THE INFLUENCE OF MALE ROLE MODELS UPON

GENDER IDENTITY AND REFERENCE GROUP

IDENTITY AMONG ADOLESCENT MALES

By

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Bachelor of Science

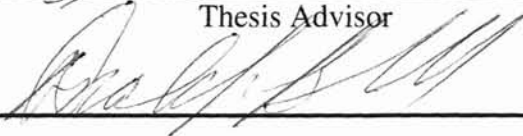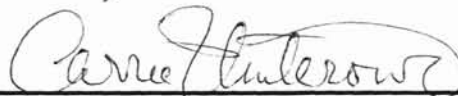The University of Oklahoma

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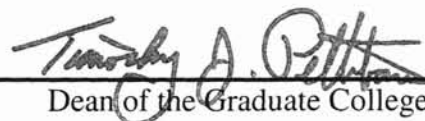
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"Social structures do not exist autonomously from humans;
rather…as we engage in social action, we simultaneously
help create the social structures that facilitate/limit social
practice" (Messerschmidt, 1993, p. 92)

Where does our gender identity come from? How is our gender identity

influenced by the primary caregivers we reside with and how is it influenced by those we

wish to emulate outside the home? Many of our "gender rules" are unspoken; we learn

through observation. Researchers have focused on assessing how our gendered roles are

defined and if our choices are innately related to our biological sex or if our choices are

more influenced by the world around us (Pryzgoda and Chrisler, 2000). Much of this

research has shown that gendered roles, influenced by race, culture, education and

socioeconomic status, are internal and complex and subject to a variety of logics that are

formed within various relationships. These relationships, and therefore gender, are often

formed within specific historical contexts. Within families these gender ideals often

become multi-generational ideals of gender roles. In the United States, gendered roles

have strong roots in patriarchy and Judeo-Christian values (Abramovitch, 1997; Pleck

and Pleck, 1997). However, over the last several decades the roles of men and women

have been evolving. Connell (1995) suggests that the three most important contributors to

this evolution has been women challenging the gender order, changes in industrial

capitalism (increased educational and career opportunities for women) and "power

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relations in the empire" or the rationalization of violence (in the context of warfare), and the technological advances of military forces. With these types of changes, it has become unclear what is still "traditionally" masculine or feminine. For example, Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (10th edition, 2001) defines masculine as "having qualities appropriate to or usually associated with a man" and feminine as "characteristic of or appropriate or unique to women." The question these ambiguous definitions raise is how does one determine which characteristics or qualities are appropriate to one's gender, what is appropriate within one's given culture, and from whom or where does one gather this information?

Introduction

As women are evolving from the feminist movement they have changed the definition of what is "feminine" (Connell, 1995) and therefore what is "masculine" since it has been believed that one cannot exist without the other. This redefined gender identity role for women has affected the identity role of men in many areas including at home and in the workplace, and ultimately, a "post feminist image of a strong yet gentle man" (Abramovitch, 1997, pg. 20) has struggled to emerge. Because of a more global economy, more women in the workplace, and advances in technology, many jobs are now being done overseas or are being performed by women or computers. As women have entered the work force, men are called upon more frequently to also be the caretakers and nurturers of their children, a role not historically seen as masculine (Ingalls, 1999; Bourgois, 1996). As most have been socialized to believe, emotional expressiveness is a feminine trait and acting feminine, a trait usually connected to nurturing, is highly taboo among most males (Cornish, 1998; King, 2001). If we correlate the change in the global

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economy with the norms of traditional masculinity, which characterizes males as the tough, stoic, hard working, primary source of income, many males may no longer be able to fulfill this traditional role, with some turning to illegal means of providing a source of income. Several studies have shown that those affected most by the changing global economy, namely blue-collar workers, often in large cities and often members of minority groups, strive to prove their masculinity through violent acts (Bourgois, 1996). According to the FBI's 1999 Uniform Crime Reporting Program, juvenile crimes increased 30% from 1991 to 1997. The large number of males in the juvenile justice system (as well as incarcerated adult males) might be interpreted as demonstrating that the definition of a "traditional male role" no longer seems to be effective for many men. Research has also shown that many who are entangled in the legal system have had few or no positive male role models during childhood (Phares, 1996). Howes' 1999 study suggests a relationship between the development of gender role identity attitudes and the relationship between parent and child. Other studies have indicated that the quality of the relationship between parent and child is an important factor in developing a healthy gender identity (Connell, 1995; Pollack, 1998). So for many men it seems that their gender identity and they ways in which they validate their masculinity has been affected by lack of male role models and changes in the global economy.

In some socioeconomic groups and cultures, tangible displays of masculinity have historically been successful careers coupled with expensive homes and automobiles (Courtenay, 2000), while in others displays of masculinity may have taken on the form of a weapon, gang affiliation, abusive behavior towards women or weaker men (Bourgois, 1996). These tangible displays of masculinity are important because they are a means by

which others may admire one's ability to fulfill a gendered role as defined by one's culture or group of reference. Television and literature have also contributed to the image of what is masculine with images of the "lone adventurer" (The Lone Ranger), the "warrior" (Odysseus, of Greek mythology) and "the fearless hero" (as implied by military marketing slogans) (Pollack, 1998). These images may be how many men unconsciously see themselves in relation to others. The Lone Ranger for instance is seen traveling about (without wife or child), defending the rights of others as does Superman, Batman, and Luke Skywalker. The "fearless hero" can be seen in most any "classic" war movie, with poignant scenes of fearless heroes leaving behind loved ones as they travel to some distant land to defend their country. Connell (1995) suggests that even in the settling of the Western United States the image of masculinity was divided into the "brawling single frontiersman and the settled married pioneer farmer" (pg. 194). These two images were promoted further within the "Western" genre of novels and movies. The scouting movement also emerged which promoted the rugged outdoorsman image or man at one with the wilderness. In the 1990's, the men's mythopoetic movement (or maybe "scouts for big boys"), promoted men coming into contact with their deep, primordial masculinity, and adapting various indigenous rituals to do so, often in wilderness settings. This movement, which has also been called a new age patriarchy, is said to be in response to feminism or women (and other men) who are challenging the status and role of the dominant white male culture. Howes' study (1999) revealed that "healthy male development must include a time of identification with a significant male or male group", a finding that is consistent with "classical and contemporary psychoanalytic theories of Oedipal and separation-individuation theories" (pg. 49). This same study also reflected

increased self-esteem, increased ability for intimacy and less compliance with traditional masculinity in men who purposefully affiliated with men-only groups. Wade and Gelso (1998) have also studied the psychological connectedness one feels towards other males, basing their study on reference group theory and ego identity development.

This study attempted to clarify how young men today are influenced by male role models, which included those within the home and outside the home as well as those presented through other cultural constructs, specifically the media. This study also looked at how these role models were related to their gender identity as based on reference group.

Since the beginning of the feminist movement, masculinity and femininity have continually been redefined. According to Cornish (1998) although much has been discussed about the negative aspects of masculinity, little has been done to formulate new ways to pattern gender identities that are more holistic in nature than the historical model of the patriarchy. There seems to be a growing body of literature that is attempting to address the need to distance ourselves from what has traditionally been defined as male and female roles and define ourselves, not by our gender, but as human beings with human traits (Hoffman, 2001).

In the attempt to find a more universal definition of what is masculine or feminine, neither researchers nor society have found a way to break out of the patriarchal values that have defined male and female roles for centuries. Only recently have men begun examining their own gender in terms of research studies. Where do we find our definitions of how each gender is "supposed to act"? It has been agreed upon, from a social contructionist point of view, that gender roles are influenced by the society and

culture in which we live (Courtenay, 2000). The process by which an individual becomes a functioning part of a family or societal system is referred to as socialization. Many studies have revealed that race, ethnicity, culture, religion, socioeconomic background, education and geographic location are very influential in how masculinity and/or gender identity are defined (Bourgois, 1996; Courtenay, 2000; Ingalls, 1999). Connell (1995) maintains that "hegemony", or the "cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in social life" is what defines masculinity. This hegemonic, or widely accepted, masculinity is what gives legitimacy to the patriarchy. He also posits that it is not always the institutional holders of power or wealth who promote hegemonic masculinity but that "film actors" and "fantasy figures" also promote the "correspondence between cultural ideal and institutional power" (pg. 77). For adolescent males how do all of these changing and ambiguous messages about gender identity and masculinity influence how they choose to play out those roles in real life or are they more influenced by real-life role models?

Statement of the Problem

In the last few decades feminism, changes in the global economy, and technological advances have redefined the traditional roles of men and women. The struggle with these seemingly ambiguous roles seems to have resulted in many changes in the social structure, as can be seen by the increase in one-parent households, increased divorce rates, and an increase in the number of crimes by male juvenile offenders.

If we examine the issues of men's health, relationships, and loss of freedom, it seems that perhaps the "traditional" masculine ideal may no longer be working in our society. It seems that many may be trying to live up to unrealistic expectations and

emulating outdated images of masculinity. Many adolescents today have fathers who grew up in the sixties, seventies and eighties, decades in which traditional ideals of what is masculine and what is feminine were being redefined (Lamb, 1997). So if the masculine ideology of the father has been evolving, how has that father (if he is present) passed on to his children what it means to be masculine? With all of these ambiguous messages and role models how does a young man define ways to display his masculinity in ways that are positive for his gendered self-concept? Who does he look to help him make these choices?

It seems that there are many influences on how one carries out the role of one's gender. Not only are singular role models important but there seems to be a need to affiliate with same-sex groups as well. By associating with role models or groups, men seem to formulate the gender ideals which are appropriate to their particular culture. Some (Wade, 1997; Wade and Gelso, 1998; Wade and Brittan-Powell, 2000) have described this association with other groups of men as 'reference group identity' or psychological relatedness or connectedness to other males. They posit that there are four ways an individual can feel psychologically related or connected to these groups and that gender identity is influenced by the groups we most feel psychologically connected to. Whether or not one chooses to adhere to the ideals of their 'group' or the culture of the 'group' may depend upon how comfortable one is with their own set of gender traits, which may have been influenced by others outside the group of reference.

Discord in gender identity may be seen in the form of stress, violence towards others, health issues or problems in relationship for those who adhere to a more traditional masculine ideology.

Perhaps in connecting the relationships between the influence of male role models, adherence to socially desirable gender traits and acceptance of male role norms to one's reference group identity, the relationship between masculine ideology and needed changes in the social structure can be better facilitated.

