male because those behaviors are often degrading toward women. Other potential biases of the researcher and limitations of the study are further discussed in Chapter 6.

In each of the interviews, the participants credited the characteristics they shared to describe what it means to be a man as the product of influences from the media such as movies, television, and advertisements, the participants’ socialization through their family upbringing or school setting, and the societal norms emerging historically. One participant focused on the influence of Christianity, which he interpreted as perpetuating traditional family values such as the men being the sole providers for the family and heterosexuality as the only acceptable sexual orientation in the eyes of God. Due to these influences, the participants’ responses when asked what it means to be a man can be divided into four categories: how men are expected to look and behave; what men are expected to do; what men are expected not to do; and expectations of college men.

Expectations of appearance and behavior. Media, socialization, and society as a whole have signaled several messages to the male participants about how a man should look and behave. According to Herb, a man should have visible muscles, be a “big, burly dude,” have a deeper voice, and be “all about sports.” Related to behavior, participants of the study explained that men should be stoic, cry less than women, have less conflict than women, and be less emotionally-affected by others. Herb described the typical man as “a
bully that would beat up anybody, take your lunch money, show off his body, and be the alpha male.”

Expectations of the man’s role. Regarding what a man is expected to do, participants listed off actions such as work out all the time, be able to make a decision, be the bread-winner and provider for the family, assume a leadership position, be good with numbers and directions. Speaking on how family influences shape conceptualization of the male figure, Chris explained, “In my family, the males are like the primary bread-winners, the male’s always planning the family gathering, always talking about stuff, and it’s always just the way it’s been for like my whole life.”

Expectations of what men should not do. In addition to the participants having an awareness of what men should do according to societal norms, they also were aware of actions and behaviors men should not do. Participants described the following actions as not masculine: cooking or cleaning, being creative, and wanting to look nice, which were instead characterized as behaviors typical of females. Herb added “having a good time,” high-pitched laughing, “getting coffee or tea with a friend” as additional non-masculine behaviors.

Expectations of college men. When asked to further elaborate on the definition of a man to examine the identity of a male student at the large, Midwestern institution at which they were enrolled, the participants offered responses consistent to each other in terms of similar observations and consistent with their perception of males in society. First, participants described the typical man at the institution as focusing more on socializing with other students and partying. According to Chris:

“To be honest with you, I feel like males tend to focus on maybe the social aspects of college more. Maybe on like the social events that may or may not
involve illegal activities. You know, I feel that they do that maybe a lot more than females do. Not saying that females don’t do it, but I feel like that’s what a male has to do and it’s sort of, I feel, becoming like a trend against involvement to be like a male on campus.”

Victor supported Chris’s observations, and when he was asked how he would describe the typical college male, without hesitation he said, “I see a dude getting wasted on a Saturday night.”

In addition to alcohol consumption, other common activities for male students at the institution included working out at the recreational facilities, playing video games, watching television, playing sports and watching sports, especially football. Participant A observed college men at the institution frequently “going after girls” or trying to engage in sexual acts with as many college women as possible. While all the participants admitted these acts occur at this institution, two participants mentioned that because there was a wide variety of college males at the institution, it was difficult to identify the typical college male.

On the topic of academics, participants did not notice a huge emphasis placed on studying for college males at the institution. They also described males as generally underachieving, apathetic, and lazy. While the media and societal norms continue to pressure men to act or think in a certain way, participants asserted that in college, peers serve as a significant influence for male students. On the topic of male students’ apathy, Chris explained:

“If I can make a statement of males at [this institution], it’s that they’re just kind of ‘Eh..I’ll just go through the motions.’ And then that’s kind of just it. I feel like I’m accomplishing more than your average male student at [this institution], but even still, I feel like I could do a little more. So I feel it’s just a sense of underachieving. Maybe the majority of my male student counterparts may not acknowledge it, but it’s something that I’ve noticed and I feel that the female community is much more
involved and when I compare myself to them and how much they’re accomplishing, I feel that we’re taking a backseat big time.”

Perceptions of self

The second core category of the participant’s perceptions of self refers to how the students view themselves, their personal career goals, and their sense of self. In each interview, the male students spoke more in-depth about the behaviors and actions they saw as unacceptable for men in society or at their university than those that are acceptable, drawing from their own experiences. Tom felt there was a disconnect between him and society, using the example of how he loves to dance:

“I love dancing, and I would say it’s not a typical manly sort of thing by normal standards. But I think in my mind it takes a man to do something confidently and not care what people think…. I would say we are in an age where the definition of a man is changing... Maybe it’s because I am in college and I am blind to the rest of the world… But I would say it’s changing in that people around me seem to be more open. I don’t know. Maybe it is just me changing.”

Tom’s thoughts reveal the struggle he experiences with the disconnect between his actual identity and the identity society has created for male college students. Through commenting on the world changing around him and the possibility that he is changing, it is clear that Tom has created a new definition of a male college student and is slowly gaining comfort with the definition he has created for himself.

Contradicting the norm. The participants were asked to explain a situation in which they contradicted to norms of society for male students. Their examples included studying instead of going out on the weekend, lacking an interest in sports teams, and choosing not to drink. Tom, a resident advisor, spent an extensive amount of time making unique and nice-looking door decorations for this floor. He explained how surprised and confused his fellow resident advisors were that he was able to be creative as a man.
When speaking in general about what the participants see happening to men who contradict the norm, they shared that these individuals often feel excluded from the overall environment and are ridiculed by friends as well as strangers. College men who contradict the norm feel like they are missing out on the typical college male culture. For example, one of the three participants that identified choosing not to drink as a way in which he contradicts the norm described his challenges making male friends. Chris explained:

“I chose to stay away from alcohol as a student until I knew I would handle it responsibly when I turned the age of 21. So, as a male who doesn’t drink, I sort of felt that I was ostracized because everyone else was always drinking and were like ‘Oh, he doesn’t drink, don’t invite him. He’s no fun.’ And so I felt I was sort of ostracized to that effect.”

Although Chris did feel “ostracized” he credited this challenge with allowing him to make friends with whom he had more in common. He did not have a large number of friends, but he was able to establish a few meaningful relationships. Interview participants commented that most male college students prefer more superficial friendships over meaningful connections. Therefore, Chris exhibited contradicting the norms of male college students once again through his view that fewer meaningful relationships was more important to him than numerous, superficial friendships.

*Priorities of Male College Students*

*Perceptions of societal views*

The next portion of the interview explored the current priorities of the participants. When asked what campus activities college men typically participate in, the students mentioned athletic events such as running in 5K’s, playing intramural sports, any type of leadership position, and academic discipline-related organizations. Participants
also mentioned fraternities and student government as popular activities for college men.
The students perceived these campus activities as more popular among college men
because men like competition but also enjoy “anything that’s brainless or requires less
energy.” Although none of the participants were in fraternities, they perceived fraternities
as a way for men to find a tight-knit group of friends or, as Herb described, “a place for
guys to find a little home on a large campus.” Participants also identified activities like
involvement in fraternities, student government or a holding any type of leadership
position as potentially looking good on a resume for a future career. When asked why
these campus activities were prioritized over other activities for men, Chris explained,

“I think maybe it’s going back to what society expects of them. I mentioned
earlier, like in college, what males are supposed to do, student organizations don’t
fit into that picture very well. You don’t see Van Wilder going around and like,
well, he does plan campus programs and stuff, but not really to the effect that
we’re looking at.”

Several participants also commented that participation in community service is atypical
for college men. Victor explained, “Yeah, in terms of service, I would say that men aren’t
really involved. When I go to a service event it’s usually all female… I just feel like men
don’t care as much about those things, maybe they’re more selfish.” Victor’s perceptions
are supported by the attendance numbers consistently demonstrating female participants
as the overwhelming majority above male participants at service events coordinated by
the SERV Team in the past few years.

Comparison of priorities between men and women. When asked how the
priorities of male college students differ from the priorities of female students,
participants in the study initially commented that females have better time management
skills and are more organized. Participants believed female students are more successful
at prioritizing tasks and activities. John added that relationships are considered a higher priority because females “use their emotions more.” John observed, “the social organizations have more females and a lot of the career-focused organizations are more male.” Through this observation, John showed that the expectations of society were reinforced through male and female student involvement.

The consensus from the interviews is that women are more focused on studying and establishing relationships while men are more focused on career-oriented activities or maintaining their reputation as a man. One student mentioned he saw women at the library more than men. Chris commented:

“I sort of feel that goes back to the standard stereotype of females being more compassionate, caring, being there…the maternal instincts. I feel the males tend to be much more focused on the collective whereas the females are much more focused on the individual.”

As previously mentioned, participants perceive that college women are more focused on academics than their male counterparts. Herb provided one potential explanation for this trend:

“Education and college is sort of becoming feminized a little. With the whole male aspect of things, learning to be masculine and all that, it’s not a top priority for males to be good at school because they might be looked down upon by other males who aren’t as intelligent and are going to the workforce right after high school.”

**Perceptions of self**

Consistent with previous findings on the topic of male expectations and norms, interview participants revealed that their personal priorities were not necessarily in line with the priorities of the typical college male. Current goals of participants include gaining acceptance into medical school, their current major field of study, building their
resumes, completing a thesis study, gaining financial independence, and securing a job post-graduation. Herb determined his priorities according to following:

“I like to try to strike a balance between everything I have going on in my life. Sometimes it spreads me a little thin. It’d be better to do a couple things really great and spend a lot of time on them rather than ten things that are really average and I’ve kind of done that to myself.”

Although the male college students interviewed for this study revealed certain commonalities between their views of society and what they observe on their college campus, their interviews also revealed glaring disparities between their views of themselves and the views of society for male identity. Findings show that society’s view of how these college men should act does not consistently align with how these college men actually act. In the next chapter, the perceptions of the interview participants for society and for themselves will be compared to perceptions of male college students demonstrated in the current literature.
Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusions

This study explored the experiences of male students and the issues they experience on a college campus. The primary research questions were: Who are the male students who choose to participate in campus activities? Why do male students choose to participate in a campus activity involving leadership and service? Given the patterns in motivations, what are the broader implications for professionals in the field of higher education looking at student engagement? In this chapter, possible answers to these questions are shared based on the interviews conducted with male students on the SERV Team. The study findings are compared to the findings of current literature through a conceptual model examining the categories of the Concept of Male Identity and the Priorities of Male College Students according to the participants’ perceptions of societal views and of how they personally fit into the views of society.

Comparison of Study Results to Current Literature

The interviews with six male college students on the SERV Team were focused on the topics of service-learning, gender identity development, and issues facing college men in order to investigate why these college men have chosen to participate and leadership and community service-related activities. The interviews reinforced much of the current literature on service-learning. The interview participants’ observations and
perceptions of men, and male college students in particular, also reinforced the literature on societal expectations, hegemonic masculinity, and gender role conflict.

Regarding service-learning, all of the interview participants mentioned joining the SERV Team because they knew about it from a close friend or acquaintance. This supports the Jones and Hill (2003) study, which found that students were more likely to become involved in community service if they had friends who either participated in service directly or were involved in student organizations requiring community service. When describing the SERV Team’s mission and outcomes, several of the interview participants described their organization as facilitating service opportunities for others and reaching out to the community and those in need. Their observations reinforced the Keen and Hall (2009) study, which found service-learning to foster a sense of civic responsibility in students and make communities stronger.

Observations from the interview participants on the gender gap in higher education supported findings from Sax (2008). In their own experiences involved with various student organizations including the SERV Team, there were more females than males involved in all of their groups. On the topic of academics, the interview participants shared observations that females studied more often than males and that females were more likely to be organized and focused on academics than males. Overall, the male participants asserted that females are more likely to perform at a high academic level than their male counterparts, which was an observation that also supported Sax (2008).

The participants’ perceptions of the concept of a man reinforced the literature concerning hegemonic masculinity. Their observations of men having deeper voices,
being “macho” and stoic reflect the characteristics of the hegemonic male described by Edwards and Jones (2009). Interview participants also reinforced the expectations for college men as described by current literature. The participants described expectations as including the necessity for the college man to strive to be the breadwinner for the family, follow sports teams, and heavy drinking, which were all mentioned in the findings of previous studies (Edward & Harris, 2010). When asked about which current groups male students commonly do participate, six out of the seven interview participants mentioned groups such as fraternities, the student cheering section for the football team, and student government. Harris and Struve (2009) referred to these types of organizations as patriarchal in nature for the reasoning that the masculine norms dominant to a college campus were most often characterized by the norms of these organizations. Therefore, the observations of the students in this study regarding the groups college men typically join are consistent with the findings of Harris and Struve (2009).

Although this study reinforced existing findings on college males, the most significant discovery from the interviews with males on the SERV Team was that these men who choose to get involved in leadership and community service-related activities do not reflect the behaviors and mindset of the hegemonic male. The participants were asked if they had ever been in a situation during which they contradicted the norms of society for men, and all of them cited multiple examples. Three of the participants expressed themselves as not exhibiting any typical male behaviors and noticed a significant disconnect between how they define themselves as individuals and how society defined them as male college students. Through their perceptions and experiences, it appears that the male students who are involved in organizations with
female students making up the majority of the membership commonly contradict the
norms of the hegemonic college male in other ways as well.

*Incongruence of Perceptions*

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the findings from the interviews were divided into
two essences: the Concept of Male Identity and the Priorities of Male College Students.
From each of these essences emerged two core categories: 1) The interview participants’
perceptions of societal views and 2) The interview participants’ perceptions of self. A
conceptual model was developed to demonstrate the incongruence of the male
participants’ perceptions of societal views with their own perceptions for both the
Concept of Male Identity and the Priorities of Male College Students:

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<th>Perception of Societal Views</th>
<th>Perception of Self</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Concept of Male Identity</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Priorities of Male College Students</strong></td>
<td>Perception of Societal Views</td>
<td>Perception of Self</td>
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This conceptual model illustrates the distinct differences that exist between what
the interview participants’ perceived as societal views for men and their own views for
men. The most significant discovery from this study was that these male college students
who participated in campus activities and exhibit behaviors that are atypical for male
students (i.e. performing community service, dancing, devoting extensive time to
studying) have perceptions of themselves that do not align with what they believe to be
the perceptions of society. For example, Participant A, who started a clothing line, which
is a venture that is not typical for college men, believed men should not have one-night-
stands or be sexually promiscuous. On the other hand, as he revealed in his interview, society and his male peers have encouraged men to engage in risky sexual behavior.

The findings from this study combined with current literature create the overall picture of the challenges faced by male college students with gender identity development. Personal experiences and observations from the interview participants described discrepancies among all categories, which is illustrated through the current issues of college men as described in the review of current literature in Chapter 2. Based on the experiences and perceptions of the interview participants, it appears that the incongruence between the perceptions of these men and their perceived perceptions of society can be found among many types of men on campus beyond those who participate in leadership opportunities and community service. The challenges and negative pressure these men experience as a result of this incongruence is described in current literature as gender role conflict theory (Wester, 2007). It is the responsibility of professionals working in higher education to support college males as they struggle with this condition throughout their college career.

Implications for Practice

At the end of each interview, the participants were asked to share any recommendations they had for college staff and faculty in addressing the gender gap and better supporting male college students. Several implications can be made for practitioners in higher education by combining findings from this study and implications shared in existing literature.
Men-only discussions

As a result of the tendency for new first year students to have misperceptions of college rooted in popular culture, it is important for the university to provide an opportunity for them to share current perceptions of the college environment and come to understand a more accurate description of their environmental realities. A secure atmosphere must be created in order for first year males to openly discuss these misperceptions. As previously mentioned in the Findings chapter, the interview participants’ pausing and hesitation gave the appearance that they did not expect or were not prepared for the questions of what it means to be a man and what it means to be a man at Ohio State.

After each interview for all six of the participants, it was apparent that they left the interview room deeply contemplating the topics brought up during the interview related to male identity development. All six of the participants let the researcher know they would give the questions asked more thought after the interview was over and would let the researcher know if any other ideas or thoughts came to mind. Two of the participants sent the researcher extensive emails one or two days after the interview with more ideas on why college men or struggling or how staff and faculty can better support them. Although it is acknowledged that the hesitation of the participants in answering these questions may be attributed to the roles of the researcher as a woman and as a staff member working at the student union, the findings of this study demonstrated a greater need for conversations to be facilitated with college males around the topics of college men and masculinities.
Thus, a men-only session during new student orientation led by upperclassmen is recommended on this topic (Harper, 2004). Davis (2002) supported the notion of a men-only session and recommended that a potential orientation session include media with gender-related messages, such as movies, reality television and sitcom video clips in order to “focus attention on both how gender roles are constructed and how to become a critical consumer of these messages.” (p. 519). While Harper et al. (2004) and Davis (2002) both supported the effectiveness of a men-only session, it is important to consider the possibility that transgender students may be attending orientation. It is recommended that a separate session on the subject of transgender transitional issues be offered as well. If a men-only session for orientation is not feasible, it is recommended that discussions on college men and masculinities be facilitated by professional staff in currently existing men-only organizations such as fraternities, men-only floors in residence halls, or athletic teams, or any pre-dominantly male organizations.

Recognition of positive behavior

Male college students often feel pressured to engage in risky behaviors such as physical assaults and underage consumption of alcohol in order to win the approval of their same-sex peers (Harper, Harris, & Mmeje, 2004). Harper et al. (2004) recommended that campus administrators recognize student organizations as well as individual students who represent positive masculine attitude and behaviors. Showcasing positive examples not only rewards those serving as healthy role models but also presents these healthy role models to students who have conflicted views. Interview participants for this study further supported the importance of positive male role models. Without positive examples to follow, students will most likely resort to perceptions from popular
culture and misperceptions of masculinity, often leading to negative behavior (Harper, Harris, & Mmeje, 2004).

**Academic performance**

Regarding study habits, participation in class discussions, attendance in office hours for faculty, as well as performance in courses, all six interview participants shared the observation that the expectations for male college students to perform are not as high as the expectations for female students. One participant mentioned that in office hours for a chemistry professor, he noticed that when male and female students were present in one room during group office hours, the professor devoted more of his attention to the female than the male students. The participant explained that favoritism had happened to some of his male classmates as well, which led to the male students not wanting to attend office hours again. By encouraging male college students to take more challenging classes (as opposed to the basic, 100-level required classes) and conduct research, faculty would be more likely to keep male college students engaged in their academic pursuits. However, the interview participants felt that the most effective way to encourage these positive behaviors and higher expectations was to reach out to the male students on a one-on-one basis, seeking them out individually and showing the faculty care about their success and academic performance.

