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Queer Student Development Theory

Gay people, who seldom grow up in gay families; who are exposed to their culture's if not their parents' high ambient homophobia long before either they or those who care for them know that they are among those who most urgently need to define themselves against it; who have with difficulty and always belatedly to patch together from fragments a community, a usable heritage, a politics of survival or resistance.

~   Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick
            Epistemology of the Closet

» 23 percent more likely to experience harassment (Rankin)
» More frequently considered leaving, feared for physical safety (Rankin)
» Physical well being negatively impacted and social isolation results from hearing "That's so Gay" (Woodford)
» Large proportion of students have experienced harassment (Yost)
» 64% experience conflict between sexual and spiritual identity (Gold)
» Twice as likely to be targets of derogatory remarks, stared at and singled out as resident authority
» Transgender students difficulties using health care, res halls, bathroom, locker room, records (Beemyn)

Campus climate ›

» Student Development Theory ~
"informal theory is not self correcting"

Cognitive (intellectual & moral)

Typology (such as the Myers Briggs)

Psychosocial (gender, racial, multi ethnic, class, non-racist white, sexual)

Career

» Developing competence
» Managing emotions
» Moving through autonomy to interdependence
» Developing mature interpersonal relationships

» Establishing identity
» Developing purpose
» Developing integrity

Chickering

›

» Believe in authority
» Authority and other opinions but authorities are right
» Uncertainty exists, but authorities will discover the right answer
» Everyone has their own equally valid opinion

» You have to make up your own mind
» Committing to a few truths, more truths
» I'm committed to my truths but willing to hear out the opposition

Perry—Cognitive ›

- » Identity Confusion
- » Identity Comparison
- » Identity Tolerance
- » Identity Acceptance
- » Identity Pride
- » Synthesis

Cass 1979 based on Aussie Clients

» Exiting Heterosexual Identity

Developing

» Q personal Identity

» Q social Identity

» Q offspring identity

» Q intimacy status

» Q community

D'Augelli 1994

Individual Sexual Identity	Group Membership Identity

(Nonawareness)

1. Awareness

-of feeling or being different | -of existence of different sexual orientations in people

Self-Statement Examples:
  "I feel pulled toward women in ways I don't understand." (I)
  "I had no idea there were lesbian/gay people out there." (G)

2. Exploration

-of strong/erotic feelings for women or a particular woman | -of one's position regarding lesbians/gays as a group (both attitudes and membership)

Self-Statement Examples:
  "The way I feel makes me think I'd like to be sexual with a woman." (I)
  " Getting to know lesbian/gay people is scary but exciting." (G)

3. Deepening/Commitment

-to self-knowledge, self-fulfillment, and crystallization of choices about sexuality | -to personal involvement with reference group, with awareness of oppression and consequences of choices

Self-Statement Examples:
  "I clearly feel more intimate sexually and emotionally with women than with men." (I)
  "Sometimes I have been mistreated because of my lesbianism." (G)

4. Internalization/Synthesis

-of love for women, sexual choices, into overall identity | -of identity as a member of a minority group, across contexts

Self-Statement Examples:
  "I am deeply fulfilled in my relationships with women." (I)
  "I feel comfortable with my lesbianism no matter where I am or who I am with." (G)
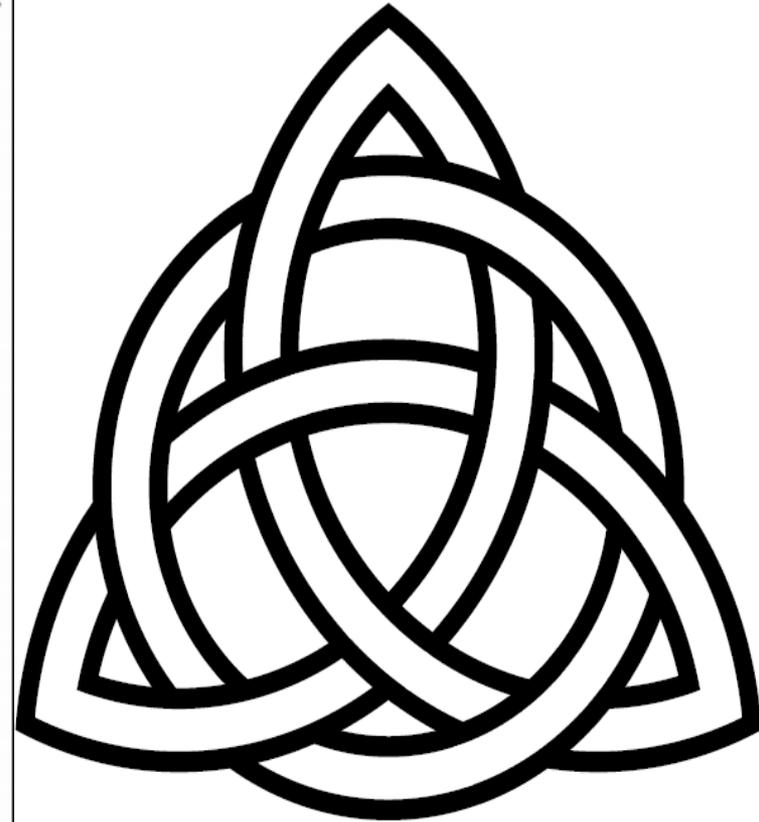
Fassinger 1998

Reassuring that a recent search looking at lesbian theory revealed studies of

- Lesbian Coaches
- Lesbian Police Officers
- Chinese lesbians
- African American Lesbians
- Lesbians from Winnipeg
- Jewish Lesbians
- Lesbian parents
- Lesbians from Columbus Ohio
- Lesbians with Disabilities
- Partner Violence between Lesbians
- Etc...

On Resiliency………………………………

» queer students accrue an "ironically beneficial impact" as "they have already surmounted more obstacles than their heterosexual peers…They have learned to persevere" (Renn, 2000)

» "A sense of strength was gained from the experience of fighting back (Scourfield)

» Identification with the community allows them to cope more effectively with internalized homophobia (Scourfield)

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