This study examined the relationships between reference group identity and the presence or absence of male role models in the home as well as the relationship between media-influenced (ie. sports figures, cartoons, movies, television, advertising) male role models and reference group identity. Reference group identity was also examined in relation to the level of adherence to socially desirable gender traits and the acceptance of male role norms.

Research Questions

1). How is the presence or absence of a male role model in the home related to one's reference group identity?

Hypothesis 1: The presence or absence of a male role model in the home is related to one's reference group identity.

2). Is there a relationship between media-influenced (ie. sports figures, cartoons, movies, video games, advertising) male role models and reference group identity?

Hypothesis 2: There is a relationship between media-influenced (ie. sports figures, cartoons, movies, video games, advertising) male role models and reference group identity.

3). What is the relationship between reference group identity and adhering to socially desirable gender traits?

Hypothesis 3: There is a relationship between reference group identity and adhering to socially desirable gender traits.

4). Is there a relationship between acceptance of male role norms and reference group identity?

Hypothesis 4: There is a relationship between acceptance of male role norms and reference group identity.

Definition of Terms

Male Role Model – a male to whom another looks to in defining one's own appropriate and/or acceptable behavior in relation to others and to society as a whole.

Reference Group Identity – reference group identity refers to how dependent one is upon their feelings of psychological relatedness or connectedness to other males or other groups of males as represented by three male reference group identity dependence statuses. As defined by Wade (2000) there are three groups: The No Reference Group, representing feelings of no connectedness to other males; the Reference Group Dependent, representing feelings of connectedness to some males but not others and the Reference Group Nondependent status represents two groups: Similarity and Diversity. Those in the similarity group will have feelings of connectedness with all males while those in the Diversity group will acknowledge their comfort and appreciation of differences in males. Relevant feelings and beliefs associated with each male identity status are represented by higher scores when using the Reference Group Identity Dependence Scale.

Male Role Norms – The norms by which males define their "appropriate" roles in U.S. society, defined in this study by three factors: *status/rationality* in which status reflects

the need to gain respect and status; *anti-femininity*, which refers to the expectation that men should avoid behaviors and activities that are perceived as stereotypically feminine and *tough image or violent toughness* in which toughness refers to the expectation of men being independent and mentally, emotionally and physically rugged.

Socially Desirable Gender Traits – Socially desirable gender traits are those traits which are desirable as defined by one's age, sex, race, culture, socioeconomic status, and geographical location. These socially desirable traits are behaviors, actions or appearances that may be seen by others as validation of one's gender role. Social desirability is determined by what is appropriate according to one's group of reference.

Significance of the Study

Perhaps if we can erase the line between expected and desired masculine behavior, we can begin to reduce some of our social ills by examining and redefining the ideals we hold for the "traditional" male. Many times the issues that bring men to counseling are connected to the expectations society places on males. By examining one's family system and reference group, a client might be able to identify and therefore clarify what has influenced his ideas about what it means to be male within that context. In this process perhaps today's adolescent and tomorrow's mature male will be able to define for themselves what it means to be masculine, or better yet what it means to be human.

Assumptions

The researchers are assuming that participants will answer the questions with honesty and not a "socially expected" or "socially desirable" answer.

<u>Limitations</u>

The scope of this study does not take into consideration the impact of male role models upon females.

The geographic location of where this study will take place, the central United States, may limit the generalizability of the findings to populations in other geographic locations.

The instruments used in this study were normed on mostly Caucasian males, over the age of eighteen, from higher socioeconomic classes and may not accurately measure the variables for other ethnic or culturally diverse groups, males younger than eighteen or males from lower socioeconomic sectors.

<u>Organization of the study</u>

In chapter one, background information was given about the problem, as well as the purpose and significance of the study along with assumptions and limitations of the study. In chapter two, the Review of the Literature discusses relevant literature. The method section, chapter three, includes information about the participants, the instruments, the research design and the procedure used to collect data. Chapters four and five contain the results of the study followed by a discussion of the findings, respectively. Finally, a reference and bibliography section are incorporated along with tables and appendixes.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

In order to present a well-rounded historical background of how one's self

concept of gender identity may or may not be influenced by male role models, it was

necessary to review literature that discussed how masculine ideologies are influenced.

The following literature review will look at how socially desirable gender traits have

historically been defined; what the most widely accepted male role norms in U.S. culture

are based on; how one internalizes self concept in relation to groups, and the importance

of role models to overall human development.

Importance of male role models

A significant other or role model has been described by adolescents (Tatar, 1998)

as being someone to whom the adolescent feels attached and is perceived to offer social

support; someone who may strongly impact their life; someone whom the adolescent

values and respects their opinion; or someone who influences an adolescent's self-

perception in a social context, such as a teacher. The degree of involvement, as well as

the dynamics of power and authority, are directly related to the influence of the

significant other or role model.

In a 1998 study by Tatar of 360 15-16 year old Israeli-born adolescents, the

mother was chosen as the "most significant family individual in their life" (pg. 698).

However, Tatar cited others who had suggested that mothers fulfill the role of "supporters

and believers for their children" while fathers function more as "role models and

teachers" (pg. 698). There also seems to be a change during adolescence as males begin

to more highly value the opinions of fathers as most important and that the "perceived evaluation of fathers has the largest impact on self-evaluation among boys" (pg. 698). Conversations about general interests and problems, especially sexual ones, seem to be the most common form of communication between adolescent males and their fathers although the males were as equally satisfied in their communications with their mothers. Tatar concluded that culture and peers seem to influence an adolescent's choice of a significant individual.

The role of "father" has been mythologized in literature for centuries. Every culture has tales woven around the search for father. Emery and Csikszentmihalyi (1981) conducted a study on the importance of books in the socialization process. In an earlier paper they presented the concept of a life theme or "set of perceptions and goals that direct a person's actions through life" (pg. 4) and correlated this to the influence of literature and the socializing effects of books as a "main carrier of cultural solutions" from which the reader seeks to identify with the characters and ultimately find meaning to real life behaviors and attitudes. Their findings suggest books are important reference systems and "provide examples of previously successful responses to existential problems" (pg. 17) but they also noted that further research is needed to fully understand the "socializing effects of cultural role models" (pg. 17).

In one California study it was found that fathers seem to have a unique ability to stimulate their infant children "along a wider scale of intensity" (Pollack, 1998, pg. 114) which creates in the infant a greater tolerance for a variety of people and settings. Pollack goes on to say that this type of "zestful" or "enthralling" type of play throughout childhood creates an ability within the adolescent to handle "difficult feelings" and

"emotionally intense situations in a graceful and socially acceptable way" (pg. 114). These skills are seen by some as the first steps in managing aggression and frustration, learning how to communicate with others, and overcoming academic obstacles (Parke, etal, as cited in Pollack, 1998). Several studies cited by Pollack indicate that the interactions between fathers and sons during infancy and childhood carry over into adolescence and even adulthood. Brody, (as cited in Pollack, 1998), found that boys with "active, caring fathers don't feel the need to act out or show aggression" and that through observation these boys also learned how to deal appropriately with "life situations". As cited in Tatar (1998), a 1990 study by Noller and Callan found fathers to be perceived as "more judgemental and less willing to negotiate" (pg. 692). Another study by Hardesty (Pollack, 1998) found that adolescent boys with less stringent views about gender had fathers who were described as "close and nurturing". In yet another study, this same descriptor was used to describe fathers of boys who displayed positive self-esteem and infrequent bouts of depression. The overall consensus of these studies seems to be that the more time a son spends with his father in a caring, nurturing relationship, the better he will perform in all areas of life including academia, sports, careers, relationships and ultimately as a parent himself.

Jane, Belsky and Crnic, (1996) found in their study, which identified four types of dads, that the two types of fathers who had positive impacts on their sons were the "caretaker" and the "playmate-teacher". The "disciplinarian" and "disengaged" fathers had more distant relationships with their children.

Many studies have been done on the effects of "father-absent" or "mother-only" households. In 1993, Pleck, Sonenstein and Ku found that studies of boys with no fathers

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in the household, failed to support the hypothesis of an insecure masculine identity among boys who were raised or taught solely by women. Another study (Kasen, as cited in Pollack, 1998) found that boys who had a "consistent" relationship with an adult male, which could include biological dad, step-dad, uncle, mom's boyfriend, family friend, etc., were less likely to suffer from major depressive disorders than boys from mother-only households.

Socially desirable gender traits

In analyzing gender, the socialization process is often examined in how it defines sex roles. Sex role theory through socialization has been criticized in that it does not allow for the various ways men and women demonstrate traits that have qualities normally associated with the opposite gender. Although most men may experience gender role stress (excessive commitment and reliance on culturally approved [gender] models) (Gale, 2000), when their masculinity is challenged, Cornish (1998) found that those raised in more traditional, patriarchal homes experienced it more so than did males who came from more androgynous environments. In a recent article, when examining sex role identity, attitudes towards others and defense style, Maltby and Day (1999) stated "there are no data that suggest how unconscious and unwanted sex role traits are externalized in sex role attitudes and behavior" (pg. 381).

However, they did find some articles suggesting that men use an externalized defense style or avoidance coping strategies to avoid appearing feminine or overly emotional. In The Myth of Masculinity (1981), Pleck describes three stages, based on empirical data, that the male gender role has undergone. He described them as the "simple conception", which implies that the absence of male role models affects the

attainment of a healthy gender role identity, which may also be influenced by the overabundance of female educators and the changing role of women. Next came a "multi-leveled theory", most closely identified with the developmental psycholoanalytic view, in which there are conscious and unconscious levels of gender role identity, and which may cause the over projection of acceptable masculine behavior (hypermasculinity) in order to conceal actions associated with femininity (cf. King, 2001). The third stage, described by Pleck, is that of "androgyny" which describes masculinity and femininity as two independent factors versus two opposing factors on the same continuum and that certain personality traits occur more in males or females (cf. King, 2001). Spence, Helmreich and Stapp (1974) operationalized this concept with the development of the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) as did Sandra Bem with the Bem's Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) in the same year. These measures were both designed to measure only "socially desirable" traits (Twenge, 1997) for males and females with the overall goal being a classification of androgynous, meaning one possesses a greater ability to be flexible within various settings or roles. The PAQ acknowledges that both genders have what some cultures consider "masculine" (instrumental) traits or "feminine" (expressive) traits and allows the person to claim ownership of many traits or levels of expression or emotions without categorizing them as inherently masculine or feminine. Instrumentality is defined by Twenge (1997) as "emphasizing individual action and assertiveness" (pg. 314) and expressiveness as more giving, gentle and understanding of others. This same study found that there were differing responses to gender-stereotyped personality traits between college students born in the 1950's and those born in the 1970's, ultimately suggesting that women have adopted more instrumental traits in this twenty year period

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but that the same can not be said about men adopting more expressive traits. The PAQ does not allow for measuring how these traits were acquired by the respondent nor how the traits may have impacted the person (King, 2001; Twenge, 1997).