**Developmental approach for judicial offenders**

When deciding a course of action to address judicial offenses, Harper, Harris, and Mmeje (2004) recommended actions should more often be developmental, not punitive. Harper et al. (2004) found that small group counseling approaches most effectively help students unpack their issues of gender identity and address their misperceptions. On an
annual basis, administrators should conduct analyses of on campus judicial trends through examining judicial statistics by gender in order to gain a realistic pattern of policy violations and to evaluate the effectiveness of current programs.

In order to address policy infractions and destructive behaviors, it is recommended that colleges and universities involve popular organizations for college men, including undergraduate fraternity chapters because Greek-letter organizations are often venues in which male college students are socialized toward specific behavioral norms, such as drinking. In addition to incorporating educational and discussion-based programs into new-member orientations and annual fraternity retreats, universities should also provide incentives for fraternity chapters to keep judicial violations low. Student Affairs administrators should provide educational and discussion-based programs for all faculty and staff of the institution so that every university official is trained to effectively support and challenge male students. The interview participants supported the educational-based response to judicial offenders as opposed to the punitive response. One participant, Chris, explained the following:

“Let’s say you were a first-year student in [a residence hall] and you got drunk and threw up in the hallway and you got documented. It happens all the time. You have a meeting with the hall director. The hall director needs to maybe ask ‘why did you partake in that behavior?’ and then turn that light bulb on like ‘oh, shoot, the reason I’m doing this is because of so and so…’ I don’t know what the reason is… If you at least were consciously or sub-consciously aware of why you were partaking in that behavior, like maybe administrators can help you find a better way to cope with it or exercise it.”

*Student involvement*

Current literature has shown the benefits of student involvement in campus activities (Astin, 1999) as well as the lack of male college students currently involved in such activities (Sax, 2009). Therefore, it is important for practitioners to better encourage
male college students to choose to get involved in student organizations and other extra-curricular activities. The interview participants provided several recommendations for practitioners on this topic. First, they observed that male college students were more likely to be apathetic and dismissive toward any broad form of marketing for campus-wide events and leadership opportunities. In order to combat that sense of apathy, the interview participants recommended marketing campus involvement with male-specific undertones. For example, if one was promoting a new leadership opportunity, it would be important to emphasize how that role could make students into stronger leaders and benefit them when looking for a job post-college, which are two concerns currently facing male students.

Second, along the same lines as the recommendation for more male role models, the participants also recommended getting currently involved male college students to recruit other males. Participant A explained, “The number one way people get involved or take those stepping stones through college is through support from elders or just other people that they know because nothing is more valuable than advice or suggestions from someone you trust.” The participants also felt that it was important to reach out to the male college students in their freshmen year to get involved on campus because for any college student, behaviors become fairly set in the first year, and the number of students who get involved reduces with each year they are in college. As Herb explained, “behaviors become set and the involvement circle becomes smaller each year.”

Limitations of the Study

There are several potential biases with this study. First, because the student conducting this thesis study works in the student union as a Graduate Administrative
Associate and served as an advisor to the SERV Team for two academic quarters in 2008, it was possible that the student personally knew the male students interviewed or that the students at least knew of the interviewer to some extent. The interviewer had previously met and interacted with three of the six participants. It was possible that having a previous personal connection to the interviewer may have affected three of the interview participants’ comfort level and responses to the questions.

Second, the interview identified as a female and because the interviews were focused on issues related to gender, it was possible that the male college students’ responses to the questions were dishonest or limited for fear that the students might be judged or looked down upon for sharing certain perceptions. However, at the beginning of the interview it as clear stated that no judgments would be made and that nothing the students said would affect their academic standing or their place in the SERV Team. From the interviewer’s perspective, the students appeared to answer very honestly and openly, but because the interviewer was a woman, it cannot be concluded that the participants felt no level of discomfort.

Third, it is important to consider the variance of the participants in age and developmental stage. No assessment was made of the participants’ level of cognitive development, and the developmental level could serve as a factor in how students answered certain questions, particularly in relation to the questions about male identity development. Furthermore, the participants were not asked to provide their sexual orientation, which could have also affected their responses to the question of how they contradict the norms of society. A final limitation to the study was the lack of ethnic/racial diversity in the sample. There were four white men and two Indian
American men interviewed, and perhaps the responses might have varied further had the sample been more diverse by race or ethnicity.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

Although this study reinforced existing literature in the fields of higher education and gender identity development, more scholarly work is needed in order to create a complete picture of the issues discussed in this study. Only six male college students were interviewed, and while they are the minority in relation to involved female students, there are many more involved male college students on campus. Therefore, it is recommended that a second study be conducted with a larger sample size of involved students.

An extensive amount of literature currently exists on the benefits of student involvement, particularly in service-learning activities, but there is a lack of literature on the motivations of college students to choose to get involved. As found in this study, exploring reasons why college students get involved is helpful in developing ways to promote involvement for others and in gaining an understanding of why other students are not.

It is also recommended that a study be conducted exploring the motivations and experiences of male college students not involved in campus activities. It would be beneficial to learn why these individuals choose to not be involved in these activities and to discover how they do choose to spend their time and why. Finally, more qualitative research is needed on the conceptualization of masculinity among specific groups, such as ethnic and socioeconomic, transgendered and homosexual students.
Conclusion

The perceptions and experiences of the male college students interviewed for this study demonstrated that gender identity development for college men is a growing issue. Scholarly work continues to grow on the subject, with Harper and Harris (2010) leading the way. Professionals in higher education are establishing men’s initiatives at colleges and universities across the country, making great progress towards closing the gender gap.

Nevertheless, the primary source of this gap in higher education does not begin at the college level. The source perpetuating ideals of the hegemonic male and unhealthy expectations for college men begins in the homes of men and women much younger than the typical college-age student. As explained by the interview participants for this study, societal norms are enforced through the student’s family, the media, and even elementary and post-secondary schools. Professionals in higher education can work tirelessly to dispel unrealistic expectations and combat the negative consequences of hegemonic masculinity, but the greater issue lies in society as a timeless, ubiquitous institution. Until society stops perpetuating these unhealthy norms, students, staff, faculty, and administrators in higher education will continue to be challenged to support struggling male college students.
References


Appendix A: Letter of Permission from the SERV Team Advisor
October 19, 2009

To Whom it May Concern:

Kathryn Krajny, Co-Principal Investigator of the research entitled: Gender and Campus Engagement, has explained the purpose of this study, the procedures to be followed, and the expected duration of participants.

I am writing to give consent for Kathryn Krajny’s access to the male students of the SERV Team for their participation in this study.

Bernie Savarese
Assistant Director, Ohio Union
Service & Outreach
Appendix B: Letter to the Participant
January 3, 2010

Dear Student,

I hope that you have enjoyed your Winter Break. I am graduate student here at The Ohio State University in the process of completing a master’s degree in Higher Education and Student Affairs Administration.

I am writing to request your participation in a research project as part of my master’s thesis. The goal of this project is to determine the reasons for male college students to participate in extracurricular activities related to leadership and service. My advisory committee has approved my research proposal and the study has been favorably reviewed by the Office of Responsible Research Practices at The Ohio State University. If you agree to participate in this study, we would like for you to do the following:

- One forty-five (45-60) minute interview (to take place at the beginning of Winter Quarter) that will be tape-recorded.
- One ninety (90) minute workshop exploring the personality with other male students on the SERV Team.
- At the end of the interview process, transcriptions of the interviews will be provided to you for your evaluation and clarification. These transcriptions will be made available to you by the end of Winter Quarter for your review and should take one sixty (60) minute session for you to read and review.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and will involve the time commitment noted above. You may withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. All information will be held in confidence. When I am transcribing interviews, I will use a pseudonym that you will select to ensure confidentiality. Quotes from your interviews may be used at times to illustrate points in my thesis and/or a published article, but at no time will any individuals be identified. Your decisions to participate or not to participate in this study will in no way impact your grades/academic success, class standing, or standing with the SERV Team.

To let me know if you would like to participate, please respond to this email or let me know by phone (614-688-4419) by Monday, January 18, 2010. If I do not hear from you by this date I will contact you by email or by phone to follow up. You may contact me at 614-688-4419 or by this email address if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Katie Krajny
Master’s Student
School of Educational Policy & Leadership

Dr. Donald Stenta
Visiting Assistant Professor

Dr. Ada Demb
Associate Professor
Appendix C: Invitation to Participate in Interviews
Hi Student,

Thanks so much for your willingness to participate in my research project!

The next step is for us to arrange an interview time! I was hoping we could set this up for a time with you within the next couple of weeks. Below is my availability. Feel free to just pick a time from this list and let me know what works best for you. We will have this interview in the Ohio Union at Ohio Stadium, and it should not last more than an hour. If you would prefer that we meet in the evening instead of during the day, I can send you some evening times as well.

<<dates and times>>

Thanks again!
Katie

Katie Krajny
<<email address>>
Appendix D: Interview Protocol
Interview Protocol

I am here to ask you some questions about the SERV Team, your concepts of leadership and community service and your concept of gender. I am most interested in your honest and immediate reactions to the following 15 questions. On some of the questions, I will want to know everything you think about the question, so I can repeat the questions if needed. There are no right or wrong answers, because I want to know about your specific experiences so far. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. All information will be held in confidence.

Before moving forward, please sign the consent form to indicate you would like to participate in this study.

Section A:
Derived from D. Stenta, 2001, Dissertation unpublished

First, I will ask you a series of questions related to your involvement with the SERV Team.

1. Consider your involvement on the SERV Team. Describe the organization to me in your own words.
   - What is the SERV Team’s mission?
   - What is your role on the SERV Team?
   - How did you first hear about the SERV Team?
   - Why were you interested in joining the SERV Team?

2. What is one of the best experiences you have had so far with the SERV Team (official or unofficial student organization activities)?

3. Are there other activities you are involved in?

4. What is your current concept of community service?

Section B:
Derived from F. Harris III, 2009, “Deconstructing Masculinity: A Qualitative Study of College Men's Masculine Conceptualizations and Gender Performance”

Next, I will ask you a series of questions regarding your perspective as a male college student.

5. What defining characteristics would you use to describe what it means to be a man? What factors influence the defining characteristics you associated with being a man?
6. Please share with me a story about the last time you and some of your male friends hung out together socially.

7. What is it like to be a male student at The Ohio State University?

8. What are considered to be “normal” behaviors of guys on behaviors of males on Ohio State’s campus? Who determines what is “normal?”

9. What happens to a guy who does not live up to the norms that have been established?

10. Can you describe an instance in which you behaved in ways that contradicted the norm?
    - What (if any) were the repercussions?

11. What campus activities are most popular among male college students? Why do you think these activities are prioritized above others?

12. What are your personal priorities currently? How do you feel the personal priorities of male students differ from the priorities of female college students?

13. Do you think the norms for male college students have an impact on academic achievement? Why or why not?

14. What advice would you give to campus administrators who were looking for ways to better support male students at Ohio State? What would be your advice for faculty members working with male college students?

15. We would like to see more male students involved in campus activities. What have I not thought to ask you in this interview that would help my thinking?
Appendix E: Request to Verify Transcript with Participant
Hi Student,

Attached is the transcript from our interview. Please don't feel like you need to make any specific edits or grammatical changes. I was hoping you could please look it over just to make sure what I recorded was accurate. Can you please look it over by <<date>> and let me know if any changes need to be made?

Thank you again for your time! Best of luck with the end of the quarter!
Katie

Katie Krajny
<<email address>>
Appendix F: Transcription of SERV Team Interviews
Transcriptions of SERV Team Interviews

Interview with Chris (C)
2/10/2010, 9:30am

I’m going to ask you a series of questions related to your involvement with the SERV team. Can you please describe what the SERV team is in your own words?

C: SERV team stands for Students Engaged in Responsible Volunteering and at its current stage in what I would call student organization development, I would say that currently we are working on planning service opportunities for students. The ones that get recognized more often are large service based, Community Commitment, Martin Luther King Day of Service, those are our two biggest events that we have the most involvement. I think we have those two combined we have around 2000 students who sign up to do volunteer service. I know that there’s 580 for MLK Day and Community Commitment is somewhere over 1200. And we also plan a couple other smaller events such as the Red Party, which is for HIV and AIDS awareness. We all do Service in 88 Counties, which is a year-long service opportunity for students to do service in all the counties in Ohio. And then, I am personally a part of the Buckeye Serve Alternative Breaks Program. What we do is for 400 students over the course of the year, we plan domestic and international service opportunities for students. We do them in a variety of disciplines and a variety of locations. We have a couple of thoughts that we have a personal place in our hearts for, but we are always open to new stuff, new places and I think the biggest one right now is One World Running, which we do in Belize, which is pretty good. We also do Habitat for Humanity, we do HIV/AIDS awareness, disability awareness, we cover a lot of topics. I think that the primary goal of the serve team is to make students more aware of the needs that people who are not as fortunate as we are, the needs that they have. We also make them aware and to try and promote long-term service opportunities, which is how Pay It Forward sort of ventures into the picture, so our big service days where everyone shows up, we can pass on Pay It Forward and hopefully get them involved in more of a commitment to community service. And that is where I believe the SERV team currently stands. What we’re currently doing now is planning events, but sort of our vision would be to promote sort of an academic career-long focus on community service, then giving back to your community once you’re a graduate of Ohio State.

So how did you first hear about the SERV team?

C: I heard about the SERV team when I applied to an Alternative Winter Break during my junior year. That would be in 2008. I went to Biloxi, MS with Habitat for Humanity. That’s one of our bigger trips, we send 50 students on that one. And I had a blast, it was great. There was that first year as an RA, that second year as an RA, that first quarter was very taxing for me, so sort of a chance to get away and to help people who really really wanted it was phenomenal. When I came back at the reunion meeting, I talked to Rosie about the SERV team and through a mutual acquaintance of ours, Cal Siebel, Cal Siebel is giving a donation to the program, and he’s a family friend of mine. He’s good friends
with my father and after talking with Cal about the Breaks program and after going on one, I realized the SERV team was something I would like to be a part of for my coming years at Ohio State. So that was how I found out about the SERV team and I, after I went on the trip, I applied and got in and it’s been a fantastic experience.

So what really made you interested in being a part of it?

C: A couple of my friends have been on Alternative Spring Break and Alternative Winter Break trips before. And, the responses that they had were that they had a blast on them. They were relatively inexpensive for what you get to do and the fact that you get to help these people is just like a good feeling to have. When my breaks until that point had not been very productive like say sitting in front of your television over break is not, this is more warming your heart, you’re not really helping anybody with that. And when I heard about the opportunities they had that they got to go, got to do, I was jealous that I hadn’t done it before. After talking with Cal and what his impressions were of the program, I realized that it was something I wanted to be a part of. And then, I did the trip, loved it, and then I applied to the SERV team because I wanted more of a role in planning the trips.

What is one of the best experiences you’ve had so far with the SERV team, whether official or unofficial?

C: Last year, as soon as I was accepted into the SERV team, we did a leadership retreat at Camp Kern that evening. And that was, I found it to be a very fulfilling and worthwhile experience, because you sort of laid out foundations for the group, what we wanted to accomplish, what we wanted our vision to be over the next year, which even though we sort of had some trouble implementing it, but that’s not really the point I focus on. I focus on the point that we all got together and talked about what we wanted for the SERV team. So what we wanted, like what we all wanted to accomplish, the standards we were going to hold ourselves to, we did the Amazing Race the next day which was really fun and very active and we got to climb and do all those high rope element things. But the night before when we got to focus on what we wanted to accomplish, what our teams were and what our events were, and what our roles for those programs were going to be, I really got a sense for how much the SERV team had to accomplish over the course of the year. Like, Community Commitment is not a small order, Martin Luther King is no small order, and the achievements that we all wanted to accomplish, like back then it seemed so insignificant, like “oh, this is so far away,” but now that our two biggest SERV events are done and some of our other ones are starting to gear up for spring quarter. Holy crap, we have accomplished a lot. I would say that’s probably the most memorable moments and most worthwhile things since I’ve been on the SERV team.

KK: What other activities are you involved in other than the SERV team?

C: I am currently a Resident Manager for University Residences and Dining Services for Drackett Tower and Neilwood Gables. I advise 23 office assistants and manage a 24/7 residence hall front desk. I approve $2000 worth of payroll every pay period. I facilitate
the daily operations, manage around 1000 keys, all of the facility related issues that happen within the residence hall sort of fall under my jurisdiction. I love University Ambassadors. I am currently inactive due to human resources reasons, I would love to work but my Resident Manager job bills me 30 hours a week and if I tour on top of that they would have to pay me time and a half overtime and that would mean 12 hours to be a tour guide and that would be more expensive and Undergraduate Admissions wouldn’t pay that. Which is fine, I understand that. I am currently a tour guide as well. I am also a BuckeyeThon morale captain.

*How would you define “community service”?*

C: That is a good question. I would say community service is actively finding a way to help out others. That’s a broad blanket statement. Anyway you can help out others, now it doesn’t have to be building houses for Habitat for Humanity. You know, if you become more aware of something and actively discuss it with maybe your friends and maybe like what you would do together, I would consider that community service because you’re finding a way to help others. Even though you’re not actively doing it yourself, you’re making a concerted effort to care. You’re at least making an effort to make a difference, I would consider that community service. Because, what I learned with the Buckeye Serve program, you can have the best intentions but sometimes the way things happen things just don’t work out. Even though there’s nothing you could have done to prevent it, the fact being that you’re still making an effort, I would have to consider that community service. So, Martin Luther King Day of Service, even though they’re only one-time community service days, you have around 2000 students make a commitment to service, even if it’s for a couple of days for a couple of hours, think about how many man hours that is and how much you can accomplish. That’s really sort of an astonishing feat as far as I’m concerned. I think both the programs could be further developed. But I think sheer numbers-wise, with that definition of community service we can accomplish a lot. If you can get that warm fuzzy feeling inside of you that you accomplished something, that you at least thought about making a difference, especially if you have the determination to follow through on it, then that’s a really good feeling and you can take a step back and look at the bigger picture and what you’ve accomplished and the significance of that in terms of being a productive member of modern society.