Male Role Norms

In U.S. culture a "man" can be described as someone who is mentally and physically competent and competitive, who is ambitious, industrious, rational, assertive and "most of all detached from emotions that would get in the way of his ability to perform and compete, and fulfill the traditional social expectations that he provide, protect and produce" (Thomas, 2000, p. 143). He may also be a lone adventurer, hero, warrior, rugged outdoorsman, or trailblazer of new frontiers. Although nothing tangible restricts men and boys from "cross[ing] over socially constructed gender boundaries" (Courtenay, 2000), they put themselves at risk for ridicule or even physical harm if they do not "adhere to cultural definitions of masculine beliefs and behaviors and actively reject what is feminine" (Courtenay, 2000). Boys and men are usually alienated from others in their group if they display qualities considered to be feminine.

Courtenay (2000) found research that indicates there is more pressure upon males than females to adopt the gender roles dictated by the majority. However, Thomas (2000) posits that as a man becomes cut off from these feminine qualities he "becomes convinced he can't survive without the external feminine" (pg. 145) which creates the expectation he has of woman to be "mother, lover, wife, Madonna, whore" (pg. 145). Women are also guilty of having stereotyped expectations of men as well because they unconsciously sever parts of themselves they later look for in men, to be providers, to be less emotionally needy, to be protectors and performers (Thomas, 2000). As men enter

into relationships with women the may experience confusion over the behavior expected of them in a male/female relationship.

In a 1997 study by Olson and Douglas they examined the portrayals of television fathers and families in situation comedies. Their study found that respondents generally did not like the television families portrayed in "Home Improvement" and "Roseanne". These two programs seemed to portray a "new breed of both positive and negative sex-role models" (pg. 425). In "Home Improvement", the father, Tim Taylor, appears to have a style of masculinity that he wants to pass on to his three sons. In contrast, Dan Connor, the father/husband on the sitcom "Roseanne", is portrayed as a "soft man" who "seems strong, a hard worker, sensitive and funny" but who rarely asserts himself when it comes to discipline or nurturing, leaving these tasks to the "strong woman" role of Roseanne (pg. 425). The results of this study seem to support "more satisfaction" with programs popular in the 1950's which portrayed more nuclear, traditional families, such as "Father Knows Best" as well as the 1980's "The Cosby Show". They concluded that children appear to extend the "equality and similarity they see between their parents" (pg. 426) to other family interactions, thus modeling vicariously to the television viewer, the "appropriate" way families and its gendered members should interact.

Thompson and Pleck (1993) argue that "television programming and commercials portray multiple genders, masculinities and femininities, and tailor these portrayals to please particular audiences in order to attract viewers and sell the advertiser's products and services" (pg. 15). This seems to imply that children who have been raised by "stay at home moms" and view daytime programming such as soap operas or children who are

exposed to a full weekend of televised sporting events will see differing portrayals of gendered images not only in the programming but in the advertising as well.

Since most research indicates that age, race, socioeconomics, and geographical location influence masculine ideology, the following information from one study may have important implications for this particular project. Given that Oklahoma is considered to be a part of the "Bible Belt" and that much of Oklahoma consists of small, rural farming communities, traditional masculinity may be a part of the prominent set of standards for males. In a study conducted in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on the effects of fundamental religious beliefs and the desire for traditional family norms it was found that the church leaders who responded to the survey supported a patriarchal family structure (Bartkowski, 1997). As cited in Courtenay (2000), Fellows (1996), found that growing up on a farm requires males over the age of ten to "be out doing men's work" (pg. 1393), which includes driving tractors, farm trucks or other large farm implements, with the idea being that as soon as a boy can reach the pedals he is ready to be a farm hand. A rural male participant described the expectation for males born into farming families to be "a total, typical, straight male...to play sports, to hunt...." (pg. 1393). Independence and self-sufficiency were also two qualities used to describe farmers in a 1990 study by Willits as cited by Courtenay (2000). In working with court-referred adolescent males, this researcher also found the "protective, though violent, posture" described by Rich and Stone (1996, p. 81, as cited by Courtenay, 2000) to be a value expressed with regular frequency: "If you appear weak, others will try to victimize you...if you show yourself to be strong (by retaliating), then you are perceived as strong and you will be safe".

Reference Group Identity

As defined by Hyman in 1942, a reference group is one that "consistently anchor[s] the person's experience and behavior in relevant situations" (Wade, 1997, pg. 22). This definition was modified by Sherif in 1969 to include "any group with which an individual psychologically identifies him or herself or aspires to relate him or herself to psychologically" (Wade, 1997, pg. 22). According to Sherif's definition, one is able to relate to a person or group of people with out tangible access to that person or group and without the knowledge of the person or group. By this definition, one would be able to identify psychologically with public figures such as athletes or actors, movie, television or cartoon characters or even images in advertising. Shibutani touched on this in 1967 as he defined a reference group as "the source of the individual's norms, attitudes and values" when one is internalizing what is "normal" through "psychological identifications with significant other" (Wade, 1997, pg. 22).

Reference groups seem to be chosen based on similarity to one's self as one seeks to confirm positive and consistent views about the self and will therefore choose groups with similar attitudes and values. Reference groups also provide rewards such as social or economic status, power, and information. Based in social identity theory, people will choose the groups which reward them the most (Wade, 1997). In examining reference group identity we must also acknowledge that other identity models (feminist identity, gay and lesbian identity, Helm's racial identity model) each suggest "that individual attitudes may be related to one's group orientation" (Wade, 1992 pg. 24). Schweder (as cited in Wade, 1997) suggests that it is difficult to separate and analyze one's identity

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from one's culture due their intertwined nature and that one cannot be examined without examining the other.

In developing his theory for reference group identity, Wade also examined ego identity and its relationship to one's reference group and determined that there may be a relationship between unintegrated ego identity, conforming ego identity and integrated ego identity and level of reference group identity. The first level, referred to by Wade as "No Reference Group", reflects no feelings of psychological relatedness to other men which he associates with an unintegrated ego identity which may indicate poor functioning overall. The second level, "Reference Group Dependent", in which a psychological relatedness is found towards a particular group of males, may be connected to a conforming ego identity where feeling connected to others, social roles, and public images have high importance. Correlated at the third level, "Reference Group Nondependent", in which one feels psychologically connected to all males, was an integrated ego identity in which self-definition has included the integration of several, perhaps more diverse, sources of self-concept (Wade, 1997; Wade and Gelso, 1998; Wade and Brittan-Powell, 2000). Wade's purpose in assessing psychological relatedness and levels of ego integration are an attempt to allow men to share their feelings on being male, their feelings toward other men and their relationships with other men in the areas of likeness, connectedness and identification and how these influence gender role self concept (Wade, 1997). Studies, as well as instruments, measuring reference group identity specifically seemed to be limited to the studies conducted by Wade (1997), Wade and Gelso (1998), and Wade and Britton-Powell (2000).

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CHAPTER 3

METHOD

<u>Introduction</u>

This chapter will include the number and description of the participants, the population from which they were selected, and how this population was chosen. Next, the instruments used to conduct this research will be discussed followed by research design and procedure.

<u>Participants</u>

The sample consisted of twenty-five (25) participants who were selected from a convenience sampling of adolescent males, from an area alternative high school and a youth and family service, between the ages of 16 and 19 living in the central United States. Participation in the study was voluntary and participants received no compensation for participating in this study. Confidentiality was maintained by separation of the informed consent/assent documents from the survey instruments. An attempt was made to include an ethnically diverse sample of participants. Demographic characteristics of the sample are presented in Table 1. The racial composition of the sample was 68% White, 8% Black/African American, 16% Native American, and 8% other (multiracial). None of the participants were Asian/Asian American or Hispanic/Latino(a). The average age of participants was 17.08 years, with 48% age 16, 12% age 17, 24% age 18, 16% age 19. Eighty-four percent (84%) of the participants listed having other males in the home, while 16% did not with 56% listing a male in the home as a role model and 44% who did not consider a male in the household as a role model. Many of the participants were not attending school (40%). The information sheet

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did not ask participants for information related to non-school attendance. Some of the

participants likely were not in school because they had graduated or had obtained a

G.E.D. The remainder were high school level Freshmen (8%), Sophomores (16%),

Juniors (20%) and Seniors (16%). None of the participants were attending college.

Participants also indicated how long they have lived in the state of Oklahoma with the

mean number of years being fourteen (14).

Table 1: Demographic Variables of Sample (N=25)

Variable		f	%
Age:			
	16	12	48
	17	3	12
	18	6	24
	19	4	16
Educational Status:			
	Freshman	2	8
	Sophomore	4	16
	Junior	5	20
	Senior	4	16
	College Freshman	0	0
	College Sophomore	0	0
	Not attending	10	40
Race/Ethnicity:			
	African Amer/Black	2	8
	Amer.Indian/Native American	4	16
	Asian/Asian American	0	0
	Hispanic/Latino(a)	0	0
	White, non-Hispanic	17	68
	Other (multiracial)	2	8
Male in the Home:			
	Yes	21	84
	No	4	16
Household male as a role model:			
	Yes	14	56
	No	11	44

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Procedure

Researchers conducted a convenience sampling through a local alternative high school and a local youth and family service facility. A scripted announcement and instructions for the study were read to each participant to increase uniformity (See Appendixes A and B). Those who volunteered to participate read and signed the appropriate informed consent, parental consent or minor assent forms (Appendixes C, D, and E). The participants then received the packet of instruments, which contained the following counterbalanced items: the information sheet, the Reference Group Identity Dependence Scale (RGIDS; Wade & Gelso, 1998), the Male Role Norms Scale (MRNS; Thompson and Pleck, 1986), the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ; Spence and Helmreich, 1978) and a 10-item scale measuring the importance of male role models. Participants were given an opportunity to ask questions regarding the materials. It took participants approximately 20 to 30 minutes to complete the instruments. The primary investigator remained present to collect the completed packets.