*Next, I’m going to ask you a series of questions related to your perspective as a male college student. First of all, what defining characteristics would you use to describe what it means to be a man?*

C: I fell like men always have to be strong. Not that women can’t be, because… speaking as a male as a member of the involved community at Ohio State, we are an overwhelming minority. At least, as far as I can see. I feel we’re an overwhelming minority, so I would say that if a male leader had to be something, I would say he would have to be strong, to know what he wants to accomplish, to be very focused on that, I feel. But, that wouldn’t be saying that like women couldn’t do the same thing we could, at the same level we could. But I feel like if you have to have a stereotype of a male leader on campus, maybe
someone who would be a go-getter, they would be very determined and focused on maybe one or two things.

*What about a male college student?*

C: Male in general, just male. To be honest with you, I feel like males tend to focus on maybe the social aspects of college more. Maybe on like the social events east of High St. that may or may not involve illegal activities. You know, I feel that they do that maybe a lot more than females do. Not saying that females don’t do it, but I feel like that’s what a male has to do and it’s sort of, I feel, becoming like a trend against involvement to be like a male on campus. Like, “Oh, don’t be involved in something” or maybe like being involved in Greek Life because that’s more of a male dominated center. But, I feel like, as a male on campus it’s much…you don’t have a sense of involvement as much. That sort of being a general male on campus.

*What about a man in general. How would you describe that person?*

C: I would continue with the strong thing. You focus on the male being the strong one. That’s sort of what I feel would be an accurate statement of the stereotype of the male gender as a whole. Because, you know, I think sociologically speaking…or anthropologically speaking, the obvious would be that the males are the bread-winners, the cavemen, we go out hunting, we brought it back, and in the Roman times, there were stuff like male authority figures, you know, even in today’s society, you have more males in like leadership positions. In suits in the corporate arena, like they’re always the strong ones. They’re not afraid to make the hard decisions and I feel like the female race has much more a sense of compassion than the males. That’s what I’d say about being a male in general.

*What has led you to feel that way or think that way about a male? What sort of influences have there been?*

C: “I don’t know, I think more than history, I don’t know.” Like history and then more personal experiences. Like in my family, it’s always been like the males always like the primary bread-winners, the male’s always planning the family gathering, always talking about stuff, and it’s always just the way it’s been for like my whole life. And now that I’ve come to college, I don’t necessarily agree that males are the strong figures because I’ve met a lot of, like more strong female figures than male figures during my time at Ohio State. But, how I was raised and going back to history, everyone sort of looks on the past, and looking back I think that that’s just the way it was. You can’t argue with 3000 years of documented history. I’d say that history, combined with my parents looking at it that way, and having my father’s influence on me, that’s sort of how I feel I have that view of the male gender.
Can you share with me a story of the last time you and some male friends hung out? Like, what did you do?

C: A couple weeks ago a couple of my friends in Student Alumni Council to me “hey, we’re going out and you should probably go with.” And I was like, “yeah, that’s probably a good idea.” I didn’t even have anything to do the next day, I hadn’t been out in a while, and we went to Too’s. And, we just had a few drinks and it was good because that was like, I’ve never been characteristically me as a person. I’ve never had a tremendous amount of guy friends. I just never have. I just feel that’s the way it’s always been because back in my high school, almost all of the student involvement was dominated by females as well. Almost everything. Student council had maybe twenty members from senior class and three of them were male, and I was one of them. So, throughout my time in my secondary and now my post-secondary education, it’s been dominated by females. So I never had a tremendous amount of guy friends. So when I had a couple of my guy friends in SAC say “you want to go out?” I don’t really have a whole lot of guy friends and I don’t feel that’s pretty healthy as far as I’m concerned. So that’s why we went out. We ended up playing darts and we ended up playing Drinking Around the World with flashcards. So, if you got an answer right you didn’t have to drink, but if you were bad with your mental math and division, you had to drink. It’s like a weird twist on a third-grade game. But it was good and I enjoyed it.

What is it like to be a male student at Ohio State?

C: I feel males at Ohio State are kind of lazy. Myself included. There are times where I find myself sitting around and I’m like, “I should probably be doing something better with my time instead of just watching CNN.” I would say more often than not, Ohio State male students tend to be underachieving in terms of, not only like in the classroom, but out of the classroom as well. I can make a statement of males at Ohio State, it’s that they’re just kind of “Eh..I’ll just go through the motions.” And then that’s kind of just it. I feel like I’m accomplishing more than your average male student at Ohio State, but even still, I feel like I could do a little more. So I feel it’s just a sense of underachieving. Maybe the majority of my male student counterparts may not acknowledge it, but it’s something that I’ve noticed and I feel that the female community is much more involved and when I compare myself to them and how much they’re accomplishing, I feel that we’re taking a backseat big time. When I see how much they’re accomplishing, I sort of feel like a slacker and I don’t know how the rest of my male counterparts feel, but if I feel like a slacker, I would imagine that some guys would just be embarrassed when you compare the two next to each other.

What would you consider to be normal behavior for guys?

C: I would say that males probably consume more alcohol than females do. By volume, maybe not by number of people, by volume. I don’t know, I’m just stating my thoughts. I think they’d be involved in like physical activity. Like, you know, “we’re going to be on an intramural baseball team” or “we’re going to play basketball, want to come?” For someone who’s not physically gifted like myself, I’m not extremely coordinated. I’m not
good at basketball, I wasn’t good at baseball. My mom and dad, I love them, they tried, but it just wasn’t in the cards for me.

In your weight class, are there a lot of men?

C: It’s dominated by males. There are two females, 23 males, I think. This is weight lifting 2 for me. Last quarter I took weight lifting 1 and that was like half and half. This one is like a sausage fest. Now there are two and one of them doesn’t show up most of the time, so it’s really one for all intensive purposes. I’ve taken 7 phys ed classes at Ohio State. I’ve never had one, including Social Dance, that has had more females than males. They’ve always been more male. So that’s why I tend to say that they do more of the physical activity and females may tend to do more of the mental area of extracurricular like student involvement activities.

You mentioned drinking and physical activity as normal behavior. Who determines that as the normal behavior? What causes that to be what they do typically?

C: I personally have to say, coming from University Housing and a resident advisor, our society portrays what males should do in college. When I see shows like Blue Mountain State on Spike TV or National Lampoon’s Van Wilder movies, when I see those it involves males drinking copious amounts of booze and exploiting the insecurities of women and you know, when you’re 14 or 16 in high school and planning on going to college and that’s what you see it’s going to be. And so, I feel that it’s sort of a self-fulfilling prophecy that when you come to college and well, damnit, it’s going to be just like the movies because that’s what I saw and that’s how it has to be. They come and just sort of make that happen. I have no evidence to base that on whatsoever, but from my personal experience, I feel, that if you saw those things happening in high school and then you sort of begin exhibiting those behaviors in high school and then when you get to college and you’re much more removed from parental supervision, it only gets worse as far as I’m concerned. And I don’t know if the drinking age were 18 or 21, that’s sort of irrelevant to me, I think it would continue under both circumstances. So, I don’t really see a point in arguing with it. But I think that sort of society’s perception of what a male has to be in college sort of is a self-fulfilling prophecy and when they actually get to college, they actually plan on doing those behaviors that started being exhibited in high school and they only get worse. And I’m pretty sure I wouldn’t have had that stance if I wasn’t an RA for 21 and 23 first-year students for two years of my life. So having that and seeing them partake in outlandish behavior and doing the things that I sort of see in those movies, I have to say that, even though that may not be a primary factor, it is a factor into what activities and behaviors get partaken in by a college student.

What happens to a guy that doesn’t choose to live up to the norms that are established for society?

C: He sort of gets ostracized, and I would partially include myself in that sort of group. Because…quick back story, I had a cousin that was killed by a drunk driver when I was not born yet, so I saw the consequences it had on my paternal side of my family, so I
chose to stay away from alcohol as a student until I knew I would handle it responsibly when I turned the age of 21. So, as a male who doesn’t drink, I sort of felt that I was ostracized because everyone else was always drinking and were like “oh, he doesn’t drink, don’t invite him. He’s no fun.” And so I felt I was sort of ostracized to that effect. Granted, I was involved with a lot of females and they showed compassion. I sort of feel that if a man doesn’t live up to those expectations (to drink), they’re sort of ostracized. I know it’s a bad thing, but you shouldn’t ask about someone base on their reactions and behaviors, you should base them on like who they are and not whether or not they choose to drink. I think that’s nearly enough of a basis for that. But that’s the world we live in. Whether or not you like it, unless you actively do something about it, you just have to accept that it’s just the way that it is. I feel college is sort of helping me get better at that and sort of because of those interactions, I’ve sort of have met people that also don’t feel they fit within that sort of stereotype, which is better because I have a lot more in common with them and I can relate more to them and I feel that they’re more genuine people as far as I’m concerned. So, I’m saying it’s a bad thing, but it’s sort of forced me to find people that I have much more interests aligned with, which is good because it’s helped me develop into who I am and made me partake in things that have helped me, not only academically or professionally, but also as a student. It’s all sort of helped develop me in the grand scheme of things. So I would say that ostracized, make fun of, kind of sort of, but for me it wasn’t like “hey let’s make fun of Chris” it was just like “let’s not bring him to things.” That unspoken thing is kind of what hurts.

What campus activities are most popular among college students?

C: I would say intramurals and Greek life, if I had to pick them. Certainly not student involvement, at least from my perspective as a student. I am involved in a couple large and small organizations, like ones that are very mature like SAC which has been around for almost 30 years, so it’s gone through the motions. We have 100 and some odd members now, so that’s a big group, predominantly females. The executive board, predominantly female, so like over 50%. And then the general body members, over 50% female. In University Housing, I know it’s much easier to find a quality female candidate than it is to find a quality male candidate. That’s the same for all the organizations I’m in and the only places where I can see that being different in the Student Life realm of things is intramural sports. I feel that tends to be dominated by males, and at least coed teams, they also have more males than females and Greek Life, maybe because what is associated with it. Maybe not, because I’m not in Greek Life, I cannot make that assumption, but I don’t know. From what I can see and what I perceive is involvement there tends to be very strong, but I don’t see a large, I don’t see the average male student at Ohio State be like “oh, hey, I want to become a member of OUAB!” No, the average male tends to be those other two things. And maybe a male that was more involved in high school would tend to maybe be more involved in more of a student organization or sort of thing.
So, why is that?

C: I think maybe going back to what society expects of them. I mentioned earlier, like in college, what males are supposed to do, student organizations don’t fit into that picture very well. You don’t see Van Wilder going around and like, well, he does plan campus programs and stuff, but not really to the effect that we’re looking at. So, or like, Blue Mountain State, I watched a little bit of it, and I was appalled. There are going to be 100,000 teenage males who are going to think that college life is like that. Or, my poor RA male counterparts on south campus are going to have to deal with those mistakes. So, I would have to say that those societal expectations are what you’re supposed to accomplish in college. And so a male planning a concert or something, eh… I mean, it’s important as the involved community at Ohio State, we recognize that that’s important and the significance of that event. But outside of that realm, it’s sort of like, “oh involvement is not good for you.” That’s nothing like, outrageously fantastic, like if your father was a legacy in a fraternity and you got it too, they would be like 10 times more proud of you than if you did some student organization. At least, that’s sort of the feeling I get. There are always exceptions. But that’s sort of the general feeling I get.

What are your personal priorities right now? What are you most focused on in your life?

C: If I could describe it, I would say that my wife would be my academics and that my mistresses would be my out-of-classroom involvements, because I sometimes catch myself spending a lot more time in those arenas than my academics. I say that, but I also hold a high level of academic standards. Like, if I don’t make Dean’s List, I am very upset with myself. So, when I say like I’m failing, maybe I’m not failing that bad, but like “I’ll probably do really bad on my econ midterm,” but really bad is 15% above the average. My standards of academic acceptance are maybe skewed a little more on that distribution path. I catch myself spending a lot of time at the front desk and making sure that all of my responsibilities I accomplish at the front desk. Because I consider that like a job, and there are more female RMs than there are male RMs and some male RMs aren’t doing so hot and I feel like sort of, for lack of better words, to redeem my race I sort of have to put a required amount of time and effort into a position. Because, I am getting paid for it, I have an efficiency apartment in Neilwood Gables for free, and I get a cash stipend of $600 a month. You know, to get all those things, that’s permitting me to hang around for a 5th year and pick up a minor in special education and take some fun classes. But because I haven’t been paying housing for three years of my life, I’ve saved a substantial amount of cash so that I can afford to hang around for an extra year. So my “first priority” is my academics. I’m glad I’m here. I do have a thirst for knowledge and Ohio State and getting my education will open up a variety of doors. I’m not going to say “getting a very good job”, because that is a horrible answer and I would have come here even if I didn’t want a job. I want to learn. That’s why I’m here. But, second after that would be my current job as a resident manager, making sure we don’t lose any packages, making sure I approve the payroll on time, I make sure to send in all my paperwork, my hall accounts to make sure University Housing can make the required money to ensure they can afford to pay be more for my extra year. I mean, after that, it would be my extracurricular involvements, the SERV team, morale captain, those other weekly
commitments that I have. And, I am currently running for VP of finance for SAC. So, that sort of throws and interesting little curveball into my works because now I’m going to have to on-par that just below my University Housing job, because being on the executive board, I would have to switch around my priorities and realize that, as a student I can only give a certain amount of time of the week and I have high standards for academics and my job will remain the same so, if I have to devote more time to this, I will have to devote less time to other things. So I just have to realize my limits. I don’t want to join it and then be bad at it. Because everyone hates those people. Oh, they’re so over involved…and I don’t want to be that person. So, I would drop other things and focus on what’s more important in my life.

*How do you feel personal priorities might differ between males and females?*

C: I actually, I only think they would differ between the group versus the individual. That’s the only way I think they would differ. They males I feel would be much more focused on the group. Like if you had a president in SAC, I don’t think he would necessarily care about you as much as a person as he would the group and where the group was headed and what the group would accomplish. With a female president, I feel they would be more like, SAC is kind of there and it will do what it will do regardless of my direct interventions, I care more about the people and the connection. Like, “oh, how are you doing? How is your life going? Are you okay?” I sort of feel that goes back to the standard stereotype of females being more compassionate, caring, being there…the maternal instincts. I feel the males tend to be much more focused on the collective whereas the females are much more focused on the individual. And, besides from that, in my experience at Ohio State, I feel that’s the only difference that I can see. The males tend to be very focused on that and the females tend to be very focused on like the people. Those are the roles that they take and actually offset each other very well. Because if you’ve got 2 male members with a male as an executive assistant, they’ll focus on the group and where the group is headed. And if you’ve got a female president and a female VP, they’ll put more of a focus on the people. So the group still accomplishes what it needs to accomplish and further move forward its mission, vision and values, but the membership and the individual aspect of the people are taken care of. So working together, that’s when they’d accomplish the most.

*You had mentioned that there are certain things that male students should accomplish or want to accomplish while in college, what are those things that you were talking about, like, what they’re currently focused on?*

C: I don’t think males are putting a focus on their education. I look at our honors program in the Fischer College of Business, if you took a poll of the GPAs of the students, the females would have a higher GPA than the males, I’m sure. The numbers are the same, because they kind of have to be the same and like the advisor picks them to be the same, which is fine, but I feel that the average GPA of that group would probably be higher for the females, not by much, but if you took that as a sample of the university in general, I believe that would be accurate. The female GPA would be marginally higher than the male GPA. I feel like their focus is more the social aspect of college life and
accomplishing as much of that social aspect, and for lack of better work, acting immature now because you can because when you get into the real world post-college, you won’t be able to act that way. In college, it’s okay and it’s expected of you, but if you did that over in corporate America, it wouldn’t be okay and you’d be fired on the spot. So it’s acceptable in college, but after college it’s not really acceptable anymore. At least, from what I’ve seen, older adults wouldn’t find that as acceptable behavior. So like these college years, when they’re free from parents but before real life, they want to crank out as much of that as they possibly can because they have the shot of doing it. So that can be like Greek Life, they’re social life, sports, I just think they’re focused much more on the social aspect and not as much about the education. Not saying that that’s bad, but you are here to get an education and to benefit society in some way. And if you’re not going to class and learning what you need to be learning to earn your BA, what real impact are you able to have in the real world. Like going through the motions in your life would be a lot more boring than if you actually loved what you did.

Do you think that the norms of male college students have a negative impact on academic achievement?

C: Absolutely.

What advice would you give to campus administrators who are looking to better support male college students?

C: (long pause) I would market some campus involvement opportunities. Not specifically to males but sort of throwing in male undertones. Like marketing of student organization and marketing of involvement opportunities. Like play to those strengths like “the strong leader,” “work on your determination and leadership skills” like the things that related to being a man. Like, exploit those in marketing and presentation of the organization. I’m not saying change the organization. I’m sure males knew what was really happening with SAC and how much was actually strength in like “a male-type person.” I’m sure more males will get involved, but that’s not the perception they have of it. And that’s not the way I think of it. I would say the SERV team is the same way, it’s dominated by females. So say like, community service is great for being the male aspect of you. You know, giving back and helping others is what males have done back since cavemen. Maybe if you drove that fact home in marketing and presentations of the organization, pulling on those male tough person kind of thing. If you did more of that, I’m sure more of it would apply, or at least take and interest. That’s what I think is most important. Ummm…I would have conversations like these. Let’s say you were a first-year student in Smith Hall and you got drunk and threw up in the hallway and you got documented. It happens all the time. You have a meeting with the hall director. The hall director needs to maybe ask “why did you partake in that behavior?” and then turn that light bulb on like “oh, shoot, the reason I’m doing this is because of so and so…” I don’t know what the reason is… If you at least were consciously or sub-consciously aware of why you were partaking in that behavior, like maybe administrators can help you find a better way to cope with it or exercise it. I would also feel that I would like to see more males in leadership positions. Like in University Housing, up to this year, I’ve never had a male senior staff member.
My first year as an RA I had a male hall director hire me, but he got promoted and it was a female HD and female AHD. Next year, female AHD, female HD. This year, the majority of the Drackett staff is female except, I have a male hall director now. That’s the only difference from everything else I’ve ever had. On north campus especially, you have your bathroom in your room and you have like a male side and a female side. Last year, staff had 3 guys total out of 15. Maybe if I saw more males in the positions, I’d think “oh they’re doing it, I’ll do it too.” If I saw more males doing it too. Like in University Admissions, if I saw more males giving the presentation I’d be much more likely to get involved. Same in other aspects, if I saw males in senior positions, I’d have males to aspire to. I do think that if you had qualified males for the positions, I’d say; give it a shot because if there was some sort of role model figure to aspire to because you can see that it’s been done before. I know that a male has made the same steps that I’m taking now, so I know I can do it too. That sort of feeling is incredibly important for males as well. To know that, hey, someone else did this, I can do it too.

What about for faculty members and professors, is there anything they can do to have men be more focused on academics?

C: “I don’t know.” I would pair more of the males with male academic advisors. That might make it easier. Maybe if I had a male pushing me forward as well, the wheels would turn much faster, like, ok, let’s do it, let’s go. I think that would help. I don’t know what faculty can do for males. Because, you don’t want to single males out and have like study sessions, because then no one would go and that’s not practical. So I don’t know what you could do to single out males to have them focus on academics. Maybe if you had a session at orientation, like maybe females can have a session and go over like self-defense, because there are some of those aspects that are geared more towards females than males. And get like a male session, and you have a guy saying you gotta get you act together, you gotta get involved. And have an undertone of maybe like males are failing at Ohio State and lacking in every aspect of collegiate life except athletics. So we need to sort of get our act together. So maybe something like that would really drive it home. I don’t know, I think that once they’re already sorted on their path, it’d be really tough and you don’t want to discriminate between males and females. I don’t really know what you could do to get it through our heads. Not to be like a negative Nancy, but it’s just like a really tough problem.

Well, what we really want to do is see more males involved...

C: I would too. I even saw it in high school. We did dance marathons and raised a lot of money. But there were only 2 guys. I don’t know, maybe if you could start earlier in like grade school. Even when I was 11, all of the things I did were dominated by females. My dad pushed me to accomplish things, and he think of sort of knows that athletics aren’t my strong suit, so he sort of wanted me to do those other things, and I did. But, you have to start really young, because I think those expectations really start at that young age and I think if you started earlier you would see very different results. I would like to see more males involved too, because I think we can provide a different perspectives and different aspects.
Is there anything that I haven’t asked yet or things that you think would be helpful?

C: The only other thing I could think of is that we just need to aspire to do greater things. Like, I’ve been saying this, when I see RAs, and it’s kind of a joke, that you’re much more likely to have a bad male RA than a female RA because the applicants are much more female than male. So maybe if we could just put more of an intrinsic value to involvement. Don’t do it for your resume and I hate people that do it for a reason, you need to want to do it because it’s going to develop you as a person and you’re going to develop skills that you’ll use as a real person out in the real world. “Like, if you don’t have them now…” I don’t see men doing a lot and maybe working on that value, you might get more results.

END OF INTERVIEW
Interview with Victor (V)
2/7/2010, 10:00am

First of all, I’m going to ask you a series of questions regarding your involvement with the SERV team. Can you describe to me the organization in your own words?

V: Sure, it’s an organization intended to raise awareness about events in important local, national and international event issues. The way that we do it is not only through the major volunteering activities such as Community Commitment, Martin Luther King Day, and all those, but in order to raise awareness about those issues that seemingly are in the background mainly, this year the critical issues forum is going to be on education for example. Last year we did it on women’s health and we did stuff on the environment and this year we’re mainly doing stuff on animal right and how that’s an issue. So I think the SERV team is not just a typical volunteer organization. It’s an organization intended to get people thinking critically about the problems in the world and they are numerous so we have to cover a lot of ground in very little time.

What is your current role with the SERV team?

V: I am one of the executive team members, I guess, “or whatever that may be”. And I am organizing Critical Issues February, which is an event that is focuses on access gaps and education between different socioeconomic groups and their access to college from high school. It’s actually a panel forum event “I’m not sure how much detail you want.”

That’s great. How did you first hear about the SERV team?

V: Well, I was in Leadership Collaborative in 2006 and I was also in the class that followed the summer events and in that they told us about great leadership opportunities that we should try and get involved in. And, one of the speakers, I can’t remember who exactly, gave us information on the SERV team. And was like, “hey, this is an interesting opportunity to do really good things as a leader.”

Can you speak a little more about why you were interested in joining the SERV team?

V: Yeah, it goes back to the idea that I was interested in doing volunteering or critical issues or group awareness or whatever it was it was one of my passions, I wanted to get people interested in them. So the more people are aware, the greater opportunity they have to do something about the issue. And I felt that, it sort of went hand in hand with my responsibilities as a leader, whatever that means, and my passion for doing something different and doing something, in my opinion, is important. But I think many people would agree.
Can you speak a little more about your responsibilities as a leader?

V: Yeah, so, I think when I envision leadership it’s an idea of enticing people to think about things that are outside of our comfort zone and making them do things that will actually involve cerebral processes. You know, I want them to think critically about issues, because on college campuses, I’m talking about my leadership in the college role, I’m not sure if you wanted something broader because on a college campus, at least at Ohio State, it’s pretty secluded from the rest of the world and we get to live a pretty comfortable life. “You know, nobody get to go to the RPAC that easily, and things like that”. So it becomes hard for a lot of us to escape that comfortable world and think about things from another person’s perspective. And so, I feel that, if I were to call myself a leader, part of my responsibility as a leader is to expose people to those issues and to make people, not by force, but to entice them in one way or another to think about those things.

What is one of the best experiences you’ve had so far with the SERV team? Either official or unofficial, like a retreat, or a social event. What’s a good memory or a great memory you’ve had?

V: Okay, well, needless to say, one of the best things, or one of the coolest things is the retreat, because at least, what the advisors have done so far is pick people that are pretty diverse in their interest. So we got to do a…meeting people is interesting because we learn about different topics. Last year, one of our students was Zach, I can’t remember his last name. Zach was interested in disability services and disabilities and how do you work with handicapped issues. And that was really interesting when I got to talk to him because I never really had exposure to that. So, the best memories that I’ve had are from meeting individuals at the retreats. Also between the retreats, but mainly the retreats.

What other activities are you involved in besides the SERV team?


What is your current concept of community service? How would you define that term, “community service”?

V: That’s tough. Well, if I break it down into two different words, “community” and “service,” I always think that community is limiting in one sense because people generally think “the surroundings.” I always hear the terms “Ohio State community” or “Columbus community,” you never think about it in a global sense, so I don’t really like the community term because it is limiting. But if I were to use the term community, I would think about it as everything that I am a part of. That’s, especially in a globalizing world, that means everybody else in the world, every animal, plant, whatever, the entire Earth, that’s sort of my community. And, in terms of service then, it’s “that’s a hard
term,” I mean, I’ve always thought it’s doing an act that’s beneficial to not just you, but other people and other things as well. A lot of times I do things that are selfish, let’s be honest, that just help me. But community service, when I think about it, for me it is doing an act in a global sense that is helpful beneficial to everybody else. That was my quickest definition, I guess.

Okay, next, I’m going to ask you a series of questions to get your perspective as a male college student. First of all, what are the defining characteristics you would use to describe what it means to be a man? Like, social characteristics, behaviors... “what it means to be a man.”

V: Do you want the stereotypical definition that comes to mind, or…?

You can use yours or the stereotypical definition, both would be helpful.

V: Okay, well part of the stereotype “…it makes me angry, but it exists” At least in our culture, my definition of the stereotypical definition, you have sports, you’re heavily involved in physical activity, and I always think of chauvinistic men, whenever I think of the stereotypical man, I guess. I think of men in our society as having more privileges than females… “that men are better off than females.” That’s the stereotypical definition in my opinion. But then when I come to see the differences between men and women, my own perspective is that they’re really not that different. Really, the thought that jumps into my head is biological differences, but those don’t really affect too much probably. Sure emotions might be a little different and mentally we might be able to do different things, but…

Can you describe what you mean by emotions being different?

V: Yeah, I’m almost thinking that we’re forced to think in certain ways because of our hormones. I don’t think that mean that men cry less than females, or that they should cry less, but that they might react differently to an event. And that could be partly cultural, but I also think that has to do with hormonal tendencies, like evolutionary trends. I don’t really know how to describe it more, I guess. For example, we’re learning in class that it might be the case that males react differently to violence than females. Because, let’s say if males were the hunters, they’d see violence every day…if they were in charge of it. So it’s sort of that stuff that’s built into us, we don’t have control over it, it’s just sort of the way we are. But… “I’m giving you really vague answers, aren’t I? It’s probably not going to be helpful…Is there anything else you want from that question? Can you actually just repeat the question?

Can you describe what you mean by emotions being different?

V: In society, I always think that females are supposed to be the more caring ones as opposed to the men being the more stoic ones, the “I don’t care about anything,” or distanced emotionally from everything. I think that’s the problem, but I feel that that’s how it is. I also think that women tend to be, at least according to society, more
thoughtful about issues and they tend to think about people, things, etc… outside of themselves more than men do. I’m not sure how far that is in reality, but that’s how I feel.

*What sort of influences have led you to see those stereotypes or have those perceptions?*

V: Every TV ad you watch for example. “I watch TV when I eat food, I really just don’t watch TV…” but the point is, every ten minutes there is an add, one that comes to mind right now, is Nivea body wash for men, “and you have to be like a…the subtitle is Sportswear, and the guy is extremely built and he just works out and goes to the shower…” Stereotypical in that sense that media influence is huge, I’m just getting all these images in my head that tell me to think is certain way about what a man should be according to whoever is controlling the advertising company, I guess. A lot of TV always displays the woman as having more emotion and having greater emotional reaction to events…I can’t really think of any experiences right now.

*Other than the media, are there any other influences?*

V: Definitely, when I walk around and talk to my buddies, you know, it’s always about sports. And if you talk about anything other than sports, the conversation just kind of dies. It’s like, “Okay, so there’s nothing else about being a person other than sports, but oh, I’m a man…what does that even mean” I don’t know where these influences come from, if there’s one source of all these influences, I’m not sure. But, surely I see it all around me. I don’t know about books. I read biology, so everything sort of boils down to math. Even my classes, since I’m a philosophy major, I read a lot of books by men because previously in the past it was just rich white men writing philosophy. Nobody else had the opportunity. It comes up that even philosophers make claims that “if you’re not civilized…they called the Native Americans uncivilized and in a state a nature, whatever that means” so all these influences about being a man as rational, intelligent, sports, active sort of person. I think it comes from my education too…”that’s messed up.”

You talked about talking with your guy friends. Can you talk about the last time you and some of your male friends hung out? Like, what did you do? How many were you, in terms of big or small groups?

V: I live with four guys. Two of us don’t talk much about sports. It’s something that doesn’t affect our conversations much. But the other two, ESPN is always on at our house and when I change the channel it’s always an awkward challenge. So it’s kind of fragmented and so we’re having wine or beer chilling in front of the TV and the two of them were talking about sports and my other roommate and I were talking about entrepreneurship or social ventures, or whatever it was. “And so it was kind of odd.” There were four of us, but it was really two and two.

*So are you a big fan of ESPN and the stereotypical sports-type discussions?*

V: No, I am far removed from sports. Not that I don’t enjoy doing them or any of that. It’s just that if I get one hour to do something and it’s ESPN vs. NYtimes or something, I
would be on NYtimes. For me, I learn about the results of something, but it’s not important to me why X team picks Y coach. I don’t care.

So have you ever had negative consequences to you not being able to converse about these topics?

V: Occasionally, what will happen is that… I was at an interview once in Philadelphia, and OSU just lost to LSU. I was freaking out about the interview and not about the game and I wasn’t really following anything about the game. And the professor was talking “about the game” and I didn’t have anything to say. So I guess it’s not just my roommates who I can’t fit in with in that sense I can’t really have conversations with a lot of “people”. Sometimes, sports are a scapegoat because it is fun, it’s interesting and you don’t have to be depressed by looking at it necessarily. Because, there’s a whole lot more of other depressing things. So, there are times when people talk about it, and I just don’t get into it, and it sort of hampers my progress in society.

Do you think it is more males than females that talk about those conversations?

V: I found this mixed. I think there are a lot of males that do talk about other things than sports. Mainly, a lot of my friends don’t really…I have a lot of friends that don’t follow sports very well. But, when I remember going over to my female friends’ houses, they’re not really watching EPSN, I’ve never noticed them watching ESPN. “So, as far as interest in sports, viewing sports might be, you know, as far as I can guess, relating to my personal experiences which have mainly been limited to men,” but I’m not sure whether that actually translates to playing sports as limited to men. A lot of my male friends are on intramural teams, but not a lot of my female friends. But that could also be because of being in subculture and all that, I don’t know. I’m not really sure.

So how would you describe what it’s like to be a male student at Ohio State? Are there unique characteristics or behaviors of a male student here versus somewhere else? Katie elaborates about how this is based on perceptions, good or bad.

V: I see a dude getting wasted on a Saturday night. That’s what I see at Ohio State. As awful as that sounds, and there are a lot of people that do great things at Ohio State, but a lot of my buddies who are 6’2” are getting drunk on a Saturday night. So, that typifies for me the experience of Ohio State. And that might just be college, I’ve been to a couple colleges over summer, and even there, it’s the same thing.

So what would you consider to be normal behaviors of guys at Ohio State? You mentioned drinking, sports… are there any other behaviors?

V: Needless to say, people do study. I’m not sure how much emphasis they put on studying because I’ve come to this realization that people could be far more productive if they put two or three more hours a week on education.
**But overall, you don’t feel there is a big emphasis to study?**

V: Yeah. And I’m not just talking about reading your books. I teach MCAT for Kaplan and one of the things I have to keep telling my students is that you have to read the news. It sort of something important to learn about what’s going on in the world and that’s also in my head, sort of studying. But I don’t mean vocational studying, I also mean just learning about the world. People don’t do that here. Can you repeat the question again?

**Sure, what do you consider to be normal behavior of guys at Ohio State?**

V: Yeah, I don’t think they study very often, or often enough. Video games are huge. TV is huge. Video games I find are limited mainly to men. I’m not sure if that is the case but all my business friends just don’t get off their video games. I guess that’s it.

**For guys that do not live up to the norms, what ends up happening to them?**

V: There are definitely negative consequences for not being able to fit into society. “Being ridiculed…oh geez you’re going to work again, you nerd. It just kind of freaks me out.” But coming to an educational facility and being called a nerd, I mean, I’ve seen friends do this to other friends, so I’m like well, okay.” But a positive consequence is that they’re really productive when they do separate themselves in one sense. I don’t mean that they should separate themselves, but when they do actually decide to engage in activity like community service or thinking or whatever it is, they actually are very productive as members of society. For their own personal benefits, like a lot of SERV team members come to mind when I think about this, they do a lot.

**Would you say they’re not really living up to the norms as a male college student?**

V: I would definitely disagree with that. Yeah, it is sort of evident to me that male college students are just less… in every organization out there; there are more females than males. That could be that the gender ratio far off from 50/50, but I don’t think it’s too far off. Am I mistaken?

You are correct. You’re thoughts in terms of it as being an issue is correct.

V: It’s odd to see that even if it’s 45/55, the organizations that I’m a part of are not even close to that. It’s so… clearly the people that are part of the organization are not the norm, they’re not part of the majority of people that are doing “”. The positive consequences are that they are rewarded well. Because there’s not very many to award. So if you’re part of something you’ll get rewarded very easily. Whether it be getting into the hierarchical structure of SERV team or an organization with a presidential spot…whatever it is, you get there pretty easily.
Why do you think that is?

V: As far as I know, from the organizations that I’ve been a part of, what we try to do is sort of, even in the leadership, we don’t want to really represent the organization as it is, because that would be like 80/20. And that sort of skews off ideas, so we try to do sort of even. But we still base it on merit. But if there are two people equal, male and female, we’ll probably try to pick the male so we have an even idea. And we get different ideas from guys than we do from girls.

So it’s not because a male should be in that leadership role but in order to better represent your group?

V: Yeah. To better represent the organization and the male group as well as to give us more and different ideas. Because, if we want the same type of people, and that plays into gender, because we grow up in society so we have all of these norms about what our thoughts should be, so we try and get two different types of thought to mix.

In terms of campus activities like the SERV team, what would you say are some campus activities that are popular among male college students?

V: Well fraternities. All fraternities are male and there are about even fraternities as sororities. So that’s about even. Maybe research is about even. But I’m not really sure because it’s individual and very isolated. “So I can’t give you a perception of why they are, I would have to look it up on the web, so I couldn’t tell you that.”

What about student government, Block O...?

V: Block O, maybe. I really have no idea. I don’t know anything about Block O or USG. USG I feel is pretty even from working on the campaign and all that stuff...so I felt it was pretty even. It was just surprisingly actually. Block O, I know a lot of friends, both male and female, so it seems about even.

You said you were in IAA. What about other cultural organizations?

V: Cultural organizations...tend to be more female. The leadership again, there are a lot of males. Leadership, there might be 6 males to 3 females. But when it comes to participation, I think there are more females.

Like in terms of coming to meetings and going to different activities?

V: Yeah, it tends to be more female.
So it sounds like fraternities are definitely where you see a lot of male college students go. Why do you think it is there and not cultural organizations or other groups?

V: I think part of it...no idea. Maybe fraternities are a good stress reliever because you hang out with friends. “And you do work, but you do it with friends, and it’s not sort of...uh, I don’t know. To be in a fraternity doesn’t mean that you don’t have a leadership role...I have no idea.”

Going back to you, what are your personal priorities? What are you most focused on in your life?

V: I am trying to juggle a lot of things. So one of my biggest issues is becoming independent. I work; I am trying to wean myself off of my parents, in one way or another. That’s become a big focus, in terms of like a mental sort of things, but not really where I spend a lot of time in any sense. But figuring out what I’m going to do for next year is a big part of my life right now. It sort of freaks me out that I’m going into an economy that has no jobs. And also, it is interesting and sad that my majors don’t allow me to get jobs very easily. “The cool thing though, is that I’ve had a lot of...the community sense is very receptive...there are a lot of opportunities to do AmeriCorps and that kind of stuff. And the other thing that is a focus is education. The last two years, I’ve come to this realization that it’ll be four years where it’ll be the only real time people are going to give me the time to study. Just, do all the mental work that I can get, you know? If I go into a job, it’s not that they’re going to expect me to study. They’re going to expect me to do work, which is very different. So I’ve really tried to read as much as I can and learn as much as I can in the last two years.

How do you feel personal priorities differ in male from female students?

V: I don’t know. When I go to the library, I see mainly females. Again, if I’m talking about them in terms of my personal priorities, a lot of them tend to be female in terms of education. I don’t know why, but there are more females at the library. In fact, maybe males go home to study instead of going to the library. “I don’t know. I really have no idea.” I almost tend to think that they’re pretty even. I’m not sure that there are too many differences in terms of college students. “I don’t know, I’m sorry.”

It’s Okay. Any more thoughts on that question?

V: I’ll have to think about it.