Instruments

All participants completed an information sheet, the Reference Group Identity Dependence Scale (RGIDS; Wade & Gelso, 1998), the Male Role Norms Scale (MRNS; Thompson and Pleck, 1986), the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ; Spence and Helmreich, 1978) and a 10-item scale measuring the importance of male role models.

Information Sheet

Data gathered from the information sheet included age, gender, level of education, ethnicity, members of the household, religious affiliation and length of residency in Oklahoma. Additionally, two questions pertained to identifying male role models, and

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one question asked for information regarding absent biological fathers. The Information Sheet is contained in Appendix F.

Reference Group Identity Dependence Scale.

The Reference Group Identity Dependence Scale (RGIDS) is a 30-item measure developed to measure theoretical aspects of male reference group identity dependence. The four scales measure feelings of psychological relatedness to other males as represented by three male reference group identity dependence statuses. Being 'dependent' upon a group infers that it is from this group that one not only reinforces views about self (because we usually choose groups with similar attitudes and values) but one may also gain a sense of status and power. One may also rigidly adhere to gender roles, possess attitudes that may be stereotypical and have "limited or restricted gender role experiences and behaviors (Wade and Britton-Powell, 2000, pg. 325). If one is 'non-dependent' upon a group then one is able to define "for himself what it means to be characteristically male" (Wade and Britton-Powell, 2000, pg. 325). The No Reference Group subscale has 10 items representing no feelings of connectedness to other males. The Reference Group Dependent subscale has 7 items representing feelings of connectedness to some types of males but not others. The Reference Group Nondependent status uses two scales: Similarity and Diversity. The Similarity subscale has 6 items representing feelings of connectedness with all males (not to one type of male). The Diversity subscale has 7 items representing one's comfort and appreciation of differences in males. One item is reversed scored. The instrument uses a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Relevant feelings and beliefs associated with each male identity status are represented by higher scores.

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Moderate internal consistency reliability has been found with this scale (Wade, 1997;

Wade and Gelso, 1998; Wade and Brittan-Powell, 2000): No Reference Group, .78 and

.82; Reference Group Dependent, .66 and .70; Reference Group Nondependent Diversity,

.70 and .74, and Reference Group Nondependent Similarity, .73 and .84.

The internal consistency estimate (coefficient alpha) for the global RGID score

for the current study was .67. Coefficient alphas obtained for the Reference Group

Identity subscales in the current study ranged from .03 to .77 (see Table 2). The

coefficient alphas for each RGID subscale were as follows: No Reference Group ($\alpha =$

.58), Reference Group Dependent ($\alpha = .59$), Reference Group Non- Dependent/ Diverse

($\alpha = .03$), Reference Group Non-Dependent/Similar ($\alpha = .77$). With the exception of the

Reference Group Non-Dependent/Similar subscale, the internal consistency estimates

generally were not adequate for the Reference Group Identity Scale.

Table 2: **Alphas for RGID, MRNS, PAQ Subscales and Importance of Male Role Model Scale**

Scale		Alpha	Mean (Range)	Std.Dev.
RGID (N = 25)	No Reference Group	.58	30.60 (10-60)	5.85
	Reference Group Dependent	.59	27.28 (7 - 42)	4.94
	Reference Group Non-Dependent/Diversity	.03	27.84 (7 - 42)	3.27
	Reference Group Non-Dependent/Similar	.77	20.12 (6 - 36)	5.06
MRNS(N = 25)	Status Norm	.74	1.99 (1 – 7)	9.81
	Toughness Norm	.23	1.36	5.05
	Anti-Femininity Norm	.75	1.28	6.35
PAQ (N = 24)	Sex Specific	.27	17.70 (0 – 32)	2.91
(N = 25)	Male Value/Instrumental	.64	12.87	4.69
(N = 24)	Female Value/Expressive	.82	22.08	3.90
IMRN (N = 24)		.89	16.87	5.14

Interscale correlations of the RGID obtained in the current study were: No

Reference Group with Reference Group Dependent ($r = -.02$, $p = .90$); Reference Group

Dependent with Reference Group Non-Dependent, Diverse ($r = .42$, $p < .05$); Reference

Group Non-Dependent/Diverse with Reference Group Non-Dependent/Similar ($r = .49$, p

$< .05$) (See Table 3). Only two of these supported the construct validity of reference

group theory.

Table 3: Interscale Correlations of RGID

	No Ref. Group (NRG)	Ref. Group Dependent (RGD)	Reference Group Non-Dep/Diverse (RGND/D)	Reference Group Non-Dep/Similar (RGND/S)
NRG	---	---	---	---
RGD	-.026	---	---	---
RGND/D	.075	.422*	---	---
RGND/S	-.078	.323	.491*	---

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

These findings are not consistent with previous research (RGIDS; Wade & Gelso, 1998),

which found scale intercorrelations in predicted directions.

Male Role Norms Scale

The Male Role Norms Scale (MRNS; Thompson and Pleck, 1986), is a derivative

of the Brannon Masculinity Scale (BMS; Brannon & Juni, 1984) and has been used to

measure masculine ideology by looking at three factors: status/rationality, antifemininity,

tough image or violent toughness. Status reflects the need to gain respect and status;

antifemininity refers to the expectation that men should avoid behaviors and activities

that are perceived as stereotypically feminine; toughness refers to the expectation of men

being independent and mentally, emotionally and physically rugged. This is a 26-item

scale where participants rate their level of agreement on a 7-point Likert-type scale

(1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree) with statements such as "a man should never

back down in the face of trouble". More traditional attitudes toward male role norms are

reflected by higher scores. A substantial correlation and evidence for validity was

reported by Thompson in 1992 between MRNS scores and masculine gender-role stress (Fischer, Tokar, Good, Snell, 1997).

The internal consistency estimate (coefficient alpha) for the global MRNS score for the current study was adequate ($\alpha = .78$). The alphas for samples of men in Thompson and Pleck's 1986 study ranged from .86 to .94. Coefficient alphas obtained for the Male Role Norms subscales in the current study ranged from .23 to .75 (see Table 2). The coefficient alphas for each MRNS subscale were as follows: Male Role Status Norm ($\alpha = .74$), Male Role Toughness Norm ($\alpha = .23$), Male Role Anti-femininity Norm ($\alpha = .75$). With the exception of the Male Role Toughness Norm, the internal consistency estimates were adequate for the Male Role Norms Scale.

Intercorrelations among MRNS subscales obtained in the current study are listed in Table 4 and supported the construct validity of Male Role Norms theory. Interscale correlations of the MRNS obtained in the current study were: Male Role Status Norm with Male Role Toughness ($r = .43$, $p < .05$); Male Role Toughness with Male Role Anti-femininity ($r = .31$, $p = .13$) and Male Role Status Norm with Male Role Anti-femininity ($r = .36$, $p = .07$) (See Table 4).

Table 4: Interscale Correlations of MRNS

	Male Role Status	Male Role Toughness	Male Role Anti-femininity
Male Role Status	---	---	---
Male Role Toughness	.432*	---	---
Male Role Anti-femininity	.369	.310	---

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

These findings are not consistent with previous research (Thompson and Pleck, 1986) but may be due to the low number of participants.

Personal Attributes Questionnaire

The Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ; Spence and Helmreich, 1978) was designed to measure the degree of "masculine and feminine" or "instrumental and expressive" traits a participant perceives himself or herself to have through scales labeled self-assertive-instrumental (measuring masculinity) and interpersonal-expressive (measuring femininity). Instrumentality is characterized as more assertive and independent, while expressiveness might be described as more gentle, giving and understanding. Participants are asked to respond to 24-items which each have a five item "A" through "E" scale. For each characteristic listed, a scale is situated between opposite ends of a continuum. For example: "Not at all emotional A B C D E Very emotional". Good internal consistency has been reported using Chronbach alpha's at .85 (M) and .82 (F). Thirteen week test-restest correlations ranged from .65 to .91. The test has been shown to discriminate among sample populations well (ie. men from women or heterosexuals from homosexuals) (Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightsman, 1990).

The internal consistency estimate (coefficient alpha) for the global PAQ score for the current study was not adequate ($\alpha = .39$) and was not similar to that found by Spence and Helmreich (1978). The alphas for Spence and Helmreich's 1978 study ranged from .86 to .94. Coefficient alphas obtained for the PAQ subscales in the current study ranged from .27 to .82 (see Table 2). The coefficient alphas for each PAQ subscale were as follows: PAQ Sex Specific/Stereotyped ($\alpha = .27$), PAQ Male-Value/Instrumental ($\alpha = .64$), PAQ Female-Value/Expressive ($\alpha = .82$). Only the internal consistency estimates

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for the Female-Value/Expressive subscale were adequate for the Personal Attributes Questionnaire Scale.

Interscale correlations of the PAQ obtained in the current study were: PAQ Sex Specific Value with PAQ Female-Value/Expressive (r = .44, p < .05); PAQ Sex Specific Value with PAQ Male-Value/Instrumental (r = -.14, p = .50) and PAQ Female-Value/Expressive with PAQ Male-Value/Instrumental (r = -.63, p < .01) (see Table 5).

Table 5: Interscale Correlations of PAQ

	PAQ Sex Specific/ Stereotype	PAQ Female Value/Expressive	PAQ Male Value/ Instrumental
PAQ Sex Specific/Stereotype	---	---	---
PAQ Female Value/Expressive	.440*	---	---
PAQ Male Value/Instrumental	-.143	-.637**	---

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

These findings are not consistent with previous research (Spence and Helmreich, 1978).

Importance of Male Role Models

The Importance of Male Role Models (IMRM) is a 3-point Likert scale, written by the primary researcher and her advisor, and is designed to rate the importance of male role model(s) the participant knows personally as well as those presented by the media. The scale consisted of ten items rating the importance of being seen by self and others as similar to different types of male role models, for example: "It is (not important, somewhat important, very important) for me to think of myself as similar to a male role model in sports." The internal consistency estimate (coefficient alpha) for the current

study was adequate (α= .89) (see Table 2). A total score for the IMRM was computed by summing the items. Higher scores indicate that male role models are important.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Overview of Analyses of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 dealt with the presence or absence of a male role model in the home related to one's reference group identity. Hypothesis 2 dealt with relationships between media-influenced (ie. sports figures, cartoons, movies, video games, advertising) male role models and reference group identity. Hypothesis 3 and 4 dealt with relationships between adhering to socially desirable gender traits, acceptance of male role norms and reference group identity, respectively. One-way ANOVA's were conducted to detect differences between groups in Hypotheses 1 and 2. Pearson product moment correlations were conducted to analyze data for Hypotheses 2, 3 and 4. An alpha level of .05 was used to test each of the hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: The presence or absence of a male role model in the home is related to one's reference group identity.