Okay, so how do you think that the norms for male college students have an impact on their academic achievement?

V: Let’s just say that going to the library is the best indicator of the priorities of studying. I’m not sure if that’s good, but let’s just say that. A lot of my friends that I know, whether it be the males or the females that are in the same class, the female friends tend to study a lot more for that class than my male friends, “in terms of academic class work sort of
things.” It definitely shows that if you don’t study as hard, there’s no way you will do as well because you don’t learn the stuff. So it shows in their GPA or whatever, if that means anything. “But, you do mean by academic like classes and that kind of stuff?”

Yeah, or just getting good grades...

V: Yeah, so society places so much emphasis on males to be stoic features and stoic burly men, “I don’t really know.” It sort of becomes hard for a lot of males to focus on education. We’re told it’s not really a factor that is important. And you sort of get mixed messages. It’s strong and athletic on one hand but you also need a job on the other. It’d be great if everyone could be strong, athletic, and have a job but that’s just not possible.

As I mentioned before, the main reason for my study is that there’s a gender gap in terms of male and female involvement in terms of student organizations, campus activities, academic achievement. The numbers are much skewed. With that, what advice would you give to campus administrators who are looking for ways to better support male college students?

V: That’s a big policy question. I mean, if you could impart on us the idea that education is important and not just physical activity. Everything is important but it sort of gets lost that education is important. A lot of people tend to take college as a fun time and not necessarily an educational time. And a lot of people tend to spend way too much time in their extracurricular activities as opposed to their classes. And as far as I can tell, there hasn’t been anybody to tell me that “look, education is first and foremost.” I mean, yes, I’ve heard it once or twice, but it’s not something that is repeated. So, in terms of education, that’s what I think is important. How do you involve male in community service activities...

Or even cultural events on campus...

V: “I mean, maybe like a sort of male’s study sort of thing. Just the way there is a women’s study sort of thing I guess.” It wouldn’t be a major or minor or anything, but just a couple of questions showing that this exists. And when you acknowledge the problem first of all… until you really started talking about it, I didn’t really even recognize it as a problem. I didn’t even think about it. If there’s a formal recognition of such problems, it might be the first step. And I think that part of the recognition has to come through something that is more available for the public. You know, when you say women’s studies, it’s sort of in the back of my mind, “oh, well, you need a women’s studies because they get downtrodden on. They still get paid less; they don’t get the best jobs, that sort of stuff.” But then, until you say men’s studies to me, I’m not going to understand that there are such problems. “I don’t know, maybe something along those lines, I’m not really sure.”
Yeah. And for faculty members or professors, is there anything they can do?

V: It’s interesting, because most of my professors have been male. So, as far as picking a role model goes, my professors are my role models. They should be sort of automatically just because I’m in their class; they should always keep encouraging me. But, I don’t know how you can encourage male students specifically apart from female students.

Do you think it helps having a male professor in the classroom?

V: I don’t think so. I think at least, our generation, is pretty open. Whether it’s female or not is not a big deal. We just want to have a professor that keeps our attention, entertaining, is engaging.

Anything else on that?

V: “I don’t really know, how would you encourage male students differently from females…”

KK: Like you, you’ve planned a lot of programs. Have you seen more females than males coming, are there different ways that you could have attracted more males to your programs? “This is going to sound sick, but”, so far IA is never like this, but we always have cultural shows and the participants tend to be more female and the audience tends to be more on the female side. But, I never organize this and I don’t know how they do it, but after each cultural organization, there tends to be a party of some sort, and that, awkwardly enough, tends to be more male. So, alcohol tends to be a big bringer of people. But for some reason, every one of these events tends to have more males than females. As far as something academic and without alcohol, I don’t know. Let’s say OUAB is showing a flick, maybe if it’s more machismo sort of thing maybe that could entice more males than females. I’ve tended to be more of the awareness and more of the heartfelt issues, especially being part of SERV team. And that doesn’t really get males out. The way I figure is, if I can get a person to come that really cares about the event, then I’m fine.

How do you get more people to care?

V: Well, have a good advertising campaign. I think that getting more people to care is doable. I just don’t know if it’s…I don’t know how to do it to get more men to care. Maybe have events that are more male-centered. That might work, because, we did do women’s health last year, and that sort of automatically implied that females would come. And I was just reading somewhere, I’m not sure where, that when they started African American studies and Women’s studies as a major, instead of helping people understand all these problems, they just made it such that only African Americans would go into African American studies and only women would go into Women’s studies. And so if we had a Male’s studies, we might have more males. “I don’t know, I have no idea. I’ve never thought about this.”
To look at this again, we would just like to see more males involved or engaged in the campus community. So, is there anything more I haven’t asked you or any other thoughts you have on that?

V: Yeah, I think you sort of have to…well one way to do it is publicize it. It’s not really something that is very well…I have a feeling most…I wouldn’t think at first glance that there’s more females in college than males or anything like that, so even those facts, the simplest facts were advertised more, I think it would be a first step to even thinking about the problem. Solving it is one issues, we need to think about it first. “I think many people do think about it, so…yeah, I don’t know.” I think it’s an interesting problem. Maybe on a cultural level, if we were able to change our perspectives on what it means to be male and female.

How can we do that?

V: I think that culturally, we can change it quickly by marketing. I tend to think that 50 years ago a male was different that what he is now. And sometimes, he’s no longer necessarily the bread-winner of the family. So, how you market it towards people might be important, but there also might have to be some fundamental culture shifts as well. I’m not really sure. If, for example, we were to run a country-wide awareness event about the problem with lack of males or something, in college and that stuff, that could be something closer to alleviating the problem at this step. “I don’t know, I mean culture shifts are really hard.”

END OF INTERVIEW
Interview with John (J)
2/9/2010, 10:30am

I’m going to ask you a series of questions related to your involvement with the SERV team. Can you please describe what the SERV team is in your own words?

J: The SERV team is a group of students that consolidate all the resources and we feel it is necessary to provide the OSU student body with service events that they can partake in and also allows the students to come to them with questions related to service and leadership on campus and the community.

What is your involvement with the SERV team?

J: I am a team member on the SERV team, so I’m supposed to attend weekly meetings and help organize different events that we hold and at the same time, my role has to be able to help organize…

So how did you first hear about the SERV team?

I heard about the serve team 2 to 3 years ago. I think I just saw the application online and then I also had friends who were on the SERV team and spoke very highly of it.

What really made you interested in being a part of it?

J: I was very impressed by the people who were on the SERV team and I was impressed by the work the SERV team did and I wanted to be part of an organization that organizes those types of events.

The friends that you knew on the SERV team, were they women or men?

J: Both.

What is one of the best experiences you’ve had so far with the SERV team, whether official or unofficial?

J: I would say one of the best is probably the retreat I went on last year to Camp Kern. I really got to know the people on the SERV team and it was a great experience.

What other activities are you involved in other than the SERV team?

J: I’m part of Global Health Initiative, I’m working on a thesis, but in terms of student involvement, I’m trying to think…in the past I’ve done Business Owners Club, I was on the dance team…
You mentioned your thesis, are you working or is there anything else?

J: No, not this quarter.

How would you define “community service”?

J: Community service is investing your time and resources into bettering the community and not necessarily at one point of time, but for a long period of time. So doing anything that would help improve the community.

Next, I’m going to ask you a series of questions related to your perspective as a male college student. First of all, what defining characteristics would you use to describe what it means to be a man?

J: (long pause) I would say, I would think someone who is physically strong, emotionally maybe not as much, and someone who is more stoic that a woman.

Now, you said you had conflicting views about that...

J: Well yeah, you know I just feel like there’s a traditional view of men, you know macho and not as much emotion…well, in terms of behavior. But I feel that’s not necessarily the case, not necessarily what I think. Yeah, in terms of service, I would say that men aren’t really involved. When I go to a service event it’s usually all female.

Why do you think that is?

J: I’m not sure, maybe it has something to do with biology…I’m not sure. I hope not. I don’t know. I just feel like men don’t care as much about those things, maybe they’re more selfish.

In terms of these characteristics, what has influenced you to think this way or perceive those characteristics?

J: I think a lot of it has to do with how society views men. So you know, it’s all just reading books, watching movies, seeing other people, and the opinions of men versus women. And then in term of why men are not as involved in service…I don’t know, maybe they’re just more selfish.

Can you share with me an experience of the last time you and your male friends hung out?

J: Yeah, it was just the other night when we watched the Super Bowl together. We ordered some food, got some drinks.
Where there a lot of you?

J: About 7 of us.

What would you say it is like to be a male student at Ohio State?

J: At Ohio State, I see male students who on the weekends look to get really drunk and look to hook up with girls. And then during the week, it’s going to classes doing the work and working out.

Are there other normal behaviors you observe at Ohio State?

J: (long pause) I’ve seen, and obviously they’re not on the serve team, but they’re men on my dance team, so I definitely see other males on campus being involved with other organizations and being really involved in academics as well.

Would you say that’s the majority or minority of men?

J: I think that’s hard to say. On a campus with 50,000 students and 30,000 are undergrads and I’d say 50% of those are male. All 50% of those males are definitely not involved in campus related organizations so I would say the majority probably are not involved.

What do you think determines this typical behavior?

J: I think it’s just the culture of “that.” When there are so many students, every year those students remember that when they see the preceding years of students doing the same thing, I think it’s just established in the culture of everybody just accustomed to that. I think, depending on the situation you are in, you sort of calibrate to that level. If all the students who are out there are really invested into the academics and service, then you’re more likely to be part of that. But if the culture is not doing that, then I think they’ll pick up those habits as well.

Would you say peers are a big influence on behavior?

J: Yes I do.

Do you think men are more influenced than their peers than women?

J: “No, I think men and women, in my opinion, are equally influenced by their peers”

Okay, so for a guy who doesn’t live up to the typical behavior of what a male college student should do, what do you think happens to that person? Are there any negative consequences that occur?

J: I think that depends on who their friends are. If their friends are understanding, I don’t think that really matters, but if they’re in a group who will shun you if you’re not doing
what they are doing, then they might be not... I think it just depends on who your friends are and what the situation is.

*Have you ever been in a situation where that has been the case?*

J: Yeah, there are a lot of times, I’m thinking in terms of academics and not just hanging out, but there have been plenty of times when I’ve stayed in and studied when my friends have gone out or vice-versa. I think my friends and I are very close and we have a mutual understanding and it’s not a problem really, ever actually.

*Are there certain activities where you see met at more than women?*

J: Yeah, so I was part of “Business Builders Club” and we had the hardest time to have girls come to those club meetings. We’d have meetings with 30-40 people and we’d have about 3 or 4 women. And I’m not sure why that is, but the group was based around entrepreneurship. But whereas, I think the SERV team is equally divided among women and men. Things like Global Health Initiative, we have a few males, but it’s predominately women. In all those Alternative Spring Break trips, a lot of times it’s women and not men. A lot of the sports organizations are more male than female and that depends on what sport it is. I only have experience with the football and basketball, but I’m sure if you look at more sports there are some that are more female. Regarding research, I think they might be equal, it’s hard to tell. Greek Life obviously is the same. I don’t know, dance teams are probably more female. My dance team is all male, so it’s a little different. I would say, like in the South-Asian community here, when there’re dance teams, it’s really hard for them to be friends. So I think we’re an exception to the world.

*So why do you think there are more men in certain organizations compared to women?*

J: Again, I think it might be the culture. Maybe men are seen as individuals who take more risk, and so they’re more involved in entrepreneurship...maybe because there are already so males, the females feel uncomfortable coming to those meetings and vice-versa. Again, I think it’s just societal attitudes towards different things and I think your own personal experience too. If you’re more influenced by what people think than maybe you won’t go to things where there are more people of the opposite sex.

*What would you say are your personal priorities in life right now?*

J: I would like to say my thesis, because I need to finish that. And then classes probably and my dance team.

*How do you feel the personal priorities of male students might differ from female students?*

J: That’s a hard question...I have no idea. I don’t know, I don’t think they’re necessarily too different. I don’t know. Maybe if you could give me like some additional substance, that might help.
I think with that, it’s looking at seeing men at certain activities and seeing that men have a different idea of what man should be as opposed to woman...

J: Well another thing that came to mind is that a lot of majors differ by the number of women and men who take those majors so…I took an art class, and it was mostly women...

and why is that though?

J: I don’t know, I think it keeps going back to conditioning. Like, maybe females are brought up to think that they can’t do engineering and males are brought up to think that they shouldn’t be doing art because…and I’m not making a judgment…I think it’s conditioning, more than anything else. Because both are equally capable of doing either of those things. So I think it just comes down to conditioning and the values that are instilled in people while being brought up. So maybe a male’s priorities are more to be in academics related to math and science. Maybe females are more involved in humanities. And again…stereotypically, I do think that’s what it’s like. It comes down to conditioning.

Literature shows that in terms of personal priorities, males are more career focused than women, and that if they’re interested in something, they’re only going to do it if it benefits their career, whereas women might be more interested in the social aspect. Would you agree with that generalization?

J: Yeah, I think I would agree with that. I think oftentimes males are more selfish than females. But in my experience, I know a lot of females that are clear-focused as well and they work hard towards that. I think there’s definitely a blurring of the distinction, especially… “I guess I wouldn’t agree with some of the definition, from my personal experience.” I mean, because we’ve talked about penetration of certain different student organizations so Business Builders Club is all about what it means to start a business and making a lot of money…and not a lot about the social impact. Then you look at a lot of people that are in volunteer organizations on campus, like the One Campaign and Asian-wide where we were making shirts and there were only 2 males and there were like 10 girls. So I think in my experience, it’s definitely been that. Like the social oriented organizations have more females and a lot of the career focused organizations are more male.

How do you think the typical behavior or the culture affects academic achievement for males?

J: I think culture is extremely important. Like I said, people, males and females, they just calibrate to the achievements of their peers and alter the expectations that are laid for them. A lot of times your expectation is, you know, X, then you will hit X maybe, but you won’t go past it. So, that’s established by the culture in your school. Most people just don’t surpass those expectations.
So, is there maybe a lower expectation for males than women?

J: No, I’m not saying that. Males and females calibrate to those expectations that are laid out for them.

So, how would you say expectations can differ between men and women?

J: I think it depends on what your area of expectations is. Are you talking about academics?

Uh huh.

J: I don’t know if there is a difference. If there is a difference…I don’t think there is a difference. I think it just depends on…because I keep thinking about like engineering versus especially in the sciences or the humanities or business and I think the expectations are equal. In terms of academics.

So, there is an involvement gap between men and women. Do you have any advice for campus administrators or people working with students to better support male students at Ohio State?

J: It’s tough, because like we’ve talked about, if there aren’t already males then it’s tougher to get more. I think, again, at the involvement fair and orientation, to directly address the issue and call males out and say, “you’re not meeting expectations”…and maybe that’s not the right time for it, but at other places you could.

Do you think that is an issue?

J: Oh yeah, absolutely. In Business Builders Club, it was reversed. So we had very candid discussions about how to get more females in our group. So we talked about it for a long time. And alternatively, I’ve been to a lot of…often times, there’s just not a lot of guys. I’ll be maybe one of two or three. So it’s…I’ve just sort of become desensitized. Originally, I cared about it a little bit because I felt a little uncomfortable. But now I just don’t care anymore. But I’ve definitely noticed that. I think there definitely is a gap.

What can we do?

J: That’s what we struggle with at Business Builders Club. So what we did at Business Builders Club, to attract more females, we advertised that we have weekly meetings and guest speakers. We traditionally had a lot of male speakers, but then we started bringing in a lot female speakers just to show the people on campus, especially the females on campus that females can be like this person too. And maybe they would be more comfortable if the person leading the meeting was a female too.
Do you think that could happen for males as well?

J: Yeah, definitely. I think it depends on what type of organization it is. Because, volunteering might not necessarily bring in a lot of speakers. But you could, like a male speaker talking about why you need to volunteer. I don’t know if that would have as much of an impact. I think just reaching out to males more to come to these things is better. For example, last year’s Belize trip, there was one guy, two there maybe, and like 12 girls. I think that specifically could be addressed just by reaching out more strongly to males. Because I think that was just like blanket marketing…you know like flyers and that stuff. So I think that maybe, directly talking to males about organizations…

What about for professors? Have you noticed males verses females being more engaged? Is there anything professors can do to better reach out to men?

J: They could right, obviously. If there’s a class where males aren’t doing as well as females, and that’s the general trend in all their classes. That’s their responsibility. I think they could talk to the males specifically, and call them out. I think that’s important. Talking to them directly and saying that you know, the expectations are higher than what you’re doing. You know, it’s just hard because of the entire culture. And it’s hard to get more involved especially since there aren’t many involved in the first place.

Another thing to think about is, although the SERV team looks equal, the application pool were definitely…same with RAs, and tour guides...

J: Yeah, right, that’s true. I think that using the people, like the males and females that are already in the organization, to reach out to their friends. So like if there’s more females have the males reach out to their friends and vice versa.

It sounds like individual attention is often the best way...

J: Yeah, I think so. Because traditionally it’s just like blanket statements about getting involved and well…males just don’t take them seriously. I’m sure going to the fraternities and talking to the guys about… (Inaudible)

Ok, is there anything I haven’t thought to ask you or other things you’d like to add?

J: I think a lot of things just depend on self-motivation. And so, it’s difficult, especially to motivate the person to do more. I think the culture at Ohio State is that the expectations are just very low. So expectations need to be raised at Ohio State, both males and females. And maybe in terms of organizational leadership, you know, focus more on men. I think there are two models, just top down and bottom up. So if you’re at the organization level and you’re directly focusing on…or even the administration…just calling men out and telling them they’re not meeting expectations. And then, the same time at bottom up, you need to motivate the students and that can be done through their peers. I think those are the two ways of looking at it. I think really just raising the standards, from academic things and leadership and organizations….
Anything else?

J: No I don’t think so.

END OF INTERVIEW
Interview with Tom (T)
2/4/2010, 12:00pm

First, I will ask you a series of questions related to your involvement with the SERV Team. Can you describe the SERV Team’s mission?

T: I would say that the SERV team’s mission is to promote service opportunities on campus for all students in hopes to show people how to have a life-long service aspect of their life, making as many great opportunities on campus as we can.

What is your current role with the SERV Team?

T: I am the marketing chair, so I drift from project or project wherever people need ideas for marketing or advertisements, things like that.

And how has that experience been so far?

T: It’s good when I have time to do it. I would say I haven’t been as proactive as I was hoping to be, but recently things are going well. I have designed a few things coming up. It’s weird because I want to have more time to just do that only but my classes get in the way.