The presence or absence of a male role model in the home was measured using two questions from the Information Sheet (Appendix F). Participants were asked to indicate 'who lives in your household with you?' (i.e. mother, father, sister, brother, etc.). They were then asked to indicate 'who do you identify as a male role model?'. These two sets of data were combined into one yes/no variable, 'household male as a role model' indicating that they had identified a male living in the household as a male role model. After conducting a one-way ANOVA, using household male as a role model as the independent variable, and each of the RGID subscales as dependent variables, no

significant relationships were found between groups. Therefore, Hypothesis One was not supported (see Table 6).

Table 6: ANOVA (RGID and Household Male as a Role Model)						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
No Reference Group	Between Groups	38.500	1	38.500	1.127	.299
	Within Groups	785.500	23	34.152		
	Total	824.000	24			
Reference Group Dependent	Between Groups	12.917	1	12.917	.517	.479
	Within Groups	574.123	23	24.962		
	Total	587.040	24			
Ref. Group Non-Dependent/ Diverse	Between Groups	11.022	1	11.022	1.029	.321
	Within Groups	246.338	23	10.710		
	Total	257.360	24			
Ref. Group Non-Dependent/ Similar	Between Groups	28.802	1	28.802	1.131	.299
	Within Groups	585.838	23	25.471		
	Total	614.640	24			

Hypothesis 2: There is a relationship between media-influenced (ie. sports figures, cartoons, movies, video games, advertising) male role models and reference group identity.

This hypothesis was measured in the following ways: Item number 7 of the Information Sheet asked participants, "Who do you identify as a male role model?" They were to check the blank next to each choice which included the options of "sports figure", "religious figure", "actor in movies", "actor in television" and "cartoon character". From these options, 24% chose "sports figure", 8% "religious figure", 12% "actor in movies", 8% "actor in television" and 8% "cartoon character". Item number 9 of the Information Sheet asked participants, "Who are or have been your role models in the following areas?

Please leave blank if there have been no role models". Participants were to fill in the blanks for the headings, "television", "movies", "sports", "cartoons". These items were measured categorically by 'no', indicating the item was left blank; 'yes, checked', indicating the item was checked with a check mark, but no name was given; and 'yes, named', indicating the name of a role model had been written in. The "named" responses were then categorized into the following: 'military', indicating a military-type role model was named; 'action hero', indicating a character or person associated with being an action hero was named; and 'comedy', indicating a comedic-type character was named. For television role models, 76% left this item blank; 8% checked the blank, while 4% named a role model. Of the named role models, 4% were 'military', 4% were 'action hero' and 4% were 'comedy'. In the movie category, 68% left this item blank and 8% only checked the item. Of the 4% who named a role model, 4% were 'military' and 16% were 'action hero'. Eighty percent (80%) left the cartoon option blank, 8% checked the blank; 8% named 'action hero' and 4% named 'comedy' type cartoon characters as role models. Role models in sports were named by 16% of the participants, with 8% only checking the blank and 76% leaving this option blank.

Prior to running the one-way ANOVA, the two media items were collapsed into one variable, 'media', indicating whether a participant had checked or listed a male role model in either item or not. This variable revealed 14 participants had selected or listed a media-influenced role model while 11 did not (see Table 7). A one-way ANOVA failed to yield any significant relationships between the 'media' role model variable and the RGID.

Table 7: ANOVA (RGID and Media-Influenced Male Role Models)		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
No Reference Group	Between Groups	18.240	1	18.240	.521	.478
	Within Groups	805.760	23	35.033		
	Total	824.000	24			
Reference Group Dependent	Between Groups	23.689	1	23.689	.967	.336
	Within Groups	563.351	23	24.494		
	Total	587.040	24			
Ref. Group Non-Dependent/ Diverse	Between Groups	1.704	1	1.704	.153	.699
	Within Groups	255.656	23	11.115		
	Total	257.360	24			
Ref. Group Non-Dependent/ Similar	Between Groups	15.211	1	15.211	.584	.453
	Within Groups	599.429	23	26.062		
	Total	614.640	24			

Participants also completed a 10-item assessment on the "Importance of Male Role Models" (IMRM), where they were asked to rank the importance (not important, somewhat important, very important) of themselves or others to think of them as similar to male role models in television, movies, sports, advertising and their personal life. While this scale showed good internal reliability, there were no significant correlations between importance of male role models and reference group identity (see Table 8). From these analyses, it would appear that Hypothesis Two was not supported.

Table 8: Correlations of IMRM and RGID

	IMRM	No Reference Group	Reference Group Dependent	Reference Group Non-Dep/Diverse	Reference Group Non-Dep/Similar
IMRM	---	---	---	---	---
No Reference Group	-.214	---	---	---	---
Reference Group Dependent	-.015	-.026	---	---	---
Reference Group Non-Dep/Diverse	.300	.075	.422*	---	---
Reference Group Non-Dep/Similar	.205	-.078	.323	.491*	---

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Hypothesis 3: There is a relationship between reference group identity and adhering to socially desirable gender traits.

Correlations between the RGID and the PAQ revealed three significant and negative relationships. There was an inverse relationship between No Reference Group Identity and Male-Values/Instrumentality ($r = -.58$, $p < .01$) meaning that high scores in feeling no connectedness to other males were related to low scores in instrumentality. This would indicate that when one feels no connectedness to other males, they may be less likely to adhere or exhibit behaviors associated with instrumentality such as assertiveness and independence. An inverse relationship also was found between Reference Group Dependence and the Sex Specific/Stereotype subscale ($r = -.48$, $p < .05$) indicating that higher scores, which represent feeling connected to some males but not others, were related to low scores (i.e. away from the direction of the stereotype) in one's perception of differences between genders. In other words, the more one feels connected to at least one group of males, the less likely one is to have stereotypical views of gendered roles. An inverse relationship between Reference Group Non-Dependent/Similar and the Female Value/Expressive subscale ($r = -.41$, $p < .05$), also was

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found. This indicates that high scores in feeling connected to all males were related to low scores in ascribing to expressiveness. That is, feelings of similarity to all males were related to being less expressive or less giving, gentle and understanding. With the exception of a correlation to Reference Group Non-Dependent/Diverse, it would appear that there are some significant relationships between reference group identity and adhering to socially desirable gender traits. Therefore, some support for Hypothesis Three was found in the current study.

Hypothesis 4: There is a relationship between acceptance of male role norms and reference group identity.

There was a significant and negative relationship ($\underline{r} = -.44$, $\underline{p} < .05$) between Reference Group Non-Dependent/Diverse, being comfortable with and appreciating differences in males, and the Male Role Norms Anti-Femininity subscale, having a desire to avoid feminine activities and behaviors. This seems to indicate that acceptance of diversity in males is correlated with a lower need to avoid gender norms traditionally considered feminine. In essence, those who are comfortable with different types of men were found to be more open to behaviors and activities that have traditionally been thought of as 'for girls only'. Hypothesis Four was partially supported.

Other findings

Additional findings emerged during analyses that did not pertain to specific hypotheses. Exploratory analyses included Pearson product-moment correlations between various demographic variables and each of the subscales. The results are discussed in the following paragraphs.

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The Male Role Norms Anti-femininity subscale was inversely related to having a male role model in the household ($r = -.44$, $p < .05$). This negative correlation seems to indicate that those with no male role model in the household are more likely to want to avoid feminine behaviors and activities.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This study attempted to clarify how reference group identity among adolescent males is influenced by male role models from within the home, outside the home and by models presented through other cultural means, specifically, the media. This study also looked at one's adherence to socially acceptable gender traits and acceptance of male role norms in relation to one's reference group identity. Findings will be discussed in several sections. Limitations of the study as well as implications for practice and future research are discussed.

This study sought to explore the relationship between reference group identity, acceptance of male role norms, adhering to socially acceptable gender traits and the influence and importance of "real" or media influences male role models. For purposes of this discussion, "reference group identity" refers to the level in which men feel psychologically connected to other males. "Acceptance of male role norms" indicates the acceptance or belief in the more "traditional" beliefs about men and their "masculine" roles in U.S. society. The "adherence to socially acceptable gender traits" means that one readily accepts and displays behavior in such a manner that it is consistent with the socially acceptable traits normally identified with one's gender.

Reference Group Identity

Reference Group Identity theory (Wade, 1998) focuses on four unique aspects of reference group identity. These aspects form the four RGID subscales: No Reference Group, Reference Group Dependent, Reference Group Non-Dependent/Diverse, and Reference Group Non-Dependent/Similar. Reference Group Identity theory involves the

psychological relatedness one feels to males. These four subscales refer to feeling no psychological relatedness to other males; feeling connected to some males but not others; appreciating the differences in males and feeling connected to all males, respectively. Wade also examined ego identity in relation to reference group and determined that there may be a correlation between the level of reference group identity and unintegrated, conforming and integrated ego identities. Unintegrated ego identity may indicate poor functioning overall. Feeling connected to others, social roles, and public images may have high importance to those with a conforming ego identity and those with an integrated ego identity may have integrated several, perhaps more diverse, sources of identity into their self-concept. It was predicted that reference group identity, or psychological relatedness to males, could be correlated with the presence or absence of a male role model and the influence of media male role models. It was also expected that there would be a relationship between psychological relatedness to males and the acceptance of male role norms as well as the willingness to adhere to socially acceptable gender traits.

Presence or absence of a male role model

The variable, 'household male as a role model' was a compilation of 'male(s) living in the household' who were also named as being a 'male role model'. After conducting a one-way ANOVA, using 'household male as a role model' as the independent variable, and each of the RGID subscales as dependent variables, no significant relationships were found between groups. The hypothesis was that, "The presence or absence of a male role model in the home is related to one's reference group identity". The findings in this study indicate that reference group identity is not

influenced by or related to the presence or absence of a male role model. Tatar (1998) described a role model as someone who impacts the life of an adolescent, offers social support and is valued and respected by the adolescent. The dynamics of power and authority, as well as the degree of involvement, also influence the relationship. Persons encountered in social contexts, such as teachers, were also considered role models. By this description, simply being present or absent in a household would not automatically qualify or disqualify one from being considered a role model. There are obviously many more dynamics at work than simply presence or absence although absence would probably influence degree of involvement and may ultimately affect one's status as a role model. This study seems to have determined that psychological relatedness to other males is not related to a male role model being present or absent from one's household.

This finding seems to indicate that role models, male or otherwise, seem to come from sources other than one's household. This population may have a variety of sources from where they obtain their feelings of psychological relatedness to other groups of men, such as family outside the home, friends, school or other social settings. These other sources were not explored in this study.

Influence of media male role models

Participants were given three opportunities to select, define and/or rate the importance of media-influenced male role models which could include males from sports organizations, television, cartoons, movies, advertising or religion. Results obtained here indicate that no relationship exists between these media influenced male role models and reference group identity. While 14 of the 25 participants, at some point, selected or listed a male role model from at least one of the possible genres of media, these selections were

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insubstantial in relationship to psychological relatedness to males. Perhaps this sampling of males feels they have been more influenced by tangible, 'real-life' role models (who may not necessarily be male) who are actually involved in and supportive of their life as opposed to those found in the forum of media. Perhaps they are not cognitively aware of the influences of media-related role models. This study did not explore the level of influence some of participants may have felt from media role models.

<u>Adherence to socially acceptable gender traits</u>

A significant inverse relationship was found between No Reference Group and Male Values/Instrumentality on the PAQ. Having no reference group, which indicates no psychological relatedness to other males, may also indicate difficulty relating to or feeling close to other men as well as feeling confused, conflicted and basically different from other men (Wade, 1998). It has also been correlated to decreased self-esteem, anxiety in social situations and not seeing oneself as having 'masculine' traits (Wade and Britton-Powell, 2000). In previous studies, high scores on the PAQ's male-values/instrumentality subscale indicate one is more likely to adhere to the instrumental traits associated with men such as independence and assertiveness. The low scores in this correlation, however, seem to indicate that this sample of young men are less likely to see themselves as independent and assertive. This relationship seems to indicate that this study's findings coincide with previous findings about not having a reference group in that this sample seemingly do not see themselves as having traits associated with masculinity. With this particular sample there may have been a high likelihood of low self-esteem and social anxiety, since most all of the participants are either from an alternative high school setting or have been court-referred to a youth and family services

agency. The inability to successfully function in a 'regular' high school setting may indicate that many of these young men do not feel as though they are like the majority population and therefore feel no connectedness to their peers. While the scope of this study does not encompass aspects of juvenile delinquency per se, it can be said that most all of the court-referred participants were not attending 'regular' school and had apparently exhibited some sort of behavior that is not within the norm and has resulted in an arrest. These behaviors seem to support Wade's theory of a relationship between no reference group identity and unintegrated ego identity, which sometimes indicates poor overall functioning (Wade, 1998), as well as other studies on self-esteem, which has been shown in several studies to be positively correlated with masculinity or instrumentality.

An inverse relationship also was found between Reference Group Dependent and Sex Specific/Stereotype values. Reference Group Dependent status has been correlated with "traditional masculinity ideology, gender role conflict, sexual harassment proclivities and attitudes unsupportive of racial and gender equity" (Wade and Britton-Powell, 2000, pg. 326). Scoring low on the PAQ's Sex-Specific scale indicates that this sample is less likely to adhere to gender traits that have traditionally been thought of either masculine or feminine.

In being reference group dependent one defines or bases his gender characteristics on those with whom he identifies, usually a similar peer group that encourages like attitudes in order to have a sense of belongingness. Wade and Britton-Powell's (2000) study also relates reference group dependence with a fully developed social identity and an underdeveloped personal identity. According to Wade's Reference Group Identity theory, conforming ego identity is correlated with reference group

dependence, where it is important for one to feel connected to others, and where social roles and public images are highly important.

Reference group identity theory seems to support the current findings in this study given the age of the sample population. The inverse relationship seems to indicate a need or desire to think or present one's self as similar to the majority but at the same time trying not to categorize traits as either feminine or masculine. From that viewpoint it would seem possible that this sampling of young men may be adept at presenting a persona that is acceptable to others. In other words, given the age of the participants, it is important to fit in and be accepted by their peers. In order to accomplish this they would not want to appear either overly masculine or overly feminine because most would not want to be labeled negatively with either gender stereotype. From this same concept it may also be that participants attempted to give 'socially acceptable' answers to items in the surveys.

An inverse relationship was found between Reference Group Non-Dependent/Similar and the PAQ's Female-Value/Expressive subscale. This indicates that high scores in feeling connected to all males were related to low scores in ascribing to expressiveness. That is, feelings of similarity to all males were related to being less expressive or less giving, gentle and understanding. Feeling non-dependent yet similar to a reference group allows one to integrate contrasting images of males into a "self-defined gender role self-concept" (Wade, 1998, pg. 443). This seems to indicate that while one attempts to define for himself the meaning of being 'male' he also has a small group or a few close friends to whom "he feels most similar to in character" (Wade, 1998, pg. 443). The current study demonstrated that incorporating expressive traits into one's male

identity is not done by this sample. Therefore this correlation reveals that while this sample of adolescents feel psychologically connected to all males, their commonality is not based on expressiveness.

<u>Acceptance of male role norms</u>

There was an inverse relationship between Reference Group Non-Dependent/Diverse and the MRNS's Anti-femininity subscale. As discussed earlier, reference group non-dependence indicates trying to define for one's self the traits of being male and not being dependent on other males for this definition. High scores on the diversity portion of this scale seem to indicate more non-traditional attitudes in relation to masculinity, that one expresses feelings comfortably and may not always have the same viewpoints as the majority (Wade and Britton-Powell, 2000). The low score on the MRNS subscale seems to indicate there is not a very high need to avoid feminine behaviors or activities. This inverse relationship seems to be saying that this sample is open to more diverse attitudes about male gender traits, that perhaps they want to be perceived as non-sexist and are not accepting of traditional male role norms when it comes to avoiding 'feminine' activities or behaviors. Perhaps in a more global sense, away from the peer group they feel most similar to, these young men are open to the diverseness of themselves or others displaying feminine behaviors or participating in feminine type activities, such as nurturing or caretaking of children. Many may be from homes where caretaking of younger siblings is required. Also, the media has made attempts to show 'the softer side' of being male; there are trends in depicting men to be more nurturing, to be more involved with family and to be more expressive. Aside from certain genres of media influence, such as beer commercials, there seems to be many

representations of what being a man means in the 21st century. Perhaps this study reflects that males born in the 1980's are more open to accepting more androgynous gender traits than generations past and that having a male as a role model is not necessarily as important as having a well-balanced role model.

Other Findings

The Anti-femininity subscale of the MRNS was inversely related to perceiving a male in the household as a role model. In other words, without a male role model in the home it is more likely one will attempt to avoid behaviors and activities that may be perceived as feminine. Many of the participants (60%) indicate having been members of single parent households at some point in their life. In U.S. culture the males who are present in the home are often considered to be 'the man of house' which carries with it certain responsibilities such as protecting others in the home. The significant correlation seems to indicate that for the participants who do not feel they have a male role model in the home, it is important not to exhibit feminine behaviors or participate in feminine activities. It is likely that suppressing feminine behaviors is considered appropriate behavior for the geographical region of this study. Those participants who have adult males in the home, but who are not considered role models, may feel it is necessary to protect others in the household. Part of this protective behavior may be to suppress feminine-type behaviors (i.e. "look strong").

Overall this study seems to have found that psychological relatedness to other males is not related to the presence or absence of a male role model and that this adolescent population may relate more to tangible role models than to intangible ones. Findings related to reference group identity indicate those with no reference group show

low instrumentality or are less apt to see themselves as independent and assertive, while those who are reference group dependent are less likely to adhere to stereotyped gender traits. Those who feel connected to all males, reference group non-dependent/similar, are less likely to be expressive or see themselves as giving, understanding and gentle. Low scores on the anti-femininity subscale indicate those who feel connected to all men, reference group non-dependent/diverse, are less likely to avoid feminine behaviors and activities.

Limitations of the Study

The present study may be classified as exploratory in nature because the constructs of reference group identity, acceptance of male role norms, adherence to socially acceptable gender traits and importance of the male role models had not been previously examined as they pertain to adolescent males who are under age 18. Three of the scales used have previously been normed on 'college-age' populations in university settings.

This study may be characterized as descriptive or correlational because of the absence of experimental control or manipulation of the variables as well as the nonrandom nature of participant selection who were recruited for the study through the primary researcher's contacts with a local alternative high school and an area youth and family service. In this study, while a college population was available, and could have changed the number and diversity of participants, the researcher made the decision to only use the alternative school setting and the youth and family services populations. While this limits the generalizability of this study it did offer some insight into the experiences or opinions of what some might term an already 'troubled' population. The

boys in the alternative school are not necessarily placed there because of 'behavior problems'. Many times attendance there is voluntary and is often related to issues caused by unstable home environments. Many of these students were in a position of being more concerned about survival than the upcoming school dance. The young men who participated from the youth and family services were all court-referred individuals and were being seen in either group or individual counseling as part of their probation requirements. While there appeared to be a level of cooperation in completing the study, most of these young men would be considered 'involuntary' consumers. This aspect might cause one to speculate whether or not there could have been a perception of punishment, reward or control of future events even though the aforementioned protocol was used.

The age of the population used for this study may have also been influential upon the outcomes. This age group may still be experiencing confusion over their identity in general and at this point in their lives may not ascribe rigidly to traits or norms that have previously been described as either masculine or feminine.

Because the majority of participants in this study classified themselves as White, not of Hispanic origin, generalizability to other racial/ethnic groups is limited. There have been mixed findings about the relationships between race and reference group identity (Wade, 1998). This study did not add to these findings because most participants were White, not of Hispanic origin. Future research should explore the relationships between race/ethnicity, reference group identity, acceptance of male role norms, adherence to socially acceptable gender traits and importance of male role models due to the influence of culture, socialization and socioeconomic class.

Another limitation of this study is the low reliabilities of several of the subscales. Therefore many of the analyses must be viewed with caution. The low number of participants in the sample as well as a lack of diversity between age, socioeconomic status and education, may have contributed to these low reliabilities.