How did you first hear about the SERV Team?

T: I first heard about the SERV Team when I went on an alternative break trip the winter of my sophomore year, and I heard rumblings of this “SERV Team” that made it all happen. Then I applied to be a leader and learned more about it. I wanted to apply 2 years ago but didn’t and then applied last year.

And how did you first hear about the Buck-I-Serv program?

T: Hmm, that’s stretching it. I think I heard about it from a girl that went on a trip that went on a trip my freshman year in my dorm.

Why were you interested in joining the SERV Team?

T: Because it seemed like an organization or something to get involved in that was more meaningful to me. Having the experience of going on these trips, those were very defining moments of my college experience. If I have anything to do with that anything to do with other people I wanted it.

Can you talk more about why that experience was so meaningful to you?

T: I had gone on a service trip the spring of my freshman year that wasn’t through Buck-I-Serv. It was Katrina relief stuff through a religious group on campus, so it was a
different experience on campus. That was when I realized there were trips every break and who I went with the first time didn’t have trips every quarter, so I went on the winter break trip my sophomore year. There’s something about going and talking to new people. The kind of experiences you have and the people you meet… they are all people you want to meet. I liken it to being in the dorms as an RA. I wanted to be around people that like doing the things I like to do. I think it’s infectious when there are 50 people all wanting to do service. They were just like really awesome weeks.

What is one of the best experiences you’ve had so far with the SERV Team?

T: The retreat was really, really good. I really enjoyed it. But I think the best times for me are like when somebody comes to me and wants ideas for what I’m here to do. It’s less about implementation but the idea brainstorming part of it. Just recently I met with Mike Ezick and Vikas and we had a little brainstorming session where you just pound through ideas and it’s exciting.

Are there other activities you are involved in other the SERV Team?

T: Like I said, I was an RA in Smith Hall, and I dunno, not really just engineering.

Going back to community service, what would you say is your current concept of community service? How would you define community service?

T: Community service starts with realizing how blessed we are and doing our part to return the favor to everybody else. Whether that’s saying hi to random people on the oval or helping out in more rigid events or community service events. It all is the same but as long as you are doing something to make somebody else’s day a little better or life a little better.

Next, I will ask you a series of questions regarding your perspective as a male college student. First, what defining characteristics would you use to describe what it means to be a man?

T: Hmm, to me or to society?

Both, how about that?

T: Ok, I guess we’ll start with society because I feel like there is a disconnect for me and society. I would say the stereotypical definitions of a man are strong-willed, a person that can make a decision, good with numbers and directions… a man hides his emotions by normal standards. But for me, I don’t see it as being a man; I see it as “person.” So what it means to be a good person…. Believing in yourself, doing things you enjoy regardless of what people think… like dancing for example. I love dancing, and I would say it’s not a typical manly sort of thing by normal standards. But I think in my mind it takes a man to do something confidently and not care what people think.
You mentioned characteristics that society holds. How would you define society? Is it the majority or, what is society?

T: Society is definitely the majority but also the majority view over time. I would say we are in an age where the definition of a man is changing. But what has been for a long time… I would say that is what I think of society… the view of the majority of the last 50 years.

What factors influence you to know what society believes?

T: I would say my family, the media, and my faith as well. I would say that plays a lot into it because we are a Christian country.

You had said before that the definition of a man is changing. Can you talk a little more about that?

T: I dunno maybe it’s because I am in college and I am blind to the rest of the world. Maybe it’s just me changing, I dunno. But I would say it’s changing in that people around me seem to be more open. I dunno. Maybe it is just me changing.

Maybe you see yourself changing from who the stereotype is to what you think a man should be?

T: Yeah, absolutely.

Can you share with me a story about the last time you and some of your male friends hung out. What did you do?

T: I don’t have many male friends, but I guess the last time was last night when we went to a bar. They had just finished a PChem exam, ad I took it last year so I could empathize with all of them.

Were there a lot of you, or just a few of you?

T: There were like 7 of us. And I don’t know them all that well, so it was like a “break the ice with the ChemE’s” sort of thing. I would say that’s the most immediate thing I did, but generally I don’t hang out with guys ever really. I’ve always been a friend with girls.

Do you know why that is?

T: I dunno. I think it’s because when I was growing up all the kids on my street were girls and my best friend was a girl, so it’s just proximity. I think it’s also because I feel like girls, women are less judging of your view of a man. It’s easier for me to relate to females because I. I feel like with other men I have this wall up because I’m not that into sports, videogames, I’m not your man’s man, if you will. So maybe it’s safer?
What is it like to be a male student at The Ohio State University? Are there unique aspects of a man?

T: Hmm, I dunno it seems like the outside view of a typical guy at Ohio State would be a was-athletic in high school, drinks on the weekend, wears his jersey every Saturday. But for me, I have tons of opportunities to be this changing man to dance, do SERV Team, things that wouldn’t typically be manly.

Beyond what you have already described, what are normal behaviors of guys at Ohio State?

T: Definitely video games, sports-watching, skipping class.

Who do you think determines what’s normal? Why do you think guys typically do those activities?

T: Because they can? Because other guys and the women on campus allow it? It plays into if girls didn’t appreciate that sort of thing, they probably wouldn’t. But it’s not that women appreciate it or not appreciate it; they tolerate it. And that’s like the easy way. It’s easy to be a guy’s guy and it’s harder to not.

With that, for a guy who does not live up to the norms, what are the negative consequences?

T: Guys could probably feel not outcast but just out of the popular crowd, if you will. To get the high school standards. Maybe they feel like they are missing out on this typical college male culture. I know I have. I have been like, “I wish I didn’t care. I wish I could just go out and drink like five days a week.”

Can you describe an instance in which you behaved in ways that contradicted the norm? What have been those repercussions?

T: Doing creative things. I think that’s a travesty in that males aren’t creative or thought of creative or artistic ones, especially in the dorms. Being an RA, I made door decs that were awesome and that broke the mold for sure. Generally guys’ door decs are god-awful. Being artistic, caring about how things look.

What are some campus activities that are most popular among male college students?

T: Frats, for sure. Going to football games, sitting around, playing video games… “Call of Duty?” I don’t event know…
You mentioned earlier that being a part of the SERV Team was not typical for guys to do. Why do you think these activities are prioritized above other activities available on campus?

T: Maybe because it’s socially seen that they are more fun? It’s easy, it’s brainless. It doesn’t take much to go to a basketball game or go to a bar. I want more.

So do you think that another characteristic for male college students is to take the easy way out?

T: Yeah, for sure. That’s both male and female, but probably more males in college, but there are a lot of people that take the easy road.

What are your personal priorities currently? What are you most focused on right now?

T: The things that I prioritize are school, because I have to. That’s why I’m here. I don’t necessary want to because I hate my classes, but yeah… homework because if you don’t do it you’ll fail, and there’s quite a bit of it to do. That’s priority number one. Priority number two, these days is trying to see more people, friends that are going to be graduating. I missed out on seeing more people being in the dorms. Being in the dorms is easy because you have RA’s that you are friends with and they’re always there, so you lose touch with other people. I’m trying to do something fun on my breaks, that might mean going to new places through the break trips. I like going to new places. Try to “figure it all out.” That’s a priority of mind lately because I don’t know what’s going on with where the next 2 years will lead me.

How do you feel the personal priorities of male students differ from the priorities of female college students?

T: I would say girls have a higher priority for their academics. Guys have a higher priority for reputation in withholding this man’s man idea. I haven’t really thought about it because I don’t really know what people’s priorities are. I really don’t know.

How do you think the norms for male college students have an impact on academic achievement?

T: I was saying earlier for typical men on campus, the expectations aren’t that high. It’s okay to slack off… get a 2.8. The fact that academics aren’t as important for males than females lets guys not try as hard. I think that like with classes and things, advisers play into the whole thing too. Like everyone takes Theatre 100 and you don’t have to. It’s the first GEC on the list, but you don’t have to take that one, and advisers don’t encourage students to take a 500-level history that counts for a 150 history. But in the same respect, guys probably wouldn’t want to anyway because it’d be harder.
What advice would you give to campus administrators who were looking for ways to better support male students at Ohio State?

T: I think it’s like an expectation thing. Similar to w my high school was in that the expectations aren’t high. Our administrators aren’t expecting the male students as a whole to do more. I think it’s an expectation. It’s so hard because college is a weird time for making your own decisions. I think it’s pushing students to take harder classes. I know they push research. But with research, it’s intimidating or something that’s unattainable for the average person, but it’s not at all. It’s just something that takes initiative and want to be there. Maybe it’s breaking down the concepts of research.

What about in a residence hall? Is there anything you have done or seen work well?

T: I know getting people to do things that they are interested in regardless of how they might seem based on the number of the class. And having positive male influences too. So like in the dorms, some RA’s give the concept of an RA a bad rep in that they are just not that cool. But if you want males on campus to be doing more like assuming leadership roles or being RAs and they see their RA as maybe a little weird or something.

Are there programs you think would be successful?

T: Guys really don’t go to programs ever.

Why do you think that is?

T: Because it takes effort. Minimal effort. And a lot of programs are shitty too (pardon my language). That’s another thing, getting programs and administrators to do programs that are interesting and fun. That’s something I always did, I always planned programs that I would want to go to. I think RA’s could do more and Hall directors could do more in pushing their RA’s to do more meaningful, fun things.

What would be your advice for faculty members working with male college students whether inside or outside the classroom?

T: Opening up research opportunities, broadcasting that out, saying there would be openings in some lab. I think they need professors that care more. Typically professors here are more research-focused and that’s why there here so I don’t fault them for that. But I have a professor now who really has a vested interest in us. He was like, “so, if you guys are ever having trouble give me a call or just stop by my house.” I’ve never had... it’s a little weird, but he’s cool. He works at Battelle as a full-time engineer who just teaches classes every once in awhile. But he’s really cool and he’s taking the time to learn everyone’s names. I dunno why. I dunno if there’s some sort of over-lying motivation to do exceptionally well, but it would be great to have professors take more of a vested interest.
We would like to see more male students involved in campus activities. What have I not thought to ask you in this interview that would help my thinking?

T: I dunno, I’m working on it too. Even people that I’m close to, I don’t know how you get people to be more active or care more. I try to be a positive influence. My friend Ryan is a freshman this year, and I subtly pushed the RA thing, I pushed SERV Team thing a little bit, and he doesn’t respond. And I think that’s how 99% of the males on campus are and it’s just more than they have to do. It’s a good question.

END OF INTERVIEW

Follow-Up Email from Tom Post-Interview

To: Katie Krajny

Fri, Feb 5, 2010 at 3:05 AM

Katie,

So my roommate and I had a conversation tonight about males and why there is such a disparity between the women and men on campus. We boiled it down to some main issues.

A lot of the males on campus have their college paid for by their parents. It is given to them, me included, and we feel like it is our right to come to college, and a societal norm to stay. But because we aren't paying for it, and there is no investment besides our time, we have no sense of ownership and we don't owe anyone anything. Most guys are here because there parents would be disappointed if they didn't come and the only thing they need to do to repay them is to earn a degree, not get involved, not do research, not make the most of the on campus opportunities. I know personally, if I had thousands of dollars of loans looming over my head I would be motivated to learn as much as I can to get the best job possible out of school to pay off these loans. Or I would use the RPAC all the time because I was paying for it, or try as many different things on campus as I could because I am paying for that too. But my parents are paying, I really don't have any concept of how much it really is and what it would take for me to make that money, so I find it hard for me to care as much as I should. This can be said for girls as well, but there is a little more to them.

As females about to be heading into the male dominated, yet swiftly changing, workforce, they want to make themselves as desirable to employers as possible. That means being super involved, getting good grades, busting their asses to make sure they get a spot, and that being a spot typically filled by a less motivated man. So me, as an upper middle class, white, tall male feels like I have nothing to prove. My ticket is punched so to speak, but it's not the case. There is going to be a shift in power sooner or later. These motivated women are going to start becoming the majority and the males are
going to be out of luck. But as for right now, society tells me I am in the driver's seat when it comes to finding a job. I think if I and other males had more to prove, then we would be working just as hard, doing just as much, and caring a heck of a lot more. We both commented on the fact that neither of us knows a girl here at OSU who doesn't work hard. Especially in engineering. The girls we encounter, work later, do more problems, get higher grades on tests because they have everything to prove. The guys think they have nothing to lose.

So with the state of society how it is right now, will we see a difference? Probably not until something drastic happens. Maybe it's when a woman becomes president, or when all of upper management are females in the biggest companies. I know in the last year I have been searching for motivation. I am hungry to be going balls to the wall for something, but I don't have it. I have the security blanket of my family, and my ethnicity to fall back on. I think a job will be waiting for me, but it won't be unless I start caring a ton more. I know that if I had something to prove, you better believe that I would be putting in the extra hours and effort to make sure I stood out. It's like when I took an architecture studio in the spring of last year. I wanted to be the best in my class, to see if I had what it took. And I did. My work was generally better than most, but I knew I didn't want to stay at OSU for three more years, so I decided to stay in engineering and take the safe route.

And for me, I do what I do because I don't want my parents money to be wasted. They work too hard for me to completely throw it away. So I am in a difficult major that requires a lot of effort, and I do more than the "norm" but I still could do a lot more and work a lot harder. Like I said before, if it was my money I wouldn't waste a penny. It may sound selfish, but it's the truth. The only accountability I have is not to flunk out. And I am blessed with a brain that allows me to put forth minimal effort and still get by.

So here's what I think. If guys have something to prove, they will be more active and work harder. Women are the way they are because they are still fighting and uphill battle to just get to an even playing field. I am glad you sparked these thoughts in me, because I need to make a change for the better. I need to find something to prove.

random tangent - men are motivated to do better than women when they feel threatened. women are motivated by the fact that there is a social injustice occurring and they don't get the respect they deserve. In this day and age, they will keep outperforming men until that respect is granted. and as long as men aren't threatened, nothing will change.

sincerely,
tom
Interview with Participant A (PA)
1/20/2010, 9:00am

First I will ask you a series of questions related to your involvement with the SERV Team. First, can you describe the organization to me in your own words?

PA: Yeah SERV team is basically a group of 20-25 students that were interviewed and selected to be a part of this organization. And what we do is, there’s no… unlike most clubs here at OSU, there is no hierarchy in term so like president, vice present, etc, it’s all on the same plateau, so everyone has the same role and the same, um, equal position as everyone else on the team. And we were basically paired up or split into groups of 2 or 3 and we were assigned a project to work on for the year sometimes it’s a one-day project like a single event like MLK Day and like Community Commitment. Those are the bigger single day events and then some of the projects are year-round just depending on what you’re assigned. And you basically work on that throughout the quarter and there are other events and projects we work on as a time as a whole, so everyone helps each other.

What’s your specific project?

PA: I work on Columbus reads, which is a tutoring project so what we do is we go to disadvantaged school in the Columbus area and we have transportation provided and we have OSU students tutor the children, usually they are in kindergarten or 1st grade.

How did you first hear about the SERV Team?

PA: I first heard about it from some of my friends who are a couple years older than me. They had told me they had applied and gotten in and they said that they experience was good.

Were those male friends, female friends?

PA: Male friends

And why were you personally interested in joining the SERV team?

PA: I was looking for something to do… I was sortof unsatisfied when I first came here in terms of like, the service projects I had gotten into… because most of them uh weren’t… well for example I was in USG as like an intern which is like for freshmen only, and in terms of the dynamics of the group, it was great and it was really fun. But the service is what was lacking. There wasn’t very much initiative taken, and I had heard this program was taken very seriously. It was one of the few I knew about where you had to actually apply to get into it. And I think typically when you have to apply to something people take it more seriously and apply more to it.
What is one of the best experiences you have had so far with the SERV Team whether it’s a social event or informal or formal?

PA: I’d say overall I have really enjoyed the Columbus Reads tutoring program I help run because in addition to coordinating it I actually tutor once a week as well, and to see everything come together every week and sortof see how much of an impact we are having first hand is pretty satisfying.

Are there other activities you are involved in besides the SERV Team?

PA: Yeah, I do research at the Biomedical Research Tower and I’ve been involved in that for over a year now. And also I’m the director of outreach for the bioethics society. And outside of OSU I am working with a store in the Short North to help start a clothing line.

What would u say is your current concept of community service, like how would you define it?

PA: I think it’s pretty broad concept. But I think in general it’s just people providing for other people who need it in the community. And I don’t think it necessarily has to be local in the community it can be statewide, national, and international, whatever degree of help you can provide. But I just think it’s basically helping people that are at a disadvantage and that need help.

OK, next I am going to ask you a series of questions regarding your concept as a male student, a male college student, so what sort of ideas you have, what your approach is, what your perspective is. The first is what are the defining characteristics would you use to describe what it means to be a man?

PA: Defining characteristics?

Yeah like social behaviors, physical characteristics....

PA: I think physical characteristic are fairly clear. Socially something I have noticed within my group of friends is that men tend to have less conflict than women. I think men are sortof made out to be, or pre-determined to be less emotionally-affected by actions or consequences and because of that they carry out that notion. I also feel like in most cases, even not in general in terms of, you know, equality of opportunity or whatever social dynamics between relationships, there is still generally a notion that men should provide for the family.

And what has influenced you to think that. You mentioned within your groups of friends you have seen those observations. Is there any other way you have gotten that cue?

PA: I think it’s portrayed like that in media and in general in movies. Obviously there are several exceptions but I think that’s it.
Can you please share with me a story about the last time you and your male friends hung out. What did you do?

PA: Generally when my friends and I hang out we just talk. We play music and just talk but generally we don’t talk about very serious stuff. It’s mostly, there’s a lot of laughing and joking around, making fun of each other, stuff like that. There usually isn’t too much weight to the conversation but that’s when a lot of us are together. If I’m just with a friend or two then the conversation can tend to get a lot more serious.

Why do you think that is?

PA: I think... [pause] My friend group is a group of friends that like to have a lot of fun and our energy feeds off of each other. It’s like if a joke comes up it will be built upon. I think it’s sortof just natural.

How would you describe being a male student Ohio State. Are there any unique characteristic being a male at Ohio State?

PA: I honestly don’t find it personally that different to be a male at Ohio State. I guess I haven’t really considered being a female at Ohio State. But my experiences have been mostly the classes I take as a science major are males and females. It’s pretty split evenly. My experiences outside of class are male and female. So I don’t think I’ve noticed too much of a difference being male at Ohio State but I’m sure with different majors and extra curriculars like sports, I’m sure there are some stark differences.