<u>Implications for Future Research</u>

This study is the first to look at the relationships between reference group identity, acceptance of male role norms, adherence to socially acceptable gender traits and the importance of male role models among adolescent males younger than age 18. This study provides some empirical support for the RGID and the relationships between the MRNS and PAQ. However, given the current findings, based only on a small sample, the constructs of reference group identity might further be explored with a larger number of adolescent males from varying types of backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses. The population selected for this study was a convenience sampling, but was also of interest to the primary researcher because there was an awareness that the majority (60%) of the sample did not have a relationship with their biological father nor a positive male role model. Future research might focus on relationships between absence of father, educational attainment and level of legal involvement.

The findings of the present study provide new information about today's adolescent male (those born in the 1980's) and the relationships between reference group identity, adherence to socially acceptable gender traits and acceptance of male role norms as well as the influence, or lack thereof, of male role models. Previous research is limited about the influence of male role models, real or "pretend", in the socialization process of adolescent males. The role of 'father' in socializing sons as well as the concepts of

attachment and/or affiliation should be examined in future research. Additionally, future research might focus on how females are influential in socializing young men and how this role might differ from a male's role. Future studies may also include adolescent female's perspectives on reference group identity, adherence to socially acceptable gender traits and acceptance of male role norms as well as the influence, or lack thereof, of various types of male role models.

Implications for Practice

The findings of the current study provide some empirical support for relationships between reference group identity, acceptance of male role norms and adherence to socially acceptable gender traits among adolescent males younger than age 18. Within family systems theory, knowledge of a client's reference group identity status may provide counselors with a greater understanding of how a male client's psychological relatedness to other males may affect and influence their behavior with others. The links between reference group identity, acceptance of male role norms and adherence to socially acceptable gender traits among adolescent males may be useful for counselors who work with this age group. It may also be helpful to know that the simple presence or absence of a male role model in the home is not related, according to this study, to feeling connected to all males and that male role model images presented by the media do not seem to be as influential as 'real-life' role models of either gender.

The relationship between the client and counselor is especially important when working with adolescent males and gender identity. Aspects of the relationship may be affected by the gender, age, values and worldviews of the counselor. These same aspects may affect how an adolescent male responds in a counseling session. Those with more

male-valued, anti-feminine beliefs about gender may be less likely to respond to insight focused therapies. When examining the gender identity development of adolescent males, counselors should take into consideration the "situational and contextual" (Wade, 1998, pg. 419) influences of each client. Counselors should assist the client in examining the potential impact of culture and society on gender identity development. Schweder (as cited in Wade, 1977) suggests that it is difficult to separate and analyze one's identity from one's culture due to their intertwined nature and that one cannot be examined without examining the other. The RGID, MRNS, PAQ or someday the IMRM, might be useful in facilitating this type of dialogue in counseling.

The current findings are preliminary in that relationships were being explored. However, these initial findings could be applicable to counseling adolescent males who have experienced difficulty in school or who have become involved in the juvenile justice system. The findings offer some insight about the influence of other males as reference groups, adhering to and accepting social norms for gendered behavior. Considering the number of inverse relationships found in this study they also provide information about possible ways adolescent males in the new millennium may be experiencing or reframing traditional notions of gender identity. If we can learn more about the influences upon the formation of gender identity and ultimately in relationships, mental health practitioners may be better equipped to assist adolescent males in overcoming obstacles that may be interfering with how they negotiate their life path.

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Appendix A

Script to Solicit Participation

I'm Julie Dorton, a Masters student from Oklahoma State University doing research for my thesis.

I am here today to invite you to participate in a study exploring how your ideas about masculinity are influenced by who your male role models are and how any male role models you may have, influence whether or not you feel connected to groups of males in general. In order to participate, you must be a male 16-19 years old. If you are under age 18, you must return a signed parental consent form and a signed minor assent form to a member of the research team prior to participation in the study. For those of you who are interested and are under 18, I have the necessary consent forms for you to take home today. I will be back on (weekday and date) to administer the questionnaires. You will need to bring your signed consent forms on that day. For those of you 18 and over, I will have a consent form for you sign on the day of the study. Participation in this study will involve completing an information sheet and four questionnaires that should take you no longer than 20-30 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. If you decide not to participate, it will not impact you in any way.

If you participate, you will not write your name on any of the questionnaires so that your responses will be confidential and anonymous. After completing the questionnaires, you will place them in the envelope provided for you, seal it shut and return it to a member of the research team. We are hoping the results of this study will help improve our understanding of the influences affecting masculine-type behaviors.

Appendix B

Script
(read prior to disbursement of questionnaire packets)

I'm Julie Dorton and I'm a Master's student from Oklahoma State University doing research on gender identity among adolescent males.

You are here to today to participate in a study exploring how your ideas about masculinity are influenced by who your male role models are and how any male role models you may have, influence whether or not you feel connected to groups of males in general. Your participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. If you decide not to participate, it will not impact you in any way.

In order to participate, you must be a male 16-19 years old. If you under 18 you should have with you, your signed parental consent form and your signed minor assent form which you will give to a member of the research team as the packets are handed out. You will give the signed consent forms to the research team member and you will keep a copy for your records. The consent form you will keep contains information about who to contact for further information, questions, or concerns following the study. Participation in this study will involve completing an information sheet and four questionnaires that should take you no longer than 20-30 minutes to complete. If you participate, you will not write your name on any of the questionnaires so that your responses will be confidential and anonymous. After completing the questionnaires, place them in the envelope provided for you, seal it shut and return it to a member of the research team. We are hoping the results of this study will help improve our understanding of how men influence one another in their masculine-type behaviors.

Appendix C

Informed Consent Form
for participation in a research investigation conducted under the auspices of
Oklahoma State University

This study is entitled **The Influence of Male Role Models upon Gender Identity and Reference Group Identity among Adolescent Males**. The principal investigator is Julie Dorton, B.A., as advised by Marie Miville, Ph.D.

I, _____ (print name), voluntarily agree to complete a series of five questionnaires. These questionnaires will ask me about my feelings and thoughts and about my relationships with others. In all, it should take me about 20-30 minutes to answer these questions.

For the purposes of confidentiality, this informed consent form and the five questionnaires will be gathered separately. None of the questionnaires have any identifying information. Once the researcher(s) have collected 30 completed packets, the researcher(s) will combine all of the data into a format that represents all participants. No individual responses will be used in the final research paper. The researcher will keep the completed packets for approximately ninety (90) days from the date of the 30th packet being completed. At the end of the 90 days, all of the instruments will be shredded. At the end of the research study itself, the results may be shared other professionals in the mental health field.

The purpose of this study is to help mental health professionals learn more about how to help young men, by clarifying how ideas about masculinity are influenced and if it is important for young men to feel "connected" to other groups of males.

Possible benefits to you may include an opportunity to discuss mental health issues facing young men your age, an opportunity to explore your beliefs about masculinity or an opportunity to explore how feeling "connected" to other groups of males may or may not influence your ideas about masculinity. You may also obtain a greater understanding of mental health research procedures.

Possible benefits to society may include the development of scientifically proven prevention efforts when working with young men ages 16-19.

I understand that participation is voluntary, that there is no type of reward or compensation for participating, that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in the project at any time, without penalty, before the questionnaires are collected, simply by notifying the researcher(s).

For answers to questions about my rights as a research participant, I may contact: Julie Dorton, graduate student, (580) 336-4019 or Dr. Marie Miville, advisor, at (405) 744-9453. I may also contact Sharon Bacher, IRB Executive Secretary, 202 Whitehurst, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078; telephone number: (405) 744-5700.

I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily.

Signed: _____Date:_____

Please sign one copy, turning it in separately from your questionnaires and keep one copy.

Appendix D

Parent Consent Form

Julie Dorton, B.A., a community counseling master's student and Dr. Marie L. Miville, a Counseling Psychologist and professor at Oklahoma State University, are working together to learn more about how masculinity is influenced by male role models and how male role models influence feeling connected to groups of males in general.

Your child was identified as a potential participant for this research study due to his current involvement with the agency or individuals from who gave him these materials. Here are some answers to questions parents commonly ask about this research study:

What will be expected of my son's participation in this research study?

Your son will be asked to complete a series of questionnaires, five in all. These questionnaires ask him about his feelings and thoughts and about his relationships with others. In all, it should take him about 20-30 minutes to answer these questions.

Examples of some of the questions include: Who do you identify as a male role model?; [I consider my self] not at all helpful to others or very helpful to others; Most of my social activities are centered around a particular group of male friends; I feel comfortable relating to different types of males; A man should always try to project an air of confidence even if he really doesn't feel confident inside; I think it's extremely good for a boy to be taught to cook, sew, clean the house, and take care of younger children. Once completed, your son will seal his responses in an unidentifiable envelope and return it to the researcher(s). Confidentiality of responses will be strictly adhered to and include the following:

1. No identifying information will be obtained on any of the questionnaires.
2. Your son's responses will be returned in a sealed envelope to the researcher(s).
3. Data received from agencies will be immediately separated from any identifying
   information such as a return envelope depicting the name of the agency.
4. All data will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the office of Dr. Marie Miville and will
   be accessible only to the researcher(s).

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to help mental health professionals learn more about how to help young men, by clarifying how ideas about masculinity are influenced and if it is important for young men to feel "connected" to other groups of males.

How long will this research study last?

Your son's participation in this research study will be completed once they return their questionnaires. The research study itself will last until at least thirty packets have been obtained, which is anticipated to occur sometime in the Spring or Summer of 2002.

What will happen at the end of the study?

Once your son completes the questionnaires, the researcher(s) will be available for him to answer any questions your son may have.

Once 30 packets have been completed, the researcher(s) will combine all of the data into a format that represents all participants. No individual responses will be used in the final research paper. The researcher will keep the completed packets for approximately ninety (90) days from the date of the 30th packet being completed. At the end of the 90 days, all of the instruments will be shredded.

At the end of the research study itself, the results may be shared other professionals in the mental health field.

Are there any benefits for participating in this study?

Participants will not receive any money or other types of rewards. Possible benefits for your son may include a chance to talk about mental health issues facing young men his age, an opportunity to discuss his beliefs about masculinity or how feeling connected to other groups of males may or may not influence his ideas about masculinity. He might also obtain a greater understanding of mental health research procedures.

Possible benefits to society may include the development of scientifically proven prevention efforts when working with young men ages 16-19.

What are the possible risks or discomforts of the study?

We do not anticipate any risks or discomforts to your son through his involvement in this study. However, some of the questions may ask him to reveal personal information. He has the right to not answer questions that may cause him discomfort. If he chooses to answer these sensitive questions, you can be assured that no one can ever link the information back to him as the questionnaires do not ask for his name or other identifying information.

Who has access to my son's responses on these questionnaires?

Only the researcher(s) will have access to your son's responses on these questionnaires which will not include any identifying information. Again the following steps will be utilized to insure confidentiality:

1. No identifying information will be obtained on any of the questionnaires.
2. Your son's responses will be returned in a sealed envelope to the researcher(s).
3. Data received from agencies will be immediately separated from any identifying information such as a return envelope depicting the name of the agency.
4. All data will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the office of Dr. Marie Miville and will be accessible only to the researcher(s).

What if I wish to withdraw my son or not have my son participate in the study?

You may choose to withdraw your son from the project at anytime. Refusing to allow your son to participate in this study will in no way impact you or your son.

"I, _____, hereby authorize that my son may take part in the completion of the research procedures identified above.

I understand that participation is voluntary, that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time without penalty, simply by notifying the researcher(s).

If questions arise, I may contact Julie Dorton, B.A., (580-336-4019) or Dr. Marie Miville (405-744-9453). I may also contact Sharon Bacher, IRB Executive Secretary, 203 Whitehurst, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078; telephone number: (405) 744-5700.

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

Date:_____ Time:_____(a.m./p.m.)

Name of
Minor:_____

Signed:_____
Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian of the above named Minor

Appendix E

Minor Assent Form

Julie Dorton, B.A., a community counseling master's student and Dr. Marie L. Miville, a Counseling Psychologist, are working together to learn more about how masculinity is influenced by male role models and how male role models influence feeling connected to groups of males in general.

You were identified as a potential participant for this project due to your current involvement with the agency or individuals from which you obtained these materials. Here are some answers to questions that are commonly asked about this research study:

What will I have to do to participate in this project?

You will be asked to complete a series of questionnaires, five in all. These questionnaires ask you about your feelings and thoughts and about your relationships with others. In all, it should take you about 20-30 minutes to answer these questions.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to help mental health professionals learn more about how to help young men, by clarifying how ideas about masculinity are influenced and if it is important for young men to feel "connected" to other groups of males.

Very little research has been done in this area. We would like to learn more about this topic by having you and about 30 other young men complete these forms.

How long will this research study last?

Your involvement in the study will only last as long as it takes for you to complete the questionnaires. The project will continue until at least thirty young men have completed a packet.

What will happen at the end of the study?

Once you complete the questionnaires, the researcher(s) will be available for you to ask questions.

Once 30 packets have been completed, the researcher(s) will combine all of the data into a format that represents all participants. No individual responses will be used in the final research paper. The researcher will keep the completed packets for approximately ninety (90) days from the date of the 30th packet being completed. At the end of the 90 days, all of the instruments will be shredded.

Are there any benefits to me for participating in this study?

Participants will not receive any money or other types of rewards. Possible benefits for you may include a chance to talk about mental health issues facing young men your age, an opportunity to discuss your beliefs about masculinity or how feeling connected to other groups of males may or may not influence your ideas about

masculinity. You might also obtain a greater understanding of mental health research procedures.

What are the possible risks or discomforts of the study?

We do not anticipate any risks or discomforts to you through your involvement in this study. However, some of the questions may ask you to reveal personal information. You have the right not to answer questions that may cause you discomfort. If you answer these sensitive questions you can be assured that no one can ever link the information back to you as the questionnaires do not ask for your name or other identifying information.

Who has access to my responses on these questionnaires?

All of your responses will be confidential. You will complete the questionnaires and then put them in an envelope, which you will then seal and give back to the researcher(s). Only the researcher(s) will have access to this information and they will not have any means to link it back to you or anyone else who participates in this study. No individual responses will be used in the final research paper, as all information will represent everyone who participates in the study.

What if I wish to withdraw or not participate in the study?

You may withdraw from the project at anytime or choose not to participate. Your decision will not impact you in any way.

"I, _____, agree to participate in this research project. My rights and responsibilities have been explained to me in words that I can understand.

If I have questions, I may contact Julie Dorton, B.A., (580-336-4019) or Dr. Marie Miville (405-744-9453). I may also contact Sharon Bacher, IRB Executive Secretary, 203 Whitehurst, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078; telephone number: (405) 744-5700.

I have read and fully understand this assent form. I understand that my parent/guardian, will also need to complete a consent form in order for me to participate in this research study. Before I complete any of the study questionnaires I will have my parent/guardian sign the attached "Parent Consent Form". I will give my signed assent and consent forms to the researcher before I complete any of the study questionnaires. I sign this form freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

I understand that participation is voluntary, that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time without penalty, simply by notifying the researcher(s).

Date:_____Time:_____(a.m./p.m.)

Signed:_____
<div align="center">Signature of Participant</div>

_____
<div align="center">Name of Parent or Legal Guardian</div>

I certify that I have personally explained all elements of this form to the participant or his/her representative before requesting the subject and his/her representative to sign it.

Signed:_____

Appendix F

Information Sheet

Directions: Please check the boxes or spaces below that best describe you.

1) How old are you?

- ❏ 16 years old
- ❏ 17 years old
- ❏ 18 years old
- ❏ 19 years old

2) Gender:

- ❏ Male
- ❏ Female

3) What school grade are you in?

- ❏ 9th grade
- ❏ 10th grade
- ❏ 11th grade
- ❏ 12th grade
- ❏ College Freshman
- ❏ College Sophomore
- ❏ Not attending high school or college

4) Race: (You can check more than one box if this describes your race)

- ❏ African American/Black
- ❏ American Indian/Native American
    list tribe(s) /nation(s): _____
- ❏ Asian/Asian American
- ❏ Hispanic/Latino(a)
- ❏ White, non-Hispanic
- ❏ Other: _____

5) Who lives in your household with you? Or if you are a college student, not living at home, who lived in the home you grew up in? (check all)

___ mother ___ father ___ stepmother ___ stepfather ___ brother(s) ___ sister(s)
___ grandmother ___ grandfather ___ aunt(s) ___ uncle(s) ___ cousin(s)
___ other family ___ friend ___ foster parent(s) ___ guardian(s)
___ other (please describe)_____

6) What is your religion? (check the space or spaces that fit)

___ Agnostic	___ Episcopalian	___ Methodist	___ Unitarian
___ Atheist	___ Hindu	___ Mormon	___ None
___ Baptist	___ Jehovah's Witness	___ Muslim	___ Other: _____
___ Buddhist	___ Jewish	___ Non-Denominational	
___ Catholic	___ Lutheran	___ Presbyterian	

Information Sheet-continued

7) Who do you identify as a male role model? (check all)

___ father   ___ stepfather   ___ brother(s)   ___ grandfather   ___ uncle(s)   ___ cousin(s)
___ other family   ___ friend   ___ foster father___ guardian(s)   ___sports figure
___religious figure   ___actor in movies   ____actor in television   ____cartoon character

8) If your biological father was absent from your life, please indicate the reason why:

❑   death
❑   divorce
❑   lived too far away
❑   job
❑   never knew father
❑   other_____

9) Who are or have been your role models in the following areas? Please leave blank if there have been no role models.

Television?_____

Movies?_____   Sports?_____

Cartoons?_____

10) How long have you lived in Oklahoma?_____

Appendix G

Importance of male role models

Instructions: Please rate how important it is for you to think of yourself as similar to male role model(s) in your personal life or to those portrayed in the media and how important it is for others to see you as similar to male role model(s) in your personal life or to those portrayed in the media.

1=not important   2=somewhat important   3= very important

1. It is **1 2 3**   for me to think of myself as similar to a male role model in television

2. It is **1 2 3**   for me to think of myself as similar to a male role model in movies

3. It is **1 2 3**   for me to think of myself as similar to a male role model in sports

4. It is **1 2 3**   for me to think of myself as similar to a male role model in my personal life

5. It is **1 2 3**   for me to think of myself as similar to a male role model as represented in advertisements

6. It is **1 2 3**   for others to think of me as similar to a male role model in television

7. It is **1 2 3**   for others to think of me as similar to a male role model in movies

8. It is **1 2 3**   for others to think of me as similar to a male role model in sports

9. It is **1 2 3**   for others to think of me as similar to a male role model in my personal life

10. It is **1 2 3**   for others to think of me as similar to a male role model as represented in advertisements

Oklahoma State University
Institutional Review Board

Protocol Expires: 5/16/03

Date: Friday, May 17, 2002   IRB Application No: ED02110

Proposal Title: THE INFLUENCE OF MALE ROLE MODELS UPON GENDER IDENTITY AND
REFERENCE GROUP IDENTITY AMONG ADOLESCENT MALES

Principal
Investigator(s):

Julie Dorton   Marie L. Miville
1101 Delaware   401 Willard Hall
Perry, OK 73077   Stillwater, OK 74078

Reviewed and
Processed as: Expedited (Spec Pop)

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

_____

Dear PI :

Your IRB application referenced above has been approved for one calendar year. Please make note of the
expiration date indicated above. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals
who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a
manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol
   must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year.
   This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are
   unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. If you have questions about the IRB
procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Sharon Bacher, the Executive Secretary to
the IRB, in 203 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, sbacher@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Carol Olson, Chair
Institutional Review Board

Julie Dorton

Candidate for the Degree of
Master of Science

Thesis: THE INFLUENCE OF MALE ROLE MODELS UPON GENDER IDENTITY
AND REFERENCE GROUP IDENTITY AMONG ADOLESCENT MALES

Major Field: Counseling and Student Personnel

Biographical:

Education: Graduated from Moore High School, Moore, Oklahoma, May 1979;
attended Rose State College, June 1984 - May 1985; Oklahoma City
Community College, January 1980 - May 1992; Oklahoma City University,
May 1992 - December 1993. Received Bachelor of Arts degree in
Communication from The University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma,
December 1994. Completed the requirements for the Master of Science
degree with a major in Counseling and Student Personnel at Oklahoma State
University in August, 2002.

Professional Memberships: American Counseling Association, Society of Indian
Psychologists

Research Experience: Influence of Male Role Models upon Gender Identity and
Reference Group Identity among Adolescent Males, The Effects of Trauma
on Family Functioning, Impact of Residential/Non-Residential Caregiver
Relationships upon the Stepparent/Adolescent Relationship, Norming the
Rorschach for American Indians, Oklahoma State University; American
Indians Into Psychology Fellow, Undergraduate Research Assistant,
Oklahoma State University.

Clinical Experience: Logan County Youth and Family Services, Guthrie,
Oklahoma; Lincoln Academy High School, Stillwater, Oklahoma.