Are there any “normal” behaviors of guys at Ohio State? Do you think there are certain things that most guys do at Ohio State or certain behaviors that they exhibit?

PA: I think it’s a stigma for guys to go after girls here at Ohio State. Near the weekend, you tend to hear about that more. I’d day that’s probably more prevalent here than at other colleges.

Why do you think that is?

PA: I think that Ohio State is a big school so it has a lot of variety and range of people. And the people that like to try to do that are generally more outspoken anyway so you hear about it more I think. So maybe in other places it’s not that people don’t have the same goals, but there aren’t as many.

What do you think might happen to a guy who does not live up being a man?

PA: If someone were like that, he would probably; feel secluded from the general environment. Here, it is very stereotypical so you’d be against the norm.
Do you think they get made fun of by their friends?

PA: If they get made fun of by their friends then they aren’t good friends. But different people that don’t know him would probably say stuff.

Can you describe an instance in which you have contradicted the norm?

PA: My clothing line is contradicting the norm because it’s taking initiative outside the borders of the school. A lot of students here live inside the walls of Ohio State and essentially don’t really interact much with the real outside world. Personally I don’t think that’s a very good thing. I guess that’s an example of how I contradict the norm because not many people take initiatives or try to push forward with something that is totally unaffiliated with the school.

What sort of feedback or repercussions from people have you seen from just you doing that?

PA: Like negative?

Yeah.

PA: Honestly I don’t know about too many negative things that have come out of it. I think there may be a minor bit of envy or jealousy just because it’s something that takes a lot of work and initiative but it’s not something that a lot of people would be willing to do. But that’s sortof speculative anyway.

Looking more at the male identity, is there anything you have done that’s contradicted being a male college student?

PA: I’m not one of those people that’s really doing to try to hook up with girls or go out with them. But other than that, I fit the stereotype, unfortunately.

With you not wanting to do after girls, for that have you had any negative repercussions?

PA: Not within my friend group, no.

What campus activities are most popular among male college students?

PA: I’ve seen a lot more males at athletic events, running 5Ks and 10Ks. I think USG might have more males, but most of my organizations are pretty split.

Looking at athletic events, why do you think that those have more male participation?

PA: I think people tend to be more passionate about things that they are good at from the baseline, and a lot of males are good at sports.
What are your personal priorities?

PA: Personally I’d say I’m most driven in school, hopefully going to medical school— that’s my number one goal. Aside from that, my business outside of school.

Would you say that there is a difference between the personal priorities of male students from the priorities of female college students?

PA: In general, yeah there’s probably a difference.

And what do you think that difference is?

PA: From what I have experienced, I think that the female students that I have been around appear to be more focused in terms of classes and less distracted by males compared to how distracted males can get with females. And I know a lot of males who have fallen into a relationship in which they stray a lot more to the likes of the female than the female does to the male. That’s a disparity in priority.

How do you think the norms for male college students have an impact on academic achievement?

PA: I think those norms can detract from academic achievement because they are not as focused.

The main reason why I’m interested in this topic is that there is a large gender gap in higher education.

PA: There, there is?

Yes. At one point there were more male students involved, but now there is a shift in females performing better. With that, what advice would you have for campus administrators who were looking for ways to better support male students at Ohio State?

PA: I think there is a higher level of apathy with males compared to females. And I don’t know exactly what the reason for that is, but I sense that females are more motivated than males. But how can we change that? Ideally you would like to target something that will attract the males to come in, but males are also a lot more dismissive than females. If I’m with a group of friends and I’ll walk down the street and we see something that is ostensibly trying to be cool or trying to attract males, instead of it working to that advantage it will actually turn males off more because they’ll say, “oh look at this. This is so stupid.” Like very dismissive and not willing to be open to actually considering that maybe the program would be good. I guess there’s no easy way to get around that somehow, but as for how to do that, I’d probably have to think about it a little more.
Are there certain things that faculty members could do for male college students?

PA: Personally I’ve had professors that are known to (whether or not this is bias experience) that cater towards females at least when you go in and talk to them individually or when you go to office hours. Some of my professors that have done that have been young, male professors so I guess it would make sense.

Have they given them more attention?

PA: They’ve given them more attention and more help. I’ve noticed it a little bit but I hear about it a lot. Anything like that will automatically de-motivate a student even further.

Any other advice you can think of for campus administrators?

PA: This is not a long-term tactic, but food always gets males involved. Anywhere there is food, it will catch males’ attention.

Ultimately, we would like to see more male students involved in campus activities. What have I not thought to ask you in this interview that would help my thinking?

PA: I think you covered it pretty well.

It sounds like the way you got involved with the SERV Team it was through another friend. Do you think that might be helpful?

PA: Yeah I would say that the number one way people get involved or take those stepping stones through college is through support from elders or just other people that they know because nothing is more valuable than advice or suggestions from someone you trust. Perhaps if there is some interaction with older people or people involved in administration and they work to trickle that down. There are a lot of students that are stellar and have a lot of connections and made their presence noticed here at OSU. And if you tap into those students and try to get them to influence other people they know to get them involved that’s probably one way to do it.

As a follow up question to a previously-asked question, do you more often to spend time with smaller groups of people or larger groups?

PA: Generally a smaller group getting lunch or dinner between classes. On the weekend is when it becomes a bigger group. I live with 8 of my close friends, and so during the week we are all out doing our own things, and on the weekend we are all home and convened.

END OF INTERVIEW
Interview with Herb (H)
1/22/2010, 2:00pm

Considering your involvement in the SERV Team, I am first going to ask you a series of questions related to your experiences with the group. So first, can you describe to me in your own words the mission of the SERV Team?

H: The SERV Team’s purpose on campus to create events service-related that students can get involved in.

...and what has been your role with the SERV Team?

H: Everybody on the SERV Team has their own specific project that they do like there’s Community Commitment, MLK Day of Service, and you’re partnered with another SERV Team members, and they try to partner them with the previous member that was on the team last year, but it’s not always possible. And this year I was in charge of New Project November.

What did you do with that project?

H: We had a little trouble figuring out what we were going to do. And it was getting down to crunch time, and our ideas were being shut down by various bureaucracies around campus, and we decided to do something involving hunger since it was around Thanksgiving. And we created a hunger awareness event where we brought in speakers throughout the Columbus area who were involved in this subject, a couple of professors and they came in and talked about it, and we had food and everything. And the following week we put on the BMW food drive and donated the food to the Mid-Ohio Food Drive.

How did you first hear about the SERV Team?

H: My roommate last year was involved in OUAB, and she had heard something through the union one day, and she forwarded it on to me. And then I went ahead and applied and interviewed.

Why were you interested in joining the SERV Team?

H: I just really like service. I never really liked it prior to high school but something about it now just sticks out to me, and I wanted to follow along with it.

Do you know what that difference is, now that you’re in college?

H: I think when I was in high school I was more selfish and maybe that has to do with socialization or just being young. And once I got to Ohio State and started taking classes and learning different things about the world and getting a better perspective of how life is for other people and realizing it’s definitely not bad for me and that I should do what I can.
What is one of the best experience you have had so far with the SERV Team whether official or unofficial?

H: I like the retreats. We’ve had a couple retreats so far, and it’s just a great experience. We bond so much together and get to know each other on the team. I like how it’s such a small group of people that you can really get to know everybody, rather than it being hundreds of people and you’re like, “uh, I know like 6 people”. We’ll brainstorm ideas for the group, we get a lot accomplished, and we have a good time at the same time.

Are there other activities that you involved in other than the SERV Team?

H: I’m involved in the Sullivant Society, Inter-Group Council, Special Olympics… that’s all I can think of off the top of my head.

What is your current concept of community service? How would you define community service?

H: I think it’s just a way to devote your time to some part of the community that maybe needs some help or maybe doesn’t have the funds to build a playground for an area in a community that really needs one. Or just a way for the people in a community to just give their time for a great purpose of the community.

Next I am going to ask you a series of questions related to your perspective as a male student at Ohio State. To start off, what are some defining characteristics whether its traits or behaviors that you would use to describe what it means to be a man?

H: Never really thought about that. There are obvious things like deeper voice, muscles. There are a lot of stereotypes like breadwinner, supposed to bring in a lot of money, work out all the time, macho.

What does “macho” mean?

H: The epitome of the meathead stereotype of being a big, burly dude. I guess like a bully that would beat up anybody, take your lunch money, show off your body, and be the alpha male.

Are there other characteristics you can think of to describe a man?

H: I guess it’s looked down upon to do feminine things like cooking or cleaning. Maybe even like having fun. When you do that you go past this borderline of being a man.

Can you talk about that a little more?

H: Yeah. There are certain things can be perceived as fun from a male’s perspective like playing sports. That’s still manly and you can still have a good time. But maybe going
out for a cup of tea with your friends might not seem all that manly but you can still have a good time but it might be looked down upon by others. Maybe it’s based on a homosexual fear. Maybe the way you laugh could be looked down upon similar to how you should have the deep voice.

*What has made you think that way? Where have you seen those ideas of what a man should be like?*

H: I guess when you’re younger, they definitely show up. Kids are so naïve but they’re not afraid to say things or they get their own perceptions from other places so they just blurt them out. We talk about them in my sociology classes.

*Where do you think those kids are getting those ideas from?*

H: It’s part of the whole socialization process of your parents, your father’s one of those types of people and had those perspectives. In the past homophobia was pretty widespread from parents and grandparents from a period of time where Homophobia was a big issue that gets pushed down. Even when you’re out on the playground and not playing sports. You’re playing Pokemon cards and kids make fun of you.

*Are there other sources of showing that influence of how a man should be as a college student?*

H: I think it’s more hidden when you get older. Everyone goes to the RPAC to work out. You see magazines on campus. You’ll see on Craig’s List when looking for a job, “Attractive Males Only.” Recently I found out there’s dating website called beautifulpeople.org and it’s only for people that are good looking based on their standards.

*The last time you hung out with other guy friends, what sort of activities did you do?*

H: We went bowling last night at Capris Lanes, and it was a good time.

*Is that something you usually do?*

H: Actually I did it with the SERV Team.

*And what about with other guy friends? Do you typically do that sort of thing like go do an activity together or do you sit around and talk?*

H: We don’t sit around and talk too much. We’ll go to out to the movies or go to dinner and watch sports, or sit in the house and watch sports. We’ll talk a little bit but we never go really in depth about anything.

*What is it like to be a man at Ohio State? Are there any male stereotypes you see for male college students at Ohio State?*
H: I guess they’re all pretty similar. I wouldn’t think it’s just Ohio State would make any
distinctions. It might be different than going to a liberal school like Kenyon or Oberlin.

*Can you talk a little about why that is?*

H: I guess with Ohio State being such a big sports campus that going to the football
games is a big thing. I didn’t get football tickets this year and people were always like,
“why?!” and I was like, “I just like watching it from my own couch.” It’s quiet and I can
actually see what’s going on. Nobody really like jumped on me about that. It wasn’t a big
issue, but I think with how a sports campus this is, it’s definitely expected that people go
to sporting events or at least watch them. Working out a lot with the RPAC being such a
great facility. There are pressures, definitely as a college student in general and with this
health and fitness movement, to work out and eat healthier.

*With that, are there any normal behaviors you see guys do that’s special to Ohio State?*

H: Drinking. Definitely a popular thing here. Seems to be the thing to do here on the
weekends. I do it every once in awhile but sometimes I like going bowling, or going to
the movies.

*What do you think determines what normal behavior is or who do you think determines
that?*

H: I guess in part the majority, but there’s a gotta be a way to lead the majority. I feel like
there are certain leaders of the majority that drag people on. Those people have a lot of
friends. They see their friends doing it so they all start doing it. It just branches out like
facebook. You reach a vast number of people, and there’s a select few that want to be
different or just don’t want to be like most people for whatever reason.

*What happens to a guy that does not live up to those norms? Are there any negative
consequences or repercussions?*

H: If you’re with so many people and you don’t know a lot of people, you’re not going to
go out of your way to say something. I wouldn’t say there’s a large negative outlook.
Somebody might say, “that’s pretty cool that you don’t drink.” But there are other people
that may be like, “Oh that’s really stupid. You should drink with us.”

*Can you give an example of a time where you contradicted the norm?*

H: I stopped drinking for like a year freshman year going into sophomore year. I’d still
go to my friends’ house for a party but I just wouldn’t drink anything. No one would ever
really like hassle me about it, but my friends would be like, “Oh you’re not drinking
anymore? Why not?” They’d try to get me to play like beer pong, and I’d play but I’d just
play with water or juice.
What sort of campus activities do you find most popular among male college students?

H: Intramurals is a big thing especially with sports as a large aspect of the male frame. Leadership positions, going along with the stereotype that men are expected to lead which could be anything like USG and fraternities. Fraternities are also a big group too.

Why do you think those activities are prioritized as more of what males would do above other activities?

H: With intramurals, men are introduced to sports as such a young age and they see it on the TV all time. ESPN’s really popular with men. That’s something men find really enjoyable, and it gives them the competitive aspect where they can go up against other males and figure out who’s the alpha male again. With fraternities, I don’t know much about that. They do a lot of good things. I know a lot of people give them criticism for drinking all the time, but look around, all kinds of college students are doing that. They do all kinds of good things such as fundraisers, the Walk a Mile in Her Shoes. It’s a place for guys to find a little home at such a large campus here. With leadership positions, it goes back to what men think that they are expected to be. Looking forward in the future to the job search, people are going to want to see that on your resume.

What would you say your personal priorities are? What are you most focused on?

H: I just recently got into the sports major, and it’s something I really want to pursue. Everything I keep reading about getting into the sports industry is about getting the experience, so finding these experiences to put on my resume is what I’m focused on. I like to try to strike a balance between everything I have going on in my life. Sometimes it spreads me a little thin. It’d be better to do a couple things really great and spend a lot of time on them rather than 10 things that are really average and I’ve kind of done that to myself. But at the same time I don’t want to quit anything.

What makes you decide what you are going to focus on and where you’re going to spend your time?

H: Right now it’s the sports thing. I’ve got to think that I’m almost down here, that’s the next in my life, so I’ve got to focus all of my attention on. While with other things, I could put some time into them, they aren’t going to dictate what happens next in my life.

How do you think female students might prioritize things differently than male students?

H: I guess to some extent they probably have the same priorities, but females in general are more organized, better time management, and probably have a better idea of what they are going to do. I don’t know much about females but there’s something that’s in the brain that clicks a lot cleaner, I would guess. I also think that social aspects, females tend to utilize their emotions more so they would want to embrace friendships as a top priority, like family, things like that. But they are definitely leaning towards their careers and stuff to, or else I wouldn’t imagine they’d be here.
How do you think the norms of male college students have an impact on their academic achievement? (pause) Or do you think that they do?

H: I think… can you repeat the question?

Do you think the norms of male college students has an impact on their academic achievement?

H: Yeah, if I could bring some sociology into this, I just took a Social Stratification sociology class last quarter and one of the things we talked about was that education and college is sort of becoming feminized a little. With the whole male aspect of things, learning to be masculine and all that, it’s not a top priority for males to be good at school because they might be looked down upon by other males who aren’t as intelligent and are going to the workforce right after high school. And we talked about the rise of females going to school and the decline of males going to post secondary education. And we talked about how at Kenyon College… they basically accepted every male that applied to their school a few years back because there are so few males that applied. And they’re turning a lot of females away actually which is unfortunate. I guess at the college level, we’re all here. You wanted to take the extra step and get an education, so most people are going to focus on their education because they’re paying for it or their parents are paying for it… however it’s being paid. So especially with how much it costs, it’s definitely something they’re going to have at the top of their priorities. But I think to some extent, it reflects a little to go out and have a beer with the guys rather than study for a test or something.

Do you think a lot of it is the pressure you get from other males around you to do certain things?

H: Oh definitely. If your friends are like, “Hey let’s go get a beer.” Even if you are going to study for a test, you’re not going to if they come up to you.

The main reason why I am interested in this topic in male students involved in leadership and service-related activities is for the gender gap that’s happening right now. I’m really interest in why that is and how as student affairs professionals we can address that. What sort of advice o you have to campus administrators to better support male students at Ohio State?

H: That is a great question. It’s really hard to figure out what you can do.

Or even what challenges do you see to us being able to support students? What are the roadblocks we’re hitting for why it’s not happening?

H: I guess I think still social pressures are heavily weighted in people’s decisions to do things. I would imagine females are more likely to bring friends to group events than males would. There is a perception that males are kind of lazy outside of physical
activity, and they wouldn’t be interested in things other than watching sports and all that jazz. I guess what it boils down to is you want to do things as an individual that interest you and if sports are what interests you, creating more sports-related groups for males to be involved in on campus? There’s Block “O”, Sportsmanship Council, you could be a student manager for one of the sports teams, creating ore opportunities that males might be interested in. I can’t imagine people would want to do to a “break the stereotype” event. I guess it’s just trying to figure out a way to get males more involved in things that get their interest.

And what about for faculty members? How can they do a better job working with male students? Is there more that they could do specifically for male students?

H: I personally think that teachers on a whole could outreach more to all students. I understand this is our education, we’re paying for it, and we need to take initiative. But sometimes it would be nice to see the professor reaching out to the student rather than the student always going to the professor for research opportunities or help. I know with some professors especially as you get into smaller classes, it’s definitely a lot easier. But when you come here as a freshmen it’s so intimidating to go into a class of 500 people especially at a young age and it’s your first time going through something like that. It can definitely be intimidating approaching a professor.

And you think that’s a problem that both male and female students face?

H: Yeah, definitely.

Ok. If you think of anything more with that, just let me know. For you sport program, is there a divide in terms of how many males and females are there?

H: There’s actually more females than I thought there would be. There’s about 80 students and it’s about 65 to 15 males to females. I think it’s showing that people are branching out more, men are becoming nurses and gender-based stereotypes for careers are being broken down.

As I mentioned before, ultimately we would like to see more male students involved. Is there anything more that you’d like to share in helping me figuring out how to better support male students?

H: I know when you first come in as a freshmen, you take that survey class. My survey class was different than other people’s survey classes, but maybe there could be a class that involved involvement on campus and available opportunities. I figure that’s when students are most vulnerable thinking, “How do I as a freshman make myself a part of this community?”

Do you think that as the years go on, people stop being as open as they were in the beginning?
H: I think the amount of people that get involved start to trim down and more. 20% of the students are involved in everything on campus and 80% aren’t involved at all. When you start as a freshmen it’s more like 80% of the students want to get involved but as you go further and further you maybe end up living with freshmen year roommates and all they do is study and party so all you want to do is study and party. Maybe reaching out to off campus students more. It seems like on campus students are ore likely to get involved. I know you can’t get a flier out of ever house on campus but maybe by getting out to high street that way for people to look at, posting them up in restaurants will promote more opportunities.

END OF INTERVIEW

Follow up Email from Herb Post-Interview

Herb <<student email address>>     Fri, Feb 5, 2010 at 2:08 AM
To: Katie Krajny <<email address>>

Hey Katie!

I hope you have been well. I've been thinking quite a bit about this question, and one of the ideas I have come up with is that incentives, as materialistic as they are tend to be significant factors in whether or not somebody will do something. So, I was thinking maybe offering small, reasonable scholarships for student leaders (could apply to both females and males). I think this would make leadership roles on campus more competitive (which would be a benefit for OSU), and would hopefully get males more involved on campus. An issue with this would definitely be accountability (how do you assure that student leaders are actually putting effort into their positions, and that the scholarship isn't being wasted), so that is something that would have to be looked into—perhaps the advisors would have to keep the Ohio Union updated on the organizations they are advising or something similar.

Right now, that's all I've really come up with, but I will continue to keep thinking about it!

Thanks!

Herb
Appendix G: Institutional Review Board Application for Exemption
APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTION

FROM REVIEW BY THE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
The Ohio State University, Columbus OH 43210

All research activities involving the use of human beings as research subjects must be reviewed and approved by an Ohio State University Institutional Review Board (IRB), unless the Office of Responsible Research Practices (ORRP) determines that the research falls into one or more of the categories of exemption established by federal regulation.

Exempt research is generally short term in nature. It must be performed “as written,” i.e. the investigators do not make changes in the research design, the selection of subjects, the informed consent process, or the instrumentation during the course of the study. If changes are necessary, re-application is required.

A determination that research is exempt does not absolve the investigators from ensuring that the welfare of human subjects participating in research activities is protected, and that methods used and information provided to gain subject consent are appropriate to the activity. Investigators may not solicit subject participation or begin data collection until they have received approval from the appropriate Institutional Review Board OR written concurrence that research has been determined to be exempt.

All OSU Investigators who participate in human subjects research must be appropriately trained in human subjects protection. See http://orrp.osu.edu/irb/training/citi.cfm for more details.

There is no deadline or timeline for submitting exempt applications for review. Applications are processed as received. Each application must include a research proposal. The proposal must include (at a minimum) the following items: the background literature review, the research question, a description of the research methods including sample size and data collection procedures, and a data analysis plan.

Please allow up to three weeks for processing.

If you have questions regarding the application process or the review of exempt protocols, please contact Office of Responsible Research Practices.
Phone: 688-8457 / Fax: 688-0366 / E-mail: exemptinfo@osu.edu
A COMPLETE APPLICATION PACKET INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS:
- **Title page** (attached). Identifies the investigators. Lists the protocol title and the source of funding.
- **Screening questions** (attached). Identifies the categories of exemption and solicits responses to screening questions.
- **Description of the proposed research** (questions #1 through #9, attached). Includes responses to questions about the objective(s) of the research, the methodology that will be used to gain informed consent from the subjects, and the measures taken to protect the confidentiality of information obtained in research.
- **Research proposal** (see question #1).
- **Letter(s) of support** (see question #4).
- **Copies of surveys, instruments, questionnaires, interview questions, focus group topics, and/or data collection sheets** (see question #5).
- **Recruitment letter** (see question # 8).
- **Consent form** (see question #9).

**SEND ONE COPY OF YOUR APPLICATION TO:**
Office of Responsible Research Practices  
300 Research Foundation Building  
1960 Kenny Road  
Columbus OH 43210-1063  
Fax (614) 688-0366
**TITLE PAGE - APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTION FROM REVIEW BY THE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD**  
The Ohio State University, Columbus OH 43210

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**Principal Investigator**  
Name: **Dr. Ada Demb**  
Phone: 614-292-1865

- **University Title:**  
  - [ ] Professor  
  - [x] Associate Professor  
  - [ ] Assistant Professor  
  - [ ] Instructor  
  - [ ] Other. Please specify. (May require prior approval.) Visiting Assistant Professor

- **Department or College:** School of Educational Policy and Leadership, College of Education and Human Ecology

- **Campus Address (room, building, street address):**  
  - 301 Ramseyer Hall  
  - 29 West Woodruff Avenue  
  - Columbus, OH 43210

- **E-mail:** demb.1@osu.edu  
- **OSU ID:** 91115258  
- **Signature:**  
- **Date:**

- **Fax:** 614-292-7020

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**Co-Investigator**  
Name: **Kathryn Krajny**  
Phone: 614-688-4419

- **University Status:**  
  - [ ] Faculty  
  - [ ] Staff  
  - [x] Graduate Student  
  - [ ] Undergraduate Student  
  - [ ] Other. Please specify.

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  - 217 Ohio Union at Ohio Stadium  
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  - Columbus, OH 43210

- **E-mail:** krajny.1@osu.edu  
- **OSU ID:** 04146665  
- **Signature:**  
- **Date:**

- **Fax:** 614-292-6061

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**Co-Investigator**  
Name: **Dr. Don Stenta**  
Phone: 614-688-4738

- **University Status:**  
  - [ ] Faculty  
  - [ ] Staff  
  - [ ] Graduate Student  
  - [ ] Undergraduate Student  
  - [x] Other. Please specify: Visiting Assistant Professor

- **Campus Address (room, building, street address) or Mailing Address:**  
  - 301 Ramseyer Hall  
  - 29 West Woodruff Avenue  
  - Columbus, OH 43210

- **E-mail:** stenta.1@osu.edu  
- **OSU ID:** 92069169  
- **Signature:**  
- **Date:**

- **Fax:** 614-292-4868
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protocol Title</th>
<th>Gender and Campus Engagement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source of Funding</td>
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**For Office Use Only**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approved.</th>
<th>Research has been determined to be exempt under these categories: ___________________. Research may begin as of the date of determination listed below.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disapproved.</td>
<td>The proposed research does not fall within the categories of exemption. Submit an application to the appropriate Institutional Review Board for review.</td>
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**Date of determination:**

____________________

**Signature:**

________________________________________

Office of Responsible Research Practices

The purpose of the Application for Exemption is two-fold: (a) to determine whether the proposed research qualifies for exemption from review and continuing oversight by an Institutional Review Board; and, if so, (b) to ensure that the informed consent process protects the rights and welfare of human subjects in research. Please respond to the following questions and provide the requested documentation.

Have all investigators completed the required web-based course in the protection of human research subjects? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If No, see [http://orrp.osu.edu/irb/training/citi.cfm](http://orrp.osu.edu/irb/training/citi.cfm) for more information. EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS MUST BE SATISFIED PRIOR TO SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION FOR IRB REVIEW.
Please check the categories of exemption for which you are applying. The list of categories is located at the end of this application. You may check more than one box.

EXEMPT CATEGORY:  1 □  2 □  3 □  4 □  5 □  6 □

SCREENING QUESTIONS: If you check YES to any of the questions below, your research is not exempt. Do not complete the exempt application. Submit an application to the appropriate Institutional Review Board for review.

Does any part of the research require that subjects be deceived?  □ Yes  □ No

Will research expose human subjects to discomfort or harassment beyond levels encountered in daily life?  □ Yes  □ No

Could disclosure of the subjects’ responses outside the research reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects’ financial standing, employability, or reputation?  □ Yes  □ No

Will fetuses, pregnant women, human in vitro fertilization, or individuals involuntarily confined or detained in penal institutions be subjects of the study?  □ Yes  □ No

For research proposed under category 2, will research involve surveys, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior with individuals under the age of 18?  □ Yes  □ No

For research proposed under category 4, will any of the data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens be collected or come into existence after the date you apply for exemption?  □ Yes  □ No

For research proposed under category 4, will any of the information obtained from data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens that come from private sources be recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects can be identified directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects?  □ Yes  □ No

IF YOU CHECKED YES TO ANY OF THE QUESTIONS ABOVE, YOUR RESEARCH IS NOT EXEMPT.

IF YOU HAVE CHECKED NO TO ALL OF THE QUESTIONS ABOVE, YOUR RESEARCH MAY BE EXEMPT. PLEASE CONTINUE WITH THE EXEMPT APPLICATION.

If you have questions about the application or review process, please contact Office of Responsible Research Practices / Phone: 688-8457 / Fax: 688-0366 / E-mail: exemptinfo@osu.edu
For purposes of this application, “research” includes the recruitment of human subjects as well as data collection and analysis. None of these research activities may begin until the investigator has received a protocol number AND has received written concurrence that the proposed research is exempt. The “date of determination” on page one of this application is assigned by the Office of Responsible Research Practices; it indicates the date when research may begin.

Please describe your study clearly and completely, using a style of language that can easily be understood by someone who is not familiar with your research.

GENERAL QUESTIONS REGARDING THE PROPOSED RESEARCH

1. Describe the purpose of the research activity to be undertaken. Describe how it involves human subjects. Respond in the space provided here, or attach a research proposal and/or grant proposal containing the requested information.

Description:
The purpose of this research is to explore the reasons male college students choose to get involved in extra-curricular activities related to leadership and service. There tends to be an uneven of participation between male and female college students. It is the goal of this project to examine male engagement and provide recommendations on how ways to lessen the gender gap. Please refer to attached grant proposal for further information on this research.

2. Provide a brief description of the subjects you plan to recruit and the criteria used in the selection process. Indicate whether subjects are 18 years of age or older.

Description:
Participants for this study will be current OSU undergraduate students on the SERV (Student Engaging in Responsible Volunteerism) Team who are male. The SERV Team is a student organization funded and advised by staff at the Ohio Union. All male SERV Team members will be contacted directly and as many as 15 students will be interviewed with the final number dependent upon the number of students available for the interviews. All participants will be 18 years of age or older, and members of the SERV Team tend to be Rank 2 or higher.

3. Describe how the proposed research meets the criteria for exemption from IRB review and oversight. (Refer to the criteria on the last page of this application that correspond to the category or categories you checked on the screening sheet.)

Description:
Proposed research meets criteria for exemption from IRB review and oversight because this project involves the use of common and standard educational tests and interview procedures with obtained information being recorded in such a manner that participants cannot be identified. Proposed research also does not place the participants at risk of civil/criminal liability or of being damaged in
terms of the subjects financial standing, employability, or reputation.

4. Will your subjects be recruited through schools, employers, and/or community agencies or organizations, and/or are you required to obtain permission to access data that is not publicly available? If the answer is yes, provide a letter of support from the person authorized to give you access to the subjects or to the data in question. More than one letter may be required.

- Does not apply.
- Letter(s) attached.
- Comments:

5. Describe the means you will use to obtain data. Check all boxes that apply.

- Surveys or questionnaires distributed by mail or in person. I am attaching a copy of the instrument(s).
- Surveys distributed through the Internet, through listservs, or through E-mail. I am attaching a copy of the instrument(s). Provide the Internet address:
- Interviews. I am attaching a copy of the interview questions.
- Focus groups. I am attaching a copy of the questions that will shape the discussion.
- Observation of public behavior.
- Observation of activities in school classrooms.
- Audiotapes. I will obtain consent from the subjects to tape their responses.
- Videotapes. I will obtain consent from the subjects to tape their activities or responses.
- Review of existing records, including databases, medical records, school records, etc. I am attaching a copy of the data collection sheet. I am recording information in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. All of the information in the records to be reviewed exists as of the date of submission of this application.
- Tissue specimens. All of the specimens have already been collected and are “on the shelf.” I am recording information in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

6. Indicate the date when you plan to begin research, and the date when you anticipate that data analysis will be complete.

- Begin date: Fall 2009
- End date: December 31, 2010
**CONFIDENTIALITY**

- Investigators are required to protect the confidentiality of the information obtained during research, unless the subjects (a) explicitly agree to be identified or quoted, and/or (b) explicitly agree to the release of material captured on audiotapes or videotapes for use in presentations or conferences.

7. Provide a brief description of the measures you will take to protect confidentiality. Please describe how you will protect the identity of the subjects, their responses, and any data that you obtain from private records or capture on audiotape or videotape. Describe the disposition of the data and/or the tapes once the study has been completed.

**Description:**
There are two types of data that will be collected for this study, and all information will be collected in confidence by the Co-PI. First, audiotapes and transcripts from interviews will be kept in a locked drawer in the Po-PI’s office. Pseudonyms will be used to identify participants in the study, and no one else will have access to the code. Second, an abbreviated form of the Myers-Brigg Type Indicator (MBTI) that is common in educational settings for student to complete. Participants will share their MBTI scores and discuss profiles. No handout will be provided to the group with each other’s scores. SERV Team advisors will not be permitted to view raw data to prevent pseudonyms from being revealed. Once the study has been completed, audiotapes will be destroyed and only transcripts with pseudonyms will be retained.

**INFORMED CONSENT**

- In most cases, investigators are required to obtain informed consent from their subjects before collecting data. Respond to questions #8 and #9 to indicate how you will inform your subjects about the research and how you will obtain and document their consent.
- Subjects must be told what they will be asked to do if they agree to participate in research, how long it will take, and how you will protect the confidentiality of the information they provide.
- Subjects must be told that their participation is voluntary, they can refuse to answer questions that they do not wish to answer, and they can refuse to participate or they can withdraw at any time without penalty or repercussion.
- With few exceptions, written consent of the child’s parent(s) or guardian(s) is required if subjects are under the age of 18. In addition, children 14 years of age or older should be asked to give written assent (agreement) to participate. Children younger than 13 years of age should be asked to give verbal assent (agreement) to participate.
- Provide a means for subjects to contact the investigator(s) if they have questions or concerns about the research. Make it clear to the subjects that you are affiliated with The Ohio State University.
8. What information do you plan to give to your subjects before you ask for their consent? Use a style of language that simply and clearly explains the research to your subjects. Respond in the space provided here, or attach a copy of the information you plan to provide to your subjects and/or their parents or guardians. (Note: if you use more than one method of recruitment, you may check more than one box)

☐ Letter(s) attached. I will give each of the subjects a copy of this letter.
☐ I will be contacting subjects by phone or in person. I am attaching a script that contains the information I will give them.
☐ Does not apply. My data analysis is limited to existing records or tissue specimens.
☐ Response:

9. How do you plan to document informed consent? Read all of the options before checking the appropriate boxes.

☐ The subjects are 18 years of age or older. Before collecting data, I will ask them to sign a written consent form. I am attaching a copy of the consent form.
☐ The subjects are 18 years of age or older. Before collecting data, I will ask them to give verbal consent to participate in this research study.
☐ The subjects are 18 years of age or older. I am distributing a survey or questionnaire to the subjects. They can choose whether or not they want to respond. I am requesting a waiver of written consent.
☐ The subjects are under the age of 18. I am attaching a copy of the consent form that I will use to obtain consent from their parents or guardians and assent (agreement) from subjects who are 14 years of age or older.
☐ Some of the subjects are 18 years of age or older, and some are younger than 18. I have checked more than one box above to reflect the methods I will use to document informed consent.
☐ Does not apply. My data analysis is limited to existing records or tissue specimens.
☐ Other. Please explain and provide justification for your request.
☐ Comments:
| CATEGORY #1: | Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as:  
| | a. research on regular and special education instructional strategies,  
| | b. research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods. |
| CATEGORY #2: | Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless:  
| | a. information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; AND,  
| | b. any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.  
| (NOTE: The exemption under Category 2 DOES NOT APPLY to research involving survey or interview procedures or observation of public behavior when individuals under the age of 18 are subjects of the activity except for research involving observations of public behavior when the investigator(s) do not participate in the activities being observed.) |
| CATEGORY #3: | Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under Category 2, IF:  
| | a. the human subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office, OR  
| | b. federal statute(s) require(s) without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter. |
| CATEGORY #4: | Research, involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these
sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

| CATEGORY #5: | Research and demonstration projects which are conducted by or subject to the approval of department or agency heads, and which are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine:  
| | a. public benefit or service programs;  
| | b. procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs;  
| | c. possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or  
| | d. possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs. |

| CATEGORY #6: | Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies,  
| | a. if wholesome foods without additives are consumed, or  
| | b. if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. |
December 14, 2009

Protocol Number: 2009E0850
Protocol Title: GENDER AND CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT, ADA DEMB, KATHRYN KRAJNY, DON STENTA, SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND LEADERSHIP
Type of Review: Request for Exempt Determination
ORRP Staff Contact: Cheri M. Pettey
Phone: 614-688-0389
Email: pettey.6@osu.edu

Dear Dr. Demb,

The Office of Responsible Research Practices has determined the above referenced protocol exempt from IRB review.

Date of Exempt Determination: 12/04/09
Qualifying Exemption Category: 2

Please note the following:

- Only OSU employees and students who have completed CITI training and are named on the signature page of the application are approved as OSU Investigators in conducting this study.
- No procedural changes may be made in exempt research (e.g., recruitment procedures, advertisements, instruments, enrollment numbers, etc.).
- Per university requirements, all research-related records (including signed consent forms) must be retained and available for audit for a period of at least three years after the research has ended.
- It is the responsibility of the Investigator to promptly report events that may represent unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.

This determination is issued under The Ohio State University’s OHRP Federalwide Assurance #00006378.

All forms and procedures can be found on the ORRP website – www.orrp.osu.edu. Please feel free to contact the ORRP staff contact listed above with any questions or concerns.

Cheri Pettey, MA, Certified IRB Professional
Senior Protocol Analyst—Exempt Research
Appendix H: Consent to Participate in Research Information
Consent Form

Protocol #2009E0850

I consent to participating in research entitled: **Gender and Campus Engagement**

Kathryn Krajny, Co-PI and authorized representative of the Principal Investigator (Dr. Ada Demb) have explained the purpose of the study, the procedures to be followed, and the expected duration of my participation. Possible benefits of the study have been described, as have alternative procedures.

I acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to obtain additional information regarding the study and that any questions I have raised have been answered to my full satisfaction. Furthermore, I understand that I am free to withdraw consent at any time ad to discontinue participation in the study without prejudice to me.

Finally, I acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

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<tr>
<th>Printed name of participant</th>
<th>Signature of participant</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date and time</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Printed name of Co-Principal Investigator</th>
<th>Signature of Co-Principal Investigator</th>
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AM/PM